

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

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Vestry meeting convened on October 26, 2020, at 6:30 PM via ZOOM Conference. Stuart Higginbotham opened with two Collects from the Book of Common Prayer (page 832).

**VESTRY MEMBERS/OFFICERS PRESENT:**

Dan Scott, Senior Warden  
Patrick O'Rourke, Junior Warden  
Newsom Cummings  
Chaudron Gille  
Charles Kelley  
JoAnn Manring  
Scarlet Pendarvis  
Tom Rossi  
Gail Sargent  
Doug Smith  
Christy Wagner  
Mike Whitmire  
Callie Flack, Treasurer

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Rev. Dr. Stuart Higginbotham  
Rev. Mary Demmler  
Rev. Betsy Powell

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Financials and Minutes from September were approved. Manring/Gille. Unanimous.

**OTHER:**

- Treasurer Callie Flack reported that revenue is down, but expenses are also down, giving us a net total of \$22,600 for the year. At this point, there are \$375,000 pledges outstanding.
- Mike Whitmire reported that purchasing the law firm building is off the table since they already have an offer of \$1,000,000. Hank Goble, Doug McDuff, and Dan Scott had met with representatives from the firm and agreed that this amount was above our range.
- The Finance Committee agreed that the Outreach Committee's request for \$22,000 in previously made commitments be dispersed from the PTP funds; we will then be caught up with outreach funding.
- Father Stuart has been in contact with "Children's Center for Hope and Healing." He will use funds from the discretionary fund to work with the families there.
- Stewardship: A deadline has been set for November 15, and Vestry members will be calling households who have not yet returned their pledges for 2021. As of this evening, we have \$299,340 in pledges from 93 families.
- JoAnn Manring and Gail Sargent report that the pastoral calls are ongoing. JoAnn, Gail, Sue Montgomery and the Community of Hope are making support calls to over thirty groups of parish members.
- Children of Grace update: Another pod was dismissed for quarantine this week, making a total of two affected pods. The system of dismissing pods and managing contact tracing seems to be working well.

- Worship Update: We now have 3 services, two virtual and one in-person. Vergers are checking in worshippers at the in-person service. If COVID numbers increase, we can scale back on this service without the Bishop's approval.
- The Formation cluster has rented a tent for a month to offer a rain-plan option, as well as space for formation groups on campus. We had a credit with Lanier Tents, and a passerby inquired about the tent and wrote a check for half of the rental cost.
- Nominating Committee: Stuart will ask Polly Jones and Patrick O'Rourke to coordinate the committee to select eight people to stand for election to the Vestry at our January Annual Meeting. Self-nominations can be done via email. Jason Voyles has been working on a plan for voting electronically. Charles Kelley offered one possible site: <https://www.simplyvoting.com/>.
- Chaudron Gille has agreed to stand for election for Junior Warden for 2021-2022. She will be working alongside Dan and Patrick for the next three months to ensure a smooth transition.
- There was considerable discussion about Parish Development and Formation. Stuart has been pondering the possibility of a School for Christian Practice to examine what people are thinking today vs. what traditional churches are doing. Here are some questions to consider: how do we nurture young families? What does it mean to practice Christianity in your life today? What foundation pieces do we need to build for ten years from now? Dan Scott related it to discussions they have had in the youth group, since many have no frame of reference to *The Bible*. Stuart will form a team to dig into these issues and being exploring them during Advent. There was general agreement among the group that this is an ideal time for this sort of exploration to keep the church relevant to all members.

Mary Demmler led a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:43PM.

The next meeting will be November 23, 2020 at 6:30PM.

Minutes recorded by Susan Lahey, Clerk of the Vestry