

## **VESTRY MINUTES**

March 22, 2022

Meeting conducted via Zoom.

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

Absent: None

The meeting opened by Zoom at 5:35 pm with Fr. Mac's Prayer and unanimous approval of March 8, 2022 minutes

Treasurer's Report: Attached are the financial reports for February. The Budget to Actual is still a work in progress. On the income side, plate was lower than projected, non-pledged donations exceeded projections and pledges are down about \$300. Overall income was up \$21,500 over budget; however, we had approximately \$17,000 in bills at the end of 2021 that were paid in 2022. Now that we are on an accrual basis bills are recorded when received, regardless of when they are paid.

Overall expenses are under projections with the exceptions of Repairs and Maintenance, and snowplowing. For the designated funds I want to bring to your attention the section for the Food Pantry. This is the only designated section that we have recorded against a budget. However, when the bookkeeper entered the data she made an error in the directors 403(b) payments. It will be corrected for the March statement, but currently results in an annual salary and compensation of \$87,376. This is incorrect. Also in the Jan-Feb column you will see a to date salary of \$49,462. That amount includes carry-over from 2021 that needs to be credited now that we have made the transfer from the Patterson Gift to the Food Pantry, per last month's Vestry meeting.

Overall we are able to meet our bills, however, the cash flow picture is not as rosy as the year to date income figures indicate due to the final bills of 2021.

The Endowment Committee was impacted by our Vestry elections. Due to the Election of Gary Buff and Janice Wagner, Gary and Markus Kolber can no longer serve. Bambi Sturbois has agreed to continue on the committee. Toby Pugh and Geilan Ismail have agreed to serve on the committee. I hope we can get in a meeting during the next month.

**MOTION:** Please appoint Toby Pugh and Geilan Ismail to the Endowment Committee.

I welcome any questions you may have either via email before the meeting or during our meeting time this Tuesday.

Paul Richard, Treasurer

Discussion: Marilyn moved to appoint Toby Pugh and Geilan Ismail to the Endowment Committee. Harvey seconded. All approved.

Paul added that Servant Keeper, the computer program that assists in our bookkeeping, now provides a free online directory. It would allow people to look up their own contribution histories (in addition to the quarterly report sent out by the bookkeeper). Paul will look into its possible security issues.

See 2 attachments: Balance Sheet Feb 2022 and Budget to Actual Feb Corrected 2022.

Jr. Warden's Report: **03/22/2022**

Halo has provided info on changes to the phone/fire protection system. This expenditure was approved and Halo has ordered the product for installation. This upgrade should be completed by the middle of April. Gwen has provided the existing phone numbers which will be ported to the new system. As you all are aware, making this upgrade will allow us to save approximately \$300 monthly in ongoing expense.

Halo has also provided the estimate for the electrification of our main entrance to install keyless entry. This expenditure was approved and Halo has ordered the equipment for the changeover. This upgrade will coincide with the phone system upgrade. The system will allow us to keep the hand crafted doors. We are still trying to find a source for replacing the doors in the Parish Hall so this keyless entry can also be upgraded. We will not address this system until Food Pantry has vacated the current location.

Erick Brunner has contacted Halo directly regarding a microphone for the choir loft and a speaker installation in the choir loft. A copy of the proposal is attached and will need Vestry approval at our next meeting. Halo has suggested that we invest in a rechargeable battery system for our Lectern mics and lapel mics. This is a minimal expense but will save us money on battery replacement. Battery operated mics were chosen over hardwired mics to allow flexibility in their use.

Our locksmith will be completing the final lock set and re-key this week. We had a delay when Ralph's service vehicle broke down. We had to replace several additional lock sets beyond the original estimate. This has led to additional expense. I am awaiting the final bill. We made an initial payment of \$1,000 to Ralph early in the program.

Phoenix Mechanical was called to do repairs on the sewer lines in the Rectory, a backed up drain in the Casita, and a repair of the faucet on the small sink in the kitchen. The occasional sewer gas smell in the Nave and Sanctuary is due to dry drains. I have requested through Gwen that Michael pour water and a cleaning solution through all drains weekly to see if this will reduce the occurrence of the smell.

We still need to clear out items in the Santiago Room to open more space for Bible Study. The furniture in the Santiago Room will need shampooing and a thorough cleaning soon.

Another capital project that we need to discuss is the refinish of the wood floors in the Sanctuary. The high traffic areas are getting very worn.

Additional snow removal expense was incurred because of timing of snow storms and the need to have the parking lot cleared for Food Pantry distribution.

Please contact me with any questions.

Respectfully submitted by Harvey Yocum Jr. Warden 3/22/2022

Discussion: Fr. Mac specifically thanked Harvey for his outstanding work as Jr. Warden.

Harvey said we are still expecting more work to be done on locks. All have been repaired/replaced except the door between north and south, at bottom of choir stairs. A final bill will come this week.

Halo will very soon complete narthex door installation with card entry.

Rusty asked that our defunct, individual sound-amplifying headsets be replaced. Harvey will send model # and photo to Fr. Mac who will order them. Fr. Mac will pay about \$100 each for them from his discretionary fund.

Billy suggested that the speakers in the sanctuary be raised for better projection of sound. Harvey will discuss with Halo. Fr. Mac urged that Harvey invite Sasaan from Halo to come back on a Sunday morning to check the sound with Erick before we authorize any further expenditure.

Outreach Report: Marilyn said that Food Pantry is now serving about 250 families per week, fewer on snow days. She added that someone is taking pallets. We need to return the blue pallets or pay for them and would like to know who the person is.

A committee has begun to meet to discuss the Community Garden, realizing that we can't begin to build it until new food pantry building is nearer completion. No expenditure will be made until authorized by the vestry.

Plans for the new food pantry building are finalized. Jack Nottingham, architect, is waiting for a directive from the town to contact our neighbors about its construction, The Town of Taos adds that we need a traffic study before we begin construction.

Pastoral Care Report: Gini said that the committee is gathering physical addresses of our members in an effort to create geographical "care" groups.

Altar Guild Report: Gini said that the Altar Guild wants to have a meeting to be sure that everyone knows her exact duties. Gwen has ordered sanctuary candle oil. Cynthia Anne has asked to step down as verger during the pandemic but she will be informed about altar guild steps, so Cynthia Anne will be informed when she does come back.

Senior Warden's Report: Rusty reported that Marilyn Farrow, Anna Mae and Jude had a meeting about the kitchen. They proposed to get everyone who uses the kitchen together to discuss how to keep the kitchen clean and nice. They compiled a list of items such as restaurant-quality pots and pans, which the kitchen needs and for which Marilyn will supply money from Empty Bowls adding that everyone who cooks in our kitchen should take a food-handling course.

We have paid, professional kitchen cleaners who come in and clean after food pantry, Rebecca Young is paid to clean up after coffee hours. The Kitchen needs a budget to replace supplies as needed.

Stacy has refreshed the bulletin board in the parish hall.

Mike Compton, general contractor for the restoration of the Common Grounds building, requests assurance that the church is behind its financial responsibilities to paying him in full. Fr. Mac added that we might equally request Mike's assurance that he will complete his work within budget and on time.

Phyllis Nottingham will represent the Vestry on the Worship Committee.

Rector's Report: Friends, This has not been the month I had planned. As I write this, and as we will meet, my youngest child and I will still be in isolation. It will have been 16 days. This was not the vacation we had hoped for and planned. Thankfully, the symptoms were never very severe, and yet I still have lingering shortness of breath and fatigue. We avoided this scenario for almost exactly two years, and I give thanks that in that time, my family was vaccinated, the severity of the symptoms diminished, and there were pharmaceuticals available for treatment. Aloyse and I both were prescribed those medicines when our doctor checked on us after 3 days of symptoms. I am not sure they helped but made me fall asleep within a hour of taking them. Please let me give my thanks to Dr. Geilan Ismail for her continued guidance, to Rusty for stepping up as Senior Warden, to Deacon Jill for being able to so capably handle the helm on a Sunday, and for all of you for your prayers and leadership.

Since our last meeting we have had some exciting times. Lent began and I had a moving Ash Wednesday. We had two services in the Nave of St James and they were full of the Holy Spirit as it always is. And I experimented with Ashes to Go on the Taos Plaza. Ashes to Go is an abbreviated invitation to the observance of Lent and the administration of the ashes to any who wish. Four St James families stopped by, including one on a get the kid to sleep nap, who happened to drive through the plaza and saw me. Others planned on attending after hearing about it at church or on Facebook. Another 30 or so people, tourists, locals, shoppers, shop keepers, politicians, all came to Ashes to Go. We will expand next year.

I attended the diocesan clergy Lenten Retreat March 4th and 5th. The original plan was to hold it in person in Las Cruces, but we pivoted to be online. I got away to the village of Pecos and was holed up there for a night to be away on retreat. When the plan moved to digital, it moved to a singular day as well, so on the 5th, I visited the Pecos National Historic Park. I learned about the pueblo, the mission, and our area. I also was able to snag a permit to fish the Rio Pecos, but did not snag any fish.

This Lent we are trying parochial formation offerings. Each Wednesday night, we have opened the nave for quiet prayers, contemplation, and meditation. This is a time to re-enter our space and to offer its holiness to those in need. Unfortunately, because of the covid isolation required, I have yet to be present on a Wednesday night. Our other offering is our Practicing How to Pray group on Sunday Mornings between the services. This is again a response to parishioners requesting more opportunities to learn and practice how to pray. I am very interested in hearing how the past two weeks have gone and where people find themselves.

Looking ahead there are a couple big items. Our bishop is making a visit to Taos on Mar 31- Apr 2. This will not be a normal visit as it does not include a Sunday, nor confirmations. Rather, +Michael is coming to see Taos and the parish beyond Sunday. He will also officially install me as your Rector. That service will be Friday April 1 at 5:30. I do not believe there is a better day in the calendar to do it. I still do not know what his expectations for us will be in regards to any meeting. If there is a meeting, we will include it with our retreat on the 2nd. And that is the other big news, our Vestry Retreat is scheduled for April 2nd 9:30-12:30 at St James in the Santiago Room. We will meet there to utilize the digital hybrid system so that all can be present regardless of physicality.

I have yet to hear from the diocese on our plans for mask-optional procedure, this report will be amended if that changes prior to our meeting.

Also before our next meeting, we will walk through Holy Week to the cross and through the dark day of Holy Saturday to stand tired and bewildered in front of the empty Easter tomb. I hope you all have a blessed Lent and Holy Week in preparation for Easter. We do Easter every year, but this year feels different. I wonder if you feel it too.

Faithfully submitted,  
In the Light of Christ,  
Mac+

PS. We have rescheduled our family trip to the Apr 25-29. And I will be away on Easter Monday 4/18, it is traditional to take that day off, but I will be traveling to the Air Force Academy for the interment of Bill Gaunt, Col USAF ret. He is an old family friend, alumnus of the first class of the USAF Academy, R-F4 pilot and Vietnam Veteran, and POW in Hanoi for 19 months. As I could not travel to TN for his funeral, I am going to CO Springs to be there for his family and my own.

the Very Rev. Mac Brown  
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Discussion: Fr. Mac urged the vestry to be thinking about articulating our vision of what we want to do in the future and the steps we need to follow to achieve that vision in preparation for our retreat on April 2, 9:30-12:30.

Bishop Hunn will be in Taos to visit our food pantry on Thursday, March 30, 2022. On Friday, April 1 he will preside at Fr. Mac's installation. On Saturday, April 2, we hope he will meet with Common Grounds, then he goes to Chama to visit that congregation. He prefers not to eat meals with other people during Covid.

Fr. Mac will send email to Altar Guild explaining how to prepare for the Installation service.

**Mike Flood and Colin Nicholls are our diocesan and deanery representatives.**

## Old Business:

Gary Buff suggested that rather than asking the congregation what they'd like to do on such a committee, that we formulate a list of possible options and ask who would be interested in supporting which ones. He suggested financial literacy as one possible option.

# Education Ministry Report

## Marach, 2022 Stacy Quinn

- † First, kudos to a few people Re the Vestry BB: I don't know how David found out about the cooler blocking the bb, but that sweet, gentle soul moved the cooler. Thank you, David! Also, I asked Rusty for pictures of each vestry member, and she sent them to me in various sizes, and then *she* went back and made them all the same size. Thank you, Rusty! We didn't have pictures of Fr. Mac and Gwen, so I took those, and I apologize that they're not the same size as the rest. I tried, but the ones you see are as close as I could get.
- † Vestry Bulletin board: The concept of the bb is "Information and Inspiration."
  - Information:** 1) Who's who and what are their responsibilities. (After your vestry retreat, I can fill in the liaison positions for those without.) 2) Space and headings for: Electronic Newsletter, Vestry Minutes, Annual Report, Finances. We could easily change the Electronic Newsletter into something else. Right now there's something about Covid, which I'm going to move to what was originally a space for Gwen for flowers, but she has set up flower sign-up in the Narthex. If she wants to reclaim that space in the PH, I can move the Covid notices to the St. James Communication bb. 3) Emergency Contacts: That had Mother Pam and Bill Humbert listed, so that sheet is now updated with Fr. Mac and Sr. Warden's contact #s. If you want anything changed on that sheet, I can. 4) On the left there is information on the theology of worship, understanding, and reconciliation. 5) On the right is information of becoming a member of St. James.
  - Inspiration:** Questions and statements that show who we are or what we think about and that inspire engagement. They are the fly on the fishing line. That being said, they require all of you to know the answers in order to direct people in the right direction. Inspiration questions are attached.
- † Once the vestry has decided on who's in charge of Communication, that person can take care of the Vestry bb. It will just mean taking off last month's vestry and treasurer's reports and securing the new ones and changing out some of the questions/statements to keep it fresh.
- † You've now inspired me to work on the Outreach bb. Marilyn has always used the right-hand side for Empty Bowls and food pantry pictures. It's always inspiring to see, so I'd like to keep that side for EB/FP. In the middle and right, we could also feature other outreach by St. James. i.e. Medical Debt Relief, DoK multiple outreach projects, any and all outreach that St. James does to show our breadth.
- † Birthday-cake Sunday was reinstated. We are serving cupcakes, and Sydney is serving them, since contamination occurs with multiple people touching the same

thing. Stacy started off Birthday-cake Sunday with homemade cupcakes and gave Sydney the 2020 sign-up sheet, so she's taking it from here.

- † Stacy met with Sydney about SS and she, ever so politely, requested that SMBS take place at the south end of the PH, so that she doesn't feel she's interrupting BS when she takes the kids to Godly Play around 9:30/45. Fr. Mac agreed to SMBS moving to the south end. I also talked with her about focusing on creating social time for parents and/or their children outside of Sunday morning to build up St. James family fellowship outside of Sunday morning church time. She agreed. She has a lot going on, too, in her personal life.
- † Daughters of the King is talking about a new service project of creating "welcoming baskets" for new families for their baptisms and confirmations. Stacy saw an "unhoused individual" with one of the DoK *Thinking of You* homeless bags in tow, so the police are handing them out.
- † Fr. Mac started *The Lenten Series* off with a great session on prayer during SMBS. 19 people attended during a full-on snow storm! The church was open on Wednesday night for an hour-long opportunity for prayer. DoK had the prayer cards in the pews. The first week 3 attended, but it was quality time for those 3.
- † MoH took two weeks off, but will begin again this Wednesday. They have a good, dedicated group of readers and faithful parishioners.
- † Men's Bible Study continues to meet at the church on Thursday mornings. What a great time to reflect on Our Lord and then go have breakfast.
- † Sandra Flood got back to me RE people she thought would be interested in weeding the Labyrinth behind the church. Due to a wise suggestion from Marilyn to hold off until post backyard construction, we are doing just that.



Fr. Mac closed the meeting with a prayer for Social Justice at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Gwenneth Glenn, Clerk.