

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Annual Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2021

Opening Devotion: The meeting was called to order on Zoom video conference by the Rev. Elizabeth Gardner at 11:19 a.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Alexandria, Virginia. She led the congregation in prayer.

Present: Approximately 40 members of the congregation were in attendance. Rob Bluey was appointed clerk.

Meeting Minutes: Jim Bailes made a motion to accept the Annual Meeting minutes from February 2, 2020, Mary Jane Stockstill seconded, and the congregation voted to approve.

Vestry Election: Rev. Elizabeth thanked outgoing Vestry members—Belinda Appiah, Rob Bluey, Nihal Masih, and David Walton—for their service. She then presented two candidates for election: Steve Mitchell and Richard Krewson. Mr. Mitchell began attending St. Mark's about 25 years ago. He's a retired federal bankruptcy judge who previously practiced law and was active duty military. He looks forward to listening and helping to guide St. Mark's in the future. Mr. Krewson began attending St. Mark's in 2012. He and his son Ryan were confirmed at St. Mark's in 2017. He currently works for National Guard Bureau headquarters, making sure facilities are maintained. Mr. Krewson wants to help St. Mark's in the same way. The congregation voted by Zoom poll and the result was unanimous: 33-0.¹

Rector's Report: Rev. Elizabeth reviewed the worship and outreach work that was done in 2020. Despite the pandemic, St. Mark's didn't miss a beat—more than 450 services, including morning prayer and compline. Sunday services moved to Zoom beginning in March and St. Mark's continued Wednesday services with The Fairfax, home communion, and visitations.

St. Mark's mourned the passing of three parishioners in 2020: Nell Brill, Earl Winsor, Helen Dell.

There were several new additions to St. Mark's: Kathy Davis, Jeffrey Crocker, Connor McDermott, Evalynn Merrill, Fernanda Lucia Escobar. There was one transfer: Rodney and Candace Fisher. Several members of the St. Mark's staff—Becky Sanders, Tatiana Andronikova, Mike Morgan, and Gaby Pineda—were furloughed due to the pandemic.

Rev. Elizabeth reviewed the programs and formation that took place in 2020, including the Potomac Episcopal collaboration and fellowship activities such as Shrine Mont dinners and children's craft bags. Coffee hour moved online and remains a vital way of staying connected. She praised the work that was done for the virtual Christmas pageant, better online communications (including online giving), a yard sale of books and furniture, separating the finances for San Marcos and St. Mark's, moving to Realm for better data management, and making several church building updates (WiFi, community and rain garden, trees and grounds).

¹ 28 votes by Zoom with 5 additional votes submitted by email or text.

Treasurer's Report: Eric Bryda reported on 2020 finances. Total income was \$295,400 and total expenses \$270,100 for a surplus of \$25,300. The mortgage balance is \$76,000, trustees balance is \$107,600, Knitters' Fund balance is \$24,800, and capital funds is \$33,700.

What to Expect in 2021: Rev. Elizabeth spoke about her plans and expectations.

- Vision Team: Clergy and wardens from the Potomac Episcopal churches have been meeting and Pam Hamrin will serve as St. Mark's representative going forward. This group is tasked with thinking about future collaboration and will soon begin collecting input via focus groups and surveys. The goal is to have a recommendation by mid-June.
- Renewed Commitment to Mission: Rev. Elizabeth wants to double down on mission work in 2021. It's a passion for the St. Mark's congregation.
- Difficult Financial Decisions: The church building costs \$100,000 per year, which is about the same as the total pledged amount for 2021. That doesn't leave much for programming or staff.
- Hybrid Worship: Rev. Elizabeth expects to start a hybrid worship as soon as the bishop allows; it might begin without members of the congregation.
- Close Look at Space Use: St. Mark's needs to determine the best way to use its space and how to be good stewards. River Farm Cooperative School is back but Pan de Vida is not due to building use restrictions.
- New Website: St. Mark's will debut a new website in 2021.
- Strong Intentional Online Presence: It's important to make worship available online.

Good of the Order: Several members of the St. Mark's congregation made comments.

- Tia Murchie-Beyma thanked St. Mark's for providing space for the Girl Scouts.
- Jim Bailes noted the Vestry has two openings and encouraged members of the congregation to volunteer to serve.²
- Rosemary Kley said it was good to see so many parishioners in attendance and asked if others might return when the building reopens. Rev. Elizabeth said survey data suggests a certain number will be back. She is in touch with all members of the congregation, even if they don't worship online each Sunday.
- Bonnie Wilkins asked for more details Vision Team and Pam Hamrin responded with an update on initial discussions among the group.
- Ashley Bryda encouraged St. Mark's to explore outdoor worship and suggested the congregation begin to formulate a plan for holding Easter services outdoors.

Adjournment: Steve Mitchell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 p.m., Charlotte Brown seconded, and the congregation voted to adjourn. Rev. Elizabeth led the congregation in a closing prayer.

² After nominating herself following the Annual Meeting, Tracy Tienken was elected via Vestry email vote on Monday, January 25.