

**Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Vestry Minutes
February 25, 2018**

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

The meeting opened at 1:40 p.m. with Bible study; the business meeting began at 2:05 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA: Avin moved that the consent agenda be adopted as presented. Rose seconded the motion, and it passed.

ORAL REPORTS

Betsy updated the group on next steps following the presentation on safety and security at the Vestry's January meeting. She will be contacting the Montgomery County Police and Fire and Rescue about setting up the initial assessment.

OLD BUSINESS

Betsy suggested tabling the discussion of the 2018 budget until after discussion of other Old Business and New Business items; the Vestry concurred.

Vestry Retreat: Gary reported on arrangements to hold the retreat at St. James, Potomac, along with the times for Friday's and Saturday's activities. The Vestry discussed arrangements for food and other items. Tim Malone will be serving as facilitator.

Search for Music Minister: John reported that the search for a new Music Minister is ongoing. Additional interviews have been held and more will be conducted with candidates as they are identified. We will continue to actively recruit candidates at least through February, if not longer based on how the interviews go.

Sunday School Teacher Report: Zadinga and Gordon relayed that the schedule for the 2018-2019 program year is still being decided. Further information will be gathered by polling parents and/or speaking with them individually and it will be discussed further at an upcoming Vestry meeting.

1A Palm Sunday: Preparations are underway for the March 25 Palm Sunday 1A service, which will also serve as our formal sendoff for Randy.

Annual Meeting: The annual meeting is scheduled for March 4. The slate of Vestry candidates has been finalized and candidates for delegate to Diocesan convention are being recruited. There will be 3 candidates for delegate, and depending on the outcome of the election, one candidate will serve a 2-year term, one will serve a one-year term, and the third candidate will serve as alternate.

NEW BUSINESS

Kitchen Issues: Betsy led a discussion about the recurrent issues with keeping the kitchen clean, especially after events, including whether the fees for using the kitchen are being enforced. Berenice reported on problems with the freezer and not being able to keep it shut. She and others also relayed problems following a recent incident in which the kitchen was not properly cleaned; Randy will be following up with Lin about that incident to find out more. In addition, the Vestry will decide whether to get rid of the freezer altogether and possibly keep the kitchen locked.

Accounting Services and Activities: Per arrangements when Lin was hired, she continues to advance in her ability to serve as bookkeeper, including learning more about QuickBooks. The Vestry discussed the time table for reducing use of our accounting firm. Randy will check in with Lin and do an assessment of her work thus far to help in making decisions about next steps.

Amy VanDalinda's Cookies: Amy would like to rent Ascension's kitchen to prepare and fill orders for her cookies. It's a requirement that she use a commercial kitchen, which is why she is interested. She will pay rent to do so, although the amount is still to be determined.

Plumbing/Electrical Improvements at Ascension House: John confirmed the arrangements and bids to make the upgrades to the plumbing and electrical services at Ascension House for installation of a washer and dryer on the main floor. John moved that the bid from JAXCO be accepted and the work awarded to them. Luis seconded, and the Vestry unanimously approved.

Pension for Lin Keene: Rose reported that Lin is eligible to receive pension benefits from Ascension based on the number of hours that she works annually. The Vestry affirmed that it wants to provide those benefits and ensure that Ascension complies with Diocesan guidance. Rose will follow up with the Diocese and Lin to determine what is needed to enroll her in the pension plan for lay employees.

DISCUSSION OF THE 2018 BUDGET

Avin and Howard Holland presented information on the latest version of Ascension's budget for 2018. They covered projected sources of income, including the latest pledge income figures, as well as projected expenses for the year. In addition, they reviewed with the Vestry a placeholder budget for 2019 to help in making decisions about budget items this year.

Vestry members asked for clarification and/or further information in a number of areas:

- What are the projected costs for youth activities and is there a line item for the youth program?
- Have projections for the cost of Lin's pension been factored into the budget?
- Does the rental income line include the extra \$500 we are now receiving from rental of space in Ascension House by a second pastoral counselor?
- Have we accounted for supply musicians needed in 2018 and 2019?
- Are any funds needed for audit services in 2018 and/or 2019 given we are now only contracting for a formal audit every 3-5 years?

Avin and Howard responded that each of these issues would be explored further and addressed in a revised budget for the Vestry's March meeting. It is expected that the Vestry will adopt a budget for 2018 at that time.

OPEN MIC

Gary remarked on the mixed feelings he has on leaving the Vestry, the pleasure it has been to serve, and offered suggestions on how the Vestry might improve how it operates in the future.

Zadinga commented on the importance of proactively reaching out to Ascension's standing committees to know more about what they are doing and build relationships between the Vestry and the committee members, including budget needs.

John reported that the expected cost of repairing the flashing on the rear entrance and other related needs will be approximately \$2,140. He will follow up with Ted Bedell and the Facilities Committee on next steps, also including security upgrades.

Rose raised the issue of logistics, sign ups and other tasks, especially for movie nights, and the need for improvements in these areas.

All Vestry members thanked Gary and Avin for their service and a hearty round of applause was offered for both of them.

ADJOURNMENT: At 4:47 p.m., Gary moved that the meeting be adjourned. Meredith seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Holland on behalf of Sari Stoddard, Clerk of the Vestry