

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMFORTER
Vestry Meeting Minutes
August 16, 2023 at 6:00pm Henry Hall

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

Vestry Members Absent: Tom Cooke, Jason Evans, Margaret Kahn,

Clergy Present: Fr. Greg Brown

Clergy Absent: Rev. Cat Connolly

Recording Secretary: Niki Manke

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

1) Convene: Opening Prayer (Ed Gash)

a) Spiritual Practice

2) Agenda Approval (Joyce Bott)

a) *Motion (AB); Second (EG); Approval (7 aye, 1 abstain)*

3) Scripture/Bible Study (Carlyle Knox)

a) Luke 1:46-55; Mary's Song

4) Finance Report (Karen Crane)

a) July 2023 Financial Statements

- i) YTD Pledge receipts unfavorable to net pledge budget by \$11.8k; favorable to prior YTD by \$26.2k.
- ii) YTD Total revenue favorable to budget by \$0.6k due to plate offerings by \$1.8k, net pledge receipts by \$11.8k, General Offering over by \$3.8k, Visitor under by \$0.3k, Interest and Dividends over by \$8.8K, Sales Tax Refunds over \$2.5k, Other Income by \$0.1k and Pledge Received-Previous Year by \$5.6k. Month unfavorable to budget by \$0.6k. YTD favorable to 2022 by \$29.5k.
- iii) YTD Expenses favorable to budget by \$14.7. Salary & benefits over budget by \$1.1k, Ministry under budget by \$11.0k, Office under budget by \$2.9k, and Buildings & Grounds over budget by \$2.0k and Utilities under by \$1.8k. Unfavorable to 2022 by \$20.0k. In comparison to 2022, Salary & benefits is \$22.2k higher.
- iv) Note payable to Holy Comforter Foundation balance is \$73.9k with balloon payment of \$68k due November 2024.
- v) Contributions were ahead in the beginning of the year, but we have started to balance out. Holly has reviewed some of the contributions and is not concerned (yet) that we will not meet our goal. She has noted that there are a few big contributors that have not submitted yet. Holly has the ability, and authority, to look through the breakdown of who contributes via check, plate, and card. There is a fee associated with the card which requires the church to pay a fee. There was question of how big a line item the fee may be and up until now it was not thought to be significant enough to make its own line item.
- vi) Giving Statements are going to be sent in late August/early September.
- vii) A request for budgets has been made.
- viii) By the next Vestry Meeting, it is strongly encouraged for all Vestry members to make their 2024 pledge.

b) Tentative meeting has been setup for the Strategic Modeling Group for 8/28 or 8/29. An item for discussion is to develop recommendations and implementations to help balance the budget.

c) Audit

- i) A Parish Audit was completed by Jim Stewart and found the statements to be adequate. A certification must be completed and submitted.
- ii) *Motion: The certification that has been completed by Jim Stewart may be presented to the diocese. (EG); Second (JS); Approved (Vestry)*
- d) Exploring other options for income
 - i) CATS Park N Ride
 - ii) Parking for Festival in the Park
 - iii) Facilities Rentals
 - (1) A copy of our Facilities Use Policies is on the Shared Drive. It was last updated 2 years ago with COVID guidelines.
 - (2) Myers Parks Baptist offers their facilities and gives their prices with staff. A copy of their rentals has been included on the Vestry Drive.

5) Foundation Requests

- a) Mission & Ministry (John Snelsire)
 - i) Detailed notes regarding the following requests are on the Shared Drive
 - (1) The Holy Comforter Foundation is requesting Vestry Approval to fund requests from the Mission & Ministry Fund to the total of \$18,500.
 - (a) Genesis Project – up to \$5,000
 - (b) Chaperones Pilgrimage 2023 – up to \$5,000
 - (c) Women's Retreat - \$1,000
 - (i) The original request was made for \$500, but it was felt by the Vestry that this should be increased to \$1,000. *Motion (JS): Increase the requested amount to \$1,000; Second (xx); Approved (Vestry)*
 - (d) Galilee Ministry Lighting - \$7,500
 - (2) *Motion (JS): To approve the aforementioned requests from the Mission & Ministry Fund in the total of \$18,500; Second (EG); Approved (Vestry)*
- b) Building & Grounds (Carlyle Knox)
 - i) Detailed document is located on the Shared Drive.
 - ii) *Motion (CK): Requesting \$25,384 in funds from the Foundation for projects completed in 2022 and 2023. Second (EG); Approved (Vestry).*
 - iii) The full 2023 distributed amount for Building & Grounds to offset the cost of following projects.

6) Ministry Reports

- a) Music & Worship (Patrick Pope)
 - i) Full report located on the Shared Drive
 - ii) Focus is on music for weekly Eucharists
 - iii) Choir remains strong with a roster of 38 singers and an average Sunday attendance of 26-28 singers. Ended the season on June 4th with a Hymn Festival featuring the congregations favorite hymns.
 - iv) The Handbell and Children's Choir did good work last year and will continue the upcoming year.
 - v) Choir and friends made a pilgrimage to Washington, DC in July to sing at the Washington National Cathedral. The Cathedral's broadcast had reached 8,000 views by the following Monday morning! The next pilgrimage is planned for May 10-22, 2024 to Ireland and Scotland. It has garnered widespread interest and support with 72 people signed up to travel.
 - vi) This summer's music series at the 9:00am Eucharist has gone well with guest musicians each week. This continues through August 28th. The guests have included both returning and new musicians.
 - vii) Choral Evensong will return this year offered monthly on the third Sunday of the month at 5:00pm beginning September 17th. The average attendance last year was 71 people ranging from 49 to 150. This year, each month's Evensong will have a mission and outreach focus where the offering received at the Evensong will be given to the sponsored ministry.

- viii) Patrick has spoken with Fr. Greg regarding an upcoming three-month sabbatical in the second half of 2024. Dates still to be determined. Patrick is grateful for the personnel policies allowing a sabbatical after each six years of service.
- ix) October 9, 2023 will mark Patrick's thirteenth year with Holy Comforter.
- b) Outreach/BOW (John Snelsire)
 - i) Update given during the Foundation Requests for Mission & Ministry.
- c) IWC/ Pathfinders/ BGG (Kirt Hibbitts)
 - i) Invite Welcome Connect
 - (1) Kickoff Sunday is September 10th. Recruiting the Circle Groups and Ministries to have a table at the ministry fair.
 - (2) Request: Identify people we want to get involved (newcomers and more), invite them and escort them to the fair.
 - ii) Pathfinders
 - (1) Genesis II – Working to discern Holy Comforter's calling; 18-24 month process started in June.
 - (a) Rev. Canon Pat Grace presented two sessions of *The Church in the New Millennium* during the Hour in April and June.
 - (b) Four upcoming initiative and tasks
 - (i) Neighborhood Mapping & Observation: Engage the parish in a mapping exercise and walking the neighborhood
 - (ii) Four Questions: Will prompt congregation to ponder four questions (ex: Why are you part of Holy Comforter at this point in your life?)
 - (iii) Foundation Funding: Putting together request for \$5,000 to support administrative costs
 - (iv) Formation offerings: Will offer classes, book studies
 - iii) Blessings Gratitude Generosity
 - (1) Annual Giving – Liz & Jonathan Weathers are co-leaders for the 2024 AGC campaign
 - (a) Theme: Glad & Generous Hearts
 - (b) Goal: 200 pledges for \$850,000 (last year: 185 pledges for \$835,000). NO second ask.
 - (c) Timing: 10/22 Kickoff; 11/19 Commitment Sunday
 - (d) Early Pledge Commitments from Leader & Small Groups: August Ministry Leaders' meeting asked ministry and circle group leaders to facilitate generosity conversation within groups. Pledge cards go out September with a request to pledge by October 1, 2024. Information is now live on website.
 - (2) Stewardship Education – Top priority for BGG is to implement a stewardship education program in 2023
 - (a) Talked about *God and Money* in May
 - (b) Currently testing a financial stewardship program called FreedUp from GoodSen\$. Six-week program using an app and small group conversations. Cost is \$99 per person and plan to offer ways to financially support parishioners who need help, funded by the Stewardship budget (000867)

7) Mid-Meeting Break (Mary Amos)

- a) Read an excerpt from the Liturgy of Showing Kindness from the Liturgies for Hope.

8) Associate Rector's Report (Cat Connolly)

- a) Absent – sick leave approved through 8/21

9) Rector's Report (Greg Brown)

- a) Camino Sharing
- b) Clergy Help while Cat is on sick leave
 - i) Rev. Ed Pickup has agreed work with us in a variety of capacities for \$300 per week. He has celebrated and preached, served as a deacon, initiated pastoral care, attended HCBG and gotten involved with Anti-Racism work, and is considering options for Adult Spiritual

Formation. He expects to be with us until mid-October, a reasonable time to expect Rev. Cat to return.

c) Youth/Children's Ministry Search Update

- i) Candidates: We had three, one of which withdrew after initial contact; two others do not appear to have the experience and qualifications to fill the position.
- ii) This process continues and we hope later this month will be a good time to gather more prospects, as students and educators return to school.
 - (1) Concern was expressed that we are cutting ourselves short by advertising these positions as two part-time positions. It was again discussed that due to needs and budget it was decided upon by the search committee to advertise it in this way.

d) Liturgy and Worship

- i) Summer Schedule: There have been a few requests to continue the present schedule into the fall. I plan on returning to the 3-service schedule and then monitor both attendance and reaction
- ii) La Misa: Attendance has been poor this summer; averaging less than 5 each week. In August the numbers have moved back into the teens. We will monitor what happens when we return to the 12:30pm service time

e) Staff

- i) Health Care Coverage / Compensation
- ii) We still have no deacon, but I hope to speak with the bishop soon

f) Circle Group updates

- i) Quarterly Leadership Meeting happened on August 10. It was very well attended and there seemed to be a very positive spirit in the air. Our plan is to move the first ask in the ministry groups to create momentum for the campaign.
- ii) Patricia Hatch will be the leader for Beyond Our Walls

g) Vacation for Family Reunion

- i) August 2-6 was very enjoyable. Unfortunately, my schedule has only allowed one day off since. I plan on taking some break time next week Wednesday during the day and all day Friday to regain some energy

h) Rector Reflection

- i) Fr. Greg shared with the Vestry a deeply personal story and encouraged the Vestry to reflect on it such that we Know Our Story and our Giving Story.

10) Senior Warden's Report (Joyce Bott)

- a) Oyster Roast (Bob)
 - i) Scheduled for November 11th which is the Saturday before the Annual Meeting.
 - ii) Bob Murphy is the Vestry Liaison. He will have a table at the Ministry Kick-off on September 10th.
 - iii) Jessica Dunlap and Tammy Langley have a wealth of knowledge and information regarding "to-do lists". Jessica Dunlap is willing to do the shopping because she can complete it while she does the shopping for Community Dinners. requested someone to organize the Sign-Up Genius this year. It was suggested to make sure we included a sign-up for the "Clean-up Crew".
- b) Need nominations for New Vestry members.
- c) Annual Meeting – November 12th
 - i) Template on the drive for PowerPoint presentations. This must be used if you want time to present at the Annual Meeting.
 - ii) When presenting your ministry, please list the members on the title slide.
 - iii) Presentations are due October 15th.

11) Junior Warden's Report (Carlyle Knox)

- a) VPOD Schedule and Duties

- i) The only exterior doors that don't have to be unlocked are in the basement. VPOD must also go back and make sure all the doors are locked prior to leaving.
- ii) Will be creating/updating the checklist.
- iii) The schedule has now been updated through December 31st. Located on the Shared Drive.
- iv) We need to remember to put out the Visitor signs (when it is not windy). Holly is working with Maurice to have cement put in to make them permanent signs.
- b) Solar Panel Update
 - i) Holly and Carlyle have emailed people who have reviewed the proposals and they all asked good questions. Laura will be coming in September to verify the proposals items. Carlyle would like for her to attend the September Vestry meeting so we can vote on the contract in October.
- c) Parking lot lighting – No updates.
- d) Painting lot lines
 - i) To be completed prior to the beginning of the La Escuelita Weekday School year.
- e) Fall Clean-Up date – needs to be established.

12) Old Business/Reminders

- a) Approval of July 2023 Minutes (Joyce) – *Motion (EG); Second (KH); Approved (Vestry, 1 abstain)*
- b) August 2023 BGG Speaker, Jonathan Wells (Natalie Parker)
- c) September 2023 BGG Speaker, Margaret Kahn
- d) September Ministry Reports, Tom C., Bob M., Jason E.
- e) Safe Church – Keep working on it!
- f) Bishop's Visit is coming up. There will be a dinner with the Vestry the night before. We have 9 Confirmation Candidates!

13) Closing Prayer (Ed Gash)

- a) Prayer from the First People