

Vestry Minutes

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Oxford, Ohio

June 9, 2020



Present: Terri Thornton, Interim Rector; Dave Guilfoyle, Deacon; Pete Lindsay, Sr. Warden; John Harper, Jr. Warden; Jim Michael, Treasurer; Stacey Peterson, Clerk; Vestry members: Rosalyn Benson, Karen Ander Francis, Martin Ganev, Ken Grabach, Lisa Hermann, Glenn Julian, Ellen Reister and Margaret Smith

Absent: Bonnie Mason

Spiritual reflections led by Glenn

Agenda for 6-9-2020 meeting: Unanimously approved with the addition of Frank Jordan Fund discussion, choir director update and vote on Rev. Thornton's housing allowance resolution – Ellen moved and Margaret seconded.

Approval of minutes for May 5, 12, 19 and 28: All four were unanimously approved – Ken moved and Ellen seconded.

Upcoming activities:

June 26 – Vacation Bible School (remote)
Aug. 13 – Move-in Miami Day
Aug. 17 – Miami classes start
Oct. 4 – Diocesan Bishop visitation

Interim Rector's Report – Terri

- Terri noted her process is to learn and listen first.
- She thanked everyone who has spent time talking with her and answering questions.
- She plans to meet with each vestry member in the next couple weeks.
- It's unclear exactly what we will do in the near term.

May 2020 Financial Report – Jim

Jim made the following points:

- Page 4, bottom line: Our net income is positive.
- Our finances are volatile. Good one week and not the next. Future is unpredictable.
- Page 6, line 2830: Holy Trinity received \$32,400 from the Federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Items that qualify for forgiveness include payroll, utilities and loan interest; 60% of total spending must be for payroll to qualify for any forgiveness. Jim thinks we'll make the minimum payroll percentage. The requirements for loan forgiveness were changed recently: The amount that can be forgiven will be stretched over 24 weeks. It's likely the entire \$32,400 will be eligible to be forgiven. We won't know for six months.
- Page 5, line 1100: Bank balance is nearly \$152,000, which includes the \$32,400 PPP loan.

- Page 7, Unrestricted Fund Balance is nearly \$82,000, which includes the \$32,400 PPP loan.

A motion to accept the May Financial Report was unanimously approved.

Frank Jordan Fund discussion – Jim

A motion to authorize the Endowment Trustees to spend \$1,000 to compensate Annette Misener for her violin performances with Phillip Roberts was unanimously approved. Ken moved and Margaret seconded.

New choir director update – Jim

- Rex Pak Yue Man has been hired as Holy Trinity's choir director; he will start September 1.
- He's awaiting paperwork to update his immigration status; that should happen by July.
- He's planning to move to Oxford.
- Phillip and Bob Benson will be helping him get acclimated.
- He may continue choir directing for a Dayton church and teaching at Otterbein University.
- The Vestry and choir have been informed of the hire; we'll hold off on a public announcement until Rex's immigration status is updated.

Terri's housing allowance – Jim

The following resolution was duly and unanimously adopted by the Vestry of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church at a regularly scheduled meeting held on June 9, 2020, a quorum being present. Rosalyn moved and John seconded:

Whereas, the Reverend Theresa J. Thornton is compensated by Holy Trinity Episcopal Church exclusively for the services as a minister of the gospel; and

Whereas, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church does not provide Rev. Thornton with a rectory, therefore it is hereby

Resolved, that of the total annual compensation of \$29,442.08 paid to Rev. Thornton, \$16,800 is hereby designated to be a housing allowance; and it is further

Resolved, that the designation of \$16,800 as a housing allowance shall apply to the balance of calendar year 2020 and all future years unless otherwise provided and amended.

Outreach Commission Request – Pete

A motion to accept the Outreach Commission's request to give \$1,000 to the Oxford Family Resource Center to assist local people with housing and lodging expenses was approved with one abstention. Karen moved and Margaret seconded.

Patio meeting with Rev. Thornton – John

Communication, near-term online worship, in-person worship in the future, music, fellowship and outdoor worship were the topics discussed at the recent patio meeting of a small group of Vestry members and Terri.

Terri noted the following:

- We have to find new ways of keeping people informed.
- Online worship is going to be a standard even after we return to the church building.
- Vestry members will help test out how things work as we re-open.
- We might consider having people present while recording the service.
- The Bishop has given the option of using more than Morning Prayer for services.
- We need to look at how others are handling their online services. Terri will share a list of congregations in the Diocese; each vestry member can check out the how a few of them are doing online services and report back. These are congregations working within the same restrictions we are, so comparisons could be useful.
- Editing pieces of a service together can be challenging; we have people who will help.
- Congregation will be surveyed on what kinds of services they would like to have the option of participating in.
- Once plans are made for in-person and continued online services, a hard-copy letter will go out from Terri and the wardens explaining how things will work.

Vestry members noted:

- Communication must be timely and better coordinated.
- While the building is closed, we must be careful about bringing extra people in beyond those participating in the service. People will wonder why some are allowed in and others aren't.
- We should explain why some people wear masks and others don't.
- The web page is an important part of communicating with parishioners and with people not connected with the church who are curious or asking questions.

Church reopening plan documents – Pete & John

John shared the "Draft Text Regarding Re-opening" paper that was previously emailed to Vestry members. These guidelines came out of discussions with Elaine Brandner. Vestry members raised the following questions:

- How will we decide who gets to attend a particular service?
- Will we use a seating chart that designates where attendees sit?
- Do we know how many people the church can safely seat?
- Will people be so comfortable with the online service they won't want to come back?
- Will they be disappointed with everything that we can't do?
- Will a passerby be able to drop in for a service?
- What happens if someone comes in and doesn't wear a mask?
- Where will used bulletins go at the end of the service?

The following comment was made:

- There are many people in the church who aren't elderly or sick, but who are alone and in need of pastoral care. We should review the pastoral care list and add those people.

Terri said the following:

- We will survey the congregation to see how they feel about returning to the church. If we hear that people aren't in a rush to come back in the building, then there's nothing

preventing us from keeping the service online and maybe having music in the church for those who want to attend.

- A lot is still unclear. Even the Diocese guidelines are ambiguous.
- We will err on the side of caution but also seize opportunities.
- Terri will explain in the next service why the readers are allowed to remove masks when reading. It should be in the bulletin and on the Facebook page.
- There is a range of options for services. We will consider the various options and see what other parishes are doing.
- Terri will look into recruiting and training more worship leaders. People who are already doing Evening Prayer have been licensed, but all licenses must be renewed by February.
- We need to consider what ministries can we offer to folks who have lost their ministries and to Vestry members?
- Vestry will divide into small groups that focus on specific areas related to re-opening.

Comments for the Good and Appreciations

Vestry members welcomed Martin back and expressed appreciation for the following:

- Article on Bill Bausano,
- Terri explaining in her sermon why she included Exodus in the service,
- Terri being here and all the work everyone is doing.

Closing prayer led by Glenn

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey Peterson

Stacey Peterson, Clerk