

St. Mary of the Hills
Vestry Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2024

Vestry Members Present: (In person) Mike Austell (Senior Warden), Joe Doswell, Leslie Billingsley, Sue Sweeting, Burt Mulford
(Via Zoom) Michelle Curry, Jim Snow, Lynn Searfoss, Jill Storelli

Vestry Members Absent: Buddy Fore, Marshall Culp

Others Present: Fr. Andrew Hege (Rector), Elizabeth Sudderth (Clerk)

Fr. Andrew called the meeting to order at 5:49pm.

Fr. Andrew requested acceptance of the meeting agenda.
Sue Sweeting made a motion with a second from Burt Mulford to accept the agenda.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew requested approval of the June meeting minutes.
Sue Sweeting made a motion to approve the June minutes as presented.
Burt Mulford seconded the motion.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew led a devotion for the early evening.
Andrew asked for prayers for our congregation. Many in our parish family are carrying a lot right now; he noted this is a very active time for pastoral concerns of various kinds.

Fr. Andrew shared the Treasurer's report in Amanda White's absence.
Income exceeded expenses this past month and the parish remains in a very healthy financial position.

Michelle Curry made a motion with a second from Burt Mulford to accept the Treasurer's report.

The vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew reported that as of today, Tour of Homes revenue totals \$93,400. Wow!! A detailed report of revenue was shared.

Leslie Billingsley made a motion with a second by Lynn Searfoss to approve the Tour of Homes report.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Mike Austell shared the allocations endorsed by the Outreach committee this month:

World Central Kitchen	\$1,500	
Rise Against Hunger	\$2,000	in response to an emergency call for funds to aid in natural disasters in several areas of the world

Sue Sweeting made a motion to approve these donations totaling \$3,500 endorsed by the Outreach committee.

Leslie Billingsley seconded the motion.

The Vestry approved the motion.

*Note-Michelle Curry delivered 2 carloads of school supplies this week; 1 to Blowing Rock Elementary School and 1 to Western Youth Network.

The next joint project of the Outreach committee and ECW is to collect diapers for the Diaper Bank at the Children's Council in Boone.

Fr. Andrew shared an update on the 2023 Parish audit.

After using the same auditor for the past 7 years, the church is looking for someone new. Two firms in Boone were approached and could not do our audit. Michael has done some research and as a result Misty Watson has been approached to do our next audit. A letter of engagement has been prepared for Misty to do our audit for an estimate of between \$5,000 and \$6,000. There had been some discussion of doing an audit internally but as this year will be complex Fr. Andrew recommends that we have an external audit.

Leslie Billingsley made a motion that we approve Misty Watson to do our 2024 parish audit at a cost of between \$5,000 and \$6,000.

Joe Doswell seconded the motion.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew asked the Vestry to approve delegates to the Diocesan convention in November. Based on expressed interest, Andrew suggests Mike Austell and Sue Sweeting be our delegates and Leslie Billingsley serve as first alternate and Michelle Curry serve as second alternate.

Joe Doswell made a motion with a second from Jill Storelli to approve the delegates and alternates listed above to attend the Diocesan convention.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew and Fr. Sam Tallman will also attend.

Fr. Andrew encouraged Vestry members to attend the Tour of Homes wrap up gathering on Thursday night this week.

The annual parish meeting will be held on Sunday, August 25 at 9AM. One purpose of the meeting is to elect new Vestry members to replace the 4 members who will rotate off at the end of December. Those nominated after discernment for service this year are Bob Amos, Luba Skibo, Mike Matthews, and as a seasonal member, Robert Rhoads.

Fr. Andrew shared Christian Formation updates.

He is considering using the St. Matthew room as a space set aside for older children. In discussions with area clergy colleagues, there are ideas being considered to start a Blowing Rock Youth Group or a Watauga County Episcopal/Lutheran Youth Group. Michelle Curry is focusing on teaching older youth to serve in worship. An idea was mentioned-should we restart an education committee?

Marshall Culp submitted prior to the meeting his Junior Warden's report which was distributed to the Vestry and is available for review.

Mike Austell shared the Senior Warden's report which was distributed to the Vestry and is available for review.

Fr. Andrew expressed his thanks to Mike for his wise counsel.

Fr. Andrew shared the Rector's report.

Andrew reflected on our call to be one; though we lack diversity in many ways, we are a varied congregation. We have recently had full Sunday services with a total at both of between 175 and 180 worshippers. This past Sunday, 2 families approached Andrew after attending services for a few weeks and told him they feel they have found their church home. We are a congregation that proves it is possible to have beautiful Anglican worship which can exist and thrive alongside happy, wiggly children!

Five years ago, Andrew asked the Search committee what they wanted to see in this place in five years. Their answers and his experiences here over those years have led Andrew to propose 4 pillars of what God is calling us to be:

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Worship
- 3) Wonder
- 4) Work

More to come from Fr. Andrew on this.....

Wrap Up Time:

What did we accomplish?

Looked at ways we can grow activities for older children/youth

Approved Outreach Allocations

Approved Diocesan convention delegates and alternates

Approved engagement of new auditor

How can we improve?

Send information for Vestry meeting out earlier

Leslie Billingsley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:06pm
Sue Sweeting seconded the motion.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Sudderth, Clerk of the Vestry