**St. James’ Episcopal Church Vestry Minutes**

**March 24, 2021**

Called to Order: 7:05 PM

**Attendance:** Alison Banks, Mitch Chester, Rich Connell, Bob Dugger,

Lisa Gleason, Don Hamer, Sam Hoyt, Becky Lee, Deb O’Donnell, Erin Perrelli, Joyce Reynolds, Cheryl Turner

**Absent:** None

 Opening Prayer

1. Learning Experience, *Love Is the Way,* Bishop Curry, Chapters 4 -6.

Group discussion.

1. Approval of 2/24/21 Vestry Meeting Minutes reviewed for approval. Motion to approve, Becky Lee and second Sam Hoyt. Vote with unanimous approval.
2. Treasurer’s Report: Bob Dugger

Revenue: General fund in good shape, $78,176. Increase due Triple P Loan funds now moved into this account since the loan has been forgiven. Pledged Offerings appear strong since pre-paid pledges are in this number. $20, 716 pledges this month, against budged amount $14,600 giving us a good month.

Expenses: Slight increase in insurance costs. Facilities costs running below budget.

1. Motion to accepted to the Treasure’s Report as presented, Sam Hoyt and second Becky Lee. Vote with unanimous approval.

ECCT Loan Application for $100.000 for air filtration and ventilation, submitted March 7, 2021. We have not received a decision at this time.

* **Re-opening Committee Report:** Don Gardner, John Korber and Pat Goodrich present

Don Gardner: Current ventilation installed 20 years ago with no draw from fresh air. Reached out Engineering Firm, Consulting Engineering Services Middletown. Consultation with a number of proposals. We have now requested an estimate to complete this work. Proposal to re-do our existing system, duct work, air ventilation, supply air and exhaust, while maintaining the aesthetics of our building (range under $100,000). Next step would be to seek contractors that can give estimates to complete the work. This will be a long-range project. The firm is proposing an energy efficient system which will should add minimally to the operating costs. Are their short-term goals to be considered if we want to re-open the church sooner? ECCT has sent new guidelines regarding ventilation which references “clean air flow” but without specifics. This project should not delay church opening, we can get fresh air with open windows and fans. The report from the firm with an estimated cost will be forwarded to ECCT for loan completion.

John Korber: We are prioritizing safe worship that is compliant with ECCT standards; accessibility and inclusiveness. We are also making an investment in the church with upgrades to our ventilation system, while preserving the integrity and historical appearance of the church. Meeting these goals will be a constantly evolving process. Discussion of the “nine monitors” that have been installed in the naïve on the pillars in the church to eliminate the use of all paper. Some have viewed the monitors with a negative response. The vestry may have missed a step in going back to the congregation and communicating this presence of monitors in the church. Becky noted that she has received feedback that the Vestry has not been communicating well in general. The monitors are large and may be interfering with the aesthetics of church. “No prayer books, No Bulletins according to ECCT.” Erin “not going back to normal. It will be a new normal.” Expectation management, “Back to Better.” John says there is refinement of the monitors, swivel, different color monitors, allowing visualization of the stained-glass windows, the alter, etc.

Rich Connell “broadcast capabilities amazing, permitting us to include all parishioners and to be more inclusive.” Don Gardner “if screens are used well, enhanced participation, no longer get lost in the bulletin, looking up instead of down.”

We can always be better at communication, hear parishioners’ concerns. The vestry did not want parishioners looking down at their phones during a service. Camera installed permit zoom sets will focus on the alter for example, or reading the gospel.

4. Checking In

* Faith in Action – Lisa Gleason (i.e., Glastonbury Links Together projects: School Backpack Program eight groups deliver to four elementary schools. St James donates grocery gift cards to individuals in town, recently supplied 200 gift cards)
* Worship – Rev. Don Hamer

Don thanked the work of the re-opening committee.

Saturday, March 27th Don will be distributing blessed palms.

Consecrated elements will be distributed following the service on Easter Sunday to celebrate communion.

Holy Week, Easter Plans posted in today’s e-blast. Easter Sunday will celebrate communion.

5. Discussion Items

* Racism, racial reconciliation study: Don presented a resolution from Convention: Every parish needs to investigate their parish’s role in racial discrimination and their role in slavery. Acknowledging and confronting systemic racism in the church.

Parishioner: Walter Kelso celebrating 100th birthday April 6, 2021

Don offering a pastoral visit.

Adjournment: 9:10 PM

Next meeting date: April 28, 2021

Closing Prayer