

# Ascension Episcopal Church

## Vestry Minutes

October 17, 2017

**Present:** Fr. Bob Flick, Tom Sutton, Lee Nirider, Liz Goodman, Glenn Criswell, Margo Kaplan, Cheryl Coppock, Alan Burton, Doug Meyers, Clement Falayi

**Regrets:** Michelle Feagin, Faye Armstrong

The meeting was called to order 7:04 p.m. with a prayer. Fr. Flick distributed the vestry committee reports and the Vestry Resource Guide, from the Episcopal Church Foundation. He made amendments to the September 19 minutes which will be posted on the Google Drive tomorrow.

**Motion #1:** Tom Sutton moved to accept amended minutes, Liz Goodman seconded. The motion carried

**Worship Committee Report:** Fr. Flick reported that there would be two tracks of worship—one for children and one for adults. Fr. Flick will not be here on Sunday, November 12. The Rev. Mark Brown, celebrant for the day, will speak about the needs of WHAM. We will have a Thanksgiving celebration on Sunday November 19. Margo Kaplan, Cheryl Coppock and Faye Armstrong attended their first worship committee meeting. Tom Sutton noted Margo's excitement about being involved, and that how that excitement could be contagious in recruiting others to be involved in activities.

**Stewardship Report:** Liz Goodman stated that she is trying to recruit committee members that have the potential to become involved parishioners. Currently she has more people recruited than she people she needs for giving testimony. This will give some of those newly involved people opportunities to serve by distributing information. She wants to focus on getting people to commit by making a pledge. Some of the pledge statistics provided by Leslie Nirider, showed that the percentage of members that commit to a pledge was 26%. This number is based on the diocesan membership roll of over 300 members. However, our active attendance is 191 on most Sundays. If one uses our active attendance, our pledge percentage is 54%. Liz would like to ask dedicated givers to actually sign the pledge card. By signing the pledge card, the vestry will know the numbers they have to work with for budget purposes. Liz will begin the campaign next week with a letter from Fr. Flick, a letter from stewardship team, and the pledge card.

**Property Committee Report:** Lee Nirider will post updated changes to their report and will post them tomorrow. **Motion #2:** Lee Nirider moved to donate 83 red chairs to Mission Bend United Methodist Church. Alan Burton seconded. The motion carried.

**Motion #3:** Liz Goodman moved to accept all reports and amended reports. Margo Kaplan seconded. The motion carried.

**Rector's Report:** Fr. Flick opened the church calendar. He would like for vestry nominations to begin on November 19 and end by December 17. Outgoing vestry members are Clement Falayi, Alan Burton, Cheryl Coppock and Cindy Breton (inactive). He wants to prepare a job description for this group. Tom Sutton interjected that he wants to be starting the rector search committee. **Motion #4:** Tom Sutton moved to establish a team to find vestry replacements so that the rector search committee can go forward. Alan Burton seconded. The motion carried.

Fr. Flick requested that the next three vestry meetings will be November 28, December 19 and January 16. The annual meeting is January 21 and will include vestry elections. The purpose of the annual meeting is to approve the budget for 2018 and to elect vestry members. He is scheduling a vestry retreat on January 27, with commissioning on January 28.

Tom Sutton explained how selections for diocesan council has been handled in the past. Usually the rector would reach out to a couple for budgetary and efficiency reasons. Fr. Flick asked how we could find the best representatives, which may involve more than just reaching out to a few people. He explained the council process. If people have an interest, they should know the opportunity is there. A delegate represents the church, not themselves. Fr. Flick will return in November with more information. The diocese has a whole process to prepare a delegate for council. The diocesan meeting is in February 2018.

**Treasurer's Report:** Glenn Criswell stated that the Financial committee is just getting started again because of Hurricane Harvey. They had scheduled the audit for weekend of August 26, but Hurricane Harvey interrupted this act. They still need to perform the audit, however preparing the budget for 2018 is more critical. The process of preparing the budget is structured. He stated that we base projected expenses on past experiences, however it is difficult to make estimations when working with unknown variables. By November 28 we should have more information concerning some of these matters. Tom Sutton asked to make sure that we budget for the compensation package for the new rector. Fr. Flick said that the Rev. Francine Young has resources for calculating compensation packages.

Fr. Flick said that it is time to go through and look at the restricted funds and analyze what can be released to the general fund. He added that we need to have this done for the preparation of the new budget. Discussion followed.

In terms establishing a budget for next year, Liz Goodman said that it would be good to be able to let parishioners have the knowledge of the amounts paid for various categories of expenses (utilities, building maintenance, staff salaries, etc.). This knowledge would create transparency in church expenditures.

It was noted that the church and the school feel like two different entities. For the long term, the church needs to determine the function and ministry of the school.

A suggestion was made to take hours of service (like donated services to WHAM) and to monetize it. This could be a second budget.

Fr. Flick noted that we are fully \$75,000 behind for the year in terms of pledges. One issue is that the statement sent to parishioners reflect shows only what has been given and not how much was pledged for the year. Lee Nirider said that this issue was due to a software problem.

Margo Kaplan noted that she currently is the only signer on the rector's discretionary account. The signers have not been updated with the bank, and Margo does not have online access to the account.

**Motion #5:** Margo Kaplan moved that Fr. Bob Flick be added to the account. Liz Goodman seconded.

The motion carried with Fr. Flick's abstention. **Motion #6:** Margo Kaplan moved that Glenn Criswell and Ann Seitz have online access to the account. Glenn Criswell seconded. The motion carried.

**Miscellaneous:** Fr. Flick announced that we would have a vestry manual. On Sunday morning the offices should remain locked. He also noted that he now has email in the name of the church. He will be gone this week to clergy conference at Camp Allen. Also, we need to find a new representative to WHAM, as Paul Searle is resigning from this committee. Our other WHAM representative is John Edel. Fr. Flick left the meeting at 8:25p.m. so the vestry could discuss matters concerning the search for a new rector.

Continuing the meeting, Tom Sutton stated that the profile committee will have their work complete within a couple of weeks, and that we need to begin the process of finding a search committee. He distributed a sheet titled "Search Committee Selection Strategies." The search committee is allowed to have two or three members from this vestry and is a committee all to itself. As Senior Warden, Tom does not have a vote. Those selected must be people who can be trusted with complete confidentiality. The vestry will build the committee and can begin accepting nominations. He feels it will take about a month to get the committee together. There must be no comment from anyone until the group is together. This search committee will have 10 to 12 people and will be split into teams of two to four people. Glenn Criswell is preparing the budget for the expenses that will be incurred with this search process.

**Motion #6:** Glenn Criswell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:36p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Coppock