

Grace Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
April 12, 2022

Vestry Present: John Adams, Lyn Ballard, Mike Casey, Kelly Eschenroeder, Rebecca Harrison, Chris Ludbrook, Ann VanConia , Jim Wethington

Vestry Absent: Susie Reis

Clergy Present: The Rev. Todd McDowell

Guests: The Rt. Rev. Deon Johnson, Bishop of Missouri; Tim Engelbrecht, Treasurer; Shari Bonham, Director of Development and Ministries Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 7:00.

Father Todd welcomed Bishop Deon Johnson to the Vestry meeting. All present introduced themselves to the Bishop by way of telling what brought them to Grace.

The opening prayer was given by Kelly Eschenroeder. Ann VanConia will give the prayer at the May Vestry meeting.

The evening's agenda stood as presented.

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Kelly Eschenroeder seconded, that the minutes from the March 8, 2022 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

Discussion with the Bishop: The Bishop's purpose for attending the Vestry meeting was to check in to see how things are going regarding Father Todd's departure and the formation of the transition team. The Bishop reported that he had already met with Senior Warden Chris Ludbrook, who informed the Bishop that Lyn Ballard would be heading the transition team. One of the next steps the Vestry will take is to find a supply priest to cover June 6 through September 4, which is the period of time when Father Todd is still technically an employee of Grace, but will be absent as he uses up his sabbatical time. The Bishop reminded the Vestry that he will be our companion on this journey to call a new rector. He will review names of those up for consideration for the positions of supply priest, interim priest and rector. The Bishop asked for questions from the Vestry regarding the handout regarding the search process in the Diocese of Missouri. Lyn Ballard let the Bishop know that the Vestry discussed the various options for conducting a search, and concluded that a full nationwide search would be best for Grace. Chris Ludbrook is working on the document that will lay out the charge from the Vestry to the search committee. The Bishop explained to the Vestry that a supply priest should be used for the time spanning the day after Father Todd's last active Sunday at Grace (Pentecost Sunday, June 5) through his last day as an employee of Grace (September 4). An interim priest should begin at Grace on September 5. The Vestry can decide if the transition team or the Vestry will be responsible for finding candidates for supply priest or interim, but the Vestry is responsible for voting on the final decision. Moving costs are usually covered by the church if the person being hired is from out of town. Some churches use a search consultant to help with things such as creating a parish profile, conducting listening sessions with the parish, and conducting interviews. They also help keep the transition team on track.

Questions were asked:

Q: What is the average salary for an interim priest?

A: The salary is roughly the same as the rector's. However, if an interim were part time, savings could be realized from not having to pay for health insurance or into the pension fund. The Bishop's office can help flesh out these ideas.

Q: How many interims are in the diocese at this time?

A: There are several interims in the diocese at this time The Bishop will review possible candidates and will disqualify those he knows would not be a good match for Grace.

Q: What is the picture nationwide concerning any issues or trends that we need to know about? What are priests looking for?

A: The Bishop said that there are not really any trends, but assured the Vestry that Grace will appeal to many priests. There are many transitions happening across the country, a result of pent up demand due to the moratorium placed on transitions during COVID. The Bishop suggested that, in terms of budgeting for a new priest, the Vestry budget for a family with children, which would have the highest health insurance costs. The Bishop thinks Grace may get about eleven candidates, including candidates from across the country. Missouri is no longer considered "fly over" country.

Lyn Ballard thought that hiring a consultant may be a good idea. The consultant's expertise in creating a parish profile may be helpful in attracting candidates, and their help with parish surveys would be important. The Bishop stated that it is very important to be honest in the parish profile, noting that clergy can read between the lines. Candidates appreciate honesty. Quotes from the parish about why we are here should be included in the profile.

Q: Are there many priests coming out of seminary?

A: There are about twenty people in the diocese who are in process. A newly ordained priest might be a good choice for an associate rector. Someone who has attended Grace could serve as rector. Grace could have an associate rector during the interim period.

The Bishop let the Vestry know that he will be out of town over the summer. He will attend the general convention and Lambeth and will take some vacation time. He will be available via email, noting that he prefers that emails come from the discernment committee chair or one of the wardens. Canon to the Ordinary Doris Westfall will be on sabbatical during July and August. The Bishop noted that an interim priest can be a source of information on how to conduct a search, but they know they have boundaries that must be respected. Grace will need a supply priest who can do pastoral care beginning in June. Father Todd wondered if Shug Goodlow would be available. The Bishop will talk to Doris Westfall about that possibility. Shug Goodlow could be a candidate for interim associate rector.

John Adams presented the Bishop with a check for \$500.00 from Grace for the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Father Todd invited the Bishop to stay for the entire Vestry meeting. The Bishop politely declined.

Five Marks of Mission: Proclaim the Good News: Worship, Music: Father Todd reported that there will be daily worship during Holy Week. Father Todd let the Vestry know that long time parishioner Don Radeackar passed away.

Teach, Baptize and Nurture New Believers: Invite, Welcome, Connect: Shari Bonham reported that she is continuing to see new families attending services. Shari could use help on Easter helping people sign in the guest book.

Respond to Human Need, Seek Peace & Justice: Outreach Programs, Activities: John Adams reported that Trinity Hot Lunch has resumed indoor dining on a limited basis. On April 10, there were 15 indoor diners and 40 “to go” bags distributed. John noted that leftovers are distributed on the following Tuesday. John extended thanks to Grace parishioners who cook and serve every second Sunday of the month, and for the parish’s financial support of the Trinity Hot Lunch program. John reported that every parish in the diocese received a \$1,000.00 check from the diocese to be used for outreach.

Personnel: Chris Ludbrook reported for Dick Entenmann that Grace is thinking about re-opening the nursery, and will be looking for a vaccinated nursery attendant.

Ministries of Governance, Administration, Stewardship and Facility:

Financial Report: The Vestry was provided with the financial report for the month ending March 31, 2022. Pledge Income for the month of March was \$20,322, which was \$11,678 below budget. YTD Pledge Income was \$134,121 versus the budgeted amount of \$127,500. Total Revenues for the month were \$40,779, which was \$13,250 below budget. YTD Total Revenues were \$197,593, which was \$7,665 above budget. Total Expenses for March were \$59,233, which was \$7,587 above budget. YTD Expenses were \$144,437, which was \$14,393 below budget. Net Revenue for March was (\$18,455) which was \$20,838 below the budgeted amount of \$2,383. YTD Net Revenue was \$53,156, versus the budgeted amount of \$31,099. Our current cash reserves would cover an estimated 3.3 months of the 2022 budgeted expenses.

Tim reported that there are two new commissary kitchen renters. Consultant Ron Gaus should have two leases for review – one for the kitchen and one for chapel rental.

Tim noted that the new gas meter that was installed last year was not recording properly, resulting in erroneously small gas bills. The error was caught by Spire, and the large March bill made up for the shortage.

The line item for transition will be added to the budget in September. \$55,000.00 is budgeted for transition in 2022.

Lyn Ballard moved, and Rebecca Harrison seconded, that the Vestry receive the financial report for the month ending March 31, 2022. Motion passed.

Tim reported that the finance committee met on April 11. They discussed the budget, including transition costs. They would like to submit a matching funds grant request to the diocese for \$10,000.00, which would be used to convert the men’s room near the narthex into a single use, handicapped accessible restroom. Jim Wethington moved, and Ann VanConia seconded, that the finance committee file for a \$10,000 matching grant from the diocese, with funds to be used for restroom renovation, with a total cost ranging from \$22,000 to \$24,000. Motion passed.

Our Journey Continues: The executive committee discussed doing follow-up with parishioners who have not yet fulfilled their pledges to the campaign. Lyn Ballard and Mike Heyer will be making phone calls to parishioners. The campaign has been extremely successful.

Father Todd noted that parishes sometimes give a cash gift to a retiring rector. Father Todd let the Vestry know that he does not want a cash gift, but would very much like parishioners to amend their wills or trusts to leave money, in any amount, to Grace’s endowment fund. Father Todd would like to see more leaves on the Perpetual Grace tree outside of the church office with the names of parishioners who have remembered Grace in their will or trust.

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Lyn Ballard seconded, that the Vestry authorize the treasurer to make the following transfers from the Miscellaneous Designated accounts to the Legacy Fund Undesignated Account: \$100.00 from Undesignated Memorial, \$75.00 from Russell Memorial, and \$1,035.00 from Hoffman Memorial. Motion passed.

Tim let the Vestry know that the annual golf tournament is scheduled for September 25 at Aberdeen golf course.

Discernment Chair: Lyn Ballard stated that she was pleased that we have the confidence and support of the Bishop. She feels that we are in a good place – many people are interested in serving on the discernment team. Those who indicated interest in serving on the team but were not placed on the team will be asked to help in other ways. Lyn is looking forward to having the team in place and receiving the charge from the Vestry. Chris Ludbrook hopes to provide a slate to the Vestry at the May meeting for approval.

Junior Warden Report: Rebecca Harrison reported that the same parishioners who tended the garden beds in 2021 will do so again in 2022. Sherwoods Forest will replace two dead shrubs. Their arborist stated that Grace's trees look good, but noted that the oak trees could be trimmed. Parking lot pothole repair, sealing and striping have been put out for bid. The tree in the wedge shaped bed at the back of the church will be removed.

Senior Warden Report: Chris Ludbrook reported that Endowment Committee member Mike Gibbons mentioned that the committee is looking to become more aspirational. As an example, he mentioned endowing a youth minister. Other thoughts would be welcomed by the committee.

At 8:51, Father Todd gave the Senior Warden charge of the meeting and excused himself so details of the celebrations in honor of Father Todd could be discussed. Father Todd resumed charge of the meeting at 9:05.

Chris will ask Mother Ginny to stay on through September 5. We will need to find a priest who can do pastoral care beginning June 6. We will need to plan a celebration of Mother Ginny's ministry on her last Sunday. Chris will ask what other support she will need over the summer. The diocesan website has a list of available supply priests. Lyn Ballard noted that The Rev. Jeff Goldone is great at pastoral care.

It may work well to have a part time interim leader and a part time pastoral care priest.

We need to find out from the diocese what compensation for an on-call pastoral care priest looks like.

Father Todd reviewed the diocesan supply priest list with the Vestry.

Chris Ludbrook and Lyn Ballard will talk to Shug Goodlow about the possibility of her doing pastoral care at Grace. Whoever does pastoral care should attend some Sunday services at Grace, and stay for coffee hour, so that person can become familiar to and with parishioners. Lay people will still be doing a lot of pastoral care, but a priest is still necessary in some scenarios.

We may need to find a supply priest for Tuesday Eucharist during the summer. Alternatively, there could be Tuesday Morning Prayer.

Rector Report: Father Todd reported that there is \$16,000 in the Lighting Project Capital Reserve Fund. Cine Services Inc. provided a quote for two possibilities for lighting. The preferred choice would be to install uplighting on the back wall of the church. There is a chance this option would not be feasible because of codes or other barriers. The cost would be about \$14,199. The second choice would be to install lighting behind the altar, at a cost of \$9,500. Rebecca Harrison moved, and Kelly Eschenroeder

seconded, that the Vestry approve spending up to \$16,000 to install new lighting at the back wall of the church (first choice) or behind the altar (second choice) per the quote received from Cone Services Inc. Motion passed.

Father Todd reported that there is a balance of \$11,255.21 in his discretionary fund. These monies were received from stipends given to Father Todd for performing wedding ceremonies, funerals, house blessings, etc. Father Todd would like to have these funds used to install a wooden structure above the lychgate in the columbarium. The structure was always part of the columbarium improvement plan, and drawings for the structure are in Grace's possession. The Vestry agreed that this is a good idea.

Tim Engelbrech suggested that quarterly calls from the Vestry to parishioners should be reinstated.

At 9:50, the Vestry went into executive session to discuss transition topics. Shari Bonham, Tim Engelbrecht and Sue Nixon left the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Nixon
Secretary of the Vestry

Motions from the April 12, 2022 Vestry meeting

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