

Sunday, August 14, 2022

Episcopal Church of the Atonement Vestry Meeting Minutes

Time: Sunday, August 14, 2022, 1:02 p.m. to 2:12 p.m.
Location: In-Person at Church of the Atonement and via Zoom
Present: Father Dan Puchalla (Interim Rector), Liz Sarnik (Warden), Dave Beil (Warden), Natalie Archie (via Zoom), Jennifer Ash, Richard Benson (via Zoom), Steve Britt, Rufus Gonzales, Barbara Newman, Rick Velon, Mike Trumbold (Treasurer), Michael Waltz (Clerk)
Absent: Amanda Kim
Guests: Belinda Blunt-Williams, Charles Bonilla, Dennis Pattey, Louise Rohr (parishioners)

Next Meeting: Sunday, September 11, 2022, 1:00 p.m. – in-person and via Zoom.

Liz Sarnik (Warden) called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Father Dan led the Vestry in prayer followed by a check-in of what members and guests would be doing if not at this meeting.

Review of July Meeting Minutes: **A motion was made** (Rick Velon) **and seconded** (Steve Britt) to approve the minutes. With no discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report:

Statement of Financial Position: Mike Trumbold reported that the Capital Projects CD was renewed and a \$500 memorial donation was added to it. At the Finance Guild’s suggestion the CD interest rates will be included on the report beginning next month. Money was transferred from Savings to Operating to pay bills. The Endowment Fund had a positive market adjustment of more than \$81,000. The much smaller Reserve Account was also positive by \$750.

July Statement of Activity: Donations were up in July because of the first money received from Care For Friends. As agreed at last month’s meeting the budget for parking lot income was decreased but revenue from the lot is increasing. Plate offerings are up because of increased attendance at masses. Total weekly offerings for July were close to budget, as was total revenue.

July total expenditures were very close to budget. There was a \$300 charge to maintenance supplies to repair a water leak in the rectory and \$1,196 in building repairs for the church is the final payment for moving and recalculating the thermostats in the sanctuary. The Outreach Guild made several donations to other organizations in July, making that figure higher than in prior months but within annual budget. The quarterly lay pension premium was paid; Mike will start paying that and Father Dan’s SECA monthly to assist with cash flow.

A motion was made (Barbara Newman) **and seconded** (Rufus Gonzales) to receive the financials. After a couple minor questions were addressed **the motion passed** unanimously.

Reports:

Rector’s Report: Father Dan said that in the seven weeks he has been with us he has had approximately 40 one-on-one meetings with parishioners, many of which were focused on the process of “letting go” because of the transition. He will be organizing some small group meetings to help parishioners with this process.

Father held a mini-retreat with the associate clergy. He has also met with Charlie Sega, Chris Windle, and Ron Fox to discuss ways to tighten up the 11:00 mass.

He expects the new website to launch around September 1. New signage has been added to the parking lot, which should help those who want to rent parking identify the spaces they can use.

In coming weeks Matt Rodgers will be taking pictures of parishioners to add to Realm.

Father reported that the Stewardship Committee has been formed. It includes Richard Benson, Charles Bonilla, Marian DeBerry, Matt Rodgers, Meera Schlack, and Nathan Walbert. The committee will meet September 4th and expects to begin this year's campaign October 30th.

Homecoming Sunday on October 2nd will include the renewal of baptism vows. Father asked the Vestry members to suggest things that we can do to make that Sunday special. A mailing will be sent to everyone on our list.

It was suggested that we make a push to get people to attend the Wednesday evening prayers for an end to violence.

Care For Friends (CFF): Steve Britt shared what he learned at his first meeting as Atonement's non-voting member of the CFF board. CFF recently learned that the costs for labor and materials for their project had increased by about 25%. They're now working with Church of Our Saviour and the architects to modify the plans, which means that demolition of the existing building and construction of the new won't start until 2023. This isn't a concern because our agreement provides for extension or termination as decided after the initial period. CFF board members are eager to get volunteers from the Atonement community involved. Liz Sarnik noted that CFF's programs at Atonement have been well received.

Outreach: In addition to the mid-year donations mentioned earlier, in a written report provided before the meeting the Guild discussed the Swift School backpacks and Chiapas projects that are underway. A subcommittee of the Guild will be visiting Sarah's Circle's new facility to explore the possibility of increasing the number of hot meals we provide each month. Liz Sarnik said she has received another application for the Outreach position and will be interviewing that person soon.

Search Committee: Co-Chairs Aron Dunlap and Charles Stewart provided a written report prior to the meeting to inform the Vestry that they had met with Mother Sierra Reyes from the Diocese to review committee roles, tasks, and a typical calendar. They will be working on the Congregational Assessment Tool, which they expect to send out in late August or early September, with small group meeting in October. They expect the position of Rector to be posted in December or January.

Discussion Items:

Fundraising: At the July meeting the Vestry thought it may be possible to do a concert as a fundraising event this fall. Liz Sarnik talked to those who would be involved and they concluded that there is too much going on to do an effective event this year. The Vestry agreed. Mike Trumbold pointed out that a fundraiser is included in our income budget so we will need to watch carefully what impact not doing one will have.

Vestry Vacancy: With Chuck Elliott's resignation there is another opening on the Vestry. Liz asked members to talk to parishioners who might be willing to complete his term.

Financial Guidelines: Mike Trumbold explained that the guidelines project started in the Finance Guild as a way to clarify how we would use larger contributions; as they worked on it they added things to clarify how we do financial processes. It was intended to be a simple set of procedures. During the Vestry review other things were identified that could be addressed. Mike felt that doing so could be good but that it might be undertaken later. Finally, it was agreed that Mike and Tim Miller, the chair of the Finance Guild, would try to respond to the questions raised and take the material back to the Guild. Richard Benson stressed that he is willing to work on this phase.

“Homework” Discussion: Father Dan followed up with members about the “homework” they were given at the last meeting. Almost all reported they had attended different services and reached out to people outside of their existing circle of Atonement friends and acquaintances. They felt they had made some good connections and learned from the experience. Father encouraged them to continue in this effort and talk with him if they need suggestions.

Dates for Calendar:

- Funeral for Leo Williams – September 3
- Next Vestry Meeting – September 11
- Back to Sunday School – September 11
- Bishop Julio at 11:00 – September 18
- Memorial Mass for Betty Muir-Weinshel – September 24
- St. Francis Pet Blessings – October 1
- Homecoming Sunday/Schola Returns – October 2
- Vestry Retreat – October 7 and 8
- Episcopal Charities Gala – October 14
- Anglo-Catholicism Study Day – October 15
- Open House Chicago – October 15 and 16

Father Dan offered a prayer before the meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Waltz
Clerk of the Vestry