

**Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit
Vestry Meeting Minutes December 19, 2023**

Vestry members in attendance: Senior Warden Gail Kase, Junior Warden Peggy Wilson, Barbara Schauer, Kathleen Phillips, Amanda Hilty, Mike Robinson, Carol Van Voorhis, Mark Holland, Rebecca Sharp

Missing: None

Others in attendance: Treasurer Sam Shiver, Interim Rector Dena Whalen, substitute Clerk Deidre Soileau

The meeting began with prayer, followed by silence and opening devotions.

1. Approval of minutes from November meeting completed via group emails before the meeting.
2. Treasurer's report
See Attachments:
Attachment A Treasurer's Report
Attachment B Proposed 2024 Budget
Attachment C La Esperanza Letter of Agreement (LOA)
Attachment D Proposed La Esperanza Advisory Committee

Discussion

Budget

Sam noted that we are short of our goal for 2024 pledges. He suggested that people take the time to read Peggy Barne's notes to the right of the budget numbers (Attachment B).

Vestry members praised the clear and concise presentation of the budget.

Reserve Accounts

We currently have both Capital and Equipment reserve accounts, and Sam recommends we combine them into one account.

La Esperanza LOA and Advisory Committee

Holy Spirit recently formalized its relationship with La Esperanza, which operates under our 501(c)3, with a signed LOA (Attachment C). The LOA requires Vestry to approve the La Esperanza Advisory Committee.

Action items:

1. Mark moved that the proposed budget (Attachment B) be passed, Amanda seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Mike moved to accept Sam's recommendation that the Capital and Equipment reserves be combined, Kathleen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Gail moved that the La Esperanza Advisory Committee (Attachment D) be accepted as proposed, Peggy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Interim Rector's report

See Attachment E Rector's Report

Discussion

Dena had nothing to add to her written report except that, through Rebecca, she will be leading vespers at Mars Hill Manor/Retirement Home the second Sunday of every month.

She noted that she is enjoying working with Teresa.

She asked what the mechanism/tradition was for staff gifts/bonuses at the end of the year. Multiple Vestry members answered that the Rector's Discretionary Fund can be used for that purpose.

Action Items: None

4. Senior Warden

See Attachment F Senior Wardens Report

Discussion

In addition to her written report, Gail reported that she will have a conversation with Augusta on Wednesday about setting up the Discernment Committee. Augusta will meet with the Vestry in early February so that the new Vestry members will be in place.

Action Items: None

5. Junior Warden

See Attachment G Junior Warden's Report

Discussion

Peggy did not have anything to add to her written report. The Vestry thanked Peggy for exceptional vigilance for staying at the church for two days while the roof work was completed. Peggy noted that paying the \$1000 deductible for a \$42,000 roof was a tremendous value.

Action Items: None

6. Committee liaison reports.

- a. Property: See Attachment G, Junior Warden's Report
- b. Finance: See Attachments A through D, Treasurer's Report
- c. Stewardship: The Annual Campaign ended Sunday with Ingathering and the Stewardship Committee will not meet again until next year.
- d. Celebration and Outreach Committees have not met since the last Vestry meeting.
- e. CCC and the Living Gift Fund committee have not met since the last Vestry meeting.
- f. Communication Committee met Dec. 14. Amanda reported that the committee requested several software purchases to enhance communications and an external hard drive (for archiving photos). The \$1000 requested is a line item in the budget.
- g. La Esperanza: see Attachment H.
- h. Welcome ministry: Barbara Schauer has decided to step away from this effort, Claire Gillespie and Loraine Hilty have agreed to co-chair.
- i. Christian Ed: Mark reported that they will have a meeting early in the new year, and that nothing is planned at this time. Dena noted that she will likely be holding a 6-week long Inquirer's Class around Lent as part of a process to clarify what membership at Holy Spirit means and how one becomes a member (formally).

7. Candidates for new Vestry members:

Gail first asked outgoing Vestry members Kathleen, Mark, and Barbara if they would like to share anything about their experiences. Mark commented on how well the vestry gets along, with disagreements resulting in productive discussion rather than arguing. Kathleen noted that 2021 was a difficult year, because we lost our senior warden just as the rector was leaving on sabbatical. She commented that the transition was a challenge, as was the unevenness re: masking and social distancing as the country started emerging from the pandemic. She is grateful for the learning experience. Barbara said she thought it

would be boring, but it wasn't, especially working through the pandemic and that she feels like Holy Spirit is indeed guided by the Holy Spirit.

Claire Gillespie, Deb Carlson, and Bendik Clark have agreed to stand for election to the Vestry at the annual meeting. Current Vestry members expressed pleasure at this slate.

8. Template for Bylaws: Dena is collecting example Bylaws and is becoming familiar with diocesan guidelines so we can proceed appropriately.

9. Plans for Annual Meeting January 21, 2024

Gail and Dena spoke about making the annual meeting more interesting by using pictures as much as possible to tell the story of Holy Spirit's 2023. **Dena asked that everyone look around and see if they have photos that could help illustrate the work we all did in 2023, and send them to Martie, Gail, or Dena.**

10. Vestry Representatives – Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for now

11. Pastoral care:

Dena asked to be notified of any homebound parishioners that might need a visit or attention. She also read a tear-jerking note Holy Spirit received from a single mom. She had been given a gift card by the church to help give her kids a decent Christmas. Rebecca spoke about people struggling, especially with affordable housing.

Gail thanked Dena for being so present and organized; and for helping us do things like working on the parish register, but much more.

Prayers of intercession and thanksgiving (*In silence*)

Closing prayer: (*Together*) *Compline, parts read by vestry.*

Next Vestry meeting: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 5:00PM

Treasurer's Report
ECHS Vestry Meeting
19 December 2023

2024 BUDGET

- we will probably not make our pledge goal for 2024, but taking that into account, we should still be able to fulfill our 2024 financial obligations with a balanced budget.

RECTOR SABBATICAL RESERVE ACCOUNT USE

- we currently have approximately \$6600 in our sabbatical reserve account. Use of those monies is not restricted for that specific expense, so we may use it as approved by the vestry.

- I recommend that we continue to keep those funds in that account, and possibly use them for the discernment process of choosing our permanent rector.

- I also recommend that we continue to move \$250 per month into that account.

COMBINING CAPITAL RESERVE AND EQUIPMENT RESERVE ACCOUNTS

- these two accounts are targeted for repair and maintenance of church property, building, and equipment. The capital reserve account contains approximately \$11,000, and the equipment reserve account approximately \$800. In recent discussion with the finance committee, we could find no reason to keep the two separate.

- I recommend that we eliminate the equipment reserve account and move those funds into the capital reserve account.

LA ESPERANZA LETTER OF AGREEMENT (LOA)

- this LOA defines the business and fiscal relationships and responsibilities between Holy Spirit and La Esperanza.

- I recommend vestry approval of this document.

Attachment B: Proposed 2024 Budget

**Church of the Holy Spirit
2024 Proposed Budget - 2023 Current Budget**

	2023 Budget	Proposed 2024 Budget	
INCOME			
Pledges	194,500	180,000	
Open Offering	13,050	16,000	
2022 Surplus & Bequest	10,000		
Other Income	25		
TOTAL INCOME	217,575	196,000	
EXPENSES			
RECTOR			
1a) Interim Rector Salary only, annualized		39,500	- Interim Rector annual compensation, per contract.
1b) Balance of Rector Salary, Benefits & Expenses (Place Holder)		45,200	-Balance of all other items of Rector compensation
Total Pastoral Compensation, Benefits & Expenses	116,916	84,700	are left as Place holders, originally \$71,200, though reduced here to cover other necessary expenses. These funds are available for Vestry to use for Rector Search expenses & potential timing impacts. Funds would also be available for Capital Reserve.
SUPPORT STAFF			
Support Staff Salaries, Benefits and Payroll Taxes			
Lay Assistant, Sexton, Musician	42,611	44,240	- 3% Increase in Staff Positions' compensation.
Other Support Personnel (Special Music, Child Care, Communications Asst, Finance Asst, Supply Priests)	11,528	10,684	
2) Total Support Personnel	54,139	54,924	
3) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE (Office Exp., Telephone, Insurance, Audit)	11,060	11,660	
4) BUILDING & GROUNDS Maintenance & Utilities	7,800	9,168	
5) Capital Reserve Expense	2,400	7,200	
6) Diocesan Pledge	20,692	20,353	10% of 2022 Operating Revenue
7) Community Outreach	4,200	4,200	Match 1st Sun giving up to \$350
8) Depts: Christian Ed \$1,000, Music \$570, SpecEvnts \$500; AltarGld \$525 (Total=\$2225) Add: Communications (Website Expansion, Software, Storage, ParishProfile)	2,225	2,795	Restore prior budget level for CHS community events
		1,000	New committee to improve communications with parishioners and public
TOTAL EXPENSES	219,432	196,000	
EXCESS INCOME/EXPENSES	(1,857)	0	

Attachment C: La Esperanza Letter of Agreement

Letter of Agreement

Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit and La Esperanza

December 10, 2023

This agreement outlines the expectations between La Esperanza, an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit (the “Church”) to the Spanish-speaking community in Madison County, North Carolina and surrounding areas.

La Esperanza will operate as a ministry of the Church, and its programs will be covered under the Church’s tax-exempt status of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Church will be the fiscal agent and will provide financial guidance to La Esperanza to conform to the requirements of Section 501(c)(3). Grants and contributions to La Esperanza will be considered tax-exempt donations to the extent permitted by law. As a ministry of the Church, La Esperanza will operate in accordance with the laws of the United States, the State of North Carolina, and the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

The Church will accept and hold contributions and grants that have been designated for La Esperanza use in the following segregated funds within the Church accounting system: a fund for compensating La Esperanza employees and activities (Operating Fund), and a fund for authorizing grants to community individuals in need of financial assistance (Mujeres Community Fund).

Attachment D: La Esperanza Proposed Advisory Committee

La Esperanza Advisory Committee

(as of December 2023)

Executive Director: Rebecca Sharp

Assistant Director: Ana Gaspar

Members:

Peggy Barnes (member of ECHS)

Mary Filiss

Becca Heskamp

Marisol Reynoso

Marta de Cano Vinson

Paula Velasquez White

Interim Rector's Report

Vestry meeting –December 19, 2023

As we have been moving through Advent, I've offered an adult forum at 9:00 am the first three Sundays called *Advent's Call & the Rule of St. Benedict*.

Pastoral Care: Have visited Joan Mahon and Frances Knisley at Mars Hill Manor.

Worship:

I am enjoying working with Teresa to plan worship and music; and with Martie, to provide her with information with which to produce the bulletins. Have met with individuals from altar guild and flower guild and am impressed with the quality of their preparations for worship.

We had two mini-training sessions after church for lesson readers and prayer leaders.

I am attending the Tuesday morning Centering Prayer & Lectio Divina.

Other:

It has been a delight and a great help to meet with Susan Sherard, Ty Jones, and others to learn the history and some of the stories of ECHS.

Rebecca Sharp and I met and she oriented me to La Esperanza and its many activities and programs.

I've attended Communications, Outreach, and Finance meetings.

The weekdays I am at ECHS are varying each week due to when appointments and meetings are scheduled. I will plan to be in the office Monday afternoons from 12:30 to 4:00. Tuesday and Wednesday hours will typically be 10:00am to 3:00 pm unless we need flexibility for meetings, etc.

Greetings!

As we begin to prepare for our Annual Meeting, Dena had a great idea for a slide show featuring outreach, events and other ways to sum up our year together. Stay tuned!

We are doing some "Winter Cleaning" in the office to update, organize and purge outdated documents. We're also creating (or updating) documents and policies that have gone missing.

There is a new roof, *that was covered by insurance due to finding hail damage!*

Sam Shiver, Bill Sewell and Rebecca Sharp created a LOA between Holy Spirit and La Esperanza.

The search for 3 new Vestry members is progressing. We hope to be ready for their approval at the Annual Meeting on January 21st.

If you are the liaison to a committee, please remember to submit your reports by Friday December 15th, even if the committee has not met since our last meeting. This gives everyone a chance to read them *before* the meeting, and allows Deidre time to include them in her minutes. Please send them to Vestry members, Deidre and Martie, and please keep them concise. Please send me anything that you would like to add to the agenda by the end of the weekend.

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.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Kase
Senior Warden

Junior Warden Report December 2023

Peggy Wilson

1. The committee met Sunday December 3 and chose the new shingle color. The replacement of the church roof was completed by Tuesday December 12.
2. Moving on to prepare the building for repainting in the critical areas that face south and west is all weather dependent. So far completed is the section from the kitchen windows across to the double red doors of the sanctuary. As temperatures permit, painting will include around the corner from double red doors, around the windows facing the memorial garden.
3. A parish workday on Friday the 15 resulted in the parking lot spaces being remarked. Work was done on the path down to the memorial garden to help with erosion. The hot water element was replaced and the clean-up of more leaves and the area around the shed finished.

Respectfully submitted.
Peggy Wilson

La Esperanza December 2023 Vestry Report

November and December have been busy.

1. We had a youth gathering in mid-November where the youth made quilt squares that told their story (or part of it!) About 10 youth attended.
2. On December 9, we had another gathering at which there were 13 youth. We made Xmas cookies, crafts, and cards, followed by a pizza party.
3. We also are doing Xmas for 4 families thanks to a \$1000 from Outreach committee. Ana and I were busy last week buying and wrapping gifts!
4. We had a check-in meeting with our funder WNC Bridge in November at which we reported how things were going with the Health and Wellness program and what two goals would be for the next six months. The goals are: 1) Expand ESL classes adding ten new students (and volunteers) and 2) Hold monthly Saturday Nutrition classes. We have lots more planned, but those are the two goals they will look at in our next reporting session in May 2024.

We are now halfway through the second of three years of funding from WNC Bridge. They awarded us \$45,000/year for Health and Wellness programs which includes paying part of the part-time wages for Ana and me.

Submitted by Rebecca Sharp