

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Windsor, Connecticut

May 8, 2018

Call to Order

Attendance

Present: Fr. Chip, Ian Rickard, Larry Young, Deacon Denise, Connie Hegarty, Marcia Hinckley, Max Kuziak, Fred McLeod, Deb Hutchinson, Allison Kelly, Karen Tiemann, Scott Sanislo, Ken Roach, Chuck Drake and JoAnne McLeod.

Special guest: Linda Rickard

Absent: Jan Lawlor and Jane Cimbak.

1. **Opening Prayers**

The May 8, 2018 Vestry Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by The Reverend Harry (Chip) Elliott with an Opening Prayer.

Special Guest – Linda Rickard, Planned Giving

Linda reviewed the Planned Giving program. We currently have three endowment funds containing money that is not to be used for the general operating expenses of the Church but for capital items and other items that are above and beyond the regular operation of the Church. The funds that people may donate to are:

- Grace Church Restricted Fund: This fund is managed by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. The Church receives the annual interest from the principle of the funds. There is a limit as to how much we can receive per year; it is at the Hartford Foundation's discretion. The principle will always remain with the Foundation.
- Grace Episcopal Church Capital Improvement Fund: This fund is to be used for capital expenses that arise in the Church.
- The Tuttle Fund: This fund is to be used for any expenses that are not capital improvements such as new linens, candles, special performers, etc.

Linda stated that if money is given to the Church with no fund designation, 40% of the money is to be placed in the Capital Improvement Fund and 60% is to be placed in the Tuttle Fund. Donations may be made to a specific fund. Donations designated for a specific purpose will be accepted but they are not encouraged. Linda also said that the Planned Giving Committee is currently setting up a process for donations to go into the correct account and for prompt thank-you notes to be sent. Linda answered questions regarding the Hartford Foundation of Public Giving's management of our fund. The vestry thanked Linda for her time and dedication to Grace Church.

2. **Additions/Deletions to the Agenda**

8. New Business

b. Tuttle House Donations

3. Approval of Minutes

4. Wardens' Reports, 2nd paragraph, 3rd sentence '.....Maryellen Shuckerow, an executive director from Chrysalis Center, Inc...' should be changed to '.....Maryellen Shuckerow, Chief Development Relations Officer from Chrysalis Center, Inc...' A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the corrected minutes from the April 10, 2018 vestry meeting.

4. Wardens' Reports

Senior Warden Ian Rickard thanked Father Chip, Deacon Denise and the parish for his grandson's recent baptism. He said that it was a joyous occasion for him and his family. Ian also stated that he and Marcia Hinckley had recently attended the National Conference for Community Justice (NCCJ) anti-racism workshop. The two-day conference was held in Windsor. He reported that the conference opened his eyes to the current thoughts on racism. Ian said that he and Marcia feel that we should have offerings on racism at Grace Church in a planned effort to effect change.

Junior Warden Fred McLeod reported that a wall has been built to separate the nursery from the classroom to provide more privacy and quiet for the Church School classes. He also stated that the flower beds around the Church have been mulched.

5. Committee Reports as Needed

No committee reports were presented at this time.

6. Financial Reports

Treasurer Larry Young distributed the financial reports. Larry noted that the payment for the Diocesan Pledge has been recorded into the budget. The General Fund currently has a projected deficit of \$24,000. Larry stated that he hoped that, by the end of the year, the deficit would be more in line with the \$18,000 Diocesan payment. He also reminded the vestry that the budget had a built-in revenue from the Tuttle House rental beginning in June or July. Larry included a fund analysis in his report. A question was asked regarding the back rent due on the Tuttle House and Larry reported that it had been paid. The vestry thanked Larry for his continued hard work.

7. Old Business

a. Front doors

Fred McLeod reported that the locksmith misquoted the project and did not account for two panic bars. As a result, the project is over budget by \$800 and will now cost \$6000. The remaining work should be completed in about four weeks.

b. Tuttle House/Chrysalis (Deb, Marcia)

Deb Hutchinson reminded the vestry that during the last meeting, the vestry had agreed to work with Chrysalis to be qualified for a new renter. Maryellen Shuckerow, Chief Development Relations Officer of Chrysalis, would meet with our representatives, Deb and Marcia, to streamline the process and to set up a needs assessment and qualifying factors. The meeting has been set for Thursday, May 10th. Deb and Marcia will report back to the vestry.

c. Tuttle House Roof (discussion continued)

Marcia Hinckley stated that while replacing the roof when the Tuttle House is currently empty would be ideal, the vestry might be reluctant to spend the money at this time due to the recent payment of the Diocesan pledge. A question was asked regarding how much the roof would cost. Marcia stated that the cost would be about \$35,000 because \$20,000 has already been committed to the approximately \$50,000 project. A suggestion was made to have the Finance Committee meet concerning the project. The vestry's consensus was to move forward with the Finance Committee meeting to discuss the finances regarding the roof project.

d. Security & Safety (Father Chip, Fred McLeod)

Father Chip reported that there are currently no smoke, CO2 or fire alarm systems in place at the Church. He also stated that the Church's Wi-Fi needs to be updated because the band width has been reduced after each new router addition. Father Chip suggested that we take \$2000 from the Tuttle Fund to put in a new network at Grace Church.

In the discussion that followed, Father Chip stated that rather than contracting with a commercial company, we can purchase four Nest detectors for approximately \$120 each. These detectors would be programmed to alert the sexton, rector, wardens and building and grounds chairman of any situation at the church so that a call for help could be made. To do this, the updated Wi-Fi system is needed. Using the Nest detector system will save us the monthly contractual fee of a commercial company. The updated Wi-Fi would also allow us to install additional cameras to cover more outside areas and the Tuttle House; this could occur sometime in the future. Fred reported that the Nest detectors also allow the temperature of the Church to be monitored remotely. The Church School has asked to use online teaching aides to benefit their program and the new system would enable that request. A question was asked regarding battery back-up. Father Chip stated that the system does have battery back-up. On another subject, he also stated that our new phone system should last much longer than our previous systems; Comcast had never grounded our underground wires and that is what caused our previous phone systems to fail.

Fred McLeod made a motion that the Church invest in a new network not to exceed \$2000 and to invest \$595 on four Nest detectors using funds from the Tuttle Fund. A motion was made by Allison Kelly to amend the motion to purchase five Nest detectors. The wording of the amended motion passed.

In the discussion that followed, a question was asked regarding the downside of this system. No downsides could be foreseen; the detectors are programmable and any designated person(s) can be notified of an emergency. A question was asked regarding how the police and/or fire departments could access the Church in an emergency. Fred reported that Building and Grounds has invested in a Knox box placed on the outside doors. Keys to the Church have been placed in the boxes and the police/fire departments have access to the Knox box if entry to the Church is needed. The amended motion was voted on and it passed unanimously.

e. Diocesan Letter/Response

Father Chip reported that a response from the Diocese to the vestry request had been sent via email. Allison Kelly read the Bishop's response to the vestry. The Bishop did not deny our request. The letter to the parish explaining Grace's situation regarding the Diocesan pledge will be placed in the narthex. It was agreed upon that the vestry would like to meet with the Bishop at a later date to express our feelings regarding this situation.

f. Form New Committees?

This item will be tabled until next month's meeting.

g. Race Relations/TED Talk: What/when do we do to present this?

Father Chip stated that he saw the excitement from Ian and Marcia regarding the anti-racism workshops they attended at the NCCJ National Conference and he feels we should pursue this by having presentations at Grace. Marcia Hinckley stated that she could do a small presentation, or we could ask other presenters to come to the Church. She felt we needed to assess who we are as a parish and to work out a process that should be spread over time to help familiarize the parish with issues surrounding race relations. The process we follow depends on the commitment from the vestry and the parish. Father Chip stated that we need to take the first step. He suggested that Marcia make a presentation to the vestry and then allow the vestry to determine a process. He asked Marcia to put together a presentation for the September vestry meeting. Marcia recommended that the vestry could watch You Tube videos regarding race relations. She will send out an email with titles.

h. Church Picnic on June 3rd

The annual parish picnic will take place on June 3rd. All preparations are being made.

8. New Business

a. Grace food pantry: Grace's Pantry (Father Chip, Deacon Denise)

Father Chip reported that the demand for items in the little food pantry is overwhelming and we can't keep up with it. It is also overwhelming financially. If we were to partner with Food Share, we could purchase food by the pound for far less and many products are free. Opening our own food pantry was a brainstorming idea that Food Share embraced. In a meeting with a representative from Food Share, it was suggested that we could utilize a corner of the downstairs dining room. Because the shelves containing the food would have to be locked, Father Chip suggested we build walls to enclose the food pantry and have a locked door. He presented the vestry with a diagram showing an idea for the location of the pantry in the lower dining hall. The idea for creating a food pantry at Grace was presented to the Outreach Committee and they embraced it and agreed that it should be presented to the vestry.

Father Chip stated that the idea of feeding the poor ties in with three ministries that Grace Church has been embracing: homelessness, human trafficking and hunger/poverty. Father Chip said that the vestry needs to consider opening a food pantry and see where that ministry takes us. If the vestry feels that we should pursue this, we should have a full parish meeting to see if the parish can get behind this ministry. Deacon Denise stated that we have come to a point in our outreach ministries where Grace can offer services to a larger group of people. The food pantry would be a ministry that speaks to the community. Folks will come to Grace as a safe place to get help. Farther down the road, perhaps the Tuttle House could be used to help homeless and trafficked women.

A question was asked regarding the management of the food pantry. Father Chip stated that Carol Blais has volunteered to manage the pantry. She will shop for the food; shopping online is available. We would probably need two people to man the pantry. Our food pantry would not interfere with the Windsor Food Bank; we would not place any restrictions on folks asking for food. During days when our food pantry is closed, folks can use the Windsor Food Bank. A question was asked regarding the funding of the food bank. Funds would come from the Outreach Committee. Also, because the food can be purchased so inexpensively from Food Share, parishioners would be encouraged to make monetary donations rather than purchasing food items. It was stressed that our Little Food Pantry would still be operational and stocked.

A concern was raised regarding the effects on the Windsor Food Bank. There would be no impact and the Windsor Food Bank is in favor of the idea. A suggestion was made to investigate any possible ramifications of the food pantry being located at Grace in the center of town. Another concern was raised regarding taking space away from any possible expansion of the Church School; Father Chip stated that the walls would not be permanent, and they could be moved to make the space larger **or** smaller.

Concerns were raised regarding the directions of our ministries and our commitment to the ministries we currently have. A discussion took place.

Father Chip stated that our next move would be to have a consensus from the vestry that the idea of a food pantry be brought before the parish. It was also stated that the Tuttle House rental situation should be discussed at the parish meeting as well. It was suggested that after Marcia and Deb's meeting with Chrysalis, talking points should be developed for the congregation to keep them abreast of all that we need to accomplish to be ready for a new tenant.

Ian stated that he had positive feedback from his letter to the parish regarding the Tuttle House rental. Many folks were in favor of renting the Tuttle House to a homeless veteran's family.

After a consensus from the vestry, Father Chip stated that we will speak about the food pantry and the Tuttle House rental at the parish meeting. The meeting will take place after church services on May 27th. He will use the time prior to the meeting to speak with our Windsor Center neighbors regarding the impact of having a food pantry on the Green.

b. Tuttle House Donations

Donations of furniture and other items have been made for use in the Tuttle House. These items will be picked up and housed there until needed.

9. Questions and/or Comments

There were no further questions or comments at this time.

10. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

With no further business before the vestry, Father Chip made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried, and Father Chip led the vestry saying the closing prayer.

JoAnne McLeod, Clerk

Attachments: Financial Report, Proposed Food Pantry Diagram, Food Pantry Mission Statement, Nest Alarm System descriptions, Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of CT