

Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Vestry Minutes
April 7, 2019

PRESENT: The Rev. Javier Garcia Ocampo, Senior Warden Betsy Hasegawa, Junior Warden Zadinga Ogada, James Black, Gordon Donnelly, Meredith Horan, Kristen Keating, Susan McLaughlin, Luis Pedron, and Berenice Rodriguez. **ABSENT:** Wadai Dennis, Bob Waters

The meeting opened at 2:11 p.m., with a prayer shared by email and check in around the table.

CONSENT AGENDA: Susan moved that the consent agenda be adopted, Berenice seconded the motion, and it passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Committee. Waiting on estimates for the Chapel as Ted is out of the country. The A/C broke last summer. Javier mentioned Precision is coming for spring clean-up and will be asked to check the A/C. Gordon continued, stating the problem with the Chapel is humidity that required humidifiers to be run and emptied. Hymnals and prayer books had mold as a result. Now that it is being used, it needs to be addressed ASAP. The humidifiers haven't required emptying recently. Susan explained that Gary has inspected and fixed all of the chairs in the Chapel. There may actually be too many chairs the Chapel. A file cabinet is in the Chapel as well and no one knows whose it is. Gary also went to fix the bathroom door, which has been stuck, but didn't want to disturb the activities of the 7th Day Adventists who were using the Chapel at the time. He intends to return.

Vestry Elections/Next Annual Meeting Date. Questions arose from the congregation about the methodology of elections. People asked why it changed to the current process. Briefly rehashed that the old process created hurt feelings and other problems that resulted in people leaving the church back when anyone could nominate themselves or another. St. Timothy's was consulted for their method. They allow people to put forward name then they all answer a set of questions. The nomination committee accepts the names then all vote on those candidates.

We need to create a committee/work group and develop more specific questions for the candidate forum. Gordon reminded the group that the bylaws need to be changed accordingly. They currently say we have a nominating committee. We also need to move toward proper parliamentary procedure. We accept our shortcomings and commit to improving. General discussion followed about how and why the meeting went as it did and that everyone was glad people were engaged. The Vestry will be better prepared next time. They bylaws were shared among the Vestry. Everyone should read them and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

Kristen asked what effect the meeting timing has on the delegates. Should we consider moving the annual meeting to a different date so delegates know who they are during that year? Betsy asked for Kristen's opinion on the term length as she's been a delegate; the bylaws say it's a 2 year term. Kristen explained that it takes about 3 years to understand the processes. It would also look strange for someone to attend the Regional meeting but not the Convention. Ascension never had the budget ready in time to have themselves mentioned at the meeting for their

donation. Moving up Ascension's annual meeting would help. The new Finance Committee will work through the year to have the budget ready on time. People from the diocese will come give a workshop on how to run the annual campaign. There are five people on the Finance Committee with Avin as the Chair and Betsy as the Vestry Liaison. The first meeting was 25 March and the next is 24 April. The intent is to keep the annual giving campaign in mind all year and get volunteers to help starting 1 September and for the subsequent few months.

April 25 Meeting at Ascension: NoMoCo Parishes. All Vestry members will attend. Javier needs the Vestry to help welcome everyone to Ascension. The details regarding food for the meeting had not been provided yet. A call is scheduled with the Bishop that will solidify the plan. Spanish language service members have the option for simultaneous translation of the proceedings if there will be more than five people that would use the translator. [At this time it was asked if such translation services could be made available during the 1A services; no further discussion took place as other business was being attended to.] Those Vestry who attend the Spanish Language service have already and will again reach out to those in attendance to ensure they are aware of the translator. All congregations within Northern Montgomery County are invited to attend; this was expanded from just the one person per church that was initially invited then just the Vestry. Susan suggested each member of the Vestry directly invite someone to attend and encourage them to come. The meeting continues to be announced in the bulletin.

The meeting will take place in the undercroft. Sandy Ridge will be notified that setup will take place down there.

Contracts Update/Shared Spaces Agreement. Sandy Ridge has signed their contract and paid. They also obtained proof of insurance; it shows that it started in April 2019. Now we are working on an agreement with Dr. Tina. A 5% increase has been included in her contract. Berenice explained that without a contract she is providing a donation that was seemingly optional. Berenice has reached out to set a meeting with her but hasn't yet received a response to the email requesting the meeting. Berenice went on to explain there is no storage space for her if she asks for it. Regarding her clients, they are supposed to ring the Doctor for her to them in at that time. It is included in the contract she can't provide the key code to anyone. [This brought up security concerns and current practices.] In exchange for building use Ascension currently receives monetary support. She is also supposed to provide some ministerial services, preaching once a year, and pastoral care. Javier can provide referrals to her if members need more assistance than he is trained to provide.

A contract with the 12 Step Program is in progress as well. As Junior Warden, Zadinga will have regular meetings with Sandy Ridge, with the first meeting coming up shortly. Betsy recommended that they get Lin invited or at least keep her in the loop going forward. Some groups that use the church facilities provide a small donation but most do not. Not everyone covers even their hygiene usage. While it has been determined that this is not important, helping is. The bigger problem is available storage.

NEW BUSINESS

Unstuck Church. Javier asked if anyone has read the book. What followed were questions regarding what exactly the Vestry should be doing at the site, a quiz only, or more? Berenice re-sent the link to everyone. Javier asked that everyone take the quiz before the 25th and to bring the results to that meeting and the next Vestry meeting. Email him with confirmation once the task is complete. Everyone can share the book.

Liaison Assignments. Liaisons were assigned or re-confirmed for each committee. The liaison’s responsibility is to ask how the vestry can help the committee. An explanation was provided for what Christian Formation for Adults is.

Committees	Vestry Liaison	Chairperson
Christian Formation for Children	Gordon Donnelly	Megan Didavi
Christian Formation for Youth	Bob Waters	Angie Hight-Walker
Facilities	Luis Pedron	Ted Bedell
Operations and Finance/Stewardship	Betsy Hasegawa	Avin Lalmansingh
Parish Life	Susan McLaughlin	Janet King
Pastoral Care	Zadinga Ogada	Javier Ocampo & Nan Hildebrand
Personnel	Wadai Dennis	Rose Buck
Worship	Meredith Horan	Gary McLaughlin & Curt Lindsay
Outreach	Kristen Keating	TBD
Christian Formation for Adults	James Black	TBD
Health and Wellness	Berenice Rodriguez	Danielle Allen

OPEN MIC

Meredith provided some suggestions to continue the Wednesday services. She spoke highly of a ½ day session on music and connecting with Ana Hernandez. The Bishop said she would support. We would need a promise of 5 people per church with a cost of \$15-\$20 per person. We could get the instructor while she’s visiting in DC.

Berenice shared that the downstairs Atrium area would be cleaned. Coffee pots need to be removed or at least moved out of the reach of children. Evelyn asked that the things by the stairs be moved for ADA reasons. There’s not enough room for people to move through that space.

Kristen attended Security at Your Worship Center Workshop on how to get money for improvements and was similar to last year’s Active Shooter training. Recommendations included publishing evacuation routes. Our plan for medical emergencies is given to the Welcome Team.

Luis spoke further about the Wednesday services. There was high praise for the series and people would like such mid-week worship opportunities to continue if possible. Peg is an option

to lead such services. Berenice suggested short cycles, much like Lent's several weeks long series. Perhaps include different types of services that would focus on or include music, dance, etc. This will be discussed with the Worship Committee.

Javier reminded everyone of their homework and asked what inputs they had for this week. Berenice suggested sending postcards to people in the directory that haven't attended in a while. Betsy asked about a bulk mailer to the local community. Berenice said she would keep one of the cards she's been receiving from churches near her; James passed around one he brought. Have we considered Facebook ads or other Social Media advertisement (ownership of our address on Google, or Yelp site, etc.)? Another banner that faces people on the southbound side of 355 could be helpful. Perhaps reaching out to High School cars that go by the church each day.

Everyone needs to email Javier letting him know how many people you've contacted saying thank you for attending services.

Javier also brought up the possible need for security cameras for the building. Mary Magdalene had a recent problem. Recommendations for Nest/Ring for buzzing and screening people into the building were offered. Possibly electric door locks that allow different codes for different people so you know who entered. The Facilities Committee will look into it.

Meredith wanted to point out that the landscaping has been noticed and that it looks wonderful. It's nice to see what hard work Fredy has put into maintaining the grounds. She suggested we send him a thank you note. Javier did thank him. Meredith went on to motion as follows: "**As a Vestry, can we please send a thank you note to Fredy for his landscape work?**" Kristen seconded and it passed unanimously. Betsy will write the note if everyone wants to then sign it. Zadinga suggested we ask him to lead the congregation on another beautification campaign.

ADJOURNMENT: At 4:57 p.m., the meeting ended with a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Allen
Clerk of the Vestry