

Grace Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
June 13, 2023

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

Vestry Absent: Kelly Eschenroeder, Mike Lillmars

Clergy Present: The Rev. Thomas Skillings

Guests: Shari Bonham, Director of Development and Ministries Coordinator; Dick Entenmann, Transition Team, Personnel Committee

The meeting was called to order at 7:00.

The opening prayer was given by Rebecca Harrison. Susie Reis will give the prayer at the August Vestry meeting.

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

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the minutes from the June 13, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as edited. Motion passed.

Discernment Team: Dick Entenmann let the Vestry know that the discernment team is in a holding pattern, waiting for direction from the Vestry.

Rev. Skillings explained to the Vestry that there are three options for moving forward. Option 1, which Thomas recommended to the discernment team and the executive committee, would involve doing some work and then beginning a new search in January, with no set end date. Work to be done includes making a new mission statement, solidifying our outreach and education stories, and improving the website. In essence, this would be a season to find out who Grace Church is. There was some discussion about how involved the Bishops office has to be in the search process. Thomas suggested that we do another round of listening sessions that include follow-up questions. Information gleaned from the sessions could be used to form a new mission statement and to help get new programs rolling in the areas of children's ministry, hospitality, acolytes etc. Thomas would like to be a part of this process. Option 2 is to start a new search in the fall, with the hopes of having a new rector by Advent. Thomas would stay on to help get youth programs and some other programs going.

Option 3 is to have the diocese assign a priest-in-charge, who could be called to serve as rector after a certain period of time if that is mutually agreeable to the priest and the parish.

Jim Wethington moved, and John Adams seconded, that we move forward with option 1, which would involve the parish doing some introspection before re-starting the search, probably in January. Motion passed.

Personnel Committee: Staffing Updates: Dick Entenmann filled the Vestry in on recent staffing decisions. The personnel committee decided it was best to not wait for a new rector to be found to make changes.

Ministries Area Leadership: Buildings and Grounds: Junior Warden Rebecca Harrison reported that the resealing and striping of the parking lot is complete.

Former Grace parishioner Gina Miller has offered to donate a sum of money to cover the cost of replacing the carpet and furniture in the library. Any leftover funds will go towards the cost of resealing the parking lot.

New trees on the grounds are doing well.

Rebecca has received two bids for tuckpointing the chimney, but is having trouble getting a third bid.

Worship Teams: Rebecca Harrison reported that the numbers of people serving as ushers, altar guild and acolytes have declined since the COVID break. Sunday youth sports teams are a particular problem for acolytes.

Communication/Social Media: Jim Wethington and Susie Reis will be working with Shari Bonham on refreshing the website. Shari explained to the Vestry how the updated computer system will make it easy to get communications out over various platforms. The Vestry was provided a handout highlighting features of the new system. The new system should go live around August 28.

Outreach: John Adams happily informed the Vestry that Jane Cenova will serve as co-chair on the outreach committee.

In a continuing effort to raise awareness of Grace's outreach ministries, John highlighted the work of Hands on Kirkwood (HOK). HOK was started by Kirkwood Baptist Church on 2007. It is a one-day blitz that includes a food drive, clothing drive, and yard clean-up and minor home repairs for those in need.

Over the years, Kirkwood Baptist has asked other organizations to volunteer to assist in the effort.

Grace's youth have distributed food donation bags, and Grace hosts the post-event luncheon that is open to all volunteers. John thinks Grace should encourage parishioners to participate – signing up is done easily on the Kirkwood Baptist Church website.

John updated the Vestry on the Horizons STL (formerly SPROG) summer camp. 84 campers and 21 staff (most are professional teachers) are involved in the six week session. The camp focuses on STEM subjects, and campers learn to swim at the Kirkwood High School pool. Grace donates \$2,500 yearly to Horizons. Volunteers are welcome. John extended thanks to all those who support Horizons.

John reported that one of Grace's substitute organists is using the raised garden beds near the playground to grow watermelons, which will be donated to the Trinity food program.

Invite, Welcome, Connect: Kelly Eschenroeder was absent, but provided the Vestry with a written report. Kelly will be meeting with Shari Bonham to discuss ways to customize the program to meet Grace's needs.

Christian Formation: Ann VanConia reported that she met with Erin Pickersgill, Ministry Developer for Children and Youth for the diocese, to discuss Christian formation for our youth. Ann extended thanks to Grace's small group of very dedicated Christian educators for their valuable work. Ann will be sending an email to parents to get their input on what they want to see in terms of Christian education. Ann is hoping some parents will volunteer to teach. Next steps include determining curriculum and securing a volunteer base. Chris Ludbrook noted that there was a Godly Play webinar explaining a pilot program aimed at children 3 years old through 5th grade, which incorporates a more modern approach than the current Godly Play program.

Financials: Tim Engelbrecht was absent, but provided the Vestry with a copy of the financial report for the month ending June 30, 2023. It was noted that an IRS refund of about \$36,000 should be received in July. The refund is due to payroll issues during COVID.

Transitional Rector Report: The Vestry listened to a song called “Mystery” and discussed the lyrics. Thomas noted that last Sunday (July 9) was a great Sunday in church – Phillip Brunswick was back, and a nice number of people were in attendance.

Mike Casey moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the meeting adjourn. Motion passed.
The meeting adjourned at 9:03.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Nixon
Secretary of the Vestry

Motions from the July 11, 2023 Vestry meeting

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

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Jane Cenova seconded, that the minutes from the June 13, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as edited. Motion passed.

Jim Wethington moved, and John Adams seconded, that we move forward with option 1 which would involve the parish doing some introspection before re-starting the search, probably in January. Motion passed.

Mike Casey moved, and Susie Reis seconded, that the meeting adjourn. Motion passed.