

Grace Church Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2017

Call to Order: Father Matt called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Roll Call: Kathryn Calame, Pam Freeman, Nanci Kryzak, Cathy Shanks, Lynda Boisse, Evelyn Garzetta, Richard Lucal, Barbara Rudy, Beth Willis

Missing: Kyle Van De Water, John Lacey

Clergy: Father Matt Calkins

Opening Prayer and Devotion – Evelyn Garzetta read the opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

November 15, 2017 Meeting Minutes approved.

Reflections:

Father Matt opened the meeting with Advent and Christmas reflections. The vestry was asked to reflect on three significant ministries that our congregation engages with loving our neighbors within and outside of church. The ministries discussed were Grace Latino Outreach, the Food Pantry & Lunch Box, and EPIC.

It was determined of these three ministries GLO is the oldest; started by Rev. Doug Fisher, Jack Banning, and Walter Cadette. They partnered with BOCES to start the first ESL class at Grace. Doug Fisher gave many sermons on the need for Grace to reach out to the Latino community; the vestry and parishioners said yes and Evelyn Garzetta was brought on board. Evelyn has gained the trust of the Latino community over the years and the ministry has grown. As a result, cultural barriers have been broken down and the people of Grace have made many new friends and grown spiritually.

The idea of the food pantry came from Episcopal Charities. Episcopal Charities approached Rev. Doug Fisher, of Grace Church and Rev. Betsy Fisher, of St. Thomas Church to determine if a food pantry was needed in the area. This resulted in a grant from Episcopal Charities to build a food pantry at St. Thomas church. Evelyn Garzetta was the first person to manage the food pantry, followed by Robin Capers. Since the initial opening a vegetable garden has been added and local farmers bring baskets of vegetables and fruit often during the summer. Denis Freeman is taking over the management of the food pantry as of December 2017. In addition to the food pantry, Grace Church has served at the Dutchess Outreach Lunch Box Program in Poughkeepsie for many years, and GLO sponsors a Thanksgiving Dinner each year. The food programs have helped many people by providing nourishment for families, and our youth have learned a great deal about helping others in need and have enjoyed the experience.

The EPIC (Engaging People in Change) program was originated by Rev. Richard Witt, of Rural & Migrant Ministry. Rev. Witt came to Rev. Matt Calkins and suggested Grace Church sponsor this leadership program for rural and immigrant high school students in Eastern Dutchess County. Katherine Mustello was part of the initial meetings with Father's Matt and Richard. Grace Church agreed, and through Rev. Witt Abby Nathanson was hired as the Program Director. In the beginning Abby had difficulty being received by the local schools' due to the unfamiliarity of the program, but now many of the guidance counselors reach out to Abby in hopes to connect their students with EPIC.

Treasurer's Report:

Cathy Shanks presented the Treasurer's Report. The report is up-to-date as of 12/12/17. There was some discussion about prepaid pledges and the accounting. It was determined that the prepaid pledges that are received prior to the end of the year, but intended for the upcoming year should be spent until the following year if possible. As of the current statement we have received \$5000 in prepaid pledges.

The Account Balances page was discussed. Our income and expenses are close. The current income is \$276,738 and the current expenses are \$249,665. Some work has been done on the organ but more work will be completed this month. Foley – Baker, an organ maintenance company, will be accessing and repairing our organ on December 18th. The costs for the repairs are anticipated to be \$2000 and then \$500 twice a year. Other minor repairs were made this year, but it didn't come out of the capital budget.

Cathy noted that the prior tenant of the vicarage did not pay the water/sewer bill and it ended up being assessed onto the taxes. Cathy noted money was withheld from their security. Going forward, the Church is paying the water/sewer bill and then is getting reimbursed from the tenant. This will make sure nothing will get put onto the taxes.

The Finance Committee including Kurt Barnes, Larry Graham, Matt Calkins, Kyle Van De Water, Richard Lucal, and Cathy Shanks recently met to work on the draft 2018 budget. The following items were discussed: The salaries reflect a 0% raise. Most of the budgeted numbers have been rolled over from last year. We will be looking for an alternative auditor who would be less expensive. The pledge income has been adjusted to \$170,000, which should be a realistic number. The Dyson and Tribute Gardens are in line with last year. The golf tournament will hopefully yield the same. Richard Lucal pointed out that the current rate of inflation is 2% and should be taken into consideration. Fr. Matt stated we are trying to cut some expenses with energy and telephone costs, and we are hoping to increase our income with the use of the parish hall facility. On the line item – Income from Programs we will receive \$5000 for pre-school support, in prior years they were unable to contribute. Memorials are unpredictable. GLO, EPIC, and Preschool, are primarily funded by grants.

Kathryn Calame motioned to accept the budget, seconded by Barbara Rudy. All approved.

Cathy Shanks motioned to approve the renewal of our line of credit with the Bank of Millbrook in the amount of \$50,000. People authorized to sign are Catherine Shanks, Matthew Calkins, Barbara Rudy, and Kathryn Calame. All approved. Cathy Shanks and Pam Freeman signed the request document.

Stewardship Update:

Kathryn Calame stated that we have lost two pledge families since last year (Connie Kinsey and the Capers) and gained four families. As of today we have received 48 pledges of the anticipated 72 – 16 of those have increased their pledges, and only one has decreased their pledge. 33% have increased their pledges. Beth noted that we had less people at the Consecration Sunday Pot Luck Lunch.

Kathryn and Barbara sent a reminder email to people who had pledged last year and hadn't pledged yet this year. Also e-pledging has been encouraged and maybe having tokens available to place in the collection plate. A suggestion box will be available at the annual meeting for comments or questions. Folks will be asked if they prefer the potluck lunch or the catered lunch on Consecration Sunday.

Grace Year:

Matt Calkins and Abby Nathanson presented a packet detailing Grace Year. The packet includes Abby's time line and job descriptions. Grace Year Fellows will hold the following Praxis positions:

- Cary Institute, work with scientist Dr. Steward Pickett to study urban tree canopies
- Cardinal Hayes – direct care, education, residential administration, and social media and outreach
- North East Community Center – after school program at Webutuck, and support local farmer's markets and community garden
- GLO and EPIC – attend and provide transportation to EPIC meetings and assist GLO work
- TBA – possibly assist with Food, Farm & Faith.

Abby's Timeline:

- February and March: Visit colleges
- March: EPIC training at Trinity Retreat Center
- April: Applications close, interviews schedule

- May: Fellows notified
- May 15: Fellows' acceptances required
- June: Site partners contracts due
- July: Vicarage becomes available for repairs and preparation for arrival of Fellows.
- August 1: Fellows arrive

**Abby will be in Guatemala for the next couple of weeks. The Vestry is requested to read through the packet and be prepared to vote at the January Vestry Meeting on whether or not to move forward with Grace Year. If you have any questions please email Father Matt.

Rectors Report:

Buildings and Grounds: The brick mortar has been repaired to the chapel. Fletcher Coddington of Arrowsmith Forge will prepare a mock-up of a cross for possible installation in the memorial garden.

Vestry Changes:

The following vestry members need to be replaced at the end of 2017: John Lacy (completing 3-year term), Kristin Martin (resigned), Kyle Van De Water (taking a 6 month leave of absence). Pam Freeman will remain on Vestry but will not continue Clerk (2 years served) duties effective January 2018. Barbara Rudy stated that if no one would like to take on the Clerk duties the Vestry members would take turns recording the minutes.

Ida Leung and Evelyn will remain as delegates to go to the Diocese in 2018.

Annual Meeting: January 28, 2018:

Please forward all reports to Father Matt for the Grace Annual Meeting as soon as possible.

March 23 & 24, 2018: Retreat. Vestry members were asked to sign up for one or both days.

Annual Blessing our Sacred Places: April 29, 2018:

The annual Blessing our Sacred Places will take place on April 29, 2018.

Annual Golf Fundraiser:

The annual Grace Millbrook Golf Tournament will take place on July 9, 2018.

Warden's Report:

Barbara Rudy and Kathryn Calame will be meeting with committees to discuss possible solutions to the stress many are feeling as a result of fewer people helping.

The next Vestry meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 17, 2018.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. Respectfully submitted by Pam Freeman, Clerk