

Grace Church Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2017

Call to Order: Father Matt called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Roll Call: Barbara Rudy, Kathryn Calame, Pam Freeman, Richard Lucal, Beth Willis, Evelyn Garzetta, Kyle Van De Water, Lynda Boisse, Kristin Martin

Missing: Nanci Kryzak, Cathy Shanks, John Lacey (at Lunch Box)

Clergy: Father Matt Calkins

Opening Prayer and Devotion - Richard Lucal led the opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

February 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes approved.

Readings:

Father Matt led a discussion of chapter one of the book *The Episcopal Way*. Each vestry member stated what he or she thought it meant to be an Episcopalian. The author of *The Episcopal Way* – Eric Law, also wrote the book *Holy Currencies* that we read last year. Some people commented that it meant being inclusive, democratic, flexible, adaptive, and engaging in mind and body. In the Episcopal Church it is okay to grow, and question, and evolve in our faith. Father Matt stated the Episcopal way is three-legged; the authority rests on scripture, tradition, and reason. He suggested we write a spiritual biography and share it with the vestry if desired.

Richard Lucal asked us to think about why the church is declining in parishioners and pledging. Father Matt said there is a lot of research going on about this question. It is a very complex subject. It is worth looking into more.

Please read Chapter 2 for discussion at next month's meeting.

Father Matt presented the Treasurer's Report in absence of Cathy Shanks:

Budget

Father Matt gave a brief overview of the operating budget and income report. A full report will be presented next month. Next month we will have the results of the first quarter. The Finance Committee will be meeting next month as well.

Operating Budget: The **year to date** pledge/plate/support is strong. We have received \$57,947 in pledge, plate and support. Some of the received money is the result of pre-paid pledges. The dividend on our investments of \$6,258.27 has been received. We have also received the Dyson Grant of \$60,000 - a major thank you. The Tribute Garden Grant comes in at the very end. We have received some income from Gracie's Attic and Parish Hall Rental. The fuel oil and electric have been higher than last year. Program expenses and salary expenses are inline. The quarterly assessment has not been paid yet. Our concerns are pledges, which are a little low, and we need to keep an eye on them.

Account Balances: The total budget includes restricted accounts – some for the stained glass window, etc. Others fund programs such as EPIC, Grace Latino Outreach, and the Grace Community Preschool. The vicarage carry's it own with the rental income. The preschool was down in tuition this year, however it may have been as result of the renovations going on. The renovations, funded by a grant through a very generous family, are now being completed and are beautiful. All are encouraged to take a tour of the new preschool.

Grace Latino Outreach Report: Evelyn Garzetta reported that Grace Latino Outreach is doing well. On April 6, 2017 there will be a meeting to discuss how to keep the Latino and immigrant community safe and to assess their needs. At the meeting they will put together a list to hand out which will include a list of laws such as wearing a seat belt and no spitting on sidewalks. These are things that we do not think about but it could get folks arrested if unaware. Evelyn is also working with the DC Legislators to talk about a "sanctuary city." Evelyn doesn't like the phrase "sanctuary city." Episcopal Charities gave \$17,100. We now have a contract with Berkshire Taconic.

EPIC Report: EPIC has applied for a Youth Opportunity Grant through Episcopal Charities for an additional \$9,850. A portion of the funds would be used for one undergraduate intern from Vassar College. An advisory board is going to be created for EPIC.

Stewardship Report:

We are still waiting on a new Stewardship Chair.

Fundraising Committee Report:

Pam Freeman announced the 11th Annual Golf & Dinner Benefit. The event will take place on Monday, July 17th, 2017 at the Millbrook Golf & Tennis Club. This year we will honor parishioner Connie Kinsey. The guest speaker will be Fred Apers, Executive Director of Cardinal Hayes Home for Children, Millbrook, NY. The vestry was encouraged to help with the event by finding items to auction off, recruiting sponsors, and recruiting golfers. All help is appreciated. The current committee consists of Robin and Doug Capers, Pam Freeman, and Betty Rae Nittiskie. Lynda Boisse offered to join the committee, and Barbara Rudy offered to help the day of the event. This is our largest fundraiser of the year and vital to our budget. The first official meeting will be April 1, 2017.

Parochial Report:

The 2016 Parochial Report has been submitted (copies were handed out). The total active baptized number of members was 212. This represents the average annual increase of 10-15%.

Buildings & Grounds Report:

Father Matt discussed the Buildings & Grounds Report submitted by Bill Hogan. The committee is suggesting improvements to the sound system in the church as well as streaming live services. The possibility of installing a hearing-loop system for the hearing impaired is also being considered.

Improvements to the Memorial Garden were also proposed. This process would be accomplished over a couple of years. New plantings would be added. The fence may be removed to make the area more inviting to people passing by the church. It was suggested that we check to see who donated the fence to be sure they wouldn't be offended by the removal. A proposal was submitted by Twin Brooks Gardens to the committee.

Richard Lucal asked about the tree stumps that have not been removed from the property. Father Matt stated that one of the stumps might be used to make a picnic table. Richard pointed out that a higher fence might be necessary in the future to keep Zoe (Father Matt's dog) in the yard. The entrance to the office needs to be painted.

Rector's Report:

Father Matt pointed out the calendar items listed in the agenda. Please note the upcoming event at Innisfree Garden on May 21st. St. Peter's will not be able to participate this year. Father Matt asked if anyone knew of a person from the Buddhist faith that could participate; Richard Lucal will send him contact information for someone he knows. Father Matt also asked that we plan on attending lunch when the Bishop visits on June 11th. All vestry members should be confirmed as Episcopalians. If you would like to be confirmed during the June 11th visit please let Father Matt know. Kyle Van De Water will help organize Millbrook Community day in September and will be the liaison for the churches. The Parish Retreat will be on October 7 & 8.

Warden's Report:

Renewal Works Committee – Kathryn Calame stated that two of the three workshops have taken place so far. More information will be provided in the near future. No big surprises are expected.

Barbary Rudy talked about the recent trip to Masjid Al Noor Mosque. Twenty-five to thirty people attended the prayer service. Dr. Umar M. Ahmad said the Muslim community is more afraid of the general population than vice versa.

Grace Story:

In moment of grace, Kathryn Calame stated that Barney has been enjoying the Lenten Reflections. Father Matt announced that Easter Reflections by the children are forthcoming.

The meeting was adjourned at 1 p.m. The next meeting will be on April 30, 2017. (5th Sunday)

Submitted by: Pam Freeman, Clerk