**Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church**

**Vestry Meeting Minutes**

**January 21, 2020**

**Vestry present Vestry absent**

Burdette Keeland, Senior Warden

Rita Justice

Kristie Van Arsdel

Al Hergenroeder

Barbara Hass

Gretta Boshara

Steven Killworth

Susannah Webb

Randy Byrd

Shannon Westin

Mike Murphy

David Robinson

Libby Spoede

Rand Key

Kelly Williams

**Clergy present**

The Rev. Neil Willard

The Rev. Liz Parker

The Rev. David Wantland

**Opening Prayer**: The Rev. Neil Willard

**Community Update**: Barbara Hass said her husband is in the hospital and that she is having eye surgery. Burdette announced that he’s engaged and will be married sometime this year. Mike Murphy announced that he has left his old law firm and is in his own practice. A photo of the 2020 vestry was taken.

**Minutes**: The minutes of January 21 had two edits in the Necrology Report: Remove (edit here) and add “died in the calendar year” to the second sentence.

**Welcome New Members**: The new members were welcomed.

**Financial Report**: The financial report included the budget for 2020. There was a question about $132,800 in pledges still needed for 2020. The assumption is that most of this will come in the year’s later pledges and that we will keep an eye on the budget to keep expenses down to the extent that we are trying to achieve a balanced budget.

**Communications**: Kristie Van Arsdel. Highlights include Roger Hutchison was elected to chair the Forma Council. Outside signage will emphasize Lent. Dustin Jesudason is going to be taking down the website for a few hours and re-organizing it to make it more user-friendly. There is a possibility of having a tutorial on the website at 10 o’clock on Sundays occasionally and there will be an attempt to have an announcement of what ministries are sponsored by what entities within the parish.

**Evangelism**: Shannon Westin. The council meets quarterly and her report has been sent by email to the vestry. A key point in her report was the council is embracing the Episcopal Church’s focus on “The Ways of Love.“ The next evangelism event will be Shrove Tuesday and the children of the parish will be participating. Catherine Meeks will be speaking on April 18 from 10 to 12 in an event sponsored by the Daughters of the King. Dr. Meeks is the director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing in Atlanta. There DOK will also sponsor a newcomers dinner on May 6. The first Sunday Welcome Reception is upcoming. The Mothers’ Helping Hands Ministry has been renamed Loaves and Fishes; it will serve a broader constituency and will be led by Laura Van Ness.

**Stewardship**: Committee is being formed.

**Vestry Councils**: Burdette asked that all vestry members send in two Council on which they are willing to serve.

**Worship**: Steven Killworth. The council meets the second Tuesday of the month. Membership includes ushers, acolytes and clergy. Kathleen Rodriguez is the new master of the new acolytes. Libby Spoede will also join this Council.

**Outreach**: Barbara Hass and Kelly Williams. The report included Liz Parker’s update on the Census and Palmer’s efforts to encourage all Houston residents to participate; the significance of this is that for every 1% undercount in Texas there will be a reduction of $300 million in revenues to the state, the majority of it from public health revenues. The census includes no citizenship question. Traditionally under counted constituencies include children under 5 of immigrants, people with language barriers, people of color, and families that move frequently. The Episcopal Health Foundation has put in more than $1 million in support to increase the census. The census can’t be filled out on a smart phone. David Robinson highlighted the city’s efforts to make signing up for the census a priority.

**Junior Warden**: Burdette Keeland. The two gates that are still not functional; the wiring is completed but they need to put the final touches on for them to be functional.

**Vestry Officers**: It was recommended that Kristie Van Arsdel serve as Junior Warden and Al Hergenroeder continue as clerk. Treasurer is Dick Sylvan and the Chancellor is yet to be named. All recommendations were approved unanimously.

**Vestry Retreat**: In the Spring, no date yet, most likely at the church on a Saturday between 9 AM and 12 Noon.

**Rectors’ Report**: Neil Willard passed out a handout documenting the history of the vestry. He has been reappointed to the board of the Episcopal Health Foundation. Neil will send around a link to Bishop Doyle’s Diocesan Council remarks that include the announcement of a $13 million pledge towards rectifying racial injustice. This will include scholarships. Neil will be doing the invocation at West U little league.

**Associate Rectors’ Reports**: Liz Parker said there are nine people in the confirmation class, four of them are new to Palmer. Liz’s program areas include pastoral care and outreach in addition to all of her liturgical and assignments. David Wantland said his program areas include liturgy,communications, youth and Interfaith Ministries. He announced that youth confirmation will be May 3 and he asked us to sign up for Ashes To Go.

The meeting started at 5:30 and ended at 6:30.