

**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS**  
**(September meeting delayed due to Hurricane Helene)**  
**OCTOBER 10, 2024**

The September Vestry meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Fr. Josh Stephens. Those attending included: Curate, Fr. Ian Williams, Junior Warden, Will Rodriguez, Clint Adams, Jon Fitzpatrick, Patrice German, Jim Gibbs, E.R. Haire, Jill Owen, Kim Sanders, Sandy Skelton, and Laura Teel. Those absent were Jerry Holt and Marisa Pharr.

Jill led the opening devotion after the general welcome and Vestry member check-in by reading *Isiah* 41:10 and a passage from Carly Colbert. The devotion ended with a prayer of thanksgiving.

**Acceptance of Consent Agenda for September:** Clint made a motion to accept all committee reports and the minutes of the August Vestry meeting; Laura seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

**Rector's Report:** Fr. Josh discussed Hurricane Helene updates in his report. He talked about responding to needs and serving the greater community during this time of recovery. To date, the church has distributed more than \$13,000 to those in need. The clergy, the Outreach Committee, and other organizations are working to establish needs and provide resources.

**Treasurer's Report:** Tom reported that the Final Audit Report has been completed and will be presented to the Vestry at a later date by Slater Soloman. Tom stated that there were no issues with the audit and no material changes to the 2023 financial records were recommended.

Although Total Operations Income and Operations Expenses year to date are close to the 2024 budget, there is an Operations deficit due to budgeted transfers. Tom recommended keeping expenses down to stay within the overall budget but also noted that the annual transfer from the Endowment Fund for Operations typically requested by the Vestry in November will cover the deficit

After Tom discussed the upcoming diocesan pledge, Will made a motion to submit \$68,000 as pledged to The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina by October 31. Patrice seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

In last month's Vestry meeting, Tom introduced two new co-treasurers, Marlon Sanders and Bill Williams, who were recommended by the Appointments Committee to begin serving the church in 2025. Will Rodriguez made a motion to appoint Marlon and Bill as co-treasurers of St. John in the Wilderness; Clint seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

Will made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Clint seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

**Junior Warden Report:** Will discussed the damage to the church building as well as the downed trees caused by Hurricane Helene. Insurance claims have been filed and the company has responded. He also discussed the renovation, upgrade, and recurring maintenance of the grounds surrounding the Parsonage, including the Trails Project. After communicating with the Trails Committee Chair, Cindy Easterling, Will suggested creating a separate budget line for Grounds and Trails for future recurring maintenance and upkeep.

## **Old Business:**

**Stewardship** - Due to Hurricane Helene, the Fall Fellowship Festival and Ingathering event planned at Camp Ton-A-Wandah on Sunday, October 13 was canceled. The stewardship campaign with the theme, 'Give with Purpose--Connect with Love,' continues with more than 80 pledges received. Additional information will be forthcoming.

## **New Business:**

**Staff Appreciation Luncheon** - Kim Sanders set the date for the Staff Appreciation Luncheon for December 3. More information and a sign-up sheet will be available at the next Vestry meeting.

**Church AV System** - Fr. Josh discussed improvement plans for the Church AV System. Although the system, which was installed last year, has been successful overall, there are issues with sound cutting in and out and problems with the synchronization of the sound and the video. After working with Hames over many months to resolve these issues, the decision has been made to retain another company, WMC Audio Visual. They explained the issues and how to resolve them by installing antenna cables, a new distribution unit, and an audio delay unit. Their estimate totaled 3,069.52 plus sales tax, including travel and installation. Patrice made a motion to approve 3,069.52 to install the AV system; Kim seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

Fr. Josh also showed the new signs that have been developed for St. John in the Wilderness. They will replace old ones and will be placed strategically around the surrounding areas.

Will made a motion to move to an Executive session at 6:32; Clint seconded the motion.

Following a closing prayer led by Fr. Josh, the September Vestry meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. Barker  
Secretary of the Vestry