

Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Vestry Minutes
February 12, 2022

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

Meeting was opened at 1:00pm following lunch break from the retreat.

CONSENT AGENDA: Kristen made an addition to the agenda. The name of the church that will be in the legal document for the mortgage has to be approved by the vestry. Danielle also made a correction to the minutes. On Open Mic, March Madness should be changed to Lent Madness. Susan proposed that the agenda with the amendments should be accepted and Lauren seconded. It passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: Gary gave a little background of the financial health of the church for the sake of the new members. He is still at the church but once the new administrator comes in, he will be able to give all the reports like he used to. He had the help of Clay Kolle who is a member and a retired CPA. Last year the goal for our budget was \$330,000 for the pledge drive. This year we got \$390,000 in pledges but some of it is for 2021. The total income for the year was \$498,390. There was miscellaneous income of \$25,000 which is included in the total income. The expenses were up and salaries and benefits are up in the \$270,000 level. If we follow the lead of the diocese, we will be up 3% on salaries this year. We have to be thankful to Javier who has agreed to have his salary remain the same which is very generous. Even though our salary expense is high, it is manageable. About our mortgage, we show the interest in our financial statement as an expense but not the principal. We are left with \$480 in interest and the rest goes towards the principal. The new mortgage will be \$1,100. The goal is to apply the \$5,100 to the new mortgage. We need to keep paying the same amount so that it will be paid off in three years.

The HVAC cost \$55,000 and it is working now even though it is not finished. The money came out of the facilities reserve fund and we are cleaning it out. We will put on a fundraiser to replenish the funds. We need to maintain the building and we are blessed to have Randall, he is always there to check on the facilities. The expenses will be broken down so we can see where everything is spent. There is no statement to share but Gary will provide one soon. We had \$490,000 in expenses. We spent more than that but some of that money came from reserves. That money does not show up in the operating budget, it shows up in reserves columns. If anyone wants to see what is going on, Gary will be available to show the statements and what is

on QuickBooks. In the last three months, Gary said he has worked hard trying to reconstruct some of the things we have and this is because we were not left in a good position to manage the office by the previous administrator. Monty asked about the interest rate of the mortgage. Gary said it is adjustable and it will be renewed every three years and it could go up or down. With the plan on hand, we could pay it off in three years and avoid any adjustments. Ed asked if the interest rate is locked in and Gary said yes. The deal with the name of the church in the mortgage document is that when we applied for the PPP loan, we had to be in good standing. When the state asked for our name we stated Church of the Ascension and when they looked for our name on file, we had different names. We found that we could go to the state and ask for an amendment and change the name. Andrew at the diocese suggested the name to use. Lauren moved to accept the name change in the records. Kristen seconded and it passed unanimously.

Gary explained the parochial report and encouraged the vestry to go to the EDOW website and familiarize themselves with it before he prepares it. Kristen said that Gary has done a great job as an administrator and it feels like we never missed anything.

Facilities: (HVAC/Elevator) Randall said that the fire panel has passed inspection with the City Fire Marshall. All the miscellaneous items are on schedule and are on the report. One thing on the agenda are minor plumbing issues. There are two faucets downstairs that are rotted out and one toilet is leaking at the base. A leaky toilet in the ladies room toilet upstairs that needs to be snaked out. The fees are \$267 an hour or \$1,500 for an 8 hour period. Jesse or Randall can purchase the faucets and Randall is asking for about \$1,650 for these miscellaneous repairs. Randall moved that we spend the money to do the repairs and Kristen seconded. It passed unanimously.

The HVAC was installed a week ago and it is hooked to the thermostat and it is heating the sanctuary by the duct heaters that were installed last summer. The components that have not been shipped yet are the 15 ton condenser heat pump unit, the humidifier and pulling out the two old units and resetting the new heat pumps and condenser. As of now, everything is on schedule. Elevator update: ThyssenKrupp (TK) had all the parts and equipment delivered on Wednesday and they started the demolition on Wednesday and Thursday. Some units have been set. The hard part is that they wanted to charge us \$10,000 more and we told them we don't have the money. We spoke to the salesman and he will get back to us. Randall said that what we found out was that they did not include the electrician's charge in the contract. That is TK's problem and their mistake and they admitted it. The Vestry will be informed of the decision. Roger asked for the total expense of the elevator. It is \$99,060.60.

NEW BUSINESS:

Shrove Tuesday: Padre said he had to cancel Shrove Tuesday last year and this year someone had the idea to do a drive through so that we can give the food to the church community. He will also give away ashes for Ash Wednesday and the “Living Well During Lent booklet”. Lauren commented on the logistics of making the pancakes and giving them away. They will be prepared at the church.

Growing Young Church: Danielle said that at the diocesan pre-convention event, there was a presentation on reaching and listening to young adults and getting their involvement; meeting them where they are. It is recorded and she encouraged the vestry to watch it. Jennifer Gamber (led the retreat) is offering to sponsor congregations for the study of growing young and it is through the School of Faith and Christian Leadership. It’s a book called Growing Young - Six Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church. They will give us four free books and we can put together a group and since this will be a mission of the vestry, a liaison will be needed when the group is formed. The diocese will sponsor us to work through this. The Executive committee was looking at some possible candidates to join this group. She also asked the vestry to suggest anyone they feel will be good candidates. Kristen asked if this is something we should move forward with. Maybe include Megan, Michelle, Angie and Trevor. Lauren asked if the young adult group would be included. Roger asked for the goal of the group. Kristen explained that the primary goal is not to increase young members but meet them where they are and hopefully they will join the church. Ruth Anna said that it is about understanding what the young people need and building on their ideas and not ours. Danielle said that, what the Baby Millennials and Gen Zs are expressing is that they are interested in projects and activities that better serve their communities and society so if they don’t see a church participating in such activities, then there is no reason for them to be a part of it. The other part is fostering the much younger ones so they will have a positive experience and they will always come back to the church. Roger said projects he has been involved with is Habitat for Humanity together with other churches and they developed sister churches in Haiti. Susan also read an article about three congregations in the county sponsoring Afghan refugees. They have expanded their efforts and we can explore that.

Parish Calls: Kristen said that we should reinstate the calls to the members. It is important because it has helped to maintain community. We will remind people of opportunities that are available for prayer. Kristen will send the assignments. Gary said others can help as well so that the burden will not be on the vestry. Padre suggested that we involve the members and tap into those who love to make the calls. Kristen will note those who cannot make the calls. After discussion it was decided that for those who cannot make the calls, the list should be given to Kristen to reassign them.

Committee Liaison Assignments: Assignments were made as listed on the table below.
Liaison responsibilities were explained to the new vestry members.

2022-2023 Meeting Schedule: It was decided that the dates for the July and September vestry meetings will be held on July 10th and August 28th respectively because the first Sunday of those months fall on holiday weekends.

OPEN MIC: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Danielle moved for the meeting to be adjourned and Monty seconded. It passed unanimously. Kristen provided closing prayer.

The meeting ended at 2:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ophelia Yalley-Ogunro
Secretary of the Vestry