

Grace Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
January 18, 2024

Vestry Present: John Adams, Mike Casey, Jane Cenova , Kelly Eschenroeder, Rebecca Harrison, Mike Lillmars; Chris Ludbrook, Susie Reis, Ann VanConia; Jim Wethington

Vestry Absent: none

Clergy Present: The Rev. Thomas Skillings

Guests: Shari Bonham, Director of Development and Ministries Coordinator; Tim Engelbrecht, Treasurer; Lyn Ballard, Transition Team; Dick Entenmann, Personnel and Transition Team; Mike Heyer and Dick Wright, incoming Vestry members

The meeting was called to order at 7:05.

The opening prayer was given by Jim Wethington.

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Kelly Eschenroeder seconded, that the evening's agenda stand as drawn. Motion passed.

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the minutes from the December 15, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

Devotion: The Vestry introduced themselves to incoming Vestry members Dick Wright and Mike Heyer. The evening's devotional was a reading and discussion of Deuteronomy 26: 4-11, with small group discussions about the events of 2023.

Discernment Team: Lyn Ballard reported that the discernment team held a Zoom call with the Rev. Michael Kurth and The Rev. Melanie Slane, both of whom grew up at Grace, and entered the priesthood. The point of the call was to get their views on how clergy feel about moving. Michael and Melanie agreed that, in terms of Grace presenting itself, it is important to be authentic and to not be too humble. They have a network of clergy that they can talk to about Grace. The Vestry was supplied with a copy of the revised parish profile. Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the Vestry approve the revised parish profile, with the understanding that some accounting numbers need to be filled in, and that, if the Bishop's office requests changes, the Vestry will be asked to approve the changes. Motion passed.

Personnel: Dick Entenmann reported that the 90-day probation period for David Waters has ended. Dick and Thomas will meet with David to discuss the three ministry areas David oversees. Based on input received from Joanie Van Reese, Sara Losse and John Adams, goals will be set along with a structure for accountability.

Shari Bonham announced that she will be retiring on February 28. Thomas expressed how helpful Shari (and Phillip Brunswick) have been in terms of their extensive institutional memories. Thomas thanked Shari for continuing to work for as long as she has. The personnel committee wrote a job description for

a 29 hour per week position, which will be posted in the Webster Kirkwood Times and on the diocesan website.

The person who was paid to remove trash from the building is no longer able to do the job. Tim, our mechanical contractor, will take over trash duty. Accounting changes will be made – the budget for trash collection will be transferred from custodian to building maintenance.

Financials: Tim Engelbrecht provided the Vestry with 2023 and 2024 budget information. Tim reported that 2023 was a tough year, with several non-budgeted costs being incurred. The \$14,700 cost of re-sealing the parking lot was almost entirely covered by a diocesan grant and contributions from the parish – Grace paid the remaining balance of \$400. The cost of a new bookkeeper and the assistant position filled by David Waters were not budgeted. Thankfully, Grace received an Employee Retention Tax Credit (ETRC) of about \$37,000 from the federal government due to the fact that Grace kept people employed during the pandemic. \$11,560 of that was used for the 2023 budget, and \$13,771 was used to balance the 2024 budget. The remaining \$12,192 should be moved to the capital reserve fund.

Tim provided a stewardship update and reviewed the proposed 2024 budget. Tim expressed thanks to the staff and committee chairs for their judicious use of Grace's funds. All budget requests were included in the budget, and the full diocesan assessment will be paid. Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jim Wethington seconded, that the Vestry approve the 2024 budget as proposed. Motion passed. Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jim Wethington seconded, that the Vestry allow the treasurer to move the remaining \$12,192 ETRC funds to the capital reserve account. Motion passed.

Tim provided the Vestry with a printout of the Legacy Fund 2024 withdrawal election calculation. The 2024 distribution amount is \$86,257. Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jim Wethington seconded, that the Vestry approve the Legacy Fund 2024 withdrawal calculation distribution amount of \$86,257. Motion passed.

Junior Warden Report: Rebecca Harrison provided the Vestry with copies of the Guidelines Governing Use of Properties, and the Building Usage Fee Schedule & Guidelines (both approved in 2017) for the Vestry to read. These documents will be reviewed at the Vestry retreat. Copies of the Church Kitchen Checklist were also distributed.

Senior Warden Report: Chris Ludbrook reminded the Vestry that the annual meeting will be held on January 28 at 9:00.

Chris reported that the Elegant Italian Dinner was held on January 20, and was a great success.

Chris extended gratitude to Ann VanConia, who will serve a second term on the Vestry, and to Vestry nominees Mike Heyer, Dick Wright, Kristin Fritsch and Mary Merriweather. Thanks were extended to John Adams and Kelly Eschenroeder, who will be cycling off the Vestry.

Sue Nixon was pleased to learn that she will be relieved of her duties as clerk of the Vestry after the annual meeting.

Chris extended thanks to Junior Warden Rebecca Harrison for keeping him on track while Senior Warden, and to all who have supported him.

Thomas extended thanks to all of the Vestry for their service, and noted that it is a gift to be at Grace.

Thomas was happy to report that Ann VanConia has agreed to serve as Senior Warden.

The Vestry retreat will take place on February 9th (dinner) and 10th (8:30-4:00 at Mercy Center).

The meeting was closed with prayer. The meeting adjourned at 8:37.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Nixon
Secretary of the Vestry

Motions from the January 16, 2024 Vestry meeting

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Rebecca Harrison moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the minutes from the December 15, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the Vestry approve the revised parish profile, with the understanding that some accounting numbers need to be filled in, and that, if the Bishop's office requests changes, the Vestry will be asked to approve the changes. Motion passed.

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jim Wethington seconded, that the Vestry approve the 2024 budget as proposed. Motion passed.

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