

Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Vestry Minutes
August 28, 2022

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

Meeting started following prayer by Padre.

CONSENT AGENDA: Kristen made changes to the agenda by adding an item to New Business to discuss Rosa becoming our new deacon. Monty made a motion to accept the consent agenda and Lauren seconded. It passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: Gary updated the vestry on the July report. He sent the May and June balance sheets and Profit and Loss statements. In July the income was \$40,000 and that's about the average. For the year to date, it is about \$282,000 and divided by 7 it is about \$41,000 and we are consistent even though it could be higher. The outflow is about \$44,000. The facilities ended up being about \$11,000 and that's catching up on things like the HVAC. We had a loss of \$3,000 but it's within where we expect to be.

Gary's Open Mic question is, how many people attend church on average and that number includes those on FaceBook. 96. Pre-covid we were averaging 180-200. That number gave us three members attending the diocesan convention. We may no longer have three since the average number in attendance has dropped each Sunday. Gary stated that he was concerned about our census but doesn't know how to get the people back in the church. Monty asked how the low census affects our bottom line since those who pledged don't necessarily have to come to church. Most of the income is from pledges and a small amount from the plate. For July it was \$1,700. Padre asked if there has been additional income after his announcements and Gary does not know if there are one-time donors.

Facilities: Kristen asked the vestry to figure out what to do with the dead tree next to the chapel. Randall sent four different estimates and then the option of turning the tree into a carving. The information we received did not say how much it will cost to turn the tree into artwork. If we vote on choosing the carving, then we should not vote to do it if it will cost more than it will cost to take the tree down. Lauren said we should think carefully about what kind of subject we will be making. Monty thinks it might be an expensive option. Padre shared photos of tree carvings. Susan said the tree is diseased and it needs to come down. Holding it longer will cause issues with people going down to the columbarium. The other one closer to the street may be a better one for artwork. Roger said given our financial situation and not knowing if 'the every member canvas' will meet our goal, delaying a decision about a potential contingency is not a good idea

so take the tree down. Ruth Anna thought the idea of a labyrinth in that space after the tree is removed will be a good idea. She agrees with Roger that the tree must come down. Ed asked if a piece of the wood can be preserved to use later. Danielle said Randall had mentioned that the company that takes the tree down keeps the spoils so we may have to pay extra to keep a piece but we need to ask. Kristen made a motion to convert the tree into art and Danielle added that only if it will cost as much as it will cost to take the tree down. Danielle seconded. It did not pass with four votes. Kristen made a motion to approve up to \$8,500 for removal of the tree and grinding the stump by Italy Tree. Roger seconded and it passed unanimously.

Ascension History Committee: Ruth Anna said Michelle has given a good preview of what the committee has worked on. A copy was sent to the vestry for review and comments or questions and she wondered if everyone received the copy. Michelle wants to send it to the diocese by September 15th. It was confirmed that the vestry received the document. Kristen said she spoke to Michelle yesterday and thought it is fair to give everyone until next Sunday to get comments or questions to Michelle before she submits the report.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ascension Expo: Kristen wants to be sure the vestry has reached out to their committees and they have prepared the display on the trifold and electronic presentations for the Expo on September 18th. It will be a 1A service and it will be the beginning of the pledge campaign.

Ascension House: Padre said we need to figure out what to do with it because it is eating into our expenses. Padre asked Gary about the information from the two realtors. They suggested selling it but then said they could find tenants to rent it also. Gary said he told them we will get back to them once a decision is made. Kristen said that the things we could do with it will cost us money initially to fix it. If we rent it, we will need someone to manage it. Arturo worked with a group that wanted to use the space. There are all sorts of ideas for the space but the issue is we do not have the people to manage the projects from there and it also means we will not have access to the space for something like the yard sale. Lauren asked about the zoning and Kristen wasn't sure if it is zoned for commercial use but definitely not for residential. After discussion Kristen asked everyone to send ideas to her by September 15th.

Deacon Rosa: The diocese sent Rosa to us and she will be starting in September but she will not be doing her deacon obligations until she is ordained. Deacons are volunteers and because she works, she will not be available all the time. She will be working for 10-12 hours a week. We are responsible for her mileage if she does anything outside of Sunday services.

The diocese requires some financial commitments from us. We are responsible for her registration for the diocesan convention, deacon's retreat and two continuing education courses. The total financial commitment will be approximately \$1,130. Ruth Anna asked if Rosa will

participate in the Spanish speaking Tending Our Soil and Padre said no because the program has already started. She will be focused on the Latino ministry. Ed asked how long Rosa will be with us and Padre said for three years.

OPEN MIC:

Roger has the mailings organized and the first event is on September 10th for envelope stuffing from 2pm to 4pm in Room 1. Padre's sermon on pledging will be on the 18th and the envelopes should be received by then. Roger has asked several people for commitment to writing the cover letter in the insert. So far he has 3-4 volunteers. He is asking the vestry to talk to people and remind them how important it is to submit their pledges. Ruth Anna asked if there is a facilities fund and Roger said it has been deferred until January. Lauren asked Roger if he has a schedule for when to write the letters or for the speakers. He will come up with one. After discussion, it was decided that the letter will also be posted on WhatsApp as well.

ADJOURNMENT: Roger moved to adjourn the meeting and Danielle seconded. It passed unanimously. Susan provided closing prayer and the meeting ended.

Respectfully submitted,
Ophelia Yalley-Ogunro
Secretary of the Vestry