

Grace Episcopal Church

Regular Vestry Meeting

Monday, May 16, 2011

Members present: Kenn JeSchonek, Heidi Barnhill, Linda Newman, Terry Gibson, Jason Loch, Nelson Flynn, Mary Ann Germanson, Michael Leland, Paul Lorenz, Bruce Croushore, Steve Webster

Members absent: Ginny Shannon

Clergy present: Father Jonathan Grieser, Deacon Carol Smith

Officers present: Nelson Flynn (Treasurer), Carolyn A. Hackler (Clerk of the Vestry)

Guest present: Anne Flynn

- 1) Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Linda gave the Devotional. Jason made a motion to adopt the agenda, motion was seconded and carried.
  
- 2) Nelson presented the Treasurer's report; he stated that the church is \$10,000 short on pledges than what was budgeted for, and made the point that the goal should be to raise more pledges, so that we can use the Development Fund less, leaving more of the money from that fund for grants. Kenn made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, it was seconded and carried.
  
- 3) Stewardship Task Force: Anne Flynn reported the team has met 3 times. She spoke to us about tithing and shared the idea of "TOOTH" ("Tithe out of take-home"), meaning that tithes should come from take-home pay rather than one's gross pay. She stated that stewardship should be more than an annual fund drive and that we should ask questions such as "what is Grace's mission?", "what don't we do?" and "how do we focus on prayer?" She passed out 2 hand-outs and discussed key points from both, such as stewardship sermons, calling parishioners who don't respond during the pledge drives and sending "thank you" cards to those parishioners who do respond. Anne talked about the characteristics of growing congregations, among them recruitment activities, parenting and marriage enrichment programs and maintenance of a strong website. Kenn will try to set up more testimonials during the 10:00 a.m. service relative to next year's pledge drive. Anne mentioned the possibility of providing a planned giving program to better explain the process to Grace parishioners. Terry asked Anne about going beyond moneymaking with stewardship and Anne asserted that parishioner involvement is critical.

- 4) Rector's report: Father Jonathan provided a hand-out that explained the difference between "mission" and "vision" statements. (A vision statement provides the answer to the question: what will the world look like after you finish changing it? And the mission statement answers the question: why are you here? "Mission motivates with purpose" while "vision motivates you with a destination", per Father Jonathan). Father stated that we are "in a different cultural situation" than 15-20 years ago, and that "religion is no longer a given" because people are so busy with other activities claiming their time. He led the Vestry in an exercise where each person was to write down 3-5 reasons why they stay at Grace and then asked everyone to share their answers. Among the responses were: the liturgy, the music, the church traditions, lay participation, the pantry and shelter involvement and the inclusionary attitude at Grace. Father Jonathan stated that church is the only place most people can participate that is intergenerational. Father mentioned finding a way to "create another kind of worship service", and shared that he is considering an ecumenical prayer service for September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011 (the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary ) in memory of the victims of terrorism and war. He feels this will send a message about who we are.
  
- 5) Pantry bylaws: report tabled until July meeting.
  
- 6) Personnel Committee: Terry reported that Grace has hired a new Christian Formation Director who will be onboard as of June 6<sup>th</sup>, and a new nursery staffer. It was mentioned that the night watchman is leaving but that a Harvard divinity student taking a summer internship in Madison will fill the position as the interim watchman.
  
- 7) Communication Committee: Steve reported that the committee is a viable one now and is meeting.
  
- 8) Outreach Committee: Linda is looking for church sitters for June, July and August to work from 10:00-noon on Saturday morning. It was suggested that an informational brochure be created for the sitters so that they may be able to share all that is of interest about the church, windows, nave, etc. with the Saturday visitors. Father Jonathan suggested that the Communication Committee could create such a hand-out. Linda mentioned that they are considering doing a Ministry Fair in September. Paul asked about a system for keeping the church open and Linda pointed out that the Outreach Committee and the Vestry have a vested interest in maintaining Grace's security. Bruce added that he is always available on Saturdays, when not out of town, to let people into the church when needed.

- 9) Buildings and Grounds Committee: Paul reported that they haven't been meeting consistently; Steve said they're hoping to change this.
  
- 10) Nominating Committee: Mary Ann will be looking for a replacement gardener to take over for Jane Henning. Steve mentioned that Vestry nominations are now a year-long process.
  
- 11) Executive Committee: Bruce has been getting insurance quotes and had a meeting with a representative of the current insurance company used by Grace. He has met with a competitor as well and will meet with a rep from a 3<sup>rd</sup> company, but states that we will probably stay with the current provider, who have agreed to perform a new appraisal of the safety conditions of the building and an appraisal of the physical property. Steve mentioned that it's time to renegotiate the contract with Porchlight for the men's shelter.
  
- 12) Trust Committee: Nelson reported that this new committee has met twice.
  
- 13) Bruce passed out a copy of his proposal to the Vestry relative to the Grace Presents Task Force. It is proposed that "Classical Revolution" become Grace's resident musicians for the purpose of performing concerts at Grace. Bruce mentioned that there would be no start-up costs to Grace Church. The proposal asks that an honorarium be given to Laura Weiner, the director of the group, but that there be no compensation to either the group or Ms. Weiner other than this. Bruce's motion to accept the proposal was seconded and carried.
  
- 14) Paul reported on Wisconsin Interfaith Power and Light's carbon audits and will investigate the possibility of this happening at Grace.
  
- 15) Father Jonathan talked about the St. Francis House building project. Steve asked about the SFH board and Father replied that there is no lay representative on the board from Grace at this time. Father Jonathan and Father Andy White, from St. Andrew's, sit on the board as clergy reps. He mentioned that it's 3-year position.
  
- 16) Meeting was adjourned at 9:00.