

**Church of the Holy Comforter**  
**Vienna, Virginia**  
**Minutes of the Vestry Meeting**  
**February 13, 2025**

**Opening:**

The meeting opened at 7 pm with a prayer of thanksgiving.

There was a discussion of a spiritual reflection sent out earlier in the week: Finding the Spiritual in the Mundane.

Mutual Ministry Review questionnaires were collected and can be turned in to Kathy; another review will occur in the summer.

**Clergy Update:**

Services include the West Indies liturgy through Epiphany.

Beyond the uncertain futures for federal employees and refugees in the parish, regular life continues, such as births, funerals, and health diagnoses. Caring for each other remains constant. One of our refugee families celebrated its one-year anniversary in the US.

Our new solar power grid is producing ½ megawatt on a sunny day. We use 11-19 megawatts per month.

**Wardens report:**

Sunday Feb 23 will be our annual meeting. The speakers will sit in the chancel. The meeting always includes youth and finance ministry speakers, and speakers from other ministries rotate each year.

Pennywise had a recent Sunday forum speaking spot.

Episcopal 101 class will explore the question of why we do ministry this coming Sunday, February 16th. Meaningful Engagement survey will be

discussed, and further participation in the survey will be encouraged. Many ministry leaders will be there and will have a turn to give a short presentation, around three minutes.

### **Personnel Committee:**

There will be personnel changes in the coming year due to a few retirements. There are plans to combine facilities management with the parish administrator role upon Tom's retirement. Peggy will maintain the treasurer position as a volunteer role.

### **Community Hall rental:**

Plans are to update the website, have staff present at events, and come up with a marketing plan to increase rentals. This Saturday 300 attendees will be present for the NE Nepalese Association, using the community hall and McGill Hall and the kitchen. The hours booked are 1 pm – 11 pm. There was a question about adequate parking for the 5 pm service; however, the group's largest attendance will take place after the 5 pm service.

### **Building and Grounds:**

In addition to the HVAC work approved last month, the following three approvals for additional expenditures are necessary to move forward with these improvements:

- Replace the heat pump in the chapel,
- Replace the chapel air sensor.
- Upgrade and repair the fuse for the sanctuary HVAC.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved for these expenditures.

The collapsed tent was removed, and ideas for replacement are being discussed.

## **Financial reports and 2025 Budget review:**

The 2025 budget has been revised with current pledge figures. Increased expenses are included to account for last month's larger than expected ice and snow removal and additional HVAC expenses.

Utilities costs were reduced, now that we know the level of electricity coming from our solar array.

It was noted that it is important to continue giving to groups outside our church and to consider fully funding Outreach through direct donations and fundraising. It was also mentioned that Items in the operating budget are subject to cuts.

At the mid-year mutual ministry review, around August, we will have updated financial data to continue to address this, although more than 30 percent of our income is in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of each year. Church income is dependent on the will of the people. Also, there is a canonical requirement that the fiscal year match the calendar year.

If there is a shortfall in Outreach funding, it was suggested that we could consider deferring the amount to the 2026 budget. This would not preclude people from giving to the refugee ministry. It was noted that we will explore grant writing and fundraising efforts to fully fund Outreach.

Our outreach efforts are focused on moving people to being independent.

The following are also not funded by the operating budget and are self-funding:

- Hypothermia shelter
- Senior Saints
- Hogwarts vacation Bible school
- Flower ministry

These areas could be addressed in the strategic plan.

The majority of the operating budget is for employee compensation and benefits. Filling the positions created by upcoming retirements will require both diocesan and geographic salary data to set a range for the position.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the updated 2025 budget.

A tax credit was received for the Employee Retention Act grant applied for 18 months ago to continue employing staff during the COVID era. The final documentation of the Solar Project was submitted to receive money from the Inflation Reduction Act.

**Parochial report:**

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the parochial report to the Diocese, due March 1. The report includes a correction for an increase in the number of Daily Office services. The report reflects 350 Worship Outreach beneficiaries each week and 1270 adult members in good standing (receiving communion at least 3 times a year, faithful in corporate worship, and in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.)

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the minutes of the January meeting.

A handout was offered on how to save reports as a pdf and to church Google Drive.

We discussed how best to manage the refugee ministry funding. There is a separate refugee fund that is supported by donations and grants. Ann+ suggested a meeting with the director of outreach at her former parish to discuss their successful refugee ministry.

There will be a blood drive on Friday February 14th.

Linda Lee presented coffee hour instructions in a red binder notebook, which will be kept in the kitchen.

The meeting closed at 9:17 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Stager

Registrar

