

Vestry Digest
March 26, 2017

PRESENT: The Rev. Randy Lord-Wilkinson, Betsy Hasegawa, Janet King, Gordon Donnelly, Meredith Horan, Avin Lalmansingh, Gary McLaughlin, Zadinga Ogada, Luis Pedron, Berenice Rodriguez. Absent: Rose Buck, John Pruessner,

The meeting opened at 1:30 with a Lambeth Bible Study, concluding at 1:53.

As the first order of business, Randy passed around the 2016 Parochial Report to the Diocese. After review, Gordon made a motion that it be approved as written. Zadinga seconded, the motion passed and the rector and clerk signed the report.

CONSENT AGENDA: At 2:07 Janet moved that the consent agenda be adopted as presented; Gary seconded the motion, and it passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Rice bowl proceeds to Cuban refugee family. The vestry is asking someone to speak about the Cuban family at as many services as possible. The Vestry had already voted to donate last year's Rice Bowl to them; Avin made a motion that the family be designated as recipients of the 2017 Rice Bowl. Gordon seconded, and motion was passed.

Liaisons from church to sanctuary movement Randy, Janet, Kathy, Barb, and Claire joined in the recent Sanctuary march. For our church, the question is, how involved do we want to be. Is the congregation willing to support another church? Would Ascensionites want to join in "flash mobs"? The vestry will invite someone to come to the church, answer questions and provide training. In the meantime, Janet herself will speak at the various Sunday services to gauge interest and provide information. An online survey, approved by the Vestry at the February meeting, will be developed to ascertain the congregation's interest.

Final pledge appeal to be mailed with next quarterly giving statements. Janet told the Vestry that quarterly statements will be going out soon. She suggested including another pledge card asking people to increase or start a pledge, since our serious financial status has been presented. Avin volunteered to write the letter.

Cookbook report. Zadinga reported that the committee has received a lot of recipes in the last 2-3 weeks, which are being typed up by the committee. The recipes will be in English and some will be in Spanish translated to English.. She plans another tasting event on One Ascension Sunday, April 30th (see Tiger Team, "Community Building" below.)

Tee shirts. Berenice has also arranged for sweatshirts and baseball caps in the same design. She will ask Eleni to put the order form on the website. She has enough orders to place right now, but a larger number will give us a reduced cost, so she is holding off placing the order for now.

NEW BUSINESS

Tiger Teams. At the Vestry Retreat, discussion of the financial situation led to creating four Tiger Teams to address different aspects of improving it. The Tiger Teams reported at the meeting.

--Communications: Rose suggested in the team meeting that we have one person for each service who would be the communication liaison, someone who would keep the service congregation informed and abreast of events, and for people to ask questions to. The team agreed that it's necessary to give our parishioners a clear picture of where we stand, but that it be as upbeat as possible. It was also suggested that we could develop a "buddy system" wherein a volunteer would keep track of several parishioners, noting if they had missed a service or two, and contacting them if so.

--Capitalizing on our Assets: This tiger team brought correspondence from Victor Sogah, a professional rental agent, submitting a proposal to act as a rental agent for our property for all non-parishioner events. He has an event for May 20th that he asked for immediate response on. Since Sogah has a liquor license, Berenice asked what his insurance situation is. Gordon made a motion that Ascension contract to engage the rental services of Mr. Sogah for May 20th, pending proof of insurance, and, if the insurance is acceptable, from then on. Gary seconded the motion and it passed.

--Budget: Gary emphasized the critical need for cutting expenses immediately. We have already spent ¼ of the 2017 budget, so it's vital that we make major budget adjustments as soon as possible. The first action needed is to go over the budget with Treasurer Howard Holland to understand all the individual expenses, so the impact of cuts can be determined. At that point, the lead person must meet with the Vestry for discussion and approval of the recommendations. Gary would like to see some financially astute non-Vestry members on the team.

--Community Building: At the retreat, this team decided that having a single joint service on our 5th Sundays (4 times per year), would be a good way to have congregants from different services get to know one another, fostering a feeling of unity. The events will be called "One-Ascension" Sundays. The upcoming 5th Sunday is April 30th, which is also Youth Sunday. The Youth leaders, Trevor and Angie Hight Walker, were supportive of having just the one service that day. Originally scheduled for 10:00 a.m., the Vestry decided that 11:00 would be better since a luncheon will follow. Janet suggested having the Vestry available for a Q&A session after the service while the luncheon was being set up.

This team, along with the Communications team, felt asking several people to "champion" each service, people willing to stand up and field questions, pass on information, etc. This could be during services or afterward in the narthex or equivalent for each service.

OPEN MIC:

Pledgers Thank You Luncheon. Avin brought up the Pledgers' Thank You Luncheon and asked that the Vestry set a date for it. But the Vestry was concerned about spending money on this considering our financial status and that we are continuing to ask for pledges. Betsy asked all

to email thoughts on the subject to Avin. . Meredith suggested making a very attractive poster listing all the pledgers' names for the narthex in lieu of the luncheon. The Vestry agreed that the poster would be the official thank you to the pledgers.

ADJOURNMENT: At 4:28, Avin made a motion that the meeting be adjourned; Gary seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sari Stoddard
Clerk of the Vestry