

St. Mary of the Hills

Vestry Minutes – November 17, 2020

Via Video Conference

Members Present: Chip Myers (Sr. Warden), Tim Silver (Jr. Warden), Jim West, Doug Galke, Roy McCraw, Bill Furr, Jane Milner, Gigi Poole, Sterling Hutcheson, and Lisa Kaufman

Vestry Members Absent: Crawford Cleveland and E. B. Springs

Other Present: Fr. Andrew Hege (Rector), Elizabeth Sudderth (Clerk), Amanda White (Treasurer), Patty Patella, Faith Jones, and Marjory Holder

Fr. Andrew called the meeting to order with prayer at 5:31 pm.

A motion to accept the agenda was made by Jim, with a second from Gigi.
The Vestry approved the motion.

A motion to accept the minutes of the October meeting was made by Chip, with a second from Jane.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Leadership Check In:

Where have you seen grace in your life? Spending time with grandson (golf game) and grandson's gratitude and love very uplifting. Church service in-person – Book study with Fr. Sam, wonderful faith-enriching. Participating in a study on dismantling racism, joyous news – new grandson on the way, Diocesan convention (small group) discussed dismantling racism, Santa's Toy Box (providing storage) good fortune in this time when so many others are in need, taking a drive with family, living in a beautiful area to enjoy the outdoors, to see flexibility in a work environment.

Report on Diocesan Convention:

Chip and Doug as well as Fr. Andrew and Fr. Sam were our delegates. The convention was all done virtually and in some ways this was superior. You could move through the topics quickly (pre-recorded videos vs. in-person talks) which were very successful. The Diocesan budget: revenue projected to decrease but no decrease in outreach budget. Chip was elected as a representative from our Deanery to the Executive Council. Videos are available on the Diocesan website as well as the Bishop's address and all documents presented at the convention.

A resolution was put forth to request a 10% pledge from parishes to the Diocese as has been done before. The keynote speaker was Dr. Kathryn Meeks of the Absalom Jones Center which has a partnership with the Episcopal Diocese in Atlanta. Her speech focused on dismantling racism as we must focus on truth and respect in dealing with each other. We need to put fear back "in the pot" and face our own fears. Racial work is not optional. We must do this. Supporting the work of the church in dealing with racism is just as important as any other way we support our church. We will hear more going forward. Next year the convention will be hosted by the Foothills Deanery and the dates are November 11th – 13th.

Reopening the parish for in-person worship:

Andrew reviewed the eight page document that he sent out to the Vestry He had asked for guidance from the medical pros in the parish: Patty, Lisa, Sterling, Faith, Chip Monroe, and the wardens. The document opens with guiding principles regarding metrics, High Country COVID-19 dashboard, and if we continue to be in the orange zone.

Thoughts and Feedback: New worship teams? When? Soon; – will need training, will need to combine roles, i.e. chalice ministers, crucifer, etc. Services in Tampa as an example – no singing from the congregation, take wafer back to pew to consume, members of choir are reader and crucifer.

Guidelines would be very space specific. Also, do we need to meet state requirements? Yes, and Diocesan guidelines. Andrew noted that faith communities are exempted from state government mandates, but our parish would chose to follow these mandates.

Actual number present would depend on who signs up and to the number of persons in households (13 “spaces”) possible.

Cleaning – will have to ramp up – may need additional staff (outside people) for deep cleaning and disinfecting.

Patty, Faith and Andrew walked through the space and Patty and Faith met with Lance Cummings from Servicemaster. They went through the whole church and noted all surfaces which would be touched. The fee to clean the whole church (which includes supplies) was \$95.00 - from (9:00 – 10:30 after church service. They were very impressed with his knowledge.

He knew to clean first then to come back with anti-viral. This supported the research Faith and Patty had already done. He would use CDC approved products and he will do research on what is safe for the chestnut pews. He will provide certificate of cleaning after each cleaning.

Christmas – to be determined.

Ventilation system considered – Yes. Re-done a few years ago.

Not all windows will open

Organ has to be kept at a consistent temperature and humidity.

The document has been shared with the Bishop’s office and doesn’t require Vestry approval.

Gigi made a motion to accept the endorsement of this proposal with (multiple seconds) from Vestry. The Vestry approved the motion.

Mask Mandate in the Church: (It is Diocesan policy) – “No mask – no entry” including contractors, etc. Sterling made a motion, with a second from Gigi to pass a resolution regarding a mask mandate in the church. A question was raised as to persons who claim to have a medical condition such as a pulmonary issue which would make wearing a mask uncomfortable. It was noted that high risk persons would probably not expose themselves to an in person indoor service.

The Vestry approved the resolution.

Progress may not be linear-based on science and numbers.

Treasurer’s Report – Amanda White

The year to date income is in a positive position as expenses are lower as well as income being lower. Our cash position is still very good. The Trust and Documents are a little flat, but ahead of the low point in March.

Pledges have dropped some from September and will probably be made up in December as in prior years.

Chip made a motion, with a second from several Vestry members to accept the Treasurer’s report.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Stewardship Update

Andrew reported that 94 pledges totaling \$375,000 have been received. The Finance Committee has prepared draft budgets A and B with B having the smaller deficit. No action is asked for tonight based upon projections of income.

Budget A – All in - Budget B – some cuts. Amanda stated some things which we probably won't spend in early 2021.

Feedback from Vestry: does cushion “roll over” to 2021? Chip responded not really.

The PPP money which was \$51,000 was a “windfall.”

A question was asked: was there an effort to balance the budget? Chip stated yes, but the potential \$32,000 surplus will “cushion” us going into 2021.

The Finance Committee wants feedback.

The comment was made that we need to reach out and ask about parishioners needs. Andrew will send out assignments again to the Vestry. Not to ask about pledges.

Andrew suggests that the Vestry review draft budgets and reach out to the Finance Committee with feedback. Please share all your ideas.

Committee Reports:

Personnel (Policy Documents) changes reflected in red in the e-mail sent to Vestry.

Chip made a motion, with a second from Bill to approve the changes. The changes need to be put into practice and will be shared with the staff. This reflects much good work by Doug Galke.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Outreach Allocations:

Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture -	\$3,000
Sri Lanka -	\$1,500
The Episcopal Church Navajoland -	\$1,000
Club 12 -	\$ 500

Jane made a motion, with a second from Doug to approve the allocations.

The Vestry approved the motion.

DigDeep Well Project is which was submitted by the Outreach Committee is still tabled until 2021.

The Vestry approved.

Jr. Warden Report – Tim Silver:

Both the stone mason and roofer (from 4 Forty Four) recommend proceed in steps.

Resilicone an area where it had deteriorated – seemed pretty dry after recent rain. Other steps possible- will watch – waiting on estimate for sidewalk. Basement still dry!

Sr. Warden Report – Chip Myers:

Chip did not share a report at this meeting.

Fr. Andrew's Report:

Andrew has had 24 pastoral appointments since our last meeting. There is a great need now.

Andrew continues in the Clergy in Community program through Wake Forest. He has recently learned that the program will continue through December 2021 rather than end in May 2021 due to the pandemic. There will be restructuring of scheduling. This program is no cost to Andrew or the parish.

He is working on growing the livestreaming team.

There will be no services offered on Thanksgiving.

Andrew will be on vacation November 22-28. Pastoral needs will be covered in his absence.

Andrew reminded us of the concert which will be live streamed in the church this Thursday.

The question was asked if the Vestry needs to vote on the cleaning contract which was presented. The Vestry does not need to vote. There is money in the budget to cover the cost.

Devotion was shared by all to close the meeting.

Bill made a motion, with a second from Tim to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Sudderth