

## **Strategic Ministry Committee**

### **Minutes from May 9, 2020 Meeting (10:00-11:15am, Virtual Zoom Meeting)**

In attendance: Debby Mills, Katie McEachern, Amy Weed, Alex Ewing, Judy Oulund, Carolyn Ross, Peter Schilling, Leslie Williams, Rev. Mike Dangelo and Aaron Dunn.  
Anila Jacobs and Anne Grandin were absent from the meeting.

Aaron Dunn opened the meeting in prayer.

This special SMC meeting was held via Zoom to address the following issues, which needed to be considered prior to the May 19th SMC meeting.

#### **Pilgrim Africa's Beacon of Hope (BOH) COVID-19 Grant**

Aaron opened the conversation by summarizing the need for \$15,000 to enable BOH to pay its teachers during the Ugandan COVID-19 lockdown (estimated need to cover May+ salaries assuming schools open for Term 2 in June). The need is particularly acute given that there is no unemployment program in Uganda and BOH's rural location would make it difficult to retain teachers to reopen without maintaining their salaries. The motion to approve \$15,000 for BOH's COVID-19 needs was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

#### **SMC Financials / Financial Framework**

Aaron reviewed the SMC's existing financials, including \$148,000 in the General account and the fact that over \$17,500 was raised via the Easter offering for FUEL. This was significantly above the \$11,000 raised for FUEL in the prior year's Easter offering.

This led to a discussion about the necessary amount for a SMC "buffer" to absorb fluctuations in FUEL funding, provide funding for new initiatives, and SMC expenses (such as SSYP lunches for B-SAFE and partner churches, and Christmas party), and Rector's & Associate Rector's discretionary funds. FUEL's monthly run rate in 2020 is approximately \$4,000, up from \$3,000 in the fall. Agreed to set buffer at approximately \$25,000-\$30,000, allocated across:

FUEL (3 month run rate) \$12,000

New initiatives \$10,000

Expenses & Rector's fund \$8,000

After deducting the \$15,000 for BOH and a \$30,000 buffer, that would leave approximately \$103,000 for grant allocations.

#### **Vestry / CSL Discussions**

Discussed the idea of SMC making multi-year commitments with its upcoming grant allocations. Aaron updated SMC on his plan to provide a SMC update at the May vestry meeting, and to ensure the Vestry is "on board" with the concept that SMC plans to make multi-year commitments. Debby updated SMC on a recent discussion Aaron and she also had with Susan Ritter, President of CSL, on the concept of multi-year commitments. While Susan made it clear any proposal would need to be approved by CSL, she was supportive of SMC's general plans. There was discussion around the fact that \$100,000 is more than the annual allocation that SMC receives from Vestry (\$50,000) and CSL (approximately \$30,000), combined. Also discussed the fact that COVID-19 is likely to dramatically change the format of next year's 2020 Christmas Market. CSL has begun conversations about what form it may take, and plans to involve both Vestry and SMC in its decision making re: the Christmas Market. Carolyn shared that CSL has \$214,000 in its "rainy day" account.

### **SMC Zoom Coffee Hour & Website**

Aaron mentioned that SMC will be presenting during the May 17th coffee hour as the second of the parish's "Forward Together: Parish Conversations for our Future" series. Discussed using it as a marketing opportunity to highlight what we have done and why, including highlighting SMC's COVID-19 response. Suggested to also solicit feedback on success of communication of volunteer opportunities, etc. "Do you know how to help?" There was also a suggestion to add a banner to the homepage of the Redeemer's new website to make it easier to find the information about how to help now.

Debby provided an update on conversations with Barbara re: using the back-end of the Redeemer's website for the SMC. SMC members will have access to directory information, as well as SMC related information. There was a suggestion to try and make SMC easier to find from the front page, and easier to find how to help — especially with the COVID-19 response.

### **New Business**

Leslie shared that Maisie asked about the process to review grants. Discussed ways to set up follow up to allow SMC members to ask any remaining questions re: the mission partners' grant requests. Also discussed need to keep in mind the potential long-term impacts of COVID-19, including a 10-20% overall reduction. Aaron offered to put together a summary of all the asks, and noted that we will have to make trade-offs in deterring grant allocations.

Mike provided an update on the usage of the COVID-19 additional monies allocated to the Rector's discretionary account. Mike indicated there are a couple of families / individuals who have been furloughed, but so far little draw on the funds. Replies to reaching out have been, "Thank you, but others need it more." Mike has seen an uptick in requests from outside the parish, and he is being careful in responding to those requests.

Epiphany is now providing food assistance to 60 families, so has requested an additional 30 bags from FUEL. "Every family needs something." Therefore, FUEL is increasing its weekly packing of food bags from 125 to 160. In Newton, PTOs and the city are beginning to pickup their response to the need for food. FUEL's presence in Newton is very important to Mike. To meet this increased demand Mike has reached out to other Episcopal churches in our Deanery, and the diocese's communication team has interviewed Mike and Velura to rally more support. All Saints in Brookline and St Andrews in Wellesley have been added as FUEL partners, and last week we provided St Stephen's 50 gift cards in addition to the food.

Rev. Mike Dangelo closed us in prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15am.