

MINUTES
TRINITY CHURCH ON THE GREEN PARISH MEETING
January 31, 2016

Present: The Rev. Dr. Luk De Volder, Rector, and the attached list of parishioners.

Opening Prayer:

The Rev. Luk De Volder led the opening prayer and called the meeting to order.

Annual Meeting Notices:

The Clerk verified that notices of the meeting had been published as required.

Roll of Members:

A list of members was circulated for signature to confirm those present, constituting a quorum of at least 61.

Appointment of Committee to Approve Minutes of January 25, 2015, Meeting

It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Vestry be appointed to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on January 25, 2015; the motion PASSED unanimously.

Election of Vestry Members:

Qualifications for Voting:

The Rector outlined the qualifications for voting, namely, persons sixteen years and above in age who have been attending Trinity Church on the Green for not less than six months and who contribute to the life of Trinity.

Amendments to Bylaws: It was MOVED and SECONDED that amendments to the bylaws, as stated in "Proposed Revisions to the Trinity Church on the Green Bylaws" (copy attached) and contained in notices to members of the Parish and displayed in the church with the Annual Parish Meeting notices, be approved as submitted by the Vestry. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Nominating Committee Report:

The following candidates for nomination to the Vestry were introduced by the Chair of the Nominating Committee, outgoing Senior Warden Jack Tebes: Fiona Boucher; Barbara Casey; Joan Dreyfus; Sheila Owen; David Rivera; Sarah Woodford. It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Clerk cast one vote for the entire slate as nominated; the Motion passed unanimously.

Charlotte Rea was introduced as candidate for the position of Warden for a term of 4 years. It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Clerk cast one vote for the candidate nominated; the Motion PASSED unanimously.

Also introduced as candidates were Murray Harrison as Delegate to the Diocesan Convention and to the Diocesan South Central Region, and Barbara Casey, Alternate Delegate to the Diocesan Convention and to the Diocesan South Central Region. It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Clerk cast one vote for the candidates as nominated; the Motion PASSED unanimously.

Appointment of the Nominating Committee:

Pursuant to the Bylaws, Article VII, Section 4, ¶¶ 1 and 2, third-year Vestry members and the Senior Warden constitute the Nominating Committee for the Vestry Elections at the Annual Parish Meeting in January, 2017. It was MOVED and SECONDED that third-year Vestry members be appointed as the Nominating Committee; the Motion PASSED unanimously.

A recess was taken for lunch in the Undercroft.

Thanks to the Hospitality Committee:

The Rector expressed thanks to the Hospitality Committee, Liz Dickinson, Chair, and committee members for presenting the luncheon.

Wardens' Presentations

Jack Tebes, Senior Warden reported on accomplishments at Trinity during the past 8 years and thanked clergy, staff and parish members who contributed to them with a view to a sustainable future and growth. He described the new staff members who have been hired during his tenure, noting particularly the Rev. Rowena Kemp; Head Sexton Sam Sigg; Julie Johnson, Church School Director; and Samantha Butler, Chapel on the Green Coordinator.

Lisa Omark, Senior Warden-Elect, honored the time and talent that Jack Tebes has contributed to Trinity as Warden and pointed to plans for Trinity going forward, noting the fifty active committees organized within our seven ministry teams.

A booklet containing Annual Parish Meeting Committee Reports (attached) was circulated to those present.

Treasurer's Presentation of the 2015 Financial Report and 2016 Budget: The Treasurer, David Soper, expressed his thanks to the Vestry, the Finance Committee and committee heads for their work on the 2016 Budget. He then reviewed the document entitled "Trinity Church on the Green Financial Review and 2016 Budget" (attached) and the figures on the "Trinity Church on the Green Financial Review" (attached). The Treasurer also thanked all who worked on the Holiday Bazaar and the Music for Music programs, which boosted 2015 revenue. There were savings in expenses in 2015, on account of staff turnover, a one-time refund from the Diocesan insurance carrier based on experience, and reduced utility costs because of the installation of new lighting. In 2016, there will be a major capital investment to replace the front steps of the church, with half of that cost to be reimbursed (to the extent of \$117,000) by the State of Connecticut Historic Preservation Commission; the balance will be made up by contributions from the Holiday Bazaar and the endowment. David expressed his thanks to Sherrill Farkas and to the Rector for their assistance to him.

New Warden Introduction: The Rector introduced the newly-elected Junior Warden, Charlotte Rea, and offered a prayer in support of Charlotte as she assumes her position. Charlotte expressed thanks to the current Wardens as she looks forward to the experience of serving as Warden.

Rector's Report: The Rector expressed the deep mutual understanding and friendship existing in his relationship with the Wardens, Jack Tebes and Lisa Omark. He read Robert Frost's poem "Mowing" as a tribute to Jack as he leaves his position as Warden:

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
What was it it whispered? I knew not well myself;
Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound –
And that was why it whispered and did not speak.
It was no dream of the gift of idle hours,
Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf:
Anything more than the truth would have seemed too weak
To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows,
Not without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers
(Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.
The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows.
My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.

The Rector offered a prayer in support of Lisa Omark as she begins her term as Senior Warden. He commented on the current congenial atmosphere in the Trinity Parish Office and what an honor it is to work with the Rev. Rowena Kemp and the staff, including Walden Moore and Sam Sigg. He thanked the outgoing Vestry class for their leadership and continuing involvement in the parish and welcomed the new Vestry members of the Class of 2018.

The Rector stated that the options existing for Trinity's future have become clear, so that possible strategies for the future can now be considered: maintaining the status quo with budget-cutting; spiritual renewal; or growth in a couple of different aspects. The Parish will decide on a plan for Trinity, as a "program" church, to grow. The essential steps in choosing for growth and developing Trinity's mission in strengthening a connection to God may require making strategic investments by strengthening crucial strategic programs: 1) giving additional administrative help to the music staff; 2) investing in an outreach program to reach more people and bring in members; and 3) emphasizing spirituality (with the Taize services as an example of bringing people to Trinity). In addition, administrative investments have been proposed: 1) updating and improving the church data base in order to ease staff tasks; and 2) putting out Trinity's message to the community through communication. The Trinity Vestry, committees and members of the Parish will consider the options together in the coming year.

Resolutions:

- It was MOVED and SECONDED that the 2016 budget report be accepted; the Motion passed unanimously.
- It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Vestry be empowered (1) to set staff salaries; (2) to buy and sell real estate and/or securities; (3) to lend or borrow money; the Motion PASSED unanimously.
- It was MOVED and SECONDED that the Treasurer and Wardens be authorized to open and maintain accounts with banks and brokers, and to deal with them directly on behalf of the Parish of Trinity Church; the Motion passed unanimously.

Announcements:

The Rector announced that, by lot, Joan Dreyfus was selected to serve a one-year term to replace Charlotte Rea on the Vestry. She will be eligible to run for an additional 3-year term on the Vestry at the next Annual Parish Meeting.

There will be an event on Tuesday, February 16, 2016, at 5:30, in collaboration with First Church, Christ Scientist.

Closing Hymn:

Those present joined in singing the hymn “My hope is built on nothing less”.

Closing Prayer:

The Rector led a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Gould, Parish Clerk

Attachments:

Annual Parish Meeting Attendance January 31, 2016

Annual Parish Meeting Agenda

Proposed Revisions to the Trinity Church on the Green Bylaws

Trinity Church on the Green 2015 financial Review and 2016 Budget

Trinity Church on the Green Financial Review

Annual Parish Meeting Committee Reports