

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMFORTER
Vestry Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2023 at 5:30pm Henry Hall

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

Vestry Members Absent: Tom Cooke

Clergy Present: Fr. Greg Brown

Clergy Absent: Rev. Cat Connolly

Recording Secretary: Niki Manke (virtual)

Guest: Karen Crane – Holy Comforter Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair; Laura Combs (Eagle Solar)

1) Convene: Opening Prayer (Bob Murphy)

a) Spiritual Practice

2) Genesis – Neighborhood Mapping

3) Agenda Approval (Joyce Bott)

a) *Motion (); Second (); Approval ()*

4) Finance Report (Karen Crane)

a) August 2023 Financial Statements

- i) YTD Pledge receipts unfavorable to net pledge budget by \$3.8k; favorable to prior YTD by \$93.5k.
- ii) YTD Total revenue favorable to budget by \$1.1k due to plate offerings over by \$1.4k, net pledge receipts under by \$3.8k, General Offering under by \$2.5k, Visitor under by \$0.3k, Sales Tax Refunds over \$2.5k, Interest and Dividends over by \$10.8k, Other Income over by 0.1k and Pledge Received-Previous Year under by \$7.1k. Month favorable to budget by \$1.8k. YTD favorable to 2022 by \$101.5k.
- iii) YTD Expenses favorable to budget by \$21.8k. Salary & benefits under budget by \$10.3k, Ministry under budget by \$16.8k, Office under budget by \$4.4k, and Buildings & Grounds over budget by \$8.6k and Utilities over by \$1.1k. Unfavorable to 2022 by \$98.8k. In comparison to 2022, Salary & benefits is \$68.0k higher.
- iv) Note payable to Holy Comforter Foundation balance is \$73.9k with balloon payment of \$68k due November 2024.

b) Strategic Modeling

- i) Holly working to pull the budget information.

5) Scripture/Bible Study (Joyce Bott)

a) Matthew 4:12-17;

6) Ministry Reports

a) Large Parish Events (Bob M.)

- i) Blessing of the Animals – October 1, 2023
- ii) Chili Cook-off – October 22, 2023
- iii) Oyster Roast – November 11, 2023
- iv) Gingerbread Houses – December 17, 2023

b) Parish Events – small/weekly (Jason)

c) Communications/Technology (Tom C.)

- i) Full report is on the Shared Drive

- ii) The circle group has continued to meet regularly. Paul Smith continues to guide the group forward, a big shout out to him! There is an ongoing issue of needing more people involved with the broadcast.
- iii) The updates and upgrades to the broadcast capabilities are mostly done.
- iv) A large tv monitor is planned to be installed in Henry Hall taking the place of the roll down screen and projector.
- v) The choir has asked about some sort of monitor so that they can see the sermon better.
- vi) The biggest issue right now is the failure of the website design group to deliver a Spanish language section of the site. Discussions are being had with the company.
- vii) Discussion of digital signage around the campus has been shelved for the time being as being a fine idea, but difficult to implement without some major work.
- viii) The zoom screen device is operating normally.

7) Solar Panel Update (Carlyle Knox & Laura Combs – Eagle Solar)

- a) A revised proposal has been sent to Carlyle which is to be shared with the group. The revised proposal is based on information that was used based on the power bills provided by Holly Williams and information from Duke stating that we must use a smaller system.
- b) Duke will be revising the rate is calculated beginning December 1, 2023.
- c) Plan to vote at October Vestry meeting.
- d) Holy Comforter is not required to sign any paperwork until it is confirmed that the rebate is still available. The rebate is due to expire in December of this year. Laura will reach out to Duke to confirm that the rebate exists.
- e) There is an up-front cost of \$3,000 for the drawings which will be completed within 3 weeks. This payment includes the \$2,500 fee and to pay the Engineer.
 - i) Vestry had much discussion, with many questions that follow-up answers are being inquired of the Eagle Solar as well as information from other churches who have been through this process.

8) Mid-Meeting Reflection/Break (Jason)

- a) Read an excerpt from the introduction of the book *People of the Way: Renewing Episcopal Identity*. He felt it was very fitting to the hardwork we are currently doing especially with Genesis II.

9) Associate Rector's Report (Cat Connolly)

- a) Absent – sick leave approved through 10/2

10) Rector's Report (Greg Brown)

- a) Clergy Status
 - i) Rev. Ed Pickup has continued his wonderful work with us in a variety of capacities. He will be leaving the beginning of November. He may overlap Rev. Cat's return.
 - ii) Cat is recovering well, and now needs to rest. What with disability, maternity, and unused vacation, we can expect to see her in late October or early November.
 - iii) Bishop Sam is discussing with Archdeacon Jan Lamb the possibilities of our having a deacon.
- b) **Youth/Children's Ministry Search Update**
 - i) Candidates: No news to report, the search continues.
 - ii) I hope to meet with Steve Cheyney (at Charlotte) next week to explore possibilities.
- c) **Liturgy and Worship**
 - i) Summer Schedule: Attendance is up (so far) after returning to the traditional schedule (8/10/12:30).
 - ii) La Misa: Attendance increased a little as the summer waned. There has been an uptick since returning to 12:30pm. We have a potential baptism scheduled for January.
- d) **Staff**
 - i) We have resolved a compensation issue that has worked well for all.

- ii) We anticipate that Director of Music Dr. Patrick Pope will take a sabbatical in 2024. It will be for three months. We will need to advise a time so as to take into account our Program Year; and budget finances for supply musicians.
- e) **Circle Group updates**
 - i) Our next Quarterly Leadership Meeting will happen in November. There is new life and leadership (Patricia Hatch) in the Outreach Circle Group; and renewed vitality in the Adult Spiritual Journeys Circle Group. Others are revisioning, which is appropriate for where they are in their respective life cycles.
- f) **Rector Programming**
 - i) I will give my next Camino Talk on Sunday 9/24. It will be about architecture.
 - ii) Request that the Vestry to divide and conquer at Community Dinners.
- g) **Local Concerns**
 - i) I was asked in August by our Park Road Clergy Association how we deal with technology/cameras on our campus, regarding security. It was noted that all of our cameras are only used during the service.
 - ii) If you are curious about the diocesan church building safety policy, find it here: https://www.episdionc.org/uploads/images/policy-on-the-safety-of-church-buildings_996.pdf

11) Senior Warden's Report (Joyce Bott)

- a) Update Nominating Committee (John Snelsire)
- b) Community Dinner sign up
- c) Safe Church
 - i) We need to get it done.

12) Junior Warden's Report (Carlyle Knox)

- a) Fall Clean-Up – October 28th
- b) Fall Clean-Up inside, tentative October 7th
- c) Painting Parking Lot Lines, October 7th & October 21st

13) Old Business/Reminders

- a) Approval of August 2023 Minutes (Joyce)
- b) October 2023 BGG Speaker, Carlyle Knox
- c) October Ministry Reports, Margaret, Ed, Anne

14) Closing Prayer (Bob Murphy)