

Approved 9/23/2025
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2025
In Person & By Zoom, 7:00PM-9:00PM

Attendance

- *Vestry Members Present:* Michele Morgan (Rector), Jim Brooks (Senior Warden), Doug Padgett, Kristina Keenan, Katherine White, Ben Flowers, Elizabeth Becker, Todd Thorpe, Mary Ellison, Meg Platt
- *Vestry Members Absent:* Martha Huizenga (Junior Warden), Travis Beaty
- *Officers:* Randy Marks (Clerk), Ryan Baugh (Assistant Clerk), Doug Ammon (Treasurer)
- *Clergy:* Caitlin Frazier (Assistant Rector)
- *Guest:* Karen Wiedemann

Actions

- [Vestry Minutes,6-24-2025](#) approved unanimously, the Rector abstaining.
- The Vestry established the Special Purpose Music Fund of the St. Mark's Church (Capitol Hill) Endowment and approved the proposed [☰ Music Endowment Fund.Charter](#) . Motion: Elizabeth; Second: Todd; Approved unanimously.

Reports

Rector

Michele Morgan discussed the following:

- Caleb will be transitioning from St. Mark's to seminary at Virginia Theological Seminary. He has been with us since 2019, both as interim and permanent Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries. This news prompted discussion about confidence in

the upcoming program year, the role of our strong volunteerism, and hiring his replacement.

- May 10, 2026, will be Bishop Mariann's 3-year visitation day.
- Michele is planning to take about two weeks off in late August, depending on how things are going in our getting ready for the program year.
- Samatha in the office is doing well and will soon have her 6-month review.
- Caitlin recently had her review. Michele is working with Caitlin to determine what her job will look like going forward, what she can take on and what she can give up to make room.
- Michele shared that she has withdrawn from the process for consideration to become the Bishop of North Dakota.
- In Martha's absence, Michele shared that Martha continues to work to address water abatement needs in the basement, and that the emergency plan is almost done. There are some concerns about the integrity of the nave columbarium, and we will have it assessed.

Senior Warden

- Jim Brooks submitted a [written report](#) in advance.
- He discussed several upcoming special dates:
 - September 7: Annual Parish Picnic. This is the ministry fair and the start of the program year! We'll possibly make the survey available then as well.
 - September 14: Celebrate Michele's ten years of service to St. Mark's!
 - September 21: Rector's Forum to discuss planning and visioning goals and survey.
- After a straw vote, Jim stated the Vestry will forego an August meeting.

Liaisons

- Randy Marks discussed a [diocesan support update](#): He is on a Diocesan committee preparing a diocesan convention proposal regarding a new standard for congregational tithing to the diocese. Discussed a theology of giving, a system of support for

congregations unable to uphold the standard, and increased collaboration among parishes, beyond just clergy.

- Meg Platt gave a quick update from Youth and Family. Caleb has done great work toward a smooth handoff. Lisa Ramish has volunteered to chair Sunday education scheduling. Navajo trip was a success and full of engagement. Also came in under budget.

Finance

- Doug Ammon submitted a [written report](#) in advance.
- He discussed “the good things:”
 - We received about \$103,000 from an employee retention tax credit we had applied for about two years ago.
 - We have had \$250,000 in bequests in the first 6 months of the year and another \$20,000 in July.
 - Our investment funds are up about 6% this year (unrealized gains).
 - Net assets are up \$261,000 year-to-date, mainly due to bequests, and not including half the tax credit, and up over \$1,000,000 since January 2024.
 - Expenditures: We are pretty well in line with our budget for the first six months of the year.
 - Our use-of-building revenue continues to be strong. We are at 78% of our expected annual revenue from space use.
- Concerns: Pledge revenue is in line with where it was last year, meaning below budget. The budget had predicted a \$48,000 deficit, but we are currently at about a \$130,000 deficit. We need to keep an eye on our income. Michele will send a message regarding desirability of receiving pledge payments and knowing if meeting pledges is impossible.
- Doug does not propose budget revisions at this time but expects we could amend the budget in September.

Discussions

Music Endowment Fund

- Endowment Board Co-Chair Karen Wiedemann discussed her two years' work toward a new endowment fund to be managed by the Endowment Board to support the music ministry.
- There has demand from potential donors for a fund specifically for music.
- This fund is different from the other Endowment funds in that this fund can be used for "routine uses" such as paying the paid section leaders. Other possible uses include commissioning works, major acquisitions for the music library, special events or concerts not necessarily related to worship, or the children's choir retreat.
- The Vestry approved the measure (see above).

Strategic Planning

- Doug Padgett and Jim led a brief discussion of the process.
- Discussion focused on the need to identify one or more people to join the planning group (currently Doug, Jim, Randy, Ben Flowers, Katherine White).
- Jim agreed to coordinate scheduling.

Walk-Through

- There was further discussion of [Walk-Through Document](#) walk-through document and experiences.
- Michele identified the following actions:
 - Samantha to follow up on handicap parking.
 - Fabric Committee to consider accessible and possibly porous parking lot surface
 - Michele, Elizabeth Becker, and Ryan Baugh to consider signage and how visitors or newcomers may experience them

Respectfully submitted
Randy Marks, Vestry Clerk
Ryan Baugh, Assistant Vestry Clerk