

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church
Minutes of Vestry Meeting
August 22, 2017

Vestry Present

Jim Key, Sr. Warden
Trent Williams, Jr. Warden
Courtney Daniell-Knapp
Linda Sylvan
Jennifer Macia
Jim Mercurio
Victor Lamas
Steven Vaughan
Marie Wehrung
Allison Marek
Ellee de Groot

Vestry Absent

Will Denham
Ruth Davies
Priscilla Plumb
Jim Lober, Clerk

Clergy Present

Neil Willard, Rector
Liz Parker, Associate Rector
David Wantland, Curate
Linda Shelton, Deacon

The meeting commenced at 5:30 p.m.

1. Opening Prayer — David Wantland led the opening prayer.
2. Prayers and Thanksgivings— Those in attendance shared their prayers and Thanksgivings. Alex Easley got engaged. Linda Sylvan had a great 45th anniversary trip. Steven Vaughan celebrated the purchase of his practice. As well, prayers were asked for Phil Nauert and speedy recovery for Jim Key after back surgery.
3. Approval of June minutes—A motion was made by Trent Williams to approve the minutes of the June Vestry Meeting; Linda Sylvan seconded and the motion passed.
4. Financial Reports
 - a. Budgetary Status -- Jim Mercurio reported the following information.
 - i. Palmer received 150K from the endowment in June.
 - ii. Expenses through July have exceeded revenue by 23K, but they were below planned expenses.
 - iii. 50% of pledges have come in through the end of July which is approximately where we were last year.

- iv. Palmer has ~ 175K in cash available at the end of July. We are tracking towards finishing 2017 with 175-200K at year's end.
 - v. Our loan that we currently hold on the church, secured by the value of the Rectory is a 30 year loan. At the end of 2011, that unpaid principal of the loan was ~ 1.05 million dollars. Currently it is at ~751 thousand dollars.
 - vi. Potential financial savings that are being evaluated include renegotiating our power / electricity contracts for the church. The current contract expires in July 2018. If we lock rates now for 5 years, Palmer stands to save anywhere between 10 and 75K over the next 5 years. Tara and the finance committee are weighing options.
- b. Update on Designated Funds Usage
 - i. The Memorials Fund will be used for ongoing building / facilities maintenance.
 - ii. To date, 11 K has been used.
 - iii. There is still ~\$6900 left from the original balance.
 - c. Stewardship Update
 - i. Linda Sylvan reported on several ideas for the stewardship campaign this year including a musical, home gatherings, testimonials in church, architectural tours from Stephen Fox, and multiple letters to the parish.
 - ii. A gathering was held at Ellee deGroot's house to brainstorm ideas for the stewardship season
 - iii. Covenant Sunday is October 29th, 2017.

5. Reports and Updates

- a. Jim Key reviewed the Adult Christian formation pamphlet that gives information regarding all the Fall offerings this fall.
- b. Jersualem Peace Builders
 - i. Neil reported about the successful Jerusalem Peace Builders camp this summer. The camp was a huge success.
 - ii. 18 kids (1 from Houston)
 - iii. Very positive word is spreading about this program amongst the interfaith community in Houston.
- c. Serve Sunday
 - i. Scheduled for Sunday, August 27th.
 - ii. Trent requested a volunteer to help sell t-shirts between the 9 AM and 11 AM service this Sunday. Marie volunteered to help.
 - iii. Neil reported that Mayor Sylvester Turner will be present at the 9 AM service on Sunday and then will go serve with Palmers at a certain location.
- d. Parish Pool Party -- All present shared that it was a great event. Turnout was a little lower than last year due to scheduling conflicts, the start of school, and the timing of having it later on a Sunday evening.

6. Junior Warden's Report—Trent Williams reported the following as part of the Junior Warden report:
 - a. Air Conditioning Survey Status
 - i. Trent detailed the plans for the chiller replacement as well as the retro commissioning to document and test all of the existing systems. Wylie Engineering was commissioned to evaluate the AC system, including the chillers. They have completed the specs for the new chillers. This information will be used to gather bids from multiple people
 - ii. Wylie will be doing further evaluation between 9/4 and 9/18 of the rest of the system.
 - iii. Trent has also reached out directly to the manufacturer of the chillers and based on that, the material cost of the chillers appears to be better than was expected.
 - iv. Other issues found by Wylie include the fact that the temperature sensor in the Nave is running about 3 degrees hot, which explains why it is often so cold in the Nave. As well, an outside air damper should have been installed (this was in the plans) when the AC was worked on several years ago, but it appears that it was never put in place.
 - v. October or November will be the ideal time to install the chillers. The AC will be off during church that week.
 - b. Proposal for Rectory repair work
 - i. The chimney at the Rectory appears to be pulling away from the house, resulting in leakage and damage
 - ii. The initial quote came in at ~20K. The work will require demolishing the existing chimney, repairing any water damage and rebuilding.
 - iii. Currently we do not have the money for the repair.
 - iv. The separated area has been patched temporarily which should prevent further damage.
 - v. Decision made to obtain more bids before proceeding.

7. Senior Warden's Report—Jim Key reported the following as part of the Senior Warden's report:
 - a. Jim stated that community building is an important part of parish life and leadership, the Vestry should make an effort to attend Parish events. It is important for us to be seen and to make as many of these events as possible as we try to grow the church.
 - b. The next Vestry meeting will be held on September 19th, 2017.
 - c. Stephen Fox and Paul Martin are working on a plan to improve the steps at the west entrance to the Nave as well as a new monument sign that will be more

visible. Jim Key will follow up with them, but they understand these improvements will be sometime next year.

- d. Servers at Great Wednesday -- Vestry will be serving 2 times during the fall. We will need 5 volunteers each time.
8. Rector's Report—Neil Willard reported the following as part of the Rector's report:
- a. Improved interior signage has arrived and will be put up soon.
 - b. Elite Academy will not be doing after school programs at Palmer this year. The summer program was a success and Palmer maintained a good relationship with Elite Academy for future work together.
 - c. The new German School (pre-K) program is off to a successful start.
 - d. Palmer will host a leadership orientation on Saturday, September 9th at the church.
 - e. Neil circulated information for approval regarding David Wantland's housing allowance for the remainder of 2017. A motion for approval was made by Trent Williams and seconded by Jim Mercurio. The motion was approved.
 - f. Neil asked for approval for the opening of a bank account for David Wantland's discretionary fund with David as signatory. A motion for approval of a resolution for the foregoing was made by Trent Williams and seconded by Linda Sylvan. The motion was approved.
9. Associate Rector's Report—Liz Parker reported the following as part of the Associate Rector's report:
- a. Liz gave thanks for the prayers and words of encouragement regarding her recent breast cancer diagnosis. She is having surgery September 1st. Her breast cancer has a positive prognosis. Later she will have chemo and radiation.
 - b. Liz met with leaders of the pastoral care groups at Palmer this summer. Although overall communication could improve, she thinks that pastoral care at Palmer is a well-oiled machine.
 - c. Roger Hutchinson and Liz are meeting with the Evangelism Council on Thursday night.
 - d. There will be 2 different Living Compass offerings this fall, one on Wednesday night, and one during EYC. Living Compass during EYC is for adults.
 - e. Linda Shelton reported that there are not any current plans for a new Walking the Mourner's Path group but that it is being investigated. She also reported that Abigail Folmar will be taking over the lead position on the Outreach Council.
10. Curate Report -- David Wantland reported the following as part of the Curate's report:
- a. He is very glad to be at Palmer and looks forward to meeting more people and working with the congregation.

- b. His work will be focused on the Youth (in conjunction with Davis), young adults, and JPB.
- c. There is an upcoming meeting with the parents of the EYC
- d. He is hopeful that EYC will begin to meet weekly.
- e. Marie reported anecdotally that her daughter has already noticed improvement in the youth program based on her very positive experiences while on the mission trip this summer.

11. Unfinished Business -- No unfinished business was brought up.

12. Call for New Business -- No new business was brought up.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

/s/ James M. Lober, Vestry Clerk
(Taken by Steven Vaughan)