

Grace Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
December 14, 2021

Vestry Present: John Adams, Lyn Ballard, Mike Casey, Kelly Eschenroeder, Chris Ludbrook, Pat O'Brien (via Zoom), Susie Reis, Ann VanConia

Vestry Absent: Rebecca Harrison

Clergy Present: The Rev. Todd McDowell

Guests: Shari Bonham, Director of Development and Ministries Coordinator; Tim Engelbrecht, Treasurer, Dick Entenmann, Personnel; Betty Bowersox, Stewardship

The meeting was called to order at 7:10.

The opening prayer was given by Susie Reis. Kelly Eschenroeder will give the opening prayer at the January Vestry meeting.

The agenda was amended to move the Rector Report to the beginning of the meeting. The agenda stood as amended.

Kelly Eschenroeder moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the minutes from the November 9, 2021 Vestry meeting be approved as written. Motion passed.

Report of the Rector: Father Todd called an Executive Session. Minutes of the proceedings are recorded in a separate set of minutes.

Five Marks of Mission: Proclaim the Good News: *Worship, Music:* Over 300 people have made reservations for the Christmas Eve in-person service. COVID procedures were discussed, including seating, the option for seating people in Albright Hall, and the procedure for including wine at communion.

Teach, Baptize and Nurture New Believers: *Invite, Welcome, Connect :* Shari Bonham reported that she was pleased with people registering for the Christmas Eve service online. She noted that some people who had visited Grace pre-COVID have signed up to attend.

Shari shared with the Vestry a note received from parishioner Lucinda Cobb. Lucinda wrote that being able to watch streamed church services has been very important to her since she has not been able to attend church in-person due to mobility issues. The note was one of many that Shari has received from grateful parishioners. About 50 people view the service online weekly. Father Todd noted that there have been thank you notes from people who appreciate receiving arrangements made from the altar flowers. Amy Kilpatrick has taken on the flower delivery ministry, and is doing a great job. Shari noted that parishioners appreciated the contact from Vestry members during the COVID lockdown. These "small" ministries are very important to the people of Grace as they help keep the parish connected. Shari is trying to revitalize the Invite Welcome Connect team.

Respond to Human Need, Seek Peace & Justice: *Outreach Programs, Activities:* Outreach programs at Grace continue to be strong. Father Todd noted that Grace's outreach efforts focus largely on hunger issues. He noted the Trinity Hot Lunch program, which is headed by Sandy Adams. Kirk Care, which has

been supported by Grace since it's inception in the early 1980's, is in need of a president. Interested persons can contact KirkCare representatives Sue Nixon or Mike Fitzgerald.

Safeguarding Creation: No report.

Report of the Rector (continued): Nominating Committee Update: Vestry members Mike Casey and Susie Reis have agreed to serve a second, three year term on the Vestry. Jim Wethington has agreed to stand for nomination to the Vestry. Pat O'Brien moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the Vestry approve the nomination of Mike Casey and Susie Reis for a second three year term on the Vestry, and the nomination of Jim Wethington for a three year term on the Vestry. Motion passed.

A convention delegate will be elected at the annual meeting.

Clergy Housing Allowance: Lyn Ballard moved, and Ann VanConia seconded, that the clergy of Grace Episcopal Church receive their compensation as a housing allowance up to the limits set by the IRS – the Rev. Todd McDowell receiving an amount not to exceed \$60,000.00 of his 2022 compensation as housing allowance, and The Rev. Virginia Bennett receiving an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00 of her 2022 compensation as housing allowance. Motion passed.

Ministries of Governance, Administration, Stewardship and Facility: Tim Engelbrecht reported that an issue with a fraudulently altered check discovered in September has been successfully resolved, with Grace incurring no loss. Tim noted that Grace's accounting policies and procedures allowed for quick detection of the problem, and a successful resolution.

Financial Report: Tim Engelbrecht provided the financial report for the month ending November 30, 2021 to the Vestry. Since it was a non-quarterly month, no oral report was given. Tim noted that pledge income is below budget, but excess pledge income and non-pledge income are over budget. Tim anticipates a good year-end report.

2022 Budget: Tim provided a draft of the 2022 budget to the Vestry. Pledge income now stands at \$380,000, which is higher than anticipated. Tim extended thanks to Betty Bowersox for running a successful stewardship campaign. All budget requests were included in the 2022 budget, with a resulting surplus of \$384.00. Tim does not think there's a need to hold back a reserve for a possible pledge income shortfall as there is wiggle room in other areas of the budget. Tim will submit paperwork to the Diocese indicating that Grace will pay the full Diocesan assessment. Ann VanConia moved, and Pat O'Brien seconded, that the Vestry adopt the 2022 budget as proposed by the Finance Committee. Motion passed. The budget will be presented to the parish at the annual meeting.

Stewardship: Betty Bowersox reported that pledges for 2022 stand at \$380,756, with six open pledges remaining. 67 pledges increased over 2021 levels, 37 remained the same, and 3 are lower than 2021. 8 pledges were received from parishioners who had not ever pledged, or had not pledged for some time. The average pledge amount is \$3,300. It will be important to work with new members to educate them on the importance of pledging. Betty thanked Shari Bonham for all of her help with the stewardship campaign. She also thanked parishioners for their generosity.

Junior Warden Report: Father Todd reported for Rebecca Harrison. A recently discovered hole in the roof was successfully repaired by Grace's maintenance people. Rebecca has no major projects planned for 2022. One item that may need to be considered is pruning the oak trees near the building.

The Lab School rent was not increased last year due to COVID. Chris Ludbrook moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the Lab School rent be increased by 6% for the July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 academic year. Motion passed.

Father Todd noted that having the Vestry approve the budget in December is very important, because it means that any changes to salaries for the upcoming year can be made as of January 1. If the budget is not approved until January, Shari needs to wait to make payroll changes until the budget is approved, which means making retroactive adjustments from January 1. Father Todd suggested that, for future budgets, even if the entire budget cannot be approved in December, the Vestry approve the Personnel section of the budget in December to prevent bookkeeping headaches in January.

Father Todd asked the Vestry for their input on COVID procedures. He explained in detail the process for having wine at Communion, which will be done only on Feast days as long as COVID protocols are in place. It was suggested that those who reserved seats for Christmas Eve be informed that the church will be full, in case that influences their desire to attend.

Father Todd will invite Jim Wethington to attend the January Vestry meeting.

The Vestry retreat will be postponed until spring, 2022.

Senior Warden Report: Chris Ludbrook thanked Pat O'Brien for her work on the nominating committee, the Vestry for their work and dedication over the past year, and the Finance Committee and others who worked on the budget.

Because the evening's meeting ran long, it concluded with a prayer. Susie Reis will lead Compline at the January meeting.

Kelly Eschenroeder moved, and Susie Reis seconded that the meeting adjourn. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:13.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Nixon
Secretary of the Vestry

Motions from the December 14, 2021 Vestry meeting

Kelly Eschenroeder moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the minutes from the November 9, 2021 Vestry meeting be approved as written. Motion passed.

Pat O'Brien moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the Vestry approve the nomination of Mike Casey and Susie Reis for a second three year term on the Vestry, and the nomination of Jim Wethington for a three year term on the Vestry. Motion passed.

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