

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Windsor, Connecticut

June 20, 2023

Call to Order

Attendance

Steve Bethke, Lois Bethke, William (Harvey) Harvey, Susan Burgdorf, Katrina Woodhouse, Margaret Shields, Father Chip, Chuck Drake, JoAnne McLeod, Larry Young, David Stender, Andrea Anderson, Debbie Hutchinson, and Ian Rickard (via phone call).

1. Opening Prayers

The June 20, 2023, Vestry Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with an Opening Prayer by the Reverend Harry (Chip) Elliott).

2. Additions/Deletions to Agenda

a. Old Business

Delete c. Selling of Organ Pipes.

3. Lynne Rhodes....Christian Education Update

Lynne reported that five volunteers joined her in teaching Sunday School. However, two of the volunteers were a married couple and, according to Safe Church rules, are not allowed to teach together in the same classroom. This year, there are a possible seventeen children that could join Sunday School. Lynne felt that there were definitely seven children for the fall. Parents need to be called to see if their children will be attending Sunday School this year. There is a possibility of a Confirmation Class beginning in January 2024.

Lynne stated that six adults per week are needed to teach this fall; Safe Church requires two unrelated adults per classroom. If we don't have six adults, three teachers per class and a floater going between classrooms would work.

A discussion took place regarding Safe Church classes. Father Chip noted that the sessions are available online for those folks who need to be recertified. A suggestion was made to give names of prospective students to vestry members so that they can contact parents regarding their children attending Sunday School in the fall.

4. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the minutes as written from the May 9, 2023 Vestry meeting.

5. Financial Reports

Treasurer Larry Young discussed the Fund Balance Analysis and Cash Reconciliation Report - May 31, 2023. The report shows the net worth of our five funds. The Operating Fund began with a net worth of \$20,000 and, year to date, has had a loss of \$16,000. Currently, the balance is \$3,200. A factor that stopped the loss from being greater was an increase in pledge payments during that time period. Larry noted that the deficit for this year will probably be in the area of \$26,000-\$30,000. He explained that utilities continue to be high, we do not have more PPE loan money coming in, and the liquidation from the Fund-It account has been completed.

A question was asked regarding the dispersal of the funds from the Red Door of Grace Food Pantry. It had been thought that the Five Corner Food Pantry in Broad Brook had closed. However, several vestry members confirmed that it is still open. The vestry had previously voted that the funds from Red Door were to go to organizations helping to stop food insecurity. Debbie Hutchinson made a motion that the vestry contribute \$200 to the Five Corners Food Pantry. No further discussion took place and the motion passed unanimously.

Larry stated that we currently have a budget with a negative outcome, and nothing happened this month to change that projection. Larry explained that he is almost done completing a three-year projection of our finances for the Diocese. He noted that because of Father Chip's retirement, we will no longer be paying his salary which will help with the negative budget. The vestry thanked Larry for his dedication and hard work for Grace Church.

Larry stated that he has given one Parish Awareness update concerning the Church's finances. He will give another update during the second quarter in July.

6. Old Business

a. Streaming Update

David Stender reported that folks listening to the Sunday services on Zoom can only hear the voices of people wearing mics and no music at all. A proposal for fixing the problem was submitted to the Church from the company that installed the sound system, Wasserman Audio. The first proposal would be to install a 2-stage power strip to stop the ground hum for a cost of about \$320. Mark Child is in favor of that. The second proposal would make it possible for folks listening on Zoom to hear the music and the singing. One method would cost \$2955 and the other would cost \$4600. The more expensive would include moving the two mikes above the choir into a piano formation. This would produce better quality.

David made a motion to spend \$320 from the Tuttle Fund to stop the ground hum from the organ. The motion passed unanimously.

David proposed talking to other churches to see how they handled their Zoom instrumentation and possibly have another company evaluate our situation. A second opinion would give us more information. It was suggested that Wasserman be contacted regarding the quality of their work.

b. Water Damage

Larry reported that Nunes Plumbing finally came back to check the pipes for further damage. At that time, four more cracks were detected and fixed. The system appears to be holding and we now have heat in the nursery area and lower parish hall. Serv-Pro is negotiating with our insurance company regarding the price for the clean-up work and cutting the walls. We have received a check for \$20,000 from the insurance company and we have currently paid out about \$1800. Larry explained that an additional blower unit that is part of the heating system is too old and needs to be replaced. He is going to investigate whether the insurance will cover that as well.

Larry stated that the pipes should be insulated, and the outside walls sealed up before the inside walls are closed and painted. It is possible that the insurance company will not cover the cost to insulate the walls.

c. Furniture in Music Room Update

Debbie reported that she is hoping to procure some parlor furniture from St. Mary's in Manchester (which is closing) to help beautify the Music Room and make it into more of a multi-purpose room.

d. Archives Storage/Work Area

The true archives have been moved to the Tuttle House and Jenny Hawran continues to work on them.

7. New Business

a. Report of Mini Vestry Retreat

Debbie presented a report concerning the results of the vote taken at the mini-Vestry retreat. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the results and the retreat. Debbie stated that it is clear that people want to protect the Church, make it handicapped accessible and get it up to code. She raised the question of whether the Vestry is willing to vote on and adopt architect Jim Vance's red list of projects to begin immediately. Ken Roach made a motion to accept the red line list presented by Jim Vance. The motion was voted on and it passed.

b. Transition Process Update

Father Chip stated that he knows Father Hamer who will be our supply priest for services from July 1st – Aug. 30th. After that, he will be our supply administrator from Sept. 1st until Dec. 31st. The vestry needs to approve the Warden, Junior Warden and the Treasurer to act as the Administrative Finance Committee; this group will look at large expenses and bring them to the vestry for approval. The vestry does not need to approve expenses less than \$500. Expenses over \$500 need to be voted on by the vestry. Larry is putting together the finances for three years going forward; the Diocese will use this to determine what we can spend on a new priest.

c. Vestry Meetings in July/August

After a brief discussion, the vestry decided to meet during the summer months.

Debbie stated that Father Hamer would like to meet with the vestry. He proposed either an evening meeting on July 7th or a morning meeting on July 8th. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the meeting will take place on July 7th at 7 pm.

8. Questions, Concerns and Comments

a. Father Chip

At this time, Father Chip spoke to the vestry regarding his retirement and his time with us at Grace. He also spoke about his thoughts concerning the Church as we move forward without him. A lengthy discussion took place with Father Chip regarding his comments and thoughts.

With no further business before the vestry, Father Chip made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried. Father Chip led the vestry in saying a closing prayer.

JoAnne McLeod, Clerk