**Good Samaritan Episcopal Church**

**Bishop’s Committee Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

The Bishop’s Committee met at the Huang home in Brownsburg.

**Members present:** Reverend Jim Said, David Huang, Anne Davis, Melinda Sowers, Charlee Mitchell, Susan Burt, Katy Hilts, Clerk Tina Lamb, and guest Barbie Russell.

Father Jim, on his tenth day as Vicar-in-Charge, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:07. The group expressed appreciation for photos he took on his first Sunday as part of a permanent record. He suggested that in the future all Bishop’s Committee reports be prepared ahead of time and read by members beforehand to streamline meetings. He discussed the last-minute rewrite of his first sermon, to make it more celebratory.

David opined that the **VIC Report’s fresh format** was great—different isn’t bad. That said, he wondered whether we are publishing the VIC Report, asking: “It stays within the committee, right?” Jim stated he won’t list specific personal details, and David agreed that could still give a good sense of what the vicar is doing. VIC Reports and approved minutes will be published and posted. Susan noted that the committee could go into Executive Session when a confidential discussion is needed.

**August Meeting Minutes:** David directed the committee’s attention to the July meeting minutes; discussion ensued. Although a misspelling of Katy’s name was noted, David moved to approve the minutes and Katy seconded; all approved.

Jim wondered where the hard copy of the minutes goes after it’s taken down from the bulletin board to make room for the newest copy, and Tina explained it’s tossed, as it’s also posted and saved electronically. He mentioned that he would contact Erinna Vandever regarding our stored files, and felt we should be filing hard copies of the minutes going forward, noting that in his prior congregation in Augusta, hard copies were kept all the way back to 1960. He clarified that he would see if we are allowed *not* to keep hard copies, making this an action item.

**Treasurer’s Update:**

Checking $155,411.49

Savings $120,317.77

Charlee moved to approve the financial report and Susan seconded: unanimously approved.

Jim noted that **transition coverage** would not be needed for supply now, but is in the budget for at least four Sundays. He explained that he and Brianna set a time to meet on Tuesdays to “go through whatever we need to go through.” The prior Tuesday amounted to four hours of locating Good Sam’s items, including digital information. They also checked for music licensure. He commended Good Sam’s warden leadership, saying the whole body had done an excellent job of keeping the church together. Churches lost 30% of attendance on average during Covid. He noted that Fr. Gray Lesesne had praised the church following Jim’s first Sunday, when 125 were in attendance, which compared very well to Christ Church’s 157 present.

Conversation turned to the **youth minister job posting**, and Barbie said there had been zero interest, and thought perhaps it had been considered too much work for the amount of hours allotted. The committee agreed that too much turnover in the position is bad for the youth group. Barbie offered to take over the youth work, with additional volunteers needed, adding that this would put her over 20 hours per week. It was noted that the program had gained Amy Dobbs’ help but lost Deb Ruckmans’ (over the winter months). Charlee said that she and Ben would volunteer.

Jim wondered about providing a pension and healthcare if needed, and was advised that non-clergy receive 9% pension. Barbie would not need healthcare coverage.

David thanked Barbie and the decision was tabled to the end of the meeting. Jim noted that two events had already been planned and Barbie had stepped into that role. He asked if there is an **employee handbook** and Barbie answered that there is, but it hasn’t been updated recently. David asked her to find it and let the committee know where it is. Charlee suggested that all committee members review it, and David agreed that it would be done in the next cycle, with Barbie sending the link to all the committee members to look through and then discuss at the next meeting.

Melinda noted that in the past, the vicar and admin have created the agenda. Jim recommended sections for new business and old business for the next meeting. Barbie suggested a Google doc so the committee can look back and see changes that have been made. Anne recommended a shared Google doc for next time, so comments can be added.

Jim asked if the committee schedule is normally the third Sunday of each month and Melinda explained it was changed often this year. Katy said she would be in Cancun on October 16th, the date of the next scheduled meeting. Jim noted that his old church’s bylaws allowed 3 absences per year. Melinda observed that most meetings were held via Zoom, and David mentioned that that was per the former vicar and due largely to Covid conditions. Jim said Sunday meetings were not good for him and recommended a consistent weekday, which could be changed if needed, rotating through members’ homes as meeting spaces. Anne acknowledged that having a meeting after service makes for a really long day. David suggested the third Wednesday of each month, and the group decided on the following dates: October 19th, November 16th, and December 14th. (The last Sunday of January, the 29th, was noted to be Good Sam’s annual meeting, to be held during the service.) David listed meeting topics including stewardship, Diocesan Convention, Discernment Committee, “After Harris,” 2023 budgets, grants, and nursery assistants.

Regarding a **Discernment Committee**, David said that in working with Jen Phelps he learned we should form a committee (with only one Bishop’s Committee member) to partner with her to establish a parish profile, a polished statement of who we are. This can be used for a search but also other purposes, e.g. pursuing grants, and it would bring the congregation together. He invited the Bishop’s Committee members to bring a few names of people to approach, and he suggested sending out a survey to ask for volunteers. Five to seven would be needed. Katy cited a need to get the messaging right: it’s not about a search. Jim recommended that a liaison be chosen, also noting that the Bishop was very clear about the two-year vicar-in-charge arrangement, making it clear he could put his name in for the position. He suggested a profile that answers: Who are we? This is important for a congregation in a time of change. Charlee offered to serve as liaison. David proposed touching base re: how many meetings, etcetera, and co-writing a description. He said a survey probably should be sent out to start the process, for openness and inclusivity. Barbie suggested a plan that accounts for a certain number of no’s. David asked each member to bring 2 – 3 names to the next meeting. Melinda noted this would be part of the process of growing as a parish.

David turned discussion to the November 4th and 5th Diocesan Convention 2022, and our delegates: Amy Dobbs, Mary Kay Conley, Heidi Morris-Cass (alternate) and Nat Rodriguez (alternate). He wondered if two would be enough and noted, “We need to confirm with Nat.” He answered Jim’s question—that he thought we are a voting church, but should still send delegates, to which Jim agreed. Jim stated that if we have voting rights, he wants three delegates. In Georgia, the number of delegates was based on the average Sunday attendance. He also noted he wasn’t sure if he can vote due to his out of state license and letters not yet having been transferred. David asked Jim to take these questions and run with them. Barbie wondered about the possibility of a youth delegate, Jim said he’d love that. Melinda noted that we pay fees and mileage, while David mentioned there would be no lodging, as the event is to be in Plainfield. Jim said that Melinda is trying to arrange a church credit card.

David segued to an **“After Harris”** discussion, asking Jim if he would be comfortable confirming with Reagan, with Brownsburg schools, what we hope to be true: that we are three years out in our location timeline. Jim agreed and said he’d work with Katy, as the leader of that committee. David noted that “After Harris” is a distinct committee from the Village Hub.

Discussion turned to **nursery assistants**, with Barbie explaining that Charlie Morehead had volunteered but had a health episode; however, she’s now healthy and needs volunteer hours for National Honor Society. *After* earning those necessary hours, she would like to be paid. Barbie noted that Rachel Lawson might move out of state and thus leave her position, plus has a fulltime job along with her five hours a week at Good Sam’s. Barbie would like a second nursery assistant because many people can’t participate in after-service service projects because they have small children. David moved to raise the hourly pay for nursery assistants from $10 to $12.50 an hour, and Charlee seconded. The motion was approved. The shifts will be from 9:00 to 12:00, alternating Sundays. Jim wondered if $12.50 was enough, and Melinda suggested staying at that rate for the rest of 2022. Rachel’s and the assistants’ pay can be addressed next year.

David shifted to **Stewardship Planning**. Anne explained that she had handled stewardship for two years, and then another person did but left the congregation, so we are limping along now. She explained that we need a theme and described for Jim aspects of past campaigns, explaining that dates need to be chosen. Jim wondered if a softer approach would be wise this year, and Anne pointed out that every Sunday we talk about how financial gifts are serving our mission. Jim discussed the theology of money, giving first fruits of the harvest, the best, and how when you come you bring your time, talent and treasure: “It’s important that clergy are part of this; I could preach a little on stewardship, make it soft.” A goal was set to try to get all pledges before Thanksgiving vacation, and Jim offered to work with Anne on the project. Multiple theme ideas were discussed. Jim explained that because of Covid, this is a resurrection, and we are never going back to the way it was before—but the mission hasn’t changed. Charlee and Jim said they both felt it on the prior Sunday. Barbie suggested using words from Barry’s poem that he read during that service, and Melinda said she would ask him if we could do so.

Barbie mentioned that we are behind in the safeguarding training and said she’d let Bri and Mary Kay know. The Waycross retreat budget and livestream equipment were mentioned, with Melinda explaining that they have a budget line.

**Ministry Liaison Reports:** The committee agreed to kick off the 2023 budget process at the next meeting. Anne stated that there was no Stewardship update. Katy moved that the committee increase Barbie’s hours by ten per pay period to cover the youth leader position, for an open-ended duration, at her current rate of pay. Charlee seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. Jim offered to let her know; this would be effective with the September 30th pay date.

Charlee, representing Outreach, explained that Lucy Karam and Beth Hannon Penny are working to transition Lucy out as co-leader, and Becky Widener in. In 2023, Lucy will lead outreach to schools. Becky is already working closely with Beth. David and Charlee proposed celebrating Lucy during the annual meeting.

Melinda explained to Jim that Mary Kay Conley is the Administrative Committee leader, and provided her phone number.

David noted that Deb Samples stepped away from Adult Formation, so that position needs filled and her contributions should also be recognized. Anne suggested doing so at the annual meeting also.

Regarding Connections, Charlee mentioned that Kristen Drake had been taking responsibility, but she was promoted at work recently. Charlee offered to handle communications for now. Jim asked about getting the photos on the website updated and Charlee said she would work with Bri to get that done.

Jim asked that when pastoral care is needed, that he be called. Cal and Yvonne Brandenburg will help.

The meeting concluded with a time of prayer and was adjourned at approximately 9:00.

Faithfully submitted,

Tina Lamb

**Addendum:** On October 10th Melinda notified the Bishop’s Committee of the following.

Barbie has informed me that based on the 14 hour base per week she was working the hourly rate equates to $22.54.  This will make the annual salary for both positions (24 hours per week) $28,129.92. I need to make you aware of this and confirm your receipt of this information.

I will be making adjustments to payroll to make this change effective with the payroll I will be processing for Friday.  I will also enter an adjustment to bring the prior payroll up to the $22.54 rate.

Father Jim responded that that was fine and asked about the timing of paying pension. Melinda explained that would happen now and that she had asked Kim Christopher to get the documents to Barbie to complete her enrollment.