

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Vestry Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2023

In Attendance:

Vestry - Bert Bender, Peter Dodge, Kaylie Gibbs, Susan Ashmore, April Maa, Sally Walker, & Judy Jarady

Vestry via Zoom - Lisa Daily & Matthew May

Clergy - Amy Dills-Moore

Ex officio - Sherry Wallace

Ex officio via Zoom - Randy Shearin

Absent - Liefy Smith, Paige Howell, Andrea Strahan, & Erin Braden

Meditation:

As a meditation, Amy led a Lectio Divina on Luke 24, followed by prayer.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of the March 19, 2023, vestry minutes and gifts over \$100 were included as part of the consent agenda. All voted to accept.

Rector's Report:

Installation – Amy expressed gratitude for all who coordinated and participated in the installation service and for the gift from vestry and the parish.

Holy Week – There were 448 total worshippers on Easter and around 80 at each of the weekday services.

We are dealing with ongoing issues with Zoom. YouTube seems to be working well. AV volunteers may need more training. April will work on this.

Future Events:

- We will have a suicide prevention workshop on Sunday, April 30.
- Youth Sunday is May 7.
- Epiphany's 125th Anniversary Celebration is May 21.
- This Sunday is the Newcomers dessert event. Vestry is asked to help.

Associate Priest Hiring Update - We are interviewing a candidate next week and should have more information for the vestry soon.

Letter of Petition (Priesthood) – The Letter of Petition for Megan Swett was unanimously supported by the vestry.

Parish Priorities Update (Lisa Daily via Zoom):

After our last meeting, we identified five priorities where we need to focus our energy. Lisa will get with Shea to post them on the website, social media, church bulletin board, etc.

It is critical to get these points included in committee actions. By next vestry, each committee should have a meeting date to discuss these goals if they haven't already met. Vestry members can ask Lisa to be at meetings if they need her help. We may want to review these goals as a vestry at the midyear retreat each year.

Old Business

April reported that we already have two Stop the Bleed kits. We also have pediatric paddles in addition to adult paddles for the AED (automated external defibrillator). We aren't required to

have any other equipment. However, we may consider getting a LifeVac Choking Kit. April will investigate this and will look into CPR classes. Once we have everything in place, we should make the parish aware of the locations of these items.

New Business:

- Endowment Grant Proposals:

The Endowment Committee sent their grant funding suggestions to the vestry for approval. There were questions as to whether two of the submissions met the Endowment Fund goals. The guidelines are not totally clear on this. After discussion of the issues, the vestry decided to send back the Endowment Board request along with recommendations for further discussion and changes. Once changes have been made, the Endowment Board can resubmit the request for approval.

- Epiphany Stars

Sally wants to keep the Epiphany Stars going. This is the process of acknowledging in the Epiphany Star people who have gone “above and beyond” for Epiphany. She asked how it works and how to recommend someone. She is willing to work keeping that tradition going. She’ll talk with Shea.

The meeting ended with compline.

Key Upcoming Dates:

- Sunday, April 23 @ 4:00 – Newcomer Gathering
- May 21 – 125th Anniversary Sunday Festivities
- Tuesday, May 23 @ 6:30 – Vestry Meeting
- Sunday, June 18 @ 12:30 – Vestry Meeting
- Saturday, July 15 – Something
- July – No Vestry Meeting

Respectfully submitted,
Sherry Wallace
Clerk of the Vestry

MISSION STATEMENT

The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany is an inclusive community called to seek and follow Jesus Christ. We welcome all people in the Eucharistic fellowship of Christ's Body. We receive strength and encouragement at the common table to carry out Christ's work of reconciliation in our broken world. Nourished by worship and witness, learning and teaching, fellowship and service, we strive to live out the Gospel's radical values with gladness of heart.

PARISH CORE VALUES

Faith in God. Our belief in a loving God is foundational to our faith. Faith brings us together for worship and sends us out in the world. We recognize everyone's faith journey as unique – wherever you are on your journey, there is a place for you here.

Love in Action. We are called to engage with the wider community through the life and teachings of Jesus. Together, we work toward environmental, racial, gender, LGBTQ+ and economic justice and equity.

Transformative Relationships. Through God's grace, we seek to embody God's love in our care for each other.

Intentional Welcome. We are an inclusive community that strives to seek and serve Christ in all people. We believe God loves you - no exceptions.

PARISH PRIORITIES

- 1) Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church
- 2) Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
- 3) Work toward environmental, racial, gender, LGBTQ+ and economic justice and equity.
- 4) Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances and those living on the margins of society.
- 5) Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc.).

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Vestry Reports for April 18, 2023

Parish Priorities — Lisa Daily

See separate "Plan for Committee Meetings" document, with the following:

- An outline of a process for Vestry Liaisons to work with Committees/Groups to address parish priorities and achieving a healthy balance in parish activities, volunteering and participation
- Notes from the February 26 Parish Discussion for consideration by Committees/Groups with Vestry Liaisons.

Finance — Andrea Strahan

Financial summary for March 2023:

March 2023	Budget	Actual
Income	\$ 57,256.42	\$ 54,089.05
Expenses	\$ 57,749.00	\$ 46,341.39
Net	(\$ 492.58)	\$ 7,747.66

March had a MTD surplus of \$7,748, bringing the YTD surplus to \$72,673. The YTD surplus is higher than this time last year (March 2022 YTD surplus = \$15,807) due to:

- not paying an associate rector,
- not paying Diocese pledge payments this year (to be paid upon confirming Diocese payment coordinates), and
- not starting community engagement payments (to be paid upon confirmation of payees/amounts).

Randy will work with Doug Runnion to set-up pledge payments to the Diocese and make payments for January through April (approximately \$20,963). If we had made budgeted payments in January through March, the March 2023 YTD surplus would have been \$56,951.

MTD revenues are short of budget \$3,167, MTD expenses are under budget \$11,408. March pledge revenue includes \$5,000 released from account 8023 (Prepaid Pledges Fund). The Committee reviewed all reports and discussed budgeting more under 6830 (repairs and minor improvements) in 2024 for unanticipated building repairs that might arise.

Pastoral Care — Lisa Daily

The Pastoral Care Committee sent Easter cards to parishioners 75 years and older.

The Community of Hope continues to meet monthly. Its annual retreat was held on Saturday March 25 and was facilitated by the Rev. Buddy Crawford, the Priest in Charge of St. Anne's Episcopal Church.. Parishioners in need continue to receive visits, calls and cards.

Members of the Pastoral Care Committee are Cecelia Democko, David Draper (Chair), Susan Moody, Nancy Thompson and Sherry Wallace.

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

Children + Youth Formation — Paige Howell (Emily Elder)

Through the end of March and the beginning of April, we have continued with our weekly rhythms of Sunday morning children's formation and Sunday evening youth group.

- Children's chapel continues to average **6-7 children** each week, while our Godly Play classroom averages **3-4 children**.
- Our "Surveyors of Scripture" classroom usually sees between **4-6 students**.
- For youth group on Sunday evenings, we continue to average **5-8 youth**, but when we are combined with Holy Trinity Parish, there are usually between **10 to 15 youth**.
- We have also started using the lower level classroom as the "Donut Den" on Sunday mornings, as a space for the youth to hang out and play games during formation hour, since there is no formal youth formation at this time (it will return in the fall).

In addition to these regular events, we have had several special / annual events over the past month.

- Our final Family Eucharist service for the year was on March 21, and **7 families and over 25 people** participated.
- **4 children** were baptized on Easter, and our Easter Egg Hunt happened on Sunday, April 9, with **8 youth** helping set up the hunt, and **over 30 children** participating in the hunt itself.
- Finally, this past Saturday, we had a "Potluck & Parenting" event where Dr. Ellen Ott Marshall came and led a discussion for **4 families** over breakfast.

See below for a list of upcoming events, and please reach out to Emily Elder if you are interested in helping out with any of them:

- **Youth Sunday** on May 7 (morning)
- **Youth Car Wash** on May 7 (afternoon)
- **Youth Lake Day** (date TBD; potentially middle or late May)
- **Youth Interfaith Ping Pong Tournament** on Saturday, June 17 (with Ismaili CIVIC, St. Luke's, Holy Trinity Parish, and potentially Ebenezer Baptist and the Temple)
- **Vacation Bible School** from Tuesday, June 20 to Friday, June 23 (9 AM to 1 PM every day)
- **Youth Pilgrimage** to Little Tallapoosa River from June 27 to July 2 (registration coming by end of this week)

Membership + Newcomers — Liefy Smith

- Our first Newcomer Gathering of the year will be next **Sunday April 23rd at 4:00** in the Courtyard (or Parish Hall).
- About 20 invitations were sent out so we are optimistic about a great turn-out! We will be down two members to help- to so we encourage vestry members to attend.

Endowment — Kaylie Gibbs

The Endowment Fund Board (the “Board”), as Custodian of The Endowment Fund of The Church of the Epiphany, Inc. (the “Fund”) received requests for disbursement of Endowment Funds in accordance with the terms of the Plan of Operation: Endowment Fund.

The Board reviewed all applications for disbursement and recommends to the Vestry the following programs for support in the amounts set forth below.

Requestor / Request Description Summary as Approved (Details of Each Request on File with Endowment Board)	Amount Granted	Endowment Category
Polly Nodine Flower Guild Room Renovation, with building and grounds committee to review and approve plans before funds are disbursed. (Initial draft plans prepared with Request.)	\$4,450.00	Capital Improvement
Frances Finegan Transform Byrdland lot into verdant, urban greenspace, addressing current areas suffering from erosion – planting native grasses and flowers in eroded areas, add soil amendments, erosion control blanket and related work.	\$1,311.00	Parish Outreach, Earth Care
Emily Elder Local, community-building outing for Epiphany Youth Group (either an amusement park or a nearby lake). Funds to be applied for van rental for the group as well as equipment rental (lake) or admission (amusement park), and associated expenses.	\$700.00	Projects of Episcopal Church; Community Fellowship Building
David Draper Scholarships to offset cost of children attending Parish Retreat, and if families with children don't avail themselves of scholarship support, Parish Life committee may redirect any remaining funds to support others in attending the parish retreat	\$1,700.00	Scholarship / Grant
Lisa Daily and Ann Fowler Tiquisha Scott education and housing. (Tiquisha is an Emmaus House volunteer and GSU education student). Direct funds toward rent as a means of both supporting Tiquisha's educational goals by offsetting housing expenses. This will also allow us to receive required documentation of disbursement of funds	\$1,000.00	Parish Outreach
Maggie Burgess and Alix Janke To Team Libertad, for supplies for asylum seekers at Atlanta airport. Background: Stewart Detention Center leaves asylum-seekers at the airport with little more than their just-received immigration paperwork. Team Libertad purchases essential supplies for the travelers (e.g. backpacks, deodorant, phone chargers).	\$1,000.00	Parish Outreach

Motion: That the Vestry approve the recommendation of The Endowment Fund Board, as Custodian of The Endowment Fund of The Church of the Epiphany, Inc. for disbursement of Endowment Funds for the foregoing programs for support in the amounts set forth above.

Stewardship — Kaylie Gibbs

Nothing to Report.

Parish Life — Judy Jarady

The three planned events were well coordinated by the Parish Life Group. We had tremendous support from other ministries across the parish particularly with Amy's installation. Many thanks to all who pitched in to make the events a success. Special thanks to the Earth Guild for great clean up help at the installation reception.

- 03/30 Installation: 150 people were served
- 04/06 Agape Dinner: 96 people were served. Particular thanks to Joel Fowler for preparation of delicious fish.
- 04/09 Easter Breakfast: 125 were served

Amy's announcements to ask for clean-up help and online signups made the clean-up go very well. Much gratitude to Amy for help and awareness of the group's needs.

Technology — April Maa

Will be reaching out to then involve more youth as they desire into the AV Guild.

Worship — April Maa

Still working on getting new placers in place for the online broadcast of worship and coordinating corresponding training.

Building and Grounds — Matthew May

Issues: In Progress (In), Planned or Scheduled (Pl), On Hold or Waiting for Decision (HOLD), On The List (OTL):

The list of projects and issues showing ups ↑ and downs ↓ since last time.

- 1) (new) **Roof Leaks (PL)** Getting Quotes. Atlanta Roofing Specialists tomorrow (4/18) from 2:00 to 4:00. I have set up a visit by Bird's Eye on Monday (4/24) at 1:30. If you have comments on this, email thetechcpa@gmail.com
- 2) (unchanged) **FFA Byrdland (HOLD)** There are ideas about use of Byrdland proposed by Earth Guild in collaboration with B&G – endowment approval, pending vestry approval. If you have ideas on this or want to be part of the conversation, email thetechcpa@gmail.com.
- 3) (↑ from 5) **Flower Guild Room Improvements (HOLD)** - received endowment, waiting on vestry approval.
- 4) (↓ from 3) **Lighting (OTL):** Bray Electrical Services made second visit 4/17 for hanging pendant lights in side chapel, plus a couple or three other issues – estimate to follow.

- 5) (↓ from 4) **Front Door Physics (OTL)**: Something happening here. Various parties looking at conundrum of the front doors: sometimes doors gap, sometimes doors stick. Next? Better door code security system (video)?
- 6) (unchanged) **125 Anniversary Improvements (OTL)** - waiting on a plan
- 7) (↓ from 1) **Courtyard Fence (HOLD)** Needs a leader to plan. Waiting for a full plan If you have comments on this or know someone who is the best to lead a project, email thetechcpa@gmail.com
- 8) (↑ from 7) **Choir Room Wall Repair (OTL)** - need to repair and repaint choir room wall from water damage
- 9) (↓ from 8) **Building an' Grounds (BANG) Structure, or Emerging Endless List of "Things to Do" (OTL)**: Circulated in March, remains possible template pending Chair(s). Grounds function in fairly good shape. Realm might help. Maybe hold a Buildings reception in the Undercroft to see the new Unit.
- 10) (↓ from 9) **Maintenance Contracts (Inventory of Systems) (OTL)** Will be updating HVAC list after McKenney's Punch List labeling is confirmed.
- 11) (↓ from 10) **Asphalt Patching (OTL)**: 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 thetechcpa@gmail.com.
- 12) (↓ from 11) **Sexton Services (OTL)** Is informal volunteer sexton approach for identifying maintenance issues, handling minor repairs, coordinating minor contractors sustainable?
- 13) (↓ from 12) **Landscaping Company (OTL)**: When more urgent stuff addressed, can seek input and review.

Off the list/projects completed: sump pump in the basement x 2,

Accomplished March 25th (9:30 am to 12:30pm) work day activities:

- Spread pine straw,
- wild flower planting,
- weed the island in the gravel parking lot,
- pull ivy back from trees,
- feed blueberries,
- weed around shrubs at the end of paved lot,
- weed in the pet cemetery,
- cut brown leaves from the Aspidistra around big oak tree,
- add wood chips,
- weed whack areas behind church that are not reached by the lawn crew,
- weed and pull up ivy around azaleas at the point,
- trim shrubs at edge of the paved parking lot and next to our neighbors fence on Ponce,
- trim pyracantha,
- replace fire department signage.

Adult Formation — Peter Dodge

Fellow Vestry Members: I am forwarding Paul Hinson's April 16 e-mail to Amy and Shea to all of us because it serves as an excellent April 2023 Adult Formation Committee Report. Paul is of Course chair of the Committee and I am distributing this as Vestry Liaison to the Committee. I, too, commend Dr./Prof. Symmonds' series to all adult parishioners available to attend--truly a presentation rich in scholarship, organization and engaging theological and ethical substance. PJD

Hi Amy & Shea,

Just checking in to let you know that we had a well attended and really superb class this morning led by Dr. Symmonds. Couldn't have been better! What a great topic and what a great presenter!

More specifically I wanted to touch base with you re the fact that Dr. Symmonds would like to assign some reading each week. The reading will be optional but will be on the order of 15 pages or so. The class responded enthusiastically to the idea of reading (somewhat surprisingly!).

... <snip> ... We could phrase a short email blast similar to the following (please feel free to rewrite or edit!).

*"We are so grateful to have Dr. Nicole Symmonds leading a four-part Sunday morning adult formation class series entitled "Expedient Ethics" (April 16, 23, 30 & May 7). For each of the three remaining classes, we'll be distributing some **optional reading** for those wanting to take a deeper dive into these topics. The reading for our April 23 class can be found at the link below. Please feel absolutely free to attend the class regardless of whether you have time to do the reading...they'll be plenty of good material presented during the class to stimulate our discussions. Everyone is welcome to join in whether they do the reading or not! We look forward to seeing you.**

Also of course open to other ideas regarding how to get this material out to the parish, but an email seemed the obvious way to me(?). Give me your thoughts.

Paul H

Community Engagement — Susan Ashmore + Sally Walker

__<to follow>__

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Letter of Petition for Priesthood to be reviewed and, if approved, signed at Vestry Meeting:

ENDORSEMENT for ORDINATION to the PRIESTHOOD, DIOCESE of ATLANTA

To: The Right Reverend Robert C. Wright, Bishop of Atlanta

Date: April 18, 2023

From: The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

We issue this letter to reaffirm our support of Deacon **Megan Swett**, as last provided in a letter of support dated September 18, 2022 for her ordination to the diaconate, which took place on December 17, 2022. We testify to our belief, based on personal knowledge or on evidence satisfactory to us, that for the space of three years last past she has lived a sober, honest, and godly life, and that she has not written, taught, or held anything contrary to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of this Church. Moreover, we think she possesses the necessary qualifications and is a person worthy to be admitted to the *Sacred Order of Priests*.

...

Letter from Megan Swett

April 18, 2023

Dear Epiphany Vestry –

In preparation for my ordination to the priesthood scheduled to take place (God willing) this summer, I am writing to update you on the latest events in my process and request your endorsement for my ordination.

It feels so recent that I was writing with an update before my ordination to the diaconate. In the past six months, I have continued to serve at Holy Trinity Parish, and have been honored to step into the deacon role for Sunday services. I have particularly enjoyed the opportunity to read the gospel, and I wish my mother were here to see her meticulous table-setting tutelage put to use in a way she never would have anticipated. Serving as deacon during all of Holy Trinity's Holy Week services was particularly meaningful, as I have been with the parish for three Holy Weeks now, the first being in the thick of the pandemic. It was a joy to see the resurrection at work in that community and to be able to serve.

I am currently working to finish out the final semester of my M.Div. program at Candler. I am capping off my education with a perspective-broadening course on the global Anglican Communion. The class engages with the critical issues across the communion and challenges students to think about what it means to be a communion, and what it means to be the church in contemporary times. I have found it to be a beautiful celebration of humility and diversity, as well as a challenge to confront some of the ways the church has and continues to cause harm to God's beloved children. In the midst of finishing out graduate school, I am also attempting to discern my first call. I hope to work in a parish, teaching, preaching, and loving God's people into deeper discipleship, ministry to the world, and relationship with God in Christ. While I have not yet landed on the next right thing, I am grateful for God's presence with me in this time of exploration, uncertainty, and possibility.

As always, I am sustained by your support and prayers and continue to keep you in my prayers. I was thrilled to be able to serve as deacon at Epiphany twice in December and to join the community to celebrate Amy's installation as rector. With gratitude for all your love and support, I humbly request your endorsement of my ordination to the priesthood.

Sincerely,

Rev. Megan Swett