

# EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SEPTEMBER 19, 2023, VESTRY MINUTES

**Date:** September 19, 2023   **Time Started:** 5:00 p.m.   **Time Ended:** 6:30 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** October 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Gail Kase, Senior Warden; Peggy Wilson, Junior Warden; Mike Robinson; Amanda Hilty; Mark Holland; Carol Van Voorhis

**Members Present via Zoom:** Kathleen Phillips; Barbara Schauer

**Members Not Present:** Rebecca Sharp

**Other Attendees:** Lorrie Cooper, Clerk; Sam Shiver, Treasurer

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## DISCUSSION/FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

**AGENDA ITEM: Call to Order, Opening Prayer** (*Gail Kase*)

**AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Vestry Minutes** (*Clerk, Lorrie Cooper*)

Minutes were approved from August meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM: Financial Report** (*Sam Shiver*)

We have paid all of the monies owed to David. That leaves approximately \$39,000 available in this year's budget to apply to funding the interim pastor, and provides a planning basis for the Finance Committee's work on the 2024 budget.

### **Item voted:**

The Vestry approved a motion to increase the expenditure level requiring two signatures from \$500 to \$2000. This will make the process much faster and efficient, and it will be in the form of a written policy.

**AGENDA ITEM: Sr. Warden's Report** (*Gail Kase*)

This is an exciting—and humbling—time! We will soon be receiving applicants for our interim priest. To prepare, we have a list of interview questions, a Vestry Covenant to “massage” into approval, and questions eliciting thoughts and feelings about “Creating and Practicing a Rule of Life.” Please review these items before our meeting. Going forward, we may need additional meetings in order to interview applicants, and to discuss our findings and opinions. However, my hope is that we can accomplish a good bit of this work through group emails.

I trust that the Vestry will continue to be a body that guides and supports our Holy Spirit community: to help us keep our hearts and minds open to discern what Love asks of us.

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**From the meeting:**

Jennifer Reda has expressed interest in attending the WNC Diocesan Convention in November. There would be no cost either to Jennifer or to ECHS.

**Post Meeting** (*Gail Kase*)

Vestry reviewed a template of ground rules to create a Vestry Covenant. These rules are explicit, agreed-on descriptions of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. The creation of ground rules performs the following important functions:

1. Help groups keep order so that meaningful work can be accomplished,
2. Identify what the group values, wants and needs,
3. Promotes effective communication via shared expectations.

The Vestry compiled a list of interview questions for applicants for Interim Priest that fall into four categories:

1. Leadership,
2. Experience,
3. Integrity,
4. Vision.

The individual questions are still being refined and the fact that we have created these together is the significant information.

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

Liaison for property committee: The committee met Sunday, September 17. The committee had been asked to review the building and site use guidelines, which were last revised by the property committee in 2004. The guidelines then went to the Vestry in May, 2004, and were approved. The property committee will have revisions made, if any, and ready for the Vestry to act on at the October 17 Vestry meeting.

At our previous Vestry meeting, funds were approved to move forward with Moss Sign Co. on the order of a new sign for our church to be located at the bottom of the driveway. However, before getting the order to Moss, I returned to the property committee with the suggestions made by various members as to the colors of the new sign. Via email and paint swatches, six of the eight committee members weighed in unanimously in the choice of green and white. The down payment and order went to Moss on August 29, with the hope that the sign could be completed and installed by September 24, which is our Founders Day picnic service. Moss couldn't promise to have it completed by then.

A roofing estimate came from Josh Jenkins on August 21: \$34,500. With this estimate and the previous one from Balkin of \$42,000, it is clear we need some beefing up of the Capital funds. The Finance Committee is aware of this future need.

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We may have sustained hail damage on the roof, as was suggested by one company which came out to give estimates. The form for filing the insurance claim hasn't been completed. This should be done and sent in by this week's end.

**AGENDA ITEM: Church Caring Crew** *(Kathleen Phillips)*

Church Caring Crew met after the Sunday service on September 17 and dealt with two issues:

1. Reach out to Lee and Linda Ballard who still struggle with health issues. Offer them Meal Train a few days each week if that would help. Discern what other assistance might be welcome.
2. Frances Knisley would like additional volunteers to provide rides to church when her usual transportation folks aren't available. Carol Van Voorhis volunteered to help with Frances' transportation.

The quarterly meeting schedule is suspended while ad hoc meetings are held until an interim rector is in place.

**AGENDA ITEM: Living Gifts Fund** *(Kathleen Phillips)*

The Living Gifts Fund Board held its second quarterly meeting on July 11, 2023, at 10:00am.

Two main items were on the agenda:

1. Increase within the parish awareness of – and planned giving to – the LGF.
2. Review the Annual Report and Spendable Income Notice for FY 2023-2024 from the Community Foundation of WNC, which manages ECHS's LGF account.

Special guest John Pfaff gave a presentation on Planned Giving. His successful career in planned giving for several WNC organizations along with his leadership roles at ECHS in the past have made John especially suited to provide an overview of what is involved and what to watch for when managing this kind of resource for a parish.

Time was spent brainstorming and developing several actions to be taken in the coming months. The annual report reflected a drop in value of our Fund Balance. In part this was due to grants issued last year in the amount of \$5,000. There were also stock market losses. It was decided to issue smaller grants this year in order to sustain our Fund Balance at \$40,000 or more.

The next quarterly board meeting: October 10, 2023, at 10:00am

**AGENDA ITEM: Outreach** *(Carol Van Voorhis)*

The Outreach Committee finished the work of assembling Joyful Jars on September 8. Presales of Joyful Jars were held on Sept. 10 and Sept. 17 after the church services. The remaining jars will be sold Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Heritage Celebration in Mars Hill. Proceeds will go to Neighbors in Need and the Community Housing Coalition.

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**AGENDA ITEM: Celebration Committee** *(Carol Van Voorhis)*

The Celebration Committee met briefly on August 21. There was discussion about the job description of the committee, the budget (\$200 currently), and the location of paper goods and miscellaneous items to use for various celebrations. A request was made for additional volunteers to serve for coffee hours on Sundays and guidelines of what to serve.

**AGENDA ITEM: Welcome Ministry** *(Barbara Schauer)*

Welcome Ministry members attended a training session with Tom Panek after the Sunday service on August 20. It was extremely helpful and added dimension to the Greeter Guidelines we already have in place, copies of which are with the new materials in the Welcome Ministry sideboard at the entry. Attached [to her email] are the instructions and recommendations Tom imparted from his experience with hospitality and retention in the restaurant field.

We do not plan to proceed with the October 20 reception due to a lull in the energy for public events. We continue to work on our skills with the first two pillars of the Episcopal Church's **Invite, Welcome, Connect** ministry and look forward to putting the third into play.

**From the meeting:** *(Barbara Schauer)*

The Welcome Ministry needs its own committee, organization, and agenda.

**AGENDA ITEM: Stewardship Ministry** *(Mike Robinson)*

**Stewardship Committee Meeting of August 30**

In attendance: Jennifer Reda (chair), Ty Jones, Peggy Barnes, Carolyn Homra, Mike Robinson (Vestry liaison), and Michael Smith.

**THEME FOR CAMPAIGN:** "Carrying the Fire"

**SUNDAY MESSAGING:**

Sunday, October 15: Speaker – Ty (introduction and theme)  
Sunday, October 22: Speaker – TBD (letters available to take home)  
Sunday, October 29: Speaker – Jennifer  
(everyone by now has received letter by physical mail or email)  
Sunday, November 5: Speaker - TBD  
Sunday, November 12: Stewardship sermon  
Sunday, November 19: Ingathering of annual gifts  
(the Gospel reading this Sunday is the parable of talents.)

**Note:** Stewardship Moments will happen after the peace and before the offertory music

**IN PROGRESS:**

- Jennifer writing draft letter and sharing with Ty (will be accomplished by September 15)
- Jennifer will invite Patti King to speak at a stewardship moment
- Ty will revise and finish the Stewardship Letter to the parish after receiving it from Jennifer

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- Carolyn creating new thermometer for tracking progress
- Jennifer inquiring with Martie about how best to contact Zoom church attendees
- Jennifer inquiring with Martie about current platforms being used to distribute an electronic version of stewardship letter with links for giving.
- Mike Robinson will share an update of our work at the September 19 Vestry meeting

**STILL TO BE DONE:**

- Keep the Senior Warden and interim or supply priest informed about our plan and theme (Jennifer)
- Ask the interim or supply priest to offer a stewardship-focused sermon
- Rally around Peggy to help prepare mailers for distribution both physical and electronic (week of October 16-20)
- Create the pie graph we discussed as a visual
- Creation of centerpiece with candle to be placed in the foyer as a reminder of the campaign's theme
- Ask Ann Smith for help with choosing musical pieces for the stewardship season
- Arranging with those planning the Community Music Gathering on October 21
- Follow up announcements to the congregation expressing gratitude and giving update on reaching budget need.

**WISDOM DISTILLED:**

- Encourage each other with a forward-thinking message that does not connect this stewardship campaign with David's resignation.
- Present a pie chart to help people "see the budget"
- Communicate specific aspirational budget goals
- Keep thermometer visible and use it for updates during January through March.
- Avoid messaging of worry with statements such as "If we don't raise X, then we won't be able to..."  
This does not motivate giving.

**AGENDA ITEM: Communications** *(Amanda Hilty)*

The communications committee met for the first time August 17. Deidre Soileau, Gail Kase, Martie Carson, and I were present. We discussed the role and importance of effective communications both within and outside the church. Deidre has been updating the website to accurately showcase and represent ECHS. The committee decided to present a survey to the congregation (which has already happened) in order to understand how folks prefer to receive information and the best way to communicate with them. Stay tuned for results.

**AGENDA ITEM: Next Vestry Meeting** *(Gail Kase)*

Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 5:00pm.

**AGENDA ITEM: Closing Prayer** *(Gail Kase)*

Respectfully submitted,  
Lorrie Cooper, Clerk