

## Vestry Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2026

Members Present: Kelly Kirby, Bill Beam, Neville Blakemore Jr., Rob Peck, Melissa Klassen, Patricia Enriquez, Phil Eschels, Heather Duffy, Robin McNally, Susie Thomas, Tim Bowman-Jecmen, Chris Newton, David Lee.

Also present: Suzanne Barrow, Edie Nixon, Steve Cherry.

Expected Absence: Diane Kyle, Jessica Roufus, Penny Shaw.

Also absent: Emerson Niehaus.

12 Vestry members were present, resulting in a quorum.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm.

After the opening prayer, David Lee offered a reflection about violence as a public health issue. David circulated an article that addresses treating violence as a health epidemic.

There were no corrections to the May meeting minutes, which were accepted as presented.

Edie Nixon reviewed the Balance Sheet, Income and Endowment statements.

- Endowment is nearing \$3 million.
- Bell tower will be paid off this month.
- Edie will provide the return of investment next month, as requested by Robin McNally.
- Income is ahead of budget YTD. Operating expenses are over budget YTD due to high building maintenance costs.
- Edie and Linda Wardell conducted the Internal Financial Review for submission to the diocese.

On Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be a review of the budget after the 10 am service.

Neville Blakemore motioned to accept the Financial Report as presented, subject to financial review. Bill Beam seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Steve Cherry presented a plan for the Memorial Garden that included new locations for name plates. He provided architectural drawings for the walls in the Memorial Garden that will display the name plaques of the deceased. A site survey was conducted to inform Steve's design. There will be three wall heights, 18", 3' and 4', with some being

bench walls. All walls are brick with a stone cap and the brick will match the existing church structures. The thinking behind the low height walls is that it will make the garden more inviting and inclusive. The walls need to be inserted 24-30" underground to stabilize them and protect them from frost heave. The biggest challenge with the erection of these walls is that the root systems of the existing trees are generally within 10-12" of the ground surface. The drawing for the largest wall showed a different type of foundation. If we used that foundation, the wall would need to be a different material, possibly granite.

Kelly reported that inclusion on the Memorial Wall is open to everyone; neither being a St. Matthew's parishioner nor having one's cremains interred in the garden itself is required. This position makes us a progressive church that provides affordable options for members of our greater community. Plaques will be on both sides of the walls and are 16" x 3.5" aluminum with 24-character spaces per plaque.

Steve will have the construction company that provided the bell tower foundation do a preliminary assessment of the grounds to determine how the walls should be anchored. The vestry will discuss this further in the August meeting.

In Penny Shaw's absence, Kelly reviewed the Vision Implementation Team's recommendations regarding parish goals. The vestry would like the committee to create two benchmarks for the proposed 2027 goals, as well as revise the language to create clearly defined goals that are achievable and measurable. The team meets Sunday and will submit the updates to be voted on next month by the Vestry.

Robin McNally reported on behalf of the Outreach Committee and presented the plan for the Outreach funds. They are still looking for potential beneficiaries of the Advent Tree in December 2026. Patricia Enriquez motioned to accept the Outreach Committee's 2027 plan as presented. Melissa Klassen seconded it and the motion carried unanimously.

Rob Peck reported on behalf of the Buildings & Grounds Committee.

- The organ is being repaired. Several bellows are being replaced, but the damage was not as bad as originally anticipated. The expected cost will be \$5-8000.
- Our last rain event produced very little water indoors. There is a funnel system now in place to divert water away from the organ.
- Mars Electric is replacing lighting above the altar.
- Rob and the committee are cleaning up the church's electronics that are no longer usable and disposing of them.
- The posts for the railing behind the church need to be replaced.

Kelly reported for the Dimensions of Faith committee, who are looking at cost-effective DOF speakers for next year. The next speaker, Jeff Chu, will be here on October 11<sup>th</sup>.

The Finance committee met in July and had nothing new to report.

The Stewardship committee met and elected committee chairs.

Wardens Phil Eschels and Rob Peck had nothing additional to report.

Kelly reported the following:

- The clergy had to begin a second round of searches for a new Music Director. The search has proven quite difficult. Kelly feels good about a couple of recent applicants. Robert Lee has been very helpful in getting instruments ready and supporting the team in their search.
- Kelly reported on a liturgical trial she is working on with the Bishop that will include collaboration between St. Matthew's and St. George's.

After a brief reflection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm. Vestry convened in the sanctuary for Compline, led by David Lee.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Enriquez