

Grace Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2020

Members of the Vestry Present

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

Clergy Present

The Rev. Martin Elfert

Others Present

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk

Members of the Vestry Absent

None

Prior to November 17, 2020 Vestry Meeting

Grace Institute Bylaws

- Via e-mail, Daniel moved to have the Vestry ratify the Grace Institute Bylaws and also make a recommendation to Grace Institute to amend Article VII of the Grace Institute Bylaws to include the category of gender. Charles seconded the motion, and the motion was approved via e-mail on November 7, 2020.

1. Formation

1.1 Opening Prayers

- The meeting began at 6:01pm with an opening prayer from Martin. After a brief discussion, it was decided to begin reading Ruth next month in an abbreviated form of lectio divina.

2. Items

2.1 Consent Agenda

- There was discussion regarding the unresolved issues on the Jr. Warden's report. The furnace in the Halsey house is not working well, but a new furnace is not a sensible purchase as a new furnace could not be used in the new building. Water remediation may be needed as noted in the Jr. Warden's report. Martin asked David to have an expert look at the water damage and make recommendations. Fortunately, there does not appear to be new water coming in. There is door damage to be repaired, and the lighting in the courtyard should probably be augmented on the stairs to make them safer at night. Martin said the electrician who installed the air conditioning may be able to offer some lighting guidance.

2.2 Rector's Report

- Establishing a 501(c)3 for the development project has been suggested by Rick Gustafson of SOJ, and this will be discussed later in the meeting.
- Regarding the financial stewardship appeal, Louise and Robin said they would incorporate information about the letter and e-mail that have been sent to members of the congregation about stewardship in the update to the parish they plan to record for this coming Sunday's service.
- Robin commented that the Diocesan Convention, which was held via Zoom, went well.
- Martin said he and Jeanne are wondering how we can become more skillful at welcoming and incorporating new members as in person contact is not available and we must rely on technology. There was a discussion around incorporating new members and suggestions included the Circles of Grace program and possibly a newcomer meeting online. Currently, there is no system in place to identify newcomers, and adding a link in the chat during the services for newcomers to identify themselves was suggested as a possibility. Martin said he could add newcomers to the Rector's Report if they can be identified. More discussion around the dynamics of welcoming and incorporation need to take place.

2.3 Campus Security Update

- Martin is working on installing the Ring system, and protocols surrounding its use are still under discussion and being developed. He added there is new paneling on the basement windows. Additionally, the breezeway doors and North Narthex door may need new fittings and locks to be secure. David will investigate door options, most particularly for the North Narthex door and the 17th Avenue front door.
- The Sack Lunch folks would like to restart the program, but they need to be safe while distributing lunches. There was a discussion as to how to keep them safe, and it was agreed they should not be the only two people in the building. The Free Lunch Collective is in the parish hall on a regular basis, and it might be possible to coordinate their presence with that of the Sack Lunch ladies or with others who are on campus at regular times. Martin will talk to Sally about this possibility.

2.4 Grace Commons Project

- Curt has been talking to Destin Ferdun of NHA to go over detailed questions he raised, and a report will be forthcoming soon about the project. Some highlights include achieving the vision of the project in a financially advantageous way for Grace; continuing to grow programs as well as control the parking; and review and discuss the relationships between the entities involved. A 501(c)3 might be the best way to address the relationship between Grace's land ownership and fundraising. The fees to establish a 501(c)3 are \$100 for the Oregon state fee and \$600 for the IRS fee, and the fees could be split between Grace, PHAME and Grace Institute. However, more information is needed before establishing non-profit status, and Curt and Martin will collaborate with Rick to determine if a 501(c)3 is the right course of action.

2.5 Moment of Grace

- Louise shared a clip of the timely song "One Fine Day" by David Byrne and Brian Eno.

2.6 Treasurer's Report

- Curt reported Grace's investments are doing well, and the operating budget is as expected. Pledges are down a little, but not too much, and he commented work on the organ has been done. No action is needed yet on the PPP loan as he is waiting for instructions from the government.

2.7 Grace Institute Report

- Charles reported there are 5 classes scheduled, and COVID guidelines will be followed carefully. Another class has been postponed due to not being able to meet the new guidelines. He also thanked the Vestry for approving the Grace Institute Bylaws.

2.8 Equity and Inclusion Report

- Cameron, Andrew, and Daniel reviewed the Trinity Racial Justice statement, and it was noted Trinity will have people of color on their new board. Grace members are involved with the Truth and Reconciliation statement, which is being formulated at the Diocesan level. The statement will be launching soon, and its format will follow other Diocesan models. Jeanne offered updates from the Diocesan Convention and added the Diocese will be sending a resolution to the next General Convention to require anti-racism training.
- Cameron is working on an equity survey for the parish, which will gather a broad range of information. The goal is to establish a parish identity of who we are and how to move forward. There was a suggestion to make the survey annual and track the results. It will be useful to know how everyone in the parish feels about Grace, how welcoming it is, and how it stands on equity and inclusion issues. Whether or not to have the survey be anonymous or have two surveys – one anonymous and one identifiable - was briefly discussed but no conclusion reached. There is not currently a timeline for the distribution of the survey.
- It was suggested to include Grace's Equity and Inclusion Statement on the Grace website, and Martin will ask Jackie to add it.

2.9 Vestry Skills Report

- Louise shared a matrix of skills and demographics for the Vestry and asked each Vestry member to complete it and e-mail it to her. There was some discussion regarding the skills listed, and Louise will revise the matrix and send it to the Vestry again as per the suggestions. It was noted Louise, Andrew, Robin, and Cameron will be leaving the Vestry in January. Louise, Charles, Nora, Martin, and Jeanne form the Vestry nominating committee.

2.10 New Business

- Kevin will forward to the Vestry the invitation from Phoebe for the Advent Calendar project.

2.11 Closing Prayer

- Martin offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk