

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMFORTER
Vestry Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2023 at 6:00pm in Van Every 207

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

Vestry Members Absent: Tom Cooke, Margaret Kahn

Clergy Present: Rev. Cat Connolly

Clergy Absent: Fr. Greg Brown

Recording Secretary: Niki Manke

Guest: Karen Crane – Holy Comforter Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair

1) Convene: Opening Prayer (Jason)

2) Agenda Approval (Joyce)

a) *Motion (MA); Second (NP); Approved (Vestry)*

3) Scripture/Bible Study (Natalie)

a) Luke 11:1-13; Jesus' Teaching on Prayer (The Lord's Prayer)

b) ~~Comments of note: In addition to Jesus teaching the Lord's Prayer in these verses, the other basic theme is that you should ask/take action. We have to do the work and we must keep asking and keep knocking, even if we think the answer might be "no". Reminisced about Bishop Curry knocking on the door. We ask God for the daily bread, but the friend is the one who gives the bread. How often are we the ones giving and answering the prayers?~~

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4) Foundation Ministry & Mission Request

a) *Motion (JS): The Foundation would like to allocate \$5,000 to Loaves and Fishes Capital Campaign; Second (EG); Approved (Vestry)*

5) Ministry Reports

a) Communications & Technology (Tom Cooke) – deferred

b) Parish Events Small groups/weekly (Jason Evans) – (Notes on Shared Drive)

i) BSA Troop 1 and Cub Scouts Pack 1 (Jon Wood)

(1) Currently have 38 scouts registered in the BSA troop. As of last evening, we now have 6 scouts who have attained the rank of Eagle in 2022, with 2 more coming soon.

ii) VOCARE (Jim Muse)

(1) Alive and well with about 13 actively participating on Zoom every Friday at 7am.

(2) Have begun a quarterly in person social to augment the February retreat that was held last week at Wooden Robot. Had 12 in attendance.

(3) We would love to shepherd a second chapter if there was any interest.

iii) Community Dinners (Jessica Dunlap)

(1) Going really well. We have around 40 people each week and we're breaking even money-wise.

(2) The last dinner will be June 7th and they will resume the last Wednesday in August.

(3) We will have House Eucharists every other Wednesday in July and August.

iv) Senior Luncheon (Jessica Dunlap)

(1) The next Senior Luncheon will be on Thursday, June 15th, with an organ recital at 11:45, service at 12:15, and lunch following.

v) Sunday Coffee Hour (Jessica Dunlap)

(1) Sunday Coffee Hour will be moving to the side lawn starting June 4th.

vi) Women's Social (Jessica Dunlap)

- (1) Started back up again this month. It will be on the first Thursday of the month through September
- vii) Men's Social (Jessica Dunlap)
 - (1) No leader currently, so nothing scheduled at the moment.
 - (2) Different than Vocare.
- viii) Tuesday morning faith group (Jessica Dunlap)
 - (1) Hasn't met in years.
- ix) Parents Connect (Mary Lindsay Evans)
 - (1) Mary Lindsay and Linda McDuffie were the last leaders.
 - (2) Not currently active; it would make sense to partner with the family ministries group going forward – Mary Lindsay to check with Jennifer Everhart and Liz Weathers on that.
- x) Ministries listed in 2023 Parish Events grouping, but received no report
 - (1) Henry Hall Sunday School Set up
 - (2) Common Morning, Common Prayer (Lent)
 - (a) Still happening. Down to one group at the moment that meets at Toast on Tuesdays.
- c) Pastoral Care (Margaret Kahn) - deferred
- d) Spiritual Formation Adult (Ed Gash) – Notes on Shared Drive
 - i) Group leaders are Mitzi Alexander & Vicki Bott. Taking a short break and meeting again in July. Successful Lenten series. Discussion about working with other groups that are meeting and wanting to offer formation to the congregation.
 - ii) Information from the Diocese brought information about HUGS and Camp56. AB shared that the camps have been shared with the youth.
- e) Spiritual Formation Youth (Anne Binns) – Notes on Shared Drive
 - i) Lay leaders have stepped in to ensure coverage for Youth and Children's Ministries. Families Ministry Circle Group has met and is charged with keeping Family/Children's Ministry going until a replacement can be found.
 - ii) Beth Hardin, Tammy Langley, Diana Smith, and Drew Kirkland are leading weekly EYC meetings. The final gathering will be May 21st. The youth and advisors are in the process of planning their 2024 pilgrimage. A meeting will be held on May 21st prior to EYC, with presentations on three possible sites.
 - iii) Parishioners are leading Children's Chapel weekly and will continue throughout the summer during the 9am service. Amy McKee has shared a signup for summer services.
 - iv) Vacation Bible School is scheduled for Monday, June 19th through Friday, June 23rd. Amy McKee and Charlotte Hayden are leading VBS this year, with Jessica Dunlap's assistance. Registration for the week is open, and volunteers are welcome. There are currently have 20 kids signed up and more are expected.
 - v) Work is underway to fill Sarah's position. The goal is to hire two individuals – a Youth Minister and a Children's Minister. Both positions will be 15 hour per week positions and will report directly to Cat. Draft versions of the job descriptions are available on the shared drive. They are to be posted in a variety of places as determined by the committee once finalized.

6) Finance Report (Karen)

- a) April 2023 Financial Statements
 - i) YTD Pledge receipts are favorable to net pledge budget by \$16.0k; favorable to the prior year by \$42.4k.
 - ii) YTD Total revenue favorable to budget by \$22.1k mainly due to plate offerings by \$1.4k, net pledge receipts by \$16.0k, and General Offering by \$4.2k and Pledge received-previous year unfavorable by \$1.6k. Month favorable to budget by \$11.4k. YTD Favorable to 2022 by \$32.4k.
 - iii) YTD Expenses favorable to budget by \$11.4k. Salary & benefits over budget by \$1.8k, Ministry under budget by \$4.9k, Office over budget by \$0.1k, Buildings & Grounds under budget by \$6.3k and Utilities under budget by \$2.1k. Unfavorable to 2022 by \$30.3k. In comparison to 2022, Salary & Benefits is \$38.6k higher, Ministry is \$3.6k lower, Office is \$3.9k lower, Building & Grounds is \$1.4k higher, Utilities is \$0.2k lower and Diocesan Assessment is \$2.0k lower.

- iv) Note payable to Holy Comforter Foundation balance is \$73.9k with balloon payment of \$68k due November 2024.
- b) 2729 Park Rd. – brief update
 - i) Rev. Cat and Lewis have indicated interest in living at 2729 Park Road house. The Vestry is analyzing the feasibility.
 - ii) ~~If clergy is using the home, then the church does not need to pay taxes. This is based on the use of the property on January 1st.~~
 - iii) ~~Assessing comps from similar properties within 2 miles. We need to understand what rent is and the current agreement we have with the current renters. If use of the property is intended to change we need to give them notice no later than 6/30. The current renters pay \$2,500 per month and are responsible for utilities and lawn care. Holy Comforter charges \$160/month for lawn care. The tenants would like to stay.~~
 - iv) ~~Reasonable rent is \$3,000– \$3,200 per month, utilities not included, and lawn care for \$160/month.~~
 - v) ~~A follow up discussion via Zoom before the next vestry meeting in June, is likely, once we have more details.~~
- c) Disability – Maternity
 - i) ~~Rev. Cat is going out on maternity leave. Her Letter of Agreement states 6 weeks full pay and the 2nd 6 weeks is less clear from the Church Pension Fund website, conversation with Diocese and the actual disability carrier, AFLAC.~~
 - ii) ~~Clergy Short Term Disability is 70% of assessable compensation up to a maximum of \$1,000/week. Holy Comforter continues to pay Cat 100% of her salary and the disability carrier reimburses the church.~~
 - iii) *Motion (CK): To commit to paying Cat 100% of her salary for the full 12 weeks of her maternity leave with the intention to seek reimbursement from insurance for all 12 weeks. 2nd (JE); Approved (Vestry)*

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7) **Mid-Meeting/Break (Bob Murphy)**

- a) Reflect on item that has been mentioned several times tonight: Leadership. Other instances of leadership in this community occurred right after David left and Sally was on the way out. There was a lot of discussion about whether it was the right time for the building campaign. The country was heading into a recession, but we had the leadership at that time to go forward with the campaign and we achieved it. Sometimes we tend to look at the empty seats and finances and look down. But we've never let anyone down and we are very blessed by the people in this congregation for our benefit and others.

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

- a) Notes on Shared Drive
- b) Parish Retreat
 - i) Was wonderful experience, great to spend time with people.
 - ii) Theme worked well, huge thanks to planning committee who put in such a huge amount of prep work.
 - iii) Sunday service was beautiful - music from Gray, volunteers for Spanish, created prayer banners which will be displayed in church for Pentecost
- c) Spanish
 - i) People in place to help with La Misa in Greg's absence (notices, readings, sermon etc.)
- d) Children & Youth
 - i) La Escuelita weekly chapel finishes on May 22nd
 - ii) VBS - Amy McKee, Jessica Dunlap, Charlotte Moore. Mon June 19th - Fri 23rd.
 - iii) EYC - had pilgrimage meeting on Sunday, last EYC on May 21st, with monthly summer meetups planned.
 - iv) Communications by Beth through me via Constant Contact. Doing a Children's Ministry email (a little less often)

- v) Job descriptions being finalised (for 2 separate Children / Youth roles), list of places to advertise compiled. Search committee coming together. Hope to start interviewing mid-late June.
- e) Baptisms
 - i) 2 baptisms on Pentecost: Sam Williams and Harley Cassar (4 year old who attends La Escuelita). With interactive children's friendly sermon (no children's chapel)
 - ii) The grandfather of Sam Williams is an ordained deacon and will be involved, doing the baptism of his grandson. Baptism prep meetings scheduled with both families.
- f) Circle Groups
 - i) Pastoral Care - seeking someone to be group lead. Meeting to discuss how to move forward.
 - ii) Family Ministries - planning ahead, recruiting/providing volunteers. Been actively involved in search process for new Children/Youth Ministers so far.
 - iii) I also attend Finance, and Liturgy & Music CGs.
- g) Sunday Morning programming is currently wide open for the summer. Let Cat/Jessica know soon.
- h) Remember to put VPOD duties in diary. Don't forget the visitor parking signs.

9) Rector's Report (Greg Brown) – absent

- a) Day 0 – Camino

10) Senior Warden's Report (Joyce Bott)

- a) Resolution of Diocesan Grant – expansion of Concert for the Human Family
 - i) A grant opportunity for \$25,000 put together by Beth Hardin. Got Vestry support through email. Got Greg's signature on Sunday, Jason needs to sign as clerk.
 - ii) Purpose to help us or other churches to host in the Greater NC area.
 - iii) *JB Motion (JB) to support the grant application; Second (JS); Approved (Vestry)*
- b) Update of Employee Policies of Holy Comforter
 - i) Kathy Trotter and James Moore to assist. JB sent email with 3 versions to use as a template.
- c) Convention Delegate
 - i) Come up with a person by Memorial Day.
- d) Safe Church
 - i) We're all supposed to be trained in it. Niki too as she's an elected official. Should be certified every 3 years. All done online. Should receive a link with a list of modules to be completed. Should discuss with Family Ministries group. Aim for doing it by June meeting. Module 1-10 (roughly 2 hours for all of them).
- e) Jason – KH created process document for vestry minutes/summary and financial documents. Need to review.

11) Junior Warden's Report (Carlyle Knox)

- a) VPOD duties – make sure you know your schedule. If you change, let Jessica know so she can update the bulletin. Lanyard around neck, the green/blue thing is right next to the 4 main keys you need. Will get list online.
- b) Campus Security/Site Assessment – Law in NC that you can declare your property as firearms free property. If someone shows up in church with a firearm, we can't do anything about it. We can declare our campus as one by posting signs.
 - i) Do we make ourselves more of a target if you put something up?
 - ii) Kirt's question about our emergency plan. On shared drive are things from the diocese that will help us create a security plan. Need to create a team and an assessment where we might have some needs. Free of charge can come do a site visit and assessment.
 - iii) Interesting question we need to follow up on with firearms given the preschool.
 - iv) We need to create a committee to help discuss security on campus. Bob volunteered.
- c) First Aid Kits
 - i) Back of narthex, one in the kitchen and one in the food closet.
- d) Visitor Parking Spaces
 - i) Working to make permanent. Don't use on windy days.

12) Old Business/Reminders

- a) Approval of April 2023 Minutes (Joyce) – *Motion (EG); Second (JS); Approved (Vestry)*
- b) June 2023 BGG Speaker, Ed G., scheduling a speaker from The Relatives
- c) May 2023 BGG Speaker, Kirt H, likely 21st
 - i) Conversations about God and Money. Being more transparent
- d) June 2023 BGG Speaker, Bob Murphy
- e) Ministry Reports Due June: Pastoral Care (Margaret); La Misa/ESL/La Escuelita (Natalie); Women's Ministries (Mary A.)

13) Closing Prayer (Jason Evans)

- a) Prayer to St. Brendon – patron saint of navigators. Today is his feast day.