

St. Mary of the Hills
Vestry Meeting Minutes
December 17, 2024

Vestry Members Present: (In Person) Marshall Culp (Junior Warden), Sue Sweeting, Burt Mulford, Jill Storelli, Buddy Fore
(Via Zoom): Jim Snow, Michelle Curry, Leslie Billingsley

Vestry Members Absent: Mike Austell (Senior Warden), Lynn Searfoss, Joe Doswell

Others Present: (In Person) Fr. Andrew Hege (Rector), Elizabeth Sudderth (Clerk), Amanda White (Treasurer), Mike Matthews (Vestry-Elect), Bob Amos (Vestry-Elect)
(Via Zoom): Luba Skibo (Vestry-Elect)

Fr. Andrew called the meeting to order at 5:45pm.

Fr. Andrew requested acceptance of the meeting agenda.
Buddy Fore made a motion with a second from Burt Mulford to accept the agenda as presented.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew requested approval of the November meeting minutes.
Sue Sweeting made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes as presented.
Buddy Fore seconded the motion.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew led a devotion for the early evening.

Amanda White shared the Treasurer's report.
Amanda reported the parish remains in a good cash position in both the checking account and CDs and in the money market accounts.
Fr. Andrew shared that the parish will be receiving a very generous gift from the estate of Dr. Adam Hill in the amount of \$105,000 which will go into the General Mission and Ministry Endowment.
Jill Storelli made a motion with a second from Burt Mulford to accept the Treasurer's report.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew has received the audit report from Misty Watson and shared that with Vestry members.
A question was raised as to when another church inventory needs to be done. Michelle Curry reported that she and Bob Finney worked on an inventory 2 years ago; Bob should have a copy.

Jill Storelli made a motion to accept the audit report.
Buddy Fore seconded the motion.
The Vestry approved the motion.
Fr. Andrew will forward the report to the Diocesan office tomorrow.

Fr. Andrew shared a Stewardship update.
To date, 90 pledges have been received totaling \$389,823. Eleven new pledges have been received. Most people who have pledged previously but who have not responded this year have a history of pledging and just have not done so yet. Andrew feels there is no reason to expect that those pledges won't come in.
Fr. Andrew noted that he has spoken with clergy colleagues who are also seeing slower pledge responses this year.

Fr. Andrew reviewed progress on the budget. He noted that all staff health insurance premiums are tallied together for budget expense purposes this year, rather than showing his health insurance separately for clarity. After discussion Andrew asked if the Vestry wished to act on the proposed detailed budget.
Sue Sweeting made a motion to approve the 2025 budget of \$583,500 with a recommendation to the Finance committee to improve readability of the document.
Marshall Culp seconded the motion.
The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew requested approval of the yearly Clergy Housing Allowance Resolution document.
Sue Sweeting made a motion with a second from Buddy Fore to approve the document.
The Vestry approved the motion.
The Clerk signed the document.

Fr. Andrew made nominations for Vestry officer positions for 2025 as follows:
Elizabeth Sudderth as Clerk: Jill Storelli made a motion to approve the Nomination with a second from Marshall Culp; Vestry approved.
Amanda White as Treasurer: Jill Storelli made a motion to approve the Nomination with a second from Burt Mulford; Vestry approved.
Marshall Culp as Junior Warden: Sue Sweeting made a motion to approve the Nomination with a second from Buddy Fore; Vestry approved.
Mike Austell as Junior Warden: Jill Storelli made a motion to approve the Nomination with a second from Burt Mulford; Vestry approved.

Andrew expressed his thanks to Elizabeth, Amanda, Marshall, and Mike for their leadership and service. They all show a keen love of this place and he especially expressed his appreciation to Mike for checking in on him during windy nights in their neighborhood!

Fr. Andrew requested approval of a Corporate Resolution designating persons to sign checks, make transfers, open accounts, and open safe deposit boxes for the parish. Those persons will be Fr. Andrew Hege, Mike Austell, and Marshall Culp. Sue Sweeting made a motion to approve the Resolution. Jill Storelli seconded the motion. The Vestry approved the motion. The Clerk signed the Resolution.

Sue Sweeting reported on progress of the nametag project discussed over the past several months. We currently have materials on hand for some types of nametags such as clips, lanyards, and pins. Fr. Andrew commented that staff will work on where to put the materials.

Ft. Andrew shared the allocation endorsed by the Outreach committee this month.
Diocese of Western North Carolina \$6,925 (remainder of budgeted funds-2024)
(For Hurricane Helene relief in Western North Carolina)
The Vestry approved the endorsed allocation.

Marshall Culp submitted the Junior Warden's report to the Vestry and it is available for review. Topics covered were hanging of Christmas wreath on Bell Tower, bids on retaining wall, HVAC service contract, and gutter guard project. At the meeting Marshall also reported that there is an issue with water condensation in the Sacristy since the recent sealing of the Bell Tower. Fr. Andrew met today with VPC who did that work to get a preliminary assessment of the problem. They gave Andrew a couple of short-term fixes to try while they work on determining a long-term solution. The issue of the temperature in the Sacristy was also raised; Andrew will ask Edmisten Heating to check on it.

Mike Austell is traveling out of the country but submitted the Senior Warden's report to the Vestry and it is available for review. Topics covered were his hopes for our parish members to treat one another with respect even in disagreement, and to uplift one another in prayer, a proposal to host Coffee Minutes together with someone you may not know well, and the Outreach committee allocation for this month.

Fr. Andrew submitted the Rector's report to the Vestry and it is available for review. Topics covered were our Advent services and Christian Formation opportunities, Christmas services schedule, Andrew's election as President of the Standing Committee in the Diocese for 2025, and word on other Diocesan leaders from our parish, and his time away on holiday from December 27-31

Holy Eucharists offered YTD:	1187
Daily Offices offered YTD:	256
Average Sunday Attendance YTD:	158

Fr. Andrew also urged everyone to invite someone in your life outside our parish to one of our Christmas services this year.

Fr. Andrew shared that the Vestry will be reading a book together in 2025: “Life Together” by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Fr. Andrew requested approval to give Christmas bonuses to the following staff members:

Michael Marshall	\$975
Lindsey Herring	\$875
Jim Bumgardner	\$600
Bill Devereux	\$450

Buddy Fore made a motion with a second from Sue Sweeting to approve these bonuses. The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew stepped out of the meeting at the request of the Junior Warden at 7:06pm. Marshall Culp made a motion to give a Christmas bonus equivalent to one week’s salary to Fr. Andrew.

Burt Mulford seconded the motion.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew returned to the meeting.

Leslie Billingsley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10pm.

Buddy Fore seconded the motion.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Fr. Andrew closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Sudderth, Clerk of the Vestry