

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY OF  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION  
Committee Reporting Session  
October 31, 2021

On Sunday, October 31, 2021, the Episcopal Church of the Ascension held their committee meetings and reporting session, following Sunday services. Committees began to meet at about 11:45 am, spread out across the campus, in the Parish Hall, the Parlor, the Courtyard, and other rooms.

Father Paul called committee leaders to the regular meeting in the Youth and Outreach Center at 12:30 pm for the reporting session. Those attending the reporting session were:

Rector Father Paul Klitzke

Mother Teresa Terry

Senior Warden Allen Myers

Junior Warden Andrew Marshall

Laura Warner Gilmer

Julie Baker

Jonathan March

Ashley Rector

Harry Breda

Audry Lee

Jane Burruss

Mark Unkenholz

Suzan Fenner

Todd Rutenbar

Jon Dunfee

Joan Romanosky

Jane Taber

Labau Bryan

Vestry members Andrew Bolt and Shade Badejo were not present. Vestry member Harry Breda continued to perform duties as Clerk of the Vestry.

A couple of notes from Father Paul prior to committee reporting:

- Father Paul reminded the group that last month, we had discussed committee staffing needs, and that several committees had added members over the past couple of weeks. He encouraged all to remain in communication and follow up as needed.
- The bells were ringing again – the new controller was installed earlier in the week, and they are still in the process of updating the schedule. He will include a note in the @Ascension newsletter to share the good news.
- Service time will shift on November 28 to 10:30 am. Formation has been going long, causing much trouble for those needing to transition from one location to another.
- We also firmed up dates and assigned lunches for the meetings through the annual meeting in January, to wit:
  - November 28 – Lunch provided by Pastoral Care
  - December 19 – Outbound Ministry
  - January 9 – Finance Committee
  - January 30 – Annual Parish Meeting

With notes complete, committee reporting began.

#### Liturgy & Music Ministry (Mark Unkenholz, reporting)

- It was announced that we would return to a common cup starting with the first week of Advent, on November 28. The wine would be offered with intinction only, meaning Lay Eucharistic Ministers would take the host and dip it into the cup.

#### Stewardship Committee (Jon Dunfee, Chair)

- Jon reported that the annual pledge letter was delivered in late October, prior to the date for the expected in-gathering on November 7.
- A suggestion was made to have leaders call to thank people for their pledge, in addition to the standard thank you note. Father Paul agreed with the recommendation and several people volunteered to participate in the calling plan.

#### Radical Hospitality (Suzan Fenner, Chair)

- Radical Hospitality served lunch for the gathered committee members (Thanks!).
- The committee discussed final preparation for game night, to be held the following Saturday, November 6. The event will begin at about 4:30, though anyone dropping off lasagnas can join the festivities sooner.
- The committee discussed hosting a progressive dinner on January 22, 2022.

#### Property, Plant & Equipment Committee (Todd Rutenbar, reporting)

- Todd mentioned that the "Tree Project" seems to be going well, with six or seven new trees planted around the southern playground, and some additional bushes also planted. There is no irrigation on that side of the campus, which makes it a bad location for growing grass. There are three more trees coming for that area.
- The floors were polished in the sanctuary, and much dusting was done on the workday.

- Todd mentioned that the committee is looking for some additional shrubbery for the southern portion of campus, given that some bushes have already died there.
- The committee had some discussions about a proposal to separate the landscaping and maintenance budget, so that some money could be set aside to improve and enhance landscaping, separate from the lawn maintenance budget for mowing, etc. Discussion was held among the leaders.

#### Pastoral Care (LaBau Bryan, Chair)

- It was noted that Lay Eucharistic Visitors (LEVs) will begin on November 28.
- LaBau reported that Food For Souls has only a few people signed up at this time, and they don't have a leader for the initiative. They will regroup and attempt to launch at a later date.
- The Stephen Ministry added three new members, and a fourth person is showing interest. There is a training session to be held on November 8.
- The committee also discussed a Veteran's Day acknowledgement, for November 11. They also discussed visiting residents of Presbyterian North on Veteran's Day.

#### Outbound Ministry (Audry Lee, Chair)

- Audry reported that the committee had a meeting with representatives from Parkland Outreach. That organization is responsible for the Vickery and Garland partnership.
- The committee received a grant of \$700 from the North Texas Food Bank – the grant money is to be spent within 30 days.
- The Food Pantry will have turkeys to distribute before Thanksgiving.
- Audry noted that Tasby Middle School reached out to her for information on new food programs.
- Finally, it was noted that Ascension Day School will be hosting a "needs" drive for Austin Street Center, gathering clothing and other items for the shelter.

#### Formation Committee (Joan Romanosky, Chair)

- Preparation is underway for the Formation Fair, to be held on January 9, 2023, prior to the start of the second half of the programming year. There will be tables set up for each of the Formation classes, as well as tables for the pilgrimage, and Bible Camp.
- There are books available for Advent: *Honest Advent*, for the adult group, to meet in the Narthex.
- Formation will host an Advent Fest on December 12, with a target audience of children eight and under. The goal is to learn about Christmas traditions around the world.

#### Finance Committee (Jane Burruss, Treasurer)

- Jane noted that she had shared the financials with the group prior to the meeting. The gap between our income (from pledges, etc.) and expenses has been narrowing. The month of September saw higher expenses than income.
- We remain at about 100% of planned estimated giving through the month end.

Evangelism Committee (Jane Taber, Chair)

- The committee discussed plans for ushers and greeters, particularly now that we are growing our in-person presence. We had more than 100 people in attendance for the first time in a long time.
- For ushers, it has been primarily on-the-job-training, shadowing a current usher, since they have not had a dedicated training session. It's important that ushers are knowledgeable and act as ambassadors for the church, since they are often the first people see when they arrive.
- The committee will host a newcomer's luncheon on November 14 following the 10:15 am service. People will be asked to bring a dish, such as a salad or drinks. The committee will work with Radical Hospitality and Vestry to provide setup and food.
- The committee decided against a set of speakers for the Advent season, given the amount of other activities going on at church.

Ascension Day School (Brett Rector, Board President)

- Brett reported that all is going well this school year, and that he expects to have new board members coming on board soon.
- There have been no significant COVID issues that have come up at the school.

With there being no further reporting, Father Paul led the group in a prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 pm. The Vestry meeting would begin on November 1.

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY OF  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION  
Regular Business Meeting  
November 1, 2021

The Vestry of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension held its regular business meeting via secure a Zoom online meeting, on the evening of November 1, 2021. Attending this meeting were Father Paul Klitzke, Associate Rector Mother Teresa Terry, Senior Warden Allen Myers, Junior Warden Andrew Marshall, and Vestry Members Julie Baker, Jonathan March, Laura Warner Gilmer, Ashley Rector, and Harry Breda. Also attending was Treasurer Jane Burruss. Absent from the meeting were Vestry Members Andrew Bolt and Shade Badejo. Harry Breda also served as Clerk of the Vestry.

The meeting came to order at 6:05 pm.

Devotional

Ashley Rector read a devotional.

Prayer Requests

As a Vestry and as a congregation, we pray for ...

- Jane Burruss and her family – her mother, her departed sister, and her nephew A.J.
- For Jane as she supports her family during these tragic times
- The Supreme Court of the United States
- All those who grieve for the loss of family and friends
- All who have been impacted by COVID, including those who have been sick as well as those who are caring for the sick;
- Doctors, nurses, caregivers and first responders dealing with those impacted by the pandemic;

Following a moment of silence for centering and prayer, the Vestry read aloud the mission statement of Episcopal Church of the Ascension.

Ordinary Business

Meeting Minutes

Minutes for the September meeting were distributed to the Vestry via email. Vestry member Jonathan March noted that he had not received them; he was inadvertently left off the distribution list. Allen Myers moved that the minutes be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Ashley Rector, and approved unanimously by the Vestry, with Jonathan abstaining as he had not yet read the minutes.

### Financial Reports

- Treasurer Jane Burruss sent around financial reports earlier in the week to all vestry members (she included Jonathan in the distribution list).
- It was noted that expenses were a bit higher in the month of September than previous months, but that care is still being exercised by staff and others in their spending.
- Ashley Rector moved that the financial reports be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded by Allen Myers, and was approved unanimously.

### New and Continuing Business

#### Budget for 2022

- Father Paul noted that we are not yet ready to develop a draft budget for 2022. We have just started the pledge campaign, and we have not yet received input from committees for their budget numbers.
- We would also like to combine the full-time and part-time marketing positions into a single full-time role, to create some consistency and synergy with the rest of the staff. More details to come on that initiative.

#### St. Phillips Licensing Arrangement

- A bit of history ... in 2018 the Dinka mission, formerly part of Ascension, split to form a new mission, with their own name and structure, organized by the Diocese of Dallas. Ascension offered to provide a home for the St. Phillips mission, and a contract was drawn up between St. Phillips (represented by DoD) and Ascension. We set the licensing fee for using Ascension facilities at roughly their previous contribution to the monthly plate.
- The agreement is now three years old and ready for renewal. We would like to review the agreement and adjust the licensing fee, and make it a one-year contract so that we can be more flexible with the arrangements.
- It was noted that there is a distinction between a mission of Episcopal Church of the Ascension (for example, the Day School) and a mission of the Diocese of Dallas (as in St. Philips).
- Harry Breda, Jonathan March and Allen Myers volunteered to review the agreement and provide suggested edits.

#### Alternate Convention Delegate

- We generally elect two alternate convention delegates, but this year we were only able to elect one.
- This year, John Dexter is unable to attend due to back surgery. Ashley Rector is also unable to attend, as the alternate.
- Aaron Huisman was brought up as an alternate delegate by Allen Myers – Aaron is willing and able to attend.
- Julie Baker moved to accept Aaron Huisman as an alternate convention delegate. The motion was seconded by Laura Warner Gilmer, and approved unanimously.

## Reports

### Junior Warden – Andrew Marshall

- The parish workday was successful, and the gathered group got a lot done.
- The PP&E committee has had inquiries from about a dozen people to be new members, and they are going through the list.
- The proposal to split the “landscaping” budget into separate “maintenance” and “enhancement” was discussed. Father Paul prefers fewer categories overall, and stability over change.

### Senior Warden – Allen Myers

- Allen mentioned that he and Father Paul have been working through “phone company” issues – they have had some trouble getting out of their last contract.
- He mentioned again that he’s looking for new Vestry members, given that he will be ending his three-year term along with Andrew Marshall and Shade.

### Associate Rector – Mother Teresa Terry

- Mother Teresa reported that the children, youth and adult formation classes are all going well. The kids are generally coming back, as are their parents.
  - Wanted to offer much thanks to Jordan for his hard work.
- They have some new volunteers for Sunday formation, which has helped ease the workload.
- She is very excited about the renewal and recommitment to the Stephen Ministry.

### Rector’s Report – Father Paul Klitzke

- Father Paul noted that it was great to hear about the stewardship campaign, and very happy to see volunteers to help with thank you calls and notes. Members of the Vestry should be committed to doing stewardship activities.
- He was also pleased to see the new pew cards – and we have been getting feedback from them.
- Finally he has been pleased to see new members coming to him with a heartfelt show of appreciation of being welcomed into the parish – our outreach to newcomers is bearing fruit.
- Last, Father Paul will be out of town from November 15 through November 26 or 27, driving to California to visit family.

## Calendar of Events

- See the agenda

## People to Thank

- Todd Rutenbar for organizing the parish workday
- Jordan Hammonds and Mother Teresa for their work with the youth groups
- Catherine Miller for her help with the stewardship campaign
- Mary Lou Howell for her work with just about everything that needs to get done.

Next Month's Meeting

- Scheduled for November 28, following Thanksgiving. A reminder that services will be at 10:30 am, so committee meetings will begin later than usual.
  - Jane Burrus to provide devotional
  - Outbound Committee to provide lunch

Father Paul Klitzke offered a closing prayer.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at about 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Breda, Clerk of the Vestry