

**VESTRY MINUTES**  
**Grace and St. John's Episcopal Church**  
**Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**

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**NOTE:** The meeting was held in person in the Brewster Room at Grace & St. John's Church and on Zoom.

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**Present:** Bob Bergner (Rector), Sue Stanley (Senior Warden), Linda Rolstone (Co-Treasurer), Linda Simmons (Co-Treasurer), Renee Janes (Clerk), Kate Aitkenhead, Brian Gray, Cindy Turner, Robin Zenobi

**Present via Zoom:** Whitney Batson, Jenneifer Campbell, Kelly Mattox

**Excused Absences:** John Graham, Jessica Kott, Sue O'Connell,

**Unexcused Absences:** John Cerritelli

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The meeting was called to order at 7:17 pm following an opening prayer led by Fr Bob Bergner.

**Agenda:**

- The draft agenda was approved. (Sue S, Kate)

**Minutes:**

- Minutes of the November 21, 2023 meeting were approved as amended. (Kate, Linda Rolstone)
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**Treasurer's Report:** through November 30, 2023

- Checking/savings totaled \$75,244; \$28.5k is D4\$ and \$17.5k is Journey of Discovery.
  - Pledges are down around \$5,000 but that is expected to be made up by the end of the year.
  - There is a deficit in building use because the insurance adjuster next door has not donated so far this year.
  - Expenses are unfavorable due to building repairs.
  - The figures do not include SJE funds.
  - Approved by Sue S and Kate, subject to review.
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**Rector's Report:**

- Bob met Todd at the insurance adjusters on December 18. Todd said he will match at least amount he donated for 2022 (in 2023).

- Bishop Laura will visit the parish on January 14, 2024 and will meet with the vestry after worship. The bishops are eager to know what the vestry needs from her or from the diocese.
  - On Wednesday, February 21, 2024, Bishop Mello, and Bishop Hazelwood, the ELCA bishop for New England, will meet here at GSJ or at Church of the Good Shepherd for a Lenten study program. The bishops are eager to enhance Episcopal and Lutheran collaboration.
  - We received a worship grant from the Calvin Institute.
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### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Financial Integration:**

- The SJE money will be moved to GSJ by the end of the year

#### **Communications Committee:**

- The website went live but there is a snafu with the domain so it is live on the GSP URL.
- The new logo is missing from the website as Dan is still working on that.
- Welcome brunch will be re-evaluated in a year; should we make this a regular thing?
- There is no meeting in January; will regroup in February.
- The Christmas cards included an insert, designed by Gretchen, with the Christmas service information.

#### **Worship Committee:**

- The committee briefly discussed when to put up a Christmas tree. For this year, it can go up any time between December 18 and December 24.
  - The committee reviewed the Christmas services.
  - At Bob's request, the altar guild will start putting more wine, and less water, in the cruets.
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#### **Dinner for a Dollar and the Food Truck:**

- Kelly is meeting with Mike Degen from United Way as a catch-up. We will need to do a final report of the AARPA funds and Kelly will use the meeting as training on how to do the report. Kelly asked that Bob follow-up with Mike on any opportunities in 2024.
- Kelly has info on a firm that will handle set-up of a 501c3 for a one-time fee of \$500 and an annual fee of \$300. Kelly will follow up.
- The Food Security task force met; Bob and Allison were there. D4\$ shines in that group.

- Allison is interested in getting a large double-size freezer and possibly a similar size refrigerator. The Town of Hamden has given us a grant toward the purchase.
- Sue S noted that setting up a 501c3 does not actually make it work. It needs an effective “back office” – policies, a board, etc. The truck task force would be a good start as a governing board plus external people.
- Kelly suggested that the vestry have a separate conversation; is this the right next step and the right time for this change? Establishing D4\$ as a separate non-profit means it will go from hands on, grassroots group to a formal setup; there may be some loss and some grieving about the change.
- Sue S thinks she wrote something about this in the past; she will look for it and send it to the task force.
- It was recommended that the task force meet before the January vestry meeting and make a recommendation to the vestry for the January meeting. If the vestry feels good about the change, we can present at the annual meeting for parish input.

#### **Other Business:**

**Stewardship:** We are north of \$100K in pledges returned. Almost everyone had a dollar increase.

**Website:** Kelly and Bob are sure we purchased the graceandstjohns.org domain. The domain expires in January 2024. Who has the login and password? Bob will investigate.

**Name tags:** we are waiting on the final logo.

**Voting list for the annual meeting:** this needs to be done soon, so we can post a call to the annual meeting two weeks before the date. Sue S and Linda S will take a first pass at the list.

#### **Outreach and Outreach Facilitator:**

- Gretchen Pritchard put together a comprehensive list for the newcomer’s brunch.
- Kim Clarke can be the scheduler but the facilitator needs to be in touch with the individual project coordinators.
- If a project coordinator does not want to do a project anymore, we need to decide if we still want to support the project as a parish.
- Two individuals offered to be the facilitator but one needs to step aside due to work commitments.
- We need to understand the scope of each project and document what is required for the project to be successful.
- Kate will email the comprehensive list or projects to Sue S who offered to start on documenting each project.

- Kate suggested we ask at the annual meeting if there is someone with an attention to detail who could document each project.

**Wi-Fi:** there is a new router in the Brewster Room, above the double doors to the sacristy. Hopefully this will solve connectivity problems in the sanctuary.

**Sidewalk access to the side door:** the grass near the ramp is uneven and difficult for people with limited mobility to get to the chair glide. Renee will ask John G to get quotes from two contractors.

**Gift card program:** table until the next meeting.

**Visit from St Mark's New Britain:** they will visit on April 21 to talk with the parishioners and vestry about our merger experience. They will supply coffee hour treats.

**Sanctuary candle from St John's:** we discussed using a battery-operated candle. Renee will look for a candle.

**Annual Meeting and Vestry:** Renee has offered to be senior warden, unless anyone else is interested. Ending terms are John G, Jess, and Cindy. Staying on are John C, Kate, Kelly, Robin, Whitney, and Jen. Brian Gray would like to come off because of his work hours. We also need a secretary if Renee is senior warden. Seven people were identified as possibilities and they will be asked. Linda R would like to come off vestry as treasurer and just be a vestry member. Cindy offered to remain on for a one-year term. Sue S will write a blurb for the e-news about joining vestry and what is involved.

## **2023 Elections**

### **Officers**

Senior Warden - Susan Stanley - one year term ending January 2024  
 Junior Warden - Susan O'Connell - two-year term ending January 2025  
 Co-Treasurers - Linda Rolstone and Linda Simmons - two-year term ending January 2025  
 Clerk - Renee Janes - one-year term ending January 2024

### **At Large Vestry Members**

For a one-year term ending January 2024

John Graham  
 Jessica Kott  
 Judy Odell  
 Cindy Turner

For a two-year term ending January 2025

Kate Aitkenhead  
 Whitney Batson  
 John Cerritelli

For a three-year term ending January 2026

Jenneifer Campbell  
 Brian Gray

Kelly Mattox  
Robin Zenobi

**Delegates to Convention**

Chris Grant  
Will Hart

The next meeting will be January 16<sup>th</sup> at the church and on Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm (Linda R, Sue S).

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**Acronyms used:**

G&SP = Grace & St. Peter's Episcopal Church  
SJE = St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church  
SPOTH = St. Peter's on the Hill Episcopal Church  
ECCT = Episcopal Church in Connecticut  
TEC = The Episcopal Church in the US  
FTAC = Food Truck Advisory Committee  
D4\$ = Dinner for a Dollar  
S2P = Swords to Plowshares