

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
VESTRY MEETING
MINUTES
January 22, 2026

Present: Senior Warden-Richard Updegrove, Junior Warden-John Corbishley, Treasurer-David Brierley, Clerk-Mattie Gustafson, Jerry Culver, David Burke, Alex Simmons, Cory Thurston, Lauren Lema, Sarah Barker, Murry Edwards, the Rev. Dr. John Gregory Prior, and the Rector, Jennifer Pedrick.

Via Zoom: Jason DeFalco and Nancy Kimble

Jennifer called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. reading the *Prayer of Dedication* from the BCP.

The meeting began with a gratitude toast to the 3 vestry members whose terms were ending in February – Lauren Lema, Cory Thurston and Alex Simmons. Jennifer and everyone else thanked them for their service to St. Mary's.

Reconnecting with one another in the presence of God – Jennifer

Jennifer asked vestry members to share one thing from the past year that has made you the proudest.

Rector's Report - Jennifer

Calendar Meeting – Those present looked at the entire year (2026) and set many dates and events for that time period.

- We also had a discussion about leadership of the various ministries, term limits and burn out. The vestry has a built-in process for term limits and succession, and the consensus was that leaders of major ministries should have a similar process in place. More discussion is needed.
- We should have descriptions of the various ministries and what would be involved in leading them.
- We need to begin establishing a culture wherein not everyone reports to Jennifer. We are growing too large to continue in that way.

Clarification of check authorization and check signing practices

- *Check requests* are authorized by the rector, the treasurer and the assistant treasurer.
- Checks paid through the General Fund may be *signed* by the treasurer, the assistant treasurer, the senior warden or the junior warden.
- Checks from the Rector's Discretionary Fund are generally *signed* by the rector but may be signed by the treasurer if the rector is unavailable and has given prior authorization.

1. The person that submits a *check request* for reimbursement of expenses should not be the same person that authorizes that request.
2. For a check for reimbursement of expenses, the person that the check is made out to should not be one of the *signers* of that check.

Annual Meeting Update – Planning is proceeding well. David Brierley, when giving his report, will mention the hard work that went into making sure that St. Mary's is going forward with a firm financial foundation

- Finance Committee has been reconstituted and meets regularly.
- The budget process has been revamped
- The St. Mary's Scholarship fund, upon the request of the Tuck Fund committee, has been reviewed in detail, and guidelines and restrictions have been researched and clarified. (A full report of these changes is in the Annual Report.)

Christian Formation – Jason D.

The committee has created a sub-committee devoted to working on the Family Dinners and is convening another sub-committee specifically for working with children (primary – middle – and high school ages). Their goal is to get something planned and on the calendar. This (these?) event (s) should be fun, easy to plan, anchored in building relationships among our youth. The first brainstorming session is scheduled for February.

Pastoral Care – Nancy K.

Nancy Kimble has agreed to be head of the Pastoral Care committee – which now encompasses the ministry to newcomers as well. There are nine current members of the PC committee and 5 new folks joining to help with welcoming newcomers. This group will hold an initial virtual meeting in February.

Since our last newcomer reception, we have been in contact with 27 adults and 14 children who are new to St. Mary's. Of these, 15 adults and 5 children are serious about becoming members.

Junior Warden Report – John C.

We have received 4 quotes for repair of the rock wall in front of Gibbs House.

- John made a motion to accept a donation of \$800 to fix this rock wall. Murry seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Gibbs House lease has been renewed (for one more year?) with a 4% increase.

We also have a few quotes for repair and restoration of the wooden doors on the historic church. These range in cost from \$12,000 to \$15,000.

- Jennifer made a motion to authorize John to choose a company and to contract with them to repair the outer doors and the transom above one of the doors. Rick seconded the

motion. The work will be scheduled for when we move out of the historic church into St. George's Chapel (around May?). The motion passed.

- Jennifer made a motion that the vestry accept a donor restricted donation to cover the expense of restoring the wooden doors on the historic church. Murry seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Senior Warden Report – Rick U.

A new vestry member orientation will take place after the Executive Committee meeting on February 19th. (Time should be around 5:15 p.m.) Included in this session will be

1. Introduction to Basecamp
2. Going over a treasurer's report
3. Vestry covenant
4. Norms for communication
5. Google Meets app

Vestry members are encouraged to attend.

Treasurer's Report – David Brierley

David shared with us the beginning of his report for the Annual Report, asking for feedback.

Investment Committee – David Burke

Ron, the new chair of this committee, has put in place a structured RFP process in their search for an investment firm (or individual). Ron is doing a wonderful and thorough job. The committee has received proposals from a good mix of respondents. The committee will review 8 bids and winnow those down to 3. These final 3 will be asked for a formal presentation.

Miscellaneous – Jennifer

The new rector at Holy Trinity in Tiverton has suggested collaborating on Holy Week services. Discussions are ongoing.

Consent Agenda

Rick U. made a motion, seconded by Jerry C., that we pass the Consent Agenda, consisting of the Treasurer's report, and Minutes for December 2025. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mattie E. Gustafson, Clerk