

Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral

Minutes, Regular Meeting of the Vestry

Thursday, September 23, 2021

Members Present: The Very Rev. Dr. Andrew C. Keyse, *Dean*; The Rev. Ryan Wiksell, *Deacon*; Candy McDowell, *Senior Warden*; Phaedra Fahnestock, *Clerk*; Jeff Johnson, Ron Michka, Pat Decker, Sharon Cheers, Ken Stewart, Bill Colvin, Kay Woolley

Members Absent: Richard Morse, *Junior Warden*; Amy Cornwell, Nick Smith

Others Present: David Barker, *Treasurer*; Steve Moore, *Chancellor*

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Dean Andy in prayer.

1. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Phaedra Fahnestock presented the amended minutes from the previous Regular Vestry meeting on August 26, 2021. Jeff Johnson moved to accept the amended minutes and it was seconded by Candy McDowell. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Dean's Report

Richard Morse had asked at the last meeting about refugee assistance. Joyce Morrow is putting a project together to collect toiletry items for Della C Lamb Center. Larry Ehren of Saint Mary Magdalene, Christy Dorn's husband, was approached by KC for Refugees about using space in his church to store furniture so that refugees can have furniture as needed. Candy and Dean Andy discussed using lower Founders' but the timeframe for commitment is 18 months to two years and with what we have in mind for that space, we don't want it to be tied up for that long. Candy has suggested that we could rent a storage unit to hold furniture donations. Larry said that they are grateful for our offer but feel that they have it covered in using their space for now. They'll reach out if anything comes up. Episcopal Migration Ministries is also taking up monetary donations to help with refugee efforts throughout the country.

Ryan and Dean Andy will be at a Clergy Retreat 10/4/2021 - 10/6/2021 at Conception Abbey.

Gary Bressman has two projects in progress right now and the scraps from those projects can be used for our projects but trucking and logistics disruptions are the bottleneck. The playground was power washed today.

Our search for a female Deacon is back on hold right now. The person that we had previously considered will no longer be available. We will wait until the Bishop Provisional is in place. The search is not over, but on hold.

On Sunday Dean Andy mentioned that he has hired a new Youth Director. Her name is Clare Stern-Burbano. She's a lifelong Episcopalian that came to Kansas City from Jacksonville, FL with a youth program. She is currently working as a youth and children's director at Village Presbyterian Antioch. She'll start with us on Oct. 10th.

Coming up: Several funerals are upcoming including Phyllis Ryder, Annie Heck, and Eric Cenovich. Ryan's ordination is 10/2/2021, Pet Blessings is on 10/9/2021, and a Croquet Tournament is on 10/16/2021. Valerie Johnson is working on an Advent devotional.

Dean Andy reminded the Vestry of the problems we've been experiencing with slow internet speed. Following some research, the Vestry is being asked to consider purchasing the necessary equipment and services to improve things all around. It's \$5,000 for the equipment, which will come from Property Funds and \$2,000 annually for the service agreement, which will come from Operating Expenses.

Bill Colvin, on the recommendation of the Dean and Cathedral Staff, MOVED that up to \$7,000 be allocated to upgrade the WiFi on the Cathedral campus including an annual service fee if needed. The funds are to come from the Property Fund per the Treasurer and the Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Candy and was passed following some discussion pending more details to follow to ensure that all users' stories are addressed.

3. Associate's Report

An idea that came out of several conversations, particularly with Angie, regarding when people who are in need are soliciting us for help, and in an effort to partner with the community, is to initiate a program to create small care packages that can be prepared in large volume. They can be handed out to downtown establishments to be further handed out to those in need. Vitamin water, granola bars, socks, gift card, and information card directing people to additional assistance are some examples of items that could be in these care packages. Candy shared that she thought we had done something like that in the past and Ryan agreed that this is something we've done in the past and would like to revitalize. The idea also takes it a step further to foster relationships with other downtown establishments. Angie and her staff are usually the first to respond to requests for help and we had the kits for people but it stopped with Covid. Ryan wants to relieve property staff from having to participate in benevolence work. Jeff asked if there's a particular day of the week that we're approached more frequently than others. Ryan said that Sundays are most frequented, but it happens all the time all throughout the week. Kay Woolley said that rent and utility assistance were the most requested in her experience. Sharon suggests that there are several resources in downtown via nonprofits and congregations that provide care packages and that she suggests contacting MAC-a clearinghouse for nonprofits emergency rent/housing/utilities. Ryan will send out an email tomorrow to Dean Andy, Terri Curran, and Sharon Cheers to further develop this concept.

4. Financial Report

The GHTC Monthly Financial Summary is a thumbnail of the salient parts of the budget information. Page 1 talks about where we are regarding Income and Expenses. This is a healthy trendline to have. August was one of those months when people were out of town and focused on other things. There's no reason to believe that things won't pick back up going forward.

For the month, our Net Income was in excess of our Expenses. The Year to Date is even better. We're going to have a good year. We're not spending the money because we're not fully open.

We have been leaning on the Property fund, which has about \$90,000 in it. Certain expenses are being covered by that Property fund.

Jeff asked if at the end of 2020 when we were in a positive cash position and we voted on whether or not to take the draw, is there any indication as to whether or not we'll be in that same cash position again this year.

Dave thinks that since we're in such a strong cash position that we really shouldn't need to take the Endowment this year. Jeff just wanted to remind the group that we will probably have the same conversations and decisions to make at the end of this year as we did last year. If anyone on the Vestry is interested in participating in the Budget Committee, please let Dave know.

Jeff Johnson moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Bill Colvin seconded it, and it passed unanimously without further discussion.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee has been discussing what to do about the lighting in Founders' Hall. With electricity savings it will take about 8 ½ years to pay back the initial costs of the install. This is an estimate of \$5,000 per year in energy savings. The fixtures need to be updated in order to accommodate the new LED lamps. This will cost about \$43,000. The bulbs are warranted for 5 years with an expected lifespan of 20 years. On the recommendation of the Building and Grounds Committee, Candy McDowell MOVED that \$46,715.00 be allocated to remove the halogen light fixtures and bulbs from the ceiling of Founders' Hall and replace them with new LED fixtures and bulbs. The funds are to come from the Property Fund per the Treasurer and the Finance Committee. Kay Woolley seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Sharon asked if there's an Energy Utility Company rebate and Dave confirmed that there is and it's roughly \$2,000.

5. Stewardship Report

Stewardship has kicked off with Ryan's sermon. The letter has been drafted with the pledge cards. They went out today. The theme is "Return, Rekindle, Rejoice". Hopefully we will have as successful a program as we did last year. Realm should be open for 2022 pledges now. We plan to have some testimonials during upcoming announcements and will continue to pray for renewed pledges. The stewardship prayer has been added to the bulletin.

6. Junior Warden's Report

Richard Morse was not in attendance for today's meeting.

7. Senior Warden's Report

The Strategic Plan: Candy and Dean Andy met with Tom Vansaghi and as a result he has sent us a proposal regarding the possibility of him working with us on a strategic plan. He has a menu that we can use to pick and choose what he would help with and what we could do ourselves. If he does it all it will cost around \$6,200. He could start around the beginning of the year. The Dean and Candy are seeking someone to head a committee to look at the proposal and make recommendations.

The Prekindergarten Daycare: Candy and Dean Andy met with Dan Yoder, COO, and Nina Ward, Community Engagement Officer of Crossroads Academy. It was somewhat disappointing, but it has led into more conversations and the eventual establishment of a meeting with Anne Miller and KC PreK Cooperative. The Cooperative here has been going on for about 4 years to address the need for kindergarten preparedness among underserved populations in the city. Over 200 early childhood centers in the metropolitan area have closed over the last year, resulting in over 3000 fewer slots available, 1200 of which are in Jackson County. Last month they added two classrooms. They work with 12 schools and they have 5 early childhood providers that service 270 children in 15 classrooms. There's state and federal funding for the students. The philanthropic community has been helpful in getting classrooms set up.

Outreach Funds: Candy sent out an email regarding funds that are available in Outreach. We have \$65,334.55 for Outreach and each month is budgeted for \$4,583 that goes through the operating fund. Outreach Ministry goes through the budget and is added to the operating fund. There's now \$73,526.05 that can be used for various Outreach Ministry actions. \$250 from Plate each month goes into Clergy Discretionary Fund. No action is proposed at this time, but it may be worth considering moving some of the funds from Outreach Ministry to Discretionary Funds. Dean Andy said that we have received numerous calls requesting rent and utility assistance and at this point are having to turn people away. Dean Andy suggests moving around \$5,000 would be helpful to get us through the rest of the year. Dean Andy continued with comments about the types of requests that are made and how the clergy determine the amounts and beneficiaries. Payments are not made to individuals, but directly to utility companies, landlords, etc. A lively discussion ensued about housing and other outreach issues. Candy suggested referring further discussion and ideas to the Outreach Committee.

Candy shared concern and suggested that with all the various activities ongoing, such as funerals and wedding preparations, that Dean Andy needs to be sure to heed his own Sabbath.

8. Vestry Liaison Reports (to be sent via email)

Sharon, Cheers, *Safety*

Ron Michka, *Community Engagement*

The information is going to go out this week regarding the upcoming Cathedral Cup Croquet Tournament. It's a Save the Date for Saturday October 16th from 3-6pm. Curtis will help with rules. We are looking for croquet sets. If anyone is interested in playing, please let Ron know. It's not a fund raiser, it's a fun raiser. More details to follow.

Amy Cornwell, *Children's Formation*

Phaedra Fahnestock, *Outreach*

During the month of September, the congregation donated 1417 diapers and 900 baby wipes to Happy Bottoms bringing the total for diapers in 2021 to 7882. The outreach goal was 10,000.

Backsnack will start back up in the month of October.

During the month of October, we will be collecting food, "Trick or Treat so Others Can Eat" to be given to Saint Mary's Pantry if reopened or Saint Paul's pantry.

Joyce Morrow and several others are investigating how we can help immigrant families from Afghanistan who will be settling in Kansas City. This group will be working through Jewish Community Services and Don Bosco.

Ken Stewart, *Communications*

Nick Smith, *Young Adult*

Old Business

The bike racks are in and they look fantastic! Thanks to Ken for his efforts. The paving stones are a nice added touch. Ken said that Angie was concerned that they may get stolen. Ken is looking into adding bolts to prevent theft attempts.

New Business

Jeff Johnson moved to adjourn and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m. in prayer. The next regular meeting of the Vestry will be Thursday, October 28, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phaedra Fahnestock, Vestry Clerk