

St. Martin de Porres Episcopal Church

Job of the Vestry

St. Martin's Episcopal Church – Vestry

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The Job of the Vestry

The Vestry is the governing body of St. Martin de Porres Episcopal Church (St. Martin's). The name "vestry" comes from the room in the church building in which the vestments were kept. Centuries ago in England, this room was used for meetings at which all members of the parish could discuss Church affairs with their rector (or vicar) and wardens¹. Such meetings were called "Vestry meetings", which created the custom of having the members of the parish represented by a smaller group of "vestrymen"². The Rector, the Warden(s) and the Treasurer form the Parish Executive Committee and may invite other Vestry members to participate in Executive Committee sessions as required.

The Vestry is not a board of directors nor are they the senior management team, though there are similarities. How a Vestry leads is a process that has a different form in every location, depending on the needs of that congregation, the responsibilities between the vestry and the clergy and the personalities of the people involved.

It is recognized that the Rector, as chief clergy in a congregation, has virtually all responsibility and authority for the pastoral and spiritual direction of the congregations. According to Diocesan Canon 14, The Vestry will be agents and legal representatives of St. Martin's in all matters concerning its property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy. The Rector is responsible for worship and spiritual life; selection and oversight of all assisting clergy; and use and control of all buildings and furnishings. The Vestry members will follow the St. Martin's Bylaws, which are based on the Diocesan Canons.

Annual Meeting and Retreat

At the Annual Meeting held each January, the congregation elects the St. Martin's Vestry. The number of Vestry members and the terms of those members are defined in the St. Martin's Bylaws.

Each year at the Annual Vestry Retreat, the Sr. Warden and the Jr. Warden are elected from the members of the Vestry. The Vestry also elects a Register (clerk) and Treasurer who may be, but not required to be a Vestry member. It is also at the annual retreat that the members of the Vestry, based on their gifts, talents, and calling, are appointed as the individuals to oversee/lead the ministries or programs. These appointments are one-year terms and are re-evaluated each year at the Annual Retreat.

The Vestry sets policy, provides overall direction, and decides budget and finance priorities, in support of the responsibilities outlined in the Constitution and Canons of Diocese of VA, the Constitution and Canons of Episcopal Church and St. Martin's Bylaws.

¹ Term Warden is another form of "guardian" and comes from the old English-French root meaning "to keep, to guard, to exercise custody". The Wardens assisted the clergy, primarily by attending to the security, maintenance and repair of the buildings, custody of parish funds, and performing various functions in absence of the Rector.

² The term "vestrymen" referred to a small group of laypersons who represented the members of the parish and met periodically with the Rector and Warden(s) to discuss the Parish affairs. Today, the "vestry" refers to the total group of parish members who represent the Parish, the Rector and the Warden(s).

Responsibilities of the Vestry member

Each Vestry Member will:

1. Adhere to the St. Martin's Episcopal Church Bylaws.
2. Promote the Five Marks of Mission (Commitment of God's mission)
 - a. Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (strengthen and communicate the "Vision" God has for the church)
 - b. Teach, baptize and nurture new believers (incorporate new members into the church's life).
 - c. Respond to human need by loving service (pray for members and needs of people)
 - d. Seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
 - e. Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. Eucharistic Prayer C found in the Book of Common Prayer explains how Episcopalians can become environmental stewards and turn toward one another in community rather than betraying the earth. The common environmental practice is "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle".
3. Stewardship (Care and Welfare of St. Martin's)
(from Greek word "oikonomia" meaning handling of money and property)
 - a. Care and maintenance of St. Martin's property, to include buildings, grounds, furniture and equipment (appoint trustees responsible for contracts pertaining to property, e.g.). [Reference Job of the Wardens, Treasurer, Sexton/Property Liaison, and Clerk].
 - b. Compensation of the ministers and other paid employees of St. Martin's.
 - c. Maintenance and accounting of all church finances (includes offerings, rents, interest, dividends and other forms of income) [Reference Job of the Wardens, Treasurer, Sexton/Property Liaison, and Clerk].
 - d. Appointment of Finance Committee [Reference Job of the Wardens, Treasurer, Sexton/Property Liaison, and Clerk].
 - e. Conduct periodic audits.
 - f. Preparation of periodic financial statements and reports [Reference Job of the Wardens, Treasurer, Sexton/Property Liaison, and Clerk].
 - g. Custody of all church bank accounts, deposits, securities, deeds, mortgages, contracts and other financial instruments and documents pertaining to St. Martin's.
 - h. Maintenance of all records except the Parish Register, and keep correct entries of all proceedings of the Vestry both hardcopy and electronic.

- i. Recognition and nurture of spiritual gifts and callings³ - members who seem to display gifts and/or sense a calling to ordained or lay office, should be counseled and encouraged by members of the vestry as well as by the Rector or Priest-In-Charge.
 - j. Ensure adherence to the Business Methods of Church Affairs (Canon 13).
4. Leadership (Take initiative)
- a. Choose leadership of the church (Rector, Wardens, and representatives to the Diocesan convention) and certify candidates for ordination as a deacon or priest.
 - b. Notify the Bishop and make provisions for services of public worship when St. Martin's is without a Rector or if the Rector is temporarily disabled [Reference Job of the Wardens, Treasurer, Sexton/Property Liaison, and Clerk].
 - c. Set goals in support of any church property and financial need, implement priorities and propose recommendations to resolve the need (monetary and voluntary support).
 - d. Participate in new Vestry nominations and elections.
 - e. Maintain congregational participation in and support for regional, diocesan and national church programs and activities.
 - f. Plan and staff St. Martin's ministries and related programs to ensure that the church meets its mission goals.
 - g. Provide leadership on matters dealing with the church as a representative of the church.
 - h. Attend regular worship, events and all vestry meetings. It is understood that there are unavoidable conflicts with schedules. [Reference St. Martin's Bylaws for Vestry meetings].
 - i. Attend orientation training/meeting and online training of: Meet Sam | It Happened to Me | Keeping Your Church Safe | Policies | Safeguarding God's People: Preventing Sexual Exploitation in Communities of Faith.
 - j. Serve as an example of our Christian beliefs
5. Assistance (Provide support to the church)
- a. Provide flow of information and ideas between the leadership of the St. Martin's and the membership in general. Represent the basic needs of the congregation. Facilitate communication with the congregation as a whole.
 - b. Support the Rector and staff. Cooperate with the Rector in the support of the spiritual welfare of St. Martin's and assist him or her in his duties.
 - c. Attend monthly (or more frequent) Vestry meetings, conferences and/or arrange other appropriate church meetings in support of St. Martin's mission.

³ The Vestry provides certification for Postulants to Holy Orders [Title III, Canon 4, Section 4(d)] and for Ordination to the Diaconate [Title III, Canon 6, Section 6©] and Priesthood [Title III, Canon 7, Section 11©].

- d. Dedicate time and energy for the health and future of the church.

Checklist of Items for New Vestry Member

For each new member that is elected as a member of the Vestry, an agreement between that individual and the church must be signed. These agreements are found either in the Parish Administrator's Office or the St. Martin's website. Each Vestry member should review the below checklist of information to assist them in their work on the Vestry. Some documents, i.e. Exterior Door Operations which require access to keys and codes will only be provided by the Parish Administrator due to the documented sensitive information.

Each Vestry member should ensure that they have the following:

Bylaws

St. Martin's Organizational Plan

Job of the Vestry and Agreements

These agreements are stipulated in the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, Canon 11 – Election and Organization of Vestries, and Call of Congregational Meetings, Section 8, each member of the Vestry must sign the agreement prior to any act as a Vestry member.

These agreements are located in the Parish Administrator's Office or online.

Job of the Wardens, Treasurer, Sexton/Property Liaison and Clerk Agreements

These agreements are in the Parish Administrator's Office or online.

Diocesan resources

Episcopal Church Structure and Organization

(located on Diocesan website):

<https://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/regional-structures/>

Constitution and Canons of Diocese of VA (2021)

Specifically, Canon 11, 12, 13 and 15. (located on Diocesan website):

https://www.thediocese.net/Customer-https://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/regional-structures//www/CMS/files/Governing_Bodies/CC_2021_English_7-8-22_.pdf

Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church (2018)

(located on Diocesan website):

https://www.thediocese.net/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/CandC_English--PDF-for-DIGITAL--01-07-19.pdf

The Five Marks of Mission – Commitment of God’s Mission

(located on Diocesan website):

<https://www.thediocese.net/who-we-are/beliefs-and-practices/the-five-marks-of-mission/>

Regions of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia – St Martin’s is in the Potomac Region

https://www.thediocese.net/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Governing_Bodies/Diocese_Regions_18x24map_v12.pdf

Vestry Person of the Day (VPOD) Guidelines

The following information is provided as a basic guideline for the Vestry Person of the Day to address. The VPOD checklist provides more detailed tasks to take for the 8:00 and 10:00 services. In general, the VPOD opens the church for services, sets up the church for services, makes any necessary announcements and cleans up after services.

(the Vestry Person of the Day (VPOD) Guidelines are located on the website <http://stmarksalex.thediocese.net/default.asp>).

To open the church, contact the Parish Administrator for the Facilities Door Operations.

Arrival and Departure:

Please arrive by 7:30 a.m. if you are serving as VPOD at the 8:00 a.m. service. This will ensure you have time to check in with the Rector and greet parishioners as they arrive. Plan to stay until 12:00 p.m. or whenever the last person has left.

Check Bathroom Supplies:

1. Ensure the bathrooms have the necessary products and are clean and tidy.
2. Towels and toilet paper are in the locked janitorial hall closet next to the coat rack, along with the vacuum cleaner.

Welcome newcomers

1. When greeting the 8:00 Service parishioners, the VPOD realizes a potential new member. Ensure they have name tag and follow-up with Parish Administrator to create a proper name tag for the next service. The newcomer will need to ensure the name is spelled correctly.
2. If the 10:00 Service Greeter approaches the VPOD with a potential new member, help them get acclimated with the Prayer Book and Hymnal. Note: The Greeter would have given the newcomer a temporary name tag and completed the request for a name tag list. The parish administrator will create a permanent name tag and place in the name tag holder for next Sunday.

VPOD Checklist (Report any discrepancies to the Jr. Warden)

Open the Church (by 7:45 AM):

- Open the exterior doors by securing the crash bars “dogged down” (reference Facilities Door SOP).
- Check that playground gate is locked shut.
- Unlock Vesting Room and Sacristy with Master key. (Leave Parish Office locked – opened by Rector, Sr. Warden or Jr. Warden).

Set Up for 8 AM and 10 Am Services:

- Check bulletins available at back of church.
- Check Nave – clean and tidy.
- Check bathrooms for neatness and ensure well-supplied.
- If required, unlock Nursery, check cleanliness (Adult supervisor required for any children).

Participation at 8 AM Service:

- Meet and greet parishioners.
- Take attendance
- Make announcements after Offertory pertaining to special events or items of interest for the congregation.

After the 8 AM Service:

- Pick up completed attendance forms.
- Tidy up the Sanctuary.

Participation at 10 AM Service:

- Meet and greet parishioners.
- Take attendance (forms are in the back credenza)
- Make announcements pertaining to special events or items of interest for the congregation when requested by the Rector.

After 10 AM service:

- Tidy up the Sanctuary.
- All lights out:
 - Sanctuary
 - Classrooms
 - Parish Hall
 - Kitchen.
- Close and lock interior doors – check Office to ensure that it is locked.
- Lock the exterior doors by releasing the crash bars “Undogged” and check that all 8 doors are locked - (reference Facilities Door Operations SOP).
- If any person remains, ensure they accept responsibility to lock doors.