

Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Vestry Minutes
August 7, 2022

PRESENT: Senior Warden Kristen Keating, Junior Warden Danielle Allen, Monty Petersen, Lauren Kingsland, Ed Armstrong, Susan McLaughlin, Roger LeCompte, Gary McLaughlin (Treasurer). **ABSENT:** Randall Adams, Shirley Allen, Lisa Blanc.

Meeting started at 2:01pm following prayer by Padre.

CONSENT AGENDA: Kristen said she added the Green Team and the Pledge Campaign to the agenda. Roger said the portion of the minutes where Andrew said he was pleased the capital campaign will include the organ restoration, implies that the capital campaign is a done deal when it is not. Lauren agreed. That sentence will be removed. Danielle asked if the first sentence about Gary's report should say "we are bouncing checks..." The sentence will be corrected to read, "we are **not** bouncing checks..." Additional changes to the minutes regarding the Treasury report were corrected. Lauren moved to accept the consent agenda and Kristen seconded. It passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: Gary said that the mortgage will be completed on Monday. He thanked Kristen and Padre for making sure the documents were signed and mailed back to the mortgage company. In the interim, we have borrowed \$50,000. The money that will come from the mortgage will be enough to pay back the loan. Gary would like the finance committee to discuss the money issues when they meet on Monday. Two weeks ago, he said he would send a personal letter to the congregation. He reported that since his letter, we may have collected about \$12,000 from the members. Next, he will send a thank you letter. In June we had \$36,000 in income; if that amount is multiplied by 6 months, we will have about \$216,000. It is now \$241,000 so we are doing a bit better than the average. The expenses are \$43,000 for the month of June. The average for 6 months will be \$260,000 and we have \$256,000 so we are keeping the expenses fairly close and the income is higher than projected. Since January 1st, Gary has not been able to get the financial report to the vestry monthly like we used to. Gary has had to recreate the reports and he apologized for the delay. He is working on the reports with Clay Kolle. Kristen asked Gary how often the Finance committee will meet and he said it will be every other Monday.

Pledge Campaign: Roger shared what he called a Progress Report and he wants the vestry to know what he is planning and who is involved. The finance committee voted Roger as the chair of the pledge campaign. A calendar has been established and September 18th will be the kick off date for the pledge drive. Padre will give a stewardship sermon on that day. A letter has been written in English and Spanish and the mailing will go out a week before Padre's sermon. Hopefully, everyone will have it before the sermon. We need speakers for the dates that are listed during the pledge drive reminding the congregation to pledge and mostly why the speaker

pledges. The campaign will be wrapped up a week before Thanksgiving. On December 4th, the results will be announced. The mailing list has been updated and the envelope will consist of three pages; a letter, the pledge form and a bank form for direct transfer from a checking account. Mailing date will be September 12th. It was recommended we give a bumper sticker to those who pledge as a thank you. We need to get volunteers to stuff the envelopes. It will be nice to write letters on the green inserts during the pledge drive. Roger will ask Paul Whitmore to give him a list of the plate donors as well. Roger also said he is open to new ideas. Lauren thanked Roger for putting together the plan for the pledge drive. Last year, there was a display of the doves as an equivalent of the thermometer showing our progress.

Susan said she has worked on this before so she recognizes how thorough this plan is. She doesn't feel that those on zoom feel the vibe that they are members of the church. Maybe something can be directed to them as well on every Sunday during the campaign time frame. Roger thinks that maybe those who speak in church will reach the people. Roger thinks that maybe those who speak, will reach those people on zoom. Susan suggested that we invite those on zoom to speak as well. Roger asked Susan to be a part of the finance committee and be in charge of inviting some of the speakers. Kristen suggested that the thank you notes should come from the Finance committee and/or the vestry.

Both Kristen and Lauren are interested in writing the thank you notes. Kristen asked Roger to come up with the number of people he will need to stuff the envelopes and people to do the stewardship minute and dates for the announcement. Kristen suggested that the welcome screen could display something about the pledge drive during the period. Danielle asked if we are using the same theme as the diocese and Roger said no. There was a question about if we should allow people to earmark their pledge for the Facilities fund and it was decided to keep that separate and make a special appeal in January when we can focus on that.

Facilities: Kristen said the deficiencies with the fire inspections are the exit signs that are out and fire extinguishers and it will cost \$494 to replace the fire extinguishers. In the sprinkler room are the valves and drain. When the church was built, the drain was required to drain only 30% of the system. Now the Maryland code has changed and it has to drain 100% of the water and it has to be done annually as part of the inspection.

The second invoice is for \$1,159 to fix the four gauges and to investigate what we have to do to the drain to bring it up to code. Randall had an idea that we can mount a fire hose to the drain to drain the system. Randall explained this to ARK and they will discuss it with their engineers and get back to us with a viable option. The most it will cost may be about \$1,000. The amount will reduce if the fire hose is a solution. The total will then be \$1,653. Randall said they have to be done as a package. Roger asked that if they are two different systems why couldn't they be done one at a time. With the change in code, they have to be done simultaneously. We have been compliant until the state changed the code. Susan asked what if we don't comply. Padre said that they give us time to fix the problem then a monthly fine is assessed until it is fixed. Roger

moved that we authorize the expenditure of the two proposals and Lauren seconded and it passed unanimously.

Tending Our Soil: The group will meet on August 10th and then a meeting with the diocese on September 10th. After that, the diocese will give instructions on what to do next. Roger asked if Padre will get anything substantive for the plan for next year. He would like to include some of these things in the letter for the pledge drive and Padre referred him to Elizabeth Baker who is the leader of the group.

NEW BUSINESS;

Ascension History Committee: Kristen said that based on what Michelle Wood sent on August 15th, Michelle will send a report which needs to be approved by the vestry before it is sent to the diocese. Kristen will ask Michelle to send it to her first then she will send it to the vestry with instructions. Danielle said that if Michelle is going to be invited to the meeting, it will be best to send questions to her before the meeting so she will have time to find answers.

Nominating Committee: Monty, Susan and Lisa will be leaving the vestry so they make up the nominating committee. Padre said they will meet to decide what to do. They will start working on it after his vacation.

Green team: The Green team asked to purchase a 4' X 3' banner. Kristen will authorize \$75 to be spent on the banner, any more will have to come from donations from the committee members.

OPEN MIC;

Danielle said an announcement needs to be made that donated food shouldn't be expired since they cannot be sent to a food bank. She also asked if any committees have problems with planning the expo. There were no responses. Kristen said that Curt has purchased the trifolds but he needs to hear from the rest of the committees. Ed said the AEJC was planning future activities and noted that September is National Spanish Heritage month. They don't want to create something that will compete with the Latino/Hispanic Ministry or other church wide plans. Kristen will bring it up in the executive committee meeting and get back to Ed. Danielle asked the liaisons to suggest their committees do something electronically for the Ascension Expo in consideration of the online members.

ADJOURNMENT; Danielle moved to adjourn the meeting and Kristen seconded. It passed unanimously. Monty provided closing prayer and the meeting ended at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ophelia Yalley-Ogunro
Secretary of the Vestry