

Grace Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Vestry Present: Katie Compton, Dick Entenmann, Rebecca Harrison, Janet Heyer, Michelle Huber, Denise Miller, Jim Moore, Carlos Nunez, Weezer Weir, and David Willard

Vestry Absent: John Cullinane and David Jayne

Clergy Present: Rev. Irene Jones and Rev. Emily Davis

Guests: Tim Engelbrecht, Treasurer and Mike Heyer, Finance Chair

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. and opened with a prayer by Rev. Jones.

Rev. Jones read the story of the miracle at Cana and invited Vestry members to share experiences in their lives when they felt the presence of the Divine.

Rebecca Harrison moved and Denise Miller seconded approval of the evening's agenda. The motion passed.

Dick Entenmann moved and Carlos Nunez seconded approval of the minutes of the December 9, 2008 meeting. The motion passed.

150th Anniversary Celebration

Denise Miller gave a brief report on plans for the 150th Anniversary of Grace Church. Janet Mika and Christie Boyle are taking a leadership role in the planning. The event will take place in late spring around the Feast of Pentecost. Questions were raised about a budget, donations from parishioners and how to update the history of the church.

Endowment Committee

Denise Miller moved and Rebecca Harrison seconded approval of Tim Engelbrecht and Ken Hand to serve three-year terms as Trustees of the Endowment Committee. The motion passed.

Building Security

Rebecca Harrison reported that the main doors to the church were found unlocked on two occasions recently. It is essential that the last person leaving the building assure that all doors are locked.

Rebecca Harrison moved and Denise Miller seconded that a letter be sent to every person or group who possesses keys, and that three bids be obtained for the replacement of all locks. The motion passed.

Rebecca will write the letter and Dick Entenmann will confer with Fernando about obtaining the bids.

Communications

Denise Miller moved and Katie Compton seconded that a weekly e-mail newsletter be established using the “Constant Contact” service at a cost of \$15 per month. The motion passed.

Susan Manning will be the recipient of information and Rebecca Harrison will determine a process for notifying Susan. In addition, further exploration of phone chain options will be completed to establish a second communication option for those parishioners who lack access to e-mail.

Search Committee

Dick Entenmann reported that four candidates have been interviewed by phone. Personal visits with each of the four are scheduled for the next several weeks.

Stewardship

Dick Entenmann reported current commitments at 148 compared with 176 last year. Additional contacts are being made with those who pledged last year but not this year. Of those contacted, 26 have made an oral commitment but pledge cards have not been received. The current number includes eight new commitments. Of current pledgers, 70 have increased their commitment over last year. The average pledge of \$2,436 represents an increase of 8 percent.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Tim Engelbrecht reported that pledge income for December of 2008 was down 20% for the month and pledge income was down 4.6% for the year. The Invest in Grace campaign was \$10,000 under budget. Fortunately, expenses have been about \$24,000 less than anticipated for the year 2008. However, it has been necessary to cover routine repairs and maintenance from the capital fund and there is a need to build up our cash position.

Janet Heyer moved and Dick Entenmann seconded acceptance of the Treasurer’s report. The motion passed.

2009 Budget

Mike Heyer presented budget alternatives for 2009. The proposed budget includes a half time assistant priest for the full year bringing the clergy staffing to 2.3 full time equivalents, 3% raises for staff, not filling the seminary student position, establishment of a sexton position, and reduction in the portion of the Diocesan assessment to be paid.

Carlos Nunez moved and Dick Entenmann seconded adoption of a budget for 2009, which would reduce both our commitment to the Diocese to one-half of the diocesan assessment and reducing internal budget requests to their 2008 level resulting in a deficit of approximately \$27,000. The motion passed.

Leaders from Grace will schedule a meeting with the Bishop and or the Bishop's representatives and present a plan to the Diocese detailing steps Grace plans to implement to address the budget issues at Grace. Three positive events are planned during the current year that should have a positive impact on attendance at Grace and hopefully provide some additional financial support. These events are the calling of a new Rector, the 150th Anniversary Celebration for Grace, and the establishment of a third service effective March 1, 2009. Other options to be considered to address the deficit include running a capital funds campaign to pay off the White Loan (building payment), engaging in additional fund raising activities, and follow-up with lapsed members.

Mike announced that Steve Henson has been appointed co-chair of the Finance Committee.

Curate's Report

The Reverend Davis reported that there are 12 young people in the confirmation class. Sixteen women attended the newly formed Women's Spirituality Group. The new Grief Group begins meeting January 14 at St. Matthew's Church.

Transition Priest's Report

There will be an Ushers' breakfast Saturday, February 7.

Lector training was successful and fun.

Lay minister training will take place Saturday, January 17.

The third Sunday service is scheduled to begin in March.

Individuals will be contacted regarding planning for the Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner on February 24, 2009.

Starting on Ash Wednesday, February 25, 2009, there will be a series of Wednesday evening Lenten events with Eucharist at 6:00 p.m., a soup and salad dinner at 6:30 p.m., and study groups from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. A tutor will be available to help youth with homework and a sitter will be available for younger children. Program content will allow a choice of programs. Programs to choose from will include a series on the Eucharist presented by The Reverend Ralph McMichael and a study group led by The Reverend Jones.

Senior Warden's Report

Annual Meeting: The Reverend Jones will chair the Annual Meeting on January 25. In

addition to the election of four new Vestry members and Diocesan delegates, the Parish will vote on revisions to the church by-laws. Susan Lauber will give a brief explanation of SWEEPS and Ministry chairs will introduce the leaders in their SWEEPS ministry area. The budget and the plan to address the deficit will be presented at the annual meeting. There will be a short organizational meeting following the annual meeting to elect a Junior Warden. Each vestry member will bring items for the “brunch” between the 9:00 a.m. service and the Annual Meeting.

Property Committee: Senior Warden Willard presented a draft letter to be sent to former Junior Wardens and members of Property and Personnel Committees requesting their assistance in reviewing options for employment of a sexton and/or cleaning service and to help identify critical needs for the maintenance of church property.

Dick Entenmann moved and Rebecca Harrison seconded the above-mentioned action be completed. The motion passed.

Dick Entenmann agreed to handle the personnel aspect of this action.

Vestry Retreat: There will be a Vestry retreat for present and newly elected vestry members the weekend of February 21-22. Members of the search committee will also be invited to participate. The Reverend Sam Portaro, the recently retired Episcopal Chaplain to the University of Chicago, an author of several books will serve as retreat leader. The Reverend Portaro is author of a number of books such as [Brightest and Best: A Companion to the Lesser Feasts and Fasts](#) and [Transforming Vocation](#).

Appointment of a new chair for the Committee of Chairs will be delayed until the new Rector arrives with The Reverend Jones chairing the group in the interim.

Kirkwood Memorial Service

Grace participation in the one-year anniversary memorial of the Kirkwood City Hall shootings will be determined when further information is available. This being the date of the Italian Dinner, there could be a conflict.

Dick Entenmann thanked those who assisted in the follow-up with the stewardship campaign.

The Reverend Davis offered a closing blessing.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Browne, Secretary