

**Grace Memorial Episcopal Church**

**Vestry Meeting**

**February 14, 2017**

**Minutes**

**Members of the Vestry Present**

Gale Beagle  
Nancy Entriakin  
Kelly Goodrich  
Avril Johnson  
Susan Little  
Sharon Loomis-Malin  
Steve Lovett  
Charlene McGee  
Judy Prosper  
James Smith  
Rebecca Wong

**Members of the Vestry Absent**

Clare Soennichsen  
(position vacant)

**Clergy Present**

The Rev. Martin Elfert

**Others Present**

Warren Burkeholder  
Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk

An e-mail vote was taken prior to the February 14<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding the slate of new vestry members. The proposed slate for 3-year terms is Elyssa de la Cruz, David Goodrich, Phillip Koop, and Peyton Snead; Nora McLaughlin is proposed for a 2-year term. Sharon made a motion to accept the slate as presented, and the motion was seconded by Nancy. The motion was unanimously approved.

**1. Formation**

1.1 Opening Prayers

The meeting was called to order by Kelly at 6:15pm. Martin read the poem "Reading to My Kids" by Kevin Carey and followed with an opening prayer.

## **2. Minutes and Agenda**

### 2.1 Approval of the Minutes

- Martin noted a correction was needed to the December minutes (the Vestry did not meet in January): his housing allowance is not called "SHU" and the reference can be deleted. A motion was made by Becky and seconded by Judy to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

## **3. Items**

### 3.1 March Concert

- Warren will begin informing the parish of the campaign to raise funds to repair the organ. There is currently \$22,000 in the organ repair fund, and the Bond Organ Company will be starting soon with the releathering phase of the repairs. It is anticipated 250 seats can be provided for the concert on March 30<sup>th</sup> by using all parts of the church. 6 premium seats will be held for possible sponsors. So far, 87 tickets have been sold, and 50 more need to be sold to reach the break-even point. Warren may review the seating with Paul Parker to determine if additional premium seats can be designated. A detailed record of the sold tickets is being kept by Warren. When asked about concert expenses, he said, other than the musicians' fee, the costs are anticipated to be minimal. Advertising is being done on the classical station, through Portland Baroque Orchestra, and with others as well. The program will be about 90 minutes with a brief interval, and possibly a meet and greet with the musicians afterwards. The parking will be controlled and monitored for the concert and special designated spots provided for premium ticket holders. He also said housing was needed for the musicians; Susan and Martin offered to be hosts, and this will provide the needed accommodation.

### 3.2 Pledge Update and Paddle Raise Funds

- Avril reported about \$218,000 has been received in pledges for 2016, which is slightly less than the previous year but still very close. She had George Fleming review the report, and he commented the paddle raise from the auction should pay for 1/3 of the auction expenses as it contributed about 1/3 of the total amount raised. This led to a discussion regarding the paddle raise funds. Becky commented paddle raise contributors expect the money to be separate from the overall funds raised by the auction with all of the money going towards the named project, and she feels strongly it should remain this way. Different opinions were offered by several members regarding a portion of the paddle raise money being used for auction expenses. Until last year, all auction monies raised went into the general fund of the parish, but this has now been changed to have increased transparency regarding the disbursement of the auction funds. The Friday community dinner, which has often been the named paddle raise cause, now has enough funds for 5 years worth of meals with additional donations received periodically. Gale initially moved to allow the new vestry to resolve the issue of whether or not funds raised by the auction paddle raise will be used in part for auction expenses. After some discussion, it was decided more information was needed regarding auction expenses and auction best practices. Judy amended the motion to have additional information presented to the vestry on actual auction expenses and best practices from other auctions, and Nancy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Avril will compile a report with the requested information for the vestry and present it in March or April. The new

vestry can then review the report to determine if any paddle raise money will be used for auction expenses, and, if so, what percentage.

### 3.3 2017 Budget

Avril reviewed some of the changes between the budgets for 2016 and 2017, which include for 2017 health insurance for the office staff and a stipend for the church school coordinator. She also answered some questions regarding line items. Martin noted the money designated for the College for Congregational Development is underfunded but other resources may be available. Martin was asked for more details about the College, and he explained briefly a discernment process takes place at the College for the participants, and there have been many positive reports about the benefits for congregations from attendance at the College. Also, no one going as part of Grace's team will be expected to pay to attend. Kelly thanked Avril on behalf of the vestry for all her work on the financial reports and budget.

### 3.4 Bishop Spofford Fund

- The disposition of the money gifted to Grace by Bishop Spofford was discussed. The Bishop did not specify a certain project or use, and the possibility of making sanctuary improvements as well as the proposed mural on the exterior west wall was suggested. It was decided Martin should speak to the Spofford family as well as Fr. Stephen to find out if they know of any particular wishes of the Bishop before a final decision is made.

### 3.5 Jr. Warden's Report

- Nancy reported Gale is willing to be the new Jr. Warden. Also, the roof of Grace House has been leaking but is temporarily fixed. The large magnolia tree has been trimmed and the diseased courtyard tree removed. She noted the lack of signage for the church and would like to head up the mural project, which would dramatically increase signage. Additionally, she will continue to work with Frank to maintain the landscaping. Nancy was thanked very much for her service as Jr. Warden.

### 3.6 State of Grace

- Kelly would like to focus on welcoming newcomers in an organized manner, and she will be working on developing a process as well as aiding Martin with pastoral care. She commented we should be looking out, not in and encouraged the vestry members to be more candid with each other and to listen better. Becky noted there used to be greeters in the breezeway and agreed the focus for the new vestry should be on welcoming newcomers. Kelly was thanked by the vestry for her leadership and service.

### 3.7 Rector's Report

- Martin has asked the deacon, Ken Powell, to track pastoral visits, and Becky commented she has talked to Ken and a process is in the works.
- Martin attended a stewardship event last weekend and found it to be an excellent and energizing meeting, which will tie into the College for Congregational Development work and welcoming new members. He noted it is important to follow-up immediately with newcomers. To this end, it was

decided to ask the ushers to sort out the pew cards from the collection plates during the service and give them to Martin immediately after the service, possibly at coffee hour.

- A letter of support to the Interfaith Alliance on Poverty was discussed. It was asked what is meant by an annual financial ask, and Martin explained it mean the Alliance may ask the congregation periodically for funds. It was agreed the letter needs revisions, especially bullet point 4 about specific asks. Judy made a motion to adopt the letter as amended by Martin, and Sharon seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- Holladay Park has offered to pay \$2 per parking spot per day for the use of approximately a dozen spots. These spots will not be available to Holladay Park on Sundays, during Art Camp or, with 2 days' notice, for weddings or funerals. The issue of this arrangement possibly affecting Grace's not-for-profit status was discussed, and advice provided by the City is the taxable status is determined by the majority user of the property. The use by Holladay Park of the parking spots will neither jeopardize Grace's not-for-profit status nor make Holladay Park responsible for asking the city for an exemption as Grace remains the majority user of the campus. Judy will draft an agreement and review it with Steve. Grace will not be held liable for any incidents resulting from the parking lot use, and it was noted Holladay Park carries insurance.
- The committee for the Campus Master Plan will meet in March and is ready to move forward with asking Holladay Park for more specifics about the proposed project. Sharon asked if all stakeholders (Grace Institute, vestry, architect, general contractor) could be included in the discussions and was told they would be included.
- Martin reported on some recent newcomers who may welcome more involvement at Grace.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 with a closing prayer by Martin.

*Following the adjournment of the meeting, an executive session was held with all members of the vestry present. The rector and clerk did not attend the executive session. The minutes from the executive session were provided by Judy and are as follows:*

- The vestry votes a 1% Cost of Living Adjustment for the administrative assistant & communications coordinator, business manager, choir director and Rector for 2017.
- While the national COLA was 0% for end of 2016, we believe that a 1% adjustment is appropriate based on the fact that City of Portland employees received a 1% COLA. We also bear in mind that the Social Security Administration increased 2017 benefits by only .3%.
- Additionally, the Rector will be paid a monthly Health Care Stipend equivalent to the monthly premium the church is not currently paying on the Rector's behalf to the Diocesan health plan. This HCS will be paid to the Rector so long as the Rector continues to be insured by his spouse's health care plan. Grace will continue to pay the Rector's dental benefit through the Diocesan plan. The amount of the Rector's HCS for 2017 is \$882 per month.

- Moreover, beginning in 2017, the Rector will be required to conduct a self-evaluation of his performance and receive a performance evaluation by the vestry on an annual basis. The content of these evaluations will be discerned by the vestry in consultation with the Rector and Diocesan leadership.
- The Rector will also be required to request self-evaluations and conduct performance evaluations of all paid Grace staff whether full or part time.

Respectively submitted,

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk