

Prince of Peace Episcopal Church
BISHOP'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 20, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Dinner was served at 6:00 and the meeting began at 6:30.

Present in person: Nancy Mortenson, Senior Warden; Nick Fortey (2024), Jr. Warden; Mary Macy (2025), Treasurer; Ann McBride (2024); Sue Rembert (2024); Barb Barb (2026); Mary Knutsen (2026); and Barbara Ross (Clerk)

Excused: Bill Dalton (2025)

Call to Order: Nancy called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Sue shared a reading from Maya Angelou and the prayer of St. Chrysostom.

Respectful Communication Guidelines: The Respectful Communication Guidelines were distributed and reviewed.

Approval of the Agenda: The agenda was approved with the following additions:

- Move Check-In to the end of the meeting
- Agreement to have Book Group move tables for Coffee Class
- Blessing of the Animals on October 1
- Email from Bishop Brian Prior regarding property development
- BAC absences

Approval of the minutes: Minutes from the August 16 were approved as corrected. M/S/P
Thanks were expressed to Bill Dalton for taking the notes in Barb's absence.

Status of Rental Agreement with Peace Lutheran

Nancy distributed a response letter from Peace Lutheran giving us two options:

1. A one-year lease, with the same basic conditions as the current lease, for 2024 with the rent set at \$2350 per month.
2. A two-year lease, with the same basic conditions as the current lease, for 2025 at \$2350 per month and 2026 at \$2550 per month.

Mary Macy noted that our current lease is for \$2150 per month, so this proposal represents a 37% increase over a three-year period. It also means we would continue to pay the utilities which currently bring our monthly building expenses to approximately \$3000 per month.

Mary Macy distributed several budget scenarios to show how these proposals might affect our bottom line. If we continue to operate with only a supply priest, we could afford these increased rents at our current pledging levels. However, if we want to have a half-time priest, our projected deficit would be over \$10,000 in 2024 and over \$16,000 in 2025.

Congregational Meeting – It was decided to schedule a congregational meeting after church on Sunday, October 8 to let the congregation know we plan to reject Peace Lutheran's latest offer and need to consider other rental options. Nick and Mary Macy agreed to plan this meeting.

Other Rental Options

St. Thomas – Nancy and Mary Macy have talked with St. Thomas about how we might worship together but still maintain our identity as Prince of Peace. One option discussed was to alternate the responsibility for planning the weekly worship service such as St. Thomas being responsible for the 1st and 3rd Sundays, Prince of Peace being responsible for the 2nd and 4th Sundays, and doing Morning Prayer on the 5th Sundays.

Mary said that St. Thomas would welcome us and would make rooms for storage and office use available as part of the deal. She said at the recent Convocation meeting there was excellent discussion about how congregations can learn from each other and work together more closely. She feels there is much we could learn from them in areas such as outreach and pastoral care.

It was reported that St. Thomas has run into some unexpected capital expenses so will be postponing their search for a priest for a year. If we were to choose to rent space from them, this could be a boon to strengthening their financial situation for partnering with us for a priest in the future.

Nick is not opposed to developing a closer relationship with St. Thomas but would like the decision to be based on other things than just finances. Others expressed concern that since many of our members already drive a considerable distance to come to Prince of Peace, we might lose members who don't want to drive the additional 15 miles to St. Thomas especially in inclement weather.

Iris Memory Care (formerly Gibson Creek) – Sue reported that Gibson Creek is currently closed and will reopen as Iris Memory Care. Since we already conduct worship services there, we have a relationship with them. They would be very happy to provide space for weekly worship and for our piano. This location is near our property and would allow us to stay in West Salem. We would need to either rent office space at another location or have our office people work from home.

Methodist Church MICAH building - Sue reported there is excellent worship, office, kitchen and restroom space available in the downtown MICAH building on State Street near the Capitol. Sue said they are very willing to work with us on the price to make it affordable for us. This would be a central, accessible location for our members and parking on Sunday mornings should not be an issue.

Other Financial Matters

- 1. Cell Tower Lease** – Mary Knutsen contacted SBA to see if they had been contacted by the diocese regarding our desire to renew the cell tower lease. The person whom we previously worked with is no longer at SBA so she is awaiting a call from the new person.
- 2. Debit Card signers** – Mary Knutsen announced that we are phasing out our Columbia Bank credit card and plan to establish a new debit card through MAPS Credit Union. She recommended we continue current signers Steve Buresh, Nick Fortey, and Mary Knutsen on the new debit card and add Senior Warden Nancy Mortensen. This was moved by Ann McBride and seconded by Sue Rembert and approved unanimously. M/S/P. Signers will need to go to MAPS as a group.

3. **2023 budget amendments for supply priest and pastoral care**
 - a. Mary Macy moved we move \$4000 from the Priest-in-charge line to the Supply Priest line to cover supply priest costs for the remainder of the year. M/S/P
 - b. Sue moved we authorize the treasurer to pay clergy \$50 per pastoral care visit. M/S/P
4. **New budget format for 2024** Mary Macy is working on a new budget format for 2024.
5. **Switch to Quick Books and Tech Soup**
 - a. As reported in previous months, Church Windows, which costs \$94 per month, is outdated and is freezing up.
 - b. Neil, the treasurer at St. Thomas, recommended we join Tech Soup which provides discounted software and hardware for charitable organizations.
 - c. Through Tech Soup, we will be able to get QuickBooks for up to 5 users for \$75 per year.
 - d. Mary Macy is familiar with QuickBooks and says it will meet our needs well.
 - i. It will allow her to work remotely which will save her a lot of time.
 - ii. She will be able to assign roles to the counters so they can enter data and generate bank deposits.
 - e. Ann moved we authorize Mary Macy to take the necessary steps to apply to Tech Soup. M/S/P

Administration

1. **Organizational position descriptions** - Nancy distributed a list of parish organizations and requested that the designated leaders submit policies, procedures, and position descriptions to her by October 31.
2. **Procedures for BAC minutes** - Nancy requested that the clerk submit signed copies of all approved BAC minutes together handouts from the meetings to the office so they can be scanned and entered into the official records.
3. **Secretary of State assumed business name** – Our DBA “doing business as” filing with the Secretary of State office needs to be corrected and updated. Mary Macy will take care of it. M/S/P

Worship

1. **Lay License Renewal** – Licenses for our lay worship leaders (Lay Eucharistic Visitors, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, and Lay Preachers) expired on June 30 and need to be renewed. Information is on the diocesan website. No license required to lead Morning Prayer.
2. **SAFE Church** – Church leaders also need to renew their SAFE Church trainings. Information is on the diocesan website.
3. **Bulletin Revamp** – Nancy reported that while our current bulletin format is beautiful, it is very time-consuming and expensive to print. She distributed a sample of a simpler format that doesn't include artwork or all of the hymns, reading, and prayers spelled out. This will give worshippers the opportunity to become familiar with the Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal. People on Zoom will need access to Prayer Books and Hymnals. It was decided to try the new format and to make Prayer Books and Hymnals available for people to take home.

4. **Zoom status** – Pedro has been dealing with an out-of-state family medical emergency and has not been able to be with us for the past several weeks. The system worked well in August so we are hoping it will continue to work well when he returns.

Pastoral Care/Parish Life –

1. Sue has been taking the lead on responding to care issues in the congregation and was pleased to see it listed as a need in Nick's Parish Life Committee Report.
2. Barb Barb volunteered to help Sue with pastoral care.
3. It was noted that diocesan guidelines for pastoral care are very strict.

Garden Report

1. Barb Ross reported the Garden Committee is planning a Fall Clean-up/End of Harvest Potluck for Saturday, September 30 from 11:00-2:00 at the garden.
2. Sue suggested that 3-wire straw (not hay) bales be placed to deter people from driving on the property. Nick agreed to look into it.

Property Development

1. Nancy shared a letter from Bishop Brian Prior offering to meet with us on property development.
2. It was agreed that Nancy, Mary Macy, and Nick would be the ones to meet with him.
3. It was suggested that Fridays would be a good time.
4. Nancy will get back to him and find out what he needs from us.

Consent Agenda

1. It has been suggested that we could streamline our meetings by using a consent agenda for routine items such as the agenda, minutes, and some reports.
2. In order for this to work, items would need to be sent out ahead of the meeting and people would need to read them ahead of the meeting.
3. If people had no changes to suggest, these items could be approved by a single vote.
4. If changes need to be made, items could be removed from the consent agenda and handled on an individual basis in the traditional way.
5. It was agreed that we would try the consent agenda at a future meeting. M/S/P

BAC absences

1. Nancy announced that in addition to missing this meeting, Bill Dalton will miss the next three meetings due to travel.
2. Barb Ross will be with family in California October 5-November 5.
3. Mary Macy will be with Oct. 11 through the end of the month.
4. It was noted that with so much going on and so many important decisions that need to be made, it is difficult when people are absent.
5. Our current inability to use Zoom for BAC meetings adds to the challenge.
6. It was agreed that we can help the situation by distributing agendas, minutes, reports, etc. prior to the meetings rather than just handing them out at the meeting.
7. It also would be helpful if someone could set up the Zoom so people could participate in BAC meetings when they are away.

End of meeting check-in

- Nick noted we have lots to do to prepare for the congregational meeting on Oct. 8
- Barb B. said this was a productive meeting. Dinner was appreciated.
- Sue said this was a thoughtful meeting.
- Mary Knutsen is willing to do anything but just need reminders!
- Ann said it seems like we have been discussing the same things for years!
- Nancy wants a decision made on our space.
- Barb R. was impressed we made it through a long agenda.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting will be Wednesday, October 18 at the church.

- Ann volunteered to provide the food.
- Dinner at 6:00, meeting at 6:30.

Action items:

1. Respond to Peace Lutheran regarding lease (Nancy)
2. Respond to Bishop Brian Prior regarding property development (Nancy)
3. Announce Sept. 30 garden workday and celebration (Barb R. with help from Nancy, Mary K. and Sue)
4. Announce and plan for Oct. 1 Blessing of the Animals (Nancy and Mary K.?)
5. Respond to Nick about Parish Life report by Sept. 27 (Everyone)
6. Continue researching option for move and get figures to Mary M. (Sue)
7. Plan for Oct. 8 congregational meeting (Nancy, Nick, Mary M.)
8. Follow up with SBA cell tower company (Mary K.)
9. Submit Secretary of State document (Mary M.)
10. Follow up on new debit card (Mary M.)
11. Make sure all employees have been paid (Mary M.)
12. Apply to Tech Soup (Mary M.)
13. Submit parish organizational reports (policies and procedures) to Nancy by Oct. 31 (Everyone)
14. Continue working on bulletin revamp (Nancy)
15. Develop plans for pastoral care (Barb B. and Sue)
16. Submit signed copies of approved minutes to office (Barb R.)
17. Submit website costs to Mary M. (Barb R.)
18. Continue working on webpage (Barb R.)
19. Follow up with lay leaders who need to renew licenses (?)
20. Follow up with Chris Craun regarding facilitated meeting (Nancy)
21. Talk to Eric of Salem Geeks about our tech issues (Nancy)
22. Bring food for October meeting (Ann)
23. Take minutes at October meeting (?)

Meeting notes submitted by
Barbara Ross, Clerk