

**St. Thomas' Episcopal Church**  
Vestry Minutes

October 15, 2024

Those in attendance: Rev. Ryan Whitley, Senior Warden Mary Jane Park, Junior Warden Tom Shevlin, Treasurer Mary Clark, Pam Holley, Wade Hamby, Colin Burkhart, Kayla Mitchell, Finance Director Joe Master, and Secretary Bill Barns.

**Opening Business:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Opening Prayer:** Prayers were offered by Tom Shevlin.

- Spiritual exercise. Bill Barns facilitated the spiritual exercise using Jonah's prayer, Jonah 2:1-9. Everyone was invited to let those words soak in, comment, or accept the gift.

**A motion to approve the September Vestry Meeting minutes** was made by Bill Barns and seconded by Wade Hamby. **The motion was approved.**

**Building and Grounds**

- Old business:
  - The Sanctuary air conditioning unit damaged by landscape crew is irreparable, needs to be replaced. Investigating an insurance claim through Antwon Montgomery's policy.
  - The gutter replacement is on hold as this will now be part of the hurricane recovery. A repair is necessary as part of a wider plan.
  - The Curry Garden refreshment project requires assessing drainage and determining how to move ahead. As this is a visible "return to normal" it will be a priority item.
- New business:

**Status Report**

  - Remediation of the church building, school, and rectory properties is almost complete.
  - Need to solicit bids for rebuild. One will be from the remediation company, BMS-CAT. It may take three-weeks to receive a bid from this vendor. Another bid will be from John Crum (a friend of Canterbury). The hope is to bid on the entire project, not just school. There should be at least one

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more bid and Hennessy Company, who is known to some parishioners, is also a possibility.

- The build-back should be designed with an eye toward the future and improvement, not just put back what we had. Jordan will have input on choir room, O/CM office; Fr. Ryan will have input on vesting sacristy. Will need to carefully and effectively communicate this to the parish. Think about incorporating an architect to design for our needs.
- **Current Rectory:** remediation almost complete, will not currently seek bids for rebuild. The pool needs to be professionally drained and cleaned. Our pool company cannot do this. Their recommended vendor quoted me \$1500 for the service, not sure if this is a competitive bid; Wade suggested another vendor with experience.
- **"Rectory-in-Avignon:"** The Whitley's are at 1234 Beach Dr. NE for one year (approx. until 9/25/25). Church Insurance Company (CIC) will pay St. Thomas' for this lease agreement. St. Thomas will then need to reimburse the Whitley's for initial outlay, then pay the monthly rent. The Duke Energy Utility bill will be paid by the church (Fr. Ryan will pass bill to Finance Director, Joe Master, for payment).
- **Future Rectory plans:** establish a small task force of non-Vestry members to research.
- **Columbarium:** families with loved ones interred on the bottom row have been notified of water incursion, but that the actual cremains remained dry and intact.
- **Pews.** Need someone to assess condition of pews.
- **Baptismal Font.** Condition unknown and will investigate.

### Finance, Administration and Worship

Treasurer, Mary Clark, provided the financial update:

#### **BALANCE SHEET**

- The main endowment had a ~\$14K gain and Altar / Youth bequest had a slight gain. A little more than \$20K from each fund was released to cover the air conditioner coil replacement.

#### **INCOME STATEMENT**

##### **INCOME**

- Pledge income remains ahead of budget, with non-pledge revenue still falling short.
- Open plate is down for the month and year to date.

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- Overall, revenue is ~\$1K short for the month and ~\$10K YTD.

**EXPENSE**

- ACCT 554804 Grounds Care – a palm tree was removed putting the account over budget for the month, but still under year to date.
- ACCT 554850 Rectory Maintenance – power wash expense.
- Overall, expenses were under budget month and year to date.

**NET INCOME**

- Net income remains above budget month and year to date.

**RESTRICTED FUNDS**

- ACCT 800028 – Altar / Youth is in the negative and will be replenished before year end. The final payment to Accurate Electronics for the security system and normal operating expenses was made.
- ACCT 800051 – Hurricane Restoration is in the negative. The PO box was initiated prior to funding beginning in October.

**A motion to accept the September Financial Report** was made by Mary Jane Park and seconded by Kayla Mitchell. **The motion was approved.**

**Stewardship Goals**

There was significant, frank discussion about the timing of the Stewardship and Capital Campaigns. Of note, many parishioners are in turmoil and are concerned about the timing of the communications and the campaign. It is necessary to recognize where parishioners are in the moment and their ability to consider pledges and other contributions. The pastoral needs of the congregation must be addressed along with St. Thomas' financial requirements and then balance them. It was decided to send a Vestry letter to the parish to communicate the situation. Themes include *“recognition of loss, gratitude for what we have, meet our financial needs by giving what you can, and above all, God’s love will guide our decisions.”* The target date to send stewardship materials is now November 15<sup>th</sup>.

- FINANCIAL IMPACT OF HURRICANE HELENE
  - The CIC \$1M flood policy will tap out. Remediation is expected to come in around \$600,000. CIC \$1M check likely to be issued in 30 days.
  - The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will make up the gap between insurance coverage and all out-of-pocket costs on eligible buildings (namely the Sanctuary, Parish Hall, Canterbury Lower School buildings), but excludes the Rectory, and Administration building.

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- FEMA relief is slow and requires extensive documentation. Sadly, our diocesan CFO is now an expert on these matters. The diocese will coordinate all FEMA documentation with our consultants and with the church. There is a shared drive for the uploading of photos and documents.
    - *FEMA needs before and after photos of affected areas, and an inventory list by building (replacement values are helpful). They need a narrative of what happened (Fr. Ryan will work on the narrative). Will want to perform a site visit. Need someone to take on this task.*
    - All invoicing from remediation and repair vendors will need to be kept separate. (Treasurer and Director of Finance will take this on). The Diocese informs us if we use vendors they recommend, it is helpful as their vendors are already familiar with FEMA's requirements.
  - The diocese is already applying for a Small Business Loan on behalf of St. Thomas' – this is a precursor requirement of FEMA.
    - *We need a drawing of the spaces affected with measurements. We need proof of ownership of the church, to be found at property appraiser records or deed searches on the clerk of the court's website. We need proof of accreditation of the school. We need maintenance records for all mechanical systems – HVAC, organs, industrial kitchen appliances and range hoods, etc.)*
  - The diocese is forgiving the remainder of St. Thomas' 2024 apportionment in the amount of \$21,771.48.
  - The diocese is suspending repayment of our current loan through the end of 2024.
  - There will assuredly be needs not met by insurance and / or FEMA; we will have to fundraise. This colors the capital campaign differently.
- **Senior Warden's Report**
    - Art Show reschedule. On pause for November and will invite Canterbury Art exhibit to continue. Intend to put it up prior to Canterbury's Lessons and Carols.
  - **Rector's Report**
    - Worship plans for immediate future. St. Thomas' will stay on the one Sunday service schedule through November 3<sup>rd</sup> and after that date, the plan is to return to two services.

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- Restarting Supper, Song, and Prayer. A good suggestion was to do it outside where the service was held and need a team of two to help with set up. The next date is October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Chapel service on Wednesday could be held in the Sanctuary. Morning Prayer will recommence soon in Sanctuary in Choir area.
- Nursery Care will be in the Canterbury playground and retain the nursery workers to supervise.
- Work from Home policy in effect for staff. All should be reachable by phone during working hours.

**Affirmations**

No single individuals were recognized this month as so many have stepped up to meet the immediate requirements post-hurricane. We give thanks for each of the faithful who have labored, prayed, and remembered this church and its parishioners.

The next Vestry meeting is on November 19th. Prayers will be led by Mary Jane Park.

**On the Horizon: *Growing Together in Love***

16 NOV	Canterbury Community Service Day at Benison Farm
13 DEC	Vestry and Staff Christmas Party (Temporary Rectory)
14 DEC	Canterbury Community Service Day at Benison Farm
20 JAN	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service at Benison Farm
26 JAN	St. Thomas' Annual Meeting / Vestry Election
31 JAN	Vestry Retreat at Day Spring (overnight)
1 MAR	Mardi Gras event

**A motion to adjourn** was made by Mary Clark and seconded by Bill Barns. **The meeting adjourned** at 8:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Barns, Secretary

**DISTRIBUTION:**

Rector, Deacon, Wardens and Vestry, Director of Finance, Parish Administrator, Endowment Committee Chair, Capital Campaign Chair

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