

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Vestry Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2022

In Attendance:

Vestry - Erin Braden, Paul Hinson, Richard Messner, Bert Bender, Lisa Daily, Peter Dodge, Liefy Smith, Kaylie Gibbs, Paige Howell, & Susan Ashmore
Clergy - Amy Dills-Moore & Nicole Lambelet
Ex officio - Shelle Bryant & Randy Shearin

Absent: John Wierwille, April Maa, & Sherry Wallace

Priest in Charge's Report:

Amy thanked Bert for his work on the HVAC project. She said we may need a new gas line, as the current one is not adequate.

The technology is working well for streaming the Sunday service. Our IT consultant has recommended some improvements and is working on a quote.

We still need volunteers to support the children & youth ministries. Amy encouraged the vestry to reach out to those who might be interested in this ministry. Emily Elder is doing a great job and we want her to get the support she needs.

There are still open spaces for the Kanuga retreat. Amy encouraged the vestry to consider attending so we don't lose our space. A parishioner needs financial help to attend, and several vestry members volunteered to contribute toward the cost of the member's registration.

Leadership Edge Discussion:

The vestry discussed chapters 13-15 of Leadership Edge.

Financial Report:

Randy reported that for the month of August ended with a slight surplus of \$306. Still, overall giving is down and we continue to run a year-to-date deficit of \$15,924. The vestry discussed the possibility of reaching out to parishioners who are behind on their pledges.

The 2023 budget process will begin shortly. Amy will ask committee members to submit budget requests.

Amy and a group of vestry members distilled the vestry retreat discussion into a series of core values. We plan to use these core values in our strategic planning process and goal setting.

Sally Ulrey will join the October 16 vestry meeting to assist with goal setting. There will be a parish-wide discussion on core values and planning on November 13.

New Business:

2020/2021 Audit – The 2020/2021 audit is complete with no significant issues identified. There was a suggestion to increase the threshold for capital purchases from \$2,500 to \$5,000. The financial manual will be revised and brought to vestry for approval. Richard motioned and Erin seconded that we accept the 2020/2021 audit, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Megan Swett Recommendation – Megan is a parishioner sponsored by Epiphany to pursue training for the priesthood. She is in her second year at Candler and is serving at Holy Trinity. In December, she is to be ordained as a Deacon. The vestry approved her recommendation for admission to the Order of Deacons.

Annual Council -- This year's annual council is November 11-12 at Holy Innocents Episcopal School. Four volunteers are needed to attend. Ann Fowler, Paul Hinson, and Shelle Bryant have volunteered. There is one remaining slot plus an alternate. Amy and Erin will identify additional participants.

Consent Agenda:

There was one gift of \$1,000 to be used for either the operating budget or the HVAC campaign. The Finance Committee recommended that it go toward the HVAC campaign. Paige motioned that the give be applied to the HVAC campaign, Peter seconded, and the vestry voted to approve. Approval of the August 2022 vestry minutes was included as part of the consent agenda. All voted to accept.

Old Business:

There was a brief discussion regarding the next steps for increasing the diocesan loan to cover the difference between the cost of the HVAC system and the funds raised. We will make recommendation after we get more clarity on the potential need. Randy will get the terms of the loan and will come back to the vestry for a recommendation.

Erin reminded the vestry of upcoming dates of note:

- Oct. 16 Vestry Mtg – Priorities, Goal Setting with Sally Ulrey
- Nov. 13 Ingathering & Parish Session – Priorities
- Nov. 20 & Dec. 18 – Vestry Mtgs.
- Jan. 22 Vestry Mtg – Gather-Transform-Send Model with Sally Ulrey
- Jan. 29 – Parish Annual Mtg
- Feb. 11-12 – Vestry Retreat
- Feb. 26 – Parish Session – Invitational Ministry “Workshop” with Sally Ulrey

The meeting ended with noonday prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelle Bryant
Senior Warden, Immediate Past

Vestry Reports

First Draft of Epiphany Values Discussion:

(still being word-smithed)

Faith

We believe God loves you-no exceptions. We honor people wherever they are on their faith journey.

Love in Action

The life and teachings of Jesus call us to the work of justice and peace, through relationships. Our faith and God's love send us out into the world where we work for environmental and racial justice and gender and LGBTQ equality.

Care for Each Other

We are transformed in community as we embody grace, love for self and others, acceptance, authenticity, and vulnerability.

Radical Welcome

We seek Christ in every person who walks through our doors. Whoever you are and wherever you find yourself, you **are welcome here**. We strive to honor and welcome you in this holy place.

Adult Formation Report - Nicole Lambelet & Paul Hinson

Adult formation has a wonderful Fall semester planned. There's not much to add to our last report, so we'll mostly repeat that again here. We kicked off the fall on September 11th with a four week series entitled, "Listening to the Voice of Creation," led by Nicole Lambelet, Hannah Schultz, and Gayla Tillman (both from Georgia Interfaith Power and Light). We had a really great and engaging first session with Nicole presenting remotely. Those sessions on "Listening to the Voice of Creation" are being recorded and will be uploaded to our Facebook and Youtube pages for anyone who would like to revisit them or for those who were unable to attend. In October we will launch a series of small groups. Three will meet during formation hour on Sunday mornings and one on Tuesday evenings: 1) "Faith and Doubt," led by Amy Dills-Moore and Paul Hinson, "Community Engagement: Why and How we do it," led by Nicole Lambelet with various parishioners, 3) "Parenting for a Better World," led by Susan and Jarrod Moody, and 4) The Book of Job, Tuesdays 6:30-8pm with Carol Newsom. The Wednesday night book-less group also continues. During Advent, we will offer a series on "Mary, Mother of God." Liefy Smith along with Amy and Nicole will present on the art, theology, and myths giving shape to the Marian tradition.

Amy continues to lead the Living Contemplatively group on Thursday mornings. Rhett Solomon

from Holy Trinity and Nicole Lambelet plan to collaborate again this year on Sacred Ground. They will be launching Sacred Ground 2.0 on 9/19 for those who have finished the initial year of the Sacred Ground curriculum, in addition to offering another Sacred Ground group over the 2022-23 programmatic year for those wishing to begin the program.

Building and Grounds — Bert Bender

Issues on Front Burners (FB), Back Burners (BB) and On The Counter (OTC): The Special Master has reviewed the files that are now all declassified and presents this month's updates of projects and issues showing ups ↑ and downs ↓ since last time.

- 1) (unchanged) **Nave Ductwork and HVAC and Office/Bathroom HVAC Combined Construction Work (FB):** Big Unit In. Big. Punch list items in process, include “test and balancing” to be sure it's all working as needed. Not done yet – with either the Punch List work or the listing. If you see something say something, preferably by email to bert.bender@alston.com.
- 2) (unchanged) **Roof Leaks / Gutters (FB):** Leak in Gallery near Narthex when it pours – some concern also about gutters. Now have long list of roofing repair contractors to consider – but have not winnowed down yet. If you have a special roofing contractor you like, email bert.bender@alston.com. Checking out precipitation, if any, from leak in Nursery.
- 3) (unchanged) **Baptistry Doors Punch List (FB):** As long as we look at gutters from on top of the roof, let's have those roof gutter people look at water flow over these doors and offer a fix and estimate.
- 4) (unchanged) **Asphalt Patching (BB):** Comment: shouldn't we patch cracked asphalt parts at entrance and exit drives, maybe starting with temporary volunteer fix? Answer: maybe, but if we need professional help, let's focus on that part and develop a plan of (a) where? (b) anywhere else? (c) who should do it? and (d) ensure good price. All comments invited. If you have a special paving contractor you like, email bert.bender@alston.com.
- 5) (unchanged) **HVAC Repairs That Are Not So Big and Scary (FB):** To include fixing or replacing a blower that supports a quarter of the Parish Hall plus a new Thermostat for Room 201 where the current thermostat has become sentient and not in a good way. Big in from McKenney's. Look for an update soon.
- 6) (↑ from 8) **Weed and Wine Party (FB):** Sabra Hanson desires to hold this event in October before Kanuga, and we'll use it as part of a gateway to grounds helping. May have a date this weekend.
- 7) (↓ from 6) **Lighting (FB):** Work Day One and Two are done and paid for – and contractor has gone silent again about an estimate for installing the Drop Pendants for the Side Chapel. It's now been six weeks so we'll get out the [P.K.E. Meter](#) to see if this is the normal multi-month delay or actual ghosting. Plus some new possible something LED wiring some bulbs not shining in one drop pendant in the Nave. If you have comments on the lift light or other lights, email bert.bender@alston.com.
- 8) (↓ from 7) **Building an' Grounds (BANG) Structure, or Emerging Endless List of “Things to Do” (FB):** Circulated in March. Will update for Ministry Fair for virtual

information table. With New Survey. Soon: Realm Lists for BANG, Grounds and Buildings. Also see below for some things that will help.

- 9) (↑ from off the list) **Yellowjackets (FB)** Not the [TV Series](#), but like a plague of locusts with bad stingers. John Yntema engaged in non-toxic efforts to move them all into traffic on Ponce. Others offering advice and support from a safe distance.
- 10) (↑ from 11) **Front Door Physics (BB)**: Team of Yntema and Graves evaluating replacing front doors affected by physics: too far apart when cold (wind blows in) + too close when warm (doors stick). Shea has pulled in GC from the HVAC project to help evaluate. [Hodor!](#)
- 11) (↓ from 9) **Courtyard Fence (BB)** Could be a topic of discussion after weeders wine. If you have comments on this, email bert.bender@alston.com.
- 12) (↓ from 10) **FFA Byrdland (BB)** There are ideas about use of Byrdland. If you have ideas on this or want to be part of the conversation, email bert.bender@alston.com. There will be solicitation as part of Ministry Fair.
- 13) (↓ from 12) **Maintenance Contracts (Inventory of Systems) (BB)** Will be updating HVAC list after McKenney's initial "inventory" inspection on August 3. Inventory report received and in review, along with Maintenance Contract.
- 14) (↓ from 13) **Playground Reconstruction (OTC)**: Invoices submitted to insurance – awaiting final payout or update about status (maybe it's in). Maybe picnic table plan, but no pressure on that right now.
- 15) (↓ from 14) **Landscaping Company (OTC)**: When more urgent stuff addressed, will seek input and review.
- 16) (↑ from off the list) **Sexton Services (OTC)** At some point the informal volunteer sexton approach to identifying maintenance issues, handling minor repairs, coordinating minor contractors, and other stuff normally done by a Sexton will no longer be sustainable.

Children and Youth – Emily Elder

The biggest update from Children & Youth is that fall formation classes started last Sunday (9/11). We had a combined total of 20 children & youth (+5 volunteers) in our three formation classes: Godly Play (3 years old through 3rd grade in Room 205); Surveyors of Scripture (3rd, 4th, and 5th grade in Room 206); and Youth Formation (6th through 12th grade in Room 201).

Youth group is now happening weekly, usually drawing between 5-10 youth, and with the help of our wonderful parents and volunteers, it's looking like we should be able to have meals together at least twice per month. We'll also start doing joint events with Holy Trinity: Fellini's Pizza together on the first Sundays of each month, and joint youth group on the third Sundays.

Finally, our Friday, Sept. 9 event for Families with "Littles" (Kindergarten-age and below) went well, with 21 people attending (including staff). We plan to continue offering fellowship events for that demographic of people, since they seem to really appreciate connecting with other families in similar life stages. Needs: We have most of the volunteer coverage we need for this

semester, but could use one more adult willing to volunteer with youth formation on Sunday mornings!

Community Engagement / Outward Facing Ministries – Susan Ashmore & Nicole Lambelet

Many of the outward facing ministries have been busy since our last vestry meeting. Here are some of the activities that have served those beyond our parish doors:

- The Epiphany Racial Justice Group, led by Kay Lee Bender, organized a trip to visit the Lowndes County Interpretive Center of the National Park Service and the Peace and Justice Memorial and Museum in Montgomery on Saturday, September 10th. Twenty-six people made the journey traveling in a minivan, one car, and a large passenger van that Brian and Amy Dills-Moore picked up from the airport and then led the driving round trip. There was deep conversation on the way and on the way back, and all were grateful for the work Kay put into making all the arrangements for this journey.
- The Refugee ministry has been busy working with the New American Pathways (NAP) to get a better handle on the rent payments for the family from Afghanistan. Nicole, Erin, Doug Kertcher, Carol Newsom, and Ellyn Bryan are doing such good work arranging doctor and dentist visits, seeking ways to improve learning English with ESL, and helping them as they settle in. Doug is assisting with finalizing their immigration status. This is often complicated with all the bureaucracies involved and navigating assistance to the family while encouraging their independence.
- The feeding ministry continues to prepare and serve meals at the Gateway center.
- The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) have finalized the new timeline for the Harvey Fund grant proposals that will be used for this term.

Membership - Liefy Smith

- The Membership Committee and the Art Ministry are organizing the parishioner 20 minute photo sessions by Zoe Aparicio (a parishioner and former exhibitor in the Art Ministry Gallery) **on Oct 2nd, 9th and 16th**. Appointments will be set up in Realm. Photo sessions per family unit will be \$75 and they will receive 4-5 digital images. One image will also be sent to the church office for the directory. The Oct 2nd session only will include family pets as that coincides with the Blessing of the Animals Sunday service.
- We are currently seeking a new chairperson/s of the Membership Committee.
- Welcoming emails were sent to 10 visitor households since June.
- A Fall Newcomers Gathering is set for **November 13th**.

Parish Life – John Wierwille

For the Parish Life report, I want to forward something Amy sent out earlier today. I think it says everything that needs to be said and understood about this remarkably giving and hard-working group:

I would just like to highlight and celebrate that parish life has actually brought in more revenue than they have spent. Revenue = \$4169, Expenses = \$3946. You all have put on some incredible events that have helped us reconnect - so important right now on the heels of being apart during covid - and have done it in such a financially sustainable way for the parish.

Stewardship – Kaylie Gibbs

The Stewardship Committee began their weekly meetings last Monday, September 12th. Amy reminded everyone that stewardship is about the ways in which we choose to express our gratitude. And that without stewardship, we are unable to carry out the wonderful work that we do here at Epiphany. We are grateful to have Pam Tipton leading the committee again this year. She walked through the stewardship campaign project plan she created to keep the committee on task. The stewardship campaign will officially kick off during the Ministry Fair on October 9th. A save the date was included in this week's Epiphany Star. Committee members volunteered to lead weekly Epiphany Star communications, social media communications, and coordination with ministry leaders.

The committee also decided to keep the theme that was used last year, Grace | Gratitude | Giving, and brainstormed on ways to ignite this theme for this year in fresh ways, including the gratitude tree, parishioner testimonials on their stewardship journey or what Epiphany means to them, and sharing scripture related to faithful stewardship.

Technology – April Maa

The AV streaming equipment has been successfully moved to the former Oratory. It is really nice to be able to sit in such a beautiful space, participate in worship, and contribute to a great online experience for others. Thank you to Leify for all the beautiful decor in there that we get to enjoy regularly! The new space has been nicknamed "DWH" or Digital Worship Hall. We have been working through some sound hiccups as well as some system streaming issues after the move, but overall Epiphany is doing better with consistency of live streaming and quality digital worship experience. A shout out and huge thank you to all those who have been involved in this project: Paul, Julie, Shea, the AV guild volunteers, and Ellen, our regular Zoom host.

We are looking to focus on possible future projects related to technology which include system upgrade to the church's network and wifi, purchasing an additional OWL camera to stream virtual small group events, etc.