

[The following meeting was conducted online, via Zoom, due to conditions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.]

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

Vestry Minutes

May 19, 2021

Present: Brooks Cato (presiding), Sheila Catania, Michelle Landstrom, Jana Laxa, Erin Loranty, Luke Marshall, Hannah McClennen, Lee Anne Miller, John Orr, Heidi Riley, Dan Schult, Deany Wood

Absent: Rick Geier

Call to Order and Opening Devotions: The meeting began at 7:02 p.m. Jana Laxa offered a prayer to open the meeting.

Clerk's Report: The minutes of the April 21st meeting were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Brooks Cato gave the treasurer's report in Rick Geier's absence. He explained that the update of Church Windows software continues and that, as a result, a balance sheet alone is being presented. Since the last report the NBT checking account increased by around **\$6,000**. A **\$100** deposit was made to the rector's discretionary fund. One charge (**\$740**) was made against the Migrant Discretionary Fund, posted 4/14/2021. Otherwise, April was a quiet month. Brooks commented that St. Thomas' can probably expect to see some effects of not having in-person worship on Easter Sunday because there was no plate passed. When Budget and Finance met they noted that there was still no action related to the ongoing issue involving the NYS Department of Labor. Rick Geier, Adger Williams, and a few others from the commission have started looking into the annual audit. The Treasurer's Report was received as submitted.

Rector's Report: Brooks Cato reported that the last month had been a very restorative period for him because he had been away for a time. He was grateful for the trip that he and Becca had shared to Florida and back and he now has a wonderful new-to-him truck. He thanked Deb Barker and Linda Jenks for taking over the Wednesday night prayer for the pandemic and Susan Cerasano for stepping in for Morning Prayer on Sunday, the 9th.

Wardens' Report: Luke Marshall welcomed Brooks back to Hamilton after his break in sunny Florida and Tennessee. He thanked Susan Cerasano for serving in Brooks' place at Morning Prayer on May 9th. He thanked Nan Schmitt for keeping everything together in the office during Brooks' absence when the computer kept on crashing. Luke then announced that he has ordered two new computers for the parish office. Luke was pleased to inform the vestry that George Weaver and Robert Maziarz have donated eighteen folding chairs to the parish. Luke and Ed Page are still waiting for the electrician to come and install the cameras and lights in the church. Lastly, the JotForm issues seem to have been solved by the change of a hyperlink.

Commission Reports: Nothing received

Old Business:

- *Flower Guild:* Brooks Cato was pleased to note that Diane Rich had recently joined the Flower Guild (Welcome, Diane!) and that she is a professional floral arranger. We are all looking forward to enjoying her work in the weeks and months ahead.
- *Mutual Ministry Review:* On hold.
- *Strategic Plan:* John Orr reported that he and Brooks are in the process of approaching persons to join the planning committee. Thus far, two persons had said yes; 1-2 had said maybe; and several required a follow up. At the time of the meeting, John felt that they were “making progress.”
- *Archives:* On hold.
- *Signs:* Brooks reported that he had received a mock-up, but it was not what we had been looking for so the church is back to the drawing board on this.
- *Banners:* Brooks Cato informed vestry members that he, Melissa Davies, Jana Laxa, and Lara Scott will meet soon to get a sense of the spaces where the banners will hang and how designs will work in the spaces.
- *Video-recording Update:* Luke reported that the IT crew is moving toward a trouble-free presentation on Sundays. St. Thomas’ needs to purchase a new wireless microphone in order for the sound to be crisper. The person running the system in the church will now be the designated “host” so there shouldn’t be any break-through noise from individual households during the services. Jana Laxa thought that the visuals were working great. Luke added that soon there will be an additional camera showing the choir area. Everyone thanked Luke profusely for sharing his expertise and his persistence in sorting through the problems that have emerged during the installation of the streaming system.

New Business

- *Street Numbers:* Brooks Cato stated that numbers have now been posted on the parish hall building. Numbers for the church and in-process with M & M Press.
- *Hearing Loop:* Brooks Cato summarized the current situation and presented the estimate for the installation (**\$2985**) of the system. The Budget and Finance Commission, having reviewed the situation, suggested that if the vestry approved the project the money could be raised out of Wish List Funds. Luke noted that it would be useful to survey the congregation, in some manner, to find out how many hearing aids will connect with the system or how many persons will actually need the loop piece. This information will give us a better feel for our needs. Brooks agreed to revisit the matter at the June meeting and to investigate some details further, including what purchasing an additional loop will cost.
- *Water Line for the Memorial Garden:* Brooks Cato stated that we have received confirmation that we can install the line. They need to get back in touch with Buzz Slentz. The funds to pay for the project will most likely come from the Memorial Garden Fund; however, if the work needs to begin before the next meeting the decision will

perhaps need to be approved by an email vote. There is some urgency to complete the work because gardening season is in full swing.

- *Landscaping*: Brooks reported that neighbors at #10 Madison St. have cleared out woods in their back yard, with the result that an area of the parking lot at the Colgate Inn is now visible from St. Thomas' churchyard. In the future, St. Thomas' will need to install some landscaping to block this view. This issue will be discussed at a later date.
- Upcoming dates: Brooks Cato reviewed important upcoming dates.
- Prayer leader for the June 16th meeting: Heidi Riley will lead prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Cerasano, Clerk