

Approved 10/22/2024
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2024
Via Zoom & In Person, 7:00-9:00PM

Attendance

- *Vestry Members Present:* Michele Morgan (Rector), Jim Brooks (Senior Warden), Martha Huizenga (Junior Warden), Jan Lipscomb, Nick Rogers, Todd Thorpe, Meg Platt, Kristina Keenan, Travis Beaty, Hank Donnelly, Doug Padget
- *Vestry Member Absent:* Elizabeth Becker
- *Officers Present:* Randy Marks (Clerk), Doug Ammon (Treasurer), Frank Nickerson (Assistant Treasurer for Bequests and Special Gifts), Rosemary Harold (Counsel)
- *Clergy:* Caitlin Frasier (Assistant Rector)
- *Guest:* Valeri Byrd

July Meeting Minutes

July 23, 2024, Minutes of the joint Vestry/Finance Committee meeting ([Vestry Minutes.7-23-2024](#)): Approved unanimously.

Reports

Rector:

- [Vestry Welcome Sign-Up July through December](#) needs members to sign up.
- Canvass:
 - Michele, Caitlin, and Todd will lead it. Bill Jordan is a consultant.

- Todd stressed Bill's suggestion that Vestry members and other leaders pledge in advance.
- Nominating Committee: Jan, Hank, Nick, Jim, Michele, and two Parish members to be identified.
- Reparations:
 - Michele will be leading a book study on reparations.
 - She expects Diocesan Convention to consider 4-6 resolutions on the subject.
 - Caitlin, Jan, and Michele were at a Summit on Truth Telling and Reparations, focusing on Blacks and Native Americans.
- Alcohol Policy:
 - Caitlin reported that the 2016 Vestry-approved [Alcohol Policy](#) requires a non-alcoholic beverage at Eucharist. She suggested that we should honor the requirement by again offering a non-alcoholic beverage or delete it.
 - Several Vestry members advocated deleting the provision and experimenting with having a non-alcoholic beverage.
 - Rosemary said that the focus of the Policy was serving alcohol at events other than the Eucharist.
 - The informal consensus was to experiment with offering a non-alcoholic beverage at forthcoming Eucharists and discuss changing the Policy next month.

Senior Warden:

- Jim decided to stand for election to a third year as Senior Warden.
- He decided to offer a Budget Tutorial before the October Vestry meeting. He asked members to consider what they want to know.
- He has begun an effort to look at how we can better coordinate our internal communications.

Junior Warden:

- [Martha Huizenga](#) provided in advance her [Junior Warden Report-09.24.2024](#), including that the courtyard doors are fixed, air

conditioning system improved, replacing a pipe for boiler, painting, removal of oak tree in the courtyard. We are on budget for the year.

- Chris Berendes, Randy, and she are working on moving Parish documents to drives that St. Mark's (as opposed to individuals) will own. The first step is to move the Vestry folder, which will happen beginning Monday (9/30) and will take a few days. Contact Martha and Randy if there are any problems during the transition.
- New calendaring system: She hopes to upload data over the next two weeks. The form for scheduling rooms will be similar to the current form, and she hopes the calendar on the website will be easier to read.

Treasurer:

- Doug Ammon provided in advance his [Treasurers Report.9-2024](#), which shows a financially great July and slightly below budget August. He expects that our year-end results will have a lower deficit than the budget.
- Doug asked Vestry members to review the budget document in preparation for the budget tutorial. He will send proposed possible dates.
- The Vestry approved two motions reported below.
 - The Finance Committee recommends minor adjustments to the 2024 budget.
 - We need a resolution regarding the opening of a Vanguard Money Market Account.

Raiford Gaffney Gift:

- Rosemary Harold (Vestry Counsel) and Kenn Allen (Raiford Gaffney Trust Committee Chair) provided an update on the process concerning Raiford Gaffney's bequest to the Parish of all her property.
- The trustees, Chris Berendes and Elin Whitney-Smith, hired Joel Nelson, a reputable and experienced Hill real estate agent, to sell the property. The house has been emptied of furniture and other items except for the pieces to be used in staging the house for sale. Painters are also working on refreshing interior spaces and doing some exterior work. The trustees aim to get the house on the market in early October. In addition, the trustees are safeguarding a

number of Raiford's valuable personal property, such as crystal and china, for a later sale, but the main focus for now has been on getting the house ready for market.

- Kenn, Michele, and Jim decided not to have the house deeded directly to the Church.

Liaisons:

- Caleb sent a [report](#) on youth and children ministries via Michele and Meg.
- Randy noted that the Membership Committee has added a summary section to the [Volunteer Leadership Guidelines](#).
- Nick provided an [update](#) on the Summer 2025 Choir Tour. Non-singers would be welcome.
- In response to Kristina questions:
 - Parish leaders (e.g., Service & Social Justice Board) can address the Vestry.
 - Parish leaders will have time to discuss budget requests.
- Jan Lipscomb also reported on the Summit on Truth Telling and Reparations (2.5 days at Virginia Theological Seminary) and a discussion at St. Mark's on Sunday. Michele will meet with Steve Daizell and Kit Arrington about the issues. Jan reported that the Navajoland Steering Committee meets on the first Monday of each month and its meetings are open to all who are interested in this work.

2024 Budget Adjustments

The Vestry approves the highlighted changes in the right-most column of [2024 BUDGET.pdf](#)

Moved by Hank; seconded by Martha. Approved unanimously.

Resolution re Opening New Vanguard Accounts

The Vestry of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, in Washington DC, authorizes Frank Nickerson to open a new account in addition to existing Vanguard Accounts ending -6651, ending -9674, and ending-9737. Signature

authority is authorized for James Brooks, Senior Warden; Douglas Ammon, Treasurer; and Frank Nickerson, Assistant Treasurer for Special Gifts & Bequests. James Brooks was elected Senior Warden at our Annual Meeting on March 4th, 2023. The Vestry appointed Douglas Ammon as Treasurer on February 4, 2024. The Vestry re-appointed Frank Nickerson as Assistant Treasurer for Special Gifts & Bequests on February 27, 2024.

Approved unanimously.

Small Groups

- Jim led a discussion of small groups, noting that:
 - Christian Education used to be the key small group generator and now, though reviving, isn't the primary locus.
 - Caitlin will coordinate this area.
- Jim asked what kind of group development (new areas like spirituality) might make sense? The discussion included:
 - Kristina suggested it might be good to create a guide for starting new groups.
 - Martha suggested couples without children and 40s-50s and more generally for people at the 5PM service.
 - Doug P suggested a group on sports.

Respectfully submitted

Randy Marks

Vestry Clerk