

St. Mary of the Hills  
Vestry Meeting Minutes, August 17, 2021  
Via Video Conference

Members Present: Tim Silver (Senior Warden), Doug Galke (Junior Warden), E.B. Springs, Patty Patella, Roy McCraw, Marjory Holder, Gigi Poole, Sterling Hutcheson, Jim West, Lisa Kaufmann, Chip Monroe

Member Absent: Faith Jones

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

Fr. Andrew called the meeting to order at 5:34pm.

Sterling Hutcheson made a motion to accept the meeting agenda as presented by Fr. Andrew.

Jim West seconded the motion.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Marjory Holder made a motion with a second from Jim West to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

A needed correction was noted: in the Junior Warden's report a typographical error was made. The word sideway needs to be changed to sidewalk. The Clerk will make the needed correction.

The Vestry approved the motion with the needed correction noted.

Fr. Andrew led a devotion to begin the meeting.

Leadership Check-In:

Fr. Andrew asked those present to share where in their lives they have recently seen grace unbidden.

Some examples shared were a friend getting recent great medical news, a delightful trip with a grandson, the blessing of experiencing Evensong for the first time in almost 2 years, finding medical personnel willing to step in

to provide adequate staff coverage during this time of COVID, and enjoying time with friends after a health struggle.

Fr. Andrew shared the gratitude he and Amanda feel for the many calls, texts, care packages and prayers during the recent time of illness in his family. He shared his special gratitude for Fr. Sam Tallman and his assurances of grace and support.

Amanda White shared the Treasurers report.

Amanda reported the parish continues to be in a great financial position. Year to date 65% of pledges have been collected.

The current revenue reported from the Tour of Homes after expenses is \$56086.15. This total results from donations received of \$45515.00 plus a grant of \$5000.00 from the Diocese, and auction proceeds of \$9125.00 for a total of \$59640.00. With expenses of \$3553.85, the current net income is \$56086.15.

Amanda shared that the report received from the recent audit shows a cash increase of over \$100000.00 in 2020 over 2019. This results in part from the PPP loan. Also, the investment funds grew by 7.2% for a gain of over \$51000.00 during the same time period. Amanda reported the Finance committee will take a deep dive into the audit report and look carefully at each recommendation made by the auditor. Some of the recommendations include holding sabbatical funds in reserve, restricted accounts being reviewed (which is already in progress), and updates to employee file documents (also in progress). An update will be given to the Vestry as work on the audit recommendations continues.

Marjory Holder made a motion to accept the Treasurers report.

Sterling Hutcheson seconded the motion.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Tim Silver made a motion with a second from Roy McCraw to accept the presentation of the audit report.

The Vestry approved the motion.

The audit will be submitted to the Diocese this week.

Fr. Andrew shared the status of regathering during this time of COVID.

As case numbers have been rising in our area, the encouragement of masking has ramped up. We have pulled back on gathering in-person other than for worship services. Andrew reported Bishop Jose continues to meet

with his medical advisors on what is best for the Diocese as a whole. We are doing everything we can to continue worshipping together in person. A question was asked as to the extent of sanitizing after worship services. Andrew reported we never let up on the increased sanitizing which started at the beginning of the pandemic. Bill Stroh shows particular continued attention to keeping the building as clean and sanitized as possible. Fr. Andrew reported the parish annual meeting on August 29 will be done online.

Fr. Andrew expressed his thanks to all who worked together to make the Tour of Homes a successful fundraising effort. He shared a special shout out of thanks to Marjory Holder for her great work on the website, to those who made the kickoff event happen, Patty Patella for her hard work, Loy McGill and Doug Galke. He noted much good work was done by many parish members to pull off this project. He noted the tour is still accessible on the parish website for those who wish to view it.

Fr. Andrew shared the Nominating committee has presented these parish members for consideration for Vestry service beginning on January 1, 2022: Leslie Billingsley, Buddy Fore and Robert Finney as year-round members, and Joe Doswell as a seasonal member. This slate of candidates and details on their service at St. Mary's will be shared via email with the parish in the coming days. The slate will be voted on at the annual meeting. If additional persons are nominated at the meeting, a Zoom poll can be set up quickly.

Fr. Andrew presented the proposed allocation from the Outreach committee for this month:

\$2000.00 to Episcopal Relief and Development for wildfire relief in the Western United States

Marjory Holder made a motion with a second from Jim West to accept the proposed allocation as presented.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew reminded everyone that anyone who is interested is welcome to attend Outreach committee meetings. All parish members are called to participate in outreach.

Doug Galke shared the Junior Wardens report.

The concrete work on the sidewalk is complete.

The leaks in the Bell Tower are sealed. He will check the bucket in the tower tomorrow to see if the sealing was sufficient.

The ad-hoc group which is working on the evaluation of the grounds continues their work. Jim West prepared a plat to assist in the process. The grounds have been divided into 12 or 13 areas for evaluation purposes. Feedback is being sought from several parish members who have shown a particular interest in the grounds or who have a long history with the parish. Doug is planning to meet soon with Olivia Knight who has extensive knowledge about the origin and development of the Mary Garden. He will also talk with Bill Stroh about all areas of the grounds. After all this feedback is gathered the group will finish their report and Doug will share it with the Vestry. Current priority areas are the old maple tree area across from the front door of the church, the current health of all other trees on the grounds, and the space for the proposed playground area.

As mentioned last month a proposed space of 18 to 20 feet by 20 feet is being considered for the playground area. There is a possibility that at least one tree will need to be removed. The shed may need to be moved away from the Mary Garden Wall four to five feet. The ad-hoc group will meet again on 9/10/21. There is \$46929.00 in the Family and Millennial Ministries restricted account (#7120-12) which could be used for this project. Marjory Holder will talk with Sue Sweeting about taking the lead on gathering information on the development of a playground in the area between the shed and the Mary Garden Wall.

There was a recent issue with emergency personnel having trouble finding the church when they were dispatched to a medical emergency here. The need to put larger street address numbers on the building is being addressed. The question is where to place the larger numbers. Marjory will order and install the new larger numbers. Also, the church sign on Chestnut Drive needs to be moved out closer to the street. Discussion as to the exact placement of the sign is ongoing.

The AED has 2 more years left of battery life.

Drew Critcher of O1 Masonry has offered to repair the steps leading up to the grounds on Chestnut Street and the Sacristy steps at no charge as a charitable contribution. He grew up in Blowing Rock and his mother attended here. All he asks is the opportunity to worship here with his family

one Sunday. He does not do pebble and epoxy so Doug will need to find another person to do that.

Tim Silver will get the name of the arborist who evaluated our trees last year to Doug. Others being considered to look again at the trees are Wendell Hicks and Sean McKee.

Tim Silver shared the Senior Wardens report.

Tim expressed his thanks to all who made the Tour of Homes such a great success this year. He shared a special thank you to the Vestry members who donated items for the auction.

Tim stated he is very pleased with the process to arrive at the slate of candidates for Vestry and is impressed with the group presented.

Fr. Andrew shared the Rectors report.

He shared he has put on hold the survey regarding a Vestry retreat at this time due to COVID. He will proceed with that when we can plan to gather in person with more confidence.

Planning continues for the Diocesan Convention in November. He reminded everyone that the revised version of the Constitution and Canons are available to review on the Diocesan website on the Convention page.

Fr. Andrew shared his fatigue at having another Vestry meeting via Zoom and the need for masking in worship again. He shared we all must acknowledge our feelings of anger and sadness at the need for these measures to provide the safest possible environment for all. He asked for particular prayers for medical workers who continue to deal every day with this crisis.

Roy McCraw made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:52pm.

E.B. Springs seconded the motion.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Sudderth, Clerk of the Vestry

