

The Church of the Ascension
Minutes of the Vestry
November 20, 2023

Present: Stewart Tabb, Kristan Huddle, Susan Meredith, Cindy Jones, Katherine Lawrence, Doug Thompson, Anji Harris, Sally Miller, Pat Duncan, Rick Jones, Genevieve Nelson

I. Welcome: Stewart Tabb called the meeting to order at 7pm. Susan Meredith led the opening devotion.

II. Check in: What is on your mind? Discussion followed and included:

- Grateful for family, the church, Vestry members, recurrence of faith, to be alive, for people helping out while dealing with health challenges
- Gratitude and appreciation for life, for grandmother who raised them
- Looking forward to holidays with family, excited granddaughter spent time with them
- Thankful for job, to be with their grandmother at the end of her life, stronger faith and relationship with God,
- When volunteering at CHKD think about patient's range of emotions and why they are there,

III. Approval of the Minutes – Register:

A motion was made to approve the minutes for October 17, 2023. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

IV. Committee Reports:

1. A request was made by Genevieve to use her deacon budget towards continuing her piano lessons. Genevieve expressed how the piano provides a large part in her spiritual journey. Discussion followed with
 - a. Can the Deacon ministerial expense in the budget be used?
 - b. Can the scholarship fund be used?
 - c. Can this request be viewed coming from a parishioner instead of a deacon? Does that change funds that would be available?
 - d. Doug will check the guidelines from the diocese and let Stewart know.
2. The Finance Report was presented by Doug Thompson. Full Treasurer reports and documents provided in Vestry email on November 20, 2023. Doug recommended having a committee created to review and determine where some of the budget funds should go and review the church funds' investments. The following questions were asked concerning use of the budget funds:
 - a. Is the Mission Fund invested? Answer – Yes, church funds are invested.
 - b. Can local youth group use funds for local mission activity?
 - c. Can we reallocate the Boys Scout money since the Scouts are no longer active?
3. Day School Report – October minutes attached in Vestry email on November 20, 2023
 - a. Staffing is still an issue.
 - b. Currently there are 13 vacancies.
4. Food Pantry – Report attached in Vestry email on November 20, 2023
5. Stewardship Report – presented by Cindy Jones. Outreach report provided in Vestry email on November 30, 2023.
 - a. Pledges are down from last year. We need to call members who have not pledged yet this year. Question was asked - how can we increase pledges? Needs further discussion.
 - b. Increase membership - How can we follow up with new people attending Ascension to see if they want to be members? For the church to continue long term we need to get young families with children to join.
 - c. Can the church research different ways to get funds, i.e. grants?
6. Church Mission & Priorities
 - a. Stewart asked what are our priorities and mission?
 - i. Vestry will have a retreat January 12-13 to discuss what Ascension's mission and priorities are.
 - ii. Set retreat agenda in December's Vestry meeting
7. Buildings & Grounds – presented by Susan Meredith.

- a. AC update
- b. Insurance update
- c. Choir cabinets replaced.
8. Pastoral Care – No report.
9. Outreach Report – provided by Sally Miller. Report attached in Vestry email on November 20, 2023
 - a. During October Sandwiches were made for the Catholic Worker Street Breakfast and lunch for students at the Canterbury House at ODU
 - b. Ascension will provide 20 Christmas stockings to Salvation Army for children. This information needs to be added to the church announcements.
 - c. Question asked - Can we have mid-week email with announcements?
 - d. Social Justice will have a meeting at Ascension on December 8th.
10. Formation – Report attached in Vestry email on November 20, 2023
11. Liturgy –Liturgy report provided in Vestry email on November 20, 2023.
 - a. There will only be one Christmas Eve service at 9pm this year.
 - b. Christmas Day service at 10:00am

V. Clergy Report - provided by Stewart Tabb

1. Joint Easter Vigil - Discussion ongoing with St Andrews and Good Shephard churches to have a combined Easter Vigil.
2. Staff Christmas Gifts – A request was made to approve Christmas gifts for staff. Gifts are accounted for in budget and past years has been \$100.00. A motion was made, seconded, and approved for gifts.
3. Ascension's Diocesan Pledge - A motion was requested to approve amount for Diocesan Pledge. Last year the pledge amount was \$10,000. A motion made, seconded, and approved for \$10,000.
4. Diocesan Council will be held in Williamsburg February 9-10. Need delegates from Ascension to attend.

VI. Schedule/Devotions:

Susan Meredith led the closing devotion. The next Vestry Meeting is scheduled for December 18th at 7pm via Zoom. Kris Huddle will lead the devotions.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Newbern