

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2019

Vestry present

Victor Lamas

Burdett Keeland

Jim Key, Senior Warden

Linda Sylvan

Jennifer Macia

Susannah Webb

Rita Justice

Kristie Van Arsdel

Priscilla Plumb

Al Hergenroeder

Barbara Hass

Randy Byrd

Gretta Boshara

Steven Killworth

Shannon Westin

Clergy present

The Rev. Neil Willard

The Rev. Liz Parker

The Rev. David Wantland

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 and finished at 6:45.

Neil opened the meeting with a prayer.

Jim Key announced that his wife, Betty, has been diagnosed with breast cancer but anticipates that she will have a good prognosis.

The new members introduced were Steven Killworth, Susannah Webb, Randy Byrd, Shannon Westin and Gretta Boshara.

The minutes of the January meeting were approved with one typo that being under Evangelism. The sentence should read, "...evangelism counsel has not *met*".

Financial report was given by Jim Key. We have \$372,282.88 in liquid funds. Expenses were over budget in January due to a quarterly payment of \$13,908 for building insurance. In addition, custodial service charges of \$14,572 were over budget due to some carryover from the Christmas season. We have \$231,834.27 in designated funds.

The **Communication Council** report was given by Priscilla Plumb. This report was also prepared by Jenifer Macia and Kristie Van Arsdel. They meet monthly. A hard copy report was handed out. There are many activities being promoted including: Ash Wednesday, Ashes to go, the Palmer newsletter; a bookmark that has been designed with the times of our Sunday services for the book events being held in the church among others. The editorial calendar was presented. Jenn Macia will be taking over as the spokesperson for this Council at the next meeting.

The **Evangelism Council** report was presented by Liz Parker and consists of a report that was prepared by Roger Hutchinson. The message is that everything we do is evangelism including: Proclamation, social action, and invitation. Upcoming events were included in the handout. The new director of outreach will be Kelly Williams. Liz Parker introduced a new social justice initiative which was described in a handout. There are three Palmers who have agreed to serve on the steering committee and a non-Palmer from the Houston Health Department to work with the reentry of prisoners into society. Their next meeting will be March 20 at 5:30. They have an initial pledge of \$15,000 and how this initiative will be administered at Palmer has yet to be decided.

Some money will be sent to the San Pedro parish for their ministry to those still affected by Hurricane Harvey. These funds will come from the Storm Relief Fund in Designated Funds.

The **Stewardship Council** report was given by Linda Sylvan. We have received 280 pledges as of this current report which is up from 261 at the same time last year. The goal is 315 pledges. Last year total pledges were \$1,619,000 ; this year we have \$1,540,000 in pledges so far. The goal to balance our budget without substantial cuts is \$1,650,000. Even if we reach this \$1,650,000 goal we will still be \$42,000 short of a fully balanced budget. Jim Key assured the vestry that we will be able to make that up, however, anything beyond that \$42,000 deficit will require other cuts in programming such as evening activities which now require payment for custodial and security services. The pledge drive has to be finished by the end of March.

Victor Llamas gave the **Worship Council** report. There will be an altar Guild Council conference on March 15 and 16, 2019 Friday and Saturday at Palmer. There will be forty Altar Guild members from the

Bahamas. Early registration is \$50 for the two days. There are a number of events planned on the program including an interfaith presentation by the Jerusalem Peace Keepers and the Muslim community; there be a talent show; a reconciliation presentation and a silent auction the proceeds of which will go to the Altar Guild. Three other churches in Houston area have been invited. Registration can be done on the website.

The **Junior Warden's** report was given by Burdett Keeland. He credited Tara who works in the office full-time work as the facilitator of his activity. He reviewed the accomplishments in 2018 including: new chillers were put on the roof; a new phone system was installed; new air-conditioning and water heaters were installed in the rectory. There are projects in process however there's no funding for them, the most notable being the front steps which has a budget of \$250,000. There are no plans to build the steps without raising that money. There still more work to be done in the rectory, for example, \$20,000 to refurbish the chimney which is not in the budget.

Jim Key announced that the vestry retreat will be on April 13 at his house in Galveston. On April 28 will be the senior warden's forum during the 10:00 hour between services. Jim reminded the vestry members to read the code of procedures and all must've done the safe church training.

Clergy reports

Neil said that there's an annual ritual that the parochial report must be reviewed and approved by the vestry. This was reviewed and approved by the vestry. Neil announced that several notable speakers will be coming to the book series to be held at Palmer. He asked the vestry's permission (which was given) that April 7 to be recognized as a date to honor Brady Knapp. A motion was made and seconded and approved that there will be a collection on April 7 to set up funds to support Brady who will be traveling to England to take his break. Jack Karn from the Jerusalem Peacebuilders is studying at the Iona school has transferred his activities to Palmer. It is the Rector's desire that he will become our next deacon.

Liz Parker gave her report. Liz and David are leading a Wednesday night study of "Scriptural Resources in a Time of Fear" and, a Sunday morning class called "This is Us" for newcomers.

Liz announced that the "Living Well through Lent" booklet is available for free. John Wallace is leading a retreat on March 30 using this book. Liz announced that they are training three new Eucharistic visitors.

David Wantland gave his report. He will be a curate until the last day of June. However, he is functioning as a priest. He has cut back on attending youth programming but is supervising Davis Mathis. He has two main activities: 1) working with Neil on the liturgical life of the parish; 2) making an assessment of who shows up at church on Sunday and who is a volunteer and how we can find opportunities for those show up and who are not involved in the parish. He's also conducting a class on Wednesdays called "Everything happens for a reason and other lies I love" which is a discussion of the practice of the prosperity gospel.

The **Endowment Committee** put forward three people as candidates for a five year term on the Endowment Board. The candidates were Laura Van Ness, Mike Murphy, and Ken Alexander; Laura Van Ness was elected by secret ballot as Endowment Representative to the Vestry.

Jim Key and the Rev. Neil Willard recommended Al Hergenroeder as the clerk; Burdett Keeland as the Junior Warden; and Tom Van Arsdel as Chancellor to be assisted by Michael Chambers.

The Rev. Patrick Hall, Canterbury Missioner at Rice University, is leaving to become Rector at Church of the Epiphany. During the vacancy at Autry House, our clergy will help with the Sunday evening service and Emily Gordon will do the sermons. The diocese is interviewing three candidates for that position.

Meeting ended at 6:45