

**St. John's Episcopal Church, Tower Grove  
Vestry Meeting Minutes, March 19, 2023 @ 12:05 p.m.**

In attendance: Rev. Nancy Emmel Gunn, Liam Clements, Brent Brower-Toland, Matthew Green, Ronya McCool, Correne Murphy, Mary Anne Pikrone

Absent: Margarita Tschomakoff, Ann Balsamo; Brent Brower-Toland will fill in absent Vestry member(s) after meeting

Opening Prayer, Nancy Emmel Gunn

Declaration of a Quorum and reminder of Behavioral Covenant—Nancy Emmel Gunn

**Appreciations**

Thomas Skillings and honorarium; organizers of Lenten soup

**Accept minutes from February**

Correne moves to accept February minutes with corrected year; Brent seconds; vestry approves minutes unanimously

**Vestry check-in**

Voluntary report from various vestry members on respective spiritual and physical well-being

**Followup Discussion of Vestry Retreat – Nancy Emmel Gunn**

Vestry discussed being the holder of mission and vision of church with attention to both spiritual and practical aspects of same.

- Paying more attention to usable space and *how* to use it
- Discussion of mission statement
- Focusing on hospitality as next reality
- Conversation about leading “Hospitality 2.0; ”identify best practices for hospitality as a bigger picture
- Vestry as keeper and monitor of community as a whole.
- Needs: Liam proposes creating a vision statement for where we want to go—how does your mission get you to your vision; Mary Anne and Ronya agree; Correne – how to set tone for people to enjoy services

**Requiem & Renaissance (Matthew Green)**

Action Planning: Review information from retreat and identify next steps, create action items, assign ownership

- Creating a culture of hospitality:
  - Educating congregation on cultural v. environmental hospitality
  - Identify needed small group conversations; find gifts that God has given & encourage use
  - Create job descriptions for usher and greeter
  - Help people create their own standard greeting as conversation starters

- Greeter will attempt to introduce visitor to other members of congregation
  - Be more intentional about networking
  - Improving announcements to be guest-friendly
  - Ronya – likes idea of job descriptions, people thrive when they have wording; Mary Anne cautions against exuding “country club/social atmosphere” – emphasize Christian life; Correne – good to have concrete ideas
  - Matt—where do we envision this work happening? We need good connection by vestry for oversight/steering/mentoring
  - More communication necessary between vestry and church; in addition to announcements, create a “vestry corner” in the newsletter
- Creating an environment of hospitality
    - Wayfinding plan/signage
    - Decluttered environment
    - How to make space welcoming and comfortable;
    - Nancy—need childcare option = 100% not 80%; proofread bulletin;
    - Mary Anne—name tags

## Committee Updates

- Buildings and Grounds (Nancy from M. Tschomakoff email)
  - Parish workday set for Saturday, April 1
  - Proceeding with stained glass repair
  - Plaster repair needs to be assessed before waterproofing; company believed other issues as cause
  - Request for assessment of electrical system—if takes place next 3 weeks, we can apply for a grant (Keith or Rodney)
- **Worship** (C. Murphy)
  - Worship committee preparing for Holy Week
  - Nancy is coordinating efforts with leaders from South Grand Christian Church and Oak Hill Presbyterian to provide community Holy Week services
- **Fundraising** (Nancy, Matt)
  - Ann & Matt to work separately and report at April vestry meeting.
  - For March 25 Sondheim review—Church enabled Square for pay-at-door
  - Event promoted on social media; MaryAnne helped pass out posters
- **Budget** (Nancy Emmel Gunn)
  - Respectable expenses for January through February
  - Gas expense continues to be high—72% of \$6100 already spent for 2023
  - Check blower at Hoffmann’s recommendation

- **Priest's Report** (Nancy Emmel Gunn)
  - Nancy will attend Clergy retreat March 21-23 in Illinois; has prepped next week's bulletin and sermon
  - Nancy has meeting with Presbyterian clergy (Oak Hill) and Disciples of Christ (Compton Heights Christian) clergy this Monday to plan joint Holy Week services

**Loose Ends**

- Save the Date: Newcomer's Dessert, April 23<sup>rd</sup>; vestry members to attend

**Reminder of Next Meeting Dates**

- a. *Next Vestry meeting: April 16*
- b. *Executive Committee: April 12*
  - i. *Additional Vestry member present Mary Ann Pikrone @ 6 pm*

**Closing Prayer (Nancy Emmel Gunn)**