



## Vestry Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2025

### Attendance

Vestry Present: Heather Beard  
Sue Guptill  
Marty Nelson, *Sr. Warden*  
Mike Uhl, *Jr. Warden*  
Caroline Wang  
John Bowman  
Erin Gasch  
Sarah Johnson  
Jeff Pitts  
Richard Williams  
Emily Yeatts

Vestry Absent: Lowell Dargbeh

Clergy: Rev. Maryann Younger, *Rector and Chair*

Guests: Duncan Krause  
Treat Harvey  
Laura Nichols  
David Kneeburg, *Clerk*

### Call to Order

The March meeting of the Vestry of St. Philip's Church convened on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6:05 PM in the Library with the Rector presiding. Richard opening the meeting with a prayer and a reading of the poem "The Cross."

### Stewardship update

Laura Nichols guided the vestry through a presentation of stewardship results in 2024.

- Theme: Leaning into key themes from Parish Visioning work into 2024 →How do we invest to make this vision a reality?
- Messaging: 'We heard you' messaging with a focus on Music, Family, and Campus ministries in campaign
- Social Media: 'Getting in Shape to Give' participation from Vestry brought a light-hearted community spirit to the campaign
- Programming Wins : Highly engaging & interactive Pledging 101 session; Commitment Sunday co-celebration with St. Philips Sunday
- Online Giving: Leveraging Realm & education on how to use increased online giving

Discussion followed with questions about the context of individual family pledges. Laura noted the difficulty in knowing when new members start pledging or how soon they pledge after their first visit to

the church. In response to the year-over-year analysis, where some household giving decreased, the committee discussed how to determine the reasons – for example, children graduating out of programs. Additionally, the church needs to understand why some pledges are unfulfilled. Vestry members noted that St. Philip's is close to average pledges for the Episcopal Church on national and provincial levels.

The committee had three “asks” for the Vestry:

1. Recruit: Identify & Onboard new Stewardship Committee members
2. Partnership: Vestry & Stewardship team to establish Pledge Campaign timeline & target by July
3. Align: Set membership goals that directly inform pledge goals

The vestry expressed their gratitude for the hard work of Laura and Treat.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. March Minutes
2. March treasurer's report
3. Rector's report
4. Senior Warden's report
5. Junior Warden's report

Emily noted a spelling error in the minutes; David will correct before uploading. Erin asked for clarification in the Junior Warden report on budgeting for HVAC – Mike responded that the note referred to the aging kitchen water heater (at the end of its 30-year life).

John motioned to approve the agenda, Jeff seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Discussion**

#### Church IT Update

Mike reviewed the proposed changes to St. Philip's IT systems and services. PCS, the current provider, is raising prices for 2025 and promoting the upgrade of legacy hardware. After consulting with the tech committee and stakeholders, Mike proposes changing providers while ensuring minimal disruption to the office printer.

Jeff announced that a parishioner has donated a video conference camera from Owl Labs. The Owl camera offers a more immersive meeting experience compared to a traditional single camera. There will be a demonstration for the office staff tomorrow. Jeff recommends purchasing a case for the camera and establishing a check-in/check-out policy to maintain its condition.

#### Church Security

Maryann opened a discussion on church security and budgeting. There is a desire to cut back on security expenses, but it has been challenging to interview and vet security guards and services. The typical costs of private security are about the same as our current expenditures with deputies. The discussion included when we started security, possibly after the Emmanuel Church shooting (in South Carolina) or after a theft from the parish hall. Currently, the responsibilities include de-escalation, with no uniform

and no guns. There are many pros to remaining with deputies, including the value of having a sheriff's vehicle in the parking lot.

Future coordination with the block and UMD was mentioned, but the current situation is not ideal. It is possible to cut back on hours and collaborate with deputies to determine when it is slow. It was generally agreed that we like what we have, but we can cut back a little, and collaborate.

## **Executive Session**

An Executive session was held.

## **Epistle Talking Points**

As published in the week following the meeting:

*The vestry met Monday, April 28. Here's what happened:*

**Stewardship co-chairs Laura Nichols and Treat Harvey shared highlights from last year's pledge campaign:** Pledges rose nearly 4%, with 59% of households increasing their pledge. The vestry thanked Laura for her years of dedicated leadership as she rotates off the stewardship committee. The 2026 pledge campaign begins later this year – and **we're looking for a few good stewardship leaders!** Interested? Contact Treat Harvey ([treat.harvey@gmail.com](mailto:treat.harvey@gmail.com)), a clergy member or vestry member for more details.

**The vestry reviewed proposals to enhance St. Philip's information technology**, including hardware and services. Junior Warden Mike Uhl outlined changes that could improve routine maintenance quality, boost the speed and reliability of the church's internet connection, and reduce costs.

**The vestry discussed our church's security budget, policies, and personnel.** Vestry members expressed satisfaction with the performance of our current team from the Sheriff's department. They also discussed potential future developments for the block, considering the mutual benefits of collaborating with neighbors on security measures.

## **Adjournment**

Marty ended the meeting with a closing prayer and the Vestry adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kneeburg, Clerk of the Vestry