

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Vestry Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2021

In Attendance:

Vestry - Shelle Bryant, Paul Hinson, Richard Messner, Lisa Daily, Peter Dodge, Liefy Smith, Lisa Carlson, Sara Cushing, Bert Bender, Erin Braden, Linda Ryder-Wolf, & John Wierwille
Clergy - Amy Dills-Moore & Nicole Lambelet
Ex officio - Randy Shearin, Sherry Wallace, & Ann Fowler
Visitors: Laura Keys & Kay Lee

Lunch: Erin provided lunch.

Meditation: Nicole led us in meditation.

Old Business:

Harvey Fund Disbursement Recommendations:
Representing ECW, Laura Keys asked the vestry to reconsider the denial of grants to New American Pathways and ERD. The ensuing discussion cleared up misunderstandings. No recommendations were made, but Erin will send out a proposal via email.

Priest in Charge Report:

Looking ahead at our Christmas Eve services, Amy proposed service times and increased capacity

- 3pm (family service 30% capacity)
- 5:30pm (50% capacity)
- 10:30pm (50% capacity)

It's time to consider nominees for vestry for 2022. Please email Amy and Shelle with the names of two to three people you would like us to consider for vestry.

Amy would like to host a vestry/staff Christmas party for us to gather at the parish in December.

Amy will be on vacation the week after Kanuga, October 25-Nov 1.

Associate Priest Report:

Due to time consideration, Nicole did not present her report during the meeting. Instead, she sent the following report to be included in the minutes:

Weekly programmatic offerings for youth and adults at Epiphany continue, with no drastic changes in attendance over the last month. We plan to begin offering nursery again on Christmas Eve (at the 3pm and 5:30pm service), and we anticipate a return to limited children's programming on Sunday mornings by late January. We are hopeful that the vaccines for children made available at the end of this year will restore more volunteers and children to Sunday formation opportunities by that time. In the meantime, Amy and I continue to connect with families for smaller gatherings and for pastoral care as needed.

Seminarian Linden Abston is planning Formation for the rest of October/November on select Ancestral Narratives in Genesis. Formation during Advent will be offered by Seminarian Emily Bagett and will attempt to cultivate intergenerational learning and

engagement. In January we plan to offer Episcopal 101 in preparation for Confirmation on March 30th, along with some additional small group offerings.

Since the last Vestry meeting, the Community Engagement Advisory Council met three times to discuss the future of Outreach/Community Engagement at Epiphany, to name guiding principles and values, and to think through a communication plan for the parish. Of note this month has also been the learning and service work we have done with the Ismaili Community. This continues to be a wonderful grace and source of excitement for our people. Thirty-seven adults and youth from Epiphany came to the event at the Jamatkhana and we will host close to sixty folks from Epiphany and the Ismaili Community for the gathering at the end of October. ENS plans to cover the story.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of the September vestry minutes and gifts over \$100 for September 2021, were included as part of the consent agenda. All voted to accept.

Financial Report:

Shelle said that the month of September had a deficit of \$2,134. This was due to a dip in income.

The Finance Committee, after consulting with the Racial Justice Committee, recommended that Epiphany's money market account be moved to Citizen's Trust, a minority owned institution. Shelle motioned that we move the account and Linda seconded. All voted in favor.

New Business:

Erin, Kay, and Lisa D led us in a discussion of patterns of systemic racism in the Episcopal Church. Kay's notes from the discussion are attached to this vestry report.

The meeting ended with midday prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherry Wallace
Clerk of the Vestry

Kay Lee's notes from the Vestry discussion about the Executive Summary of the Episcopal Church's Racial Justice Audit:

- The work is complicate and hard to live out. The Financial Committee found it a challenge when considering establishing a relationship with a Black-owned bank, balancing the logistical work of banking (i.e., location for bank deposits etc.), being good stewards of Epiphany's money (Are the funds as fully protected (FDIC)? Are sufficient IT safeguards in place? etc.), Is continuing our relationship with our current bank which has a historical and recent history of lending practices that discriminated against People of Color a form of support of institutional racism? Developing a relationship with a black-owned bank allows opportunities for more direct interaction.
- The work is disheartening/overwhelming: It is a complex and far-reaching issue. There doesn't seem to be enough time to be fully informed of the history and current structure that promotes racism. And it is challenging to know what else a person can do that will really make a difference.
- The work is a process. Racism is so fundamental that it is not something that any one of us can solve.
- Mention of work by Vestry members at Emmaus House and Outreach as part of community engagement.
- Education: Reading and working toward understanding allows a white person to see the situation in a different way. Doing the work of life-long learning is part of racism work. Being more learned heightens a person's awareness.
- Transformational and Transactional is the 1st of the 9 Dominant Patterns described in the Audit report. When the work is transactional it is disconnected. However, with enough transactional work the episodes can culminate into change, which is transformational. The deeper work is the transformational work

- The work is about relationship building. Being in proximity with People of Color and people in need.

- The work is the work of our baptismal covenant.

- The Audit outlines the importance of awareness of historical racism within the Episcopal Church. Being honest. Epiphany should consider exploring its own racial history.

- The Audit identifies that People of Color (in the clergy and in the congregation) are held to a different standard and to different criteria.

- The 9th Dominant Pattern in the Audit Report is Intentionality & Ongoing Commitment: **“There are no single, accidental, or quick solutions to racism. Many people recognize that anti-racism, racial justice and healing requires long-term commitment, lifelong learning, deep intentionality, accountability, financial redistribution (reparations, to name one example), and powerful and courageous leadership”**

- The Recommendations for The Episcopal Church are as follows: **Recommendations for The Episcopal Church**
 - → Prioritize racial justice and healing within, between, and for People of Color, including resources, gatherings, and funding
 - → Continue to educate all-white or predominantly white congregations about racialization and about the story/history of whiteness in their lives and communities
 - → Systematize internal racial audits for leadership bodies. Conduct racial audits every 5 years on a churchwide level. Provide resources and tools to conduct racial audits for dioceses and congregations.
 - → Explore and discern a system of accountability to ensure deep systemic change (culture, policy, decision-making, education, finance, liturgy, etc.
 - → Institute reparations on the churchwide level for communities directly affected by the exploitation of or profiting from the labor and resources of Black and Indigenous people
 - → Expand the current audit report into a living, interactive, theological resource for the church

- → Use theological resources to deepen commitment for the long-haul of transformation, anti-racism, and Beloved Community
- → Design effective interventions for communities at different points along the Becoming Beloved Community labyrinth or along the continuum from exclusive club to anti-racist organization

Vestry Liaison Area Reports October 2021

Adult Formation (Paul Hinson)

At present during the Sunday adult formation hour, we're in the middle of a virtual Zoom only adult formation series led by seminarian Linden Abston and Nicole Lambelet entitled Ambivalent Ancestors in which we're exploring how faith, legacy, and the complexity of the human experience are narrated in the stories of our biblical ancestors and in the lives of the saints. That series concludes in another couple of weeks. As we enter Advent, we will participate in various offerings over the course of three weeks designed by seminarian Emily Badgett. This Advent season we will explore together how our senses help reveal God's presence among us as Emmanuel and the hope of God's coming future. An intergenerational offering entitled Coming to Our Senses: Encountering God will feature a short presentation for participants of all ages on various traditions each week, as well as practices and activities pertinent to the Advent season. We will kick off the series on Dec 5 with the Flower Guild and an Advent Wreath Making Workshop. On Dec 12, Julie Ryder will present about the music of the Christmas season and lead us in our own music-making. To close out the Advent season on December 19, we will learn about the ancient practice of Icon Making with a modern twist and engaging this practice devotionally with the guidance of Seminarian Emily Badgett. Going into the new year we'll look forward to a formation series on "Faith and Doubt" led by Amy Dills-Moore and Paul Hinson. There will no doubt be more to come beyond what I've outlined here and we're aware that formation happens not only in classroom style teaching whether online or in person but also in service — I'm thinking specifically of our continuing commitment to lay pastoral care in the Community of Hope in which we have a dozen or so lay folk being trained, as well as in Sacred Ground anti-racism discussion circles. We also look forward to continuing to be formed by our association with the Ismaili community and developing that relationship further.

Building and Grounds (Bert Bender)

Our reading today comes from "The Story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears":

"This porridge is too hot!" she exclaimed.

"This porridge is too cold," she said.

"Ahhh, this porridge is just right," she said happily.

If we replace "porridge" with "Sanctuary", we are at line 2 in that story and hopefully soon we'll be at line 3.

Issues on Front Burners (FB), Back Burners (BB) and On The Counter (OTC): To supplement the prior inventory of issues last month, here is a current Baker's Dozen Plus list with updates:

1+++ (again ↑ from 1) **Nave Ductwork and HVAC and Office/Bathroom HVAC Combined Plans (FB):** Revised plans approved by Owner as of 11/17. Instructions to Bidders and draft/example Construction Contract complete with comments from Mechanical Engineer. When we have a firm date from Johnson, Spellman & Associates, Inc. for a bidder "walk through" (hopefully by Monday), Instructions to Bidders will be sent to four or five Contractors from a semifinal list of Pennebaker johnpennebaker.com, United Maintenance unitedmaintenance.com, Sluss and Padgett www.slusspadgett.com, McKenney's www.mckenneys.com, KBS Heating & Cooling kbs HVAC.net, Shumate shumateheatingandair.com. 27 companies were investigated.

- 2) (↑ from 4) **Lighting (FB):** New estimate received for many fixtures, awaiting walkthrough and final details.
- 3) (unchanged) **Irrigation Plumbing Extensions (FB):** Initiated water meter application with DeKalb, on approval remaining donor funds to be posted.
- 4) (↑ from 5) **Kitchen HVAC (FB):** Ace and A ghosting (but they did provide one part for free, thx), so Empire will complete follow through for repair.
- 5) (↑ from 9) **Kitchen Appliances (FB):** New kitchen appliance inspection means work orders now placed.
- 6) (↑ from 11) **Baptistry Doors Punch List (BB):** Under consideration: bigger gutters and/or canopy over doors – plus canopy over undercroft – with inquiry to be made of undercroft design/contractors.

- 7) (Unchanged) **Building an' Grounds (BANG) Structure, or Emerging Endless List of "Things to Do" (FB)**: Collected a few more names of people who might want to help.
- 8) (↓ from 6) **Memorial Garden Plaques**: No problems that I've heard of, so ... thanks giving.
- 9-10) (Unchanged-ish) from the January Report: **Courtyard Fence (BB), Maintenance Contracts (Inventory of Systems) (OTC)** because there is only so much time. But there was a kitchen appliance inspection, and some items are being taken care of above or below my pay grade.
- 11) (↑ from 13) **Georgia Power Ponce Transformer Replacement (BB)**: GA Power \$6K in. Waiting for construction to start (unknown timing).
- 12) (Unchanged) **Playground Reconstruction (BB)**: Invoices submitted to insurance – awaiting final payout. Maybe picnic table plan, but no pressure on that right now.

Old Number 2 (Relocate Undercroft Cr*p) got done in October, thanks to John Yntema, Paige Howell, Dan Mundy, David Brandon.

Children's Formation (Linda Ryder Wolf)

No updates reported.

Endowment (Peter Dodge)

No updates reported.

Finance (Shelle Bryant)

Financial Summary for October.

October 2021	Budget	Actual
Income	\$46,317	\$53,694
Expenses	\$46,317	\$45,887
Net	0	\$7,807

Membership (Liefy Smith)

- We welcomed 3 newcomers at the Newcomer's Gathering last Sunday. Loren and Susan Williams have officially joined our parish.
- Coffee mugs have arrived, and we will be delivering in early December to new members along with a letter from Amy and one from Membership.
- The Intro to the Episcopal Church brochure turned out lovely and has been printed. Copies have been placed in the rack in the gallery. Greeters will distribute to folks who are visiting from other faiths.
- We are creating a system for tracking and follow-up to connect newcomers to their area of interest, status of officially becoming members, and other relevant categories.

Community Engagement/Outreach (Erin Braden)

The feeding ministry is hosting one more dinner in December, and co-chairs Sally Walker and Anne Kerner are creating gift bags for the Gateway Shelter residents. Kristin Phillips and I are coordinating Thanksgiving at Home for Emmaus House. Bags of groceries are accepted through this Sunday, and will be delivered to Emmaus House on Monday. Christmas at Emmaus House is being coordinated by Ellyn Bryan and Lindsay Todd. Unwrapped Christmas gifts are being collected through mid-December. In partnership with New American Pathways and possibly St. Catherine's, we will host a refugee family in January. Nicole and I are gathering a planning group together and will meet at the beginning of December. Work to transition to a community engagement model continues.

Harvey Fund (Erin Braden)

The HF committee met to discuss a revised timeline for future HF grant cycles, to ensure that the grant cycle is not started until after the available amount of grant funding is determined. This is the beginning of the work that needs to be done this coming year to update grant procedures and by-laws. In addition, the committee will start working on ideas for the larger scholarship/other grant opportunity for the remaining \$48,000 in grant funds for this grant cycle.

Parish Life (Linda Ryder Wolf)

Oktoberfest was a great event (Tracy Laird even referenced it in her stewardship story). There was a budget of \$500.00 and \$400.00 (more or less) was taken in.

Kanuga Parish Retreat (held on 10/22-10/24)

37 of 40 slots were filled. It was different than before Covid-19, but still very good. It was perfect weather. That committee is looking into alternatives, as Kanuga has gotten way too expensive. Charlie and Holly feel like Kanuga is probably headed toward convention only type events.

The stewardship In-gathering was November 14 (Stewardship had asked for some help from Parish Life). It was originally billed as bring your own picnic for outside, but the temperature did not cooperate, and it was moved into Jones Hall. Beer, Wine, and a sheet cake were provided as well as some appetizer type food (provided by Stewardship Committee). Parish Life members provided set-up and clean-up and some food.

Nativities:

Volunteers NEEDED especially for hosting. Linda asked to take this to the other Vestry Liaisons to have some of those committees/ministries provided volunteers.

Set up begins in November

Exhibit starts on December 4.

Along with the nativities, there will be a reception on December 5th after Lessons and Carols (6:00pm) Beer, wine, hot chocolate, and/or hot cider, cheese and cracker menu. More about that after In-Gathering.

Feast of the Epiphany is January 6th. Checking with Amy as to the clergies' vision for the event. Parish life is suggesting a chili potluck. The next meeting is January 10th.

Pastoral Care (Lisa Carlson & Lisa Daily)

Chair: David Draper

The Pastoral Care Committee continues the card ministry to those parishioners who are added to the prayer list and in December will be sending cards to older parishioners and those in special situations.

The Community of Hope Training began October 4. Eleven Epiphanyites, led by Ann Fowler, continue the 14-week training program to become lay pastoral care givers based on the Benedictine principles of balance, stability, hospitality, and prayer. Weekly sessions include guest presenters who are pastoral care experts in the Diocese including Rev. Amy Dills-Moore and Rev. Caroline Peacock, Director of Spiritual Health, Winship Cancer Institute, and an Epiphany parishioner. As part of the training, over the next 4-6 weeks, participants will make pastoral visits to parishioners.

Racial Justice (Erin Braden)

Co-Chairs, Erin Braden & Kay Lee

The Racial Justice group is not meeting during the Sacred Ground series, to allow time for member participation. Dialogue circles are meeting for their fifth session prior to the holidays and will hold the remaining five sessions January-April. Nicole and Holy Trinity's Rhett Solomon led a facilitator touch base this month to

support the facilitators and plan for a December 11 Advent day of reflection. This has been a productive partnership with Holy Trinity.

Stewardship (Richard Messner)

Stewardship had wonderful attendance at the Ingathering for the 2022 Stewardship effort this past Sunday. We are in line with prior years and feel good about coming closer to our goal. The Star this morning revealed we have \$385,751.04 in pledges to date for 2022. 68% of our goal. 91 pledges have been turned in as of Thursday.

As we have done in years prior, we will ask Vestry members to select people that they are comfortable calling or writing a letter to parishioners who have not year turned in their pledge. Stewardship will also reach out to those who have not yet pledged.

Historically, about 1/3 of those who pledge wait until December, and in some cases, January. Finance is not in a panic but would like to get our numbers nailed down so we can see what we may have to reduce spending if necessary (or more if we get even more pledges!!).

Thank you in advance for helping us with this collection.

Technology (Sara Cushing)

Committee Chair, Patrick Bryant

Video:

- Camera positioned with preset focus points
- Julie, Matt, Nicole, and Technology Chair trained on starting video feed for church
- Streaming audio sourced switched to a better source

Audio:

- Mixer from outdoor PA introduced to blend room audio (organ, choir, congregation) with miked audio (lectern, altar, clergy wireless).
- Blended audio routed to streaming only, not to nave speakers
- Additional microphones added near camera -- on loan from Technology Chair

Notes:

- Service recording is still not working, cause unknown.
- Nave microphones, added during the "New Parish Hall" renovation, do not work. Cause unknown.
- The current configuration is temporary; we still need to redesign and renovate the entire sound system using professional consultation. The main issue is audio for streaming has very different requirements from live sound reinforcement; our current sound system was designed to amplify individual people speaking in the nave.
- High bandwidth audio, such as organ and choral music, sounds a little wonky over Live stream on YouTube. We believe this is intrinsic to how YouTube compresses live streaming signals to save bandwidth. At present we do not know if there is a solution for this.
- At some point, we will need to mount the camera to a wall. Discussions are under way as to how best to do that without creating an eyesore.

Youth Formation (John Wierwille)

Over the past month, the youth have continued to meet weekly for 5-6 evening prayer. Evening prayer has had an average attendance of 8-10, and we have discussed the origin, structure, and content of the Bible. Holy Trinity joined us on the third Sunday. Sunday morning formation has focused on the practice of discernment and has taken place every Sunday from 10-11 with an average attendance of 6. From 4-5 we have held a youth drama practice, where 6 of our youth are writing and practicing a play about the Bible told from the perspective of Balaam's donkey.

In addition, we held a youth scavenger hunt on Oct 30, and 6 of our youth served as acolytes and tech support for our All Soul's Requiem.

Committee Thank You Schedule

Amy and Erin will work on a 2022 schedule of ministries; please let us know if you have any suggestions.

Month	Committee	Lead
November	Racial Justice	Erin
December	Alter Guild	Amy