

Iona-Hope Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry
June 8, 2021

Attendees:

The Reverend Ray Buchanan ✓

Vestry Members:

Joe Mulino, Senior Warden ✓

Patricia Ingram, Junior Warden ✓

Ray Zentis ✓

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 started the meeting discussing a program called Second Life. He became aware of it 10-12 years ago and starting looking into it. It's a virtual city or virtual world. You develop your own Avatar and you can interact with other people in a virtual world. When you get into Second Life, there's a world. You become part of a group. You decide how you look. There is a website for Second Life of the Anglican Cathedral. Father Ray used this concept as part of his work with a previous Vestry at a retreat (10 years ago). How much of a church can be done on line? How can community be built? Who is a part of it? How do we get people to be a part of it? How can we intentionally include people? One of the issues it can bring up is that you don't have a physical offering, so how do you bless the gifts that come forward from God? How do you do offerings? The Cathedral Second Life is being interacted with. People are engaging with it. They are thriving. They are doing virtual worship and it is working. Some of our pledges are made now on Realm. It can be an automatic debit now. We receive fewer physical checks now. We just went through over a year that we were not physically together. We have been through a prophetic time. How we envisioned the church previously has changed. It's important for us to continue to look at the changed reality and the new places we may wish to consider for our future. We will never be back to how it was. This is a prophetic message and time. There are elements of who we have been that we can bring back together. We see what is going on now and we see the reality of where we are going. The prophets said, this is where Israel is and this is where you are going if you do not change your ways. We are at a time where we need to consider new reality. Do we think that churches will be physically smaller in the future? If there is building in the future, it must be looked at VERY differently. The core of a congregation is to build small groups and to build on that. Our use of buildings will most probably be different in the future. We probably don't need to be so extravagant in terms of buildings in the future. We could consider co-building buildings, building shares.

INFORMATION

Approval of Minutes – Motion Joe Mulino, Second Bob Earl, to approve previous minutes of May 11, 2021 as revised. All in favor.

Group Ministries – None at this time.

Announcements – None at this time.

Visitor Comments – No visitors attending.

Vestry Actions from May – Clerk of the Vestry Paula Paquette reported on results of two actions that were taken by the Vestry in May by email votes. The first is the approval of diocesan convention delegates. The other is approval of the sign estimate from the Epic company. Two proposals had been presented. Epic was selected.

DISCUSSION

Senior Warden Report

Joe Mulino, Senior Warden

Letter of credit from the bank was discussed. This will be attended to at the beginning of July. We will keep the line of credit open for another year. We have not used it, but it will be good to keep it open just in case.

Vestry Consultation

Doug Lind, consultant

The topic which was brought up by Father Ray has been discussed by churches and other organizations throughout the country. The question is, how much will we take the lead in this and how much will we let this all be done TO us. If we stay within the hybrid model, people can be more involved. Many people belong to a church up north and a church in the south. Some people are participating in two churches at the same time. Now churches can start to consider if they share a pastor between two churches. The possibilities are endless. There are a whole bunch of people who are glass half empty and glass half full. Churches who are embracing the newness of the future will do well. Those who do not embrace any change might not do so well. There are some churches that are or have closed. But, we need to recognize how much opportunity there is now. Father Ray mentioned that he would like to look at a Vestry Retreat sometime in September, an evening and a day local.

Invite, Welcome, Connect

Kathie Hart, Chair, Invite, Welcome, Connect

Kathie presented info about a chart that Iona-Hope used to use of our organization with groups and ministries. We have not actively had cell groups operating lately. A cell group is 8-10-12 people who gather, usually weekly. They decide the frequency. They meet for a while and then they divide. They nurture relationships for the purpose of then widening the Kingdom of God when it divides. Cell groups are different from our existing topical small groups and our other ministerial groups. Kathie recommends we start with one cell group and then grow from there. The first can be a concept as developed from Forum for Theological Education Another Way Living and Leading Change on Purpose. CARE is an acronym they use. Their purpose is to engage in ministry outside of itself. It includes theological reflection and sharing/getting to know each other. Each has a purpose. This idea would not replace any group. It would be an addition. The members of the group and then the splitting off/growing groups might not necessarily be members of the church now or ever. They would incorporate and bring in members of the community, friends inviting friends, community members and outreach. The people gather together to get to know each other, see who and how they are in the world, and then reach out to other people to grow the movement. The group might decide to serve together at a food bank or to do some other project. The initial group would be a time for including potential leaders of next groups, people who would be willing to lead the groups. There would be some sort of

leadership to keep supporting the leaders so that everyone stays on track. One comment said perhaps we can start with continuing the reopening and then look at this. September or slightly later might be a time to start this. We might should build on what we have, get fully opened, and then consider adding something like this. Should we publicize this? It might be better to identify the correct folks to be the starter group so that it's a good fit. When we had the justice ministry, we had different geographies of groups, Shell Point, Cape Coral, etc. That might be a way to tag onto an existing grouping for this new idea. The focus of this type of group is theological reflection, to create a closer relationship with God and to serve our community, to see and meet the needs of the greater world around us. We will discuss this concept again at the next Vestry meeting. It was agreed that it is a wonderful concept.

Thrift Store Update

Eileen Carrara, Thrift Shop Manager

Sales were nearly \$28,000 for the month. Sales this month were a bit sluggish, but steady. People are coming in, looking, buying. She wishes that we could find a way to get the word out there. We are on Google, Facebook, etc. Bob did offer to do an ad in the newspaper. Perhaps, that's costly for the exposure. We need to advertise on Next Door. That reaches our neighborhoods in the tens of thousands of people. We can establish ourselves as a non-profit business on Next Door. Then, posters on their own sites can tag the Thrift Shop to their neighborhoods. There is an event coming up, hair glitter for ladies, June 30. It will be advertised. THANK YOU to Eileen for leading the Thrift Shop and THANK YOU to the owners of the plaza for being so cooperative and encouraging. There is an association called the happy thrifter. We are involved in it. Groups take a bus and have thrift shop outings.

Reopening Timeline

Father Ray discussed the continuing timeline for the opening. Father Ray suggests it is time for us to move forward with opening for some groups at the church. The doors are not being flung wide open, but we still need to This was the last week for reservations on line. We still need to maintain the limit of the number of people into the church, but we will not do reservations any longer. We are setting up a readers schedule. We are also setting up a schedule for the Prayers of the People. As we move away from the reservation system, we need to set back up a welcoming group for each service. We cannot allow for food or drink at this time. We can bring our own cup of coffee to a meeting, but we cannot make coffee or serve buffet meals yet. We will set up some guidelines for groups. Unvaccinated people will need to wear masks. We still need to practice social distancing. We need to clean and use safety procedures. Peace Lutheran has a guideline that there is no food except for food bought at a store (prepackaged food). No coffee hour at this time. No dinner at this time. When will we allow AA and Al Anon back in? Beginning July? Sooner? The drafted guidelines are very simple and straightforward. What about contact tracing? We don't need or want to know, but the groups need to keep a list of how to contact trace. We just need to know that the group is being careful and will get contact information so that a contact can be notified if necessary. Motion, Bob Earl, second Joe Mulino, that we will reopen to all groups (internal and external) within the guidelines presented. All in favor.

Finance Committee Changes

Not discussed at this time.

Diocesan Convention Delegates

Not discussed at this time.

Stewardship

Not discussed at this time

New Capital Campaign

Not discussed at this time.

Strategic Planning

Not discussed at this time.

Mardi Gras 2021 Recipient

Not discussed at this time.

DECISIONS

Finance Committee, Deb Prather

Financial reports were emailed earlier to Vestry. Any questions about finances? Treasurer Deb Prather reported on finances as of this date. There has been \$39,520 total paid out to the Thrift Shop from Operating. Some people responded to our appeal last month for revenue by paying their pledges for the year. This is much appreciated. We are \$66,000 below our budgeted revenue so far for this year. This is concerning. It's good that we are renewing the line of credit. This might be used by the end of the summer. Our Treasurer suggests we send out an appeal for people to increase their giving in conjunction with the six month pledge payment statements. We are down in revenue, for sure. We would like to ask the Thrift Shop to start paying back the operating account. Maybe \$1,500 per month? Perhaps it can. Bob Earl, motion, that the Thrift Shop begin reimbursement of the loan to the amount of \$1,500 beginning July 1, second, Andi Jerger. Discussion. We can change and amend the amount next month. The Thrift Shop can also make an additional payment back, depending on how its receipts are. When is the six months over? We start paying rent in September. That's when the other \$14,000 is due also for the security deposit. Suggested we send a letter or an attachment with the statements in June. Seems to be a good idea. It's visual. It's a reminder. The letter should be positive and grateful. Consensus is send the letter. Treasurer Deb will draft the letter. Patrick Hunt is not up to doing Stewardship due to health matters. We will have a Vestry meeting in July, but no meeting in August. In July, Father Ray would like to put together a group to work on Stewardship for this year. Father Ray will be happy to provide information and consultation to that group. The diocesan stewardship meeting is usually in August. Fresh ideas, exciting ideas are welcome. The idea of Stewardship is what we do with what God has given us.

Junior Warden Report

Patricia Ingram, Junior Warden

Report for May has been provided. Everyone praised Patty Ingram for what she is doing. The facilities are looking fantastic. Things are being cleaned and painted. Things are really looking so nice. Please let Patty know if you have any questions or concerns. We have worked hard to make advances for meetings on line. Now, we will be having meetings in person. We all need to be great stewards of facilities. Father Ray reported on the cost to replace projectors. We will need to replace the projectors at some point. We have been replacing bulbs. It will cost about \$12,000 to replace them. However, we need laser projectors. We did that in the crow's nest. That would be about \$32,000. We might include that in the capital campaign. We need rain to fill up the well which waters the lawn.

Closing Prayers – Father Ray.

Vestry agenda completed 6:18 pm.

Adjournment

Iona-Hope Vestry Results of Vote, May 2021

Ray Buchanan (rbuchanan@ionahope.org)

Vestry,

We need to approve the slate for DC delegates. The diocese needs them for their list. So, I ask that you vote by "reply all".s

I have contacted the following and they are willing to serve in these positions.

Delegates:

Kathie Hart

Alison Kinch

Joe Mulino

Alternates:

Paula Paquette

Patty Ingram

Margo Farrara

Please "reply all" with "yes" to affirm this slate or "no" to vote against.

Thank you.

Peace,

Ray+

Patricia Ingram (pingram081@gmail.com)

Yes, approve

Joe Mulino (joemulinorealtor@gmail.com)

Yes

Robert Earl (rrearl10@gmail.com)

Yes for all.

Bob Earl

Alison Kinch (alison.kinch23@gmail.com)

Yes.

Andi Jerger (andijerger@yahoo.com)

Yes

Ray Zentis (ray@rayzentis.com)

Yes

Kathryn Hart (kphart85@hotmail.com)

Yes

Iona-Hope Vestry Results of Vote, May 2021

Ray Buchanan (rbuchanan@ionahope.org) To: you + 14 more

Advance Sign Estimate.pdf (408 KB)

Epic Sign Estimate.pdf (146 KB)

Vestry,

We did not have time to consider this last month. I am attaching the estimates for the sign repair. Fr. Gamble supports the Epic proposal.

To save us some time, I would like to hear your thoughts/questions via email as soon as you can.

Peace,

Ray+

Ray Buchanan

Rector

Iona-Hope Episcopal Church

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VOTES IN FAVOR OF THE EPIC SIGN ESTIMATE:

Mr. Joe Mulino, Senior Warden ✓
Mrs. Patricia Ingram, Junior Warden ✓
Mr. Ray Zentis ✓
Mr. Bob Earl ✓
Mrs. Alison Kinch ✓
Mrs. Kathie Hart ✓
Ms. Andi Jerger ✓