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Vestry Meeting Minutes

July 27th, 2026

Attendance

Vestry Present:	Heather Beard	John Bowman
	Jillian Downs	Sue Guptill
	Marty Nelson, *Sr. Warden*	Jeff Pitts
		Natalie Sommerville
	Mike Uhl, *Jr. Warden*	Bynum Walter
	Caroline Wang	Emily Yeatts
Vestry Absent:	Andy Slaughter	
Clergy:	Rev. Gabe Lamazares, *Acting Rector*	
Guests:	Marcus Southern, *Treasurer*	
	David Kneeburg, *Clerk*	

Call to Order

The July meeting of the Vestry of St. Philip's Church convened on July 27th, 2026, at 6:06 PM in the library. John opened the meeting with a reading of the Prayer of St. Francis.

Consent Agenda

1. May Minutes
2. June Package
3. Treasurer's report
4. Acting Rector's report
5. Senior Warden's report
6. Junior Warden's report

The vestry requested to pull out the building and grounds report for clarifying questions on the parking plan. Questions arose over the $1/hour minimum and whether it should be free. Mike confirmed the minimum cost and noted that the nearby garage for the Health Department remains free. Another question arose about taxable revenue from parking. Maintenance costs could offset the taxable income, and the net tax burden is likely small – but will be budgeted for. After discussion, John motioned to approve the agenda, Bynum seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Updates

The Trees

Emily presented a memo to the vestry (handout) providing an update on the organization structure of The Trees. The proposal recommends creating a separate nonprofit 501(c)(3) for the Trees, governed by an independent board while preserving limited St. Philip's oversight through board appointments and approval rights. The Trees would operate the Harris property under a long-term nominal lease, assume operating and maintenance costs, and rely on donations, grants, program revenue, and limited transitional support from St. Philip's. Vestry feedback is requested before the proposal is shared with the Trees Development Committee at its September 26th meeting.

Outreach / GMC

Sue presented ideas for how St. Philip's should structure and fund its Global Missions Committee in relation to the Outreach Committee. She reviewed the history of the church's 0.7% global missions commitment, explained how that commitment fell out of practice during staff transitions and COVID, and noted that recent outreach funding likely still exceeded the intended threshold.

The main unresolved questions are whether the 0.7% commitment should continue, whether global missions funding should sit inside the broader outreach budget or remain separate, and how GMC membership and decision-making should be defined. No decisions were made; the next step is to re-group and propose a resolution before budget season.

Audit Report

Marcus gave an overview of the recent financial audit. No significant findings were reported, the Finance Committee will meet and provide a recommendation to approve at the August 24th Vestry meeting. The audit is due to the diocese electronically before September 1st.

Delegate to Convention

Gabe noted that one convention delegate's 3-year term has ended, and a search was started for a new candidate. Bill Pearson has agreed to serve this year joining Freda Tucker and Meg McCann. Emily motioned to approve Bill as the new convention delegate, Marty seconded the motion, and the vestry approved unanimously.

Stewardship chairs

Marty announced that Diantha Daniels and Donna Rewalt have stepped forward as Stewardship Co-Chairs. Meetings are underway and the program will begin on Sunday September 6th.

Discussion

Restricted Funds

Marcus reviewed a presentation of six restricted funds at St. Philips, which limit the Vestry's ability to direct resources where they are needed most.

A. Garden Close Renovation -- Three options were presented
    a. Move to Restricted Accounts (operations)
    b. Leave as-is
    c. Direct fund balance to sanctuary renovation

    The vestry agreed that the original intent of the fund matches option A. Bynum motioned to move the current balance of $12,648 to the operations fund earmarked for Garden close maintenance. John seconded the motion and the vestry approved unanimously.

B. Davis Fund

    The Davis Fund is a roughly $27,000 distribution from an endowment for Christian education and formation for preschool and elementary-aged children, with funds accumulating since about 2022 because they have been underspent. Possible uses discussed included an upstairs kitchen near the Gathering Room, Emily Sparks's compensation, and children's ministry supplies or equipment, with the idea that Davis Fund dollars should be budgeted first for eligible children's ministry expenses to free up other funds.

C. Johnson VBS Fund

    The Johnson VBS Fund supports Vacation Bible School, and because VBS has not occurred for several years, its distributions may be available for other children's ministries. The group discussed using it for Camp at The Trees or the VBS budget line instead of operating funds, but no decision was made; Emily Sparks will weigh in, and the fund will be considered in 2027 budget planning.

D. St. Philip's Indian and Indigenous Fund

    The St. Philip's Indigenous Fund, about $18,000 combined with the Indian Fund, which is narrowly designated for theological education scholarships for someone of Native heritage. No vote was taken; the suggested next step is for a volunteer to contact seminaries about creating a named scholarship or one-time grant.

E. Parker Fund

    Gabe proposed using this fund to host a regular (annual or biannual) conversation/lecture series on Christian pacifism at St. Philip's, potentially named the "Parker Lecture." Concept was well received. No decision made other than continuing to develop the concept.

F. Miscellaneous Fund:

    A $2,000 miscellaneous petty cash fund exists; recommendation to reduce it to $1,000 and move the remaining $1,000 to the operating fund. No vote is required to implement.

G. Flower Fund

The Flower Fund has a negative balance because weekly flower costs continue while parishioner sponsorships have declined since COVID. The recommendations were to reopen flower sponsorships and include flowers as a regular operating budget expense in 2027, while Laura Dearth helps determine how to address the existing deficit.

The vestry also discussed funding for Emily Sparks to attend the Camino pilgrimage. The group was generally supportive, but the funding source remains undecided; a proposal and possible vote are expected at the next Vestry meeting.

Acolyte Vestment purchase

Gabe noted that the current scapulars are in poor condition and requests the vestry to approve an amount up to $2500 to replace them. The Memorial fund is the most likely funding source with a balance of $11,000. Natalie motioned to approve up to $2,500 in spending, Jeff seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Maryann's return

Gabe and Marty announced that Maryann will return on Sunday, September 2nd. Discussion revolved around the vestry coordinating with Liberian Medicals Inc for a welcoming social hour following the service. In addition, evidence of the ill-fated "Water-skiing Wednesdays" Ministry will be scrubbed from the records before her return.

Nominating Committee

Sue reviewed formation of the nominating committee to identify candidates for upcoming Vestry vacancies as several current members rotate off. Caroline agreed to co-chair, and the group discussed adding a first-year Vestry member plus two non-Vestry parishioners, with an emphasis on diversity and earlier committee formation for better continuity.

Executive Session

An Executive session was not required

Epistle Talking Points

As published in the week following the meeting:

The vestry met Monday, July 27. Here's what happened:

Bill Pierson will represent St. Philip's at diocesan convention. The vestry voted to appoint Bill to a three-year term as a lay delegate, joining Meg McCann and Freda Tucker in representing the parish at the Diocese of North Carolina's annual convention.

New acolyte vestments are on the way. After more than 20 years of faithful use, St. Philip's current acolyte vestments have reached the end of their life. The vestry unanimously approved purchasing a new set, using discretionary monies from the Memorial Fund.

Garden Close funds will continue supporting its care. The vestry voted to move remaining funds from the Garden Close renovation project fund, leftover after the 2022 renovation, into the operating budget. The funds will remain earmarked for the Garden Close and can be used more easily for ongoing maintenance and improvements.

New stewardship leaders have stepped forward. The vestry celebrated and gave thanks for Donna Rewalt and Diantha Daniels for serving as co-chairs of this year's stewardship campaign!

Adjournment

Gabe ended the meeting by reading the compline from the New Zealand book of prayer and the vestry adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kneeburg, Clerk of the Vestry