

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Windsor, Connecticut

February 13, 2024

Call to Order

Attendance

Present: Larry Young, Ken Roach, Katrina Woodhouse, Margaret Shields, Debbie Hutchinson, Linda Rickard, JoAnne McLeod, John Carpenter, and David Stender.

Absent: Susan Burgdorf, Andrea Anderson, and Chuck Drake.

1. **Opening Prayers**

The February 13, 2024, Vestry Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. with an Opening Prayer led by Senior Warden Debbie Hutchinson.

2. **Additions/Deletions to Agenda**

5. **Old Business**

f. **Website Update** (add)

6. **New Business**

f. **Discussion about Aging Churches** (add)

8. **Executive Session** (add)

A motion was made and seconded to accept the amended agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the minutes as written from the January 21, 2024 Vestry meeting.

4. **Financial Report & Update on By-Laws**

Treasurer Larry Young withdrew the financial report that he had previously emailed to the vestry; an error was discovered in the report. Larry will make the necessary corrections and share his report at the next meeting. A question was asked about the Operating Fund and Larry explained how funds are placed in that account.

Larry also reported that he had rewritten the By-laws correcting errors that he had found. He noted that he remained true to the by-laws that had been approved at the Annual Meeting. He made slight wording changes and corrected typographical errors.

Senior Warden Debbie Hutchinson stated that she felt a financial committee should be established by the end of the first quarter. Larry stated that he felt an assistant to the Treasurer was definitely needed in order for someone to be able to fulfill Larry's duties should he be unable to perform them. It was also noted that succession training needs to be in place for administrative and leadership roles in the Church.

5. Old Business

a. Stewardship Update

Stewardship Chairperson Andrea Anderson was unable to attend the meeting. The Stewardship Update will take place during the March meeting.

Debbie Hutchinson stated that we need to determine exactly which parishioners are members of the Church. A welcome committee needs to be established and we need to determine the progress of the folks who are changing the various prayer cards and new parishioner envelopes in the pews. In a follow-up discussion, it was suggested that a current directory needs to be emailed to all parishioners at the start of each new year.

b. Building & Grounds Update

1. Roster of Activities

Larry reported that he is still waiting for ServPro to revise their proposal for the work in the Nursery. He asked them to relocate pipes inside the walls and to add additional insulation in the walls. He is trying to have their bid match the \$8500 payment we received from the insurance company so that we have most of our \$5000 deductible covered.

2. Inventory Volunteers

Larry reported that 10-12 folks have volunteered to assist with the inventory. Larry will be consulting with the insurance company regarding what they would like included and he will work out a system for completing the inventory.

c. Stewardship Realty

David Stender reported that he and Katrina Woodhouse met with Dan Panitz from Stewardship Realty and they walked out campus together. Katrina noted that she had emailed Dan the most current condition assessment completed for the Church. Dave noted that we are still waiting to hear back from the company.

d. Ramp Update

David Stender reported that he has received 2 out of 3 requested bids regarding the design for the handicap ramp. A discussion took place regarding whether an architect or builder is needed to make the design. It was decided that other contractors and builders will be pursued regarding the project.

e. Reflections and Take Aways from Bishop Mello's Visit

The vestry was unanimous in their positive feelings regarding the Bishop's visit. In a further discussion, it was noted that the parish needs to be continuously updated regarding our progress in calling a new Priest. Debbie stated that Father Don will reach out to Canon Hodab regarding starting our search.

Before our call for a new priest begins, our website needs to be complete. Debbie reported that Jenny Hawran, our website designer, needs material in various areas. Planned Giving, the Altar Guild, and the ECW need to provide a brief description and photos. Ken Roach was asked to pull together information regarding the history of Grace and the stained glass windows. Much of this information is currently available and needs to be pulled together for the website. New vestry members need to submit a photo and brief write-up regarding what Grace Church means to them. A discussion took place about whether a link requesting donations of Time, Talent and/or Treasure should be included in the website; it was decided to make that inclusion.

6. New Business

a. Ash Wednesday & Lent

Debbie reported that she, John Carpenter, and Jane Cimbak will be administering ashes from 12-1 p.m for Ashes to Go on Ash Wednesday. A service of Holy Eucharist will take place at 7 p.m.

b. Adult Formation Lenten Suppers

Debbie reported that she will be hosting Adult Formation Lenten Suppers beginning next Wednesday. A light supper of soup and bread will be served and participants will watch and discuss selected episodes from the series The Chosen. Discussions will center on the messages viewed and translating them to our faith. The program will continue for six weeks and take place on Wednesdays from 6:30-8 p.m. A sign-up sheet will be placed in the Great Hall during Coffee Hours.

c. South Park Inn

Margaret Shields reported that she is starting up the South Park Inn outreach program. Debbie noted that we are waiting for the Inn to give us dates regarding when they would like us to prepare and deliver meals. A discussion took place regarding the food that would be served and where it will be prepared.

d. Reverence in the Church

A discussion took place regarding showing reverence during the Church services and behavior that should take place in the Church in general. Debbie has volunteered to speak to the families of those involved so that all can have a meaningful experience at Grace.

e. St. John's Visit on March 3rd

Debbie reported that St. John's Episcopal Church in East Windsor is considering merging with Grace or another Episcopal Church in the area. Leadership members of their Church will attend a Holy Eucharist service at Grace on March 3rd and they are also planning on attending a future vestry meeting.

f. Discussion about Aging Churches

A discussion took place regarding the recent collapse of a church in New London and the condition of aging churches. It was noted that sometime prior to Covid, an extensive structural review of Grace took place. Debbie noted three items should come out of this collapse: the town should be engaged as to how they can help us to maintain our aging historic building; what is the Diocese doing to help parishes maintain their aging buildings; and what is the state doing to help preserve these iconic structures. A further discussion took place regarding a capital campaign and how one is needed prior to asking for grants and/or donations.

7. Executive Session

A motion was made and seconded for the meeting to go into Executive Session. Following a discussion, a motion was made and seconded for the vestry to come out of Executive Session.

8. Closing Thoughts, Question, Concerns and/or Comments

- JoAnne McLeod read a text from Christian Education Director Lynn Rhodes. Lynn thanked the vestry for their support for Sunday School over the past 10 years. Lynn will be retiring from her role at the end of the school year. The vestry thanks Lynn heartily and is very appreciative for her years of dedicated service to the children of Grace. A search for a new director and additional teachers will take place in the near future.

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the vestry, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried. Debbie Hutchinson led the vestry in saying a closing prayer.

JoAnne McLeod, Clerk