

MINUTES OF THE 157TH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
January 28, 2024

1. Call to Order **Valori Sherer**

Following the service at 10:00 a.m., 61 electors present in the parish hall and electors signed in through a waiting room via Zoom gathered. The meeting was called to order at 11:05 am by Rev. Valori Sherer. She explained that the meeting would take place both in person and virtually and that voting would be done by raising a hand. She asked us to make an offering to the United Thank Offering (UTO) any time we hear something we're grateful for or keep a hashtag score and make an online offering later.

2. Opening Prayer **Sujanna Raj**

Rev. Sujanna Raj offered an opening prayer that reflected on the life and ministry of the church, and asked God to lead us through the meeting with God's presence, bless our organizations and new beginnings.

3. Quorum Confirmed. Polls Declared Open **Valori Sherer**

To facilitate voting, all nominations were requested in advance of the meeting. Sandy Cooper, John Long and Michael Mancini were nominated for the vestry. There being no nominations in addition to the proposed slate, the polls were closed. With more than 50 members present in person and online, there was a quorum. Valori said that voting would be on "the honor system."

4. Appointment of Secretary pro tem and Parliamentarian **Valori Sherer**

Ann Marie Ruhlin was appointed Secretary *pro tem*. Al Ludwig was appointed Parliamentarian.

5. Presentation & Approval of the 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes **Valori Sherer**

Charlotte Martin made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed. Davis Allen seconded. Volunteers counted hands and the motion passed with a majority approving the 2023 meeting minutes.

6. Reports

Emmanuel Church Foundation **Richard Keyes**

Richard Keyes noted that he will be retiring as president after three years of service. Jeff Remming is also retiring from the Foundation board after three years, but will stay on as treasurer. Richard reviewed reasons to contribute to the Foundation: celebrations for birthdays, anniversaries, birth of a child, remembrances. He reminded us that other choices for donations are the food center and Sunday flowers which may be given online. He noted that the flowers are used twice – Sujanna brings them to Faith Christian Church of India for their services later in the day. Money contributed to the Foundation is there forever. The Foundation doesn't spend any of the principal; only interest is used. The principal has not been touched in over 50 years. This year, the Foundation gave \$229,000 to Emmanuel's

budget. The part of the Foundation designated for Missions gives \$10,000. He encouraged all to consider the Foundation for estate planning. In conclusion, he noted that Allison Williams is coming onto the board this year, but they are looking for one more.

(Exhibits Ia and Ib)

Building and Property Report

Dave Pluhar

Dave Pluhar noted that Emmanuel is amazing because of what we have been able to accomplish in the past couple of years and fantastic things are planned for this year. He added that at some point we will have new signs outside. Building safety, security, and communications needed to be the focus for the past year. Emmanuel is finally joining 21st century! ***(Exhibit II)***

Junior Warden

Charlie Walch

Charlie Walch offered the Junior Warden's Report. ***(Exhibit III)***.

Charlie noted that the Junior Warden has two portfolios of responsibility. One is being the liaison between the property and the vestry and the other is being the liaison to the congregation. Charlie emphasized how much Dave Pluhar has worked to keep this property moving in the right direction. He thanked Mimi Shipp, Katie Gregston, Ann Marie Ruhlin, Philip Poke, Rachael Ludwig and the other people who are here during the day.

The Junior Warden's report lists achievements. Emmanuel has finally moved away from copper telephone lines! He noted that our "new building" is coming up on 16 years old. The HVAC system is coming up on its end-o-life. However, we now have a lovely steeple. We will eventually have signs.

Secondly, the real job of the Jr. Warden is connecting with the congregation. Anyone with questions or concerns is welcome to reach out to Charlie.

Senior Warden

Allison Williams

Allison offered the Senior Warden's Report ***(Exhibit IV)***.

Allison noted that the vestry began the year with a retreat in February where they clarified the parish's Divine Purpose Statement. She noted that her remarks are anchored in this statement, both thinking ahead and reflecting back on the past year. We have welcomed people into the community and have the joyful noise of children, but we have also experienced loss and people have moved away. We have embraced a call to be the hands and feet of Christ. There is a robust food ministry. We still hold Black Lives Matter vigils Friday at 6 pm. We gathered to wear orange and march with Churches Together for Justice to focus on Gun Violence. Our world and community have so many broken places, but we have grown in faith, worship and connections. We have resumed fellowship dinners. We must continue to grow in the ever present calling to live more deeply into our Divine Purpose. 2024 will not be an easy year for our country or world. How can we as Emmanuel

be grounded in our faith in these times? She asked us to consider three things: the healing effect of connections; the Village of Emmanuel – a local group of folks sharing experiences, living in a space of hope, not fear; and to keep dancing, embracing love and hope over hate and fear.

7. Report from the Priest-in-Charge

Valori Sherer

Valori noted that it's the start of her 3rd year at Emmanuel (September) and is amazed how much fun it has been. She gives thanks on our choice to heal.

Recognition of Retiring Vestry and Convention Delegates

Valori Sherer

Valori Sherer thanked the vestry for their prayerful work this past year and noted retiring members Kristyn Brennan, Peg Cooper, Elizabeth Kaul and Allison Williams. She acknowledged retiring alternate delegates Nancy Grow and Tom Jones.

Thank you to staff, ministry leadership

Valori Sherer acknowledged the current vestry: Allison Williams and Charlie Walch, Wardens, Maryann Vognild, Treasurer, Lynn Stephenson, Secretary, Kristyn Brennan, Peg Cooper, Lissa Johnson, Elizabeth Kaul, Lee Nelsen, Joyce Pluhar, and John Simon. The current convention delegates will continue: Lisa Liss, Margo Smith, and Bob Zagar.

She thanked the staff: Sujanna, especially for her international student ministry; Jerre Birdsong, our deacon; Mimi Shipp who manages "everything that happens here;" Katie Gregston for her work with children and youth and formation. Valori noted that Katie is like her father: if it needs doing, she'll do it and get others to help. Jae Park who makes worship full, beautiful, and brings out the best in the voices here now; Lauren Romano who leads our children in playing bells, tympani, and who makes children excited about singing praise to God; Jim Kern, our financial assistant. She noted that Philip Poke is so much more than a sexton – he practices some of the best evangelism in his interactions with both parishioners and those who visit the Food Center. Rachael Ludwig, Managing Director of the Emmanuel Preschool and Parents' Day Out; Alex Hughey and Nicholas Williams, Sunday care givers; Patricia Altemueller, who is new in the office, is somebody who is all about us connecting. Dave Pluhar and Ann Marie Ruhlin are volunteers who both need raises.

Valori acknowledged that there are so many ministries at Emmanuel that she can't name them all, but she thanked especially Jeannie Keyes and JoAnne Warren – the best altar guild she's ever worked with. Katherine Ziegler, for her expertise in organizing weddings! Peg Cooper (Caring Committee), Charlotte Martin and Gail Range (Food Center Ministry Coordinators). Valori noted that the real impact of Covid continues to hit our Food Pantry. Janet Dobbs (Worship Committee). The tech ministry: Alex, Jae, Nick, Tom, Robert, Dave. Acolytes – Amy Ryan, Brian Weiland and Stephen Knapp – it was a good year for acolytes. Pam Belloli: twenty-three new Eucharistic ministers were trained this year, and Pam also manages the MCs and is lit up with passion for Christ in this ministry. She thanked Jerre Birdsong, Kathleen Martin and Tom Smith for organizing Faith in Action into 4 Pillars: Earth

Love – Lynn Stephenson, Dale Penrose; Diocesan Involvement – Mary Jane Kuhn; Equity and Justice – Lee Nelsen, Mimi Shipp; Feeding & Caring – Charlotte Martin and Peg Cooper

Valori then acknowledged Betty Long for her 20 years of service as a volunteer in the Food Center on the occasion of her retirement from this ministry.

8. 2022 Treasurer’s Report

Maryann Vognild

Maryann Vognild began with a report on the fall stewardship campaign. Pledges are still coming in and all are welcome. 18 families are new this year. 46 family units increased pledges. She noted that this year there will be a 4% raise for the staff.

She noted that this will be her last year as Treasurer and would welcome an overlap year with the next treasurer. She thanked Jim Kern, Dave Pluhar, and Charlie Walch who all helped with the finances and building, and the rest of the staff. This congregation is so generous.

She noted that unpledged/unbudgeted gifts have increased since the pandemic - \$100,000 this past year. The vestry applies some of these funds for reserves for capital repairs.

The vestry creates the budgets based on the pledges. Large gifts to the foundation are phased into the planning. Some staffing positions are currently being provided on a volunteer basis, but it’s good for the parish to plan the budget to continue staffing. She noted that to cover the cost-of-living increase of 4%, we would need an additional \$10,500 in pledges. The parish made some adjustments to earthquake insurance and that resulted in a decreased cost. The parish covers the upfront costs for Rise Against Hunger - \$5700 from Ministry Beyond Parish. She noted that our diocesan annual assessment went up.

Reviewing the Balance Sheet, Maryann pointed out that cash is a little bit lower (HVAC and technology costs). Some funds were moved from Reserves for these expenses. The goal is to keep a level amount in Reserves of around \$110,000. The big difference is the line for Property and Equipment: \$16 million is a much more realistic number than \$4 million. For example, the steeple repair was over \$300,000. There are things that insurance won’t cover, such as HVAC or steeple cladding. She also encouraged people to give a special gift to the Food Center as it has been drawing down significantly, especially over the past few years.

Maryann reviewed the specifics of the pledge campaign of fall 2023. *(Exhibit V)*

Maryann continued with the Treasurer’s report. *(Exhibit VI)*

Presentation of the 2024 Budget

Maryann Vognild

Maryann continued with a discussion of the 2024 budget. *(Exhibit VI)*

9. Election of Vestry Members, Delegates and Alternates

Valori Sherer

There being no nominations from the floor, Valori Sherer declared that the slate of nominees was approved by acclamation. Sandy Cooper, John Long, and Michael Mancini were elected to the vestry. Peg Cooper and Tom Jones were elected as alternate delegates. Lisa Liss, Margo Smith, and Bob Zagar are continuing as convention delegates. **(Exhibit VIIa and VIIb)**. Valori then appointed Lissa Johnson as Senior Warden. Charlie Walch will continue as Jr. Warden. Maryann Vognild will continue as Treasurer for one more year. Lynn Stephenson will serve as Clerk for one more year.

10. Announcements

Valori Sherer

Valori Sherer asked if there was further business or any announcements; there were none.

11. Closing Prayer

Valori Sherer

Valori Sherer offered a closing prayer. Sujanna Raj offered a blessing.

12. Adjournment

Valori Sherer

Valori Sherer declared the 157th Annual Meeting adjourned at 12:18 pm

13. Dismissal

Jerre Birdsong

Deacon Jerre Birdsong dismissed the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Ruhlin