

**The Church of the Ascension
Minutes of the Vestry
October 20, 2020**

Present Via Zoom: Rev. Stewart Tabb, Chuck Beers, Debra Griggs, Anji Harris, Ann McMellin, Harry Porfert, Chester Long, Philip Todd, Mel Phillips, Doug Thompson, Patti Glowatsky, Beverley Buston and Kristan Huddle.

I. Welcome: Stewart Tabb called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and Anji Harris led the opening devotion.

II. Register: A motion was made and seconded to approve the corrected minutes of the previous meeting (September 29th) and unanimously approved.

III. New Business:

- 1. Exit Interview:** Patti Glowatsky present. During the pandemic, she continued her contact with 43 children between the ages of 2 and 18 and their families by phone and email and Zoom and provided resources and information to maintain their connection to the Church. She sees the challenges going forward for Ascension as Vestry Support and Space. First, Patti feels it is important that the Vestry members be more involved in children's formation to have the knowledge of how formation operates and the problems involved. Submitting a report is not sufficient for the Vestry to understand the issues. Secondly, the loss of space to the Day School without considering specific sacred space for EYC and children's formation. A question was asked regarding what other churches are doing? Patti has maintained close contact with her counterparts in other churches and reported that all are trying to function through Zoom and email with resources for home formation activities in order to remain connected to the Church. Stewart stated that especially during the pandemic, formation is broader than just Sunday School and that across the country churches must meet families where they are, not just in church.
- 2. Prayer Partners:** Stewart will notify the Vestry of their prayer partners in an email.
- 3. Beverley Buston "Triangulation":** Beverley stated that it is important that we celebrate our strengths. Stewart is providing worship for us during the pandemic. We are doing a good job maintaining transparency. She stated that some Vestry members never speak and that we need to be sure we are asking them for their ideas and thoughts. She is also aware of a level of negativity and that we need more investment in working with the people that are here vs. spending time worrying about the people that are not here. It's great that the building continues to be used during the pandemic and that once we resume indoor services, we must also recognize that some people may want to continue involvement in a virtual way. She is aware that there is a group that is not happy with leadership. There is a problem when parishioners talk to a Vestry members with a complaint about someone and expect them to bring the problem to the vestry. The Vestry member needs to have the complainant talk directly to the person themselves. We can offer to go with them to talk to the other person but we must not get in the middle (triangulation). Triangulation creates divisiveness. We may think that a

change of leadership will solve the problem, but it only causes more division and loss of more people and money. We need to think about how we can come together and work together in a positive way: Both/And instead of Either/Or

IV. Committee Reports:

1. **Financial:** Chuck Beers present. See [Attachment #1](#) (email from Stewart dated 10/16/20 4:42pm subject: Meeting Reminder etc). Pledges for 2020 are down \$13,000+. Expenses are down due to salaries that are not being paid. **PPP \$146,000 (including Day School salaries)** loan forgiveness form being completed. Once forgiven, it will positively affect payroll and utilities. Audit in progress. Doug Thompson is writing the final report.
2. **Stewardship:** Chuck Beers present. So far 27 pledges have been received for \$109,000.
3. **Building and Grounds:** Anji Harris present. See [Attachment #2](#) (email from Stewart dated 10/19/20 10:18am Subject: Reports for Vestry Meeting). The bathroom near the office has been repainted and holes in the roof have been patched.
4. **Regathering:** Anij Harris and Ann McMellin present. They are in process of marking the spaces in the pews and removing all of the hymnals and prayer books etc from the sanctuary to be ready by November 1st.
5. **Liturgy:** Mel Phillips present. Making plans for regathering. No hymns will be sung but there will be Prelude and Postlude music. Roni Porfert and Katherine Lawrence are working with Stewart in selecting correct hymns for the music. Communion will be in one kind: bread only. Also looking forward and planning for Christmas.
6. **Outreach:** Ann McMellin present. Drive thru only for Trunk or Treat this year. No walk-up option due to safety concerns. Bags of candy will be passed out to children in cars. The Food Bank will be providing turkeys and pies to the Food Pantry, so no need to raise funds for turkeys this year. Ann has requested stockings from Salvation Army and Angel Tree names. She has requested fewer stockings this year until we know how many wish to participate. She can always request more.
7. **Pastoral Care:** Philip Todd present. See [Attachment #2](#) (email from Stewart dated 10/19/20 10:18am Subject: Reports for Vestry Meeting).
8. **Day School:** See [Attachment #2](#) (email from Stewart dated 10/19/20 10:18am Subject: Reports for Vestry Meeting). Unclear if Elementary School will continue if Norfolk schools are going back to the classroom. Also with minimum wage increasing to \$15/hr Mark and the Board will be dealing with increasing staff salaries and how that will affect tuition.

V. Membership Trends: Debra Griggs present. No further discussion.

VI. Formation and Pastoral Outreach: Stewart Tabb present. Will we have the money to hire another Director of Family Formation? How do we support the children and families in the meantime? We have a job description for the paid position, but need to develop another for a

volunteer position. Stewart will confirm with the members who expressed a desire to help but not be in charge: Susan Meredith, Courtney Wheeler, Andrea Kinnear and Kelly Montagna.

VII. Contact Information: Cheryl to create an updated Vestry contact list. Stewart also requested the following information as to how the Vestry members wish to be contacted by her:

Debra - call cell and text, both.

Anji - text (works 7am-4pm M-F)

Ann - call or text

Chuck - call cell

Mel - cell (works 7:30am-4:30pm)

Phil - cell, text first

Harry - home phone

Chester - home phone

Doug - cell 757-418-2345 and text; home 757-554-0987

Email: vabeacht@gmail.com

VIII. At Debra Griggs' request, the Vestry Highlights in the announcements will be replaced by a condensed version of the minutes in a separate email to parishioners.

IX. Schedule/Devotions: Anji Harris led the final devotion. The next Vestry meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2020 at 7:00PM. Mel Phillips will lead the devotions at this meeting.

Amendment: See [Attachment #3](#) (email from Stewart dated 10/21/20 11:47am Subject: Updated Roster and Position description for Director of Family Formation)

Respectfully submitted,

Kristan Huddle