



The Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist
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Vestry Minutes for The Episcopal church of St. John the Baptist
June 17, 2020 – Zoom Meeting

Present: Jill Malloy, Sharon Lamando, Fr. Tom White, Scott Kresge, Jean Skocypec, Ted Palmer, Clara Escobar, and Ed Stout.

Meeting was called to order by Senior Warden Jill Malloy at 7:00 p.m.

Opening Prayer was given by Father Tom.

Acceptance of May Minutes: Scott had a correction to make to the second to the last paragraph of the minutes. It was stated “to which Scott send to the vestry just before the vestry meeting.” This was incorrect. The email was sent by Fr. Tom. So, it should read “Which submitted by Fr. Tom to the vestry just before the meeting.” There was a motion to accept the minutes with that change being made by Sharon, seconded by Clara, and all were in favor.

Treasurer’s Report: Ed reported on the treasurer’s report that was sent to the vestry prior to the meeting. He went through the report with the vestry.

Status of Funds:

This included the status of all accounts, including the operating account still included the \$5,225 from the Isabell McGuinness Memorial Fund, which is slated for use for the streaming system approved at the Vestry Special Meeting of June 3, 2020.

Barnabas Technology Grant:

He reported that we applied for and received that Barnabas Technology Grant in the amount of \$2,500 to be applied to the new Live Streaming project that is currently being installed. This was the maximum amount and the monies should be coming this week.

Termination of the Merritt Franklin Hopkins Trust:

He stated that he has received the paperwork to complete the termination of the trust. Last year Tom Sombar signed and returned the paperwork agreeing to do this. At the time the market value was \$33,893 to be divided between eight (8) beneficiaries. Our portion before expenses at the time was \$4,236.74. He is trying to get a hold of the current value and our estimated share at this time. He will need to get signatures form Jill, Sharon, and Fr. Tom and will arrange that at a future date.

Dioecian Acceptance Contribution:

It has been requested by the Diocese to provide them with a payment date for our Acceptance. Ed reviewed last year’s payments and Tom divided the contribution in half and paid one half in September and the other half in December. Ed recommended we pay half now and the other half in December. The amount due now would be \$4,250 and the final payment in December of \$4,250 for a total of \$8,500.

Thermostats:

Ed brought up the fact that the electric bill dropped again by \$60 with the suspended services and no one using the space. Scott commented that during the time of heating the building the thermostats were

programmed and stayed consistent, but since the air has been set the thermostats have been registering different temperatures when entering the building. Jill suggested that we get Jerry to install locks on the thermostats, so they are not tampered with.

Hillside Flower Bills:

They do not itemize their bills and it is very hard to determine whether it is accurate or not. Jill suggested that we talk with Raymond, the owner, to get a better handle on the bill.

A motion was made by Ted to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Clara, and all were in favor.

Priest comments: Fr. Tom reported.

The Bishop meets with the Clergy every Tuesday at 4. There is good news for Delaware. All trends are going downward. We are in Phase II now.

Jill/Sharon - Wardens meeting with Bishop via Zoom is on June 25th. Also, musicians got invitations for them to meet with him as well via zoom on June 24th.

The appointed task force by the Bishop has put guidelines together which have transitioned into questions to ask as we move towards regathering. All congregations have to answer them, submit a proposal to the Bishop and Standing Committee. A congregation has to be certified before they can reopen and gather again. He will talk more about opening up later in the meeting.

He has heard three things. Some are getting tired of zoom. But there is positive feedback how well the fellowship hours go via zoom. Clara attends a zoom social hour from a previous parish. Fr. Tom and Scott attended the virtual national conference of Invite, Welcome, Connect last week and there was overwhelming positivity on these gatherings. They are having discussions that would never have had during non-COVID-19 times. One congregation had a trivia night via zoom. The vestry talked about having more of a social aspect for the congregation via Zoom, including fellowship hour.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Property: Sharon Reported on behalf of Mike McNamara.

The lock on the two back doors of the sanctuary has broken again after being repaired only 6 weeks ago. This cost us \$180 to have it repaired, and when it was fixed, he said there was not a lot of viable wood left to fix again. Jill, Sharon and Mike discussed this, and they are recommending that we get a nice brass side lock on the door to lock from the inside. Jerry said he would put that on.

Painting of the rental will begin next week, she said it depends on the weather and she is not sure what day. Earle will be pressure washing the bricks.

Heads up, our next big expenditure, may be in the spring. Steps to the front door are being eroded away. Jill said that the house is in historic district and we will have to go to the town to be approved. Whatever is removed has to be replaced exactly the same. She is thinking it will be several thousand dollars. Probably going to be very expensive. Fr. Tom stated that it is in our best interest to maintain the building. We need to schedule a walk-through of the rental house and we need to have new lease signed. Ed brought up that she is delinquent on her water and trash bill with the town of Milton by two months. Ed called the town and they said the next step by the town will be the disconnect notice. We get this and submit it to her. It was determined that Ed will call Mike and give a specific date for her to pay this bill and Ed will then check back with the town and if not paid, Jill stated that Ed will then contact her with stronger language.

Door at back by Sunday school. This needs to be replaced. Jill stated that Jerry and Jack will look at it and determine if they can replace it as Jack has experience with door installations. They are thinking about a metal

door to replace it, as this wooden door is full of cracks. Jill will contact them, and they will get an estimated amount for the project and that will then be sent out to the vestry.

Parish Communications: Mark was not present for the meeting.

Parish Administration: Scott reported.

Newsletters via Mailchimp

We were using them because they have a starter free tier. The Responses were 60-70% in the beginning of COVID-19 suspension. Checking the analytics, they have been on a downward decline and now are in the 35%-40%. He wasn't sure if this was over saturation, or just tired of the weekly newsletter, but recently he has received some contacts by frustrated parishioners that are not receiving them at all, and they previously did. Free tier has no technical support and we cannot talk to anyone. There is also the fact that everyone has different mail services with different filters that constantly change. He expressed that getting information for people to look at was difficult, especially if they are not receiving the emails instructing them what to do. Fr. Tom commented that he will address this topic with all the Shepherd leaders to talk to them. Scott has put some stuff to look at in their email accounts on the website under the newsletter page under contacts. Jill asked how much a subscription would cost that would get us the technical support needed and Scott responded \$9.99. Jill asked if it was month to month, which it is and if this makes no difference then we could drop it. Scott also addressed that this would give us more layouts and more flexibility where we could change the look and make it not look like the same newsletter coming out week after week. Jill recommended we purchase this and poised it to the vestry.

Teleprompter

He stated that the equipment for the teleprompter is in and has been used with both the filming of Sunday School lessons with Jill and the Rector's message with Fr. Tom. There have been some minor glitches and learning curve, but they have been worked on and it is hoped that going forward this will make it easier to film other messages from the different ministries and make more people that are not used to it or comfortable, willing to try it.

Zoom

In the past we had Mark set up the Zoom meetings via his company. Scott set up a free account previously, which is limited, so Jill asked Scott to upgrade the account so we could have the meeting tonight and there will be a lot of uses for this going forward. Jill authorized it, as it is \$14.99 a month. There are future plans for the use of this with Bible Study, fellowship hour, etc. So now the church has an account for future use.

Outreach/Inreach: Clara reported.

Sandwich Thursday

Sandwich Thursday starts tomorrow. This year will probably be more costly because we will not have the visibility of people driving by and freely donating to the cause. Signs will still be placed around town, but distribution of lunches will be at the side entrance to the church with all safety precautions being taken. Clara is recommending that one be outside and one inside to make sure there are not too many lunches being prepared and one will be visible to the public.

Angie will have to be notified, regarding her cleaning days. They will have to be any time after 1:30 on Thursday because by CDC standards it has to be sanitized before the next use of Sunday live streaming service. This will continue through the summer distribution of lunches. Fr. Tom will contact Angie and Scott to let them know of this change.

Clara stated that we sent a check for a group that was giving out meals and they sent a thank you letter to us.

Youth Ministry: Jill reported.

Sunday School

Sunday School has continued via recorded video with Jill and Scott. Jill continues to get pictures and positive feedback asking her to keep it up. Crafts continue to be sent out to those following the classes. Jill plans on going through June and checking with the parents to determine if the children want to continue for July/August.

God's Buddies

Scott sent out a video link to what St. Peters did for their bible school. Jill feels our standards are high and the kids love it and really get excited. It was determined by those involved that we will not be doing God's Buddies this year. Celeste and Amanda said the kids seemed to 'zoomed out'. So rather than lower our standards we are shelving it for next year, which we already have the curriculum for.

Music/Worship: – Fr. Tom reported.

This Sunday Service, The Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Canon Martha Kirkpatrick to preach this Sunday at the service for the homily. She was to visit this Sunday prior to the COVID-19 suspension. He reached out to her and asked if she wanted to do it electronically. She got back and said yes, she would love to do it. We are also going to the renewal of baptismal vows. We will have a drive by baptismal blessing at the church following service. Fr. Tom will use the sprinkler and bucket and will give anyone that is present a baptismal blessing. He will be wearing a mask and asks that anyone in a car wears a mask as well.

Pentecost Hangings

The Pentecost season is half the year. We have felt hangings for the day of Pentecost itself, but we didn't have enough banners and they are not appropriate for the entire seasons that follows. So, over the last year Fr. Tom and Scott worked on coming up with new hangings for this period. They decided on parables. Fr. Tom picked them out and Scott got the graphics to go with them and Fr. Tom selected a verse and the posters were created. Fr. Tom spoke with Barney Lanes family and funds from his Memorial will be used to frame and hang them. There will be a tour at the start of the service on Sunday June 24th so that the congregation and Barney's family can see them in the sanctuary.

Fair Linens

Gary and Margot Lawrik have created two beautiful fair linens and one is fairly long and will extend to the floor. Whenever paraments go to the floor this will be used. They had extra fabric, so they created a short one. We had a short fair linen, so we now we will have total of 3. They are given in memory of Gary's Brother George who died last year.

Altar Flowers

Fr. Tom brought up that Jean has offered, WHEN SHE HAS TIME and he emphasized this, she is willing to do the arrangements. She said the flowers are getting fewer in each arrangement and that the quality is going down. She did question if we have an agreement with Raymond, and it was determined that we do not, we have to actually place orders every time we want flowers.

Kitchen Teams: Jill had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Stain Glass Lighting: Mark was not present for the meeting.

Locks/keys: Sharon reported.

Changing of the locks and rekeying of the locks

It was brought up that there are a lot of keys out there to our building. Everyone still has keys and access to our building. Fr. Tom emphasized this is THE time to change the locks. This is a perfect time to clear out the old keys.

We decided that one key will open up all four doors. Sharon said she thought the estimate was \$580 for the rekeying and all the replacement keys. She said it included the sacristy door, Jill said Jerry can rekey that. It was determined that we get a total price of the door and an estimate for rekeying and send out an email to the vestry for a yay or nay vote.

Opening our doors to other organizations

Jill also suggested that we start to think about this might be the perfect time to separate from outside groups using the church as we have seen the utilities use drop and the rents tend not to support the extra cost incurred of using the church. Cleaning will have to be done and sterilized after each use and this was determined that this would be our cleaner and it might be cost prohibitive for them. If we do allow in the future their new contracts would have to reflect this. It is our building so we will dictate who cleans it.

NEW BUSINESS

Live Streaming: Scott reported.

Scott reported that all orders were placed, and it is within the original budget of Isabel McGuinness' memorial fund. Not everything has been delivered yet but should be in by the end of next week. Fr. Tom stated that the funds from the technology grant should be used first and the balance of the Isabel McGuinness memorial fund be held for future streaming needs as discussed at the special meeting of June 3, 2020.

Internet access with Comcast

This is an essential key to the installation of the system. We need high speed internet to stream. Scott reported that he and Ed have been dealing with Comcast. The prewiring visit resulted in him telling us that we had to submit a 'burry order' for the cable and he was going to do that and canceled the install appointment for the following Tuesday. Scott received a call the following Tuesday from the installation guy asking where he was, and he explained. The installation guy said the prewiring guy has no authority to order the order, that was his job. So, he went over the stuff with him via Facetime video chat and he placed the 'burry order' and, being optimistic, scheduled an install for two weeks, which is June 23rd. We have heard nothing on whether it was approved or not, but there appears to be cable activity at the church. Ed has called and not gotten a definitive answer, as the cable is not outside the office window. If the wire is not at the window, we have to hire someone to run the wire ourselves. Fr. Tom says if this continues to let him know and he will intercede and call on our behalf.

Proper accounting for memorial contributions

Sharon writes letters of thanks to any donors on behalf of the church. The treasurer needs to keep track of any contributions and give the name and address to Sharon. Also, Sharon needs to give a list to the family, so they know who gave to their loved one's memorial funds. We need to have a procedure in place, so no one gets left out getting thanked. Ed will make sure that Sharon gets all the information.

Grant: Fr. Tom reported.

Ed and Fr. Tom kept their promise to the Vestry to make sure the application went in ASAP. They both worked on the application questions together, and that combined with the financial information needed provided by Ed and the submitted technical proposal, provided by Scott helped us achieve the highest amount possible, which is \$2,500. We applied on the day the grant was made available and the monies should be coming in this week.

Opening Back Up: Fr. Tom reported.

We are coordinating with what is called 'The Route 1/Coastal Parishes' which consist of the following parishes; St. Peter's in Lewes, All Saints Rehoboth & St Georges Harbeson, St. Martha's in Bethany Beach, and us. We have committed to work together and all open on the same Sunday. The fear is if one opens and the others don't, it could be chaotic for that church. There was a zoom meeting, and they are thinking Phase III or beyond. Right now, we are securing materials needed to handle it when we reopen. The next meeting hasn't even been set yet.

There is something that might be a possibility in the future would be a drive by communion with safety precautions adhered to. He said the sub-committee will discuss this and then bring it to the vestry. But he wanted us to keep it in the back of our minds.

Landscaping: Sharon reported.

She and Jill noticed and discussed that the Landscaping looked terrible and that the landscaping committee wasn't keeping up. She stated that no plants should be in the memorial garden. Fr. Tom disagreed and said some parishioners were showing up. Scott stated that we just recently discovered that no plants should be there and that we haven't put many in. Most of them that are there were there prior to the redesign of the landscape. Sharon stated that she had an appointment set up with Bella Terra for next Monday at 1 and anyone was willing to show up and be there. Fr. Tom expressed his unhappiness with Bella Terra, because when we had the plants destroyed the promised a complete replacement, they had a write up in the paper and we announced to the congregation that they were going to do that, and they stopped returning Fr. Tom's calls and he believes we need to set that right and make everyone aware. Sharon will meet and get a quote and let the vestry know.

Motion to Adjourn: Sharon made a motion to adjourn, Clara seconded it, and all were in favor.

Next meeting will be held Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.