

Vestry Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2025

Vestry members present: Senior Warden Amanda Hilty, Junior Warden Ron Pell, Gail Kase, Claire Gillespie, Keith Pierce, Mike Robinson, Jennifer Reda , Deb Carlson, Bendik Clark

Absent: None.

Others in Attendance: Rev. Dena Whalen, Clerk Deidre Soileau

Opening devotions: Keith Pierce

1. Pastoral Concerns

- Dena gave an update on Martie.
- Gail gave an update on Starr and Raven; “meals for Starr” have been claimed through June.
- Prayers for Barbara Moloney’s husband; the Ballard family, Clarence Biggs (Amanda’s brother-in-law)
Dena’s brother Marshall, and Marcus King’s friend
- Pray for the turmoil and stress created by changes in federal agencies – many are affected
- Immigrants (we will learn more during Lent)

2. **Approval of December 17 minutes**—completed December 3, 2024, via group emails.

3. **Approval of Gail Kase as Vestry rep to the Discernment Committee-** completed February 6.

4. Reports

Treasurer’s report page 4

Interim rector’s report page 4

In addition to the written report, Dena mentioned a request from La Esperanza to place a small statuette of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the sanctuary while they gather once a month to count rosaries. Vestry clarified that La Esperanza would select and pay for the statuette. Further discussion resulted in Ron agreeing to construct a small shelf for this purpose that can be used for Holy Spirit’s icons or other purposes throughout the year.

Senior warden’s report page 5

In addition to the written report, Amanda discussed a meeting held with stewardship consultant, the Rev. Richard Rowe; this is part of the discernment around part time or full time rector; this may lead to the consultant returning offer classes during Easter season, for Vestry and the Stewardship Committee. The consultant stressed that everything we have is God’s, not ours to give to God.

Junior Warden’s report page 6

5. Committee liaison reports

- Property page 6
- Celebration no report
- Outreach page 7
- Communication no report
- La Esperanza no report
- Welcome Ministry page 8
- Christian Ed page 8
- Church Caring Crew page 8
- Discernment page 6

6. Ice breaker

One skill or profession you would love to learn. Why?
 One skill or profession you hope you'll never have to learn! Why?

7. Follow-up from Vestry mini-retreat

Vestry discussed and agreed to shift Vestry liaisons from being tied to our nine standing committees to a system based on *all* of our ministries, grouped according to categories that would be easily recognized by an incoming rector (see chart on pages 9-13 for a detailed list).

Vestry liaison assignments for 2025 are shown in the chart below.

2024 System	2025 System	2025 Vestry liaison
-----	Worship/Music	Mike Robinson
Property Committee	Property	Ron Pell
Celebration Committee	Hospitality	Jennifer Reda
Outreach Committee	Outreach	Keith Pierce
Communication Committee	Communications	Gail Kase
Welcome Committee	Welcome Ministries	Claire Gillespie
Christian Education Committee	Christian Education and Fellowship	Deb Carlson
Church Caring Crew	Pastoral Care	Bendik Clark
Finance Committee	Finance	Amanda Hilty
Stewardship Committee		

(Discernment Committee falls outside the standing committee structure, and Gail Kase is the Vestry rep)

8. Sign-up for Vestry Opening Prayer/Reflection- See page 14.
9. Training for new vestry members as Sunday reps: Amanda will meet with each of the three new vestry members for training.
10. Vestry discussed reactions to call lists.

11. **Discussion on changing start time for Vestry meetings** (and default start times for church evening events) to allow people who work during the day to participate.
Start time has been moved to 5:30.
12. Closing Prayer & Blessing (Dena)

Treasurer's Report

Operating account balance - \$76,245.64

This is a very healthy balance (current cash position in the operating account) which is reflective of the of a past surplus (\$30k-ish) and a healthy amount of 2025 pledges already received and paid in full.

Total expenses for January were only \$8516.55

Savings/Money Market balance - \$136,674.31

This is the healthy cash position that I discussed with Amanda, Dena, and Bill. This could be construed as a "rainy day fund" should we need any major repairs or consider operating at a deficit for a short time should we choose to pursue a full time rector.

Pledges Received as of January 31, 2025 - \$37,145 or 16% of the pledge total for 2025.

If one were to evenly spread out pledges contributions per month we would take in about 8% of the pledge value, so this is really good news that we are sitting on double the amount of expected pledges received to date.

Interim Rector's report

Rev. Dena Whalen

Annual Parish Meeting took place on January 12. After reports were given, we thanked the outgoing vestry members, Carol VanVoorhis and Peggy Wilson; outgoing treasurer, Sam Shiver; outgoing finance chair, Peggy Barnes; outgoing LCF chair, John Graeter; and outgoing senior warden, Gail Kase. The following people were commissioned for new ministries: vestry – Keith Pierce, Jennifer Reda, Ron Pell; senior warden, Amanda Hilty; junior warden, Ron Pell; treasurer, Marcus King.

Vestry Mini-Retreat took place on Saturday, February 1, 9 am to 12 noon. We reflected on what it means to be Church through scripture and our own experiences. We reviewed the structure and governance of The Episcopal Church, the Diocese of WNC, and our parish. I presented a revised layout of Ministry Leadership at Holy Spirit. Our vestry liaisons have been assigned according to the committees at Holy Spirit. I recommended that we broaden the vestry roles to include ministry areas. We will review this further at our upcoming vestry meeting.

Worship

Sunday worship in this season after Epiphany, January and February, has had the theme of the ways God has been made known through Jesus. I have attempted to address the current political unrest in my preaching, focusing on who we are called to be as Church in difficult times. I continue to lead the Vespers service at Mars Hill Manor on the second Sunday each month.

Holy Spirit has been gifted a set of fourteen Stations of the Cross, made of wood and pewter. We will dedicate them on Sunday March 2. They are a gift from the Diocese of Northern Indiana through Brother John Huebner who will be our guest on March 2.

Pastoral

Starr O'Hara and her daughter, Raven, will continue in our prayers. Gail Kase is overseeing a

meal ministry, in which Starr comes by the church and gets prepared meals left in the freezer. I Martie Carson is progressing through her chemo treatments, which should end mid-April. Surgery will follow. Trusting that all goes well, Martie hopes to return as our Admin Assistant once she has recovered from surgery. This has been a particularly rough cold and flu season for our congregation, with continued outbreaks of Covid.

Formation and Fellowship

The theme for our Wednesday Lenten Program will be Stories and Fellowship with our Latina/Latino Neighbors, facilitated by Rebecca Sharp. The dates are March 12, 19, 26, and April 2 and 9. Friends from La Esperanza will join us to share our meal at 6:00 and program at 6:30. On April 9, our last Lenten Wednesday, the Church calendar date when we remember Dietrich Bonhoeffer, we will collect all we have gathered into Evening Prayer followed by our meal.

Beginning on Sunday March 2, I will begin offering what we'll call Sermon Dialogue for a short discussion about the sermon and reading following the worship service on Sundays.
Administrative

Martie and I have worked together to produce a list of duties for admin volunteers while she is in treatment. Martie will work when she is able and the team will cover for her when she can't.

Time Away

I was away in January from the 21 through the 27. Dennis Fortinos served as supply priest on January 26. I will be away to officiate at a wedding in Charleston March 28-30. Dennis Fortinos will serve as supply on Sunday, March 30.

Senior Warden's Report

Amanda Hilty

Greetings! It's been a little while since our last meeting. A new year has begun and with it new challenges and new opportunities will arise. We've had a few changes as we said "thank you" to those who completed their term and said "hello" to new vestry members at our annual meeting on Jan 18th.

On Feb 1, Dena led us in a vestry retreat where we spent time in prayer, reflection and discussion. Additionally, she reviewed Diocese leadership roles as well as our role as vestry. A reminder that if anyone would prefer to use the 3-ring binder with printouts of documents as well as a paper handbook, please let me know. Otherwise, it is expected that you will keep all documents digitally in a way that is easy for you to access. The assignment of committee liaisons will continue at our meeting on 2/18.

You should have received your call list via email. Please try to contact everyone on your list by the time of our meeting, and keep track of anyone you were unable to contact as well as any changes that need to be made. If you didn't receive your call list, please

reach out to me ASAP.

Committee liaisons please send out your report no later than Fri 2/14 so that everyone has a chance to review it. If there is anything to be added to the meeting agenda, please let me know by Thursday 2/13.

I look forward to our next year together and want to thank each of you for serving in this ministry. Let us as individuals and as a group consider prayerfully our roles within our community and act as love and God calls us.

Junior Warden's Report/Property Committee

Ron Pell

The property committee team has been solidified with Ed McNally and Teresa Matthews serving as co-chairs. The following items are under discussion:

- Improvements to the playground and associated apparatus
- Resolution of issues related to the commercial dishwasher
- Request for service broadcasting to be provided in the children's nursery
- Installation of the existing wide-screen TV to be installed in the Foyer
- Landscape planting in the coming year
- Follow-up on the WiFi extenders and sound supporting memorial garden
- Design for the new path project to improve the handicapped seating and provide for seating and access above the memorial garden
- Follow-up on staining needed on the exterior of the sanctuary and painting the interior of "youth room"

The next meeting of the committee has been scheduled for March 2, 2025

Discernment Committee

Gail Kase

Sadly, no submissions for our Rector position were received. (Take a moment . . .) Joslyn Schaefer, our diocesan facilitator, relayed Canon Augusta's message that this is not abnormal. Joslyn told us of at least 6 churches that had no responses for their first rounds of advertising.

Even though it was agreed that posting the ad for another 4 week round is a good idea, it was also agreed that we should pause to gather ourselves and research possible reasons for the lack of responses.

Possibilities include:

1. Full time vs. part time. Do we have the capacity to offer a full time salary?
2. Stewardship education could help increase our budget, but it is a longer term solution.

Other concerns:

1. Dena's expectations for the length of her term.

2. If we are looking at a significantly longer period of time until we have a new rector, does it make sense to consider another interim sooner rather than later?

For now: Vestry's responsibility is to stay strong and optimistic and to trust in the Spirit-led process.

Stewardship

Mike Robinson

No Report

Celebration Committee

No report this month.

Outreach Committee

(taken from Outreach Committee minutes)

1. *Review of upcoming First Sundays:*

Feb -La Esperanza

March-Beacon of Hope-

April -Nanostead Foundation

May-Roar

June-Beloved Asheville

July-Rector's Discretionary Fund

August-Community Housing Coalition

All Hands and Hearts (Peggy Wilson)-in transition...may be considered later in the year for some funding.

Neighbors In Need can be funded in fall for heating assistance.

Nanostead—(Nanostead is part of Marshall Relief.)

September-Pisgah Legal

2. Feb. 23-29—Mary Jo will be collecting breakfast items for Homeward Bound.

3. Outreach Fund, approximately \$10,000—(\$5,000 of the \$10,000 is for Helene)
Discussion on potential recipients of the \$5,000.

\$5,000 approved for Nanostead Foundation as relief organization for Helene.

4. *Additional Funding Requests:*

21st Century Packhorse Librarians -\$200 sponsorship approved

Gift Cards—\$1,000 for specific people in need (\$50 gift cards)-Amanda and Lorraine will assist with getting them out to folks in need. Approved

California Fire-\$3,000 to All Saints Pasadena. Approved

5. *Holiday Bazaar- 3 craft days*

Carol will form a sub-committee to begin to plan for craft days.

Bazaar is to take place Dec 6 with a potential reception the night before to show the silent auction and have music. Silent Auction will have "experiences". Gail also brought up potential to begin to ask those we go to (hairdressers, massage therapists) for interest in providing gift certificates.

Pam Hayhurst and Pam McNally will head up bake sale, soup lunch.

We also discussed Tamma's idea of "loose, broken jewelry" that could be gathered and taken to pawn shop. Everyone has that one earring or a broken necklace, she shared she has taken broken items and been amazed at the amount of money given for them. We will discuss timing.

Church Caring Crew

Bendik Clark

New co-chairs will be Carol VanVoorhis and Peggy Wilson.

Communication Committee

Meeting February 20

Welcome Committee Report

Claire Gillespie

Welcome Committee has three new members: Ty Jones, Susan Sherard, Susan Sewell. The committee is planning to meet February 23,2025.

Christian Education

Deb Carlson

Christian Education Committee had suggestions for multiple education topics

- Historical content of the Bible
- Acts of the Apostle's
- Dealing with grief
- Book group

Timing of offerings to be discussed

Worship/Music

To plan, with clergy, to provide appropriate, Integrated, and excellent liturgy and music throughout the year

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
Overall	Dena Whalen		Mike Robinson
Music	Teresa Sumpter/Dena Whalen	Offertory musicians	
Acolytes	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	
Altar guild	Amanda Hilty (S)	Guild members	
Bread bakers	Peggy Wilson	Volunteers	
Greeters	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	
Lectors	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	
Live Stream Operator	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	
Ushers	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	

Christian Education and Fellowship

For all ages to learn, grow, be supported, and strengthened in the Christian faith through organized classes, fellowship, and integrating formation within and among all ministries

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
			Deb Carlson
Christian Education Committee	Ingrid Diedren, chair	Committee members	
Men's Breakfast Group	Lee Ballard, Tom Panek	Men of the Church	
Nursery			
Sisters in Spirit	Ingrid Diederer, Nancy Larkin, Kathleen Phillips	Women of the Church	
Wednesday Potluck and Program	Dena Whalen		

Hospitality

To provide food from a well-functioning kitchen

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
			Jennifer Reda
Celebration Committee	Ann Shiver, chair	Committee/Volunteers	
Kitchen coordinator	Pam McNally	Volunteers	
Sunday coffee hour	Amanda Hilty(S)	Volunteers	
Sunday clean-up	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	
Trash removal	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	
Coffee hour hosts	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	

Pastoral Care

To provide for the pastoral needs and support of the parish

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
		Bendik	Bendik Clark
Church Caring Crew	Peggy Wilson, Carol VanVoorhis, co-chairs	Committee members and volunteers	
Sunday Intercessor/Healing Prayers	Amanda Hilty (S)	Volunteers	
Eucharistic visitors	Anne Smith	Volunteers	
Prayer chain	Peggy Wilson	Volunteers	
Drivers			

Welcoming

To welcome and incorporate newcomers and support all members

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
			Claire Gillespie
Welcoming Committee	Claire Gillespie, Lorainne Hilty, co-chairs	Committee members	
Birthday cards/monthly cake	Claire Gillespie, Lorainne Hilty	Committee members	
Newcomer Dinners	Claire Gillespie, Lorainne Hilty	Committee members	
Event/outside groups Liaison			

Outreach

To provide for the needs of the larger community and build ministry relationships

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
			Keith Pierce

Property

La Esperanza	Rebecca Sharp	Committee, volunteers	
To ensure proper stewardship of the building and grounds			

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
			Ron Bell

Finance

To manage all monetary aspects of the parish, with reports to the vestry	Matthews, co-chairs	members and volunteers	
Building Maintenance and Repair	Property Committee		
Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	
Grounds/Landscaping	Property Committee	Volunteers	
Woodland Trail	Ty Jones	Volunteers	
Finance committee		Committee members	
Stewardship Committee (?)		Volunteers	
Accounting	Marcus King, Treasurer	Katie Douglas, finance assistant	

Communications

To provide attractive, relevant, and current sources of information about Holy Spirit, its mission and activities to newcomers, visitors, parishioners, and the wider community.

Ministry	Leader/Scheduler(S)	Team	Vestry Liaison
			Gail Kase
Communications Committee	Deidre Soileau, co-chair	Committee members	
Website	Deidre Soileau	Martie Carson	
Mountain Spirit	Deidre Soileau	Martie Carson, Kathleen Phillips, many contributors	
Weekly Spirit	Martie Carson		
Advertising/PR	Kahleen Phillips (tbd)	Committee	
Facebook	Amanda Hilty		
Collateral (brochure, flyer, postcards)	Deidre Soileau	Committee, church members	

Vestry Opening Devotions 2025

February 18	Keith
March 18	Gail
April 15	Ron
May	Mike
June 17	Claire
August 19	Amanda
September 16	Bendik
October 21	Deb
November 18	Jennifer
December	TBD