

St. James Vestry Minutes
Thursday, January 15, 2026
5:45PM

In attendance: Rector De Freeman, Rev. Amanda Doshier, Parish Administrator Meghan Kasuba, Finance Director Jim Ketchum, Director of Children's & Youth Ministries Natalie Smith, Sr. Warden Margaret Cadden, Jr. Warden Bruce Stone, Treasurer Amanda Montz, Dan Campbell, Tracy Corte, Jim Daniell, Gary Garner, Lisa Hansen, Jennifer Lambert, Rhett O'Keefe, Cappi Sully, Ken Talbert, Austin Young, and Clerk Mary Mullins Redditt
Absent: Bill Dowdle, Dee Gambill, and Bettsie Norton

Both outgoing and incoming vestry members were welcomed at this meeting.

De opened the meeting at 5:44 pm and asked Rev. Amanda Doshier if she would offer an opening prayer.

Opening Prayer -

Amanda opened the meeting in 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 – De Freeman

Fr. De offered a visual, a photo of a bristle coned pine that lives in arid conditions out west. These are some of the oldest trees in the world. He compared their resilience to leadership in the church. He named three traits of faithful leadership: steadiness, patience, and hope.

Youth Report - Natalie Smith

- Natalie handed out the Children's & Youth Ministry report (attached), and reviewed a PowerPoint presentation with the vestry.
- There is a consistent and strong foundation for children and youth here now.
- Children's ministry is about relationship forming and trust.
- Vacation Bible School hosts about 150 children supported by 30 volunteers and summer camp staff.
- The ministry now hosts seasonable parish-wide events, such as the new Christmas Eve Pageant, Halloween, and the Easter egg hunt.
- You Group is a formation program for 5th and 6th graders. Have 6 active families. Once a month they share a meal together with their families. It's an important bridge to youth group. Could grow this group by expanding formation opportunities.
- Youth Ministry serves 6th through 12th grade. There is weekly programming with events happening, typically, twice a week. The youth volunteer at Prodissee Pantry and run the Postcard Ministry led by Karen Myrick. Have 20 active youth from middle and high school.
- Youth confirmation is offered annually with a mentorship program. Over the past 2 years, have had 19 youth confirmed.
- Mission Trips have been to conventional and non-conventional places. The point is there is something to offer any- and everywhere.

- Have also hosted fun adventures, such as to the beach, Universal Studios (are going again next month). The youth pay the majority of the expenses. These are great outlets allowing youth to be with their friends in a safe environment. Can grow this ministry by focusing on the Jr. High age.
- Acolyte Ministry is thriving with the help of Mother Amanda. They were offered a trip to DC to the National Cathedral which has been a big draw. Want to meet more regularly for check-ins with them.
- Diocesan Connection, Happening gets our youth out there more, connecting with other youth around the Diocese.
- The vestry all agreed that there is a LOT of programming going on with the youth.
- Ken says that, as a father of two teens in the program, Natalie has done a tremendous job with the young people and she has helped them build an amazing network.
- Natalie is looking forward to the new facilities which will offer a lot more opportunities for the youth. She is shadowing how other youth programs in our area use their auditoriums.

Nominations & Welcome new Vestry Members

Vestry member term discussion and vote

- Misty Whitehead has asked to step down from the vestry due to family health issues and work demands. De asked for a motion to have Margaret fill Misty's open position. ***Bruce made a motion to do so, Cappi seconded and the vestry approved.***
- De also asked for a motion to have Margaret remain as Senior Warden for the next year. ***Cappi made a motion to approve Margaret as Senior Warden, Rhett seconded and all approved.***

Nominate and approve Junior Warden

De expressed his hope that the vestry will approve Bruce Stone to stay on as Junior Warden. Bruce has done an outstanding job. ***The vestry voted and approved Bruce Stone as Jr. Warden.*** [The motion and second were not recorded, but the affirmative vote was confirmed at the February meeting of the vestry.]

De announced that organist Joe Setzer resigned from his job today. Last Sunday was his last and he has taken a new position. Will be discussing any needs to replace him with Mary Katherine.

Vestry expectations, roles, and responsibilities – De Freeman

De handed out a list of vestry roles and expectations.

- **Faith and Spiritual Leadership**—The most important quality is that the vestry member is a person of faith and that we build upon one another's faith. Each vestry member is given the opportunity to offer a meditation at a meeting during the year. It is important to hear from each other and remember that we are all walking in faith.
- **Kindness and healthy communication**—It is important for us to remember to agree to disagree.
- **Unity and Shared Support**—avoid parking lot meetings and share with one another here.
- **Confidentiality & Executive Session**—Those sensitive conversations stay here; they don't go home with you to discuss with your spouse, but with one another.
- **Governance & Communication Boundaries**—This is updated every couple of years. Meghan handed out a booklet for guidelines for vestry operations.
- **Visioning & Empowerment**—The purpose is to keep a vision going and not go into the difficult details of an activity. That is what committees are for and they will give us recommendations to discuss and sometimes vote on.

- **Attendance & Engagement**—We need to understand that we represent the parishioners. In order to do that, we need to be attending church and the special activities, including coffee hour so we are available for conversation and support. Parishioners will have lots of questions. We need to be visible to support what's going on in the church. Parishioners will see your vestry name tag and know who they can talk to. We also expect everyone to be here for all the 11 vestry meetings each year. If you miss more than 3, you are typically asked to step down.
- **Preparation**—Staff tries to give us time and information so we can come to the meetings prepared.
- **Financial Stewardship**—the primary job of the vestry is to raise funds, the second is to search for a new rector when that becomes necessary.
- **Service, Volunteers and Shared Responsibility**

De pointed out that retiring members Jim Daniell(10th year) and Tracy (1st year) are here and they are rolling off the vestry this year. He wants to thank them for their service which has been tremendous.

Future Vestry meeting dates - third Thursday of the month unless a holiday or church function interferes.

Financial Update Discussion & Decisions – Amanda Montz & Jim Ketchum

Financial Review

Jim offered to present the financial report tonight for Amanda. Jim offered some guidance on how to read the financial documents he had handed out.

December financial report

- A financial report is presented on a monthly basis for the last month, and also compared to last year's same month.
- Will see a budget for the year so you see how we are doing for the year and also for the month.
- Have line items for church and school.
- Begin with the income of church and school. We operate as one with one checking account. The school is a mission of the church and is the biggest money generator.
- 2025 was a good year because December was a great month. It was a good year for income and expenses.
- Then you will get a summary of income and expenses that shows month, year-to-date, and previous year.
- Pledges=people that turn in a pledge card
- Contributions=funding that comes in that is not previously pledged. This is typically about 20% of our budget that we cannot account for in advance.
- Plate= what comes in the plate on Sunday as an unnamed gift.
- Misc.=such things as wedding fees, graduation fees, etc.
- You'll also get a summary balance sheet
- The Finance Committee goes through the same reports but in greater detail.

Stewardship update

There was no update this evening.

2026 Budget talks and approval

We don't yet have a budget for 2026, since so much unaccounted for funding comes in late in December. We would like to do a month-to-month budget for January at the rate of \$275 K for

church and school until a budget can be approved. ***Dan made a motion to accept the month-to-month limit of \$275 K for church and school, Rhett seconded and all approved.***

Diocesan Pledge

Amanda Montz said that last year we pledged \$80 K for the Diocese. Are trying to get back to our 10% contribution, so would like to pledge \$90K this year.

Bruce made motion to accept the diocesan pledge, Dan seconded and all approved.

Dan made a motion to approve the December financial report, Ken seconded and all approved.

Vote to approve December Vestry Minutes

Ken made a motion to accept the meeting minutes, Jennifer seconded and all approved.

Vote to approve Annual Parish Meeting minutes

Dan made a motion to approve the annual meeting minutes, Ken seconded and all approved.

Lenten program & dinners to begin Wednesday, February 25

Still working on the program. The vestry usually cooks and serves the dinner, so please put this on your calendar and all plan to be here that morning to cook and also about 4 to prepare, serve and clean up. Will likely be red beans and rice.

Lenten Concerts & Lunch to begin Tuesday, February 24

De pointed out the meditation schedule for the year. Margaret has February, Dan has March and Jennifer has April.

Closing Prayer

Amanda closed us in prayer at 6:54 pm.

- De said that at the next meeting, we will go around the room and introduce ourselves and get to know one another better.
- The building report is in the packets for review.
- Had many topics for this evening so had to pare back the agenda.
- Brick pavers are still being bought and they are going to leave this fundraiser open. Raised over \$30 K already.
- Misty Campbell offered to commit the school board to serving dinner at one of the Lenten dinners.

The meeting was adjourned by Margaret at 6:58 pm.

Submitted respectfully by the clerk, Mary Mullins Redditt.