

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Windsor, Connecticut

July 11, 2023

Call to Order

Attendance

Present: William (Harvey) Harvey, Susan Burgdorf, Katrina Woodhouse, Margaret Shields, Father Don, Chuck Drake, JoAnne McLeod, Larry Young, David Stender, Andrea Anderson, Debbie Hutchinson, and Ken Roach.

Absent: Ian Rickard, Steve Bethke, Lois Bethke, Andrew Hutchinson, and Carol Blais.

1. Opening Prayers

The July 11, 2023, Vestry Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with an Opening Prayer by Senior Warden Debbie Hutchinson.

2. Additions/Deletions to Agenda

a. Old Business

Delete e. Selling Organ Pipes.

b. New Business

d. New Committees

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the minutes as written from the June 20, 2023 Vestry meeting.

4. Financial Reports

Treasurer Larry Young presented the Fund Balance Analysis and Cash Reconciliation Through June 30, 2023 report and the Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual report. He explained the nature of the funds for the benefit of Father Don. Larry went on to note that the summer report does not reflect as many expenses due to lower summer utility bills, and Melissa Rickard on vacation. Beginning in September, there will be decreased personnel expenses due to the retirement of Father Chip.

Larry went on to say that the deficit at this time is not as great as projected due to parishioner pledges; we are halfway through the year and have received about 56% of our parishioner revenue. This amount also includes non-pledged contributions. If revenues continue at this level, Larry anticipates that the deficit will not be quite as large as he predicted.

Larry also presented the 2023 Through 2026 Financial Projections report that he prepared for the Diocese. This report will help the Diocese determine how much we can afford to pay a new priest. Larry explained to the vestry how he calculated his projections. A discussion also took place regarding summer expenditures for personnel.

5. Old Business

a. Streaming Update

Dave Stender reported that recent thunderstorms affected the computer service to the Church. There also appears to be a problem with the routers and where the wi-fi is going. The ATEM needs to be reset. As a result of these issues, the printer is currently not working.

Dave also addressed the organ issues. At the June meeting, the vestry approved a gadget to stop the organ hum. However, since that meeting, Mark Child has found a different and less expensive gadget to fix the problem. The organ needs to interface with the speakers. There is a 3-year warranty on the current speakers. A credit will be received, and Mark will purchase a new one. Dave also said that we will stream through YouTube which will save the \$5,000 expenditure discussed in June.

b. Sunday School and Education Ministry

Debbie reported that Lynne Rhodes sent out a list of prospective students to vestry members so their parents could be called regarding the children attending Sunday School in the fall. She also included talking points for the conversations. Not all vestry members received the list of students so Debbie will speak to Lynne regarding this. Father Don will reach out to the Safe Church liaison at the Diocese so that training can take place as soon as possible.

c. Water Damage

Larry reported that nothing has changed regarding repairing the damage in the nursery. Discussions continue to take place between Serv-Pro and the insurance company. Hopefully, the two companies can reach a decision as to what will be covered by insurance. Chuck Drake volunteered to call Lon Pelton so that he can evaluate the cause of leaks in the window or foundation of the Lower Parish Hall.

d. Furniture in Music Room Update

Debbie Hutchinson reported that there is no update at this time.

e. Archives Storage/ Work Area

Debbie reported that Jenny Hawran is continuing to work on preserving our archives. A former member of the parish, Lee Tryon, would like to gift the Church many archival documents and items that his family has had for many years. It was suggested that a formal presentation could take place when we receive the items.

f. Update on Transition Process

Father Don stated that we are in the preliminary stage of the process. After Larry submits the financial projections, Debbie will meet with Amber, our representative from the Diocese. We will need a search committee to hire a new priest. The Diocese controls the process. A discussion took place regarding how a new priest is called.

6. New Business

a. Meetings

The August Vestry meeting will be held on August 8th. The Vestry Retreat will take place on August 11-12. The hours on the 11th will be 6 pm – 9 pm and a working dinner will take place. The retreat will resume on the 12th from 8:30 – 2 pm. Breakfast and lunch will be served. Dave Stender has booked a room at the University of Hartford for the retreat.

b. Review/Audit of Covid-era Practices

Dave Stender discussed reviewing practices that were put in place during Covid. It was decided that the small bottles of hand sanitizer placed in the pews will be removed and the larger bottles at the church entrances will remain. Father Don stated that the Diocese has made decisions regarding Holy Communion. We will no longer use individual plastic cups of wine; we will return to using a single chalice. Grape juice will also be available for those who do not partake in wine. The small kits for communion will no longer be used. Father Don will write a message to the parish informing them of these changes.

c. Inclusion of Music in the Bulletin

A discussion took place regarding how much time Bonnie spends on the bulletin, especially cutting and pasting the music for each Sunday. It was agreed that we will begin using the Hymnals on August 6th. Dave Stender volunteered to write a notification to the parish to explain the change.

d. New Committees

Debbie Hutchinson stated that she would like to initiate an executive committee to provide her with support and to discuss new ideas. Father Hamer noted that other parishes have this committee, and it is usually made up of the wardens, treasurer, and clerk. Debbie also stated that we need a Building and Grounds Committee and a Communications Committee. The Building and Grounds Committee would oversee the maintenance of the Church. Larry Young and Chuck Drake volunteered to work on this committee. The Communications Committee would help to coordinate pictures, articles, and communication from the church; this would include both internal and external communication. Dave Stender and JoAnne McLeod volunteered to help Debbie on this committee. Debbie will write a communication to the parish explaining the two committees and asking folks to volunteer for either one.

7. Questions and Comments

Father Hamer discussed several ideas with the vestry. He noted that as we move forward, we should keep in mind that we are talking about the Church of the future. We need to look at other resources that speak to people in a different voice. He also stated that the idea of year-round stewardship needs to be discussed and made a focal point. Father Hamer also mentioned how much he enjoyed meeting the congregation during his first service with Grace.

With no further business before the vestry, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried. Debbie Hutchinson led the vestry in saying a closing prayer.

JoAnne McLeod, Clerk