

Approved 11/18/2025
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2025
In Person & By Zoom, 7:00PM-8:40PM

Attendance

- *Vestry Members Present:* Michele Morgan (Rector), Jim Brooks (Senior Warden), Martha Huizenga (Junior Warden), Doug Padgett, Ben Flowers, Elizabeth Becker, Todd Thorpe, Travis Beaty, Meg Platt, Katherine White, Mary Ellison
- *Vestry Member Absent:* Kristina Keenan
- *Officers:* Randy Marks (Clerk), Ryan Baugh (Assistant Clerk), Doug Ammon (Treasurer), Frank Nickerson (Assistant Treasurer for Bequests and Special Gifts), Rosemary Harold (Counsel)
- *Clergy:* Rebekah Taylor (Seminarian)
- *Staff:* Lisa Ramish (Children, Youth, & Families Ministries Director)
- *Guests:* Holly Kreutter & Edna Boone (Service & Social Justice Board Co-Chairs)

Actions

- [w](#) Vestry Minutes, 10-28-2025 approved unanimously, the Rector abstaining.
- The Vestry authorized having a special fundraising effort in November to support hunger programs. Motion: Elizabeth, Second: Meg; approved unanimously

Discussions

Children Youth & Family Ministries

- Director Lisa Ramish presented a [vision document](#) and powerpoint.
- The focus of the Board for the next three years is to ensure each part of the program (activities, worship, fellowship, and Sunday School) are in alignment with the Board's mission/values, all other program parts, and expectations (future growth).

- She is setting up a working group to focus on Sunday School, particularly how to deal with expected growth and teacher recruitment and training. Jim noted these are areas where the Vestry could support its efforts.

Service & Social Justice

- SSJ Board Co-Chairs Holly Kreutter and Edna Boone provided [bullet points](#) and a [vision document](#).
- Holly noted that current stresses related to the federal government are meaning that priorities and activities are shifting often, with a special focus on supporting migrants.
- She noted that the SSJ programs have grown rapidly and with little overall strategic planning. This year it has incorporated Navajolan and Justice in Palestine.
- The Board is starting a discussion of what programs and activities are no longer central to our work, with a particular focus on supporting activities with strong parishioner involvement. It is also considering how to distribute its budget more evenly.
- There was discussion about having the SSJ budget increase gradually towards 5% of church income.

Strategic Planning

- Doug Padgett reported on behalf of the Planning Group with submitted a draft of the [survey](#) and [overview](#).
- There was general support for moving forward with the survey by mid-November, with discussion of a Rector's Forum in December and/or January and using the February 8 annual meeting to continue the discussions.

Reports

Rector

- Rector Michele Morgan submitted her [report](#) in advance of the meeting.

- She discussed her concerns about the temporary cessation of food stamp (SNAP) benefits. She notes informal efforts within the church to support members in need. She proposed that the church generate funds to contribute to feeding organizations:
 - A special fundraising effort in November, which the Vestry approved (see above).
 - Working with Service and Social Justice and the Finance Committee to identify additional funding.

Wardens

- Senior Warden Jim Brooks briefly commented on the Vestry meeting schedule through the end of January.
- Junior Warden Martha Huizenga submitted her [report](#) in advance and noted the work on the stained glass window and doors.

Treasurer

- Treasurer Doug Ammon submitted his [report](#) in advance.
- Doug noted that despite the continuing operating deficit, there is good news:
 - A strong cash position because of tax credit refund and bequests.
 - October had strong pledge payments.
 - As of October 28, we had 111 pledges (including 10 new pledges) with \$517K in pledges.
 - Expenses are in line with our budget.
- He briefly discussed the 2026 budget, noting a 6% increase in health insurance. He will ask for budget requests be in by November 14th.

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