St Philip's
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Vestry Meeting Minutes

August 24th, 2026

Attendance

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

Call to Order

The August meeting of the Vestry of St. Philip's Church convened on August 24th, 2026, at 6:06 PM in the library. The meeting began with an opening prayer led by Caroline, themed around transitions, returning, and the start of the school year.

Consent Agenda

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

The vestry discussed the consent agenda; a question arose over the feedback request deadline for the Trees meeting – Emily confirmed that she has included the vestry's feedback from the August meeting. Bynum motioned for approval of the agenda, John seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Updates

Parking

Mike provided an update on the status of parking lot signage. New signs were ordered, arrived on Friday, and are expected to be installed by Thursday. Signs are bilingual (English and Spanish), include QR codes, hourly rates, and have received approval from Grace. Old towing signs and non-matching signage will be removed. Mike also noted that some out-of-pocket costs occurred because of the customization but remained under $4,000.

HVAC

Mike presented a detailed update regarding the failed basement dehumidifier and the need to replace the entire HVAC system serving the choir room and adjacent spaces. The basement's dedicated dehumidifier has failed, leaving the approximately 20-year-old HVAC system unable to control humidity effectively. Because the existing system is oversized and cycles too quickly, the recommended solution is a full replacement rather than adding another dehumidifier, at an estimated unbudgeted cost of $15,000–$16,000. Alternative contractors are being sought who have experience with high-efficiency, residential-scale variable-speed systems and manufacturer-matched thermostats. The replacement is urgent during the humid season, and the Finance Committee will identify a funding source and determine whether a formal vote is required.

Ministry Fair

Caroline updated the vestry on plans for the fair. The fair is expected to include 21–22 ministry tables and potentially about 30 total tables with outreach partners, including all organizations that received tithe funding last year. The 9:00 service will be moved to the church to accommodate set-up in the parish hall.

Because a food truck is not affordable within the $1,600 budget, simple delivered food such as bagels, donuts, and desserts will be arranged for the 10 o'clock and post-11 o'clock periods. Engagement activities will include a raffle using curated items from the church, a youth scavenger hunt, and stickers identifying ministry participants. Children's formation will follow the usual schedule, and a Vestry member will staff the Vestry table during the 10 o'clock hour.

Stewardship

Andy noted that the stewardship campaign is on schedule, with personalized pledge packets expected to be mailed by Friday and a soft launch planned for Sunday, August 30, when Vestry members are requested at all three services. Upcoming milestones include the September 13 stewardship and finance forum, a stewardship table at the September 20 Ministry Fair, the main pledge gathering on St. Philip's Day, October 11, and follow-up calls in early November. Grace will coordinate filmed Vestry testimonials, and pledge receipt acknowledgment letters will be sent as pledges are received.

EHM grants

Emily presented an update on the Episcopal Housing Ministry grants. The EHM Municipal Housing Committee reviewed 11 proposals and identified 4–5 strong finalists, with 2–3 expected to receive funding.

After sending follow-up questions, the committee will present its recommendation to the Vestry in September. Funds are expected to be awarded by October, with Bill Pearson actively coordinating the process.

Discussion

St. Philip's relics

Marcus proposed displaying historical artifacts from St. Philip's for St. Philip's Day to emphasize the parish's 120-year continuity. He also volunteered to curate a selection of artifacts for display on St. Philip's day. The vestry recommended contacting Tim Riggs (Art committee) for assistance.

Audit Approval

Marcus presented the Finance Committee's recommendation to approve the annual audit and submit it to the diocese. The vestry commended the clean audit result from a new auditor. Marcus credited Laura Dearth and Duncan for their leadership. Bynum motioned to approve the audit and submit it to the diocese, Heather seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

An Executive session was held.

Epistle Talking Points

As published in the week following the meeting:

The vestry met Monday, August 24. Here's what happened:

The Episcopal Housing Ministry Committee reported St. Philip's received 11 proposals for our $300,000 affordable housing grant. *The EHM committee is reviewing each proposal for improving affordable housing in Durham and will bring recommendations to the vestry in September. Funding decisions and distribution are expected this fall. The vestry gave special thanks to Bill Pierson for his leadership throughout the grant process. More about the EHM grant*

The vestry celebrated a successful annual audit of St. Philip's finances. *This year's audit was conducted by a new auditor, bringing a fresh set of eyes to our financial records, and resulted in a completely clean report. The vestry voted to approve the audit for submission to the diocese. Treasurer Marcus Southern gave special thanks to Bookkeeper Laura Dearth and Duncan Krause of the Finance Committee for their detailed work throughout the process.*

Vestry members looked ahead to the St. Philip's Ministry Fair on September 20. *More than 20 parish ministries are expected to participate, along with several of our outreach partners, offering a chance to discover the many ways St. Philippians put worship, love, and action into practice – and where your own gifts might fit.*

Adjournment

Maryann ended the meeting with a closing prayer at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kneeburg, Clerk of the Vestry