

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Vestry Minutes

April 21, 2024

In Attendance:

Vestry - Kaylie Gibbs, April Maa, Emily Thompson, Sally Walker, Matthew May, Cristin Davis, & Jordan Moody

Clergy - Amy Dills-Wright

Ex officio - Bert Bender, Randy Shearin, & Sherry Wallace

Attending Online – Andrea Strahan

Absent – Susan Ashmore, Judy Jarady, Carol Bartlett, & Paul Bonner

Amy opened the meeting with a meditation on Thomas Merton's writings on nature.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of the March 2024 vestry minutes was included as part of the consent agenda. All voted to accept. There were no gifts of \$100 or greater to approve.

Rector's Report:

Amy reported on Easter events. She noted that we had just under 200 at the 9:00 and 11:00 Easter services.

Amy, Kaylie, and Matthew will meet to discuss our property maintenance needs and to propose ways to address them.

The door mechanism for the primary exterior door is in the process of being fixed.

Paul and Amy will discuss security issues.

The parish retreat committee is in the process of renewing our retreat contract for the next two years.

The next Newcomer Gathering is April 28 at 4:00. Amy requested that the vestry members attend if possible.

The youth carwash is April 28 from 2-4.

Youth Sunday is May 5.

The next class of Community of Home is finishing in May.

Pentecost is May 19, as is the Parish picnic.

Epiphany is hosting a Taize service on May 20 @ 7:30.

Sally reported that she has heard that Emmaus House may need help in transporting people to doctors' appointments. We will follow up with Carmie to determine the nature of the need.

New Business:

Excess Cash – Due to a surplus from prior years, Randy and the finance committee suggested that we move all but \$120K into a money market fund. This will allow us to earn interest while keeping enough money aside for day-to-day needs. Kaylie motioned that we move all but \$120k to a money market account. Sally seconded. All voted in favor.

Endowment Grants – The Endowment Committee had a total of \$10,044 to spend this year. They approved five grants to send to the vestry for final approval. The committee had no questions about four. The fifth was a request from the Flower Guild for reimbursement for work on the Flower Guild room. There was a question as to whether a grant could be approved for work already done or if this should be sent to Building and Grounds to be paid from their budget.

Due to special circumstances in which the project had been approved for a grant and this was just additional previously unanticipated spending, the vestry voted to pay the \$1200 out of the Endowment Fund. Emily motioned, Matthew seconded, and all voted to approve the five grants for \$5,214, with the remaining \$5,730 to be returned to the Endowment Fund.

Old Business:

Leadership Corner: The Vestry discussed excerpts from Daniel Coleman's book Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ.

The meeting ended with noonday prayer.

Online Resolutions:

On March 26, Kaylie made the following motion via email: "That the Vestry of the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany approve the attached parochial report as presented to be submitted to the diocese." (Note that the final draft of the report was attached.) Sally seconded. There were 12 votes for the motion and none against, and the motion passed.

On April 12, Kaylie reported via email that the Finance Committee wished to change auditors. She listed the committee's key concerns relating to the current auditor. Kaylie motioned that we switch to James Jordan for our 2023 audit and accept the engagement letter submitted by his firm. The engagement letter was attached to the email. Susan seconded. There were eleven votes to approve the change and none against, and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherry Wallace
Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry Reports

Parish Health & Wellbeing — Paul Bonner

No updates at this time.

Membership + Newcomers — Cristin Davis

The Newcomers Dessert is next Sunday, 4/28 and the committee would love for any vestry members to come if you are available. The committee hand wrote 19 invitations to newcomers and visitors that have visited or joined Epiphany this quarter.

Parish Life — Judy Jarady

Pancake Supper – February 13: All went well. Youth did a fine job, and was grateful for our help.

Agape Supper – March 28: The event was well attended with 88-90 people participating. Joel Fowler and his crew prepared delicious seasoned baked bass for the meal. Parishioners provided simple foods for the tables. A person presented a bread offering from each table to be used at the altar at the Maundy Thursday Service which followed the meal.

Easter Vigil – March 31: strawberries & bubbly, coffee and juices were offered after the service.

Easter Breakfast – March 31: A festive meal was presented by Parish Life. Ham, biscuits with jams/jellies and drinks were provided. Parishioners brought side dishes. The breakfast was well attended and enjoyed by over 100 people.

Parish Picnic – May 19: Parish Life will meet in early May to plan the Parish Picnic.

Community Engagement Partnerships — Sally Walker

On April 16, the Community Engagement leaders met with Carmie. Those attending included Carol Bartlett for the Earth Guild, Liefy Smith for the Art Ministry, Jeanette Hanson for Holy Comforter, Suzanne Yoder for the Racial Justice Group, Kay Lee for the Interfaith Children's Movement, Sally Walker for the Feeding Ministry.

Feeding Ministry - Gateway

Sally reported that the Feeding Ministry's volunteer participation has increased, and all is running smoothly for the monthly meal at Gateway's Evolution center. There has been some great interaction with those we feed including Volunteers eating with the residents.

Feeding Ministry – Holy Comforter

Jeanette reported that the meal on March 13 went well, and the next meal will be June 4th. She is planning to serve a meal quarterly and the next will be in the fall. There will be a plant sale at Holy Comforter on May 11.

Feeding Ministry – Freedom School at Emmaus House

Kay asked if there were plans to serve a meal this summer at the Freedom School's Parent's Night. This is something Lisa Daily has led in the past, so a new person to lead this will be needed.

Emmaus House

May Ann Schneider volunteers at Emmaus House helping people with their Social Security. She said that many time the people she works with need rides to doctor appointments. She is overwhelmed and needs more volunteers.

Interfaith Children's Movement

Kay reported that Epiphany's Peter Dodge delivered 87 valentine messages supporting ICM to the Georgia legislators. This was the largest number of messages from any one group. Peter has been approached about being on the ICM board. Kay is looking into how Epiphany can grow its partnership with this organization.

Art Ministry

Liefy reported that the March art show had a total of \$1,200 in sales. The current show of the Epiphany youth's art is a fundraiser for the youth trip. In May there will be show of Virginia Highland's Plein Air group. There will be no show in June and July. Ben Bell is the August show artist. Paige Love Smith is now co-chair of the Art Ministry.

Refuge Ministry

Carmie reported that she had met with Erin Braden and Ellyn Bryan regarding the Refuge Ministry. Epiphany has worked with the current family from Afghanistan for a long period and they are now looking at stepping down our financial support. This ministry will be looking at new ways to aid the refugee community. One option being considered is to partner with another church.

Sustainability & Justice — Carol Bartlett

Racial Justice

1. April 21st - gathering on Identity - Barrier or Bridge, intergenerational.
2. May 1st - visit to Spelman Museum of Fine Art -
3. Research on history of Native Americans living on land occupied by Epiphany.

Earth Guild

1. Work proceeding on solar possibility
2. Successful work day in partnership with Building and Grounds
3. Exploration of planting fruit trees in upper Meadow
4. Concert in the fall

Children + Youth Formation — Jordan Moody

Since the last Vestry meeting, we celebrated Holy Week and Easter and then got back into the swing of our weekly and monthly formation offerings. Most notable from Easter for Epiphany's Children's Ministry was the baptism of one child and our Easter Egg Hunt, which involved over 12 families and 23+ children hunting about 1,000 eggs. Also since the last Vestry meeting, we have hosted two Family Eucharist Services; one on March 19 and one on April 16. Our March eucharist involved 7 families and 26 people and our April eucharist involved 7 families and 22 people. These continue to be a wonderful way for families with children to connect, fellowship, and worship together. Finally, we have continued to offer Sunday Morning Formation. We continue to average around 4-5 children at Godly Play, around 3-5 children at "Surveyors of Scripture," and about 3-5 children at Children's Chapel each week.

Epiphany's Youth Ministry helped facilitate the Easter Egg Hunt, with 6 youth assisting in hiding the eggs and supervising the younger students. And the week after Easter, the Youth Art Show began, featuring works from 6 of our youth. Youth Formation continues on Sunday mornings, still averaging 2-3 youth each week, and we've continued to host Youth Group on Sunday evenings, which typically draws between 4-8 youth. Activities in the past month at Youth Group have included learning about Biblical monsters, creating mushroom-growing kits, eating a meal with Holy Trinity, and spending time with peers at SPLIT Youth Group (when middle and high schoolers come at separate times on Sunday evenings).

We are looking forward to our Youth Car Wash Fundraiser on Sunday, April 28 and our Youth Sunday service on Sunday, May 5. We are also in the midst of preparing for VBS

(June 10-14) and the Youth Pilgrimage (June 24-28). If you are interested in helping out with or supporting any of the above, please reach out to Emily Elder at elder@epiphany.org.

Adult Formation — Susan Ashmore

No updates at this time.

Pastoral Care — April Maa

The Pastoral Care Committee continues to send cards to parishioners on the prayer list. Members of the Pastoral Care Committee are Cecelia Democko, David Draper (Chair), Susan Moody, Nan Ross, Nancy Thompson and Sherry Wallace.

The Community of Hope continues to visit parishioners who have requested contact, take Communion to home-bound parishioners, and meet monthly. New members in training are Lalor Cadley, Carol Moser, Nan Ross, Nick Theyerl, and Nancy Thompson. They are making their second practice pastoral visits in April.

Community of Hope's Leadership Team is comprised of Jessica Burns, David Draper, Ann Fowler and Laura Gary. Additional members are Barbara Belcore, Lisa Gray, Paul Hinson, Chris Miller, and Annie Strahan.

Stewardship — Emily Thompson

No updates at this time.

Endowment — Emily Thompson

I met with the Endowment Committee last week in regards to the Grant Submissions. The Endowment committee has a total of \$10,944 available this year. The Endowment committee has approved the following request:

- Parking lot gravel \$707
- \$750 for the Philadelphia 11 Screening \$750
- DMV school scholarship of \$1000
- Window replacement \$1,523.51
- **conditional approval** flower guild room renovations of \$1, 233.83; Endowment Committee funded the renovation in 2023 and supports funding to complete the work. However, as this is a request for reimbursement, not a

proposal for new work, should funds come from Capital budget vs. Endowment?

The committee denied the grant submission of the Dairy Farm in South Sudan of \$31,500. With the conditional approval, the committee agreed to granting the \$5,214.34 and the remaining \$5,730 would return to the Endowment fund.

Finance — Andrea Strahan

March 2024	Budget	Actual
Income	\$61,997.42	\$59,836.92
Expenses	\$61,520.07	\$60,275.75
Net	\$477.35	(\$438.83)

March 2024 operating results were essentially “break-even.” We had a deficit of \$439 for the month, with expenses generally in line with the budget. March year-to-date (YTD) operating results are a surplus of \$74,500 (versus a March YTD budgeted surplus of \$1,432). 2024 YTD results are similar to the March 2023 YTD operating results, when we had a surplus of \$72,673.

The church did not receive a payment in March from Little Forest Preschool, which is one reason for the deficit. Amy will follow up with the preschool on this missing payment. As of 3/31/2024, Epiphany has not made any mission support payments under community engagement.

2023 surplus funds are currently in a designated account (8083 Operating Budget Surplus Desig Acct). Any expenditures out of the account will need to be allocated and approved by the vestry.

The Finance Committee discussed how to earn interest on the church’s excess cash. An option that the committee discussed is a money market account with Truist, which could be linked to the church’s checking account. The committee resolved to keep \$120,000 – two months of expenses – in the checking account, with any remaining cash being invested in a Truist money market account. This will go to the Vestry for approval and the committee will discuss how to use any revenue from the money market account at their May 2024 meeting.

The finance committee discussed Randy Shearin's (Treasurer) suggestion that we switch auditors to James Jordan, due to an unsatisfactory experience last year and increased fees with Lighthouse Advisors. Members of the committee, as well as Susie Boyko (Bookkeeper), all expressed their support for the change in auditor. [This switch was brought to Vestry and approved via email on April 12, 2024].

March 2024 Designated donations: None

Building and Grounds — Matthew May

These are actively in progress:

- 1) **Front Door** Waiting on one replacement parts and repairman. Looking into lighting for front door keypad evening use.
- 2) **Nursery** New (rediscovered) leak in the nursery. We thought this was from heat condensation and started leaking recently after rain.
- 3) **Outside Youth Room** The brick vestibule outside the lower level classroom got a rather bad first coat of paint a few years ago. Youth have proposed mural plans to replace. Sketch received approval from vestry.



- 4) **Parking Spaces** Expand gravel pad, as possible, by Gaga ball pit and mailbox.
- 5) **Flower Guild Room** - Last step install threshold
- 6) **Painting Touch Up** - Painting touch up for stairwell and hopefully some other spots is planned.
- 7) **Solar Roof** Earth Guild has taken over the solar project. They are moving forward with selecting two contractors to do physical site visits and propose on the project. Meeting planned for next steps at the end of this month.
- 8) **Work Days** Q2 Work Day tbd.

These are not actively in progress or are waiting on a volunteer or prioritization:

Water Main Main building shut-off water valve needs to be replaced.

Water Issues The storm cellar continues to have gallons of water get into it from under the wooden stairs when it rains hard. But there was also some water at the other end of the storm cellar.

Kitchen Sink Issue There appears to be an occasional leak when draining multiple sinks likely associated with a drain clogged somewhere. Need to redesign the drainage – potential plumber issue.

Stucco Damage The stucco on the side of one of the dormers facing the courtyard has been damaged.

Nursery Water Fountain Not working

Choir Room Wall Repair Need to repair and repaint choir room wall from water damage

Nursery Repaint window sill.

Vents check for mold inside (for vents cleaned by the preschool)

AC Off 1 of 4 HVAC systems for the Parish Hall is currently not running.

Sexton Services Is informal volunteer sexton approach for identifying maintenance issues, handling minor repairs, coordinating minor contractors sustainable?

Tankless Water Heater and Repairs Earth Guild has interest in moving to tankless water heater eventually. ALSO The water heater in the Tables and Chairs room has a little condensate drain. It was never run all the way to the floor drain. You can see it on the right. It just ends. It is next to a copper tube that runs to the floor drain. Just a bit of water comes out whenever the water heater is firing. The water on the plywood got there when the plumber shook it. It's apparently been slowly leaking water since it was installed in 2004. Just enough to stain the floor and rot the edges of the plywood board that the water heater is set on. We need to cut a path along the copper pipe to the floor drain and extend the plastic drain tube to it. Mark McDonald expressed interest in doing carpentry stuff. I would like to see if he is interested. This was spotted by the "civilized plumber" guys who came to assess whether a tankless water heater is feasible when our water heater dies. He is going to check to see if there exists a water heater that can supply hot water as fast as is now available from our current water heater. If not, dual water heaters might be necessary. And very expensive.

Various Inside Projects

There were also a lot of little paint drips on the floor - including the bathroom that could be cleaned up. In the kitchen by the little sink, the plastic screen guard installed to keep the

walls dry have trapped bugs which Can the whole thing be removed, meaning the walls would probably need to be repaired and then painted.

Soap dispenser in upstairs bathroom

Semi-gloss touch up needed on baseboard leading to playground.

Wall in parish hall needs repainting

General touch up/painting plan needed.

Recurring Indoor Needs

Cleaning the interior windows and window sills on both floors and the lower level classroom.

The seams in the church floor always collect debris and dead bugs. Screwdrivers are used to loosen the debris up then vacuumed up.

The floors and cushions and sometimes even the pews often get candle wax on them - someone could scan for that and try to get it up.

Replenishing the Epiphany pens in the pews - pens live in the usher closet.

HVAC filter replacements on a regular schedule

Recurring Outdoor Needs

Fertilize blueberries

Freshen up mulched areas

Off the list/projects completed:

Flower Guild Room Flooring installed

Roof Repair Approved repairs completed.

Playground Preschool is working through a list of things on the playground they would like improved/fixed. They are going to work on what they prioritize. They had a safety inspection done that they shared with us.

Parking Spaces Added mulch where people had been parking on grass. Moved the composter to be more visible and prevent people from parking under the wire attached to telephone pole.

Asphalt Patching Patched cracked asphalt parts at entrance, also added rock at exit and at the transition from asphalt and gravel parking lot.

Men's Room The men's room toilets have more problems - replaced toilets. Installation scheduled for March 13

AC Issue Room 203/205 acted up again - repairs were made, crossing fingers.

Technology — April Maa

No updates at this time.