

**The Episcopal Church of the Holy Comforter**  
**VESTRY MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 13, 2022 at 6:00 PM in Van Every 207**

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Vestry Members Present: Tom Fennimore, Drew Kirkland, Kelly Sewell, Ed Gash, Arnoldo Marquez (Virtual), Natalie Parker, John Snelsire, Joyce Bott, Jason Evans, Margaret Kahn  
New Vestry Members Present: Mary Amos, Anne Binns, Bob Murphy, Kirt Hibbitts

Vestry Members Absent: Susanne Shaw, Carlyle Knox  
New Vestry Member Absent: Tom Cooke

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

Recording Secretary: Penny Crawford

Guest: Karen Crane, Chris Ravenberg (Virtual)

I. Convene

A. Opening Prayer (Tom) - Prayer for feast day of Lucy, Martyr of Syracuse (304) - Tom welcomed the newly elected Vestry members for being present tonight.

B. Agenda Approval - APPROVED with accommodations for absent or late participants (Vestry) C. Bible Study: Luke 22: 54-69 (Ed) - Fr. Greg asked what does this have to say to the assembly of the people? Ed said that when things get tough we might run away; Kirt also made a similar statement; Margaret mentioned that we have to be careful about the decisions we have to make; Fr. Greg stated that people are looking for Jesus' disciples as Peter is asked 3 times, "aren't you one of his disciples?"

II. Associate Rector's Report (Rev. Cat) - Enjoy being part of Pastoral Care and connecting with families; Made graham cracker houses with children; Taking a course on racism with Sarah Cavins - "Tell Me The Truth About Racism"; Will be holding her second Taize service on Sunday, December 18th.

III. Parish Finances and Giving

A. Treasurer's Report, 2023 Budget (Chris Ravenberg, Karen Crane) - Chris went over the November 2022 Financial Reports and answered questions;

- YTD Pledge receipts unfavorable to budget by \$41.7K or 6.3%; favorable to prior year by \$1.0K.
- YTD total revenue unfavorable to budget by \$56.4K or 7.3% mainly due to pledge receipts and general offering. General Offering behind budget by \$6.5K through November. We need to receive \$18.4K to keep on budget for this line item. Total revenue unfavorable to 2021 by \$11.1K.
- YTD expenses favorable to budget by \$3.7K but November actual unfavorable to November budget by \$12.5K. Expenses were higher across all categories: Salary &

Benefits \$4K, Ministry \$3.7K, Office Admin \$3.4K, Buildings & Grounds expenses over budget by \$1.4K. November expenses above trailing 3 months trend of \$88.6K.

- Based on recent revenue/expense trending, expected deficit is \$123K vs. budgeted deficit of \$115K.
- Note payable to Holy Comforter Foundation balance is \$73.9K with balloon payment of \$68K due November 2024.

B. Reviewed Parish Cash Position - MOTION if no unrestricted funds available, that Holly can take funds from Line Item #851- Unassigned Bequests (under Holding Accounts - Vestry) to pay bills as needed until the next Vestry meeting (Chris); APPROVED (Vestry).

C. Preliminary Draft Budget for 2023: Medical and dental expenses for clergy and staff; Pensions; Medical has gone up 8 to 9 percent. Pledge Receipts - \$176K; Salary includes the full year for Clergy and Staff; Vestry goal is to see how to spend the money in 2023.

D. Annual Pledge Campaign (Tom, Kirt Hibbits) - Kirt handed out Dashboard report for 2023 Annual Pledge Campaign status as of December 12, 2022; Received 14 pledges this past week; Suggests having conversations with people to let them know where we are; Will keep mentioning about pledging right now rather than wait until January.

1. Thank you notes for pledges received; set date for Vestry writing session - Kirt already has "Thank You" notes and envelopes, and would like members of the Vestry to help write to those that have pledged; Writing session will be held on Monday, December 19th from 6 until 8 PM; Further pledges hereafter will receive "Thank You" notes that will be done next year.
2. Follow-up with Not-Yet-Pledged parishioners - About 57 parishioners have not pledged as yet; Request that by Saturday the 17th, Vestry members reach out to 3 names as given either via a call, text or email; Handout shows link to get names and includes a script for emails and text follow-up guidelines.
3. Second ask? A second pledge ask may be necessary but the decision deferred until January.

E. MOTION for 2022 budget to continue into 2023 until 2023 Budget adopted; APPROVED (Vestry).

F. Recognized Chris' services for almost a decade and recognized Karen who is taking over as Treasurer.

IV. Mid-Meeting Reflection / Prayer (Joyce) & Break - Joyce read "*Moving on*" from *Meditations for Vestry Members*, which was about Vestry members ending their terms.

#### V. Ministry Group Liaison Reports

A. Invite-Welcome-Connect (Kelly) - Gift Bags are being branded with Holy Comforter and Invite Welcome & Connect to replace the bottles that were being given out; Have added two new people to the group, Georganna Moore and Elana Roseberry; Kirt mentioned putting together a "WayFinding" plan on the website about what things are and where they can be found; Setting out Christmas Eve luminaries.

1. 2022 Parish Retreat deficit as of November 2022 (Parish Account #848A); Kelly reported

that there is an unpaid balance of \$4,765.53; MOTION that Birthday & Anniversary Line

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Item #824 with a balance of \$10,311.58 pay \$4,765.53 out of that Restricted Holding Account (Kelly); SECONDED (Ed); APPROVED (Vestry).

2. 2023 Retreat will be held at Montreat next year on April 22 - 23, 2023.

B. Parish Events (Weekly/Monthly) & Small Group Fellowship (Jason) - Nothing to report on Tuesday Faith Group; Senior Luncheon was held on December 8th; Coffee Hour going well; Women and Men's Groups going well; Scout Groups are very active with 38 Boy Scouts.

C. Women's Ministries - Darrow Owens doing well per Mary Amos; No further updates available as Susanne was absent.

D. Outreach & Missions (Joyce) - Loaves & Fishes, Beyond our Walls, Joyce recommended talking with Carla Hanzal and Jennifer Everhart about these groups; Relatives On Ramp - Edie Livingstone heads up; QC Family Trip led by Elsie Garfield; Roof Above doing lunches; Meals being done on first Fridays; RITI - Holy Comforter to help Avondale and more help needed with the check in process; Possibly use Line Item #893 (Vestry Outreach) to utilize the funds to possibly help pay medical bills for those who can't pay them or utilize for some other project.

#### VI. Junior Warden's Report (John)

A. Update on repairs for Van Every office corridor and doors - Working on the Van Every doors - poor soil near the doors and 7 of 14 piers are installed.

B. Reconciliation of Property cost approvals and actual expenses - Plan to report on approved costs for the spring and what was spent in the summer; Will send out what was allocated and what was spent.

C. VPOD Schedule - If you need to change your scheduled date, email Jessica; Outgoing Vestry members turn in your key and badge or give to a new member; New Vestry members are encouraged to do *StrengthFinders*; will send out the schedule for upcoming special services for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day; New members should contact Holly for Shared Drive access.

#### VII. Old Business

A. Approve Minutes of November 15th Meeting; Posting of Summary Docs (Natalie) - MOTION to Approve the November 15th Meeting Minutes (Natalie); SECONDED (Ed); APPROVED (Vestry); Natalie continues to summarize the Vestry meetings to add to the Vestry Share Drive as well as a copy posted on the wall near the Acolyte Vesting room, and a copy on the website.

VIII. Rector's Report (Fr. Greg) - A handout was distributed to the Vestry for the "Rector's Report to Vestry". Fr. Greg reported that Advent Movie Night going well; Vestry Retreat will be off-site beginning February 10th, which will be a social night, as well as meeting on the 11th; Recommended new Vestry members reading *Four Agreements*; *StrengthFinders* reading was also encouraged by the new Vestry members and information will be shared by Fr. Greg at the Vestry retreat; Would like to give a gift to Chris Ravenberg for his years of service as Treasurer, and John is willing to purchase a gift card, and if any Vestry members would like to contribute, please give to John by Sunday the 18th; MOTION for Housing Allowance (Greg); SECONDED (Joyce); APPROVED (Vestry); MOTION for Housing Allowance for Rev. Cat for \$35K, APPROVED (Vestry); MOTION for Housing Allowance for Fr. Barry of \$40K (Margaret); APPROVED

(Vestry). Housing Allowances attached to these Minutes.

A. Circle Group updates - Important to have a Vestry member represent a Circle Group; Quarterly Leadership meetings of CG leaders will begin in January.

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B. Diocesan Convention, November 18th - 19th in Winston-Salem - BP. Mark Andrus was the keynote speaker.

C. Update regarding Staff 1:1 Meetings - One on one meetings with Staff have been completed; Staff Retreat Plans - Staff was unwilling to utilize this opportunity to discuss *StrengthFinders* information; Fr. Greg met with Doug Bacon regarding this.

D. 2023 Compensation - Personnel to meet December 14th.

E. New Parish Officers - Joyce Bott, is the Senior Warden for 2023, she will meet with Fr. Greg to discuss Junior Warden and Clerk positions; A new Recording Secretary will be found either within Vestry or from outside.

IX. Senior Warden's Report (Tom) - Tom recognized and shared his appreciation for all those serving with him for three years and two years as Sr. Warden; He asked outgoing Vestry members to share their thoughts; Kelly shared that it has been a learning experience and learning about the church operation; Drew expressed that he feels the same way; John shared about the Junior Warden position and Natalie shared about the Clerk position.

X. Reminders

A. BG&G Stories Schedule - John Snelsire to speak on January 29, 2023;

B. Vestry Meeting: Tuesday, January 17th at 6:00 PM, Van Every 207

C. 2023 Vestry Retreat, New Member Training: Retreat - February 10th and 11th. XI.

Closing: Prayer (Tom) - The Archbishop Oscar Romero Prayer read in unison.

Housing Allowance Motion

for Rev. Greg Brown, for Vestry Meeting of December 13, 2022

Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code specifies that the amount of ministers' compensation that is designated in advance by their employer as a housing allowance is not taxable in computing federal income taxes to the extent that it is used to pay for actual expenses incurred in owning or renting a home or apartment, and,

in the case of ministers who own their home, does not exceed the fair rental value and maintenance of the home; and

Whereas, Rev. Gregory Brown is compensated by Holy Comforter Episcopal Church exclusively for services as a minister; and

Whereas, Holy Comforter does not provide Rev. Brown with a parsonage;

therefore, it is

Resolved, that amount \$65,000 is hereby designated as a housing allowance pursuant to section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further

Resolved that the designation of \$65,000 of Rev. Brown's annual compensation as a housing allowance also shall apply to all future years that Rev. Brown is employed by Holy Comforter unless otherwise provided.

Housing Allowance Motion for Rev. Cat Connolly, for Vestry Meeting of December 13, 2022

Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code specifies that the amount of ministers' compensation that is designated in advance by their employer as a housing allowance is not taxable in computing federal income taxes to the extent that it is used to pay for actual expenses incurred in owning or renting a home or apartment, and, in the case of ministers who own their home, does not exceed the fair rental value and maintenance of the home; and Whereas, Rev. Cat Connolly is compensated by Holy Comforter Episcopal Church exclusively for services as a minister; and Whereas, Holy Comforter does not provide Rev. Connolly with a parsonage; therefore, it is Resolved, that amount \$35,000 is hereby designated as a housing allowance pursuant to section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further Resolved, that the designation of \$35,000 of Rev. Connolly's annual compensation as a housing allowance also shall apply to all future years that Rev. Connolly is employed by Holy Comforter unless otherwise provided.

Housing Allowance Motion for Rev. J. Barry Vaughn, for Vestry Meeting of December 13, 2022

Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code specifies that the amount of ministers' compensation that is designated in advance by their employer as a housing allowance is not taxable in computing federal income taxes to the extent that it is used to pay for actual expenses incurred in owning or renting a home or apartment, and, in the case of ministers who own their home, does not exceed the fair rental value and maintenance of the home; and Whereas, Rev. J. Barry Vaughn is compensated by Holy Comforter Episcopal Church exclusively for services as a minister; and Whereas, Holy Comforter does not provide Rev. Vaughn with a parsonage; therefore, it is Resolved, that amount \$40,000 is hereby designated as a housing allowance pursuant to section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further Resolved, that the designation \$40,000 of Rev. Vaughn's annual compensation as a housing allowance also shall apply to all

future years that Rev. Vaughn is employed by Holy Comforter unless otherwise provided.