

**Vestry Minutes**  
**Ascension Episcopal Church**  
**June 20, 2017**

**Present:** The Rev. Todd Bryant, Doug Meyers, Tom Sutton, Lee Nirider, Alan Burton, Liz Goodman, Glenn Criswell, Faye Armstrong, Cheryl Coppock.

**Regrets:** Clement Falayi, Michelle Feagin, Margo Kaplan,

The meeting was called to order at 7:02p.m. Father Bryant began with a scripture from the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 10:17 – 21, which he felt appropriate for the upcoming Independence Day on July 4. In the scripture, God defends the fatherless, the widow and the foreigner, and reminds his people that they were once foreigners in Egypt. In Hebrews 11, Paul's letter describes how Abraham, by faith, set out to places unknown, and Matthew 5, essentially describes what American went through as a young country.

Fr. Bryant asked for prayer requests. Tom Sutton asked to pray for the air conditioning on the whole campus. Faye Armstrong was disturbed about an issue that was brought up in Bible study. Fr. Bryant asked that God's will be done in the Bible study group; and that should be her focus. Pray that where conviction needs to happen, it will happen. The same for reconciliation, if it needs to happen, it will happen. Pray that God's will be done at the right time and season. Tom Sutton added that one gets clarity as the issue is brought up and discussed.

**Consent Agenda (items that were discussed):**

**Rectors report:** Fr. Bryant will be on vacation two weeks from July 18 through August 5. This will affect two Sundays, July 23 and July 30. The supply priest will be Desmond Goonesekera.

**Ascension Episcopal School Board Members:** New and returning members of the AES Board are Marissa Kane, Krisztine Merritt, Abhijeet Narvekar, and Cody Stafford. The board appointed Mike Black as President. The vestry voted to accept these members of the Board.

**Motion 1:** Liz Goodman moved to approve Consent Agenda. Tom Sutton seconded. The motion carried.

**Old Business:**

**Treasurer Report:** Glenn Criswell reported that the new signatories for the bank accounts are on board. The letter of credit was paid down with the \$10,000 bequest. He said that we will be addressing ways to reduce the remainder of the loan, but currently we have no plan. In terms of the campus, Alan Burton was reviewing projects that are under a maintenance contract and how difficult to know when each contract was near expiration. Tom Sutton suggested having "tickler" files, and that he would put this information on the Google Drive. Fr. Bryant suggested that the tickler files could be on a spreadsheet

and that he was volunteering Samantha King, Church Secretary, to help Alan with setting up the worksheet. He noted that Ann Seitz, Bookkeeper, is starting to provide this information with the records of the checks that are issued, but it is a work in progress. The intent is to resolve the problem of matching checks to contracts by using this worksheet. Glenn Criswell began the conversation about the annual audit. Depending on the amount of pledges, the Diocese has rules and policies on whether the audit can be a self audit or whether a professional audit is required. Ascension qualifies for the self audit. Glenn stated that our cash on hand is reduced since the line of credit was paid down. He noted that the cash situation is unlikely to improve during the summer as many people are away.

On the Fidelity Investments account, the church holds gifts of stock for as short a time as possible. As soon as stock is sold the funds go from Fidelity into Amegy Bank. Any decision of whether to transfer funds is dependent on the amount of cash on hand.

**Disaster Preparedness:** With hurricane season in force, Lee Nirider visited with the vestry about dividing the parish directory into 12 sections. Each vestry member would contact every person in their assigned section. Although the directory was recently updated, we also want to make contact with each household to ensure that we have the correct information, and let the parishioners know that this is for follow up and contact after a hurricane or other emergency. Each vestry person will be a “point person.” Lee will create a script of talking points to keep the conversation brief. Each vestry person should have to call less than 24 people. The vestry also must have feedback about what happened on each call (if they were successfully contacted, or if there was no answer after many attempts, etc.). Lee will divide up the directory later this week.

#### **Other Business:**

Fr. Bryant informed the vestry about his call to a new position in Danville, California. He expects negotiations to be settled this week and asked for confidentiality until everything was certain. He said that if, and when this becomes a certainty, there will be a lot of activity happening very quickly, as he wants to move there before school starts on August 14. He told us that this had been a three-month process and that it appears to be in the final negotiating stage.

Fr. Bryant said that in searching for a new rector, Ascension already has a parish profile and that the vision workshops held in recent months will help us in this transition. He told us that the Diocese will be very active in working with the search committee during the transition period, and that we can counter any objections we might have to the Diocese. Tom Sutton wants to gather names for search committee. The Diocese generally places the interim priest. Tom said he will be leaning on the vestry during the interim period.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. with a prayer.