

Trinity Rutland Vestry Meeting Minutes

June 18th, 2025, 5-7pm

PRESENT: Sarah Ginolfi, David Thurmer, David Rugger, Lois Castonguay, Shannon Hill, Diane Novak, Brandy Blosser, Holly Webb, Clerk

ABSENT: Cassi Whitcomb, Judy Hall, Melissa Alarie

FORMATION SESSION

Call to Order/Opening Prayer

I. Formation: Intentional Growth Check-in: How are we currently addressing the items identified by the Intentional Growth Study that needed attention?

A. We will live into our mission and values, continuing to serve one another and expanding our embrace to encompass the entire community.

- We now have a youth group; 15 have participated, 8 are fairly regular.
- We are continuing our work with Companions in Wholeness – Tuesdays volunteers from Trinity are some of its more reliable people;
- Our Trinity Present programs frequently have a 50% non-trinity audience; is raising funds for other community programs;
- We coined new/updated Mission Statement;
- Paramount Players is now using our space;
- Trinity has had a presence at Pride and National Night Out – Trinity is a sponsor with support raised in the community, not just in-house;
- Family pew created and in use;
- Highs and lows with live-streaming; user issues still need to be worked out; issues with copyrighted music being blocked by AI; need Peter Wilder to come back to make adjustments.

B. We will maintain our pastoral care program and strong clergy presence.

- Deacon Liz has done wonderful job at organizing things;
- That some people are visited more frequently than others needs to be looked at;
- How do we welcome new people into this ministry;
- Work on our expectation settings.
- A knitting group (prayer shawls) ministry is starting up;
- Look into development of a short-term meal program for shut-ins, others in need of this service;
- Prayer tree ministry
- Sarah would like a better “welcome table” set up that each works within the limitations of the winter congregation vs the summer congregation

C. We will develop programming for all ages, including specific procedures to welcome newcomers, young adults, and households with children.

- We are working on development of changing the perception of “church” in younger population;
- We continue to work with the congregation with respect to interacting within and expectations for a young adult ministry.

D. We will both honor the richness of our Episcopal traditions and embrace the freedom to try new things so that we might attract, engage, and convey the gospel to a twenty-first century population.

- Dave Thurmer and Brandy both really enjoyed the Taizé services; both felt if someone came once, they would be inspired to come back; noted the timing of the service didn’t work for some;
- Sarah would be interested in a worship service that reaches out to young families – families with children 10 and under – perhaps a service once a month; suggested we consider putting together a Christmas pageant;
- Have a children’s “Sunday School” type thing during the sermon;
- Develop things to attract young families with children to come to coffee hour.

E. We will care for our buildings and grounds so that they reflect the welcome, health, and vibrancy of the congregation within.

- Acknowledgment that a lot has been going on in this regard in the last couple of years;
- David Rugger noted he has been doing research on historic and sacred spaces grants; all are matching grants, but would need this to be part of and co-occurring with a capital campaign; it’s a very involved grant processes, involves a lot of commitment and follow-through; involves an eligibility study; historical criteria evaluation;
- Noted we need to be mindful of using our Jubilee Fund in the manner and for the purposes for which it was established and not simply as a “line of credit” for things that are considered maintenance of our physical plant;
- Dave, Lois and Judy will be doing “walk abouts” starting in July to identify things needing attention, prioritization.
- Trinity needs to maintain its “curb appeal”.

III. Rector's Report

A. Storytelling Workshop Recap (with Mark Yaconelli)

- Sarah reported it was: Great! Wonderful!
- We need to pursue various incentives that we can provide for people to be willing to share their stories.
- We need to focus on developing people's level of comfort in doing congregational participation in story telling and interacting with others within the congregation during these opportunities.

B. Austin Story Project idea

- Noted it's provides a fully funded grant
- There's \$100 application fee
- It's a two-year program with a couple of in-person residencies
- Sarah/Lois will follow up with each other to look at the "nuts and bolts" as to whether this is something Trinity could take on.

BUSINESS SESSION

I. Approval of May Minutes

Motion to approve by Lois, second David T. No discussion felt needed. Unanimously approved.

II. Treasurer's Reports for May

Discussion: Fuel: we will definitely go over budget on this item. It was a very cold winter. Need to install better thermostats in the sanctuary. Need to develop expectations for specific areas of our buildings. Everything else seems to be fairly in line with budget expectations. Bridge loan payments are expected to be finished in September or October. Motion to approve the Reports by Lois; seconded by Diane. Discussion: Diane reported on some details from the Finance Meeting. Memorial Garden fee will be a topic of discussion for development of a fee that is reflective not only of the cost of materials, but acknowledgment that fee doesn't currently provide for any perpetual maintenance of the garden, etc.

Finance Team recommended a fee of \$1000 to include the cost of the stone, engraving, and perpetual maintenance. Sarah will make some inquiries as to industry standards associated with these costs.

Vote on the motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports: unanimously approved.

III.Updated Sculpture Agreement with the Carving Studio

The Agreement has been moved along; it ran into some conflicts over the last couple of months, but those seem to have been resolved. Motion by Diane to approve the updated Agreement with or without some final changes that are still in redline on the agreement as it is being reviewed by the vestry; these are still awaiting final approval by the City Aldermen; Motion seconded by Dave T. Motion unanimously approved.

IV.Memorial Garden

a. Benches and spare pavers proposal:

Finally have some concrete numbers to present: Proposal from Artistic Memorials. Each bench would be \$2485 for the bench and installation. Four benches total \$9,940. There will be no engraving on the benches. 20 pavers stone at \$275 for \$5,500. Need to confirm whether the \$275 includes the cost of engraving the name and birth/death years.

Diane noted that if we are raising the fee for interment to \$1000, this will in time offset some of the initial expense for the benches not covered by the donation we already have in hand for them. We need to find out from Linda if any of the \$25K in the Memorial Garden Fund can be used towards this.

Motion to approve the proposal from Artistic Memorials as is, accompanied by a request for the finance team to direct us on where the money will come from beyond the \$5000 initial donation. Brandy made motion; seconded by David R. Unanimously approved. (Comment: Funds are NOT to come from the Jubilee Fund)

b. Idea to expand the number of paver spaces – Sarah provided a sketch representing a proposal for placement of additional stones in the garden alternative to a second row of stones around the outer circumference of the circular walkway. An explanation and discussion of that proposal occurred, but no formal motion or vote were held at this meeting.

V. Ministry Oversight Team Conversation Recaps

a. Stewardship (Diane and Sarah+)

Team is going to meet, do reviews in July. Sarah showed some materials she obtained for ideas. Diane mentioned she thought the plan was somewhat rigid. Sarah countered with the information on potential positive outcome from use of the materials.

b. Worship (Dave T. and Lois)

Team will meet in July

c. Evangelism (David R. and Melissa)

- Trinity Presents Calendar of Events
 - Reggie Mobley event is not happening. Moving past that, Oct. 12th will be with Diana Fanning for a piano concert;
 - Potential concert on Nov. 16th by Phil Lima and Noah Palmer, vocalist and pianist. Lima is head of the voice dept at Berklee; the proposed fee will be \$1700 for both artists including travel. David made a motion to approve \$1700 for this concert. Seconded by Dave T. Unanimously approved.
 - David noted that the total outlay for concerts held to date \$6,839.00 for all three concerts combined, including artist fees and piano maintenance costs. Gross proceeds totaled just under \$8000; with the current model, where we have designated 50% to beneficiaries, or about \$3,850. \$1027 was raised for the Trinity Youth Group, \$1272 was raised for Trinity Operating Fund, and \$1550 was raised for Rutland County Pride. In addition, there was a \$4500 grant from the diocese for the concert series, which more than covers the remaining cost to the Jubilee Fund, and partially funds next season. As a result, the series has brought in many new people to Trinity, had a major charitable impact, and had a net positive cash flow.

Discussion occurred about some questions within the Finance Committee regarding costs associated with the Trinity Presents program. Diane N. stated that she feels there is understanding and appreciation that the Jubilee Fund is a positive outreach effort. David R. noted that the fact that we are donating 50% of our intake for each concert is a huge consideration. With a better understanding of how this has all worked, it demonstrates the positive progress we are making in fulfilling the purpose of the Jubilee Fund. David R. further noted that the spreadsheet from the Finance Committee also does not reflect or take into consideration the \$4500 grant that we obtained. Sarah indicated she will remind the Finance Committee of that grant funding as an offset. Trinity Presents also recently received a considerable donation (\$10,000) that will nearly cover all the concerts that are planned.

d. Education (Melissa, Brandy, and Sarah+)

Team gathered to reflect on youth programming. Broad support to begin a Sunday school program for all ages. Sarah suggested it would work better to start this more in Sept. See if this can be put together for the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

e. Pastoral (Shannon)

Regarding the area where all the rummage stuff goes, Judy H. and Shannon have discussed that it would be nice to have well organized and labeled tubs to hold donations as they come in. With some good organization, in the event there are people in need (like people with a house fire or similar), that they could come in and obtain things to meet this immediate need.

- f. Property (Judy, Dave T, and Lois) –
David T. announced the roof project has been completed; parking lot paving has been put off for a year, but the painting parking spaces will be done. Sarah asked that we schedule walk-about for July. Sarah advised that the Rectory project has been paused because of the tariffs effect on costs. Mice have again made entry into the Rectory and their presence is loud enough to wake folks up. There is just a long litany of problems affecting the quality of life of all the residents of the rectory by infestations of mice, bees, etc. The monthly pest remediation contract has been put in suspended animation. This needs to be addressed immediately as Trinity does not have sufficient volunteers to handle this level of problems that need immediate attention. No formal action taken by vestry at the meeting.
- g. Service and Outreach (Cassi, Judy, Brandy)
Team hasn't met in person but is communicating through an email thread. Ideas: Rejuvenating bulletin boards in Nourse Hall, those for Kato's kid, WOTF, etc. starting campaign funds to go to Kato's Kids.
Diane asked what's happening with the Ramp. Sarah advised it's part of a Sunday service project. Rich is getting materials and volunteers (not children) together and will do preparation and paint it and do any immediate repairs needed. Hopefully it will be done by mid July.

VI. Critical Projects for 2025 Check-in

- a. Organ Project – temporarily on hold.
- b. Rectory (Siding/Soffits & Eaves/Heat Pumps, Paving, Loose ends still in progress.)
- c. Paving: Not happening in 2025. Lines still being painted. See above.
- d. Parish Roof Fontaine bid signed. \$25k (1/2 + \$15,000) paid. Expenses to date explanation in Appendix A.
Noted: Bid is hard to understand. Remaining balance number is what we have left out of the \$50K that we approved, NOT what is still owed on the project. We had to buy over \$8,000 worth of more slates than anticipated. Focus at this time is on repairs needed to address water infiltration causing damage to the wall over the side entrance door to the nave. We're trying to get to a point where we can make it through two years before we need the funds to do the major repairs that have been discovered are needed.
- e. Chapel Ramp Refinishing – see above.
- f. Parish Kitchen Hood (not discussed)
- g. Sunday Snow plan (See Appendix B)
- h. What else? (not discussed)

VII. "Homework" – Vestry members reminded to complete online Safe Church Training

VIII. Adjournment 7:09 p.m.

IX. Report of E-Mail Voting:

Following a series of emails on 6/24/25 regarding the resurgence of pests invading the Rectory, David Rugger made the following motion: *“I move to empower the Rector to establish or reestablish a relationship with a pest control company of her choosing--billed to Trinity--for ongoing preventative treatment and possible remediation at the parsonage. The Rector shall seek vestry approval for one-time expenses exceeding \$250. This authorization will expire when the construction is deemed complete and the building envelope prevents future infestations, at which time the pest control strategy will be reevaluated in consultation with the Vestry property team.”* The motion was seconded by Lois, and after the 24-hour discussion period, voting occurred, and the motion was approved by a majority of the vestry.

Respectfully submitted,
Holly Webb, Clerk

The Next Vestry Meeting will be August 21, 2025 (NO JULY MEETING)