

Iona-Hope Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry
January 12, 2021

Attendees:

The Reverend Ray Buchanan ✓

Vestry Members:

Joe Mulino, Senior Warden ✓

Patricia Ingram, Junior Warden ✓

Ray Zentis ✓

Bob Earl ✓

Alison Kinch ✓

Robin Mills ✓

Andi Jerger ✓

Debbie Prather, Treasurer, Member ✓

Guests - Persons of Interest:

The Reverend Suzy Post ✓

John Thomas Assistant Treasurer ✓

Eileen Carrara, Thrift Shop Manager Excused with regrets

Patrick Hunt, Stewardship Excused with regrets

Paula Paquette, Clerk of the Vestry ✓

Guest: Douglass Lind, Consultant ✓

Opening Concerns and Prayers – Father Ray Buchanan

OPENING DISCUSSION

Father Ray wants to hear from everyone about December, the Advent and the Christmas season. Senior Warden Joe thanked all the volunteers for all of their help. People thought the drive through Follow the Star pageant was wonderful. It would be fun to repeat that and perhaps do it in addition to the Paper Bag Pageant. We received LOTS of donations for the Gladiolus Food Pantry and about \$200 in donations. This was a challenging Christmas for many as we were unable to participate in person much. The 8:00 service was at capacity on Christmas Eve. The Advent bags were beautiful. It really got people together and involved. We should repeat that. People liked them. Mother Suzy and our Parish Nurse Julie Vergin did lots to make those happen. We felt safe. We provided opportunities and people still felt safe. People really miss being together. The services were very different for our Clergy as well. Everyone who stopped for the drive through thought it was wonderful. The assumption is that, next year, when we do this. Sometimes, it's good to do something new. Father Ray is thinking about possibly doing the drive through the weekend before Christmas and then continue the Paper Bag Pageant on Christmas Eve. We had 40 vehicles go through which means about 120 people. Eileen Carrara was a gem with her candy tube. Father Ray wants to check in to hear from everyone about how they feel about the events of the past week in the nation, at the capitol, in our communities. How are we doing with all this? We never thought we would see this kind of division in the country. We usually defend from outsiders and, now, we have division from within ourselves. We are all Americans and we are all hurting. We need each other right now. There is a great deal of fear right now. People are afraid of personal injury. People are afraid of what is going to happen with our government. Will we be governed the way we have been governed? Will something change? It is a frightening time. It is a layered thing. People are not sleeping. People are very fearful. People are fearful for the new administration, that injury will come

to them. We need to pray for healing. We feel anxiety. We do have some hope that there are people who are taking public action right now. Some businesses are withdrawing support. We need justice, not just unity. We will not have unity until the people who did these things will be called into account. Much concern expressed for what will happen between now and Inauguration Day. Social media and the ability to communicate so much has brought us into a new world and, perhaps, we do not know how to live in that new world. We need to figure that out. People can post anything they want on line, true or not. A friend of someone was making buttons that say Truth Matters, It's good to try to understand the truth that other people have from their own perspective. Perhaps the only real truth we can hold onto is the truth of Jesus, to love your neighbor as yourself. Some people hold as truth things that do not seem to be true at all. As faithful people, how does our faith help us to make it through. Perhaps we just need to have faith to see this through, that God will take care of us. We need to live by what God is teaching us. There are some people of faith who espouse a very different truth. We pray that HIS Kingdom will reign. Perhaps we will go through a period of discernment and consideration after this thing is all over. We will need this discernment, This has been a horrifying process to see. Financial pressure is being brought to bear now. It is despicable that one person hijacked a political party like this. The establishment has come together enough that the protections of the country will happen. The national guard has been called in. Systemic racism is part of the cause of all this, perhaps a major cause. We will get through this. We will need strong leadership. That leadership can only begin after January 20. The question comes up as to how we present ourselves to the world as people of faith in a way that will be helpful to people and the situation. Not only is fear a hard thing, but the chaos and confusion are hard also. How our faith helps us to get through this is important. And how that can, then, help the world is important. There are some havens around us. One of those havens is, hopefully, Iona-Hope and we pray to keep it so. Father Ray expressed that he worries about all of us within all of this.

Information

Approval of Minutes – Motion Joe Mulino, Second Bob Earl, to approve previous minutes of December 8, 2020. All in favor.

Group Ministries – No reports at this time.

Announcements – Robin Mills reports that the calling program he implemented has worked very well. People made about five calls and the calls were very well received. Callers did a wonderful job of reaching out to people. People were very, very grateful to hear the connection. The busload of donations that was sent to Haiti by The Thrift Ship was so wonderful. Robin Mills has photos and will publicize them. There is abject poverty in the places where the donations went.

A Prayer Vigil will be held Tuesday, January 19 at 6:00 pm outside at the Lanyrinth to pray for peace and to remember those who have passed from the coronavirus.

DISCUSSION

Senior Warden Report, Joe Mulino

Update on Thrift Store. Property manager Mary Rosetti flew in from Las Vegas and Father Ray and Senior Warden Joe met with her. The County declined the last step in the occupancy permit path. The County asked for an engineering study. The issue has been resolved and the plan will not be required after all. Some items need to be taken care of though. The implementation of these items is underway. Perhaps we will be able to get into the new store within two weeks. The lease will be extended by four months because of the delay in occupancy and we will still receive the time to get the store underway. There is a neon sign up now and it is lighted now. We have a great working relationship with the owners and we look forward to a continued great and positive relationship.

Vestry Consultation

Doug Lind, consultant. What makes Vestries strong is like the time we spent before the meeting started tonight in personal conversation and friendship and support of one another. Doug Lind works with entities all over the country. It seems like, now as we see the vaccine rolling out and the possibility of the pandemic coming to a conclusion, that we start to relax, loosen standards, and act out. As church leaders, we need to remind people that we have to be just as careful and patient and vigilant as we have from the beginning. Now is not the time to make errors. It will be time soon as new people come onto the Vestry that we have some sort of recovenanting event. When it is safe, of course.

Congregant Contacts

See above. Were completed recently.

Stewardship

Stewardship. Generating Excitement About Who We Are is the theme. Stewardship letter is being sent today. A stewardship email will go out Thursday. Ingathering of pledges should be done by the end of January. We can pledge on Realm. We can set up pledges to come out automatically from our bank accounts too. It is an incredibly easy way to do giving.

Annual Meeting

This is being worked on now. It will be on Zoom. The logistics are being worked out. Marnie Ike has asked for reports from those who provider reports. There will be a Deanery Convocation this Sunday as our Clergy and Convention reps are assisting with reviewing applications for the Bishop Search Committee. Father Ray wrote a beautiful Stewardship letter for the campaign. Zoom meeting last Sunday in January with a presentation of the spending plan and an election at which one person is presented for election.

New Capital Campaign

Not discussed at this time.

Strategic Planning

Not discussed at this time.

Invite, Welcome, Connect

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. We ended up \$20,000 to the good this year. We ended this year in a very, very good place. The funds for the PPP are included in other revenues and the PPP hugely helped with our situation. Giving from the congregation was definitely off since we have not been able to congregate and because people have been hurting financially. We kept our spending down. Congregational Life line was definitely down since we didn't have one this year. Response to our Christmas letter was fabulous.

Junior Warden Report, Patricia Ingram

Patricia Ingram reported. The Gathering Place is back together. A bathroom sink in the Sanctuary is being worked on. Small leaks and little issues are being worked on now in the dry season so that they do not turn into large issues. There was an issue at a service a few weeks ago to respond to someone who passed out. The emergency response that occurred was so proficient. He was outside and waiting for an ambulance when the ambulance arrived. The ushers helped hugely. Thank you all.

Father Ray expressed gratitude to Robin Mills for the many years he served on the Vestry. His time and talent and presence have been MUCH appreciated and we express our gratitude to him.

Father Ray expressed his gratitude also to all the members of the Vestry for supporting and encouraging all the ministries of our church.

Closing Prayers

Father Ray.

Vestry agenda completed 5:58 pm.

Adjournment