

Iona-Hope Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry
September 14, 2021

Attendees:

The Reverend Ray Buchanan ✓

Vestry Members:

Joe Mulino, Senior Warden ✓

Patricia Ingram, Junior Warden ✓

Ray Zentis *excused with regrets*

Bob Earl ✓

Alison Kinch ✓

Kathie Hart ✓

Andi Jerger ✓

Guests - Persons of Interest:

The Reverend Suzy Post ✓

John Thomas Assistant Treasurer ✓

Eileen Carrara, Thrift Shop Manager ✓

Debbie Prather, Treasurer ✓

Paula Paquette, Clerk of the Vestry ✓

Guest: Douglass Lind, Consultant ✓

Opening Concerns and Prayers – Father Ray Buchanan

OPENING DISCUSSION

Father Ray Buchanan

INFORMATION

Approval of Minutes – Motion Bob Earl, Second Joe Mulino, to approve previous minutes of July 13. All in favor. Record of vote concerning Gathering Place roof repairs/rebuilding from September 1 was reported.

Group Ministries – None at this time.

Announcements – Some projects are in the works and there are some projects which will need to be started as we enter into the fall. Blessing of the Animals is being planned, and how it will be done. An announcement will be made soon. It will be at the beginning of October. All Saints will be first weekend of November. There are other events in October. This coming Sunday at 9:30 will be a baptism. Some things we need to be looking at... Last year, instead of the pageant, we did the drive through Follow the Star. The response was quite enthusiastic for that. We will look at scheduling that again. We will look at how we may be able to do the pageant also. We are discussing how we can bring back prayer and laying hands on people for prayer, especially for Saturday night. It is being discussed as things settle down related to the virus. Perhaps we can anoint a prayer cloth as a symbol and hand it out in a baggy? We do have prayer shawls. Julie Vergin will be returning within a couple of weeks. She is helpful; people trust her. She helps with thinking through matters such as the Saturday evening laying on of hands.

Visitor Comments – No visitors attending.

DISCUSSION

Senior Warden Report

Joe Mulino, Senior Warden

Thank you Bob Earl and John Hart for attending the stewardship program sponsored by the Diocese. Handout information is available if anyone is interested to receive it. One point that was made was perhaps we should eliminate the word "pledge" as that can be intimidating to people. They suggested the words "giving" and "generosity". John Hart was participatory and seemed very interested in this whole topic.

Thank you to Paula Paquette and Kathy Hart for putting together the care packets for Small Group Leaders. They were well received. About 45 were prepared and distributed/mailed. The prayers were beautiful and helpful. The information was good.

Bob Earl commented that the stewardship event by the Diocese was very well done and helpful.

Vestry Consultation

Doug Lind, consultant

Nothing at this time.

Invite, Welcome, Connect

Kathie Hart, Chair, Invite, Welcome, Connect

We will not be able to do festive reopening and small group leader meetings quite yet in October. It is just a bit too soon because the virus is spiking. Invite Welcome Connect has met in August and they are talking about various options for those projects. Kathy Hart and Paula Paquette took an online class on Small Group Ministry. It was through Virginia Theological Seminary. One of the interesting concepts discussed was forming small trusted groups and really undertaking conversation on theological concepts and thinking. The class addressed deepening relationships among people in the church and within topics in the church. Kathy Hart recommends we start a small group as a pilot based on the Way of Love. Kathy recommends we start a pilot group, as outlined by the Episcopal Church, on the Way of Love to see how it goes. It could be the Vestry. It could be another group. It is about deepening relationship and deepening understanding of God, community, etc. Doug Lind commented that Episcopal Vestries tend to focus on the secular business matters and this gets separated a bit from discerning God's calling for how the Vestry steps together and works forward. We could, as a group, take the Lectionary reading and discuss it weekly. We can do it for five weeks. We can do it for a season of Lent. Whatever we decide. Further information will be disseminated. To come to know each other more and to trust each other more deeply is seminal. We eventually will need to identify people who can become facilitators. They don't have to be experts. They need to be able to facilitate. The Vestry can explore it next month. Or we can move forward. Alison Kinch makes a motion that the Vestry becomes a pilot group for a Small Group Ministry based on the Way of Love, second, Joe Mulino. All in favor. There was a suggestion at the last I-W-C meeting that we shift our service times to allow for a full hour of Christian formation between the two services. This recommendation was made by several people. People seem to want classes of some sort between the services. We need to be concerned about what the congregation would think about delaying the 9:30. We need to perhaps digest how many people really would want to do a class or program between services. Would they just as soon do them weekdays? Have we ever done a survey to ask this question? The history here has been that people tend to want to do events weekdays more than on Sundays. When Mother Suzy Post did the movie program, there were close to 40 people there. Her Bible Study after Wednesday service had 20 people there. So, days outside of Sundays have been well received. We need to consider events that bring all three services together, too. Sometimes, the three services really act as three different churches and, sometimes it seems, they're fine with it. If we do a survey, we need to do it carefully. We need to speak with staff as well. Their schedules would be impacted. Perhaps, move forward with a survey. Alison Kinch and Kathy Hart will work on a survey to gauge congregational interest.

Thrift Store Update

Eileen Carrara, Thrift Shop Manager

Everything is very, very well at the thrift store. We had \$84,000 in profits from May 4 to today. Currently, we are only open 27 hours a week. Managers have met and Saturday hours will extend to 3:00. Monday hours will be extended after the snowbirds return.

There are some high schoolers coming in to volunteer to do their community service hours. The store is receiving very excellent donations from the community. Not so much from members. Eileen Carrara suggests the bulletin and the weekly email include information about the store and provide Eileen's phone number so she can discuss donation questions with people. Folks can call her and she will let people know that, yes, items can be received by the store. There are some new merchandise items being received. There will be a section of new merchandise. \$14,000 is the estimate of the monthly costs for the Thrift Shop. We had been trying to discern that bottom line figure.

Finance Committee Changes

Not discussed at this time.

Stewardship

Discussed above.

Reopening Timelines

Infection rates and hospitalization rates seem to be dropping now. What questions are there, if any, on our reopening timeline and processes? It is still being written as we respond to the ever-changing landscape of the virus.

Budget for 2022

Preliminary budget was provided. Staff raises were included and are recommended at 3 percent for all staff. The 2022 apportionment, as included in the budget, is a firm number and firm from the convocation this week. Insurance is a firm update. Numbers were received today on health insurance costs. The increases as noted here would increase our costs by \$22,000. Capital apportionment has resulted in some of the cost, of course. Apportionment is paid monthly. Line of credit is \$45,000. You can take a monthly distribution from the line of credit to the operating account. We are net \$41,000 short of our budget that we will need to come up with for this year. How do we want to move ahead with this? Does a small group of you want to consider this and come back to the group as a whole in October with some ideas? Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Senior Warden, Bob Earl, and (we will ask) John Hart will be on a budget subcommittee.

New Capital Campaign

Not discussed at this time.

Strategic Planning

Not discussed at this time.

Mardi Gras 2021 Recipient

Not discussed at this time.

Vestry Composition

Joe Mulino rolls off Vestry this year and is not eligible for re-election. Andi Jerger rolls off and is eligible to stand for re-election. Patty Ingram rolls off and is eligible to stand for re-election. Neither Andi nor Patty will be standing for re-election. Paula Paquette has agreed to stand for election.

DECISIONS

Finance Committee, Deb Prather

A financial report was emailed ahead of the meeting together with preliminary financials. A request was received asking if financial reports can be posted on the website or be more distributed somehow. Father Ray thinks that putting the reports on the website is a good

idea. There is something good about being open. It can provide an education for people. A motion is not necessary. We will kindly ask if Marnie Ike can do this.

Junior Warden Report

Patricia Ingram, Junior Warden

Gathering Place roof was completed today, before the rain. Nicely done! Inside of Gathering Place is getting fixed up and corrected from the leaky roof/rains. Things are looking wonderful!

Closing Prayers - Father Ray.

Vestry agenda completed 5:55 pm.

Adjournment

*Respectfully submitted,
Paula Paquette, Clerk*