

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE VESTRY
GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA
November 17, 2021 AT 7:00pm**

VESTRY MEMBERS/OFFICERS PRESENT:

Dan Scott, Senior Warden
Chaudron Gille, Junior Warden
Barbara Batog (via phone)
Newsom Cummings (via phone)
Daniel Grizzle
Vance Holifield
JoAnn Manring
Sonja McLendon
Tom Rossi
Gail Sargent
Christy Wagner (via phone)
Mike Whitmire

STAFF PRESENT:

Rev. Dr. Stuart Higginbotham
Rev. Dr. Cynthia Park
Rev. Mary Demmler (via phone)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Susan Lahey, Clerk of the Vestry
Jason Voyles, Chancellor

ABSENT:

Callie Flack, Treasurer

The meeting opened with a prayer for Ministering for the Sick from the Book of Common Prayer offered by Rev. Stuart Higginbotham.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved October Treasurer's Report and October Minutes
Motion to Approve: Gille/Whitmire. Unanimous.

Approved Jason Voyles' recommendation to endorse Option 1 and approve the Proposed Plan regarding the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) bankruptcy. * Gille/McLendon. Unanimous.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Jason Voyles met with the vestry to outline the three options presented to Grace Church as a Chartered Organization under the Chapter 11 Plan that has been filed by the BSA. Option #1 is the default option, meaning that if Grace takes no action, it will be deemed to have elected Option #1. Under Option #1, Grace will not have any rights in any BSA or local council insurance policies. Abuse victims would not be able to assert abuse claims against Grace for any abuse alleged to have occurred on January 1, 1976 or later (these would be covered by the Settlement Trust). Grace would remain liable for any abuse claims occurring prior to January 1, 1976. Grace would waive any claims it has against BSA or local councils. Grace would also release Hartford from all insurance or abuse-related claims. No one attending tonight's meeting was aware of any claims whatsoever. In a three-page memo to the vestry, Jason had stated that "I think it is prudent to afford Grace of the protection of the Settlement Trust for any claims arising January 1, 1976 and would not require Grace to make any contribution to the Settlement Trust. If Grace elects Option #1, it would not necessarily need to take any action. However, Grace has filed a Notice of Claim, so it is entitled to vote on the Proposed Plan. My recommendation is that Grace vote to approve the Proposed Plan and elect Option #1." *Approved under **Action Items** above.
- Reba Page is continuing to explore 3 payroll processing companies: ADP, Paycheck and Gusto. The highest yearly fee would be Paycheck's amount of \$5296.
- Mike Whitmire reported that the stewardship campaign for 2022 is going well. As of today, we have received \$763,000 from 195 pledges. There is still \$345,000 in "pledge card value" (people who pledged in 2021). There have been 14 new pledges for a total of \$44,000. Fifty-two pledges increased from last year, and 13 are lower. Vestry members are continuing their calls to Grace members.
- Dan Scott and Kevin Boyd will be hosting two socials this weekend for Grace families up to the age of 49. The responses have been slow but they are hoping to having successful gatherings to engage this group.
- Scarlet Pendarvis, chair of the Vestry Nominating Committee, has announced a full slate of candidates to be chosen at the annual meeting in January. It was suggested that ballots be made available on the internet and around the church building in advance of the voting. The 12 candidates are: Nate Early, Julia Greene, Rob Jaeger, Beth Neidenbach, Sally Pittman, Nancy Richardson, Frank Rinker, and Stephanie Wells.
- Chaudron Gille opened a discussion on the School for Christian Practice. She is part of the second Sacred Ground Group, which is a group trying to find a way to emphasize the broader church's call to see how racial reconciliation is rooted in the Gospel. The consensus is that we need to figure out a way to hold two different spaces at this time: the traditional Sunday morning services and other non-traditional work.
- Gail Sargent spoke of the need for an updated church directory. This is an important priority for the parish, and work can begin when Reba is able to turn over the payroll responsibilities.

- Stuart distributed two documents: 2022 Financial and Visioning Notes and the Diocese of Atlanta Clergy Compensation Report for 2021.
 1. He would like to consider making a further investment in the staff, which could include \$400 bonuses for the staff (excluding himself), and a possible 3% raise for the staff, with a separate category for Cheryl Kelley to bring her in line with other Christian educators across the Diocese. While being mindful of the need to have sufficient funds in the building reserve fund, it is important to recognize the extraordinary job the staff has done during this challenging time.
 2. The compensation report has designated Grace as the seventh largest parish in the Diocese. Stuart feels we need to find a way to equip the staff with a hybrid platform. One request would be to allow \$15,000 salary for a part-time sexton to assist Jeremy Landers.

- The December meeting is TBA, depending on when the Finance Committee approves the budget.

- Cynthia closed the meeting at 8:20 PM with an evening prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Lahey, Clerk of the Vestry