

Church of the Holy Comforter, Vienna, Virginia

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

February 12, 2026

The meeting opened at 7:04 p.m. with a prayer led by Jon Strand.

Kim welcomed the group. Laurie Pedry shared a spiritual reflection on an anonymous 17th-century prayer.

Clergy Report:

Jon thanked Sherryl and Bob Dorch for the vestry dinner on January 9 at their home. Kim and Gini were thanked for putting together the vestry retreat morning on January 10.

Jon reported that Roman Halla was a WW2 veteran, and his funeral was held at Vinson Hall retirement community. Jon acknowledged the wedding of Keith Joseph, Director of Children's Ministries, and Rohama, and mentioned the shower we hosted for them in January. Jon also celebrated a small wedding on 11 February. There is an inquiry from a new aspirant, a person considering ordination. In addition, Adam Steele is in conversation with Jon to possibly be a seminarian at Holy Comforter next fall.

Warden's Report:

There is a working group led by wardens Kim and Gini to create a Rule of Life for the church. Vestry members were invited to join.

We will host the hypothermia shelter during the first week in March. Shifts for breakfast and evenings are still open.

Kim and David Grove attended a Fairfax County Police House of Worship Safety and Preparedness Day.

Church misconduct prevention training is required by all vestry members and must be repeated every 3 years. Information on accessing the SAFE Church training was handed out; those due for training need to complete it by the March 12 vestry meeting.

Vestry Person of the Month, VPOM:

Kim sent seven condolence cards and one congratulatory card for a baptism. She attended one funeral and assisted with coffee hours. This month's VPOM is Laurie Pedry. March VPOM is Bob Dorch.

Administrative tasks:

Financial report:

The January report includes December snow removal. The snow removal for the very large snow and ice storm on January 24-26 will show in next month's report. Our snow removal service is paid by the hour, not by the job. They returned a second time to finish this snow removal.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the treasurer's January report.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the January minutes.

Parochial Report:

January report: Attendance was down slightly due to the above-referenced Sunday storm. A larger Saturday service was held in anticipation of the Sunday service being cancelled.

The 2025 annual parochial report was presented. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the 2025 annual report.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to disburse funds from the Carol Stock book award for graduating high school seniors going on to college.

Committee Reports:

Adult Faith Formation:

The consecration of the outdoor altar was rescheduled for April 19 after the 10 am service.

An exhibit of crosses by Rev. Roy Hills will be installed in the community hall on February 19 and 20 and will remain on display through Lent.

Movie Night returns February 26, featuring "The Penguin Lessons" with Ann Gillespie and Jeff Allin.

Building and Grounds:

The rebuilding of the stairs to the office entrance involves three different trades: masonry, handrail, and lighting and electrical. Bids are being solicited.

Three trees need to be removed: a red oak and a maple tree near the upper parking lot, and an ash tree near the pond, which neighbors have noted threatens their property.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved, with seven ayes and six nays, to fund design plans for both a bioretention feature, to address water flowing off of our parking lots, and for a design of an ADA-compliant boardwalk into the woods. The two projects can both be designed by a vendor the committee has been working with. It was noted that a donor will give funds toward the cost of the boardwalk. The total cost of the boardwalk may exceed the current sum that has been donated.

Several high-priority items remain on the project list, ranked last year by the vestry, to include a new boiler, the sanctuary roof, stairs to the office, stove replacement, a new security door system, and drywall repair of the chapel ceiling.

Communications:

Laurie noted plans to post to our social media about Lent events, including the cross exhibit.

Pennywise, ECW, and Coffee Hour:

Help is needed in the back room at Pennywise sorting donations on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

VPOMs for the coming months were urged to gather their committees to staff upcoming coffee hour dates. In addition, it was suggested that Outreach ministries highlighted each month also contribute to hosting coffee hour.

Fellowship:

Keith Joseph, Director of Children's Ministries, will head up the arrangements for the Second Saturday family services and dinners.

Finance and Stewardship:

\$1.2 million in pledges are in the budget. So far, \$1.15 million in pledges have been received. The pledge cards will be removed from the pews before Lent. Pledges are accepted at any time throughout the year.

Newcomers:

Greeters will invite newcomers to fill out a form when they visit, to give contact information, starting with the Easter service. In May, there will be another meaningful engagement survey.

Outreach:

March 14 will be the annual Samaritan Ministries breakfast in downtown DC.

The Grants committee will run the highlighting of the monthly ministry.

Children and Family, Youth, HCEP (preschool), and Iona Fund reports:

March 15 will feature a youth-led service.

At the preschool, 80 are enrolled for next year, which leaves 12 openings.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

A motion was made and seconded, via email, on February 26, to disburse funds from the Capital Replacement Fund for the emergency removal of six trees on the church property.

On Monday, February 23, three trees on our property fell, and one landed on a neighbor's residence on Cynthia Lane, causing significant property damage.

Two additional trees are either dead or leaning toward two other of our neighbors' homes on Cynthia Lane. In addition to these two, four additional trees have been identified for removal to prevent further property damage. along the John Marshall Drive side of the upper parking lot and over the Labyrinth/pond.

There was a motion by the Building and Grounds chair for a Vestry email vote to approve the removal of these six trees. The vote passed and the removal of the trees was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Stager, Register