

**Grace Memorial Episcopal Church**

**Vestry Meeting Minutes**

**March 17, 2020**

**Members of the Vestry**

Roosevelt Carter  
Cameron Denney  
Andrew Eshleman  
Robin Gault, Co-Sr. Warden  
Curt Germundson, Treasurer  
Daniel Jones  
Charles McGee  
Holly Puckett  
Kathryn (Katy) Unbehaun  
David Waldow  
Kevin Walsh

**Clergy**

The Rev. Martin Elfert  
The Rev. Jeanne Kaliszewski

**Others**

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk

**Members of the Vestry Absent**

Louise Tippens, Co-Sr. Warden

**1. Formation**

1.1 Opening Prayers

- The meeting began at 6:06pm with a reading from Acts 24 in an abbreviated form of lectio divina, followed by a prayer from Martin.

**2. Items**

2.1 Consent Agenda Items

- The February Vestry Meeting Minutes, Rector's Report, Grace Institute Report, and Jr. Warden's Report were included in the Consent Agenda Items distributed to the Vestry prior to the meeting. No items were requested to be removed from the Consent Agenda. Roosevelt moved to accept the reports as

presented, and Cameron seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

## 2.2 Treasurer's Report

- Curt reported revenue is down a little, and investments are sliding due to the world situation. Restricted gifts did well in February, though, and the overall balance in the account remained approximately the same. He noted pledges are down a little and maintenance is up some, but, in general, the expenses are in line with the budget. As a side note, Curt reported on his greatly reduced printing costs at his workplace due to a more favorable contract Pacific Automation, and Martin will ask Jackie to look into a similar contract for Grace.
- A question was raised as to whether pledges from parishioners should be mailed or paid online, and Curt said either works. Martin and Jeanne are working on a reminder to the parish that pledges should still be made even while the congregation is not meeting in person due to the pandemic.
- Martin asked Vestry to make a motion to keep clergy and staff on full salary even while they cannot physically report to work at church. The sexton, Daniel, has been asked to keep an eye on the campus and will also help Frank with the garden. Martin said building users have been asked to continue paying building use fees, if possible, as there are continuing expenses even though the campus is not in use. After some additional discussion, Curt moved to note the Vestry supports the continuation of payroll for Grace staff during the current pandemic. Charles seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

## 2.3 Coronavirus and GMEC

- Jeanne reported Morning Prayer on You Tube went pretty well on Sunday. It was a wonderful team effort, and there are improvements to come. This format for services will continue at least through Easter.
- The need for pastoral care is increasing along with complications as to how to provide it. Jeanne is setting up Circles of Care, details of which she will be sharing with the parish soon. Basically, it involves small groups of 4-6 households who will check in with each other daily via text, voicemail, etc. She also is starting a list of those who might be more affected than others by the virus and will check in with them frequently. Jeanne is hopeful one result of the current crisis will be a better-connected community. Martin and Jeanne are staying in close touch with other clergy, the Diocese and the broader Episcopal Church. Additionally, Jeanne is exploring a Zoom room for providing the Daily Office for anyone who cares to drop into one of the services. She is also thinking of expanding the theme for the (postponed) Women's Retreat of women mystics and offer it to the entire parish.
- Charles commented he shared last Sunday's Morning Prayer on his platform and has had a number of responses. He thought the service went well with good attendance. Sharing services via our platforms is an opportunity to spread the word.
- The question was asked if the sack lunch and Friday dinner programs will continue, and Martin said there might be a take-away option for the Friday dinner, but options are still being explored.

- The possibility of using the west wall of the church for positive messages and providing a public space for messages was briefly discussed. Martin noted the Vestry had previously approved erecting a public notice board, but the project hasn't happened yet.

#### 2.4 Moment of Grace

- Robin shared a lovely prayer for a little brown bird by Brian Doyle for the Moment of Grace.

#### 2.5 GMEC and Metro Homeless Services Measure

- The question was raised asking if Grace should endorse the Metro Homeless Services Measure, which will appear on the May 19 ballot. The measure will authorize Metro to create a new personal income tax and a new business profits tax, estimated to raise \$250 million per year to be spent on a variety of services.
- Opinions were offered that Metro might not be the best organization to take on this task, and it would certainly be a "heavy lift" for them. However, it was generally agreed action needs to be taken to address the homeless issue. It was suggested the Diocese could be asked as to the policy regarding endorsement of measures. Martin said he could have a conversation with Neysa to find out if there is Diocesan direction.
- Before agreeing to take a stand on the measure, it was suggested the parish be informed about the measure and given the opportunity to respond. There is time for this as the vote is in May. Martin noted the fenced-in Nativity set of last year was generally, but not entirely, well-received.

#### 2.6 Subcommittee Reports

- Vestry Liaisons: Charles reported he is working on the liaisons and will have a report to the committee in the next week or so.
- Bylaws: Andrew reviewed the proposed changes to the Bylaws which include allowing for Co-Senior Wardens and adjusting the election of Vestry members to fit the current practice. He and Katy found ambiguities to address in the Bylaws, and Katy also drafted a new section entitled Standard of Conduct. The frequency of reviewing the Bylaws was discussed, and it was suggested to review the Bylaws every year and have all Vestry members read them. Additionally, Kevin noted a "buddy system" for new Vestry members might be a good thing to implement for next year to help new members learn what is expected of Vestry members such as reading the Bylaws. Andrew said further revisions for the Bylaws may be sent to the committee, and a final draft should be available for the April Vestry meeting. The committee was commended for their good work on the Bylaws.
- Equity and Inclusion Statement: (The proposed Equity and Inclusion Statement was distributed to the Vestry via e-mail prior to the meeting.) Robin suggested a separate meeting with Cameron and Daniel might be needed to review the Statement in greater detail. Daniel has asked for responses from the parish but has not received any yet. Roosevelt said his wife has some feedback, and he will ask her to share it with Daniel and Cameron. Daniel noted this is just the beginning of the conversation and more input is welcomed. It will likely take several more meetings to finalize. Suggestions for revisions should be sent to Daniel and Cameron.

## 2.7 Other Business

- Charles complimented Kevin for his contributions to the service on Sunday.
- Martin noted baptisms have been requested, but, since there will not be an Easter Vigil this year, he will suggest Pentecost for the baptisms. He added we're still the body of Christ no matter where we are.

## 2.8 Closing Prayer

- Martin offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk