

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

NOVEMBER 15, 2022, VESTRY MINUTES

Date: November 15, 2022 **Time Started:** 4:30 p.m. **Time Ended:** 6:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 13, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. (Please note this is sooner than normal, but the date was agreed upon by the attending members.)

Members Present: Kathleen Phillips, Senior Warden; Peggy Wilson, Junior Warden; Dick Jordan; Nancy Larkin; Rebecca Sharp; Carol Van Voorhis; Barbara Schauer; Pam McNally; Mark Holland

Other Attendees: David McNair, Rector; Lorrie Cooper, Clerk; Bill Sewell, Treasurer (present via phone); Peggy Barnes and Nicki Toole re update on financial restructuring; Barbara Moloney re unfinished item re church safety.

DISCUSSION/FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

AGENDA ITEM: Call to Order, Opening Prayer (*David McNair*)

AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Vestry Minutes (*Clerk, Lorrie Cooper*)
Minutes from the October 18, 2022, meeting were unanimously approved.

AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Financial Report (*Bill Sewell*)

The October Year-To-Date financial reports are attached. Pledge receipts for the month were strong, and year-to-date receipts were 86.1% of budget. Receipts for early November have been strong as well, and I [*Bill Sewell*] remain optimistic that we can reach our full-year budgeted income.

Total operating expenses remain below budget. Propane expense is over budget, reflecting both price and usage. The vendor that approves our use of copyrighted music in services assessed an additional fee because we are broadcasting. The approved distributions from the Living Gifts Fund will take place in November.

Bill is unable to attend the November meeting in person, but will to join the meeting via Zoom. Peggy Barnes and Nicki Toole will attend in order to provide an update on the planned restructure of the ECHS finance function and the search for bookkeeping assistance. [*A shortened version of Nicki Toole's summary of the search for a bookkeeper can be found at the end of these notes.*]

Discussion: Feedback was presented regarding the qualifications of Katie Douglas, who is the leading candidate for the treasurer position. (*See shortened version of Nicki Toole's summary at end of these notes.*) Katie presents as "incredibly affable" and quite efficient. She believes her work for ECHS could eventually be accomplished in two to four hours per month, at a charge of \$30.00 per hour. She would work remotely, although she is willing to come to the church without charging for travel expense. She likes to work in PowerChurch, which is also the program ECHS plans to use. The online version will cost the church \$465 yearly, a cost which is considered reasonable. Bill Sewell offers to stay through the transition period.

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Peggy Barnes will continue in her role as assistant treasurer. A treasurer will also need to be chosen from someone in the parish. David McNair has met with Katie Douglas and is comfortable in relating to her. The decision to hire Katie Douglas will come from David McNair.

AGENDA ITEM: Old Business: Church Safety *(Barbara Moloney)*

Discussion of the ECHS Safety Report, which was emailed by David prior to the meeting. This topic was originally addressed by the Vestry in existence before the onset of the pandemic. At that time, Barbara Moloney was overseeing the matter and attended this 2022 meeting in order to summarize the topic and resulting actions, as well as additional actions. The church site had been visited by representatives from the local Sheriff's department, who provided a list of possible actions ECHS could take in order to strengthen the security of the church. Some actions required purchases and training. At that time, Vestry began by installing special locks on the outside doors. The next step would have been installation of Night Owl cameras to cover the parking lot and exterior of the church, which could be viewed during the service through internet. Although another possibility was to use two persons to patrol the parking lot with two-way radios, this suggestion was met with resistance from the ushers.

An additional exit for the sanctuary was proposed to allow for a quick exit of the congregation in the event of an "active shooter." Exit rehearsal could happen under the guise of being a fire drill. During discussion, a report from the Gun Violence Archives was presented by another member of that earlier Vestry in order to communicate the scarcity of active shooter events in American church settings.

Pam McNally suggested installing an additional exit door in the main sanctuary. There was a positive response by some for this suggestion. David McNair proposed that the Vestry let this information "percolate." The information could be thought about as a form of homework, and discussion can be resumed at the December Vestry meeting. Barbara Schauer challenged the Vestry to think of ways that ECHS can devote energy and resources on behalf of something good for the community rather than devoted our energy and resources in response to fear.

AGENDA ITEM: AED Training Report *(Carol Van Voorhis)*

Back in April Carol examined the AED (*automated external defibrillator*) at ECHS and found that it was in great condition, but the disposable electrode pads had expired. She then ordered new pads to replace the expired pads in the storage box of the unit. The battery in the unit is still up-to-date and working well. Believing that a class to review the AED and its use would be good for the Vestry and any other ECHS members who might be interested, Carol contacted the Madison County Fire Department to arrange for a class to be given by a certified CPR/AED instructor. She was referred to two different persons from the Fire Department who said they would be willing to teach a class. Unfortunately, neither of the two has been able to schedule a class. Carol is not a certified instructor but is very familiar with the AED and its use. She obtained teaching material through the manufacturer of the AED and proposes that she offer a short AED class for those interested.

David suggests coming up with some dates in January of 2023 for having these classes, which may contain no more than twelve attendees at a time.

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AGENDA ITEM: Rector's Report *(David McNair)*

1. Pastoral issues:

Julie Johnson – will undergo heart surgery on Tuesday, Nov. 22, to replace/repair two heart valves that are leaking. Her son Rob will be in town the week of the surgery.

Esther Moriarty – continues to receive regular leukemia treatment at Duke University Hospital. She is taking part in a new leukemia trial drug.

Shannon Dowler – is recovering well from double mastectomy surgery on 10/19 after discovering several weeks ago that she has breast cancer.

Francis Knisley – is back home and doing physical therapy to regain her strength and balance. She has applied to Meals on Wheels in order to receive lunches several days a week.

Mike Robinson – will undergo knee replacement surgery on Friday, December 16.

Robert John Gillespie – Is at home recovering from emergency open-heart surgery on Oct. 24. He has a upbeat attitude and is slowly regaining his strength.

2. Visitors to ECHS in recent weeks:

Shelly and Jim Williams visited on November 14, 2022. They are building a house in Marshall and plan to move here from Concord, North Carolina, ASAP. Current address: 61 Grove Ave NW, Concord NC 28025. Jrwilliams23@gmail.com

3. New to ECHS:

Benton Hester moved membership from Good Shepherd Episcopal, Punta Gorda, Florida, to ECHS. Benton's address is 319 Deer Run Drive, Mars Hill, NC 28754

Christina Hester has joined ECHS and wants to be added to our church registry. She was a Lutheran before joining ECHS.

4. The newly established committee for devising a strategy and plan for intentional connection, reconnection and welcoming of former and prospective members to ECHS has not yet met. I will set a meeting date soon.

5. ECHS RECKONING WITH RACE will participate in the "Sacred Ground" during the winter months of 2023. This is a Madison County-based dialogue series exploring race and faith. David will be leading one of the Sacred Ground small groups.

6. I plan to suspend the First Wednesday evening potluck and prayer gatherings until there is a renewed interest in that meeting.

7. Request that announcements given to Martie for inclusion in ECHS publications be as pithy as possible. Lengthy announcements necessitate the Sunday bulletins use extra paper, and often more detail is provided than needed.

8. Reminder: If you are serving as Vestry rep on Sundays, please check in with me before the service so that we can communicate pertinent info.

9. FYI: Martie is on vacation November 11- 20.

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10. **If the Stewardship financial pledges fall significantly short of the 2023 proposed budget, a called congregational meeting will happen Sunday, December 18,** following the 10:30am service to discuss a Plan B budget. Please hold this date on your calendar and attend if at all possible.
11. The “Steve Davidowski and Friends Christmas Concert” is Thursday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m. at Marshall Presbyterian Church. All proceeds will benefit Neighbors in Need.
12. Christmas Eve service on Saturday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Day service on Sunday, December 25 at 10:30 a.m.
Service of Christmas Lessons and Carols on Sunday, January 1, at 10:30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM: Sr. Warden’s Report (*Kathleen Phillips*)

- The **Finance Committee:** Next meeting TBA – Early December
- **Transitions for ECHS Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer:** A sub-committee has moved forward on the search for a bookkeeper to replace Bill Sewell and Martie Carson as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. They will bring a full report to the vestry at the meeting on Tuesday, November 15, 2022.
- **The Stewardship 2023 Committee:**
Completed its mission with the Ingathering on Sunday, November 13, 2022.
Gratitude for a job well done goes to Jim Haaga, chair, Ty Jones, Carolyn Homra, Colleen Boll, and Paula White, with assistance from Peggy Barnes, chair of the Finance Committee.
- The **Living Gifts Fund Board:** Next quarterly meeting January 10, 2023.
The committee moved forward to notify recipients that the grant awards will be disbursed in December.
The resignation of Deidre Soileau from the Board was received with appreciation for her valuable service and acknowledgement of her desire to focus her energies in other ministries. John Graeter, chair, will present replacement suggestions at the December vestry meeting.
- **ECHS Communications Management:**
Livestreaming: In response to chronic problems with the Facebook platform, as reported by several remote parishioners, an anonymous donor pledged funds to cover the cost of upgrading to a platform that will better serve the needs of the parish.
Based on extensive research by Jay Schauer, a subscription to **Vimeo** has been purchased. Jay has agreed to donate his time and skills to set up this new system and train staff and any interested parishioners in its use, maintenance, and capabilities.
Implementation will take place the week of November 20, when Martie returns from vacation. The transition will be complete in time for the first Sunday in Advent, November 27, 2022.
Other Media: Currently WIX Website, Facebook, MailChimp, Newsletters (one Monthly and two Weekly)

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We are seeking parishioners willing to team up to form a communications committee. Over the decades we have built a patchwork of ways and means of connecting both within and beyond our parish. This network is experiencing growing pains that signal a need for a more intentional and coordinated effort.

AGENDA ITEM: Jr. Warden's Report (*Peggy Wilson*)

Two parish workdays — October 29 and November 12— were well attended. Much outside work was accomplished: the cleaning of gutters, leaf removal, trimming of trees along the path to the Memorial Garden and on the woods bordering the parking areas. Bushes were trimmed and weeding was done around the parking area outside David McNair's office door. Day lilies were thinned out.

Preparation for painting was done to the double set of glass pane doors off the front patio. The double doors at the upper entrance to the office will also be prepared for painting. Doors will be painted the same red color as the trim. Enough paint remains in the storage room for these projects. Painting will begin this week if the weather allows.

Under the radar of usual workdays, trimming and cleaning has been done in the front flowerbeds. The Memorial Garden group put the final fall touches on those plantings until spring.

The energy survey assessment results have been received, and a report will be prepared pertaining mostly to lighting and heating. More details will come in the Junior Warden's December report.

AGENDA ITEM: Outreach Report (*Nancy Larkin*)

First Sunday for September was Homeward Bound: \$1030 will be sent to the organization. Mary Jo continues to coordinate quarterly breakfast for **A Hope**. Next breakfast date is December 1, and they have requested some other items. Mary Jo will provide information to Martie for *Weekly Spirit*. **NEXT Outreach Meeting is December 4.**

Luncheon for DSS workers was held October 27 (please see invite below, Thanks Deidre!) They were provided with Papa Nick's Lasagna and Cheese Manicotti and bread. Gift cards were given in the amount of \$15.00 each (seven from Camden and seven from Zuma). Pam McNally made all the desserts, and Nancy Whitaker provided salad. The DSS luncheon was very successful and gave those in attendance the opportunity to learn more about what social services workers are doing in Madison County. They serve many in both juvenile and adult placements. Deidre indicated that there is about the same number in each placement group. Those social workers in attendance thanked the church for its outstanding work. They indicated that ECHS has supported them the longest and most consistently!

Gift Cards for Christmas. Instead of Christmas Angels, the plan is to do a gift card drive for DSS beginning the first Sunday in November and lasting through the first Sunday in December. Pam McNally offered to decorate a box with a slit on top big enough to fit either gift cards or checks for gift cards. DSS has requested that the gift cards be in amount of \$25 from any of these three places: Walmart, Target, or Amazon. People not wishing to buy gift cards may simply write a check.

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Update on Joyful Jars- A total of 209 Joyful Jars were put together over three workdays (some were also done by Deidre). A total of \$1881 was collected, and each nonprofit will be sent a check for \$1717 from the sale of JJars's and quilt raffle tickets. A discussion of the pros and cons of the JJars resulted in the decision not to make so many different types of cookies and soups next year. Carol and Pam agreed to serve next year. Deidre and Nancy Larkin will need to be asked closer in time. It was a very successful event. At the end of the meeting, David McNair shared "A Prayer among Friends"

AGENDA ITEM: Next Vestry Meeting *(David McNair)*

Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at 4:30pm

Informal potluck get-together: December 6, 4:00pm. Not a meeting but an occasion to discuss ideas for how to generate revenue by promoting use of parts of the building during the week by people from the community.

AGENDA ITEM: Closing Prayer *(David McNair)*

Respectfully submitted,
Lorrie Cooper, Clerk

The following is a shortened version of Nicki Toole's report on the search for a Finance Contractor. She emailed the full report to the Vestry and David McNair.

The Finance Committee decided that a sub-committee would lead the search and transition for a contractor as well as begin transitioning to more modern processes: i.e., bank BillPay, payroll service (ADP), and online (multi-user) financial management software. This sub-committee is comprised of Bill Sewell, Peggy Barnes and Nicki Toole.

The search was for a contractor to handle most of the duties currently performed by Bill Sewell and Martie Carson. Peggy Barnes will continue her role as Assistant Treasurer handling income and receipts. The contractor would include bookkeeping and eventually may or may not include services from an independent accountant.

After exploring several possibilities, Nicki Toole contacted Grace Episcopal after learning that they use a contract bookkeeper, **Katie Douglas**. Katie was contacted by Nicki Toole on October 17 and made an excellent first impression on Nicki through her familiarity with both PowerChurch Online and also with ACS Realm. Katie's previous background was as an assistant controller for a large corporation before deciding to work as a bookkeeper for her own church, St John's in Haw Creek (Asheville). She now bookkeeps for several other churches, mostly in the diocese. Together Peggy Barnes, Bill Sewell and Nicki interviewed Katie via Zoom. Bill sent follow-up questions to which she has responded. Professional references were also contacted. The referrals were impeccable and without stated weaknesses. David McNair will also be meeting with Katie and can relay his impressions at the Vestry meeting.