

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

August 17, 2026

Attendees: The Reverend Rusty McCown, The Reverend Monna Mayhall, Senior Warden Jonathan Webster, Junior Warden, Jim Miller, Angela Lassiter, Mark Tumblin, Jim Lambert, Jenna Martin, Spencer Dibble, Ann Denson, Larry Whitlock, Michael Walters Young.

Absent: Melissa Montero, Chris Olberholtzer, Marty Karpie

Minutes

The Vestry reviewed the July meeting minutes. A correction was identified concerning the individuals who presented a prior report; the record was clarified to reflect the appropriate participants.

Jim Lambert moved to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded and approved.

Financials

- July had a higher-than-expected deficit due to lower pledge receipts, diocesan assessment catch-up, and outreach spending. Overall, giving remains strong.
- Capital campaign has about \$405,000 remaining. Major decision needed in September about loan pay-down before Oct. 1 amortization.
- Finance Committee is preparing recommendations on loan payments, capital needs, and Barnabas project financing. This will be voted on by the vestry at the September meeting.

Barnabas Project

- Decisions needed on scope, financing, fundraising, and cash use.
- Long lead times for materials (especially windows) are slowing progress.

Staff & Ministry Updates

Monna reported that she and Rick Britton would conduct a one-day training at Sewanee for first-year seminary students.

Monna also discussed the recent regional gathering recognizing the 50th anniversary of Stephen Ministry.

- Rusty reported on behalf of Libby the Nursery mural proposal (estimated \$6-8k); fundraising ideas under consideration. The concept is a seasonal landscape progressing from winter through spring, summer and autumn and incorporating animals and elements representing St. Paul's.
- Rusty reported on behalf of Donna Stokes-Rogers, the Summer Bluegrass & Stained-Glass Services were a great success. Appreciation was expressed for the participating musicians.

- Rusty advised the vestry of staffing and clergy coverage during the upcoming pilgrimage. Retired clergy and other staff will provide coverage as necessary, and arrangements have been made for preaching, children's services, and celebration of services during the clergy's absence. A recent acolyte and Crucifer training attracted an encouraging number of young participants, including several new members.
- September courtyard bluegrass event planned for 9/9/26 (weather permitting).
- Because of the pilgrimage and the significant financial decisions expected in September, the regular Vestry meeting is delayed by approximately one week.
- The Finance Committee intends to meet before the pilgrimage and distribute its recommendations sufficiently in advance for Vestry members to review.
- Remote participation was discussed for members who may be traveling.
- Rusty reported that updated architectural and construction numbers are being developed for the Barnabas project. Windows represent a substantial component of the project cost, and the design is being adjusted to determine which windows are necessary.

Junior Warden Report

- Jim Miller discussed the Barnabas HVAC unit requires a critical component with a lengthy lead time and significant installation cost. Replacement part is under warranty, but labor is expensive. Jim's former company agreed to provide the installation, creating significant savings for the church.
- The sanctuary HVAC units are functioning, although extreme summer temperatures combined with a large congregation can exceed the system's ability to maintain the desired indoor temperature.
- Exterior painting and window cleaning progress was provided.
- SFM completed a facilities inspection and identified several building maintenance items. Solomon subsequently addressed items falling within its responsibility, including masonry and building envelope repairs.
- Courtyard project to address landscaping is expected to start in September.

Outreach

- Love Thy Neighbor (LTN)-Cookie Ministry and Soup Ministry launched, both are seeking volunteers for various tasks.
- Summer Food Bags delivered 120 food bags to the Community Center to fill the nutritional gap over the summer for children that school meal programs fill.
- Spring Street is on break until September.
- Birthday Outreach Ministry continues to visit Charter Senior Living of Franklin, on the 2nd Tuesday of every month to celebrate the birthdays of the Charter residents for that month.
- Several recent community distributions were made (African American Heritage Society, Special Olympics, Boys & Girls Club, Mercy Healthcare).

Communications

- Website updates are ongoing to improve visitor experience, ministry access, and outreach information.
 - Changes and planned improvements include:
 - Improved visitor navigation from the homepage.
 - Additional visitor-related links.
 - Updates to the "About Us" material.
 - Improved access to ministry/program information.
 - New small-group pages.
 - Updated outreach information.
 - Updates from ministry leaders.
 - Continued publication of *News from the Pews* and *The Epistle*.
- A website usage/audit report is also being developed to provide additional information regarding how visitors interact with the website.
- Rally Day 9/13/26- Ann and another volunteer will assist in updating parish directory information as well as photographs.

Stewardship

- First planning meeting held; focus on parishioner personal stories about why they come to St. Paul's. Work has begun on campaign dates, theme, speakers, parishioner testimony.

Pastoral Care

- Grief Ministry continues to offer meaningful support.
- Burglar-alarm installation progressing; Franklin PD security assessment scheduled for Sept. 8.

Renewal Works

- Several programs have developed from the assessment, including Bible study, Rally Day activities, and consideration of a future Lenten program focused on the spirituality of the Book of Common Prayer.
- Vestry discussed ongoing monitoring of recommendations and incorporating them into parish life. Considering future reassessment to track progress.
- Repeating the assessment in future years was also discussed as a way to measure progress.

Leadership & Hospitality

- Jim Lambert raised a discussion concerning what it means to be an effective Vestry member. Emphasis on Vestry's role in spiritual leadership, engagement, and welcoming practices and partnership.
- Need to strengthen usher expectations and visitor hospitality. Small acts of personal invitation and engagement can go a long way.

- Ann Denson expanded into the church's welcoming and ushering practices. Ann expressed visitors should be actively welcomed, assisted and at times, shown where to sit. A previous usher training was revisited and includes; recognizing visitors, helping people find a seat, being attentive, maintaining accessible seating for those in need, providing a warm and hospitable experience. The discussion reinforced the broader leadership theme that hospitality is shared among vestry members, ushers, clergy and the congregation.

Scripture Reflection

- Focused on trust, rest, and recognizing seasons of life.