

**Grace Episcopal Church**  
**Minutes of the Vestry Meeting**  
**October 10, 2023**

**Vestry Present:** John Adams, Mike Casey, Jane Cenova , Kelly Eschenroeder, Mike Lillmars, Rebecca Harrison, 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

The meeting was called to order at 7:00.

The opening prayer was given by Mike Lillmars. Susie Reis will give the prayer at the November Vestry meeting.

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

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Mike Lillmars seconded, that the minutes from the September 12, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

**Devotion:** Thomas led the Vestry in a devotional exercise which examined Colossians 3:12-17.

**Transitional Rector Report:** *Listening Team:* 25 parishioners have been asked to hold listening sessions in their homes. A listening team member will be present to lead the conversation. Hosts will invite 6 -8 people to attend.

*Assistant update:* David Waters has arrived, and gave the sermon on October 8. He will have office hours Sunday through Thursday. Dick Entenmann put together a job description for David. Dick thanked members of the Christian Formation, Outreach, and Pastoral Care teams for their help developing the document.

*Stewardship Team Update:* The theme for this year's stewardship campaign is gracefulness. Shari Bonham has started working on the brochure, and is gathering information for the pledge cards. Pledge packets will go out on October 24. Ingathering will be on November 12.

**Discernment Team:** Lyn Ballard reported that the discernment team met on September 19. The team's chaplain, Susie Skinner, will continue to work with the team. She is not accepting compensation for her time.

Lyn Ballard and Dick Entenmann had a phone call with consultant Anne Schmidt. Anne was able to answer questions Lyn and Dick had, but did not feel it necessary to attend the September 19 meeting. The discernment team and some Vestry members had a small get-together preceding the discernment team meeting. The discernment team was grateful for being thanked by the Vestry for their efforts. At the meeting, the team worked on how to do discernment from a spiritual aspect – expressing thoughts is hard, although feeling the spiritual feelings is not difficult.

The discernment team will meet monthly, the week following the Vestry meeting. Recruitment for rector candidates will open in January.

Lyn asked the discernment team members to help with the stewardship process by speaking with parishioners about the importance of supporting Grace.

Two discernment team members have resigned due to difficulty making it to meetings.

Lyn wrote to Canon Doris Westfall requesting a meeting with her and Dick Entenmann.

The team requested that Lyn write to a former candidate to let them know that Grace would like them to apply again. Lyn will do that now, as opposed to waiting until January, when recruitment officially begins.

Dick Entenmann conveyed some budget information to the discernment team.

### **Ministry Area Leadership:**

*Personnel:* Dick Entenmann is working with Thomas to see what 2024 looks like in terms of personnel expenses.

*Buildings and Grounds:* Rebecca Harrison put out a call for volunteers to tend the garden beds, especially in the front of the church.

*Communication/Social Media:* The new website will launch on October 17. It will not be a finished product at that time – changes will continue to be made.

*Outreach:* Jane Cenova attended a recent meeting of the Meacham Park Neighborhood Improvement Association, in an effort to find ways that Grace can help the organization.

John Adams reported that Hands on Kirkwood (HOK) luncheon, hosted by Grace, was a great success. Grace had 29 volunteers who cooked and served food to those who participated in the Hands on Kirkwood project. The number of people who stopped by for lunch was higher than in the past. It was noted that the Grace volunteers did an excellent job of cleaning the kitchen after the event. John was happy to report that Michele and Vince Nicosia will head up the luncheon in 2024. Youth from Grace helped distribute bags in the neighborhood that were used for the Hands on Kirkwood food drive. Chris Ludbrook noted that it was fun to watch the older kids working with the younger kids on this project.

Rev. Barbi Click will preach at Grace on November 12. She will let the parish know about the new food truck ministry that she has created.

Susie Reis has a large number of knitted items made by members of Grace, which will be donated to Kirk Care. The items will be given away at Kirk Care's annual Christmas box event.

*Invite, Welcome, Connect:* Kelly Eschenroeder reported that a schedule will be created for the greeters team. The team could use a couple more volunteers.

*Worship Teams:* Between now and November, the various worship teams will meet with Thomas to discuss how their ministries enrich the life of Grace. The listening team will be able to use some of the information from those discussions in the search process.

*Pastoral Care:* Mike Lillmars reported that the pastoral care team will meet with Thomas Skillings and David Waters on October 11.

*Christian Formation:* Ann VanConia reported that the church school committee is working on a budget. The teachers are settling into their classrooms. The window treatments in the large classroom need to be replaced. The kids are enjoying the lessons, and are also enjoying gathering in the front of church to talk about the lessons.

**Financials:** Tim Engelbrecht provided the Vestry with the financial report for the month ending September 30, 2023. Tim reported that the third quarter ended on a positive note, with YTD revenues 3% above budget, and YTD expenses 1% below budget.

The finance committee held their quarterly meeting on October 9. They discussed unbudgeted expenses including substitute organists, the website upgrade, the new part time bookkeeper (who is working out

very well), a new computer for the finance person, tuck pointing, and utility overages. There are some areas of the budget that are under budget, so the unbudgeted expenses should not have a negative impact by year's end.

The budget for having David Waters on the payroll through the end of 2023 can be made up with the budgeted amounts for employees who have left and from the transition budget.

Tim distributed the timeline for the 2024 budget to the Vestry. Thursday, January 4 at 7:00pm has been reserved in case the Vestry and finance committee need extra time to finalize the budget before the January Vestry meeting. Normally, the budget is finalized well in advance of the January Vestry meeting. Tim distributed a revised copy of the accounting controls document. The Vestry objected to one of the revisions, which would have allowed an individual person to count the plate collection, in the event that a second counter could be located. The finance committee will strike that revision, and will rewrite it to state that, in the event only one person is available to count on a Sunday, that person should not count the money, but put the collection in the safe and notify the treasurer.

Tim will send email reminders to Vestry and finance committee members when they are scheduled to count.

Ann VanConia moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the Vestry receive the financial report for the month ending September 30, 2023 as presented. Motion passed.

The Vestry agreed to get their pledge cards turned in at least one week prior to ingathering (November 12).

Tim reminded the Vestry that the annual golf outing will be held on October 15.

**Junior Warden:** Rebecca Harrison reported she met with Mike Gibbons and the YMCA to discuss sharing our grounds for uses such as ball games and pickleball.

An Eagle Scout would like to install a second fountain in the Columbarium. Grace would purchase two benches to be placed near the fountain, at a cost of just under \$1,000 each. Parishioners will be asked if they would like to donate funds for the benches.

Bids are out to three architects for the building of the lychgate.

There has been some interest in planting a community garden. Rebecca suggested that the land behind the dumpster would be a good location, as it receives rainwater from the gutters.

**Senior Warden: *Nominating Committee:*** There will be 5 vacancies on the Vestry in January. Kelly Eschenroeder and Chris Ludbrook are required to cycle off. John Adams and Ann VanConia are eligible to serve one more three year term. Kelly, Chris, Ann and John are the nominating committee. Any suggestions for candidates can be sent to the nominating committee.

Thomas closed the meeting with a blessing.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:48.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Nixon  
Secretary of the Vestry

### **Motions from the October 10, 2023 Vestry meeting**

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

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Mike Lillmars seconded, that the minutes from the September 12, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

Ann VanConia moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the Vestry receive the finance report for the month ending September 30, 2023 as presented. Motion passed.

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