

## **VESTRY MINUTES**

February 15, 2022

Meeting conducted via Zoom.

Present: The Very Rev. Mac Brown, Rector; Rusty Gaston, Sr. Warden; Harvey Yocum, Jr. Warden; Paul Richard, Treasurer; Gini McDermott; Marilyn Farrow; Janice Wagner; Gary Buff; Phyllis Nottingham, Gwenneth Glenn, Clerk

Absent: Billy Archuleta

The meeting opened by Zoom at 5:35 pm with Fr. Mac's Prayer.

Fr. Mac then welcomed all returning and new vestry members. Each said a few words of introduction.

Fr. Mac then asked for nominations for the position of Jr. Warden, also known as The People's Warden, whose job focuses on buildings and grounds. Marilyn nominated Harvey Yocum to continue in the position for a second year. Phyllis seconded the nomination. Harvey declared that he would be happy and honored to accept. All were in favor of the motion.

The Agenda for this meeting was approved, and the Minutes for both the January 18, 2022 Vestry Meeting as well as the February 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Paul asked that \$250/month of Jill Cline's salary be designated as Housing Allowance for tax purposes. It would not change her salary amount; she would still receive a Cost of Living Allowance this year. Rusty so moved; Gary seconded; all were in favor; the motion passed.

Paul then shared the Profit and Loss Statement and discussed a few modifications to simplify its use. He noted that Taos Youth Music School still appears in the budget but the amount St. James would contribute to the School is on hold at the moment because the school is not in session due to Covid.

Food Pantry Committee asks to move \$65,000 from the Patterson Gift to Food Pantry fund to pay David Hines. Marilyn so moved; Harvey seconded. All were in favor.

Paul also showed the updated, Minimum Budget for 2022. Based on the 2021 Budget, it now reflects higher Natural Gas prices and other increases. The printed budget is posted in the Parish Hall.

Paul then showed the 2022 Profit and Loss Deficit Budget, which would require raising the money needed to fulfill obligations. Rusty moved to accept this second version. The motion was seconded and passed.

Marilyn asked that the bookkeeper remind parishioners that their pledge amounts are due by sending each person a quarterly statement, whether or not that person has made a contribution within the quarter. Paul will discuss the idea with the bookkeeper.

Regarding Jill's clergy compensation it was decided to authorize payment of all monies due for moving from the lay pension plan to the clergy pension plan.

Senior Warden's Report: Rusty described her visit to the Common Grounds building and expressed her amazement at Jill's vision. Mike Compton is now formally engaged as General Contractor for renovation of the building.

Rusty proposed that we update the Vestry bulletin board with photos of our members. She asked each person to give her a photo as soon as possible and that, on a monthly basis, someone from the vestry write a report to be published in the email newsletter.

The group decided to ask Gwen to put a link into the email newsletter leading to the website where we can post the entire minutes of each meeting in addition to hanging them on the bulletin board. To shorten the time between each meeting and the approval of its minutes, we will approve them by email vote as soon as Gwen sends them for our personal review. Within 7 days of Gwen's having sent them we would need 5 members' approvals for posting. Gwen would send them to Erick for placement on our website, and then we would formally approve the minutes at the next vestry meeting as a group.

Junior Warden's Report: There are no changes in existing projects.

Harvey proposed a new telephone Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system which would unify all Halo Technology's parts that are now in place and reduce overall expenses. Rusty moved to accept the telephone plan, Marilyn seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

*Halo Technologies: "Providing the Circle of Protection we all Deserve"*

Free Estimate for:

St. James Church

VoIP Phone Upgrade & Fire Monitoring

Halo Technologies thanks you for requesting a free quote from us. Halo Technologies has a growing staff with over 40 years of combined low voltage experience. We strive on competitive pricing and take pride in setting the bar when it comes to installation quality. There has been nothing spared in your quote and based on our discussions about the project we have chosen the following items to fulfill your needs. Please look at what our design team has recommended for your professional installation.

**Scope:** Halo Technologies prides in helping business cut overhead costs by offering systems and technologies that allow consumers to save money. CenturyLink phone lines on average cost \$29.99 per month while many VoIP systems can start at \$9.99 per month. Halo Technologies can also save money by cutting out another phone line provided for the fire alarm and install a dual path cellular radio that is safer than traditional phone line and would cost less to monitor than the current set-up. Halo has included a fire inspection free of charge and all necessary material to takeover the phone and fire communications.

### **Product Description:**

**Patch Cords for Switch Connections QTY: 15 Total: \$140.00**

**VoIP Phones with Internet Throughput QTY: 8 Total: \$819.92**

**VoIP Service \$9.99 per Line QTY: 3 Total: \$38.97mo**

**This item is paid directly to Ubiquiti and their Unifi service. Halo doesn't collect this.**

**Cat6 Riser Wire 1000ft Roll QTY: 2 Total: \$398.98**

**M2M Fire Radio Dual Path QTY: 1 Total: \$199.99**

**Fire Monitoring Costs Billed Monthly QTY: 1 Total: \$39.99mo**

**Material Totals, Labor Totals & Terms & Conditions. Please read carefully!**

**Material Total: \$1,598.88**

**Labor, Product Warranties, Installation Guarantee and Customer Education: \$600.00**

**Total: \$600.00**

**Halo Technologies offers a 90 day install warranty. Job estimated at 14 hours to complete installation, Halo estimates 2 hours of testing. All Equipment used will carry a minimum 1-year manufacturer warranty. All labor charges include misc. materials needed for a professional system.**

*Halo Technologies will have 3-4 Journeyman licensed technicians on-site during this project. It is estimated to take one day install and possibly some programming time the following day or in the evening of the proposed install.*

*Halo has included all supplies necessary to install everything in a professional manner. TAX SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING TO LOCATION.*

**Total Estimate Cost: \$2,198.88**

**Tax: \$172.61**

**Total: \$2,371.49**

**Terms & Conditions:** Halo Technologies requires a 50% deposit up front to allocate materials and to schedule the project efficiently. Halo will coordinate with you directly to setup installation times based on your schedule. Halo Technologies takes pride in offering the latest technologies in home and commercial security needs. Thanks for choosing the circle protection provided by Halo Technologies LLC. Tax subject to change.

**PLEASE SIGN BELOW FOR FINAL CONFIRMATION OF JOB AGREEMENT AND TERMS:**

X \_\_\_\_\_

Future projects will include replacement and rekeying of Parish Hall doors, restuccoing of church building, refinishing of main walkways in the nave.

Outreach Report: Marilyn said that Deacon Jill Cline is working with other agencies to delineate and identify who is doing what to help Taos people in need. She is hoping to coordinate efforts.

Rector’s Report: Friends, It is with joy that I welcome our new members of our vestry. Since our last meeting on January 18th, I have been busy in administration and meetings. On January 20-22, the Diocesan Leadership Team gathered in retreat, digitally of course. This group includes our Bishop and Diocesan Staff, the Diocesan Council (on which I sit), the Standing Committee, the Trustees, and the Chancellors. We spent time hearing from each Diocesan Missioner and from our Bishop. Bishop Hunn used permaculture farming techniques as a metaphor for our life together as church. The group sought to hear where God is calling us, to what relationships need our tending, and what structures need attention. We met in our groups, as well as in mixed groups, to discuss ideas. The following week, January 26-27th, the Diocesan Council met to do our normal business and to continue our discussions from the retreat. From those meetings, Council will be focusing on our Deaneries, their structure, function, and effect. As the Dean of La Sierra Encantada Deanery, I am excited about what this may mean for the deanery. Since the dissolution of the POB grant structure, deaneries have been a bit

wayward, and I hope this will give new life and direction. I shared this news at our last Deanery Board Meeting, 2/1, and the board shared my excitement.

This past week we also held our annual meeting. Of course, I miss being all together, yet this modality allowed a lot of people to vote and be present who may have otherwise not been able to participate. I am very pleased that we endeavored to have our business in the midst of our prayers. I hope to continue with this experiment as we continue. And I must apologize for my missing of the election of two more officers. Once I realized the issue, we were too close to the meeting and so we will discuss our plans here tonight. I have already received two nominations for those positions.

On Thursday 2/3, I attended a webinar hosted by the Rev Cn Stephanie Spellers and Dr Cathrine Meeks on Cn Spellers new book, 'The Church Cracked Open'. The book is a quick and easy read and examine ways in which the Church has become an agent of the empire rather than the Gospel. I recommend this book to all of you and will gladly have discussion groups. This month would have typically been when I attend a conference or two. As that did not occur, I will be looking for conferences in the future to attend to continue my education. In that vein, I would like to share with you that some of my continuing education books this year will be, James Baldwin's 'the fire next time', 'The Hidden Wound' by Wendell Berry, "A Catechism of Nature" by George Brown III, "The Three Mothers" by Anna Malaika Tubbs, "Black and Episcopalian" by Gayle Fisher-Stewart, "The Last Conquistador" by Marc Simmors, and "Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys" by Richard Twiss. I am happy to discuss them, once I have read them.

In the past month, I have met with our church staff in staff meetings and one on one. I also have informed them of my intent to meet with each of them one on one every other month, in addition to our regular staff meetings and business meetings. These one on ones are to improve communication and relationships while allowing us all to grow together as a staff. Our Staff meets every other week on Tuesday at 1 via zoom. You all are welcome to join.

On the alternating weeks from staff, the clergy of the DRG and the bishop gather for a 1 hour meeting. This meeting began with the pandemic and continues today. This meeting allows us to have greater contact with our bishop and to be able to freely communicate.

This past month I attended or hosted, two meetings about homelessness in Taos and what we can do. You all know that we will be part of the solution and we are still identifying what problems need our solutions first. This endeavor will be a partnership with other non-profits in town and I am excited about the long term effect such partnerships will bring about.

In the course of a month, I:

- Attend Spiritual Direction (postponed to tomorrow bc of snow days)
- Prepare and Preach Sermons: 2 sermons and Annual Report Address
- Open Office Hours: 12 hours of open hours
- Scheduled Meetings: 16 hours of scheduled meetings
- Pastoral Care: No hospital visits made, working with multiple people in Hospice care, Multiple phone calls, texts, and emails.

Personal Prayer and Meditation Life: 1 hour every day  
Officiated and preached at the graveside funeral of Margaret Burns at Los  
Cordovas Cemetery  
And with the aid of others, prepared our Annual Parochial Report.

Coming Up:

LSE Deanery Meeting this Saturday  
Ash Wednesday 3/2  
Clergy Lenten Retreat 4/3-5  
Mac out on Vacation 3/10-318  
And our Next Vestry moved to 3/22 bc I will be away

Faithfully submitted,  
Mac+ The Very Rev. Fred M Brown

Discussion: In addition, Fr. Mac made a hospital visit today and has sent out several thank you notes (for pledges received.)

The diocese has sent us draft bylaws to use when updating our existing bylaws.

Old Business: Paul wants to work on "Social Justice" (community projects) such as working with New Mexico Lutheran Advocacy to monitor and encourage legislators to pass appropriate legislation such as the bill to set store front lending at a maximum of 36%, it is currently at 175%. He requested vestry approval for out-of-building cooperative community involvement in behalf of the church. There was discussion about the term "Social Justice" having negative connotations. The rector will constitute a committee to facilitate such a group.

Elise Olonia has a collection of Chinese Art which a donor wants to give to St. James Church for resale, the proceeds to be retained by St. James. Discussion followed. Rusty moved that we accept the gift and take on the expenses of storage and sale. Harvey seconded. All were in favor with one opposition. The motion passed.

New Business: Fr. Mac said we need two delegates to deanery meetings and diocesan convention. We can appoint one alternate. We will advertise for interested members then provide an online ballot with deadline.

Regular vestry meetings will continue via Zoom at 5:30 PM on the third Tuesday of each month with the exception of March 2022 when we will gather for two separate days of Vestry Retreats. Fr. Mac will poll members for preferred dates.

Rusty then urged that vestry members not feel responsible for all committees in the church. Instead each member may be responsible for area(s) of personal interest and let committees make reports to the vestry.

Rusty asked that Gwen remove the words "limited number of" from the email newsletter offer to take Communion to homes.

The following Education Ministry report from Stacy Quinn was submitted to members by email in advance of this meeting.

## Education Ministry Report February 2022 Stacy Quinn

- † Vestry Communication: At Sunday's Annual Meeting a number of people brought up the topic of "better communication," and "being able to see the Vestry Reports," etc. Though they are expertly filed by Gwen in an annual Vestry Book in the office, which is open to all, might I suggest that we re initiate the use of the Vestry Bulletin Board in the Parish Hall? When it was used **consistently**, it worked well in that it gave a permanent location where Vestry would communicate minutes, attachments, budgets, pictures of vestry members with their position (senior warden, junior warden, treasurer, pastoral care liaison, altar guild liaison, food pantry liaison, etc.) That way you have done *your part* in communicating. Also, if Fr. Mac makes an announcement once a month that "we just posted new minutes or treasurer's report, etc." and the parishioners can find them on the Vestry BB, then they will be reminded to look in the same place. If you want the Vestry BB reinstated, I'd be happy to freshen it up. If someone on the vestry would rather do it, that's fine, too. Also, if you ask me to do it, please send me a list of who is liaison for what. Am I to assume that the drink cooler's location has not been grandfathered in? It slightly covers that area. I have attached a photo of the Vestry BB so that you know the area I'm talking about.
- † I want this year to be a year that we pay closer attention to the needs and wants of parents and/or their children other than on Sunday morning. Some of this falls under Sydney's domain (i.e. family fellowship events outside of Sunday A.M.) and other ideas might fall under Adult Ministry. As we currently have a blank slate, I have spoken with parents directly to have them think about what their needs/ desires are, and I have e-mailed Sydney about the topic. If I don't hear back from her, I'll speak with her this Sunday.
- † As you heard at the annual meeting, the children have expressed an interest in having Birthday-cake Sunday reinstated. I think we can either have a cake, and have Sydney make individual slices, OR we can have Birthday-cake Cupcake Sundays. I will ask Fr. Mac if we can do either or only one of the scenarios. I have sent Sydney the contact list form, so that she doesn't have to recreate it and have offered to get a Birthday Poster Board from Unicorn for signup.
- † I set up a meeting with Taos Landscaping, Fr. Mac, Harvey, and myself to talk about the three areas in the backyard. They will adjust the design based on our input and have a "semi-final copy for presentation" ready for April 1. Just a reminder, the design is not a fait accompli, but it shows parishioners that much thought has gone into accommodating areas for sit-down conversation, holy programs (i.e. Palm Sunday) and meditation, the very young, the young, the teenagers, and also a place for grilling. All age groups from 0-100 have been

considered and interviewed for input. Taos Landscaping has had issues with # of employees working due to Covid, so—though we are in the same order in line—our start date is now sometime in August or September.

- † Sunday Morning Bible Study is going very well. I'm glad we moved it into the PH due to Covid. We range from 14-20 people. The level of discussion has been deepening as we go forth.
- † Bible-study Friends is now studying the book of Romans. We are so glad we studied Acts first! Paul is an amazing apostle. Though homely in description, Paul emanated light. The BSF schedule is posted in the PH on the St. James Communication BB. As the weeks pass, I rip off the top page, so the information is always current. Almost all who attend also help in facilitating the lessons. Everyone's approach is different, which makes it interesting. About 10-14 people attend. See attached schedule.
- † Monastery of the Heart has now been meeting regularly. We are getting a lot out of Foster's book. About 6-8 people attend.
- † Men's Bible Study meets in the Choir room and then goes to breakfast on Thursday mornings.
- † Daughters has delivered a *Thinking of You* basket to the Newton's because one Daughter, in speaking with them, heard how isolated they were feeling (snow, age, a variety of reasons). They were very touched to know the church "had forgotten them." Meetings are on the third Sunday and include administrative matters, programming, and prayer. Daughters mission includes *prayer, service, and evangelism*.
- † Fr. Mac and Stacy have met RE The Lenten Series. It will be a continuation of our prayer program. In our meeting, we outlined the series. I wrote it up, sent it to Fr. Mac and he will be writing a blurb for the eNewsletter and making announcements in church. We will also be having a "prayer hour" in church during Lent in the evenings, with candles lit, and a meditative feel to it.
- † I called Sandra Flood, who brought up at the annual meeting the desire for a labyrinth, which we have. I asked her to develop a list of 6-8 people to call and weed the area in April/May. She said she would "look into it." I'm happy to be a weeder. She has a great passion in this area!

The meeting adjourned after 7:30 PM with a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gwenneth Glenn, Clerk