



*Love with the heart of Christ, think with the mind of Christ, and act in the world as the Body of Christ.*

**Vestry Meeting, November 19, 2023, Noon**

**PRESENT:** Rev. Suz Cate (Rector), Ellen Haase (Senior Warden), Bill Hurst (Junior Warden), Bob Taylor (Treasurer), Hap Wheeler, Betty Snowden, Jean Ellen Zavertnik, Jody Hunter, Harry Morse, Charlie Curtis, Mel Harriss, Jan Cribb, Chesley Rowe, Mark Stokes

**ABSENT:** Andrew Baker, Jenn Ellison

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Approval of October 2023 Minutes** – Harry Morse made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Jody Hunter. Motion passed unanimously.
2. **Mutual Ministry Study Goals - Status update - See ATTACHMENT A:** Ellen Haase talked about the workgroup assigned to explore possible options (financial and otherwise) for hiring an assistant priest. She reported that there are not many available to hire, so we will wait until the end of the year to explore further. Additionally, waiting until the end of the year gives us an opportunity to see how our budget performed for 2023 and what the budget is going to be for 2024.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Treasurer's Report [Bob Taylor] - See ATTACHMENT B** for detailed summary; spreadsheets were provided to the Vestry in advance of the meeting. General discussion points included the following:
  - a. **Year to Date:** YTD we are in good shape with our austere budget; checking account is low, but money market balance is high, which means we are managing our checkbook efficiently and able to earn interest on money market funds; plate offerings are up; pledge offerings are being fulfilled; we expect to end the year with more income than was budgeted; and expenses have been low, mainly because we haven't had any major repairs recently. We are close to budget on the Doors Campaign pledges and we have a good balance in the Trinity Place account, thanks to the hard work of our Parking Committee (we should formally thank them with a letter of appreciation).
  - b. **Trinity Loan Principal Only Payment of \$15,000.** An anonymous donor would like to make a principal only payment of \$15,000 on the Trinity Place Construction Loan. ***The Finance Committee voted unanimously to recommend the \$15,000 principal only payment to the Vestry for approval. No motion or second needed since the recommendation comes from the Finance Committee; motion passed unanimously.***
  - c. **Endowment committee:** Ellen Haase suggested the Endowment Committee come to the February 2024 Vestry meeting to discuss their work and progress.
  - d. **2024 Statement of Mission (SOM):** We haven't yet developed the SOM (budget) for 2024 because we believe we will get more pledges. We hope that we will receive more pledge

dollars than last year and be able to budget for some things we had to cut out of the budget last year. We would like to do salary adjustments (increases) because of inflation rates. We are very thankful for our excellent staff.

e. Chesley Rowe asked about redundancy in our financial processes, which is an important part of good fiscal practices. Bob said that he and Dorothy Meeks can step up to handle finances if needed.

f. **Charlie Curtis made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report; seconded by Bill Hurst. Motion passed unanimously.**

2. **Stewardship Ministry update – [Jody Hunter] - See ATTACHMENT C for Committee Minutes:** Jody reported that we track the progress of our Stewardship Campaign by comparing it to the same period in the previous year. Currently we are in Week 9. So far we are ahead of last year with 87 pledges totalling \$418,691. We project pledges will total \$470-\$480,000. We are sending an appeal letter to those who haven't yet responded to our campaign. He praised the Stewardship Ministry members for their dedication and hard work.
3. **Parish-wide Survey Update and Discussion – [Hap Wheeler].** Hap reported that we have over 80 responses to the survey thus far. It was sent to a list of over 300. The committee also reviewed the inactive list and selected a few additional people from that list to survey (most of that list includes deceased parish members). Additionally, he sent out a special appeal to parishioners in their 30s and 40s encouraging them to respond. A preliminary review shows that we have some areas of ministry that people rank as important, but rate our performance in those areas fairly low. These will be particular areas to address. The arbitrary deadline is December 15, but it has not been announced. Hap will send out a reminder and announce a deadline at that time.
4. **Children and Youth Sunday Worship 2024 - [Mel Harriss] - See ATTACHMENT D.** Ellen Haase met with Jerae Wallace, our Family Ministries Coordinator, to try to develop new ideas for getting younger couples and their families involved in Sunday worship. Beginning January we will have the children (primarily 5K-Grade 5) begin their worship service separately and join adults at the Peace for the remainder of the service. During their service, they will have Sunday School lessons (rather than during the traditional Sunday School hour). If parents attend Adult Class, children will have a less structured time together doing activities. See ATTACHMENT D for details of the plan, which is a general guide and will be modified as needed. This venture will be treated as a "holy experiment" for the remainder of the school year and assessed afterwards. It was noted by Vestry members that Jerae is doing a wonderful job and we are fortunate to have her on staff. Youth Grades 6-12 will still be under the leadership of Bill Purkerson, who has done an amazing job with that age level for many years.
5. **Vestry Discernment Process for 2024 - [Ellen Haase]** – Ellen reported that we held a Vestry Discernment meeting on November 5. Not many attended, so she suggested we advertise it earlier next year. At this point, we are pleased to have the following individuals running for Vestry: Martha Williams and Charlie Curtis - one more individual is needed to run for the third Vestry seat. Mel Harriss has agreed to run for Senior Warden and Chris Keerwagon has agreed to run for Junior Warden. We hope to have ballots out for vote by November 27. We are finalizing Diocesan Convention delegates and we need a new Day School Board Member.

## **REPORTS:**

1. **Rector (Mtr. Suz Cate) –See ATTACHMENT E for detailed report:** Mtr. Suz reported she is now on Day 39 of a 40 day prayer practice. She spends 15 minutes in the morning in prayer and is focusing on where she sees energy in the Parish. She is particularly excited about all the energy she is seeing in our music programs (adult and children), ECW, and Canterbury. She encouraged Vestry members to look for signs of the Spirit's energy stirring at Holy Trinity also. She also encouraged Vestry members to attend Evensong at St. Paul's tonight in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the church facility.

**NEXT VESTRY MEETING:** Following the 10:30 service on December 17. Betty Snowden agreed to arrange for lunch.

**CLOSING PRAYER by Ellen Haase.**

Respectfully Submitted, Rebecca Eidson, Clerk to the Vestry



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**Mutual Ministry Study Goals for 2023**  
**Grow Membership and engagement!**

Near-term Goals – 3 months	Responsible	Status
<b>1. Vestry Transition Plan</b> – Outline vestry succession and transition plan	Mtr. Suz & Ellen	<b>In Process</b> Discernment process implementation started
<b>2. Options for Vestry Meetings</b> – Explore options for vestry meetings now that we are more comfortable meeting in person. Consider in-person, hybrid, various days or times	Ellen & Bill H.	<b>COMPLETE</b> In person following church with Zoom option is now established
<b>3. Expand Fellowship (Engagement) Ministry.</b> Re-establish a Fellowship Ministry to support engagement opportunities. a. Define what events Fellowship is responsible for b. Clarify Fellowship responsibilities	Jan, Betty, and Mel	<b>COMPLETE</b> Several events have been planned along with work to restart neighborhood group gatherings
<b>4. Parish Calendar for 2023-24.</b> Develop annual parish calendar for the 2023-4 program year. To be done in June and ready for 2023 -4 academic year.	Jerae, Jan, Mel, Mtr. Suz, Stephanie L.	Calendar set, will seek input from Communications Committee for best means of sharing with the parish
<b>5. 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday children’s service.</b> Bring back children helping with dismissal (possibly make this every Sunday).	Mtr. Suz	Implement with EDS Sunday
<b>Intermediate Goals – 6 months.</b>		
<b>6. New Name Tags for the Parish</b>	Rebecca Eidson and Wesley Ramey	<b>COMPLETE</b> Name tags are now available!!
<b>7. Updated Parish Directory</b>	Jack McKenna, Wesley & Will Cate	formatting underway, project should be completed by the end of August
<b>8. Event Communications</b> – Enhance our communication of Parish events	Hap	See “ <a href="#"><i>Minutes Communications Comm 8-24-23.odt</i></a> ”
<b>9. New Ideas for Worship</b> – Worship ministry to propose new ideas for worship service. Consider asking our parish and other churches for ideas	Mark Stokes, Mtr. Suz	Sunday 5 PM, “Comfy Church” <b>Children’s Church 2024</b>
<b>Goals for the year</b>		
<b>10. Website refresh</b> – Enhance our website, including mobile accessibility	Hap	See “ <a href="#"><i>Minutes Communications Comm 8-24-23.odt</i></a> ”

Treasurer's Report to the Vestry

Bob Taylor, November 19, 2023

Items to be presented:

- A report on the October 31, 2023 Financial Statements.
- A recommendation for a \$15,000 principal only payment on the Trinity Place Loan
- A Third Quarter Report from the Endowment Committee
- Early comments on preparing a draft of the 2024 SOM for Vestry input in the December 2023 Vestry Meeting.

**The Review of the October 31, 2023 financial statements by the Finance Committee is summarized in the following comments:**

The overview is very favorable with respect to the austere 2023 SOM which was set in January 2023.

While the First Citizens Checking Account is low (\$27,202.80) (page 3), Everyone is very carefully monitoring the balance so that most available cash can remain in the Edward Jones MMKT account (\$581,047.96) (page 3) which has been earning almost 4.7% interest (page 11).

Both pledge offerings and plate offerings are several thousand dollars (\$6,968.00 and \$16,631.96, respectively) in excess of year-to-date budgeted amounts (page 5).

In October, income exceeded expenses by \$9,967.74 (page 6), but there still may be some October expenses to record.

On October 31, 2023 year-to-date total expenses excess total budgeted expenses by \$31,278.15 (page 6). The overall situation may not be quite this favorable as more expenses are expected before the of the year.

Trinity Place parking income has already exceeded the budgeted yearly totals, and Doors pledges are close to year-to-date budget amounts (page 7). The cash balance in the Trinity Place Fund is almost \$44K which is approximately 5 months payments on the construction loan which is expected to drop below \$700,000 in November/December.

ECF accounts lost money in both September and October.

**Trinity Loan Principal Only Payment of \$15,000.**

An anonymous donor would like to make a principal only payment of \$15,000 on the Trinity Place Construction Loan. ***The Finance Committee voted unanimously to recommend the \$15,000 principal only payment to the Vestry for approval.***

The principal only payment of \$15,000 will shorten the current 2031 payoff date by two months and a few days. Moreover, it will save at least \$4,005.39 in interest over the remaining life of the loan (at least because the current very favorable 3.3% interest rate is likely to be much higher when the loan's interest rate is renegotiated in February 2027).

**The following 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter report on the Holy Trinity Endowment Fund Interim Report, was from Endowment Chair Ron McGimpsey:**

The fund market value at 9/30/2023 is \$118,510 compared to beginning of year value of \$109,387. The current value includes contributions of \$4,500 this year. Market performance of the funds this year (70% equity, 30% fixed income) reflects a 4.3% overall gain. This compares favorably to the following indexes:

DJIA +1.8%

S&P +14.8%

Russell 2000 +1.4%

S&P 500 Bond Index -1.2%.

Ron should be invited to the February 2023 Vestry Meeting for an annual report from the Endowment Committee and to respond to Vestry members' questions.

**The Finance Committee has begun discussions on preparing a draft of the 2024 SOM for Vestry input in the December 2023 Vestry Meeting.**

A working draft to be presented for Vestry input at the December meeting.

A proposed 2024 SOM (incorporating Vestry's December input) for vote in the January Vestry Meeting

Problems with timing of knowing the final 2024 Pledge total.

Likely to restore about than half of the 2023 reductions to outreach and Diocesan Assessment.

Consideration of salary adjustments for Holy Trinity personnel should be given because of the inflation rates of 7% in 2021, 6.5% in 2022 and 3.7% in 2023 **(page 17)**.

## ATTACHMENT C

### Stewardship Minutes/Report

I continue to be very thankful for your faithful support and dedicated service to our Holy Trinity Stewardship Ministry. This is an exciting time for our Ministry as we work toward the completion of our 2024 Stewardship Campaign. The minutes of our meeting which was held on November 5th are as follows:

- We reviewed the progress of our 2024 Stewardship Campaign. The Campaign Kick – Off was held on September 10th. On October 22nd we celebrated our In – Gathering. As a result of rain, we held our campaign kick-off in the Parish Hall with a barbecue lunch provided by Palmetto Smoke House. We had about 63 parishioners in attendance at this luncheon. To celebrate our In - Gathering, we will hosted a celebration luncheon in the Parish Hall immediately after the 10:00 a.m service on October 22<sup>nd</sup> with catering provided by Palmetto Smoke House. We estimate that over 85 parishioners were in attendance for this celebration luncheon. My thanks to all for your work in making both of these events a great success.

- We have established our 2024 Stewardship Campaign goal at \$470,000. We made a decision not to establish a “Stretch Goal” but to emphasize the impact that additional pledge amounts would have on the mission of Holy Trinity, We will not share average pledge data in our 2024 Stewardship update communications.

- Below is a summary of our campaign results to date:

October 26 - 78 Pledge Cards, \$392,914 pledged, \$5037.35 average pledge

November 3 – 82 Pledge Cards for \$407,614 pledged, \$4970.90 average pledge

We are currently \$60,828.00 dollars above last year pledges for this same time period in our campaign.

- Below is a summary of our campaign results for 2023:

106 Pledge Cards, \$425,093.98 pledged, \$4010.32 average pledge

- We continue to thank Jim Reed for his sincere and dedicated work in writing the Stewardship messages for our "Tempo" publications.

- We discussed the following questions:

- The percentage of pledges that are coming in on line.
- Number of pledges coming in without a pledge card.
- The number of Stewardship Packets that were mailed but returned due to incorrect address.

- A special thank you to Mtr. Suz for the caring and very appreciative pledge thank you letters sent to each Parish family after they have submitted their pledge.

- Our next action will be to send out a letter the week of December 12<sup>th</sup> encouraging Parishioners that received a Stewardship Packet but have not responded to please submit their pledge. Cindy and Paul Thackham have volunteered to write this letter for us. Our thanks to Cindy and Paul. Jody Hunter will coordinate getting this letter signed by each member of our Stewardship Ministry in preparation for mailing. In addition, we will send out a Stewardship letter and pledge card to new members of our Church that started after our Campaign Kick – Off.

- Cindy Thackham is continuing work on our website for Stewardship.

- I continue to feel we will have a successful campaign with strong support from our Parish Family. I thank each of you again for your work and commitment to our Holy Trinity Stewardship Ministry.

Sincerely, Jody

## **ATTACHMENT D**

### **Proposed Children's Church 2024**

Family Ministry with Christian Formation identified challenges in making children's church accessible, interesting, and engaging for our children. Children are reluctant (and maybe embarrassed) about getting up to leave church during the service. Also, we need to adapt the children's church to meet the energy levels and attention spans of our children including some with special needs.

Jerae has done research on what is working for children's church in other Episcopal churches. Based on that research and what Jerae is seeing at Holy Trinity, we developed the following ideas to try through the end of the church school year starting in January 2024:

1. Children's church will include a children's Sunday School component. For younger children, this means less time for children to have to stay focused.
2. During the regular Sunday School time, children can enjoy activity time while parents to attend Adult Fellowship.
3. Children go directly to children's church before the 10:30 AM Worship Service starts and then join their parents at the "Peace."
4. The children's church time will be a combination of a short interactive "worship" with a bible story and Sunday School time. The program will have lots of activity and seek to create a fun atmosphere for Christian learning and fellowship.
5. A sample Children's Church Template follows.
6. The new format will be evaluated at the end of the program year in May 2024.

Other area churches also use this format for children's church.

## **Children & Youth Worship Schedule Template**

**Season after Pentecost: Fall 2023**

**Seasonal Color: Green for Growth**

**Seasonal Focus: Lifelong disciples of Jesus.**

**Date: MM DD, 2023**

**Story: *Example* - The Reluctant Prophet**

**Scripture: Jonah**

**Story Theme: God shows compassion for sinners who repent.**

**Teaching Point: God's mercy draws sinners to repent.**



## Monthly Memory Verse:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

**10:20** - Ask for volunteers for bell ringer, candle lighter, snuffer, tech helper and Memory Verse reader **10:35 - 10:36**  
**Welcome in Children’s Chapel**

Welcome In-person kids. “It is wonderful to see you!”

**10:35 - 10:45 Worship -**

- Light candles - Say *‘We light these candles as a visual reminder of Jesus, “light of the world”*

- As the Jesus candle is light, have the candle lighter say ‘The light of Christ’.

- Then the kids say ‘Thanks be to God.’

- Talk about seasonal colored cloth

- **Memory Verse:** Review and discuss the meaning of the memory verse:

**Song**

**10:45 - 10:53 Bible Story**

**10:53-10:55 Close worship** time by saying a prayer.

- *Say a closing prayer*

- Have snuffer snuff candles (left to right). We extinguish them because the light of Jesus is now within us to go out and be Jesus in the world.

- Dismiss the children to classrooms.

**10:55 - 11:10 Sunday School time: Age-based discussion with Activity**

**11:15/11:30 - Children join parents in the Nave During the “Peace”**

## ATTACHMENT E

### Rector's Report 11/19/2023

I have spent 40 days praying about the mission and ministry of this parish, focusing on where I see the energy of the Holy Spirit at work. There is much to celebrate on that front. There are also areas where energy is forced and in some instances failing.

**Worship:** Attendance remains strong, averaging 100+. Children's Services consistently bring out an additional 20 or so, thanks in large part to Cynthia's building up the Children's Choirs. The Adult Choir has grown, both numerically and in musicality. I see great energy in our music programs that is contributing to our "draw" for newcomers.

The 5:00 "Comfy Church" service is doing quite well, with a steady attendance of 10-12 people. A little over half in attendance each week are the same 7 regulars, with a rotating group who make up the rest. The rotating crew are about half parishioners and half Canterbury students.

The congregation for Evening Prayer at St. Paul's on the third Sunday of the month has never been more than 5 since we started back after Covid last year. From May to October of this year it has averaged 3, including the Reeds and the Worship Leader. The St. Paul's Committee agrees that we should take a break from that service for the time being and just concentrate on the monthly Holy Eucharist and the wonderful occasional services.

**Formation:** Our traditional Sunday School hour is struggling, with very little regular participation in any age group other than adults. This is reflected in breakfast numbers have fallen off considerably over the course of the semester. Jerae met with Ellen and Mel to discuss and plan alternative approaches.

ECW is an area where there is great energy. Fellowship gatherings are very well attended, and the Food for Thought event was a great success. This is a wonderful example of an organic following of the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Canterbury continues to be small but mighty. We had 11 for supper last week, followed by a lively discussion of the Book of Common Prayer. The programming has been particularly strong this year, focusing on a rotation between Christianity 101, Anglicanism 101, and hanging out. Each Sunday gathering ends with student led Compline. It is a joy to see our non-Episcopal members embracing that office! We are preparing for a Service of Lessons and Carols at Cadden Chapel in a couple of weeks, as well as Exam Week Support.

EfM, Bible Study, and DoK continue to be strong pillars of our Adult formation.

**Staff:** I want to commend our staff for their professionalism and helpfulness. They have responded beautifully to multiple requests for assistance with sizable projects this fall. Stewardship, ECW, Outreach, Communications and others have benefited from their diligence and cooperation. They truly work as a team.

Currently they are all working on hand-off documents and cross-training. This is a project that I expect will take a few months to complete, but will be invaluable in years to come.

The new directory is ready to print and hard copies will be available Advent 1.

**Help for me:** John Nieman and I are working out occasional preaching and weekday coverage, which is the extent of his interest in working in retirement. He will not be available for pastoral care, and parishioners should continue contact me, the church office, or the Pastoral Care Team for comfort and aid in times of need.