

Church of the Nativity

Minutes of the Vestry

August 18, 2020

Attending: Stephanie Allen, Michael Warrillow, Carrie Mash, Rene Garces, Cheryl Waechter, Robert Joines, Stephanie Sumner, Josh Booth, Kim Stoke, Kat Belk, Lori Special, and Gail Christensen.

The meeting convened at 7:07 pm via Zoom video-conferencing due to all church services, activities and meetings being suspended because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Phase 1b update: Stephanie Allen

The Diocese has postponed going into Phase 2, because the numbers of positive cases and hospitalizations in NC are not dropping significantly yet. With the Diocese lifting some restrictions, and we are now in Phase 1b. Churches now are allowed to gather outside, limiting the number to 25 for worship services and 16 for small groups.

Stephanie will start offering outdoor services beginning on Sunday, August 30, at 8 am (Morning Prayer) and 7 pm (Evening Prayer). These services will not be livestreamed; online pre-recorded services will continue at 10:30. The outdoor services will require signing up to attend; all must wear masks and observe social distancing; there will be no singing but Jason is considering how music can be added; there will be no passing the offering plates.

Parish survey: Carrie Mash

A survey to be conducted by the Communications Team was suggested at an earlier Vestry meeting, but was delayed as we went in May to pre-recorded worship services only. With input from a survey from Emanuel Episcopal Church, Carrie worked with David Dykes of the Communications Ministry Team to devise the 11 questions in the survey. All the questions must be about actions we would be able to take. The goal of this survey is to understand how to improve our virtual services and get parishioners' thoughts about returning to in-person worship. The Vestry went question by question, making some alterations. The survey will go out soon.

Youth and Children's ministry update: Stephanie Sumner

Vacation Bible School was cancelled because no campers signed up. Summer Outreach consisted of weekly volunteering on the Interfaith Food Shuttle Farm. 4-8 youth harvested and processed produce in the month of July. Participation has been down over the summer, and Stephanie Sumner will send an email asking parents to urge their kids to participate in the fall.

The fall calendar has been sent to parents. This fall, we will be exploring formation virtually through a series of 4-week long sessions. Each session will meet on Sunday nights from 5:30 to

6:30 for all youth in middle and high school. The theme for the Fall will be OUR CHURCH. The first series will be "What is Church to me", the second is "What is the Episcopal Church", and the third is "What does the Church say about..".

We will gather for Youth Group a few Sundays a month immediately following Youth Formation from 6:45 to 7:30 pm. Grub Group is the first Wednesday of the month from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Youth Socials will be on the designated Wednesday nights from 8:00-8:30 pm.

Financial report: Carrie Mash

Income for the month of July is down, but for 2020 is up. Expenses for the month of July are up, but for the year are down. The overall picture is good; indeed the numbers are better than in July 2019.

\$45,000 has been paid directly to the mortgage, thanks to John Oldham's hard work. The mortgage is now down to \$311,000.

John applied for a loan from the Federal Government's Payment Protection Program, and we received \$47,000, which is 2.5 times the monthly payroll. Nothing has been spent as yet, but it gave the Finance Team a sense of security in paying down the mortgage, and a possible "rainy day fund" in the uncertainty ahead of how the Stewardship Campaign will go. Because we have retained all employees at full salary, we qualify for forgiveness of the loan. The Vestry will need to vote in a future meeting about whether to return the money or apply for forgiveness.

We must provide a financial review by August 30 in order to vote at the Annual Diocesan Convention, but the canons do not allow for virtual conventions. Convention can't vote to change the canons until they can meet. We cannot have an annual parish meeting virtually either, which means we cannot elect Vestry members.

Junior Warden's report: Rene Garces

- 1) One of the benches located under the oak tree went missing and was recovered. The bench was being used by groups gathered in the woods behind the Korean church. We may have to contact law enforcement to drive through campus to watch out for young people coming through the campus and throwing trash in Kinder Garden area. Security cameras will be installed on the oak island soon.
- 2) Lawn service is now charging \$250 to cut twice a month. They will cut further up the driveway and about 50' along Ray Road for \$25 extra, for an average total of \$500/month.
- 3) Rise Against Hunger event had been paid and scheduled for Sunday 8/30/2020. We asked for parishioners to sign up to do the meal-packaging in Rise Against Hunger's warehouse, but so far only 2 families have signed up.
- 4) Newcomb & Company conducted the first of 2 yearly HVAC preventive maintenance events.
- 5) There were issues with the fire alarms in the nave, costing \$1500 for running new wire above the Nave from fire panel to vesting room.

- 6) Safety & Security leadership is switching from Jon Gorman to Matt Chytka. Thanks to Jon for all his work!
- 7) Sanitizer station equipment will be installed around campus.
- 8) Flood lamps will be installed for the sidewalk north of the Worship building.
- 9) A Fall Workday is needed to augment Lesley Troan's and Nancy Reed's work, but we need to observe social distancing and other safety measures.

Kinder Garden September-December plans: Stephanie Allen

The Kinder Garden will resume on September 17. There will be 3 weeks of camp each month: 3 weeks in, 1 week empty, 12 children in camp, divided into 2 groups, outside using woods, playground, under the Oak tree, and hikes. They will use two rooms in inclement weather.

In a spirit of helping to support our parishioner, Mary Kingsley, who runs the school, in keeping the school open while also providing some amount of income for the church, we will charge \$400 rental per week, \$1200 per month, to be reassessed in December for the next session. Mary remains responsible for cleaning rooms and restrooms at the end of each day; Robert will clean the entire building once or twice a week as usual. This will be reassessed if we are able to return to Sunday School/Youth classes meeting in person in the building.

Stephanie discussed this plan with Bishop Anne Hodges-Copple. Diocese is fine with this, as Mary is an independent operator, and this is not a church program. Vestry is okay with the plan.

In other news:

Stephanie will be on vacation August 19-24.

Robert Joines told the Vestry that beginning last Sunday, the videos of the Sunday morning worship services at 10:30 will be simulcast on both Facebook and YouTube. There has been little interest in watching it on YouTube, and as a result we have no "custom URL" but a link will be posted in Glad Tidings and the website and also on Facebook, hoping that this will push some participation to YouTube.

Approval of the June Vestry meeting:

The minutes of the June 2020 Vestry meeting were submitted for approval. Robert moved to accept the minutes as written; Stephanie Sumner seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with a prayer at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Christensen
Clerk of the Vestry

The Next Scheduled Vestry Meeting will be Tuesday, September 15 at 7 pm via Zoom.