Vestry Retreat & Meeting September 19th, 2026

8:30am

Minutes prepared by Jessie Caverly Rae

Present: Charlie Merwin, Tiffany O'Neill, Eric Rabe, Jim Jordan, Hope Knight, Danielle Trucksess, Jessie Caverly Rae, Rita Davis, David Woods, Rev. Peter Vanderveen, Rev. Jo Ann Jones, and Joshua Castaño. **Guest:** Andrew Senn.

Absent: Daniel Wesley, Cheryl Masterman, and Scott Carter.

Opening Prayer: Rev. Jo Ann Jones.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Prior Minutes: The consent agenda and July minutes were presented for approval. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the consent agenda and July minutes were approved unanimously.

Administrative Reports

Rector's Warden's Report

1) Charlie Merwin will be moving out of state after the October Vestry Meeting. He will continue as Rector's Warden, participating in the 3 remaining meetings via Zoom. Eric Rabe will facilitate Vestry meetings in person during the remainder of Charlie's tenure as Rector's Warden.
2) Minor alterations to the meeting cadence will be considered for future meetings in an attempt to align more effectively with the Finance Committee.
3) Minutes will continue to be written on a rotating member schedule unless someone volunteers to serve as secretary.
4) It was suggested that the vestry provide four baskets for the Christmas Village: two containing a generous donation of wine from Charlie Merwin, and two themed baskets: French BYO and Italian BYO. The latter baskets will contain gift cards of $200 each, requiring a $40 donation from each vestry member. Vestry members were asked to send contributions to Danielle Trucksess.

Accounting Warden's Report

1) The vestry considered a resolution to withdraw endowed funds held in trust by the Church Foundation and reallocate these funds to a Vanguard account owned and managed directly by the parish.

Resolution: Vestry resolves to request withdrawal of remaining endowed funds held in trust by the Church Foundation and reallocate these funds to our Vanguard accounts.

   Upon resolution duly made and seconded, the resolution was approved unanimously. The resolution is maintained with the meeting records.

2) Redeemer financials were reviewed. The parish is over budget due, in part, to unexpected expenses and lower-than-budgeted return on 2026 pledge contributions to date. The ***"Redeemer Financials, July 2026"*** document provides additional detail and ***should be included in COTR Vestry files along with these minutes.***

Parish Administrator's Report

1) The bells have been refurbished. The parish is awaiting connection between the bells and the organ for first use.
2) Mapping of the churchyard was completed as part of our transition to a web-based service for managing the yard and proving public access to records. In partnership with local historian Jeff Groff we will delve into the history of those buried in the churchyard who were integral to local events. This could develop into a talk in November.
3) Multiple projects and initiatives were discussed, including the newly revealed banners celebrating 175 years of church history, refurbishing the church door, fixing Room 211, addressing water issues in the narthex, and other items.
4) Joshua Castaño presented projected capital costs for 2027 to 2032 to facilitate capital planning and budgeting. A number of significant projects are expected reflecting needed upkeep on the church tower, air conditioning system replacement, and work on the rectory. Altogether, these projects may ultimately approach $1.5 million. ***Joshua's slide presentation should be included in COTR Vestry files along with these minutes.***

Rector's Report

1) Parish restricted endowment funds to support theology students are not being spent. The vestry considered contributing these funds to support theology students within the greater diocese. This contribution would go toward Church of the Redeemer's annual diocesan sacred ask and would require vestry approval each year.
2) Two candidates for associate rector are presently being interviewed by the Rector and church staff.
3) The vestry discussed the value of bequests and the fact that they need not be very large to be impactful.

<u>Old Business</u>

Organ Installation Planning – Andrew Senn (moved up in agenda)

1) The vestry discussed organ installation, including the following:
    a. Expected communication to the parish explaining the need for organ replacement.
    b. Enlisting a consultant to advise on installation. Scott Reidel has been contracted for this.
    c. Identifying the appropriate company to complete the installation. Intend to have RFP responses back and vendor selected in Dec/Jan timeframe.
    d. Installation could be completed by spring or summer 2028.
    e. Donors are being contacted, and grant opportunities are being explored. Grant opportunities include 2 institutions focused on organs, 1 on British culture in North America, and 1 on project of historic/architectural interest.
    f. Consulting J. Milner Architects regarding opening the north chancel wall (adjacent to the pulpit) to improve acoustics.
    g. The vestry discussed the possibility of sharing use of the organ with members of the musical community, including the Curtis Institute and local organists.

New Business

Subcommittee Briefings

1) **Diocesan Relations:** See the first item under the Rector's Report above.
2) **Volunteer Committee:** David Woods is working with all subcommittees to determine what works best for volunteers and how to modernize the parish's approach to volunteering. Rev. Peter Vanderveen noted that volunteers need not be on a fixed schedule and may benefit from the flexibility to volunteer at a time and pace appropriate to the individual.
3) **Grants Committee:** Nothing new to report.
4) **Anchor Institution Committee:** Working to coordinate with the 175-Year Committee.

Nominations Committee (briefed by Tiffany O'Neill): Meetings will begin on the 27th of this month, with the hope that members from last year will continue this year because last year's process worked well. Charlie Merwin, Hope Knight, Danielle Trucksess, and Daniel Wesley will be concluding their tenure this period.

Christmas Village Committee (provided in writing): See document included in the packet. Rev. Peter Vanderveen asked that the vestry support the Christmas Village and the volunteers who work to make it happen, noting that the process is complicated and somewhat new this year.

Churchyard Plot Request (brought forward by Rev. Vanderveen)

The church received a request that two neighbors who are not parishioners be allowed to purchase two plots within the churchyard.

Motion: Vestry moves to approve sale of two plots to George Closkey and family per their written request at standard rate.

Discussion included concerns about limited space in churchyard. Joshua reported there are approximately 1000 spaces available, generally in smaller blocks of 2-3.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the ***motion passed***, with seven in favor, one opposed, and one abstention. The vestry discussed the need to consider guidelines for similar future requests and whether an amendment to by-laws or policy may be

needed. Rev. Vanderveen suggested the Vestry establish a committee to study this in 2027. Tiffany O'Neill expressed interest in heading this effort.

Adjournment

There being no further business recorded, the meeting closed with prayer led by Rev. Jo Ann Jones and concluded at 11:20 a.m.