

Church of the Nativity  
Minutes of the Vestry  
August 17, 2021

**Attending:** Stephanie Allen, Stephanie Sumner, Rene Garces, Cheryl Waechter, Josh Booth, John Oldham, Kim Stoke, Beth Crow, Anne Krouse, Bill Sena, Robert Joines, Carrie Mash, and Gail Christensen.

The meeting was convened at 7:05 pm in person for the first time since February 2020 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Two Vestry members attended via Zoom.

**Approval of the June 2021 minutes:**

The minutes of the June Vestry meeting were submitted for approval. John moved to accept the minutes as written; Anne seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Rector's Report: Stephanie Allen**

All plans for further opening are on hold due to the recent resurgence of the Covid virus. Worship will continue as we've done since Lent - a mix of in-person services and online live streaming of the 10:30 am service. No one wants to return to online services only. It has been difficult to fill the positions of ushers, readers, and counters, so it was suggested that the Vestry Rep ask someone in attendance to lend a hand.

The Diocese of NC is instructing parishes to remain in Stage 3 - they are reluctant to fall back into earlier stages. We will continue to wear masks in services; kids will meet mostly outdoors, masked, and socially distant.

Education will continue in a hybrid fashion - part in-person, part on Zoom. There are at least two Bible studies planned, and two Sacred Ground meetings. Parishioner Ryan Parker, a chaplain at the Durham VA, offered to lead a Veteran's Issues group.

Rene hopes that there will be enough sign-ups for meal packing for Rise Against Hunger on August 29. It will be Nativity's 10th year of doing this.

Beth indicated that the Day or Week of Giving will return this Advent, online at least and maybe in person. We did a Week of Giving during the pandemic in 2020, and it was very successful.

**Finance Report/Senior Warden's Report: John Oldham**

Parishioners have been "phenomenal" in paying their pledges during the pandemic. We are only a little behind on net income, but expenses are way down, so the budget is very close to being balanced. John is "very comfortable" with where we are during this challenging time.

Business Manager Nancy Reed and Assistant Treasurer Alfred Christensen are about 90% there in correcting some numbers in our financial results.

John now has all the documentation needed to apply for forgiveness of our PPP loan from the Federal government. John fully expects that the loan of \$44,000 will be forgiven, since no other churches have been denied. The disposition of those monies will be decided at a later time.

The Buildings and Grounds Team proposed to the Finance Team that Nativity spend \$4,400 on removing animal (squirrels, mice) waste from the attic and ceilings in Estill House, which has been accumulating for 30 years despite unrelenting efforts by the B&G teams over the years to

stop it. Rene reported that three estimates were sought and Bio-One was chosen. The cleanup effort will take 3 days, when staff and clergy will have to work from elsewhere.

As noted in the June Vestry minutes, First Aid/CPR/AED training/certification has expired for those in Nativity who took it a few years ago. 11 people were trained in January/2019, but many of those who trained previously are no longer available. 10 individuals have now shown interest in being certified. The cost of Adult First Aid/CPR/AED training/certification for 10 people on-site is about \$1,500 for a class of 6 hours.

John moved that the Vestry authorize \$6000 to be used for animal waste mitigation and CPR/AED training/certification. Cheryl seconded. The vote was unanimous.

### **Junior Warden's Report: Rene Garces**

In addition to the two projects mentioned in the Finance report, Rene also reported that five parking lot lights have been converted to LED, saving us about \$20/month.

There is still no volunteer for a security/safety lead (SSL) to replace the acting SSL.

Our lawn service is being done early mornings now instead of afternoons, every 2 weeks on Thursdays, with the understanding they should complete lawn service around Nativity's 3 buildings and area by Mary's pre-K classroom in the woods before 9am.

All three buildings are in need of painting. Rene has begun getting estimates, but the prices are high. Asking parishioners to volunteer to paint has not been successful in the past, but we may have to consider it, after we see the bids.

The B&G team proposes to convert our fire alarm monitoring from 2 existing AT&T land lines to 2 imbedded cell phone lines. The conversion by JCI will cost \$3260, but this cost will be recouped in about 8 months because of the savings the conversion will provide. A cost/savings analysis shows that we will save more than \$8000 a year. Carrie moved that the Vestry authorize this conversion. Cheryl seconded and the vote was unanimous. The next step is to go to the Finance Team to find the money to do this. (Our fire panels have recently been inspected and are fully compliant with the City of Raleigh.)

### **Vestry Retreat**

A retreat led by Rev. Canon Sally French on Friday night, October 1 and Saturday morning, October 2 seems to work for everyone. Friday night will be a potluck social combined with "spiritual renewal". Beth offered her home for Friday night's gathering. A working session on Saturday could address how we can reach out to the parish to find out who is not engaged and how we can operate in the next months. Strategic planning for the next two to five years may have to wait until this pandemic is resolved somehow.

### **Exploration of solar panels on church building - Stephanie Allen**

Since solar panels were installed on the education building, the costs of solar have gone down and opportunities for leasing have expanded. Before rebates expire, is now the time to consider installing solar panels on the worship building? Yes, but the building's roof is 20 years old and should be replaced before installing solar panels. Carl Sigel has offered to take the lead on getting bids.

**Updated website**

Nativity's website (<https://nativityonline.org/>) has been updated by Alfred Christensen, primarily to improve performance but also to update some content. It went live Tuesday, August 17.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned with prayer at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gail Christensen  
Clerk of the Vestry

**The next Vestry meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2021 at 7 pm.**