

Grace Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting

September 18, 2018

Minutes

Members of the Vestry

Elyssa de la Cruz
Andrew Eshleman
Robin Gault
Curt Germundsen, Treasurer
Steve Lovett, Sr. Warden
Nora McLaughlin
Peyton Snead
Louise Tippens

Clergy

The Rev. Martin Elfert

Others

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk
Jenny Stadler, Executive Director of PHAME

Members of the Vestry Absent

Cameron Denney
David Goodrich, Jr. Warden
Phillip Koop

Prior to September 28, 2018 Vestry Meeting

Approval of the Minutes

- The minutes from the August 18, 2018 Vestry meeting were distributed and discussed via e-mail prior to the current meeting. Andrew moved to accept the minutes as amended, and Louise seconded the motion. The motion passed with an e-mail vote on September 8, 2018.

Non-voting member on Grace Institute Board

- Elyssa sent an e-mail to the Vestry on September 8 noting the Grace Institute by-laws do allow for a non-voting member, so Dana Murphy can be a non-voting member as requested.

Discussion regarding repair to sanctuary front door

- The front door to the sanctuary can only be closed with difficulty due to a broken spring in the floor. The original proposal to repair it was \$677. However, the proposal was resubmitted with a cost of \$2,062, to allow the door to be repaired without its appearance being significantly altered. After some e-mail

discussion, Steve noted on September 10th no further discussion was needed and the door should be repaired as described in the second proposal at a cost of \$2,062.

Discussion regarding a change in banks

- Grace's current bank, Beneficial State Bank, has not been satisfactory since the change in ownership. Jackie asked the Vestry if Grace could move banking to OnPoint Credit Union. After a brief e-mail discussion, Steve determined it was up to Martin, Jackie and Curt to decide if there should be a change in banks as they are the primary users. As they are in favor of the change, no further action is needed on the part of the Vestry, and the change in banks will be made.

1. Jenny Stadler's Possible Vision for Redeveloped Campus

1.1 Jenny Stadler

- The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm, and before the opening prayer by Martin, Jenny presented her idea for redeveloping the campus by sketching a rough layout on a flip chart. (She also offered thanks to Grace for giving PHAME a home for the last 10 years.) Her suggestion includes space for refugees, low income residents, seniors and other under-served groups of people by having various sections of the multi-storied L-shaped building dedicated to a particular population with a common lobby area. Space for Grace's use, and possibly the Diocese were also included. She believes interaction between the residents is important, but it is also important to be able to close off spaces to keep everyone safe. She would love to see the development become an art hub with classes for all and artists using the space as well.
- PHAME is willing to do a capital campaign to aid the development, and Jenny was asked the timeline for this. She replied it depends on the decided use of the development; additionally, the PHAME board would like a letter of commitment from Grace. An architectural assessment is needed first, however. Martin said the Diocese will be approached on September 27th about funding an architectural assessment, but he added funding will not commit the Diocese offices moving to the Grace campus. At the end of her presentation, Jenny left the Vestry meeting

2. Formation

2.1 Opening Prayers

- Following Jenny's departure, Martin offered an opening prayer. The lectio divina reading of Acts will return next month as this month's agenda is very full.
- Further discussion took place regarding Jenny's proposal. The need for outdoor space for all residents was stressed as well as having a beautiful exterior. Questions were raised regarding the timeline and letter of commitment. It was agreed experts need to be consulted first.
- It was suggested the development of a "North Star" statement for Grace could be discussed with the parish. This would be modeled after the North Star statement used by the St. Francis parish for their development project. Springboards to a Grace parish discussion could include affordable housing, arts, tradition, and a place of welcome where all are safe. A Vestry tele-conference was suggested for further

discussion. Also, Martin will be talking with Ashley regarding Grace Institutes needs with a development project.

3. Items

3.1 Auction Planning

- Phillip was unable to attend the Vestry meeting, but Martin reported the caterer is booked as well as the band and PA system. He thought more help may be needed with ticket sales and auction items. He said a letter to previous donors has gone out.
- It was noted the list provided to the Vestry of previous donors was not easy to read. Martin will ask Jackie to divide some of the auction tasks and contact Vestry members about completing them as well as sending each Vestry member a list of contacts to be approached for auction donations.
- Martin knows some volunteers have been lined up but is not sure if more are needed. Phillip responded to Steve's e-mail at about this juncture and said he will provide the Vestry with an e-mail update about the auction.

3.2 iPad for Giving

- Contributing via a "square" is an idea from Matthew David. A parishioner has donated an iPad, and Grace has a square, which works with an iPad. Different possibilities for using it were discussed, and it was thought the best course might be to try it out during coffee hour as a way to pay a pledge or make an additional donation to Grace. Martin will also check with Sally to see if she thinks this might be something the ushers could do after services in the narthex. If Sally thinks this is a doable idea, an announcement about it will be made during the service.

3.3 Possible Chalkboard Installation

- Martin previously shared via e-mail photos of the chalkboard installation he saw in Berkley, and he asked if the Vestry liked the idea for Grace. He thinks the chalkboard could be made in house for a minimal expense. All realized inappropriate posts will most certainly be made, and concerns were raised regarding Art Camp campers. It was suggested deleting inappropriate posts could be part of the current Art Camp sweep of the campus. The idea is generally liked, and the idea of posting "prompts" for prayer requests could be developed by different groups at Grace. A location was discussed, and it was felt the best places are on 17th Avenue either near the breezeway or the front door. Martin may need advice regarding the construction of the chalkboard so it withstands weather, and he will look in to it. Andrew moved Grace install a chalkboard on the Grace campus for prayer requests, and Elyssa seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

3.4 Moment of Grace

- Elyssa shared thoughts she had about asking everyone to share "One Thing I know God Is" but decided instead to share the St. Francis prayer.

3.5 First Conversation About Recruiting New Vestry Members for 2019

- Andrew reported he has been in touch with the Trinity coordinator for recruiting Vestry members, and sent information to the Vestry via e-mail. The Trinity method uses a sub-committee of the Vestry for the nomination and vetting of potential Vestry members. A matrix is used to achieve balance among all populations of the congregation.
- Having nominations come from the floor during the Annual Meeting was noted as not being ideal, and there is not a process in place to cope fairly with such nominations. Historically, however, the problem has been finding enough candidates to fill the Vestry slate. If the Trinity method is adopted, the matrix will add the component of making it easier to match the needs of the Vestry and parish.
- It was generally agreed as a good thing to have Vestry members involved in the formation of the new Vestry slate and not leave the entire process to Martin. Louise agreed to work with Andrew to develop a committee composed of Vestry and non-Vestry members to select the new Vestry slate. Martin will make sure announcements are made soon letting the parish know who to contact if interested in the Vestry themselves or have an individual to nominate. A total of 5 new Vestry members are needed. Announcements will be made both electronically and physically, with nominations going to Louise. Additionally, a closing date for nominations will be communicated, which will prevent nominations from the floor during the Annual Meeting. It was also suggested revising the Vestry job description to add more detail. A suggestion was made to ask potential Vestry candidates to submit a letter of interest along with their nomination.
- A question was raised regarding the by-laws of Grace and whether or not they spoke to how a Vestry should be selected. After review, it was determined the by-laws are general enough to allow adoption of the Trinity system for selecting a new Vestry slate.

3.6 Andrew's Appointment to Grace Campus Development Committee (GCDC)

- Andrew has been asked by Nancy Entrikin to become a member of the GCDC with a directive to lead parish involvement. Peyton moved to appoint Andrew as a member of the Grace Campus Development Committee, and Nora seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

3.7 Reports

- Rector
 - Martin said he has been invited to return to the College for Congregational Development as a teacher in June.
 - He enjoyed spending time with colleagues in the Bay Area and their discussions on what it means to be a parish on the West Coast. He looks forward to more discussions in the future.
 - He would like to focus the financial stewardship campaign as a spiritual exercise this year with speakers building their talks from prompts such as "What stories am I bringing to my work?" and "How have I experienced generosity?". Discernment towards giving should be encouraged.

- He noted he has had coffee with a lot of newcomers, which is great! He reminded the Vestry of goals set at the retreat to improve welcoming and keeping new members.
- Jr. Warden
 - Dave was absent, but he provided a report saying the stage in the sanctuary is being repaired.
- Treasurer
 - Curt reported not much has changed from last month with the expenses being ok and the pledges a little behind. He will find out from Jackie how gifts of stock are being processed. He was asked to prepare a financial report for the parish with a short commentary.
 - Grace's banking will be moved to OnPoint.
 - Martin commented he would like to have discussions regarding gifts to Grace at a member's death, such as endowments and trusts.

3.8 Other Business

- Andrew questioned how the position of Jr. Warden is working. Nancy currently has stewardship of the grounds with Dave overseeing the Jr. Warden role rather than doing the physical work himself, which has worked out well. Nancy may need to step back from her grounds stewardship as she focuses more on her work with the GCDC. Martin will talk to her about it.
- Curt noted, as he did last month, he recently became the executive director of QUAD Inc., which provides low income housing for the severely disabled. Since QUAD Inc. does have a financial interest in the possible campus development at Grace, Curt fully disclosed this information to notify the Vestry of the conflict of interest. Steve will look to confirm whether this disclosure is sufficient or whether there is another document regarding disclosure Curt should sign.
- Peyton reported he has been hearing opposition to possible campus development and stressed the need to continue education on the development ideas with the parish. It should be an ongoing conversation with more cohesiveness brought to regular reports and meetings. During the ensuing discussion, it was commented much is still unknown, which is ok to say. It was suggested we might have the facilitator from the large parish meeting return to lead further sessions. Having targeted conversations around particular topics was discussed. The need to keep channels of communication open is important, and the enormity of the proposed change was emphasized.

3.9 Closing Prayer

- Martin offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk