

Iona-Hope Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry
May 11, 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 *Excused with regrets*

Debbie Prather, Treasurer ✓

Paula Paquette, Clerk of the Vestry ✓

Guest: Douglass Lind, Consultant ✓

Opening Concerns and Prayers – Father Ray Buchanan

INFORMATION

Approval of Minutes – Motion Joe Mulino, Second Bob Earl, to approve previous minutes of April 13, 2021 as revised. All in favor.

Group Ministries – None at this time.

Announcements – Some decisions have been made regarding vacations this summer. Mid July to mid August will be Father Ray vacation. Mother Suzy will be out last two weeks of August and first week of September. Marnie Ike, Administrator, will take days here and there, no set plans. Sabbatical will not happen this year. It will happen in 2022.

DISCUSSION

Senior Warden Report, Joe Mulino

Thanks to Vestry members who attended Zoom Vestry retreat at Dayspring. It was very meaningful, very spiritual. Kathie Hart stated she was very favorably impressed as well. A part of the retreat asked people to take a fresh look at persons who might irritate or annoy you and to look at them again, then look at them from the perspective of what Jesus would think about that person and what He appreciates about them. The Vestry can use spiritual discernment and listening to God together as a part of its work. God's will is not one particular choice, but rather an array of possibilities. How people enter into collaboration is a part of God's will, regardless of what the end product is. The program was really on point and wonderful. The idea of sitting on the same side of the table is a great idea, whether literally or figuratively. Someone asked where is the Vestry Covenant? We have one, where is it now? It has been resurrected; we do have it. We will use it. The Vestry Retreat really made people think. The part about how we label each other was a good thing to think about, and if we can reflect on how we would like to be labeled rather than how we might be labeled now. Eileen Carrara, Thrift Shop manager, is trying to get on the meeting. She has a lot of need for extra storage right now as we have a lot of items that we will still be

receiving. People held their items and they want to get them to us now, post pandemic. The owners offered for us to use as nearby unit. We stored there while we were waiting for our opening permits. We expressed interest in continuing to use the space. Joe Mulino negotiated a cost of \$500 to use the nearby unit for storing surplus items. When do we start paying rent? It is a little over \$10,000 per month. This does not begin until November. We are paying CAM charges now, about \$3,400. It is an included part of the rental amount. We will also pay the extra \$500 for now, too. We have the other half of our security deposit due also. \$14,000. It will be due in November. Total security is \$28,000. The store did about \$4,700 its first day.

Vestry Consultation

Doug Lind, consultant. We still do not know yet when it will be prudent to have an offsite Vestry retreat. It will be useful if people can start thinking about what they would like to have for topics for that date and event. Then, we can start to think and plan for that event. If there are people on the Vestry who do not want to meet in person, we can Zoom in if there are people we need to Zoom into a meeting. We will need to clear the Gathering Place and meet there if there is a meeting there. We may start in person Vestry meetings and will see when that can happen. Perhaps out first in person meeting is, in fact, the Vestry.

Invite, Welcome, Connect

Kathie Hart, Chair. Invite, Welcome, Connect. Provided a report on the Invite, Welcome, Connect ministry. Kathie Hart and Father Ray spoke about doing some dreaming and visioning with Invite, Welcome, Connect as individual groups over the summer and then presenting some ideas and a budget to go with it in the fall as preparation for 2022 budget planning. A festive re-opening celebration has been tossed around as an idea and may be part of that process. Paula Paquette has taken over getting small groups reorganized and possibly a meeting of small group leaders slated on Zoom for June. Father Ray and Kathie met today to discuss how in person happening may occur. The go ahead is in place to do a children's church school during the first half of the church service. This will begin soon. We want to dream a big dream and then get momentum built up and programs and ministries in place and thriving. A challenge is how we invite and how we can invite broadly. Paula Paquette reported on the process of how we have updated our small groups listing/descriptions and emailed each leader of the groups or ministries individually to confirm they are still the leader, and to see if there is any updated information for the listing that goes out. This process of communication has been met with great enthusiasm and happiness. We are thinking about small groups ministering to their members and our need to minister to the leaders who are being conveners and helpers of people in their respective groups. This will create enthusiasm and momentum.

Thrift Store Update

It was an incredibly exciting week at the Thrift Store. It reopened last week. There is a difference between cost and investment and that concept emerges all the time for the Thrift Store. A new point of sale system has been implemented. On Tuesday opening day, the place was packed. The first day was \$4,700. Over \$11,000 came in the first few days. The additional storage area is also an investment. The "Warehouse" space will enable us to take some really good merchandise, receive it, sell it and yield from it. The truck is being maintained now. It needs new tires, a new wheel bearing, and a few other things. We have hired a person to oversee pickups with the truck. He has hired a helper. A couple of hours daily.

Reopening Timeline

Father Ray and Mother Suzy have made some decisions. The Saturday service will open this Saturday at 5:00 indoors. It was held outside last week. We need the people to run the booth and livestream the service as well. We will livestream both services from now on 5:00 and 9:30. We are working out the timeframe to reopen the 8:00 service as well. It may

be June 6. It may be earlier. We will need booth as well as programming. We are looking at reopening groups as well. We will need to stay distant and to stay masked even if vaccinated. We need to find a way to manage groups and get their assurance that they will keep the group size to no more than 10 people. They will also need a system for contact tracing. There are fully vaccinated people who have ended up with Covid and very ill. We need to continue to be vigilant. We need to continue to be careful. Masks, distancing, size limitations will all be important. AA is an anonymous group, so keeping info for possible contact tracing will need to be thought about. Choir will not return very soon, perhaps. We have lost two sets of operators for the booth for 5:00. We need more booth people. We need more programmers, too. Alison Kinch volunteered to program. Some of this time might be confusing. The Thrift Store has reopened and there is no contact tracing. Perhaps people find some confusion in the fact that the Thrift Store of us is open, but other groups are not? Perhaps some communication about that would be worthwhile. We do ask people to put on a mask when shopping. We would like to have the church move with diligence as it reopens, not just throw everything open. We also want to make sure we are open to visitors. There is a group of people who are not vaccinated. We need to be careful about that, too. Just for them to say they are fine and don't have Covid is not quite an assurance to the entire group. We can communicate all these matters well. This whole matter is developing. And we will need to communicate about it. We need to be mindful of communication, our instruments of communication, so that we can emphasize the points being made and what needs to be said related to openings and restarts.

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. Treasurer Deb reported that she was disappointed about the revenue for April. It was low, only \$19,000. We have had some extra expenses paid out for the opening of the Thrift Shop, but it should not affect the amount of revenue coming in. We need some Stewardship leadership. We may need monthly reminders of ways to give, ways to be grateful, ways to give more, etc. This is the Vestry's responsibility. The Vestry needs a decision on how to go forward. The Treasurer needs assistance with securing our finances. We have used some PPP money for salaries. We still have a chunk of that to use. Father Ray also picked up some checks and deposited them into the operating account. There are more expenses for the Thrift Shop which will hit in May. Income through April is down this year compared to the last three years. Where are these people and have they fallen by the wayside? We don't currently have a Stewardship person to look at who they are and what is the status of their pledges? How do we generate new pledges also? We need to keep in mind we are coming off of a pandemic year when everything was shut down. There were also some heavy donors who have pulled

back. What we are doing with Invite, Welcome, Connect is a great effort toward revitalizing, getting new people, getting new pledges. We need to look future and focus on what will happen in the future. The Finance Committee needs to get itself back together and work from there. The Vestry was asked three months ago, what do they want from the Finance Committee? We need to still look at that and do something with it. Who would be great members of the Finance team? Who can we get to work on Stewardship?

Junior Warden Report, Patricia Ingram

Patricia Ingram was present at the meeting. Because we are overtime, we will not have this report at this time. Email updates will be sent.

Sign Repair/Update

Information about the sign repair will be provided by email.

Closing Prayers – Father Ray.

Vestry agenda completed 6:05 pm.

Adjournment