

Vestry Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2026

Attendance

Vestry Present:

Heather Beard

John Bowman

Jillian Downs

Sue Guptill

Marty Nelson, *Sr. Warden*

Jeff Pitts

Andy Slaughter

Natalie Sommerville

Mike Uhl, *Jr. Warden*

Bynum Walter

Caroline Wang

Emily Yeatts

Vestry Absent: None

Clergy:

Rev. Maryann Younger, *Rector and Chair*

Rev. Gabe Lamazares, *Associate Rector*

Guests:

Marcus Southern, *Treasurer*

Call to Order

The February meeting of the Vestry of St. Philip's Church convened on March 23, 2026, at 6:02 pm in the library. The meeting commenced with a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday" for Mike, and Emily led a prayer from Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Consent Agenda

1. February Minutes
3. Treasurer's report
4. Rector's report
5. Senior Warden's report
6. Junior Warden's report

Maryann noted a revision to the February minutes for David to correct.

Following Bynum's suggestion, the vestry discussed strategies for relocating the recycling receptacles during events in the columbarium. Gwynetta and Mya will be consulted.

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

Updates

Summer Liturgy

Maryann requested advice on the format of summer services based on historical experience. Sue noted that in the past when services were combined during the summer months, average Sunday attendance declined. When Jonah elected to keep all three services at the usual times, attendance did not decline.

Bynum suggested alternating the style of a single service, noting that services throughout the summer will all be in the same location due to church renovations. Mike questioned the impact on visitors, and there was discussion of ways to communicate about summer plans and the style of a typical service schedule.

Gabe voiced a preference for keeping two services, one with the character of the 9 o'clock service, and one with the character of the 11 o'clock service, to maintain the momentum of the year. Marty and Jeff expressed concern about the burden on Gabe, who assured the vestry he is comfortable with available help in leading services.

Maryann concluded that the clergy would decide on the format and welcomed further comments.

Sacred Spaces Phase II

Marty recalled the prior month's presentation from the Sacred Spaces Committee. She clarified that the \$176,000 required for completion of Phase II (painting, plaster, and planning) is not in the operating budget and will be funded by one-time donations. A capital campaign will be required for subsequent phases but is not needed for Phase II. John made a motion to authorize proceeding with Phase II upon receipt of sufficient funding. Sue seconded the motion, which then passed unanimously.

Retreat Debrief

Maryann and Mike asked for takeaways from the March Staff and Vestry Retreat. Several members of the vestry noted that the presentations of Sheldon Mitchell and Ryan Smith were inspirational, provided hope, and opened possible ways for St. Philip's to participate in serving our unsheltered neighbors. All agreed that the noonday prayer was especially beautiful.

Suggestions for improvement included arranging seating to allow for more eye contact, incorporating more outside time—possibly beginning with a walk as an icebreaker, and finding time for the retreat that is not immediately prior to a vestry meeting.

Episcopal Housing Ministries Update

Marcus shared background on the grant from Episcopal Housing Ministries ("EHM") and the St. Philip's commitment to award funds within three years. The EHM Committee has been formalizing

a discernment process and expects to finalize an RFP open to the community. It is looking for 1-2 proposals for capital expenses. Mike described the process of drafting an introduction and form of questions for the RFP. The EHM Committee is working on a timeline and will come to the vestry for a recommendation. Emily mentioned that Bill Pierson has taken on leadership of the Committee and facilitated progress. Marty asked about how to spread word of the opportunity. Sue responded will be shared with contacts and through networks. Jill questioned whether to include a pre-screening process, so applicants do not waste time, and Mike responded that the intent is to keep the application very short and easy to complete.

Executive Session

An Executive Session was held.

Committee Meetings

Committees for the 2026 term met separately and reported back on next steps, as follows:

The Community Connection will continue brainstorming for a ministry fair.

The Governance Committee will survey hard copy records and connect with Ginny Bowman.

The Building, Grounds, and Technology Committee will access the project management system and begin development of a preventative maintenance plan.

The Youth Programming Committee will meet with Emily Sparks and support her in hiring an assistant and reconvening the Youth Council.

The Outreach Committee will connect with Amanda Fratrik on process.

The Stewardship Committee will interview past chairs for feedback and commence identifying potential co-chairs.

The Urban Ministries Committee will consider ways to reenergize St. Philip's commitment to UMD.

Epistle Talking Points

As published in the week following the meeting:

The vestry met Monday, March 23. Here's what happened:

The vestry approved proceeding with Phase 2 of renovations this summer after reviewing last month's Sacred Spaces Committee presentation. Once funds are raised, this summer's work will include paint, plaster, and planning for future renovations. This work is not included in the 2026 operating budget – please consider a one-time gift toward our summer renovations!

The Episcopal Housing Ministries grant committee is developing a simple request for proposals (RFP), Treasurer Marcus Southern reported. The RFP will be open to the community. The committee will then review the proposals and identify one or two projects that could use the \$300,000 grant amount toward improving or preserving affordable housing opportunities.

Maryann and Gabe sought input from the vestry on this summer's worship schedule and format, as we prepare for both Maryann's sabbatical and the possibility of all services worshipping in the parish hall during renovations. We'll share more details as plans take shape.

Vestry committees began shaping their goals for the year and identifying initial next steps, including Community Connection, Governance, Buildings and Grounds, Youth Programming, Outreach, Stewardship, and UMD.

Adjournment

Maryann closed with prayer and the meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily C. Yeatts