

## Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting Minutes September 20, 2022

### **Vestry present:**

The Rev. Neil Willard  
David Robinson, Senior Warden  
Danna Kurtin, Junior Warden  
David Candler  
Margie Dieter  
Melanie Fahey  
Abigail Follmar  
Pam Harvey  
Jim Rosenbach  
Posey Saenz  
Libby Spoede  
Marie Wehrung  
Andy Williams  
Lam Yu

### **Vestry absent:**

Bet Hunter  
Rand Key

### **Assisting Clergy present:**

The Rev. Ryan Hawthorne

### **Assisting Clergy absent:**

The Rev. Jack Karn

The hybrid in person and virtual meeting started at 5:33 pm and ended at 7:04 pm.

1. **Opening Prayer.** Neil opened the meeting in prayer.
2. **Community Sharing.** Neil encouraged community sharing.
3. **Dwelling in the Word.** Psalm 91 was used for the exercise lead by Ryan.
4. **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes from August 16, 2022 were approved with no corrections. Motion by Posey, second by Andy, and the vestry voted to approve the minutes.
5. **Vestry Councils**
  - a. **Good News.** Lam stated that his update is in the report sent to the vestry.
  - b. **Worship.** Andy stated that the updates are in the report to the vestry which included looking for a youth verger and youth acolyte coordinator. Neil stated that Rite II will continue until Advent and then would change to Rite I through Advent.
  - c. **Outreach.** Marie stated that most updates are in the report. She added that Serve Sunday was September 11<sup>th</sup> with on campus and off campus activities. On campus activities included snack bags for Ben Taub and welcome back bags for Archway Academy.
  - d. **Communications.** Melanie said that there are signs that more people are around such as more website traffic, views of online services, and running out of bulletins on Sunday. There were 6 households that used the nursery on Sunday. All other updates are in the report.

- e. **Building/Grounds.** David C. stated that the key items were included in the report, but highlighted the most pressing issue is the compressor in the chiller which is not running at this time however is not a long term solution and the repair will be a large expense. The council decided to defer fundraising discussions to the spring. They are adjusting with how the group is going to function without Tara. Abigail said Gerry has been extremely helpful, communicative and organized. There is a question about how the repairs that need to be made for GISH to receive their accreditation will be shared or passed along to GISH; Posey will bring this question to the Finance council.
- f. **Finance.** Pam highlighted that we must keep an eye on our cash on hand. Pledges are behind for the year, we have received ~\$775K of the ~\$934K budget. Posey added that the summer is typically slower and September will be an important month to see if/how pledges catch up. Neil said that with the vacancy of Tara's position, he and the staff are considering changing the parish administrator position from full time to part time. Pam added that in the audit, it was highlighted that a second signatory for electronic transfers was suggested and that this may be an opportunity to rectify this situation as Tara's duties are being redistributed. Additionally, Neil stated that we would not seek an associate rector at this time. The plan would be for Ryan to join as an associate rector after she completes her time as a curate. Subsequently, a part time person would be hired for the youth program.
- g. **Stewardship.** Margie said the committee is a good group with great ideas and added that it has been helpful to add communications to the committee. The pledge goal is \$1.6 million from 250 pledge units. Margie has a letter going to people who currently pledge, asking that they turn their pledges in before Covenant Sunday to show community support, help the finance committee plan for next year, and allow resources to be focused on those that have yet to pledge. Margie asked that the vestry add a note to the letters which will then be signed by Neil before being mailed out.

## 6. Warden Reports

- a. **Senior Warden.** Deferred to Junior Warden. David left the meeting at 6pm to attend the fundraising event for the Dr. James and Betty Key Map Room at the downtown library as discussed at the beginning of the meeting.
- b. **Junior Warden.**
  - i. Danna provided an update on the strategic planning, stating there was a meeting with Tucker yesterday with David R, Danna and Neil to discuss logistics and a timeline.
  - ii. Tucker has a quantitative survey to go out to obtain baseline information from the entire congregation. The goal is a 30% response rate for the initial qualitative survey. The second survey is more qualitative and detailed, which will go out to a more targeted group of active members. Phase 1 is a data collection phase starting in September and concluding in December. The data collection will include gathering data from surveys,

a vestry retreat, task force, focus groups, congregation, individual interviews, and staff.

- iii. This Sunday, Danna and David R will be talking about the process this Sunday during announcements. Next Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> in Neil's email the survey link will be sent out. There will be a vestry retreat with Tucker on Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup> from 11:30am to 3:30pm.
- iv. Danna stated that the tag line for the strategic planning process will be "Come. Be. Palmer."
- v. Phase 2 will be from January to August 2023 to synthesize the data and Phase 3 will be from September to October 2023 for a final report out.

## 7. Clergy Reports

- a. **The Rev. Neil Willard.** Neil stated that his topics of discussion were covered throughout the meeting. Neil stated that he is taking the church staff out to lunch on Thursday to thank them for their work during his sabbatical.
- b. **The Rev. Ryan Hawthorne.** Most of Ryan's updates were included in Stewardship. Ryan asked that each council email her dates for activities through May 2023.

## 8. Old Business. None.

## 9. New Business.

- a. Margie asked what council education falls under. Neil said that education is via Roger and Abigail added that it generally falls under Good News Council.
- b. Andy asked if Great Wednesdays would return in person. Neil said there was discussion about it returning once a month, but the numbers and finances don't support it at this time. The gathering that was done on Wednesdays has shifted to Sunday mornings. Melanie suggested that Wednesdays could shift into small groups and gatherings at homes.
- c. Margie asked if the Healing Service is returning on Wednesday evenings and Ryan said it is once a month at 11am before the noon bible study.

## 10. Closing Prayer. Ryan closed the meeting in prayer.