

**Grace Memorial Episcopal Church**

**Vestry Meeting**

**November 21, 2017**

**Minutes**

**Members of the Vestry**

Gale Beagle, Jr. Warden  
Elyssa de la Cruz  
Robin Gault  
David Goodrich  
Phillip Koop  
Steve Lovett, Sr. Warden  
Nora McLaughlin  
Peyton Snead  
Rebecca Wong

**Members of the Vestry Absent**

Andrew Eschleman  
Charlene McGee

**Clergy**

The Rev. Martin Elfert

**Others**

Curt Germundsen, Treasurer  
Carol Snead

**1. Formation**

1.1 Opening Prayers

- The meeting was called to order shortly after 6 pm with a reading and prayer by Father Martin.
- Due to the absence of Alicia Lehrle, Nora McLaughlin agreed to take minutes.

**2. Minutes**

2.1 Approval of the Minutes

- Steve Lovett recommended corrections to the minutes: 3.2 Add to the final sentence: but consensus was not reached. The vestry agreed to reconsider this in future.; 3.3 Change “monetary” to “business” in the fifth line; 3.4 Should say Martin thanked Demetria...that additional help is needed.

- Becky Wong recommended a correction: 3.9 Change “including a recycling class” to “including an Art of Recycling Fair”
- Steve Lovett moved the minutes be approved as corrected and Phillip Koop seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Items**

#### 3.1 Coffee Hour Strategy

- Carol Snead described a coffee hour process that is managed using hospitality teams. This has worked well at St. David’s. Everyone in that parish is on a team, and a team covers each Sunday. Not everyone on a team will be there each time, but there are enough on a team to make it happen in spite of absences. Carol described this as community-building as well as an effective way to share the work. Some see hosting coffee hour at Grace as intimidating because of the size and complexity of the offerings. There was a robust discussion of this option and how to make it work. There would be a coordinator who managed the lists of teams. The Coffee Hour Coordinator could send a reminder email to the responsible team each week. Father Martin suggested a natural recruiting day would be December 17 when many members will be in attendance. There needs to be some notification to the congregation of the opportunity. The vestry was generally supportive. Father Martin and Carol Snead will work on a strategy for moving this forward.

#### 3.2 Financial Stewardship Update and 2018 Budget

- Fr. Martin reported 83 pledges for \$181,000 have been received to date. Last year at this time we had received 65 pledges for \$123,000. He expressed cautious optimism about our ability to write a budget between \$205-215K. That seems a manageable gap to close. The average pledge at this meeting table (vestry, priest, and others in leadership) is \$4411. The parish’s giving will likely follow the enthusiasm of this group. In the December vestry meeting we will discuss the budget. Fr. Martin plans to send budget documents in advance of the December meeting to ensure a more informed discussion even before the in-person meeting.
- Sue Jensen has reported that she is being paid under market but has not indicated what the market rate is. Fr. Martin supports her being paid a market rate. She has both a pastoral and music ministry. Paying staff at market rate is a wise investment both in staff and to keep our salaries such that when we recruit for successors, we are not facing a large gap. Father Martin discussed with her that any substantial change would likely be made over more than a year.

#### 3.3 Auction Thoughts for 2018

- Steve Lovett suggested that this is an item for the full vestry.
- The vestry discussed whether this should be an annual or a bi-annual event. It is a resource- and time-consuming event, particularly for those doing the bulk of the work. The income from the auction is important to the financial health of the parish.
- There is great documentation for what is required to produce the auction, but this fall there weren’t enough volunteers to manage it effectively. Work remains to wrap up the auction.

- David Goodrich stated there has been some discussion in the parish of having the auction every other year, alternating with an event/party that is a community building event and includes a simple request for monetary support.
- After some discussion of how to make such requests at an event, Fr. Martin reminded the vestry that what we need in the budget are unrestricted gifts, so asking patrons to designate their gift is less helpful to the budget.
- It was pointed out that members of the parish may not know how the money raised at the auction is spent in the budget. Historically, the auction monies were intended for activities that use the parish hall.
- There was general consensus of those present to have the auction every other year and a dinner in between. How do we communicate these ideas to the parish?
- Preparation for the auction needs to happen a year in advance, so the decision about next year has to be made soon.
- Curt Germundsen suggested that a better option is a Grace Institute Auction with a goal of raising \$300,000, because the draw to the Institute is stronger than to the church in the broader community.
- Fr. Martin suggested a butcher paper survey on December 17 with the questions we want to ask the parish. He asked members to send question suggestions to him.

### 3.4 Moment of Grace

- Members of the vestry expressed thanksgiving for important moments in their lives.

### 3.5 Rector's Report

- Fr. Martin reported on pastoral matters and encouraged the vestry's prayers and messages to those affected.
- Jackie Thomas has had a security camera installed in the courtyard. It is discreet. It does not yet record.
- A colleague is planning to participate in Episcopal Service Corps. She wonders if Grace would be willing to house one or more volunteers. Additionally, there is a possibility of an intern to assist in tasks for the parish or the institute. The vestry agreed to invite her to a future meeting to learn more.
- With the departure of Ken Powell, the vestry discussed what additional help would be most beneficial to the rector. He suggests the pastoral care team.
- Tim and Mary Bryant have offered to step in to schedule and manage the community meal. There are discussions underway to facilitate the transition. Fr. Martin would like ideas on how to honor Hale McMahon for his many years of service.
- There will be an email soon about the College for Congregational Development greeting project. The four things we can achieve easily: obtain contact information more reliably; follow up more promptly (the card arrives on Thursday following the Sunday the person visit); improve the number of new folks who make it to coffee hour; and make sure new people are spotted and contacted. Some parishes

deliver something to the house the same day. At another parish a colleague has a tracking system for newcomers. Fr. Martin wants to restore the role of greeter and make the four goals happen.

- The vestry discussed the need for a formal motion regarding the rector's housing allowance. Robin Gault moved that the housing allowance for Martin Elfert will be \$30,000.00 for 2018. Dave Goodrich seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

### 3.7 Jr. Warden's Report

- Gale Beagle reported that lighting at Grace is very difficult and challenging. We may have to hire someone to do the very high lighting. Courtyard lighting may need to be replaced.

### 3.8 Treasurer's Report

- Curt Germundsen reported that the financials have not been updated since the last meeting and will send an update via email.

### 3.9 Other Business

- Is there a protocol for closing up the church and hall? This continues to be a problem. The protocol needs to be listed and posted. Fr Martin agreed to have it posted at more than one exit.
- The vestry agreed the topic of the 10 Rules of Respect should be addressed more fully, ideally with someone who has lived in community with those rules. This could be early in the new vestry's time, to inform their work.
- The next meeting is December 19 at 6:00 pm.

After a closing prayer by Fr. Martin, the meeting was adjourned at 7:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora McLaughlin, Clerk *pro tem*