

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS
AUGUST 15, 2024

The August Vestry meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Fr. Josh Stephens. Those attending included: Senior Warden, Jerry Holt, Junior Warden, Will Rodriguez, Clint Adams, Jon Fitzpatrick, Patrice German, Jim Gibbs, E.R. Haire, Sandy Skelton, and Laura Teel. Jill Owen, Marisa Pharr, and Kim Sanders were absent.

After the general welcome and Vestry member check-in, Jim led the opening devotion by discussing farming, ranching, and agriculture as related to growing the kingdom of God. Jim also read Prayer 29 from *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Acceptance of Consent Agenda for August: Will made a motion to accept all committee reports and the minutes of the June Vestry meeting; Clint seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

Churchyard Ministry Committee: Deacon Sandy provided updates to the St. John in the Wilderness *Historic Churchyard Rules and Regulations*. Regarding the resale of an unoccupied easement, the wording will be changed from the 'current cost' to the 'original cost'. In the Burial Planning and Segments, the segments will be limited to four cremains of members of the same family. If segments are used for more than two individuals, there must be space for markers or headstones for each additional cremains. Clint made a motion to approve the changes as outlined; E.R. seconded the motion and it was passed by the Vestry.

Rector's Report: Fr. Josh began by acknowledging our many losses as a community with many recent deaths in our church. He continues to think of the staff and our members as they navigate the grief process. Fr. Josh continued by discussing changes to the baptismal policy and summer part-time members. Referencing feedback from the Appointments Committee, he reviewed potential Vestry candidates for 2025.

Further discussion included Dewitt Tipton's Retirement Reception. As a result, Patrice made a motion to provide an additional donation of \$1,000 from the Vestry to honor Dewitt upon this retirement. Sandy seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry. Fr. Josh asked Will to read the Resolution in Gratitude for Dewitt's ministry which will be presented at the Retirement Reception. After reading the resolution, Will made a motion to adopt the Resolution. Clint seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry. Please see the attached copy of the Resolution.

At 6:20, Fr. Josh made a motion to move to Executive Session. The Executive Session ended at 6:36 p.m.

Curate's Report: Fr. Ian reported that he is continuing to develop curricula for Christian Education. Following discussion and collaboration with those involved, the Askews agreed to provide formation for the Middle/High School age students. Fr. Ian and Mary Anne Inglis will teach the Elementary class. In addition, he teaches a weekly Men's Bible Study class and continues to share preaching and celebrating duties on Sundays, Wednesdays, and other occasions such as funerals, weddings, as well as the monthly Eucharist at Lake Pointe Landing. Recently he served as Chaplain at Camp Henry for a session with elementary-age children. Fr. Ian reported that he will be hosting a Young Family Ministry event and coordinating a joint service and reception for our retiring Music Director/Organist, Dewitt Tipton, in August.

Treasurer's Report: Tom reported that with approximately 60% of the year elapsed, financial reports are on track with the 2024 budget. He noted that although total operations income and expenses are on target, budgeted transfers including those to Discretionary Funds and the Sabbatical Fund have resulted in an \$8,141 deficit in the operating budget. However, Tom stated that the transfer from the Endowment for Operations (usually requested in November) will cover this deficit.

The 2023 Audit has been completed and a presentation of the final report by Slater Soloman to the Vestry is scheduled for September.

Will made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report; it was seconded by Sandy and passed by the Vestry

Junior Warden Report: Will discussed recurring maintenance around the buildings and grounds, along with minor repairs including cleaning the carpet in the church and churchyard lighting. He is working with Tripp on estimates to begin needed repairs to the Parsonage.

Old Business

Patrice, speaking on behalf of the STJW Trails Committee which includes Ed Blackburn, Jim Olson, and Cynthia Easterling, discussed the plan and vision of the committee. The committee aims to provide a meditative woodland path through the church property where our parishioners and community may come for spiritual refreshment and solace in nature. The committee wants to develop a master plan with assistance from Todd Branham of Long Cane Trails in Pisgah Forest. To continue with this project, the Trails Committee has requested \$2,000 to pay for the initial plan. After discussion, Sandy made a motion to allocate the \$2,000 for the STJW Trails master plan. ER seconded the motion and it was passed by the Vestry.

Following a closing prayer led by Fr. Josh, the August Vestry meeting was adjourned at 7:06

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. Barker

Clerk of the Vestry

Attachment: Vestry Resolution

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

**VESTRY RESOLUTION
IN HONOR OF DEWITT TIPTON**

DULY PASSED ON AUGUST 15, 2024

**IN RECOGNITION AND PROFOUND GRATITUDE FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE BY DEWITT TIPTON,
ORGANIST AND DIRECTOR OF MUSIC, 2013-2024**

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON faithfully and with honor, integrity, and great distinction served as the ORGANIST AND DIRECTOR OF MUSIC of THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS in FLAT ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA for over ELEVEN years; and

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON has always been dedicated to the music of the liturgy and worship of our church, working tirelessly to advance the importance of our music program, and giving his musical talents and gifts for the betterment of our church; and

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON has provided superb leadership and guidance through his in-depth knowledge of Christian Music to our Clergy and to the various services of our church; and

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON with his dedication and constant endeavor has patiently taught and challenged the church choir to raise the quality of their music and sing in perfect harmony to the glory of God; and

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON through his wide and in-depth music connections in our area, in North Carolina, and throughout our country, as well as his devotion to his music ministry, has created a quality “Friends of Music” program offering monthly concerts to our congregation and our community-at-large; and

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON would, frequently, support local eating establishments and would always keep the choir informed of his gastronomic delights of said eating establishments; and

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON has become convinced in recent months that someone is moving his organ shoes each week just to mess with him and now would be a fitting time for this person to step forward to reveal themselves; and

WHEREAS, DEWITT TIPTON abhors lengthy and wordy introductions to concerts since everyone comes to hear the music and indeed even the length of this resolution is now making him uncomfortable.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the VESTRY of THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS in FLAT ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA formally acknowledges and extends its profound appreciation and gratitude to DEWITT TIPTON for his many years of service to our Parish and our mission, specifically, “To know and love God as He is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, to bring others to His saving love, and to serve the world in His name.” Let the Vestry minutes of this month, August 2024, forever reflect our congregation’s deep gratitude for his ministry at The Episcopal Church of St. John in the Wilderness.

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that the VESTRY of THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS in FLAT ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA unanimously adopted the aforementioned Resolution, and this Resolution is duly recorded in our formal church records.