

Vestry Meeting Minutes (approved via e-mail Sept. 5)

August 30, 2024

Vestry members present: Senior Warden Gail Kase, Junior Warden Peggy Wilson, Deb Carlson, Bendik Clark, Amanda Hilty, Claire Gillespie, Mike Robinson, Carol VanVoorhis

Others in Attendance: Rev. Dr. Dena Whalen, Discernment Committee Chair Bill Sewell, Clerk Deidre Soileau

Absent: Sam Shiver, Treasurer

Evening Prayer: Begin in silence

Opening devotions: Bendik Clark

1. **Approval of June minutes**—completed on August 2, 2024, via group emails.
2. **Approval of Deidre Soileau’s resignation from and Bill Sewell’s acceptance of the role of Discernment Committee Chair**- completed on July 30, 2024, by group emails.
3. **Treasurer’s report:** See Sam’s report on page 11.
4. **Interim Rector’s Report.** See page 4.

Additional items:

1. Annual Conference

Dena mentioned the need to elect convention attendees for the November 7-9 convention. It will take place at the Cherokee Convention Center (123 Harrahs Service Dr., Cherokee, NC). Two delegates and an alternate need to be elected by the Vestry.

Gail Kase, Loraine Hilty, and Amanda Hilty (alternate) were recommended.

ACTION ITEM: Gail and Loraine were unanimously elected to be the delegates, and Amanda was unanimously elected to be the alternate.

Dena informed Vestry that the cost would be higher this year due to the location. It is not feasible to commute, so there will be lodging costs for four people in addition to the regular conference fees.

Total cost is expected to be around \$1516. Since the higher amount was not in the budget, Vestry agreed to confer with the Finance Committee on what’s possible.

Note: 60% of the proceeds will go to Eastern Band of the Cherokee Tribe.

2. Communion cups

Per the diocese, we are to stop using paper cups for communion. Instead of paper cups, there will be Common Cup for intinction on one side of the altar, and a Common Cup for sipping on the other side.

5. Senior Warden's Report. See page 4.

6. Junior Warden's Report. No report this month.

7. Committee liaison reports.

- A. Monthly featured committee article for Mountain Spirit - *October will be Welcome Committee. Claire will see that something is submitted around September 21.*
- B. Property: No report this month.
- C. Finance: Dena. Ex officio. The committee met August 1. Until the end of year, Gail is assisting in putting together the agenda and running meetings.
- D. Stewardship: Mike. No meeting this month.
- E. Celebration: Carol. No meeting this month.
- F. Outreach: Carol. See page 6.
- G. Church Caring Crew: Bendik. No meeting this month.
- H. Communication Committee: Amanda. See page 7
- I. La Esperanza: Rebecca. See page 5
- J. Welcome Ministry: Claire. See page 7

Additional item: Nancy Larkin and Pam Hayhurst went to the university crawl August 29, and Claire is waiting to hear how it went. Vestry discussed some ideas on welcoming the new people that we've been seeing every Sunday. Dena suggested a "shepherd" could be assigned to each new person/family for their first year or so.

- K. Christian Ed: Deb. See her report on page 8

8. Rebecca Sharp resignation

At some point Rebecca's seat on Vestry will need to be filled. There was discussion on whether to have Vestry elect someone to finish out Rebecca's term, or to leave the seat empty for the rest of 2024. Gail asked Vestry members to think about it and send her any ideas.

9. Pam Hayhurst took over Ingles cards

This transition seems to be going well.

10. Discernment Committee Reports: See page 8 for Amanda's report as Vestry rep, and page 9 for Bill Sewell's report as Discernment Committee chair.

There was general discussion around when and how the parameters of compensation are determined, particularly as we are planning the budget for next year. Vestry discussed the pros and cons of full-time vs. part-time, and the difficulty of making projections at this point.

11. Holy Conversations

General discussion on what Vestry members heard.

12. Stewardship 2024

Ty cannot chair, as he is clergy, but he has offered to work behind the scenes; Vestry discussed some possibilities for chair.

13. Ice breaker.

Vestry members shared thoughts on something they recently found or discovered, and something they have lost or are missing.

14. Vestry Rep responsibilities. No concerns have been expressed.

15. Treasurer search: No update.

Ending prayer: Bendik Clark

Next meeting: September 17

To Dos:

- 1. Gail/Dena** to talk to Finance Committee about funding for conference attendees.
- 2. Claire** to make sure Welcome Committee submits a Mountain Spirit article about what they do; deadline is September 21.
- 3. All:** Send Gail ideas on filling Rebecca's seat
Respond to Bill Sewell's request as included on page 10

Interim Rector's Report

Pastoral Care & Visits:

- We celebrated the life of Larry Johnson with the Burial Office and interment in the Memorial Garden on July 24.
- Home communion to Frances Knisley and Joan Mahon.
- Visited newcomers Keith and Kirsten Pierce. Keith is joining the offertory musicians' rotation. He has been a full-time Minister of Youth. Kirsten commutes to Hendersonville in her work as a hospital chaplain. It is a blessing to have them as part of our church!
- Monthly visit to Mars Hill Manor for hymn singing and bible reflection.

Formation & Fellowship:

- We've enjoyed two evenings, July 10 and August 14, at the pavilion at Wolf Laurel, hosted by Bob and Crellin Byrd. After Evening Prayer, we enjoyed a potluck dinner together. In August several of us hiked up to Big Bald for a glorious sunset.
- With Susan Sherard and others providing generous food and drink, I held a book reading of *Through the Red Door* on August 7. Three Sundays at 9am followed with discussion on the book and another book *Having Nothing, Possessing Everything*.

Bishop Jose McLoughlin's visitation to Holy Spirit was August 18. He met with members of the vestry and search committee at 9 am; was our celebrant and preacher at 10:30; held a time of dialogue with the congregation afterward. Gail Kase was received into the Episcopal Church. Pam Hayhurst, Patty and Marcus King, and Deidre Soileau reaffirmed their baptismal vows.

Season of Creation will be the theme of our worship in September, with the Feast of St. Francis and the Blessings of the Animals taking place on September 29.

Time away:

July 21 – supply clergy was Dennis Fotinos (Feast of Mary Magdalene, observed) Ingrid Diederer provided the homily.

Senior Warden's Report

Greetings!

It seems like a long time since we last met—largely because it has been! As the Summer slowly turns the corner into Fall, vacations are ending, students returning, and our church prepares for a new liturgical season. The annual Stewardship Campaign is upon us! Even though July and August are traditionally slower months of the year, The Ocean Spirit has been sailing smoothly along, and the Discernment Committee has been hard at work with two Holy Conversations, continuing meetings and developing a Parish Profile. The profile will take ~2 months to create, but it will serve as an invitation to our new Priest.

As I'm writing this, I took a moment to recall where we were one year ago. David had just left, and the Vestry had assumed responsibility for the running of our dear church. We planned our retreat with Gary Butterworth, and Canon Augusta had recently met

with Vestry to outline the road ahead. Seems like a long time ago, doesn't it? It reminds me of the Grateful Dead's immortal words, "What a long, strange trip it's been." We had some turbulent water and some tricky weather, but the strength of our community nourished by the Holy abiding love has kept our ship moving right along!

Meanwhile, our website continues to develop, our attendance continues to grow, and our vitality is bright! We'll have an opportunity to follow up about our experiences with the Holy Conversations at our next Vestry meeting.

If you are the liaison to a committee, please remember to submit your reports by Tuesday, August 27th, even if the committee has not met since our last meeting. This gives everyone a chance to read them before the meeting, and allows Deidre time to include them in her minutes. Please send them to Vestry members, Dena, Deidre and Martie, and include the name of your committee.

Please send me anything that you would like to add to the agenda by Tuesday the 27th . I trust that the vestry will continue to be a body that guides and supports our Holy Spirit community: helping us all to keep our hearts and minds open to discern what Love asks of us.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Kase,
Senior Warden

Junior Warden's Report

No report this month.

La Esperanza

Youth and Families

We had a wonderful summer camp in July. One of the days we did a work project with Madison Native Gardens and then had a picnic on the Island. We have a trip to the NC Arboretum in September and a visit from Mountain Naturalist Carlton Burke in October.

ESL classes continue strong thanks to our dedicated volunteers. Unfortunately, we have 3 women waiting since December for tutors, so we need more volunteers!

I have been busy interpreting for Claudia who has breast cancer at her chemotherapy appointments and helping one of our families with a special needs child get enrolled in school.

We applied and were turned down for 2 grants, so both Amna and I have our hours to make the funds we have last longer.

We are having our big annual food fundraiser at Art on the Island Sept. 28. All monies made will be used for medical assistance for Claudia. I have been selling tamales a couple times a month with some of the women in part to help with Claudia's bills and to help with other needs of the Latina community.

Big news is that Ana (codirector) is pregnant and due in January!

Property Committee

No report this month.

Finance Committee

No report this month.

Stewardship

Mike Robinson

The stewardship committee will not meet again until September.

Celebration Committee

Carol VanVoorhis

No report this month.

Outreach Committee

Carol VanVoorhis

Mission Moment—Dena Whalen

Church of the Advocate is making a move away from asking churches to provide food. Trinity has purchased a house adjacent to the church. They are thinking about a more rounded ministry, with counseling in addition to what is already happening there. Mike Reardon is the new Vicar, and they are open to fresh new ministries.

Currently \$6,434 in outreach funds-\$1,000 is to be used for shoes for social services and some of the funding includes:

First Sunday for World Kitchen.

First Sunday in July was Beacon of Hope, \$915 was sent to Beacon.

August- World Kitchen

September- Homeward Bound (our funds go to support AHOPE)

Holy Spirit Bazaar

Warm Hearts, Full Plates, Cozy Homes for Madison County Families

Next 2 Craft Days are Sept. 6, Oct. 4. 10:00-2:00. We will use the September craft day to take inventory and decide if any more days are needed. If anyone knows of people making things at home, please contact them and get the number of items.

In the November Mtn. Spirit there will be additional information on the Holiday Sale -includes crafts, silent auction items and chili, soup, bread and bake sale.

Deb Carlson gave an update on shoe vouchers for foster kids and the elderly for Social Services in Madison County, and \$1,000 has been approved to use to purchase \$50 gift cards

New Business

Mary Maupin is starting to gather information to email out applications to nonprofits for First Sunday.

Church Caring Crew

Bendik Clark

No report this month.

Communication Committee

Amanda Hilty

We've had a couple brief zoom meetings since our last vestry meetings. The Mountain Spirit has been the focus of the work. Deidre continues to update/ maintain the website, and our Facebook page is regularly sharing information & happenings regarding our parish.

Welcome Ministry Report

Claire Gillespie

The second phase of the "Supper Club" began in July after the committee met to form the groups. Discussion was held about how to plan the visit from the MHU Bonner scholars for their service project. Peggy Wilson, as junior warden, shared ideas for their project and an easy way to provide the meal.

On July 24th Zavannah Aparicio, a Bonner scholar leader, came to Holy Spirit to tell about how scholarship students provide services during their school year.

On August 21st fifteen MHU students gathered for a welcome from Gail Kase and learned how their services would be carried out by Peggy Wilson. After snacks the students were divided into groups with Teresa Matthews, Tom Panek and Peggy Wilson directing the groups to wash windows, sanitize the nursery room contents, and haul brush and mulch plants. As students finished, Ty Jones led them on a hike along the CHS trails. The lasagna dinner was provided by the Welcome committee and others. Cookies, brownies and peaches were bonus carry-outs. Many conversations with questions and answers were being shared all around with these students just beginning college. It was a great beginning to our relationship with the university. Ideas for additional activities with these students are brewing.

On August 29th members of the Welcome Committee will be participating in the University Crawl which provides a chance for students to see what churches and organizations are in the area.

Christian Education

Deb Carlson

Offerings from the Adult Education Committee. Dena will present her book the Red Door Sept 1 at 9 am. Near Death Experience presentation/discussion on September 29 after the service.

Discernment Committee Report

Submitted by DC Vestry Rep Amanda Hilty

The DC has been meeting twice a month. Joslyn Schaeffer (from the Diocese) has sat in via zoom to offer assistance and answer questions along the way. After the CAT surveys were submitted (81 were completed), Elizabeth from Holy Cow Consulting shared with us a presentation about the findings and results of the information. For those unable to attend, I encourage you to watch the recording. Deidre is also working on an abbreviated version to share with the congregation (draft due to the DC by September 1). The findings told us things we already know, like how welcoming we are and that we're just an awesome church, but also gave us insight as to things we need to work on, be cautious of, or that people would like to see improved.

We used this information along with other guidelines from the diocese to help form the questions for the Holy Conversations that took place on Aug 12th and 20th. Participation was good with approximately 22 attending on the 12th, and 30 attending on the 20th. A make-up session, possibly with Zoom option, is being planned. The questions helped dig a little deeper into the thoughts and responses of the CAT Survey as well as offered a more personal and intimate approach.

As we continue to sort through the responses, we are pulling together the threads of common themes along with pertinent information in order to knit together our parish profile. This is our next step and will likely take about another month to prepare. The profile is what we send to the diocese to share with the world about ECHS and that discerning priest will view to learn about us.

For the Vestry (and possibly finance committee), there is the matter of addressing the salary we can afford in regard to a new rector. Deciding the budget is not part of the Discernment Committees responsibility, however it is information that is needed to determine if we are seeking a part time/full time rector.

Discernment Committee Chair Report

Bill Sewell

The final Holy Conversation session will be held Sunday, September 8 following the regular service. It will allow for attendance either in person or via zoom.

Members of the Discernment Committee will participate in anti-bias training in the next several weeks.

The results of the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) are on the website and an abbreviated summary will be up very soon. Some Vestry attended the session with Holy Cow. I encourage all members to listen to it or at least the summary.

Next Step: The Parish Profile

Actually, there are two related documents or processes—the Parish Profile which will be placed on our website and available for anyone to look at and the Office of Transition Management (OTM) Community (Parish) Portfolio which is submitted to the Diocese and goes onto a database for searching priests to access.

We have been told to develop the parish profile first. Later, pieces of it can be summarized to fit the OTM format.

The OTM includes a variety of statistical data and eleven essay questions (limit of 1,200 characters each), most of which we can draw from the CAT and the Holy Conversations.

Overall instructions for the parish profile include that it should be “true, transparent and an example of integrity” and “appropriately demonstrate joy and levity”.

Sections Include:

Mission Statement or prevailing vision of ministry

History of the Parish (Patty King has been actively working on this piece and I think has been having a lot of fun).

Where we live – the community surrounding the parish

Who we are

Ministry Areas

Our Discernment of God’s dreams for the parish

Characteristics of the Rector we seek that are unique for our context

What we offer our next Rector

Parish Finances – “very important and tell the unvarnished truth. Do not include compensation.”

I would specifically be interested in input from Vestry members in a couple of areas: where we live and who we are. We have a lot of demographic data and gleanings from the CAT/Holy Conversations that will be useful, but we also need to tell our story.

Assignment from the Discernment Committee

As we work on the Parish Profile to be posted on the church website, we would really like your input. Please think about the following questions:

If your closest friend that you haven't seen in years asked "What is it like to live and work in Madison/North Buncombe Counties? Who are the people? What are the attractions? Brief History, how has it changed in the last ten years? How do you think it will change in the next ten years?"

What about your church? What is the building like? What is the setting like? What about the members? What are they like? What is their history? What is important to them?

We really hope you will play along. Any format. Bullet points are fine. You can send an email to searchholyspiritwnc@gmail.com or give them to any Discernment Committee member. We would appreciate responses by September 11th.

Treasurer's Report for Vestry

August 2024

On August 12th, we successfully transferred oversight and management of all Montalvo Fund monies to an account at Self-Help Credit Union. It is in the care of Mark Siler and an advisory committee, of which Barbara Moloney is a member. ECHS no longer has any responsibility toward the fund.

I have transferred \$135,000 of our operating fund (checking account) into our First Bank money market account which formerly held the Montalvo Fund. This has begun earning ECHS approximately \$350 per month.

Our 2023 audit material is in the hands of our auditor. She should be finished with her review and the report by September 1st. Many thanks to Katie Douglas our bookkeeper for tracking down and organizing reams of paperwork!

Sam Shiver