

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING DECEMBER 14, 2023

The December Vestry meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Fr. Josh Stephens. Those attending included: Senior Warden, John Barker, Junior Warden, Will Rodriguez, Elizabeth Christenbury, Patrice German, E.R. Haire, Jerry Holt, Marisa Pharr, Kim Sanders, and Laura Meherg Teel. The new Vestry members attending were Jon Fitzpatrick and Sandy Skelton. Absent: Clint Adams, Jennifer Shelton

Fr. Josh welcomed new vestry members and thanked outgoing members including John Barker, Elizabeth Christenbury, and Jennifer Shelton. Following Vestry members' check-in, Fr. Josh offered a prayer.

Acceptance of Consent Agenda for December: Will made a motion to accept all committee reports as well as the minutes of the November Vestry meeting; E. R. seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

Rector's Report: Fr. Josh discussed the following items:

- A new subcommittee related to Holy Hikes is being formed to explore the feasibility of connecting trails around the church property and beyond.
- As an extension of the Backpack program, the church is partnering with Ingles Markets to provide a box of food for the Christmas Holiday for approximately 170 families.
- On January 5, the parish is invited to the Kanuga Conference Center for the "burning of the greens." A special Epiphany service will be held at Kanuga on January 6.
- Safe Church Training is required for all new Vestry members. Sarah will provide the information needed to complete the training modules.
- The Annual Vestry Retreat was scheduled for January 26 – 27.

Treasurer's Report: Tom reported that with 92% of the year elapsed, Operating Income has continued to exceed Operating Expenses. In addition to the increase in income, expenses have been less than expected.

Following collaboration with the Finance Committee, Tom discussed dissolving a fund previously referred to as 'Designated Outreach Gifts' which has accumulated approximately \$13,000. He stressed that the account had been used for gifts for specific purposes not related to Outreach and was never intended to be used for Outreach. He recommended that the fund be dissolved, and the balance transferred to the Vestry Special Projects (VSP) Fund. The revisions will be made and voted on by the Vestry in January 2024. (E.R. made a motion to move the funds to the VSP account, Elizabeth seconded the motion, and it was passed.)

Continuing Tom discussed recommendations for the 2023 Surplus which is forecasted to be approximately \$85,000. The following items were mentioned: 1) transfer \$10,000 to the Operating Reserve Fund; 2) transfer \$10,000 to the Capital Replacement Fund; 3) transfer \$15,000 to the Unrestricted Outreach Fund; 4) transfer \$50,000 to the Vestry Special Projects Fund. Will made a motion to approve the recommendations as listed above, E.R. seconded

the motion and it was passed. Kim made a motion to create a new Travel Account for Pilgrimages; Will seconded the motion and it was passed. Will made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report; John seconded the motion, and it was passed by members of the Vestry.

Fr. Josh made a motion to appoint Margaret Barker as Clerk of the Vestry and Tom Griswold as Treasurer for 2024. Marisa seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

Jr. Warden's Report – Will discussed reactivating the former Building and Grounds Committee as the church is expecting some major to the Parsonage. Other projects will be discussed in January.

Committee Reports

Stewardship: John reported that 165 pledges have been received to date. The goal for the 2024 campaign was 175.

After the Executive Session, Fr. Josh led the group in closing prayer. Following prayer, the December 14 Vestry meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. Barker
Clerk of the Vestry