

## **The Church of the Cross Vestry Minutes**

**March 21, 2025**

Fr. Owens called the meeting to order at 12:30PM in the Conference Room of the Chapel.

**PRESENT:** Fr. Owens, Michael Simon, Lee Watkins, Joanne Byrd, Craig Pelley, Linda Laird, Wayne Bowerman, Laura Strange and Kevin Sevier

**ABSENT:**

### **I. Welcome Laura Strane and Kevin Sevier**

Michael introduced Laura and Kevin to the Vestry members and explained the expectations for serving on the Vestry. As a Vestry member we are to represent Padre and the Parrish.

### **II. PRAYER AND DEVOTION:**

Craig gave the devotional from 2 Cor 12:9-10. He shared his own thoughts on vulnerability and how Christians are willing to be vulnerable in order to share with others. Every time we step out to serve at the food band, on the prayer team, or as a greeter, we are willing to be vulnerable. Fr. Owens challenged each of us to be willing.

### **III. Presentation by Doug Barone on happenings at God's Goods**

Doug Barone is the new director over the God's Goods ministry. He guides over 371 total volunteers with the help of his leadership team. He shared last year's earnings and contributions worldwide. He is faced with a new problem. The storage containers must be removed and he plans to replace them with a new structure across the parking lot from God's Goods. There will be hurdles to overcome with code enforcement and permits. It is a work in progress.

### **IV: MINUTES: Linda Laird**

The Vestry Minutes for March were electronically distributed. Craig made the motion we approve the minutes, Michael seconded and all approved.

### **V: FINANCES: Lee Watkins, Treasurer's Report for Month Ending February 28, 2025:**

#### **Revenue Discussions:**

Income and giving continue to exceed expectations as we begin the new year.

February monthly Income finished at \$374,691.44 to a budget of \$296,040.50

Comparatively, January 2025 monthly income was \$336,974.97

Monthly Plate/Pledge Income was \$293,184.84 to a budget 218,354.00.

February Plate/Pledge income variance is +\$74,784.84

Total Income for the month was higher than budgeted by \$91,104.41

**Note:** Total income includes Giving, Bequests, Missions, Faith Formation and Counseling Center revenue. God's Goods Income transferred to the Missions Fund was \$60,090.30 compared to January GG income of \$50,292.75.

**Expenses Discussion:** Overall expenses were lower than budgeted.

Total expenses for the month were \$310,096.73 to a monthly budget of \$338,668.60

The monthly expenses budget variance is under by \$28,571.87.

**Church Attendance for February:**

2025 monthly attendance was lower than 2024, the primary reason is that Ash Wednesday services and the beginning of Lent fell in February last year (approximately 400 more attendees counted on Ash Wednesday)

<b>February</b>	<b>HC 5:28</b>	<b>HC 8A</b>	<b>HC 10A</b>	<b>Chapel 9A</b>	<b>Crosspoint</b>	<b>Cross School</b>	<b>Wk Total</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1505</b>
<b>9th</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>1923</b>
<b>16th</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1470</b>
<b>23rd</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1596</b>
<b>Mo Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>1137</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1900</b>	<b>6494</b>

Current Month: 6494 (note: Ash Wednesday Services were in Feb 2024)

Year to Date: 12,404

YTD 2024: 13,085

MTD 2024: 7175

**Streaming and Online:** YouTube views for the month totaled 1611, that is higher than January views which were 1379, that's a 16% increase. The COTC Website daily views/visits averages were lower than December (avg. 850) and January 2025 at 619. Average daily traffic for February was at 580 views per day.

We give thanks to Christ, our King, for everything.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Lee Watkins, Vestry Treasurer**

Michael explained how the Financial Board manages our funds with the expertise of Regine Johnson, our Financial Administrator. The members work together to seek the most profitable decisions. Michael made the motion to accept the treasurers report, Wayne seconded and all approved.

**Linda presented the summary for the Missions Outreach Board Meeting, March 10, 2025.**

### **Disbursement Report**

Net Working Capital:	\$59,381.06
March Set Aside Distributions:	\$21,984.00 (See Appendix A)
March One Time Grant Approvals:	\$34,300.00
Total March Distributions if Approved:	\$56,284.00
Remaining Net Working Capital:	\$ 3,097.06

### **March Disbursements**

- a. Outreach for Nazareth Orphanage - **\$5,000** was approved to assist with the costs of replacing the current water/septic system. This is a new organization who ministers to the youth in Tecate, Mexico.
- b. Shearly Cripps/TARIRO - **\$6000** was approved to cover the costs for implementing a new Counseling Program for the youth at Shearly Cripps orphanage.
- c. UCCD Burundi - Funding for 2025 Pastor Retreats in the amount of **\$6000** to cover the costs of hosting the retreats during the first half of 2025.
- d. Olomayiana Village School Construction - **\$8300** was approved to complete construction of the school kitchen, teacher house and small office.
- e. Harvesters International Ministries - A one-time gift of **\$6,000** was approved to help cover the increased costs of security, food, medication and other necessities for the remainder of 2025.
- f. Hearts for the Congo - **\$3000** was approved through post meeting unanimous electronic vote due to a new update making us aware of the desperate need for food and clothing to assist those who are displaced through the current violence that is now impacting Bunia, DR Congo.

### **Funding Renewal Approval**

- g. Harvesters, DR Congo funding renewal approved for the monthly amount of \$3350 in support of ongoing orphan care in the DR Congo. This amount is already accounted for in the March set-asides.

**New Board Member Application** - Dr. Sam Molind was approved by the Missions Outreach Board as a new Board Member.

Lee made the motion to approve the Mission Boards request, Craig seconded and all approved.

## Appendix A

<b>March Set Aside Commitments</b>	
<b>Anderson Sanchez Peru - End June 2025</b>	\$2,250.00
<b>Bluffton Community Kitchen - End January 2026</b>	\$1834.00
<b>Campus Outreach Ministry, Hoffman- End November 2025</b>	\$500.00
<b>CBC Kenya Monthly - January 2025</b>	\$3,000.00
<b>Cross Christian Counseling Center - End December 2026</b>	\$300.00
<b>COTC Faith Formation - End May 31 2025</b>	\$1,250.00
<b>CS Cross Schools Monthly - End May 21 2025</b>	\$2,500.00
<b>Harvesters Intl Congo Monthly Orphan care - End March 2025</b>	\$3,350.00
<b>HELP Madagascar - End January 2026</b>	\$1,850.00
<b>Hope Compassion Center - End October 2025f</b>	\$1,500.00
<b>SAMS Missionary Griffin - End Jan 2026</b>	\$1,500.00
<b>UCCD Burundi - End Dec 2024</b>	\$1,650.00
<b>Young Life New Gen Program - End July 2025</b>	\$500.00
<b>Total March Set Aside Disbursements</b>	\$21,984.00

### I: Other

#### 1. Update on Bennett Ellison's Discernment Committee:

Michael reported that this was Ellison's third meeting with the vestry, with only one more to come. Bennett has been contacted by the Dioceses of the South and he will be ordained as a Deacan in November. He will be Ordained to the Priesthood in May and we hope the ordination will take place at The Church of the Cross.

#### 2. Update on Cross Schools: Wayne)

Construction is continuing on the new dining area/flex space and completion is expected in September. The Fountain is now repaired and running. Damage to the AC units have been repaired, but we are still waiting for parts for the dual units. Replacements are not available until June or July.

The Cross-Country track is not quite ready. Excess water has delayed the process. We are in need of a long dry spell to complete the track.

### **3. Follow up on ADOSC Convention**

Laura was a delegate from TCOTC. Craig and Michael and Mill were also with her. It was a very uplifting service. Clergy paraded into the Chapel and they renewed their vows. Music included bag pipes, brass and praise music. The bishop spoke to three primary topics: Education, the Book of Common Prayers and Growth of congregations. Elections for the standing committee was completed. Unfortunately, no one from the COTC was elected. Resolutions were discussed and the bishop required a 2/3 vote to be confirmed. The next Convention will be in Myrtle Beach.

### **4. Preparations for the Vestry portion of CLTW on 4/12/25 (Craig)**

Craig has prepared upgrades for the leadership training agenda for April 4. Five Vestry members will assist in the training.

### **5. Update on the Columbarium**

Construction of the Columbarium was stopped due to discrepancies with the original drafts.

### **6. Update on staff additions:**

Rev. Jonathan Collins will be joining us to serve as Curate in June. Bradley Cooper will join us as Worship Minister on April 15. Fr. Chuck shared the importance of looking for very flexible people to serve on our varying campuses.

### **7. Election of Vestry Officers**

The Vestry voted for officers to serve this year. The results were as follows:

Vestry Senior Warden – Michael Simon

Vestry Junior Warden – Craig Pelley

Vestry Clerk - Linda Laird

Vestry Treasurer – Lee Watkins

8. ??? Wayne asked Fr Owens if there could be a volunteer or part time person available at Buckwalter to assist in repairs, tasks, etc. Father Owens noted the request was already in the works for both campuses.

**V. Closing Prayers:** Craig closed the meeting in prayer and all said “AMEN.”

Next Meeting – April 25 – 12:30pm – Conference Room in The Chapel

Wayne has the devotional and prayers.

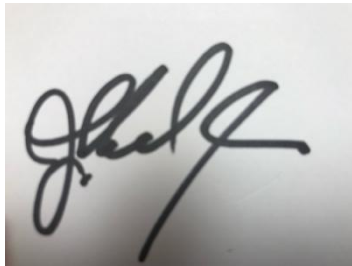
[Meeting/Devotional schedule: May 23 – Lee; June 27 – Joanne; July 18 - Michael]

Respectfully submitted,

**Linda Laird**

Linda Laird, Vestry Clerk

**J. Michael Simon, Sr. Warden**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Michael Simon", is shown on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping tail.