

St. James Vestry Minutes

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

5:45PM

Participants: Rector De Freeman, Associate Rector Amanda Doshier, Parish Administrator Meghan Kasuba, Senior Warden Margaret Cadden, Junior Warden Bruce Stone, Treasurer Amanda Montz, Dan Campbell, Jim Daniell, Bill Dowdle, Dee Gambill, Jennifer Lambert, Bettie Norton, Cappi Sully, Ken Talbert, and Clerk of the Vestry Mary Mullins Redditt

Absent: Tracy Corte and Misty Whitehead

Margaret opened the meeting at 5:45 pm.

Opening Prayer -

Amanda Doshier offered an opening prayer

Recitation of the mission statement -

The vestry then recited together the mission statement:

We are a community anchored in Christ, seeking God, sharing His love, and serving others.

Meditation – Bill Dowdle

Bill offered a meditation on the importance of forgiveness based on an essay from C.S. Lewis.

Jr. Warden updates - Bruce Stone

- All the plant and shrub relocations for construction have been completed and are being watered twice a day for a month. This will help them persist through to the Fall. Pat Ponder is sending up a rep twice a day to check on them.
- There is a fan in front of the door that will be oscillating.
- The large hole in the front by the office is for re-boring the fiber optic cable.

Sr. Warden updates - Margaret Cadden

Social Chairperson

- Margaret thanked the vestry for jumping in and helping with the groundbreaking. It got her thinking that we need a permanent social chairperson. This would allow the vestry to be present and to speak to members of the congregation without working the whole time.
- We also have a number of newcomers and followup is difficult.
- The first person that comes to mind for many people is Jeanie Smith, as she is passionate and has done a good job of this in the past.
- There were many comments that this is exactly what we need and was also done in past years at the church.
- Margaret believes Jeanie would agree, if asked, and we should allow her to select who she wants to work with her on the committee.
- Putting together a team/teams may be a good way to spread out the work.

Stewardship Season (tentative Sept 28 - Oct. 19)

- We won't have a July meeting and we will be back the 3rd week in August, so stewardship will be right around the corner. We are tentatively planning the stewardship campaign dates to coincide with the Harvest Festival.
- Would like to plan for some more concrete discussion at our August meeting.

Concert Series- Chanticleer

- Mary Catherine has asked us to promote this Tuesday, October 28 grammy award winning vocal ensemble performance in the church.
- She wants to tap her concert endowment but still sell tickets to it. Total cost is \$22 K to get them here. Believe we can spread the cost between endowment, sponsorships and selling tickets.
- Parking may be an issue so would need to develop some kind of shuttle arrangement. Could probably sell out an even bigger venue.
- Mary Catherine has a Concert Series Committee that will plan all the details.
- Believe there will just be one performance.

Construction Update - De Freeman

- De thanked Bettsie and Josh for hosting the vestry social in their home. He also thanked the vestry for pitching in for the groundbreaking event.
- Chuck Coddington offered an update report on the construction (see handout).
- There has been \$129 K in savings.
- Tomorrow morning there is a meeting with City of Fairhope, engineers, key subs for a final pre-construction meeting. This is key to getting our permit to start construction. Could start as early as next week.
- City sent a revised plan of road closures today. Tomorrow they are closing Hwy 104, so we will not have that access for 3-6 weeks. Jim Ketchum has calls in to the City for a limited access permit for Sundays so we can use that [This has since been granted.] This entrance is essential during our construction. Mac Walcott is trying to get permission to cut the throughway as soon as possible.
- There are 8-10 weddings planned and Meghan is in discussion with another 4. Have increased rate to \$2,500 for the church and a \$1,000 refundable damage deposit. Most have an Episcopal connection if they are not parishioners. We are not advertising we do this. The church gets a couple of phone calls a week about weddings.. May want to revisit cost after our construction is complete. Any visiting priest that conducts a wedding must be an Episcopal priest in this Diocese.
- It was suggested that we should have a construction update on our website so parishioners have a place to go to for the latest. Have just done this for the Hwy 104 road closure. May also be able to put up a timeline. Other suggestions were to be in *Anchorlines* and on our Facebook page.
- A parishioner has offered a 4-seater golf cart for our use for the next while. Will need to recruit more people, including vestry members to drive the golf cart and help direct traffic. The church van is also available. Will need volunteers to get going on this plan now. Bill Dowdle will try to recruit from the Men's breakfast group. Cappi says Hank Miner rents them out for special events. Bettsie made suggestions about how to encourage people to carpool. It might inspire people to get together and get to know one another more. Bettsie said she will coordinate the carpooling incentive. Meghan says the addresses in the church database could be exported into an Excel spreadsheet to help with matching neighboring parishioners up for carpooling.
- Jennifer said that walkie talkies may help on the church campus.
- De encourages any vestry members with good ideas to step up and coordinate them.
- Natalie needs help from people to set up for vacation bible school this Saturday and Sunday.

Financial Update Discussion & Decisions- Amanda Montz

May financial report

- The total St. James income from church and school in May was \$198,344 with total expenses of \$168,551 for a net of \$29,793.
- Our year-to-date net is \$138,083.

- We have \$2,501.834 in our cash accounts.
- Our liabilities are few now, but that will change with our construction loan.

Growing Faithfully balance sheet

- We brought in \$91,452 in additional contributions in April and May, along with \$20,871 in interest income.
- Eighty-five percent of our expenditures were for a payment to Walcott of \$129,022, and the ending balance as of May 31 was \$1,856,780.
- Amanda says it has been a good six months.
- ***Bettsie made a motion to approve the financial report, Bruce seconded, and all approved.***

Vote to approve May Minutes

Bettsie made a motion to approve the minutes, Jim seconded, and all approved.

Reminders: July meeting cancelled

The only exception is if we need a specially-called meeting due to construction issues.

Next Vestry Meeting Thursday August 21, 2025

Misty Whitehead has the mediation for the August meeting. Dan offered to step up if Misty is unable to be present.

Closing Prayer

De closed us in prayer at 6:48 pm