

Vestry Minutes for the Regular Meeting of March 2021

Grace Church, Lexington

Zoom Meeting

Lent 5 Monday, March 22, 2021

5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Call to Order 5:00 pm

Fr Tuck

In Attendance: Fr. Tuck Bowerfind, David Connolly, Punky Dod, Carole Elmore, Elizabeth Grist, Diana Kenney, William McCorkle, John Milford, Rob Minor, Liz Moss, Judy Schram, Cecile West-Settle.

Officers: Buster Lewis, Treasurer; Lisa McGuire, Clerk

Absent: Kathy Hill

Meditation

Punky Dod

Punky used as her meditation an essay she found while gathering up her tax receipts...written by one of her former Stuart Hall students. She said when she read the essay, she reflected on the development of children's minds, their spiritual journey and their learning process and growth and understanding. The essay assignment was to talk about parables and social awareness exemplified by Jesus. She closed with prayers for students and educators.

Information

- **Capital Campaign Update**

Rob Minor

As of today, we have pledges in hand of \$500,690.29. There are still 20 or so pledge cards that are still outstanding from the quiet phase. The quiet phase will end on Easter with an announcement to the congregation. The Week of April 5th will start the general phase, which will run until June 6th. The faithfulness of the community has been fabulous. The committee is very thankful. The committee is working on ways to recognize contributors.

- Returning citizens update – nothing new to report. No news on a second decision by the parole board.

- Walker Program update

John Milford

John spoke with Al Hockaday and found out that 16 individuals applied for the program. Of those 16, 13 are going to move on to the pitch competition. They will present their business ideas/plans and those will be reviewed by the board, ending on April 15. The board is working with the individuals on location for their business, finances and budgets.

Tuck mentioned that Grace Church committed \$25,000 to the Walker Initiative in 2020. We have also identified another \$100,000 that we could allocate to racial equity and other outreach efforts in the community. The Vestry is interested in receiving input from the Racial Equity Subcommittee and the Outreach Committee on how we might spend the additional money over the next couple of years.

John also asked Al Hockaday about a question that came up about street renaming. He said that personally it was not a critical issue right now. He has been busy helping people sign up for vaccinations and getting them to appointments. Also there has been an issue with homeownership. He is trying to help families that are living together, buy their own homes. He has been helping with trying to find financing/loans. Potentially this may be something we could help with. We also may be able to help with rides to vaccination appointments that the NAACP is signing people up for and David Connolly will check with Al Hockaday on the ways we can be helpful.

Discussion

- Gadsden agreement

Bill McCorkle

Draft Vestry Minutes 3/26/21

It was noticed by the Strategic Financial Planning Committee, that the earnings for Gadsden were significantly lower than the other church endowments. The parameters in place for the Gadsden Trust were different than the other investments. Conversation has started with the Finance, Gadsden and Strategic Financial Planning Committees on finding a way to equalize the different investment policies. This has resulted in changing some of the language involving investment for Gadsden to make it possible for the Treasurer of the parish to have access to the accounts and information and not just the appointed treasurer of the Gadsden committee. The Gadsden Committee wants to achieve successful policies that can generate more income which allows the church to put into practice the needs and ideas of the Outreach Committee.

Tuck mentioned that the church is grateful for the grant of \$20,000. that was received from the Gadsden Trust for the Chancel Capital Campaign.

- Marriage policy Judy Schram/Punky Dod
 - Clarification of the difference between Lifelong Covenant and Marriage.
 - Remove the language “Lifelong Covenant” from our policy. Same-sex marriage was legalized in 2015.
 - Prayer book Marriage service is not used for same-sex marriages because the language is incorrect, using husband and wife. The same-sex service is in the liturgical supplemental “Enriching Our Worship”. The language used is spouse, instead of husband and wife.
 - Baptism: to be married in the Episcopal church it has always been that one of the persons to be married must be baptized.
 - The language in our Marriage Policy will be changed from *With the action of the General Convention in the Episcopal Church* to **With the adoption of General Convention 2018 resolution A086, we furthermore affirm**
 - Information will be posted on our website and sent out in an email announcement.
 - The Vestry will vote on the policy in April.

Review and Update

~~Blessing of Same-Sex Relationships~~ **Marriage Policy of R.E. Lee Memorial Grace Church**

R. E. Lee Memorial **Grace** Episcopal Church affirms God’s love of all people and our baptismal vow to seek and serve Christ in all persons. ~~With the action of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church taken in July, 2012,~~ **With the adoption of General Convention 2018 resolution A086,** we furthermore affirm that, **in accordance with the laws of the commonwealth of Virginia, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church and the Guidelines and Approved Rites for Same Sex Marriage of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia and the God’s love can be experienced in committed love between two people of the same sex and, therefore, with the approval of the Rector and Vestry, agree to offer the Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant effective at the beginning of Advent 2012 the following rites for couples regardless of gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation:**

1. The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant
 2. The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage
 3. The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage
- a. The Blessing of a Civil Marriage b. An Order for Marriage

Recognizing the seriousness of lifelong, loving, committed relationships, ~~R. E. Lee Memorial Episcopal~~ **Grace** Church will offer a Christian blessing of same-sex relationships according to ~~the following guidelines:~~ **Diocese of Southwestern Virginia Guidelines for Same Sex Mariages.**

Consent Agenda

Wardens' Reports

Vestry Minutes for February 22, 2021

Rector's Report 03222021

Services will continue to be held on Zoom through Easter. If we had an in-person service not everyone would be able to attend, on-line allows more parishioners to participate. We will offer communion after the Palm Sunday service and the Easter service at approximately 11:45-Noon. We will also offer the cross to "flower". Sometime after Easter it will make sense for us to gather. We will have to figure out what that will look like.

Treasurer's Report

Committee Reports

- Administration and Personnel
- Chancel Project Committee Report
- Christian Education Committee
- Christian Outreach Committee
- Committee Chairs & Vestry
- Finance Committee
- Gadsden
- Higher Education Committee
- Property Committee
- Strategic Financial Planning Committee
- Worship Committee

Old Business

New Business

Appointment of Convention Delegates **Approved**

Delegates:

John Milford
Punky Dod
Judy Schram

Alternates:

Frank Settle
David Connolly
Carole Elmore

Adjournment

Closing Prayer