

St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2020

Present: Jack Armistead, Eddie Bennett, Kelly Black, Rhonda Hefner-Packer, Jane Hudson, Marge Massey, Nikki Mathis, Kathryn Musholt, Caley Ross, Beth Thornton, Lester House, and Chrissy Moffett

Devotion and Triad Time: Rhonda Hefner-Packer and Nikki Mathis

Rhonda shared a drawing from *The Second Mountain* by David Brooks. Discussion followed on the topic of suffering.

Call to Order and Approval of Meeting Minutes: Nikki Mathis

Nikki called the meeting to order. Copies of the June 9 vestry minutes were distributed in advance of the meeting. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as written. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Financial Report: Nikki Mathis and Les House

Les House provided the June Treasurer's report in advance of the meeting. For the month of June, revenues were \$4,408 under budget and expenses were \$1,024 over budget. Les noted that two payments were made for Nikki's insurance in June because it was not paid in May. Year to date, revenues are \$11,554 under budget and expenses are \$13,921 under budget. Discussion followed.

Les noted that a two-month break was being taken on the drafting of financial policies. It will be resumed in September and it is expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Santa Maria a Ferrano Follow Up: Les House

Les indicated that a response had been received from Bonnie Burgess at the diocese concerning the request for Santa Maria a Ferrano. A summary of the response follows:

- Since the retreat is affiliated with the Episcopal Church in Europe, it is acceptable for a parishioner to solicit funds for it.
- Any funds collected must be put into a separate restricted fund.
- Normally the diocese would serve as a clearing house for the funds to be transmitted, but Bonnie stated it would be okay if St. Gregory transmitted the funds directly.

Les noted that any expenses for transmitting the funds will be taken from donations. Discussion followed. Previous concerns were alleviated with the communication received from the diocese.

A motion was made for St. Gregory to act as a flow through for the Santa Maria a Ferrano retreat house in Italy with a separate designated fund established to hold monies collected. Monies

collected will be sent directly to the retreat house and the congregation will be notified. The motion was seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Les will notify Kendall to set up the fund and a notice will be included in the weekly parish newsletter.

Audit Letter: Les House

Discussion was held on the letter to the diocese on the audit due in August. Les will contact Kendall to confirm that the audit letter had been sent.

Rector's Report: Nikki Mathis

Nikki provided her report. Per the Bishop, there is strong encouragement not to congregate, but vestries can consider congregating according to diocesan pandemic precautions. At present, there are no options that allow for more than 50 people meeting outside, with masks, 6 feet between persons, and no more than 20 people per 300 square feet inside. No paper handouts, no wind instruments or singing, no Eucharist. Given the rising rates of infection and hospitals at capacity, Nikki feels that we are not in a place to meet in person. Discussion followed.

Columbarium Discussion: Kathryn Musholt

Kathryn noted that she was unable to find any plans for the columbarium/Memorial Garden. Mark Reinberger obtained a proposal for landscaping which includes a concrete walkway wide enough for a wheelchair, grading the land, and cutting back a large azalea. Kathryn presented the proposal to the finance committee who raised questions on ADA requirements. Discussion was held on the existing status of the walkway, the available funding for the work, and a need for two other bids. Kathryn will ask Mark to obtain two additional bids for the work.

Discussion was held on the price of the marker stones. The original fee included the cost of the stone plus \$200 for upkeep of the garden. However, now all that \$500 covers is the cost of the stone; no money is available for garden upkeep. Thirty-two people have already prepaid for a spot in the garden. It was noted that prepaid fees cannot be raised retroactively but that there is a need to make a change going forward. A suggestion was made for the formation of a committee to review what other churches are doing in this area. The need for a stop gap measure now, until additional decisions are made, was stressed. Discussion followed.

A motion was made to change the policy for burial spots/stones for the Memorial Garden to market price plus \$200. This excludes those that are already prepaid and excludes those wanting to pre-purchase until a clearer and more refined policy regarding price point is determined by a Memorial Garden committee yet to be formed. The motion was seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Kathryn will have more information on the Memorial Garden in September.

The vestry thanked Les and he left the meeting.

Toward Better Understanding: Kathryn Musholt

Kathryn indicated that a request had been made to provide parishioners with an opportunity to support the Black Lives Matter Movement by understanding more about racism and personal bias. A book discussion is something that could be started quickly. Ellen Richardson has agreed to facilitate one and suggested two historical books for consideration including *The Warmth of Other Suns*. Discussion followed.

Stewardship Report: Caley Ross

Caley indicated that there was no update on the Ministry Fair yet but confirmed that it would be separate from Nourish, Grow and Go. The Ministry Fair will be placed on the church website so that it can be viewed at leisure.

Report on Nourish, Grow, and Go: Rhonda Hefner-Packer

Rhonda indicated that an email went out this morning with registration information for Zoom sessions in August for each committee. Six people are already registered. Discussion followed.

Planning for Celebrations for Next Year: Kelly Black

Next year is the 50th anniversary of St. Gregory and the vestry wants to do something special to celebrate. However, given COVID, we will need to be more creative and flexible in what is done. Since it is likely that we won't be able to meet in person in January when the Bishop was scheduled to come, September 2021 is being looked at as a date for the celebration since it coincides with the Feast Day of St. Gregory. This will be a topic of discussion at the September meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40.

Respectfully submitted by Chrissy Moffett.