

Vestry Minutes

Ascension Episcopal Church

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

Present: Clement Falayi, Doug Meyers, Tom Sutton, Alan Burton, Liz Goodman, Michelle Feagin, The Rev. Todd Bryant, Margo Kaplan, Glenn Criswell, Faye Armstrong, and Cheryl Coppock.

Regrets: Lee Nirider and Cindy Breton.

The meeting was called order at at 7:03p.m. with a Bible study scripture. Fr. Todd Bryant read the last section of John 14: 15-21, the main thought states, "If you love me you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father and he will give you another 'Helper' to be with you forever. . ." The question is, do you start with love or do you start with actions? The object is to find balance between the two, but most of us get frustrated because we become focused on what we are doing instead of being focused on God. As people, we think that we are doing good (or that we are doing all the work), and we are still waiting for patience. We have a calling from God, and love serving, but then we get frustrated because no one else is joining us in the (leadership) process. Therefore, we should ask God for love to give us the inspiration that will get others to love the church also. Leadership comes out of relationship. In closing the lesson and opening the meeting, Fr. Bryant asked for prayers of concern and thanksgiving.

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

Old Business:

Treasurer's report: Glenn Criswell informed us that as for signatories for the Fidelity account, Fidelity would need the minutes from last meeting when the new signatories were named, voted and passed by the Vestry. The minutes would be taken to Fidelity to authorize them to make the necessary changes.

The \$10,000 bequest to the church will be used to reduce the outstanding line of credit, which will be reflected in the statement for May 31. Glenn said that our "numbers" have improved for this month because of extra offerings in April due to Easter, as well as the \$10,000. **Motion 2: Tom Sutton moved to accept the treasury report. Margo seconded. The motion carried.**

New Business:

Tom Sutton distributed the VOW schedule for the time period June 4, 2017 to January 14, 2018, when new vestry members would begin their terms. He also distributed the vestry contact list and asked for corrections. These lists will be placed on the Google Drive.

A new vestry duty was added: The VOWs are to place the member information and name tag tables outside under the bell tower, weather permitting. Other duties: Michelle Feagin asked about setting the alarm in the school area because it gets tripped frequently. Fr. Bryant said that Nancy Clausey can set the alarm from her phone, so she can disarm it on Sunday morning arm it at an appropriate time on

Sunday afternoon. If it is not disarmed on a Sunday morning, instructions were given on how to disarm the system.

Other business: Fr. Bryant has been invited by Bishop Fisher to attend a preaching workshop at Virginia Seminary, called “Deep Calls to the Deep” as part of his continuing education. He will be gone from June 10 to June 16, so he will not be at Ascension on June 11. Paul Searle will preach the sermon and Fr. Thomas Kallarackal will be the celebrant.

Vision update: The Vestry will participate in a vision workshop on Saturday morning, June 3. Fr. Bryant is enthusiastic about the vision plan. At the June vestry meeting he will give us the “bird’s-eye” view of the plan.

Mike Black, current head of the visioning committee, will become the AES school board president, and therefore wants to hand off the chairmanship of the visioning committee so that he can concentrate on his new role with the school.

Faye Armstrong expressed concern about having a new mission statement. Tom Sutton explained to her that in the past five years our church has changed, our congregation has changed and the community that we serve has changed. We are a different church than we were five and six years ago and a new mission statement is something we needed to do. Fr. Bryant Todd added that the local culture is changing, and has especially changed within these past five years. He said that this new mission statement was a clarification of what we are doing. In the geographical areas we serve at the present time, we have differing economic classes, races, etc. We need to ask the question of who God calls us to be at this time in the continuing history of our church, and explained how our mission statement clarifies what we want to become. Margo Kaplan added that in another five years we will likely have many different people than we have at present. Tom Sutton added the mission statement guides us on how to consider love and repentance in order to frame those concepts and make them approachable to the new people that reside in the area.

Liz Goodman asked, in the context of the vision plan, how we might be changed as a church. Fr. Bryant said that we will have a group of core values. We have to ask what our core values look like and how our ministries support our core values. A statement of core values describes what we value, and how we will support those values. It is a system of checks and balances so we stay on track and do not turn into the church of “what is happening now.” He assured that we are not leaving our traditions or compromising our values to get more people in the door. Fr. Bryant gave an example that should he get completely focused in property and budget issues and lose his spiritual values, that it is up to us as vestry and congregation to check him. The vision committee will connect with the outreach committees and will involve new people. We want to be sure that when small groups are formed, it is not the same people all the time. This vision plan is meant to be short term. It is to get people involved to fold into different activities so that we do not have 10% of the people doing 90% of the work. This is about “congregational health.” The work that is done blesses the participating people, and if we get more people in the door, great! It is a vision document and a recruitment piece.

Prayer teams: Michelle Feagin said that we are short two prayer teams for our services. She asked each vestry member to be searching for one or two people. This ministry is about sharing compassion and the love of Christ. If we can find some prospects, Fr. Bryant said that he can visit with the people considering this ministry. If one wants to find out what this ministry is like, they should talk to the Edels, Olive Gomez or Wanda June.

Motion 3: Liz Goodman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06p.m. Tom Sutton seconded. The motion carried. We concluded with The Lord's Prayer. After adjournment Fr. Bryant announced that there would be no meeting in July.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Coppock

Secretary