

Vestry Meeting Minutes
Grace and Holy Trinity Church
Richmond, Virginia
June 9, 2020

VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL

Members Present: Thomas Ewers, Barbara Derry, Lisa Dawson, Bill Perkins, Rosalie West, Lara Wulff, Glenn Moore, Todd Pawson, Elaine Quinn, Nancy Trego, Carl Blackwell, Bev Eggleston, Martin Erb, Jodie Pully, Kathleen Thomas, Bill Queen (Interim Rector), and David Lewis (non-voting Register)

Members Absent: David Hetherington

Staff Present: Kim Reinholz and Beth Melcher Davis

Guests: Mike Joyce

Opening Prayer – Lord’s Prayer

At 5:03PM, Bill Queen called the meeting to order and a quorum was declared. The Vestry said the Lord’s Prayer in unison.

Amend & Adopt Agenda

Item 6b of the pre-distributed agenda (about youth planning for 2020-2021) was removed. An item relating to the interim rector’s contract was added as item 13, after the concluding prayer.

A motion to accept the amended agenda was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Adoption of 5/12/2020 Vestry Minutes

A motion to accept the unamended minutes from the May meeting was made, seconded and unanimously carried.

Discussion & Adoption of Financial Reports

See printed report. Mike Joyce attended to review the financial information for the year to date. He noted the strong numbers for pledged income and warned that non-pledged gifts would likely come in short of budget.

Discussion followed concerning ways to increase non-pledged gifts during church closure, Red Door fund-raising, the challenges faced by our Red Door guests, the funding source for the new technology support person, how COVID-19 might spur donations, and the dispersal of outreach grants. Half of the budgeted grant to Circles will be made by the end of the month. The incoming seminarian will help review the seven outreach grant applications before money is dispersed in July.

A motion to accept the financial reports was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous vote.

Assistant organist

See Beth Davis's printed report. With Larry Heath's departure, the need for an assistant organist arises.

Discussion focused on finding candidates, auditioning the candidates on our own organ amidst church closure, the timeline for candidate selection, and a start date after resumption of face-to-face worship, which would be when an assistant becomes necessary.

The Vestry was satisfied that Beth has the selection process well in hand to fill this position under the same terms as the previous contract. The Senior Warden will follow-up with Beth about the Vestry's discussion and next steps.

Children and Youth Report

See Aaron Davis's printed report. Questions and discussion from the Vestry concerned responses to the youth meditation series. The Associate Rector encouraged more responses in these meditations as we plan youth formation activities.

Interim Rector's Report

See Bill Queen's printed report. The Interim Rector offered his views on the complex guidelines for re-opening and the high responsibilities the Vestry has in making a prayerful decision about when face-to-face worship would resume.

Discussion centered on diocesan re-opening guidelines, practical steps we need to take to meet the requirements, the continued offering of online worship after regathering, what we might offer in addition to online services, the changes to our worship after reopening (no communion or singing), and how these changes would affect the customarily joyous celebration of worship together. The use of ZIP code groups, house church and one-to-one meetings, and calls to connect these people were also discussed.

Discussion moved to recent protests in Richmond and our parish's response to them and to racism. Rather than thinking of a new program, Bill recommends channeling parish energy into Circles, an up-and-running program addressing the deep causes of inequality. Additional options were discussed as was the need to maintain clear communication for people who want to help.

Associate Rector's Report

See Kim Reinholz's printed report. The Associate Rector stressed the need for Grace and Holy Trinity Church to be mindful of its history and demographics in its intentional responses to racism and recent protests.

Discussion focused on parishioners' responses to racial discrimination and their desire to effect change beyond recent protests in our city. In addition to missions and bridges already in place, like Circles, Kim will facilitate ten sessions in the Sacred Ground dialogue series beginning on

25 June. She drew attention to the Poor People's Campaign (led by William Barber and Melanie Mullen and to which the Presiding Bishop has often referred) as a logical extension of the moral implications of Black Lives Matter.

Sr Warden's Report

As liaison to the Discernment Committee, the Senior Warden updated the Vestry on the parish profile's listing on the diocesan website.

Discussion concerned the timeframe for interviews and how many other parishes are in the process of receiving names. The Discernment Committee will not interview until the posting closes in late July or the beginning of August. Although 19 other parishes were receiving names, few postings appeared similar to that of G&HTC.

Upcoming Date

The Vestry will meet on 14 July at 5PM, likely in an online format.

Vestry member to video summarize vestry meeting

Lisa Dawson volunteered to record the video summary.

Concluding Prayer

Bill Queen led the Vestry in prayerful consideration of the following Bible verses at the intersection of our faith and current events:

Justice and only justice shall you pursue. (Deuteronomy 16:20)

Love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18, Mark 12:31 *et passim*)

The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. (Psalm 103:6)

Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed. (Isaiah 1:16-17)

I the LORD love justice. (Isaiah 61:8)

Let justice roll down like waters. (Amos 6:24)

What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

Interim Rector's Letter of Agreement

Because the search for a rector is likely to continue into September, and possibly beyond, and because the current agreement with the interim rector runs only through August and requires 60-days' notice, the Senior Warden recommended extending the current agreement, on a month-to-month basis, through September.

Barbara Derry moved to extend the agreement. Elaine Quinn seconded the motion, and the Vestry approved it in a unanimous vote.