

Grace Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
November 14, 2023

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

Vestry Absent: Mike Lillmars, Ann VanConia

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:02.

The opening prayer was given by Susie Reis. Jim Wethington will give the prayer at the December Vestry meeting.

The agenda presented to the Vestry was from the October meeting. The agenda was amended to show the correct date. The financial report section was amended to show a non-quarterly report; struck the report on the golf outing; and added a report on the stewardship campaign. Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the evening's agenda stand as re-drawn. Motion passed.

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the minutes from the October 10, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

Devotion: Thomas led the Vestry in a devotional exercise which explored gratitude.

Transitional Rector Report: *Listening Team Update:* Several Vestry members reported on how the listening sessions they attended went. Thomas reported that about 60 parishioners have signed up to participate in the listening sessions, with good feedback being received. The listening team facilitators will get together after all of the sessions are completed to synthesize the information they gathered. A report will be presented to the Vestry at the December meeting.

Assistant update: David Waters is spending time getting to know the parishioners.

Vestry recruiting: Calls are being made to recruit new Vestry members. John Adams, Ann VanConia, Chris Ludbrook and Kelly Eschenroeder will be cycling off the Vestry.

Dates for 2024: The annual meeting will be held on January 28. It was suggested that the meeting time be moved to after the 10:00 service.

The elegant Italian dinner will be held on January 20.

The Vestry retreat will be held on February 2nd and 3rd or on February 9th and 10th.

Personnel: Dick Entenmann reported that the job description document for David Waters is being developed. The document will be finalized after the Personnel Committee and representatives from the Pastoral Care, Outreach, and Christian Formation committees meet with David in early January to get his input. Some measurables will be established for each of the areas.

Dick noted that the personnel manual contains a statement requiring employees to be vaccinated against COVID. The requirement may need to be deleted, as it has become difficult to verify vaccination status. Dick will check with the diocese to see if there is a policy regarding vaccination status.

Discernment Team: Lyn Ballard reported that the discernment team will meet on November 21. They will continue to discuss what discernment means, particularly from a spiritual viewpoint.

Lyn and Dick met with Doris Westfall to verify with the diocese that the search process is continuing. Doris mentioned that the diocese has received some inquiries regarding Grace from people looking for a new position.

The team is working on the process for bringing in a candidate to meet the Vestry, which will allow the Vestry to make an informed decision when the time comes. The Vestry and the discernment team will meet together on December 12 to work out the process.

The discernment team will get a preliminary report from the listening team facilitators, and work will begin on the process of getting that information into the parish profile.

Lyn and Dick attended the diocesan convention, and spoke with several clergy people to let them know that Grace's search is continuing.

Lyn noted that the discernment team is generating some great leadership.

Ministry Area Leadership:

Buildings and Grounds: Rebecca Harrison provided the Vestry with an article for the Messenger regarding the memorial garden.

Rebecca provided the Vestry with a written junior warden report. Highlights include:

Help is needed with the flower beds. Leaves are to be blown out to the lawn for mulching before November 20.

The roof repair will happen when the 85 foot lift needed for access is available.

Rebecca clarified the rules for keeping the kitchen compliant with the rules set forth by the St Louis County Health Department. The fact that the pantry is quite crowded was noted.

Rebecca asked that she or Shari be informed if there are items that need to stay in the freezer for an extended period of time.

Floor mats have been ordered for the area in front of the stove.

The YMCA will be sharing the grounds with Grace. Baseball for 2nd graders and younger are among the activities that will take place. Mike Gibbons is working on details of the plan.

Final plans are in place for the memorial garden.

Communication/Social Media: Jim Wethington reported that some parishioners were having trouble with links on the website, but the problems seem to have resolved. Shari Bonham has had some trouble with updating information on the website – updates are being entered, but information is reverting back to August 6, the date the website switch was made.

Outreach: John Adams met with David Waters to discuss outreach. John was impressed with David, and is excited to have him work with the outreach committee.

The next outreach committee meeting will take place on November 19. There is a large sum of money to be dispersed before year-end.

John attended a recent meeting of the Meacham Park Neighborhood Improvement Association. John is not sure that there's an opportunity for transitional ministry at this time, but will keep listening to find an avenue for Grace parishioners to become involved with this organization.

The JustFood food truck did not make its scheduled appearance at Grace on November 12 due to the Rev. Barbi Click having COVID, and mechanical issues with the truck.

Vince and Michele Nicosia will put up the Giving Tree again this year.

Invite, Welcome, Connect: Kelly Eschenroeder reported that the greeters team will meet on December 3. There is a group of 8 or 9 volunteers who will be trained in the greeting process.

Worship Teams: Mike Casey wondered if there is an easy way, perhaps an app, that would send reminders to parishioners who are scheduled to serve on a Sunday in areas such as ushering, acolyting etc.

Christian Formation: Chris Ludbrook reported that the Christian Formation team met with David Waters to discuss ways to increase spirituality, and to address the issue of kids finding time for fellowship while they are also doing things such as acolyting and playing hand bells.

Chris reminded everyone to sign up to bake cookies for the missioner's annual cookie sale.

Financials: Tim Engelbrecht provided the Vestry with the financial report for the month ending October 31, 2023.

The finance committee held their quarterly meeting on November 13 to review the 2024 budget. A copy of the draft was provided to Vestry members. The draft reflected the 47 pledges received as of November 12, which totaled \$212,212. Follow-up with those who have not yet pledged will begin soon. Listing the names of those who have pledged was discussed.

Tim reported that parishioner Mike Fitzgerald is "retiring" from preparing Grace's annual financial review, which he has graciously done, at no charge, for over 25 years. Tim believes they have found a suitable replacement who can prepare the review in 2024.

Thomas closed the meeting with a reading from Colossians.

Kelly Eschenroeder moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the meeting adjourn. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Nixon
Secretary of the Vestry

Motions from the November 14, 2023 Vestry meeting

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

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the minutes from the October 10, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

Kelly Eschenroeder moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the meeting adjourn. Motion passed.