

Grace Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
September 12, 2023

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

Vestry Absent: Jane Cenova

Clergy Present: The Rev. Thomas Skillings

Guests: Shari Bonham, Director of Development and Ministries Coordinator; Tim Engelbrecht, Treasurer; Lyn Ballard, Transition Team; Dick Entenmann, Transitions Team and Personnel

The meeting was called to order at 7:00.

The opening prayer was given by Kelly Eschenroeder. Mike Lillmars will give the prayer at the October Vestry meeting.

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

Rebecca Harrison moved, and Ann VanConia seconded, that the minutes from the August 8, 2023 Vestry meeting be approved as drawn. Motion passed.

Devotion: Thomas led the Vestry in a devotional exercise which involved contemplating a parable and reading a poem.

Transitional Rector Report: *Assistant update:* Mr. David Waters will come to Grace on October 1 to serve as our Assistant for Christian Formation, Outreach and Pastoral Care. It is a full time position. He will serve for two years.

Stewardship Team Update: If we plan to keep a full time assistant, pledge income will need to increase. The finance committee will determine how much of an increase will be needed. Ted Sward is working on this year's campaign. He is looking at the various age groups present at Grace, and tailoring stewardship appeals to those groups. Ted is looking for a team of people from the different age groups to work with him.

Listening Team: Thomas met with the listening team, which includes Jen Wethington, Mike Gibbons, Brent VanConia, Dianne Casey and Leslie Hoffarth. The group is working on how to engage the parish in the listening session process. In January, a group will convene to write a mission statement.

Discernment Team: Lyn Ballard reported that the discernment team will resume monthly meetings on September 19. The plan is to make the rector search public in January. Dick Entenmann and Lyn will have a phone conversation next week with consultant Anne Schmidt.

Ministry Area Leadership:

Personnel: Dick Entenmann is working on a job description for David Waters. Dick will work with Tim Engelbrecht on the budget for the remainder of 2023 and for 2024 in terms of having a full time assistant.

Buildings and Grounds: Rebecca Harrison provided the Vestry with a written report. Carpet in the library will be replaced on September 22. Roof repairs have started. Volunteers are needed to maintain the flower beds in the front of the church. An Eagle Scout candidate would like to install a second fountain in the Columbarium. New benches will be installed after the fountain is put in. Architectural plans for the lychgate will be procured, and will be presented to the City of Kirkwood to receive a permit. There is a possibility that a pollinator bed will be put in along the back driveway.

Communication/Social Media: Shari and Thomas met with the website company, and progress has been made toward updating the website. The new website will be up and running within the next month, but will not be completely renovated for a few months.

Outreach: John Adams reminded the Vestry that Hands on Kirkwood (HOK) will take place on October 7. Individuals can sign up to volunteer for various projects on the Hands on Kirkwood website. Grace will host the volunteer luncheon that day. Volunteers are needed to help cook food and to serve the volunteers. A signup sheet has been posted in Albright hall for those who wish to help with the luncheon.

John provided the Vestry with a handout about the Jubilee Ministries Just Food Truck project. Barbie Click will preach at Grace on November 12 to explain the project to the parish. The food truck will be on site to serve food to the parish. John noted that Grace made a financial donation to the project in June.

Invite, Welcome, Connect: Kelly Eschenroeder reported that training for greeters will take place on September 24. Kelly provided the Vestry with a handout that those going through greeter training will receive. There are 6 greeters at this time, but Kelly said that the team could use a couple more members.

Worship Teams: Mike Casey spoke with Chard Russell, who heads the ushers team, about having kids serve as ushers. The team will wait until David Waters arrived to start that process.

Pastoral Care: Mike Lillmars reported that the visitation team is on track, with Sara Losse leading the team. They are looking forward to the arrival of David Waters.

Christian Formation: Ann VanConia reported that the church school started on September 10, with 32 children present. There are 4 classrooms, with two teachers in each room. It is hoped that there will be a confirmation class in the spring, with David Waters leading. Thomas noted that the new curriculum follows the lectionary, which helps tie together what is happening in church and in church school.

Mike Heyer has published a children's book that was written by his late wife, and life-long member of Grace, Janet Heyer. Mike will have a book signing at Grace, and proceeds will go to St. Jude's hospital.

Shari distributed an invitation for the Perpetual Grace appreciation evening on October 12. Vestry members are invited to attend whether or not they are participants in Perpetual Grace.

Financials: Tim Engelbrecht provided the Vestry with a brief, non-quarterly financial report. A detailed printed report was provided the Vestry. Tim reported that we had a great August, with pledge income over budget, and expenses under budget.

Tim provided the Vestry with a detailed report of cash transfers that were made to the appropriate accounts.

Tim reported that there was a problem with posting accounting items, which resulted in an out of balance situation of about \$83,000. The White Fund loan had been left off the balance sheet in error – the problem has been corrected.

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

Senior Warden: *Bishop's visit:* Chris Ludbrook reminded the Vestry that the Bishop will visit Grace on September 17. The Vestry will meet with the Bishop after coffee hour.

Nominating Committee: There will be 5 vacancies on the Vestry in January. Four Vestry members will cycle off (unless they are eligible to serve a second, three year term and choose to do so), and one position will be created to bring the total number of Vestry members to 11.

The Vestry will meet with the discernment team on September 19 at 7:00.

Thomas closed the meeting with a blessing.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Nixon
Secretary of the Vestry

Motions from the September 12, 2023 Vestry meeting

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

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