

Vestry Meeting April 21st, 2026
6:30pm

Minutes prepared by Jim Jordan

Attendees: Rev. Peter Vanderveen, Rev. Jo Ann Jones, Hope Knight, Eric Rabe, Joshua Castaño, Tiffany O’Neill, Danielle Trucksess, Rita Davis, Scott Carter, Jessie Caverly Rae, Jim Jordan, Charlie Merwin (Guest: Chris Chojnacki)

Absent: Daniel Wesley, David Woods

Opening Prayer: Rev. Jo Ann Jones

Approval of Consent Agenda and March Minutes: Moved to accept unanimously

Administrative Reports

Rector’s Report given by Peter Vanderveen

- Purpose of Rector’s Report – Peter said this is an appropriate time during each meeting for Vestry members to bring questions to the Rector. The Report is not meant to be a briefing, but open communication between Rector and Vestry.
- Parochial Report
 - Annual report sent by parish to NYC
 - Contains financial information, attendance, parish activities details, schedule of standard services, etc...
 - COTR staff preparing report; will review for accuracy to make sure information reflects parish correctly
 - Report may be filed late this year – not a risk or concern

Parish Administrator’s Report given by Joshua Castaño

- Provided timeline on Bell tower repairs (4 months)
- Masonry: anticipate starting repairs within the next 2-3 weeks
- Acoustical study for Burns Hall will be presented to staff this week. Priorities will be identified based on the study and a timeline to implement will be developed

- Exterior door on bathroom addition to Church replacement projected to be completed before September 2026
- Prysm Strings has indicated interest in a multiyear lease
- 205 Pennswood Rd may require tree removal/exterior maintenance awaiting recommendation from Jim Ward, Arborist.
- Parish has purchased three new computers and upgraded the CPUs that control the display screens in the Parish house

Accounting Warden's Report given by Eric Rabe

- The Youth cottage mortgage has been recently paid by funds originally designated for lighting and memorials. May need approval from donors to ensure their wishes are being met.
 - Expenses continue to grow while the building is not in use. AW recommends formation of a committee to determine the best use of the Youth Cottage (repair, sell, rent...?)
- Account reports have been reconciled after discovering donations that were double booked. This occurred during the 2024/2025 window when there was staff turnover, and was not noted on that year's audit. The current accounting system may need to be upgraded, which would be a large undertaking.

Rector's Warden's Business

- Committee liaison assignments
 - Need new Vestry liaisons on Building/Churchyard (currently inactive) and the Newcomers Committee
 - Requested members to communicate interest in these roles, or will assign them before next Vestry meeting

New Business

Stewardship Committee Demographic Report presented by guest Chris Chojnacki, Committee Chair

- Fewer families have pledged in the current FY than previous year, although the pledge amounts have increased
- Summary: Pledge base value is projected to decrease over the next 10 years. Target: add 7-10 new pledging units per year.

Holy Week Retrospective Discussion led by Rev. Vanderveen

- Services were well attended. Music flyer in the bulletin was well received and extra copies are available for different uses.

Discussion of Social Media presence at COTR given by Rev. Vanderveen

- The social media programmer position is not budgeted but is currently staffed (PTE). Admin is weighing the benefit of the position and advises that clarification is needed in order to decide the best way forward. Rector will decide by June 2026.

COTR 175th Anniversary Budget Considerations led by Merwin

- Peter noted there has been confusion over relationship between Anniversary plans and the Christmas Village Dinner. The two events do not have to be merged, though there may be an opportunity to combine efforts at that time if the committees want to.
- Elizabeth MacLean has agreed to serve as honorary chair of the 175th Anniversary Committee
- Initial meeting with selected parishioners to discuss committee formation/activities scheduled for May 3rd
- Charlie Merwin stated that Vestry should be prepared to consider budget requests from committee and reminded group of:
 - 175th events will aim to partner with existing events to not add to calendar
 - May consider a funded celebratory dinner instead of selling tickets – would need budgeting
 - Christmas Village Committee is looking for a POC on the 175th Committee – will need to set up liaison

Old Business

Parish Work Subcommittees Update

Vanderveen

- Committee Vacancies filled by New Vestry Members (Merwin presented)

Anchor Institution	Volunteers	Grants	Diocesan Relations
Jim Jordan	Hope Knight	Cheryl Masterman	Charlie Merwin
Scott Carter	Danielle Trucksess	Daniel Wesley	Eric Rabe
Tiffany O'Neill	David Woods	Rita Davis	Jessie Caverly Rae

Joshua Castano		Rev. Jo Ann Jones	Rev. Peter Vanderveen
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- Peter will set up initial meetings with Committees for 2026 – aim is to meet regularly throughout year

Closing Prayer: Rev. Jo Ann Jones

Meeting adjourned: 8:10 pm