

**St. Philip's Episcopal Church**  
**Vestry Meeting**  
**May 18, 2021**  
**Minutes**

*Present:* Dana Richardson, *Sr. Warden*, Dave Ham, *Jr. Warden*, Jimbo Smith, Debbie Evans, Bill Bittenbender, Tom Griffin, Bob Wright, Holly Meiners, Steve Russell, Deborah Jordan, Liz Halbert, Mother Lisa Erdeljon, *Assistant Priest*, Fr. Eric Mills, *Rector*

*Absent:* Rich Alt

*Guest:* Lorraine Beamer

*Ex Officio:* Bob Fuchs, *Treasurer* and Margaret Bearden, *Clerk*

**Opening Prayer.** Fr. Eric opened the meeting with a prayer at 5:30 pm in the Parish Hall and on Zoom.

**Minutes.** The April minutes had been approved via email.

**Rector.** Fr. Eric, in response to the recent lifting of pandemic recommendations by the CDC and state of North Carolina requirements, discussed possible changes that St. Philip's will be instituting. Our "back to normalcy" will follow decisions made by the Diocese. He noted that service practice decisions have been made by our clergy and wardens during the pandemic. We are currently laying the groundwork for possible service practices, including providing areas, such as in the choir and acolyte seating sections, for those who still may need or want to continue masking and social distancing. Choir activities are expected to return in the fall. He expects Wednesday services to be reinstated once the Diocese removes the indoor mask requirement. New plans are being developed for a possible resumption of the Beach Service, previously put on hold due to COVID restrictions.

Fr. Eric noted that job descriptions have been completed for the Sexton, Parish Administrator, and Organist/Choir Director. Copies of the job descriptions have been provided to the vestry for their Vestry Notebooks. He also noted that Linda Humphreys is resigning as chairman of Parish Life, and a new chairman will be recruited.

A new six-week program of "Discovery" classes, with quarterly sets of disciplines, will begin this fall and will take place during Adult Forum periods between services. This program, following a model from a San Antonio Episcopal Church, will serve not only as confirmation classes but also for renewal of existing members. All current members will be invited to participate in this first year of the program. This program will repeat on an annual basis so that newcomers will not have to wait to start their confirmation education. Finally, Fr. Eric will be developing a video for the parish that provides an overview of how the program church organization is operating in St. Philip's Church.

**Treasurer's Report.** (attached as addendum)

Bob Fuchs reported that we had received a clean audit from our auditor and has attached the report to his Treasurer's report. **A motion to accept the audit report and to send it to the Diocese was made by Bill Bittenbender and seconded by Steve Russell. The motion was approved by the Vestry.**

Bob noted that pledge revenues decreased during April, with YTD revenues still above budget by approximately \$41,000 (primarily due to prepaid 2021 pledges). April expenses exceeded revenues by \$7000 but remain \$8100 under budget for the year-to-date. Responding to a question, Bob reviewed expenses in the "Vestry Functions" category, which include the recently completed audit and expenses incurred during the search for the assistant to the rector.

With regard to the Capital Campaign, several larger contributions have been received since the end of April, reducing the pledges still needed before completion of construction to \$75,000 in order to avoid dipping into Cash Reserves.

**Liz Halbert moved to receive the Treasurer's report, with the motion seconded by Bill Bittenbender, and was approved.**

**Senior Warden.** Dana Richardson briefly reviewed Action Items from April. The status of these items will be noted under "Action Items and Review."

**Dana presented a motion to name Bill Bittenbender as the authorized signatory on the Mission Investment Fund Certification of Ministry Management. The motion was seconded by Jimbo Smith and was approved.**

**Junior Warden.** (report attached as addendum) Dave Ham has created a new customary for Vestry Person of the Day (VPOD), which will change again post-pandemic. He stressed the need for VPODs to read announcements emailed by Lorraine Beamer on Thursday afternoon prior to Sunday services. Signup-Genius is being used for vestry members to reserve their Sunday VPOD duties.

Dave also noted that the arbor project has been completed, and the new sign for the Chapel of the Cross should be ready in about a week. The paver project from Dry Street past the labyrinth to the church is expected to begin by May 21.

**Chaplains and Committees.** (reports attached as addenda.)

**Strategy Team.** (report attached as addendum) Bob Wright discussed the team's report of April 20, 2021. The team has asked the vestry members to prioritize the suggested strategies, motivated by the

St. Philip's vision statement, which include planning for post-COVID church, growing the congregation, enhancing greater community awareness and effective campus use and coordination. The team is asking the vestry to assist the chaplains to work with the ministry boards to review the strategies and develop additional suggestions for church growth. It was suggested that chaplains take concrete suggestions directly to their assigned ministry boards. Short and long-term objectives should be defined and the ministry boards will be encouraged to conduct monthly meetings.

Discussion ensued regarding the desired relationship between chaplains and their boards. During the discussion of the Strategy Team efforts, Fr. Eric agreed with the chaplains' request for them to attend with him the next meeting with the ministry board chairs in order to clarify any misconceptions regarding the function of the chaplains.

### **Building Committee Update. (attached as addendum)**

#### **Action Items and Review.**

- Don Halbert and Bob Fuchs will work on a revision of the Cash Reserve/Fiscal Management Policy that will better suit our current financial condition. [**Action Pending F&F Policy Review**]
- Staff Job Descriptions: [**Action Complete with files sent today**]
- By-Laws Changes: [**Communicating with Diocese Chancellor – Action Pending**]
- F&F draft policy on **Building Access**. Provided to new Safety and Security Committee for review and recommendations for implementation. [**Action Pending**]
- Memo from F&F Board to Ministry Boards regarding storage space [**Action Pending**].
- Chaplains' delivery of Strategy Team recommendations (4-20-21report) to ministry boards [**Action Pending**].
- Results of Southport Church Security Meeting has been forwarded to Safety & Security committee – [**Action Complete**]
- ExComm will address prioritizing requests for use of new Fellowship Hall [**Action Pending**]

**Closing and Prayer.** Mother Lisa offered the closing prayer **Bill Bittenbender moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 pm. Dave Ham seconded the motion, and it was approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Bearden, *Clerk*

**Treasurer's Report to Vestry**  
**May 18, 2021**

The 2020 audit is completed and was sent to the Vestry. From the auditor's letter, "...based on my review and testing as described above, the Church is in compliance with the Diocese Contract Audit procedures for the Church Financial Reports for the year ended December 31, 2020 and the financial statements present fairly the financial condition of the Church."

<b>Operating Budget</b>	<b>2021 FY Budget</b>	<b>2021 YTD Actual</b>	<b>2021 YTD Budget</b>	<b>2021 YTD Variance</b>	<b>Apr Actual</b>	<b>Mar Actual</b>	<b>Monthly Change</b>
<b>Revenues</b>							
Pledges	581,157	226,893	193,719	33,174	39,905	44,413	-4,507
Flower Revenue	8,025	2,325	2,675	-350	340	1,605	-1,265
Identified Offerings	41,208	19,049	13,736	5,313	6,099	6,450	-351
Loose Plate	7,500	397	2,500	-2,103	225	103	122
Parish Hall Rental	600	200	200	0	50	0	50
Miscellaneous Receipts	15,000	10,020	5,000	5,020	7,056	292	6,764
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>653,490</b>	<b>258,884</b>	<b>217,830</b>	<b>41,054</b>	<b>53,675</b>	<b>52,863</b>	<b>812</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
Parish Staff	433,349	130,037	137,001	6,963	47,019	27,100	19,919
Administration	35,316	11,622	11,772	150	2,201	3,724	-1,523
Property	87,596	24,743	20,935	-3,808	2,120	9,764	-7,644
Vestry	65,060	22,049	23,520	1,471	5,868	5,183	685
Faith Formation	1,700	0	225	225	0	0	0
Outreach	7,050	3,550	3,550	0	2,000	0	2,000
Parish Life	4,924	395	1,358	963	271	124	146
Pastoral Care	1,080	238	360	122	119	0	119
Worship	16,894	3,578	5,605	2,027	1,084	249	836
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>652,969</b>	<b>196,212</b>	<b>204,325</b>	<b>8,113</b>	<b>60,681</b>	<b>46,144</b>	<b>14,538</b>

Net Total	521	62,672	13,505	49,167	-7,006	6,719	-13,725
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**Comments:**

April expenses exceeded revenues by \$7,006. Pledge collections were \$13,906 under budget in April but remain \$33,174 ahead of budget year-to-date. \$5,600 in Miscellaneous Receipts were donations for the paver project. Total Expenses were \$4,261 under budget in April and are \$8,113 under budget year-to-date. Mother Lisa’s moving expenses were paid in April. Pension payments to Fidelity (\$5.6K) were either not made or not entered in the system; I am following up on this.

**Prior Comments:**

January pledge includes \$20K of pre-paid pledges in 2020.

\$3K more of Identified Offerings was received in March than was budgeted.

Loose plate is under budget because there were few in-sanctuary services in January & February, and it continues to lag.

Medical insurance payments are \$4,339 over budget because December premiums were paid in January.

Computers Network & Web is \$1,204 over budget for live stream equipment in February which was not in budget. It was approved to be spent in 2020.

January grounds keeper equipment (\$882) was not in the budget but was offset by a \$1.5K donation for ground keeping equipment and supplies in Miscellaneous Receipts.

Property insurance is \$3,499 over budget because December premiums were paid in January.

In January, \$700 was spent on a lot survey for the Chapel of the Cross that was not in the budget.

Office Rent is \$980 over budget because storage unit expenses in February were not in budget.

Diocesan Convention is \$2,000 under budget because nothing was spent in January.

<b>Project Costs</b>		<b>Project Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>at 11/30/2021</b>
<b>Construction Cost</b>		Pledges	1,408,655		
Parish Hall/Admin	2,029,850	Collected		1,040,394	1,040,394
Architectural Services		Collect by 11/30			113,761
Construction Supervision	20,500	Outstanding		368,260	254,499
Other Costs		Other Funds	366,117	366,117	366,117
Furniture & Fixtures	37,500	Mortgage	835,000	0	835,000
Contingency 5%	101,500	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>2,609,772</b>	<b>1,406,511</b>	<b>2,355,273</b>

Misc.	6,173	Total Spent	2,355,273	308,352	2,355,273
<b>Total Construction Cost</b>	<b>2,195,523</b>	<b>Available Funds</b>	<b>254,499</b>	<b>1,098,160</b>	<b>0</b>
Actual Construction Spending	148,602				
<b>Remaining Construction Spending</b>	<b>2,046,921</b>				
Pre-Construction Spending	159,750				
<b>Total Project Costs</b>	<b>2,355,273</b>				
Total Spent to Date	308,352				

**Comments:**

November 30 is the planned construction completion date.

\$1,040,394 in Capital pledges has been collected, which is 74% of the total pledged amount.

Overall, \$368,260 of total pledges remain unpaid. Pledges for 2018 through 2020 are under paid by \$115,048.

Twelve pledgers have moved, left the Church, or passed away, leaving a shortfall of \$44,988.

At least \$113,761 in outstanding pledges must be collected before the end of construction to avoid using cash reserves, which will allow us to stay within our \$835,000 maximum mortgage approved by the Diocese.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Fuchs

Treasurer

## REPORTS

### Junior Warden:

**VPOD** – A revised customary is attached with changes made relative to our current conditions. It is important to review the policy especially as it relates to interaction with the congregation. We as Vestry members, especially the VPOD, have a responsibility to be available to answer questions and concerns the congregation may have.

A new **VPOD Schedule** is needed for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year. Sign-Up Genius has worked well, and the sheet will be sent out by the end of May. Please complete this as possible; we each will need to schedule for 2 – 3 Sundays.

A **VPOD Training Video** is scheduled for completion. The intention is to help current VPODs as well as indoctrination for future Vestry members. This will be complete in the near future.

**Arbor Project** – The arbor project is complete with the arbor being installed and the labyrinth restored by Ethan McLaughlin with assistance from his Boy Scout troop. Additionally, sixteen Mahonias and three boxwoods were added to the planters on the Dry Street side of the church by the Groundskeeper volunteers. Many thanks to the scouts and volunteers.

**Paver Path Project** – The project is progressing slowly, and Urban Construction has contracted with a subcontractor other than Aztec. As of 5/16/21 the contractor is scheduled to begin construction 5/20/21 and expects the process to take 2-3 days. All needed materials are on site and fair weather is expected. The scope of the project has been reviewed with the contractor and no impediments other than scheduling are expected.

**Chapel of the Cross Sign** – All intermediate materials have been received by A Sign of Distinction and final design has been reviewed and approved. Fabrication of the sign is scheduled to be complete by 05/21/21, and the sign installed when complete. Projected to be complete within two weeks.

**Building & Grounds** – Church irrigation systems being repaired and reactivated, as necessary. Plan in place to restore the system to operation by 5/21/21 for those areas not affected by Fellowship Hall construction.

Establishment of a **Maintenance Reserve** calculation is progressing slowly. Fulford HVAC has been contacted and should help in calculating reserve levels for those systems - a major liability. Other reserve costs will be calculated by Building & Grounds Committee. No projected completion date provided. Current level of reserve fund ~\$61K.

David Ham



## **Building Committee:**

Activity continues although not at the speed we would like to see. Main issues are just trying to get sub-contractors to show up at times promised but an issue that receives continuing attention. As of today, our contractor has told me that the committed occupancy date is still 11-30-2021.

Plumbing and electrical inspections have been completed and next steps are to treat for termites, compact the soil base again, place the metal re-bar, pour the foundation, and place a fence around the construction site. Windows and doors have been ordered and initial order for framing material will be done this week.

We continue to provide weekly updates through the E News and will continue this practice.

Bill Bittenbender

## **Strategy Team:**

During the annual Vestry Retreat this January:

1. The Vestry was challenged to better define the rolls and responsibilities of the Vestry, Ministry Boards and Ministries in line with the Program Church concept.
2. Vestry members were assigned responsibilities to develop the details and begin the implementation of the concept for St. Philip's.
  - a. Strategy Team established
  - b. Chaplains were assigned specific MBs.
  - c. An Executive Team was created.

Over the four prior Vestry meetings:

1. A new Vision statement for the church was developed and approved.
2. A mission Statement for the Vestry was recommended and approved.
3. Both short and long-term objectives were developed.
4. Various potential strategies were identified and reported to the Vestry as suggestions toward meeting our objectives.

The May Vestry meeting is the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the year:

1. COVID has had a negative impact on meeting personally and communicating effectively: however:
  - a. There is little evidence that we are making progress in meeting our stated objectives.
  - b. It does not appear that the various elements of the Vestry are totally aligned.

- c. There is limited reporting of MB progress in developing the strategies necessary to meet objectives.
- d. Little time is available to discuss the most pressing issues during the allotted 90-minute monthly Vestry meetings.

2. Recommendations:

- a. Poll all Vestry members to determine their personal agreement with the objectives previously identified and approved.
  - b. That a deadline or timeline established to complete and report to the Vestry that the objectives have been communicated to the MBs, Mission Statements completed, and strategies developed.
- c. That Vestry meetings be reconfigured to allow time and opportunity to discuss previously submitted written reports and other priority issues.

Bob Wright

**Chaplains 'Reports:**

**Faith Formation Ministry Board Chaplain's Report**

Both the Faith Board and the Wednesday bible class hope to resume meeting in person using the Parish Hall as we try to return to normal. The Wednesday bible class is looking for the next video series since they are just about to finish the video series on Science and Religion.

Jennifer sent an email of the suggestion she tried to make during our meeting (but which was lost in a bit of chaos). I am awed by the simplicity of her suggestion.

"The Faith Formation ministries demonstrate the intentionality of St. Philip's people 'to deepen our love of God and strengthen our love of others 'by building, enriching, and maintaining an informed understanding and practice of Christian faith and spirituality through our ministries of Bible, Seekers, Youth, Library, the Labyrinth, Yoga, prayer shawls, and related activities."

Jennifer said, "I do understand the idea of trying to make the Boards more clearly visible and understandable on one page so with a glance, parishioners can see what is truly involved in each board. This also helps jump the hurdles of the poor website."

I would then suggest trimming another couple of words, but we can deal with edits later. In any case, for tomorrow, our chaplain and Debby can report that Faith Formation is on top of the issue.

Tom Griffin

## **Worship Ministry Board Chaplain's Report**

It was announced that Deacon Sally was retiring from her pastoral duties with St. Philips and focusing her calling on outreach activities for the Diocese at the end of May.

Ricky Evans led the discussion regarding the Worship Board's Mission Statement. This resulted in Bobbie Fuchs sending out a draft mission statement to the entire Worship Board for review and comment, due Friday, May 07, 2021.

If there are a lot of comments or suggested changes a zoom meeting will be undertaken to try to resolve all outstanding issues.

While no fixed date was set to forward to the Vestry, it is believed the Vestry will receive the Worship Board's submission before the June meeting.

I submitted to the Worship Board for their consideration a request from the Senior Warden that the Beach Service Ministry review the beach service customary and make any necessary enhancements that would allow someone unfamiliar with all the logistical procedures to carry on the program. The intent is to place in the church office an up-to-date customary for a number of St. Philips 'ministry boards. Mr. del Sol stated he would start that process.

Rich Alt

## **Outreach Ministry Board Chaplain's Report**

The Outreach Committee will have their next meeting July 13. Ruth Smith is working with her committee on the Mission statement.

In April, we received in donations \$885.00 for the diaper ministry.

The Outreach board approved \$250.00 for the American legion and \$1,000.00 for the purchase of diapers.

Holly Meiners

## **Parish Life Ministry Board Chaplain's Report**

**ECW** board met on 5/3. The Lunch Bunch will meet at Provisions at 11:30 on 5/25. On 6.25 the group plans to go to Wilmington, possibly Airlie Gardens.

The Fall Festival is scheduled for 10/2. One shell workshop has been held. Deborah Alt plans a series of craft workshops in the parish hall in the future. Because of the construction a new location for the fall festival is being sought.

**Newcomers:** The Shepherding project is being developed with Fr. Eric. Plans for a greeter to stand by Fr. Eric or Mother Lisa to get names of newcomers are being made. Plans for the greeter to follow up with a phone call or a short note were discussed.

The **gift bag program** has been dropped.

Since there are 35-40 Newcomers to St. Philip's, Fr, Eric wants some sort of reception for them i.e.: lemonade and cookies. Plans for a Newcomers get together are on hold.

**Men's Club:** No meetings until new Fellowship Hall is completed.

Clark Sizemore led a crew of **Odd Jobbers** to work at New Hope Clinic.

**Dine Out and Dine In** groups will restart in fall.

**"Rides" program** is on hold till after COVID.

**Brotherhood of St. Andrews** is on hold till after COVID.

The **Brunswick Town Worship Service** and **Picnic** were a great success. Steve Moore was instrumental in the success of the picnic.

The idea of parishioners interviewing each other and then writing a short item about that person to be published in a parish newsletter will be discussed later. This type of activity is sometimes called **"Silver and Gold"**.

A **mission statement** is being developed for the Ministry Board. An early candidate is:

"The mission of the Parish Life Ministry is to connect and care for the people in our Parish in order to promote and strengthen our love of God and our love of one another".

Linda Humphreys is resigning as Board Chairman. Efforts to replace her are underway.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2021 at 3:30pm.

Jimbo Smith