

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE VESTRY OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION**

January 25, 2020

A meeting of the Vestry of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension of Knoxville, Tennessee, of the Protestant Episcopal Church (the "Church") was held the Lighthouse Knoxville, 6800 Baum Drive, Knoxville Tennessee, on Saturday, January 25, 2020. Present in person were Interim Rector Rev. Pat Wingo; Senior Warden Marilyn Roddy; Junior Warden Dave Irvin, Jr.; Jim Alexander; Jim Hodge; Tim Jeffcoat; Laura Johnston; Tom Morgan; Sylvia Peters; Pat Richardson; Marilyn Roddy; Amanda Rowcliffe; Pat Rutenberg; Janet Slabbekorn; Muffet Testerman-Buckner; and Neale Wetherall, constituting a quorum. Absent but duly notified was Brian Wanamaker. Present by invitation were Linda Hawley, Parish Administrator, and Mark Medley, Treasurer.

Father Pat chaired the meeting, and Amanda Rowcliffe served as Clerk.

Father Pat called the meeting to order at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Father Pat began with an overview of what his view of the opportunities and challenges for the Vestry in 2020. First, Father Pat expressed a desire for a year-round stewardship committee to focus of individual gifts of time, talents, and money. He advised the Vestry that Mary LeMense has agreed to lead the committee at the outset. Second, Father Pat also advised that, while the Church has been fortunate in receiving the assistance of others in recent years, it needs a third priest. Third, Father Pat explained that the coming year will likely include a discussion about whether and how to reorganize the endowment. Fourth, Father Pat reminded the Vestry that the Church likely needs a major gifts campaign in the near term. Finally, Father Pat informed the Vestry that he has struggled with congregational reactions to comments on national or world affairs. He advised that he is putting together a civil conversations workshop in March to help improve dialogue with challenging issues. Father Pat then concluded his overview with a discussion of the Vestry organization and its commission and committee structure.

Thereafter, Father Pat opened the business portion of the meeting. At his request, Amanda Rowcliffe provided the Outreach Commission Report. Amanda advised the Vestry that she recently held a meeting of all outreach ministries in the Church, with 15 in attendance. She then reviewed how funds from the 2019 Mardi Gras event were dispersed in the last year as well as how the remaining funds will be disbursed. She noted that GiGi Logan plans to take the Ascension Youth Group on a mission trip to Wilmington, North Carolina, and that \$1,700 of the Mardi Gras funds will be donated to support this trip. An additional \$1,700 will be donated to Episcopal Relief and Development for either the 1,000 Days of Love campaign or disaster relief in Puerto Rico. The Outreach Commission will make a

recommendation as to where to place the funds at the February meeting. The final \$1,700 of Mardi Gras funds will be reserved for seed funding for future outreach needs. Finally, Amanda advised that the 2020 Mardi Gras event will be a lower key event with the goal of splitting the proceeds equally between youth outreach, local missions, and world missions.

Next, at Father Pat's request, Pat Rutenberg provided the Inreach Commission Report. She reviewed recent Adult Christian Formation events, noting that the Rev. Caroline Vogel has done an excellent job in the current Sunday School workshop on Daring Greatly. Pat noted that the Worship and Music team met with Director of Music Ministries Jim Garvey to discuss needs and goals for the year. Pat also advised that the Episcopal Church Women will be providing a meal for the Tweens group and will be providing donation baskets for the Mardi Gras event. Finally, Pat advised that there is a need for more volunteers for Parish events.

Thereafter, Father Pat opened the Temporal Business Commission Report. At Father Pat's request, Mark Medley provided a monthly financial report to the Vestry. Referring to materials provided to the Vestry in advance of the meeting and attached hereto as Exhibits A and B, Mark reported that the Church ended 2019 with balance of \$26,000 in its checking account and pledges of approximately \$27,000 over budget. Mark noted that typically the Church reduces pledges by 3% to account for various reasons why pledges might not be fulfilled. But in 2019 pledges were over budget by approximately 3%. Mark also advised that for the first time in four years the Church did not draw on its line of credit and was able to reserve funds Foundation 60. He reminded the Vestry that in 2019 it made the difficult decision to approve a budget with a \$47,000 deficit. But he applauded the Church for its efforts to reduce expenses and the parish for working through that immediate financial challenge. Finally, Mark advised the Vestry that in 2019 the chairs of the Finance and Endowment committees began attending each other's meetings in an effort to increase communication and reduce the potential for conflict between the two groups.

Next, at Father Pat's request, Linda Hawley provided the Parish Administrator report. She advised the Vestry that the youth room has a small leak that is being repaired. In addition, the Kitchen has been cleaned, including the grease trap. Linda reminded the Vestry that the Church is aware of the need improve sound systems in the Church, and that some of the microphones have been replaced. The Church is also updating the hearing-impaired system to be similar to the newly installed system at St. John's. Linda noted that the Church has some landscaping needs, including trees that need to be cut down. She has obtained a quote of \$4,500 for cut down and prune the trees. Linda also updated the Vestry regarding pledges for 2020. She explained that the Church received 141 pledges for approximately \$1.1 million. While some of the pledges have been prepaid, the Church has received approximately \$100,000 less in prepaid pledges than last year. In addition, in 2019 the Church received pledges from 32 pledgers who did not pledge for 2020. This represents approximately \$94,000 in pledges. Vestry members are following up

with the 32 pledgers that did not pledge this year, and Linda expects that outreach to be completed by January 28. On the whole, the church received more individual pledges for 2020 than it did for 2019. But the total amount pledged is lower. While the Church needs to continue to focus on increasing the number of pledges, it also needs to be cognizant that it is not receiving as many large pledges (*e.g.*, pledges in the \$20,000 range) as it has previously.

At Father Pat's request, Dave Irvin and Laura Johnston completed the Temporal Business Commission report with an update on the roof and ceiling repair. Dave advised that the roof replacement has started and that the contract provides for the work to be completed within 120 days. Laura informed the Vestry that she has contacted companies that specialize in church restoration projects and has been advised that it is not necessary to do additional work until the roof replacement is complete.

Father Pat then advised the Vestry of four appointments slated for the Endowment Committee: Ann Hansen to serve for 2020-2021 to fill a vacancy; Amanda Busby, Joe Johnston, and Alan Wright have each completed their terms and have agreed to be reappointed; and Father Pat has nominated Jim Alexander. Father Pat reminded the Vestry that Julie Hembree is in the middle of her term and remains on the committee. On motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the slate of nominees was approved as submitted.

Next, Marilyn Roddy updated the Vestry on the *ad hoc* major gifts committee's work. She reminded the Vestry that Father Pat and the Wardens had appointed Dave Irvin, Andy Oakes, and Ann Hanson to evaluate how to address the Church's debt. The committee prepared a report to review a major gifts campaign and issued recommendations for the conditions for the campaign. The Vestry previously reviewed and approved the report, and the report has been referred to the Finance Committee for further consideration. The Vestry anticipates receiving a recommendation from the Finance Committee regarding the report and proposed campaign, including proposed priorities for the campaign.

Thereafter, Father Pat provided the Rector's Report. He reminded the Vestry that the Very Rev. Anthony Pompa, the Rector and Dean of the Cathedral Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, will visit the Church during the weekend of March 7 through 9. He will speak on the success of the Celtic service at his church.

Next, Marilyn Roddy provided the Senior Warden's Report. She reviewed the listening sessions the Vestry conducted last year, noting that they were constructive and raised important issues for the Vestry to address. She advised the Vestry that, given the approaching rector search, the Vestry may choose to focus on the parish profile as a means to gather feedback rather than listening sessions. She also reminded the Vestry that it produced a list of items raised at the listening sessions and that the Vestry should consider updating the Church on actions taken with respect to those items.

Father Christopher then provided the Assistant Rector's Report. He advised that the Mardi Gras committee met the previous Thursday. Its goal is for the Mardi Gras event to be a fun parish gathering rather than a major fundraising event. The committee proposed that \$5,000 of the funds raised be earmarked for Family Promise event in honor of Mary LeMense and Ann O'Connor and that the remainder of the funds be distributed among other outreach missions. The committee decided that the theme of the event will be "Celebrating Our Shared Ministries," and Father Christopher and Amanda Rowcliffe will prepare a Keynote presentation, highlighting the Church's various missions, to be played during the event. On motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the Vestry agreed that the monies raised from the Mardi Gras event will be distributed to the Outreach Missions as part of the Budget.

Thereafter, Father Pat opened discussion of the election of the Wardens. He and the Vestry began by thanking Marilyn Roddy for her service as Senior Warden and Dave Irvin for his service as Junior Warden. Father Pat then advised the Vestry of his appointment of Dave Irvin to serve as Senior Warden. On motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the Vestry approved the appointment. Sylvia Peters then nominated Laura Johnston to serve as Junior Warden. On motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the Vestry approved the nomination. Father Pat then advised the Vestry that it will be commissioned at the 8:00 and 10:30 services on Sunday, January 26.

Father Pat then reminded the Vestry of its Commission structure. On motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the Vestry approved the Commissions as follows:

- Senior Warden – Dave Irvin
- Junior Warden – Laura Johnston
- Inreach Commission
  - Chairs – Pat Rutenberg and Muffet Buckner
  - Adult Formation – Tom Morgan
  - Children and Youth – Brian Wanamaker
  - Worship and Music – Pat Rutenberg and Muffet Buckner
  - Spiritual Life – Janet Slabbekorn
  - Parish Events – Tim Jeffcoat
- Temporal Business Commission
  - Chair – Laura Johnston
  - Finance and Endowment – Jim Alexander
  - Building and Grounds – Jim Hodge
  - Communications – Pat Richardson
  - Ascension Gifts – Marilyn Roddy
- Outreach Commission
  - Chair – Amanda Rowcliffe
  - Newcomers – Neale Wetherall

- Local Missions – Sylvia Peters
- World Missions – Amanda Rowcliffe

Father Pat reminded the Vestry that, following the formal business meeting, the Vestry would hear from Canon to the Ordinary Michelle Warriner Bolt regarding the anticipated process for the Rector search.

The Vestry then closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Thereafter, upon motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Amanda Rowcliffe, Clerk

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Dave Irvin, Senior Warden