

**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMFORTER**  
**Vestry Meeting Minutes**  
**April 18, 2023 at 6:00pm in Van Every 207**

Vestry Members Present: Carlyle Knox, Ed Gash, John Snelsire, Kirt Hibbitts, Joyce Bott, Mary Amos, Margaret Kahn, Bob Murphy, Jason Evans, Anne Binns, Natalie Parker

Vestry Members Absent: Tom Cooke

Clergy Present: Fr. Greg Brown, Rev. Cat Connolly

Recording Secretary: Niki Manke

Guest: Karen Crane (virtual)

**1) Convene: Opening Prayer (Cat)**

- a) Excerpt from The Lives We Actually Live by Kate Bowler & Jessica Richie

**2) Agenda Approval (Joyce)**

- a) Motion NP; Second CK; Approved Vestry

**3) Scripture/Bible Study (Jason)**

- a) John 17:12-19 Prayer that Jesus offers on the night of his betrayal.
- b) Comments of note: The commentary of this passage was very helpful. John is the philosophical Gospel and gives a different point of view than the others. You have to be in a different mindset when you read the Gospel according to John. Noted that Jesus prays for himself, the disciples, and the world. He is praying to God in a personal way which we can relate to despite he is a part of the trinity, but then again, we are all a part of the Trinity.

**4) Associate Rector's Report (Cat)**

- a) Holy Week & Easter
  - i) Palm Sunday creative storytelling
  - ii) Maundy Thursday was beautiful, particularly the foot washing and stripping of the altar
  - iii) Good Friday meditations were thought provoking
  - iv) Saturday Vigil: sang exultant and celebrated the Eucharist. My favourite service of the year.
  - v) Easter Sunday: Great joy. Wonderful music, great worship, so many people working hard to make all the things happen, fantastic to be a part of.
- b) Programming
  - i) Women of Holy Week had final Easter session on Sunday 16th. Program as a whole has gone very well, good attendance and positive feedback.
- c) Parish Retreat
  - i) Planning is coming together. Will be teaching new hymn to sing in Sunday service.
  - ii) Looking forward to spending time with people.
- d) Spanish
  - i) Becoming more comfortable with celebrating using Spanish liturgy. Next to learn +blessings.
- e) Teeny McCorkle's Funeral Friday 14<sup>th</sup>
  - i) From Teeny's Realm notes we knew some of her wishes, she had chosen the readings. Family were so appreciative of all the ways in which they felt we could make the service personal. Loved the bulletin, music, and reception. Another example of Holy Comforter people working together and creating something beautiful.
  - ii) Teeny's ashes to be interred in the Memorial Garden at a later date.
- f) Sarah Cavin's departure
  - i) The Family Ministry CG, and EYC leaders, have stepped up in a fabulous way to continue the work with our children and young people. Seemed to be covered until the end of May.
  - ii) I have taken on La Escuelita weekly chapel until the summer

- iii) Communications are being worked on. KH is on website committee and they will touch base with Trish. KH wanted to make sure this was covered.
  - (1) JE Is someone monitoring her email?
    - (a) GB Sarah will be monitoring until May. JS suggested that she put an out of office on there. GB asked Cat to connect with SC to make sure she turns that on. Her email will then be shut down after May.
    - (2) Suggestion to make emails more generic (i.e. youthminister@holycorforter.com)
- iv) Members of EYC leadership and Family Ministry CG are being asked to help discern during hiring process.
- g) Circle Groups
  - i) Pastoral Care - Suzan Becker has stepped down as CG leader. Edie Livingstone temporarily running the group, but seeking someone else to step into leadership role. Always looking for more people interested in joining one of the pastoral ministries, and especially with delivering seasonal goodie bags & flowers.
  - ii) Family Ministries - taking on more responsibility to keep programs running until the summer.
  - iii) also attending Finance, and Liturgy & music CGs.
- h) Taking off May 1 – May 7 for rest prior to GB leaving for the Camino.

## 5) Finance Report (Karen) – virtual

- a) March 2023 Financial Statements
  - i) YTD Pledge receipts are favorable to net pledge budget by \$9.0k; favorable to the prior year by \$32.5k.
  - ii) YTD Total revenue favorable to budget by \$10.6k mainly due to plate offerings by \$.04k, pledge receipts by \$9.0k, and General Offering by \$2.1k and Pledge received-previous year unfavorable by \$0.6k. YTD Favorable to 2022 by \$3.0k. Month unfavorable to 2022 by \$32.6k.
  - iii) YTD Expenses favorable to budget by \$11.9k. Salary & benefits by \$1.3k, Ministry under budget by \$6.3k, Office under budget by \$1.4k, Buildings & Grounds under budget by \$0.8k and Utilities under budget by \$2.0k. Unfavorable to 2022 by \$23.5k. In comparison to 2022, Salary & Benefits is \$29.6k higher, Ministry is \$5.7k lower, Office is \$0.9k lower, Building & Grounds is \$2.6k higher, Utilities is \$0.6k lower and Diocesan Assessment is \$1.5k lower.
  - iv) Note payable to Holy Comforter Foundation balance is \$73.9k with balloon payment of \$68k due November 2024.
  - v) March was low and Karen has checked in with Holly to see how we are doing in April, but has not heard back as of the meeting.
    - (1) The question was asked why March was unfavorable, but we don't know which is why Karen asked Holly to check in on April and will follow-up with an email when she hears back.
    - (2) GB noted that there can also be a difference when we have a month with 5 Sundays instead of 4.
- b) The additional \$20k that was motioned/approved to be moved to a different account last month was moved to the emergency fund on 4/2/23.
- c) The Financial Forum is scheduled for 5/7/23.
  - i) Trish is to be reminded that this invitation needs to go out. KH will make it a “featured event” on the website.
- d) Karen Crane and Holly are working on figuring out the proper rental rate for the 2729 property. The numbers are not ready yet.

## 6) Ministry Reports

- ~~a) Communications & Technology (Tom Cooke)~~
- b) IWC/BGG/Pathfinders/Etc. (Kirt Hibbitts)
  - i) Report is on the shared drive
  - ii) **IWC**
    - (1) New leadership - Elaina Roseberry. Working with Jessica and will transition to circle group leader.

- (2) Wayfinding for visitors. Looking at ways to make campus more welcoming for visitors. IWC is working on a punch list which will be sorted by importance and cost (some will be free). Several signs are out of date and/or difficult to read. Visitor Parking signs will put up near the Sacristy entrance and Welcome banners where bushes will be cut down.
- (3) A newcomer social event will happen this spring. Date is TBD after a Wednesday Community dinner, with a special desert and Q&A.

**iii) PATHFINDERS**

- (1) Reconnection - Working with circle groups and ministries to help reconnect after the pandemic
  - (a) Assisted with Blue Christmas, Ministry Leaders Summit
  - (b) Developing a "Broken Bowl" workshop on grieving and healing
- (2) Parish Discernment – Working to understand Holy Comforter's calling
  - (a) Signed up with "Genesis II: Re-Vision and Renew" which is led by the national church to explore of new ways of being church. Starting in May, Genesis is an 18-24 month process, working with a core team of lay leaders, and it will involve the parish. There is no cost impact to the budget.
  - (b) The Rev. Canon Pat Grace will be an occasional preacher/teacher, starting April 16. She presented *The Church in the New Millennium* during the hour.

**iv) BGG**

- (1) Annual Giving – Jonathan and Liz Weathers taking lead on the Annual Campaign. Hope to start planning in April for the 2024 campaign. Need more across generations to join the team.
- (2) Stewardship Education – Top priority for BGG is to implement a stewardship education program in 2023. We will talk about God and Money during the hour on May 21 where we will invite parishioners to sign up for a financial stewardship program (GoodSen\$e or Compass TBD).
- (3) Year Round Stewardship - Developing a calendar so that we have stewardship messaging and activities happening throughout the year, not just during the Annual Giving campaign. The calendar will reflect the liturgical calendar and tie in with parish events.
- (4) Stewardship Storytelling - Looking for opportunities to share stewardship stories at appropriate times throughout the year. Messages, speakers, format, timing are TBD and need to be coordinated with vestry stories.
- (5) TENS Membership - Joined *The Episcopal Network for Stewardship* and have started to participate in their webinars, thanks to a gift from a generous parishioner.

**c) Outreach/BOW (John Snelsire)**

- i) Report on Shared Drive
- ii) The Concert for the Human Family
  - (1) Kory Caudill would like to do a "Facebook Takeover" in the evening on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday the week of the concert to help promote. He would be given "administrator" role for the period of time, likely an hour. During this time, Kory would be talking about the concert and playing music. It is requested to get the Vestry's approval of this. *No formal motion made, but all were ok with this.*
  - (2) Buy tickets to the Concert. They're \$15-\$30 and with the code "holyccomforter" there is a \$10 discount for general admission. Group tickets are \$15 and student/teacher tickets are \$15. JS also has a code for free tickets. Kory and team want to ensure that anyone who wants to attend can do so.
  - (3) Need 10 hosts to welcome. The commitments is 5:30-10:00pm at the church. Diana Smith is coordinating. 5:30 there will be a walk-through, information packets, and casual dinner.
  - (4) Vestry to consider need for security for the event. Security has not been provided at previous concerts, but given the broad communication (and recent Nashville shootings) concerns were raised.
    - (a) There was concern that a police presence might threaten People of Color. Suggestions of plain clothes officers was discussed as well as an officer for traffic

- control. CK is to coordinate with CMPD to make them aware of the event and to discuss parking issues.
- (5) Concert is family friendly. The primary issue could be sound levels. Links to videos were offered for any adults questioning bringing their children. Concert has been posted via The Charlotte Ledger, QCMetro, WDAV, and Blumenthal. Kory will also be interviewed by WDAV.
- iii) Beyond our Walls
- (1) Met in April to discuss how to move forward as a super committee and meet once a quarter. All agreed that meeting monthly was not functioning, but need to make sure that the outreach ministries are supported.
    - (a) This group may need help with communicating who/what they are. Perhaps model after Pastoral Care.
  - (2) In March, Holli Adams stepped down as chair. No one has offered to chair or offered suggestions for someone who could chair.
  - (3) Still have a commitment to make sandwiches for On Ramp
  - (4) Creation Care plans: the garden, a tree-themed art show by Wil and Maura Bobyshell
  - (5) Will meet next month to discuss budget and steps forward.
- iv) Holy Comforter Book Group
- (1) Action items
    - (a) What you'd like to study this summer
    - (b) How you'd like to be engaged
    - (c) Fill out form
  - (2) 260+ people on distribution list with 60% outside of Holy Comforter
  - (3) List of books suggested in report on shared drive
- v) Addressing Homelessness
- (1) During winter Holy Comforter supported Room in the Inn with Avondale.
  - (2) Supported Roof Above lunch program through winter and made 1800 lunches
  - (3) Took out a table at the Roof Above True Blessings fundraiser luncheon in November
  - (4) Bike Gallery sold discounted bike pumps to be donated to the new Roof Above shelter on Old Statesville Road.
- vi) Loaves and Fishes
- (1) After 2 years of serving in the parking lot, they moved back inside last summer. They used the time to update pantry fixtures, paint and install new flooring. Repairs were made to the freezers. Looking to rebuild the volunteer staff.
  - (2) Campaign
    - (a) Mac plans to use format similar to Joe Mynatt. Suggested that an outline be provided due to sensitivity from 2<sup>nd</sup> ask. It was mentioned at Darrow-Owens and there was one who felt blindsided. Since the word has gotten out, it was noted someone needs to follow-up with Mac to get the communication out and offer aid in the communication. JS volunteered to follow-up.
    - (b) CEO is going to come speak at the 8am and 10am services on 4/30.
- d) Parish Events – Large (Bob Murphy)
- i) Oyster Roast
    - (1) 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday before Thanksgiving. Discussion about changing this date.
    - (2) Tammy and Gray Langley are taking a step back and Jessica Dunlap is stepping up.
  - ii) Pentecostal Picnic
    - (1) 5/28 (Memorial Day Weekend)
  - iii) Blessing of the Animals
    - (1) Late September – early October
    - (2) Beth Hardin has led the past 3 years. Last year she expanded to South Minster and discussed expanding to Freedom Park that weekend.

## 7) **Mid-Meeting/Break (Anne Binns)**

- a) Searching for Sundays Rachel Held Evans– laying of hands and how that is important to ministers.
  - i) how our hands are important as lay people. So much of what we do is about personal touch

- ii) To make a copy of the chapter to share with us on the Shared Drive.

**8) Rector's Report (Greg Brown)**

- a) Liturgy & Worship
  - i) Lent and Holy Week
    - (1) 12 services! Very powerful.
  - ii) Rev. Pat Grace
  - iii) Retreat & Rev. Earnest Graham – Reggie Payne Weans was supposed to cover but due to health issues, Rev. Graham will cover.
  - iv) Camino and La Misa
- b) Circle Group Updates: BOW
  - i) Next Quarterly Leadership Meeting 5/11
  - ii) CG-Leaders Status Check
    - (1) cg-ARSI: Gail Fennimore – Leader
    - (2) cg-Adult Spiritual Journeys
    - (3) cg-Liturgy & Music: Greg Brown – Leader; Patrick Pope – Co-Leader
  - iii) Civil Rights Pilgrimage at International Civil Rights Center & Museum
- c) Staff Update –
  - i) Children's/Youth Ministry Position
    - (1) Cat > Youth Leaders > Large Group. Interview Group
    - (2) May split this into two positions since it requires different skills for children's and youth ministry. Hoping to also attract more people. Focus on children's first since the youth has a solid group of adult helpers at this time.
    - (3) Programming Meeting
- d) Camino Planning (5/15-6/30)
  - i) Holly's Reaction – Greg is planning to use Continuing Education for expenses.
  - ii) Walk with me! Invite people to walk with GB on a day to help the congregation remain connected.
  - iii) Map – Ben Knox to put a pin in where GB ends each day.
- e) Crisis Communication Plan is drafted and will be shared for Vestry to read. Meeting April 27<sup>th</sup>.

**9) Senior Warden's Report (Joyce Bott)**

- a) Sub-Group for Designated Accounts (Mary & Anne)
  - i) Been in touch with Holly. To report later.
- b) Update of Employee Policies of Holy Comforter – volunteers
  - i) Needs 2 people from this committee to marry up with 2 people of the personnel committee to update.
  - ii) JB has 3 to use as a goes by.
  - iii) JE volunteered and MA.
  - iv) Due date late summer/early fall.
- c) Convention Delegates/Alternates
  - i) Each person to come back with a suggestion and we will discuss.
- d) Reminded everyone that the 2<sup>nd</sup> door near the front of church needs to be unlocked and free of obstructions.

**10) Junior Warden's Report (Carlyle Knox)**

- a) Parish Workday, Saturday April 1, 2023 (30 people despite rain)
  - i) Pad of things that Richard and Sissy noted
- b) Parking/Visitor Spaces – signs to be permanent at some point. Working with IWC to find the best spot. VPOD to put them out across the sacristy door on non-windy days.
- c) Water damage all over. Hard to tell what's active and inactive. Reports to 2701 group. Pushing to get previous damage repaired so it's easier to tell when its active. BM there's instruments to help test.
- d) First Aid Kits – Working to put them with the AEDs. One at the steps. One in this building. Grey unidentified box in kitchen right now.

**11) Old Business/Reminders**

- a) Approval of February & March 2023 Minutes (Joyce)
  - i) Minutes distributed via email. Received approvals from 8 members. 3 outstanding.
- b) Date set: Concert for the Human Family, April 28
- c) March 2023 BGG Speaker, Mary A., scheduled 3/12
- d) April 2023 BGG Speaker, Ed G., scheduling a speaker from The Relatives
- e) May 2023 BGG Speaker, Kirt H, likely 21<sup>st</sup>
- f) Ministry Reports Due May: Pastoral Care (Margaret) and Spiritual Formation Adult (Ed G.), Spiritual Formation Youth (Anne) and Parish Events – small groups/weekly – (Jason deferred to April)
- g) Social Media Policy update (Jason) May meeting

**12) Closing Prayer (Greg B.)**