

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT NOVEMBER 21, 2023, VESTRY MINUTES

Date: November 21, 2023 **Time Started:** 5:00 p.m. **Time Ended:** 6:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 19, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

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

Not Present: Sam Shiver, Treasurer; Rebecca Sharp

Other Attendees: The Rev. Dena Whalen, Interim Priest; Lorrie Cooper, Clerk; John Graeter, Chair of the Living Gifts Fund Board

DISCUSSION/FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

AGENDA ITEM: **Call to Order, Opening Prayer** (*Carol Van Voorhis*)

AGENDA ITEM: **Approval of Vestry Minutes** (*Clerk, Lorrie Cooper*)
Minutes from the October, 2023, meeting had been approved online.

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

John Graeter, Chair of the Living Gifts Fund Board, gave this report:

The Living Gifts Fund Board (LGF) requests Vestry approval of a grant to Habitat for Humanity of Buncombe/Madison. The grant is for \$2,000 towards construction of a second new Habitat house in Mars Hill. Madison County HFH merged with Buncombe HFH last year, and they are currently working on two houses in Mars Hill. The LGF Board gave their approval of this grant at their meeting on November 7, 2023. The funding comes from the LGF fund held by the Community Foundation of WNC.

First action:

Vestry approved a \$2,000 gift to Habitat for Humanity of Buncombe/Madison.

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

I'm happy to inform you that Dena will be joining us regularly for Vestry Meetings. The 2023 Stewardship drive has been fruitful and officially ends Sunday.

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Please think about whom you would choose to be a new member of the Vestry. Send me names (perhaps three?) before the meeting, and I'll compile them so we can be efficient with our discussion. On Sunday I will also ask for volunteers from the congregation. 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.

Second action:

Dena was voted as signatory for the Rector's Fund.

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

Liaison for property committee:

The revised Property and Building Use document with the proposed fee schedule suggested by the Property committee needs to be voted on by the Vestry related to the revision which Vestry discussed at the October meeting. The revision is stated in the fees section, item number 4.

Property committee hasn't met this month.

Third Action:

Vestry voted to approve the revision of item number 4:

A set fee per user will not be charged, but instead it is requested that an offering be considered to contribute to the church's maintenance, staff, insurance, and utilities for this special space. It is requested that the offering be made as soon as possible before or after the event.

The new sign at the church driveway entrance off Bone Camp has been installed with the help of Jim Woodruff and Tom Panek. Thank them, please.

The claim response from the church insurance office came via email November 21. What great news, and it couldn't wait until next Vestry meeting! I have also informed both the Finance and Property committees. As soon as funds are in hand, we can move forward with Balkin roofing.

From Rana Singh, API Claims Examiner, Church Insurance Company: "I have issued payment for the covered damages as follows:

Replacement Cost Value	\$	41,746.56
Less Recoverable Depreciation	\$	(8,349.31)
Actual Cash Value	\$	33,397.25
Less Deductible	\$	(1,000.00)
Net Claim	\$	32,397.25

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“We have issued the payment according to the contractor’s estimate as it is in line with the adjuster’s scope and estimate. The check should arrive in about 7-10 business days. The hail reports confirm an event in July 2023 but nothing prior to that earlier in the year. Being that the temporary repairs from May were prior to the hail event, they were not included in the payment. The recoverable depreciation will be released upon completion of repairs. Invoices, receipts and photos will be required. Please notify us of your intent within 180 days after the loss.”

AGENDA ITEM: Rector’s Report *(Rev. Dena Whalen)*

It is a joy to have been called to serve as interim rector at Holy Spirit as you move through the discernment process to call a new rector. I look forward to our year together. I am grateful for the warm welcome from the Vestry and the congregation. Gail and Martie continue to orient me to the life and rhythm of the people and ministries here. This can be a valuable time for the Vestry, the search committee, and the members to reflect intentionally on your core identity – the worship, ministry, formation, pastoral care, fellowship, and community involvement that are authentic to whom you are called by God to be.

The goal is that your new rector will not be someone who fits your status quo or someone who will come in and establish a new identity. Rather, it is to call someone who will uphold all of your best qualities and bring fresh vision to the table.

Each month, this report will reflect my time and involvement at Holy Spirit.

My first Sunday at Holy Spirit, Mars Hill, was October 22. I have preached and celebrated on October 29, November 5, and November 19. I took November 12 and the week of November 13 as time off. I plan to be present at Holy Spirit each Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Sermon prep will be done at home. This rhythm should be 19 [or slightly more] hours each week.

I have met with Mark Holland to learn about formation, taken part in a meeting of La Esperanza, attended the Celebration of the life of Carol Jablonski, made a pastoral call to Francis Knisley, and attended the Communication and Outreach meetings. I look forward in the coming weeks to meet new people and learn about Holy Spirit.

AGENDA ITEM: Stewardship Ministry *(Mike Robinson)*

The stewardship committee will not meet again until next year. The in-gathering is Sunday, Nov. 19.

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AGENDA ITEM: La Esperanza *(Rebecca Sharp)*

ESL and Zumba classes continue successfully. We have five new ESL students and two new volunteers. The youth group is meeting monthly. Last month we hiked and explored Bailey Mountain. This month we will work on story quilt squares and next month, Christmas crafts and cookies!

We have started assisting families in need with utility and rental assistance. Times are hard for them and getting harder. We have been working with The Ark to assist a family of a child with cerebral palsy to purchase a wheelchair. Additionally we have been offering nutrition and cooking classes in conjunction with a Cooperative Extension nutritionist. In July we received our second year of the WNC Bridge Foundation Health and Wellness grant. The amount is \$45,000 per year.

Ana, my new assistant as of May, is absolutely wonderful and a very hard worker.

AGENDA ITEM: Communications *(Amanda Hilty)*

The Communications team met Thursday, November 16. Diedre continues to update and develop the website. There was discussion about the best ways to gather and distribute information both effectively and efficiently.

Related is organizing committee/ministry volunteer information so as to be easily available and current. The bulletin board quickly becomes out of date. Additionally related: how best to engage and develop communication with the community around us, specifically Mars Hill University.

This question for the Vestry came up: *Is there, or should there be, a policy regarding the kind of information included in the Weekly Spirit and/or attached to the website?* For example, links to articles/information important to parishioner(s) but which may not be church/diocesan related. Another example would be an external link to an organization not directly affiliated with the church. (Currently, there are links on the website for our outreach partners.)

The next Communications meeting is December 14.

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

Liaison Report for LGF: The Living Gifts Fund Board met Tuesday, November 7, 2023. See Financial Report on page 1 for the recommendation from John Graeter, chair, which received a vote of approval.

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

Liaison Report for CCC: There has been no new activity of the Church Caring Crew.

AGENDA ITEM: Miscellaneous *(Gail Kase et al)*

A major part of the meeting involved discussing possibilities for the open positions on next year's Vestry. The church directory was used as a source for leads. Also discussed was a possible need for bylaws. The Diocese has bylaws that can be reviewed for applicability. Dena observed that the high trust level among the ECHS parish members makes bylaws not so crucial for us. Kathleen Phillips reported on her experience at the Annual Convention. "Christmas Eve service will be robust," observed Rev. Dena.

Fourth Action:

Vestry voted to allow the prayer room and welcome lights to remain on at all times.

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

Consider Haiti is the First Sunday open offering for November.

Deidre has spoken to Social Workers, and we will have a luncheon for the team at Social Services (foster care services). She will offer a few dates from which to chose. Gift cards for foster children and seniors in need are now being collected for the foster care team: Amazon, Target, and Walmart gift cards are preferred. The Committee will meet again on November 19. The Celebration Committee has not met in the past month.

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

Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 5:00pm.

AGENDA ITEM: Closing Prayer *(Carol Van Voorhis)*

Respectfully submitted,
Lorrie Cooper, Clerk