

**Episcopal Church of the Ascension  
Vestry Minutes  
December 1, 2019**

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

The meeting opened at 2:06 with a prayer from Javier.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Gordon moved to accept the consent agenda at 2:24; Susan seconded and it passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Annual Giving Campaign.** Thank you cards are being sent. The team is meeting the Wednesday following the Vestry meeting. Avin is working on the 2020 budget. The audit is coming up in January to review all of 2019. Ideally, we would like to have \$400,000 in pledges, and we are currently at ~\$200,000. The vestry members asked if electronic pledgers are included in the current pledge amount. A willingness to call and email members was expressed. The Vestry will stand during the services to speak about the campaign. James will speak at the upcoming service with Betsy and Susan speaking at the subsequent two week's services. It was suggested that the Youth Group members talk about why they appreciate the pledges.

Avin has two more months remaining as Treasurer.

**Facilities Committee.** Building Cleaning Services: Fredis cleaned up the leaves from the parking lot with his team. Javier expressed his appreciation for his work and the Vestry asked to investigate an opportunity to "shout out" the volunteers during a Volunteer Appreciation Day. Kristen will find out if there's a specific day for this or otherwise we can appoint one for Ascension.

**Snow Removal:** Mike's American and Greenlink are the two companies remaining in consideration for the contract. Greenlink provided a more comprehensive quote. Berenice moved to accept Greenlink's proposal. James seconded. The motion passed with one abstention.

**Contract Committee:** Sandy Ridge's contract ends in May 2020. SR is aware that it must notify Ascension by February if their intention is to stay in the building. Wipes were removed from the clogged toilet in Room 8 by the plumber. Zadinga contacted Sandy Ridge to discuss them paying for the repair. We are awaiting a response to the \$850 bill. The meeting with St. Barnabas was cancelled and not yet rescheduled. Discussion returned to the possibility of a sexton and how

such a person could be utilized. We need someone to clean on Sunday evening and the concern is a single person won't be able to do it all alone.

**Church Rental.** Indians for Christ are waiting for a decision on using Ascension. We would like to create a committee from both our congregations so we can set up schedules. IFC wants to begin using our facilities in February or March. Under consideration is a one year or six month trial. One year for the current amount they are paying (\$2500) while we determine what the financial impact will be to Ascension (increased electric usage, cleaning, etc.). Susan moved that we accept this group as renters for one year at \$2500 per month contingent upon Vestry, youth group, and Indians for Christ committee gathering to set a schedule. Berenice seconded and it passed unanimously (with the exception of Wadai who had to depart early). Javier will reach out to Angie and Treavor.

**Nominating Committee.** There are five Vestry candidates and one Delegate candidate. Meredith will provide information at the next Vestry meeting on how the committee fared in its first year. Discussion opened regarding how to fill the Vestry seat of the member who becomes Junior Warden. The newly accepted bylaws state a vacancy in the Vestry will be filled by a member of the Parish as selected by the Vestry with a majority approval vote and that person will serve until the next Annual Meeting. The concern was that the Parishioners expressed their desire for transparency and democracy at the 2019 Annual Meeting that lead to a bylaws update. It might appear that the Vestry was ignoring their request and continuing to act without input from the Parishioners. No conclusion was reached with the intent to discuss further at the next meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Choir as paid positions.** The Music Director has proposed paying two people, a soprano and a tenor, to sing with the choir to help attract new, young members to Ascension as well as energize the choir. At \$50 per service and rehearsal, this will be about \$100 per week per person. They would begin during Lent. The singers will be sought from Montgomery College. The choir's input to this idea will be sought before moving forward.

**Treasurer Replacement.** Per the bylaws, the Vestry appoints a Treasurer for a two year term. Gary McLaughlin has been suggested. He would resign as Co-Chair of the Worship Committee if he is selected. Gordon moved that the Vestry appoint Gary McLaughlin as Treasurer. Meredith seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### **OPEN MIC**

**Javier** brought up the lack of diversity in the videos being shared for the annual giving campaign. This doesn't go along with the message repeated in each video that members love the diversity in the church. He asked for more people to volunteer for them. James, Danielle, and Berenice agreed to participate.

### **Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

January 5th Vestry meeting

January 19th Annual Meeting

January 31 to February 1 Vestry retreat.

**Susan** suggested creating a Communications Committee to assist with creating videos and other content for the website and Social Media. They can assist in translating the videos for proper subtitles. Current captions are illogical because they are provided by the video host services, which aren't exact.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Gordon moved to adjourn and Berenice seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Allen  
Clerk of the Vestry