Vestry June Meeting/Summer Retreat

13 June 2026, 8:30 AM

Minutes

Breakfast and Coffee served buffet style starting at 8:30 am.

The Retreat was called to order 8:55 am.

In attendance: Charlie Merwin, Danielle Trucksess, Scott Carter, Jim Jordan, David Woods, Jessica Caverly Rae, Tiffany O'Neill, Eric Rabe, Rev. Peter Vanderveen, Rev. Jo Ann Jones, Joshua Castaño.

Excused: Daniel Wesley, Cheryl Masterman, Hope Knight, Rita Davis.

Opening Prayer: Rev. Jo Ann Jones

Approval of minutes and the Consent Agenda

Committee Reports
The May Committee Reports were received; Cheryl Masterman emailed her report to Mr. Merwin.

Rector's Report
Peter shared draft letter to James addressing the Diocese's request for our feedback and approval. Vestry reviewed the letter and Peter provided background on communication with the Diocese. The Diocese's long term goal is assessing 10% of parish NOI for the Sacred Ask. The average across the diocese is now 5.9%. Adding our current Sacred Ask gift (about 8% of NOI) to the $73 thousand which we are currently giving through COTR Grants brings COTR over the 10% target. The Redeemer's response to the Diocesan appeal is that these additional requests for funding be considered directly through the parish's existing grant program instead of being supported by a cash contribution from the parish to the Diocese. Thanks to generous donors within the parish up to $12,000 can be provided.Supportive and robust conversation ensued:

- Jo Ann: the grants committee knows the grantees well.
- David: We need to have regular feedback and reporting for assurance that funds are being used as described.
- Jessie: Clarify that funds should be "up to" $12,000 (up to). Peter answered that Gordon suggested others will donate to Redeemer rather than through diocese is the idea so we are not operating at a potential loss.
- Charlie: This is not meant to be an ongoing grant request.
- Eric: Establishing the $12,000 grant fund helps to quash the impression among the Diocese that we (i.e., large churches) have no loyalty to the Diocese.

Peter shared that the Diocese requested the number of people we have impacted in our annual Parochial Reports. This led to a great many questions and conversations as well:

- Scott: How have other parishes responded to the Diocese on this question? Others have said funding is not possible. St. David's responded "no." Others have responded similar to ours.
- Eric summarized that there are 135 churches within the Diocese and roughly 80 are not fiscally sound, but they serve very needy people. The Diocese understands their structure & priorities, but these churches are unfortunately not sustainable under current Diocesan structure.
- Jim: With respect to funding salary asks, spending endowment for this purpose is unwise

There was a motion to accept the amended letter from Peter to James as discussed ("up to $12,000 in last paragraph). Charlie Merwin motioned; seconded by Tiffany O'Neill. It was a unanimous vote.

Budget Hearing of Diocese

Peter attended the recent Budget Hearing that provided information on the revenue side. He was generally pleased that they are demonstrating more accountability by using the Canonical structures. He appreciated that they are showing ways to augment revenue. Regarding the Diocesan Budget, they are planning to flatline at 8% per church. If needed, they will assume the risk to backfill.

Associate Rector position

Peter updated Vestry on the Associate Rector position and small number of applicants. He asked for feedback on the updated job posting. Response was positive and in support of trying to fill the position as soon as possible. Charlie encouraged all to reach out to potential circles (f.e., military chaplains, statewide associations, Lutheran/Anglican priests, etc…). Further conversation included:

- Jim asked whether we need to specify what being "credentialed" meant - Peter explained that it would be understood by applicants.
- Some Vestry members thought we should be looking more broadly.
- Peter: Does anything strike us as wrong?
- David: Associate Rector is a good title.
- Jim: Should we add music reference?

Accounting Warden's Report: Eric Rabe

- Generally no concerns We are a bit behind in Revenue from pledge giving and ahead in expenses. .
- Youth cottage is a problem. We need to think about what we want to do about it as well as what might make sense to do with the other two properties on Pennswood.
- The vestry Task Force on the Youth Cottage, led by John Black, has advised that vestry do nothing further with the youth cottage at this time and mothball it.
- Regarding real estate holdings, discussions were had around whether we should hold onto real estate. Some agree that it's good to have it as a part of a balanced portfolio; to keep good eyes on it; others thought perhaps redevelopment or selling if we have to invent purpose for it.
- In defining gifts, Eric recommended that vestry think about better definitions and setting parameters for the types and purposes of donor in order to follow best practices.

Rector's Warden Report: Charlie Merwin

He was invited to and attended his first Altar Guild luncheon in June. While the Guild is facing some challenges, the level of commitment to this ministry and the quality of care each member gives to the Redeemer is exceptional and should be considered a model to other ministries. The Guild's Chair, Carol Harris, described a ministry that is very traditional but at the same time, it is forward-moving. It has a wonderful mentality and possesses good ideas about how to get things done; and how to involve youth in order to prepare for each service on Sundays. He wholly appreciated being a part of the lunch.

--We will be having our next meeting on July 21st at 6:30 PM.
--Mark our calendars for our next Retreat on Saturday, September 19th from 8-11 AM.

Parish Administrator's Report:Joshua Castaño

- We have switched our auditors to CLA.
- Staff is preparing a list of stones and monuments in the Churchyard that require attention.. We are preparing a data migration for the WebCemeteries online cemetery management system.
- HVAC repairs are underway.
- Tower repairs are also underway.
- Door replacement (at bathroom entrance of the church) will beexpensive.
- Discussed how Bequests above $10,000 are handled: i.e., they are placed in the endowment. Our building fund was created as a percentage that is vestry designated.

Tour of Buildings and Grounds led byJoshua Castaño

- Vestry went on a great project tour of the church and parish house to review current conditions, upcoming repairs, etc. Highlights included IT systems, flood repairs (lower level/Masterman Hall), water damage above the altar, masonry conditions at front façade. Tour lasted 45 minutes before returning to Pembroke Room for the rest of the meeting.

Focus Committee Meetings

Reintroduction and Orientation: Peter introduced the vestry task forces . He provided philosophical framework around giving, impact, and openness. Peter discussed the potential dangers of "us vs. them" mentality and instead encouraged vestry to build relationships that embrace differences.

Peter reacclimated vestry to the Task Force subgroups and highlighted the work of the Volunteer and Diocesan Relations subgroups. For the former, he suggested that the committee adopt an approach used by the Altar Guild: *What would be both vibrant and would generate great ideas for engaging volunteers in a time when volunteers are hard to come by*?. Regarding the Diocesan Relations Committee, the hope is that Peter's letter to James Pope will help reset the relationship with the Diocese. The Diocesan Relations committee needs to address how Redeemer and other churches participate fully and grow stronger and self-sufficient. Peter also mentioned Christmas Village as something that will look very different in the future in terms of the nuts and bolts of fundraising efforts.

Vestry broke into our subgroups and met briefly to plan their next steps. The subgroups are as follows: .

Anchor Institution	Volunteers	Grants	Diocesan Relations
Jim Jordan	Hope Knight	Cheryl Masterman	Charlie Merwin
Scott Carter	Danielle Trucksess	Daniel Wesley	Eric Raab
Tiffany O'Neill	David Woods	Rita Davis	Jessie Caverly Rae
Joshua Castaño	Rev. Jo Ann Jones	Rev. Jo Ann Jones	Rev. Peter Vanderveen
Meeting Dates:	**Meeting Dates:**	**Meeting Dates:**	**Meeting Dates:**
June 23, 2026 at 11 am			
July 6, 2026 at 8:30 am			

Closing comments
Thank you, engagement, thank you

Closing Prayer by Rev. Jones at 11:30 AM

Respectfully submitted,
Tiffany O'Neill
June 29, 2026

