



Vestry Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2025

Attendance

Vestry Present: Heather Beard
Addis Crook-Jones
Erin Gasch
Sarah Johnson
Jeff Pitts
Caroline Wang
John Bowman
Lowell Dargbeh
Sue Guptill
Marty Nelson, *Sr. Warden*
Mike Uhl, *Jr. Warden*
Emily Yeatts

Vestry Absent: -

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

Guests: Katie Bracy Limkeman
Marcus Southern, *Treasurer*
David Kneeburg, *Clerk*

Call to Order

The August meeting of the Vestry of St. Philip's Church convened on August 25th, 2025, at 6:03 PM in the Library with the Rector presiding. Mike opening the meeting with a reflection and reading from Galatians.

Consent Agenda

1. July Minutes
2. Treasurer's report
3. Rector's report
4. Senior Warden's report
5. Junior Warden's report

Clarifying questions were asked regarding parking options and the increasing insurance premiums. John noted corrections for the minutes, David to change before archiving. The vestry welcomed Addis to the group. Emily motioned to approve the agenda, John seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion

Audit

Marcus presented the financial audit report from Thomas Judy & Tucker, P.A., that was completed on August 17th. No irregularities were found, and the organization is improving year over year. Mike motioned to approve the audit, Sue seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Marcus noted that he has received four 2026 audit proposals to date with interviews planned for September and October. He plans to submit a candidate for approval to the vestry in October or November.

Budget Review

Budget Review – Marcus presented that we have reviewed priorities and can start to crystallize the budget. Mike noted that requests to subcommittees should align with the vision, but no results have been received yet. Marty asked to identify who had significant requests or large new line items.

Next Steps – Mike volunteered to follow up with subcommittees for request information and include example language regarding St. Philip's vision.

Bylaws

Emily summarized the bylaw change proposals, emphasizing that there would be no vote today and that amendments can be selectable: none, one, or many.

1. Number of nominees required for Vestry elections: Currently, eight nominees are required, but this could change to six while keeping the option to nominate from the floor to a maximum of eight.
2. Allow remote voting: Technology is now available for remote voting, which was not the case when the bylaws were written.
3. Allow early voting in advance: This may be difficult except for the first round.
4. Ranked choice voting: The main benefit is fast results, but the challenge is that canons require a majority vote. This is also less difficult for only the first round. Early ranked choice voting could increase participation. John volunteered to ask the diocese and introduce the concept. Early voting also helps with shielding disappointed candidates when not winning placement. Emily suggested proceeding with discussion and asking parishioners for feedback.
5. Operating reserve: It is unclear if the church is meeting the bylaw of a 1/6th reserve. The change here can clarify the amount, whether based on expenses or budget. There are no canon requirements regarding the reserve. Also needed is a definition of liquidity – cash on hand versus T-bills with quarterly liquidity.

Stewardship

Marty summarized that there are eight people on the committee. The slogan is “Building Belonging Together,” with a kickoff planned for September 7th. Ministry minute announcements will begin at services every Sunday. The plan is to finish on October 12th with a combination of ingathering, commitment, and the celebration of St. Philip’s Day.

Hiring

Maryann presented an update on the latest staffing news.

- Great progress made on a new chef – a meeting on Wednesday may finalize the candidate.
- New positions at the Trees – Henry will be stepping down as director, but staying on as a caretaker with no stipend. The directorship will be split between Laura Kirby (Director) and Olynda Smith (caretaker and scheduler)
- Youth minister: Four candidates and seven interviewers but no clear consensus for hire. Also, a desire to clarify job description.

Member Connection

Marty summarized member connection activities including a block of tickets for a Durham Bulls baseball game and that nametags will be coming soon (permanent and temporary). Also, that the parish directory will be released on September 17th with help booths during Wednesday and social hours. Parishioners are given the option to opt out of listings of addresses and phone numbers.

Executive Session

An Executive session was held.

Epistle Talking Points

As published in the week following the meeting:

The vestry met Monday, August 25. Here's what happened:

Audit approved – St. Philip's has successfully completed its 2024 financial statement audit by Thomas Judy & Tucker, PA. The vestry unanimously approved the audit for submission to the diocese.

Potential bylaw changes discussed – Emily Yeatts shared initial findings from the Bylaws Committee, which is currently evaluating policies regarding voting procedures and operating reserve requirements. Ongoing work will continue, with recommendations to be presented in time for consideration at the annual meeting.

Member connections initiatives – Senior Warden Marty Nelson gave an update on member connection initiatives. Upcoming activities include a baseball outing, new name tags, and the release of an online directory. Stay tuned!

New staff – Maryann reported on recent hiring developments. The Trees directorship has been restructured into two collaborative roles, and a new chef has been hired to support events held in the parish hall. More news about new staff members – and our family and youth hires – coming soon!

Adjournment

Maryann ended the meeting with a closing prayer and the Vestry adjourned at 7:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kneeburg, Clerk of the Vestry