

## **St. Peter's Episcopal Church / Vestry Minutes, June 23, 2020**

Approved via email 6/30/2020

**Members in attendance:** Hal Evans, Kathy Field, Bob Gilbert, Debbie Giordan, Chris Goode, Kathryn McLearn, David Neises, Kim Ribbens, Paul Soderberg, Lyndall Stanley, Adrienne Williams, Rev. Hunt Priest, Rev. Kelly Steele.

Also attending: Linda Tierney, Invite/Welcome/Connect Chair; Doug Eberle, Finance Chair; Emilie Miller, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. The meeting was held via Zoom to accommodate social distancing.

Hunt began the meeting by reading Mathew 10, 40-42. Using invitation, members reflected on the reading and how it resonated with them. Some common themes were hospitality as discipleship, rewards and welcome.

Lyndall led a reciting of the Vestry Covenant.

### **Consent Agenda:**

The May minutes were approved by email.

A motion to approve purchase of additional equipment for the Live Steaming project was also approved by email.

Both were accepted unanimously.

### **Invite/Welcome/Connect Committee**

Linda Tierney led a discussion of the I/W/C initiative. Reporting that it recorded 18 new families added to St. Peter's in 2019. She discussed the challenges of connecting during corona virus, stressing that it is hard to make people feel welcome when you cannot be close. The committee is staying in touch with the new families and sending cards to stay connected.

The most important message she shared is that every member of St. Peter's is part of the IWC committee. She stated "The work my committee does is to guide and steer the IWC committee ----- all church members of St. Peter's need to welcome and reach out to visitors and existing members of St. Peter's. We are all part of the Invite, Welcome, and Connect committee. We should treat all members of St. Peter's and guests as we would any of our family members."

## Church Administration:

### Financial:

Bob reported that the financial news is good. Income is ahead of budget and expenses are tracking projections. He reported that the annual independent review is nearly complete. It has been slowed by the corona virus, but he expects it to be completed by the next meeting.

Doug presented the Finance Committee's requests for action:

- ❖ **New Ministry – Technology Driven Temporary Restricted Account (TRA)**  
The Vestry approved the Live Streaming project at the May meeting; the mechanics of the bookkeeping must also be addressed. The Finance Committee members agree that a new Temporary Restricted Account with a separate fund code is probably the best solution to record this activity on St Peter's books. We obviously do not want to impact operating budget accounts, since this is a special one-time project. We also need to track the contributions and include them in parishioners' contribution reports.

**Motion:** The Finance Committee recommends Vestry approval for creating a Temporary Restricted Account (TRA) titled "New Ministry - Technology Driven" according to the specifications documented in the attached "Request for a TRA" form. The purpose of the TRA is to isolate the income and expenses for the audio-video live streaming technology project from operating budget accounts.

- ❖ **Business Expense Accountable Reimbursement Policy (ARP)**  
The staff, both clergy and lay, are entitled to reimbursement of business expenses in accordance with an accountable reimbursement policy established by the organization. The policy specifies what types of expenses may be reimbursed, required timeframes, documentation requirements and other conditions. The Finance Committee has updated St. Peter's policy based on the national church's revised *Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs*, published in December 2019. The policy document will be part of the updated Treasurer's Manual.

**Motion:** The Finance Committee recommends Vestry approval for the updated Business Expense Accountable Reimbursement Policy (ARP), which is attached.

- ❖ **Episcopal Youth & Children's Services (EYCS) – Honey Creek School Fund**  
The Episcopal Youth and Children's Services of the Episcopal Diocese of Georgia provides needs-based college scholarships and camp scholarships for youth in the Diocese. The EYCS Board is comprised of women from the Savannah Convocation's parishes and missions. They meet regularly to distribute funds raised through an annual diocesan appeal and received through various trusts and contributions. St. Peter's has been a large beneficiary of the EYCS scholarships, but we have been delinquent in soliciting donations for the EYCS fund. Normally we should ask for donations annually around Thanksgiving. St. Peter's has a Honey Creek School Fund TRA that has been inactive since at least January 2015. The Finance Committee considers the purpose of this fund to be consistent with the EYCS fund.

**Motion:** The Finance Committee recommends Vestry approval for donating the \$963.13

balance of the “Honey Creek School Fund” Temporary Restricted Account (TRA) to the Diocese’s Episcopal Youth & Children’s Services fund and closing the “Honey Creek School Fund” TRA.

All three motions were approved unanimously.

David reported on the meeting with the Endowment Committee. He stated that the goal is to loosen restrictions on the use of endowment funds so that the 4% available can be used every year. He also stated that they are discussing allowing any unused portion of the 4% to be rolled over to future years. They are working on broadening the Planned Giving appeal to list Building and Maintenance, the Endowment and Unrestricted Funds as options. Restructuring the Planned Giving Campaign may free up an additional \$4,000 for use by the Live Streaming Project. David thanked Debbie and Bob for their work on this initiative.

#### **Church Mission/Ministry:**

Hunt briefly addressed the plan for returning to the building, stating that the rising number of cases of corona virus will likely make no return possible until at least August 1. In response to a question from Kim about new equipment being installed at the Methodist Church, Paul said that he is investigating air scrubbing equipment and the possibility of introducing more fresh air. He warned that it is a fine balance between more fresh air and allowing the mold to return.

Chris presented a Live Streaming update. The appeal has already raised \$45,500 which is more than the original goal. Unfortunately, costs have gone up due to scarcity of components, changes in technology, and issues with the church building. Chris reported that costs will run over budget but that he does not have a final number. There will also be a time delay so the initial live streamed service will likely not be July 5. The vestry expressed their support for the project and for getting the right equipment and not cutting corners.

Debbie announced that Shirley Forsell is retiring as head of the card ministry after many years of leading that effort. Vestry expressed a strong interest in the ministry continuing and Debbie took on the responsibility for finding a new chair.

Debbie gave a brief update on the Gala. It will not be held, and Marilyn Sobke has offered to call all those who purchased tickets to offer a refund or the opportunity to donate to the Building and Maintenance Fund. These calls will be accomplished in a few weeks.

#### **Church Property:**

Paul reported that Mark Forsell is working on rebate requests for the 6 new energy efficient AC units.

Paul leveled the steppingstones between West Ridge and the church. He stated that while it is better it is still not a safe walkway.

Sanitizing companies are being solicited for proposals as part of the logistics of reopening the church.

Paul reminded the vestry that we still need to get back to the insurance company on the changes requested. These are due by August 1. It was also pointed out that we need to determine how our policy deals with corona virus issues.

Kathy introduced a motion to purchase indoor and outdoor signs at a cost of \$2,025. The motion was approved unanimously.

Hunt reported on the status of the Parish Administrator position. The job description has been reworked to reflect the current needs. There is one interview scheduled. Hal has been assisting with systems changes.

Debbie and Hunt thanked Emilie for her two years plus of service as Vestry Clerk, proving that it is not a thankless job.

**Closing:**

Hunt led the Keep Watch prayer

The meeting adjourned at 7:23.

The next Vestry meeting is July 28 at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Emilie Miller, Vestry Clerk