

**MINUTES OF A VIDEO-CONFERENCE MEETING OF THE VESTRY
GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA**

CALL TO ORDER: The Vestry meeting convened on June 29, 2020, at 6:30 PM via ZOOM Conference. Stuart Higginbotham opened with a poem from German theologian Meister Eckhart: "Become Love" from *The Book of Secrets*

VESTRY MEMBERS/OFFICERS PRESENT:

Dan Scott, Senior Warden
Patrick O'Rouke, Junior Warden
Newsom Cummings
Charles Kelley
JoAnn Manring
Scarlet Pendarvis
Tom Rossi
Gail Sargent
Doug Smith
Christy Wagner
Mike Whitmire

STAFF PRESENT:

Rev. Dr. Stuart Higginbotham
Rev. Dr. Cynthia Park

ABSENT:

Chaudron Gille
Callie Flack, Treasurer

ACTION ITEMS:

- Financials and Minutes from April were approved. Kelley/Rossi. Unanimous.
- Approval of Pre-School Budget. Finance/Whitmire. Unanimous.
- 2021 Diocesan Pledge: \$188 monthly increase from 2020. Kelley/Whitmire. Unanimous
- Approval for using PPP funds to cover Grace payroll and utilities for July through September in the amount of \$158,200. PPP forgiveness options will be reviewed at year's end. Finance/Manring. Unanimous
- Approval for purchase of commercial grade water heater for the Parish Hall kitchen from Sweetman. \$6900 will be paid from the Building Reserve Fund. Finance/Wagner. Unanimous.
- Approval for contracting with dB Integrations to purchase livestream equipment and installation in the amount of \$23,161.27 to be paid from Building Reserve Fund. We will hold off on the optional Parish Hall feed of \$1639.80. dB Integrations cannot do the full specs until the nave is filled with people, and there will be an additional fee of \$1200 to return and fine-tune later. Discussion of pre-payment for that fee will be deferred until later in the Fall. The equipment can be installed 4 to 6 weeks after the contract is signed. Finance/Manring. Unanimous.

OTHER:

- Commenting on the Treasurer's Report, Mike Whitmire said that we had received pre-payments on pledges in May, and we will have to wait until Reba Page sends the quarterly reports at the end of June to see exactly where we stand on our pledge revenue.
- Stuart referred to his email to the Liturgy Cluster about moving forward with 40 people signing up for services in the nave. Jennifer Williams has created a streamlined registration process, and Jeremy Landers has developed a seating plan that will accommodate social distancing.
- Considerable discussion followed about the dates of return to the nave followed. Following is the text of a June 30 email from Stuart to the vestry, which synthesizes the status quo:

- *A key piece, of course, is Jeremy's schematic of the nave itself with indicated spacing*
- *A key piece, as well, is Jennifer's framework for communication and registration. This is key, and we think Eventbrite will help us manage this well.*
- *With visitors, we have a couple options that would help us manage this. And, we can honestly see where we land with this in the coming weeks. 1) Encourage all visitors to register ahead of time, and communicate this. (this would be difficult, given that some folks may really need a space for worship and prayer right now, and how can we find a way to honor that). 2) If visitors come, parishioners give their seats to them. 3) Set up a space, say in the covered drive with some sort of speaker, for those who can sit there. So, can we see what the Spirit stirs up with regard to visitors? How can we balance precaution with welcoming?*
- *We will publish three dates that people can sign up for: July 26, August 9, August 23. This will give folks a space to discern for themselves, based on numbers, etc. We had 140 folks total say they were interested, so this would enable us, with 40 to 44 signing up each time, to get very close to that number of initial interested people.*
- *Remember the guidelines on no singing and the service itself limited to 40 minutes. The past couple weeks, we have timed this and we are very close, so when we take the hymns out, I think we will be in good shape.*
- *Jeremy has removed all prayer books and hymnals for the time being.*
- *Entrance through the tower doors only. Doors open at 1035 am for the 1045 service, to dissuade gatherings. We will encourage people to space themselves out in the new plaza, etc while they wait for the doors to open.*
- *No clergy procession or greeting line.*
- *Our regular cleaning cycle will allow us to cover this.*
- *Any potential mid-week worship (for now, let's hold to this small group framework on Sundays and make sure we are comfortable managing this well before we add elements to it). The staff may begin looking at other scenarios that we will run by the Liturgy Cluster and Vestry at some point.*
- *We will watch the numbers closely, both the NGMC numbers and the broader Georgia state numbers, since we are a regional parish. If there is a spike in cases and we are not comfortable with any of these three dates, we can address it immediately. Also, adding the two-week space between the services allows us to feel even more comfortable about contact tracing, etc., given that we will have a full registration of everyone in the nave.*
- *If we all feel good with this plan, I can send the certification form to the diocese this week, and we will look toward a parish email by the end of the week to communicate all of this. If you twelve want to formulate a communique to the parish as the sitting vestry, by all means...and thank you.*

- *This email can serve as our plan for certification, attaching Jeremy and Jennifer's portion for the logistical frameworks.*

The virtual meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM with a closing prayer by Cynthia Park.

The next meeting will be June 29 at 6:30PM

Minutes recorded by Susan Lahey, Clerk of the Vestry