



August Vestry Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, August 25, 2026 6 p.m.
Diocesan House Council Room
Meal Hosts: James & Julia

Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.

Vestry Members Present

Christopher Breunig
Martha Craig, Junior Warden for Facilities
Amanda Davis, Junior Warden for Finance
John Gulhaugen
Phil Haas
Sam Herring
Hannah Hochkeppel
Julia Logan, Senior Warden
Mark Lundquist
Sarah McCord (Zoom)
Michael Monnikendam, Diocesan Member
Deborah Person, Junior Warden for Stewardship (Zoom)
The Very Rev. Steve Thomason, Dean
Canon Charles Thorne, Bishop's Representative
Cynthia Tidwell Stelle, Diocesan Member (Zoom)
The Rev. Gail Wheatley, Diocesan Member
James Wilcox

Officers Present

Mary Dickinson, Treasurer
Barbara Erickson, Clerk

Officers Absent

Re Knack, Chancellor

Staff Members Present

Erik Donner, Cathedral Administrator
The Rev. Canon Emily Griffin, Canon Vicar

Guests

John Hoerster, Chancellor Emeritus and Affordable Housing Committee Chair

Dean Thomason opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. with the Land Acknowledgement and a prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adopt the June 23, 2026 Vestry Meeting minutes as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

Greenbelt Trees – Update and Action Item

Dean Thomason discussed a significant tree removal and habitat restoration project involving 26 diseased maples from the greenbelt to protect the Egan House. The total cost is estimated at \$352,000, including \$252,000 for tree removal and an estimated \$100,000–\$500,000 for habitat restoration, with the city requiring replacement with native species and 184 shrubs.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to authorize Seattle Tree Care to remove the 26 trees, and to secure a contract with a habitat restoration specialist for the habitat restoration work.

Cathedral House HVAC Retrofit Updates

Dean Thomason reported that HVAC retrofit of ceiling work and new lighting in Bloedel Hall is almost complete, with an outstanding item of manufacturing an outdated switch.

Cathedral Processional Banner

Dean Thomason reported that the memorial fund for Corey Streat is being divided between a new cathedral processional banner and the Queer in Christ Ministry. The banner will be dedicated to Corey Streat on Homecoming Sunday, September 13 with his parents, Derek and Diana, present.

Deanery Shower Project Update

Senior Warden Julia Logan reported that the remodel of the deanery shower is complete, but the bedroom floor was damaged by the contractor. The company acknowledged their fault, and will sand and refinish the floor. The exact date for the completion of this work is to be determined.

Cathedral Foundation 2025 Financial Review

Dean Thomason explained that the Cathedral Foundation's financial review has been sent to the diocese, and the vestry's responsibility is to accept the report.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the 2025 financial review of the Cathedral Foundation of the Diocese of Olympia.

Saint Mark's 2025 Financial Review

Treasurer Mary Dickinson anticipates that the 2025 financial review will be available to the Finance Committee and the vestry in September, and then to the diocese by the end of September. Dean Thomason acknowledged the work of Mary, Marc Aubertin, and Erik Donner.

Living Stones II Design and Project Updates

Dean Thomason reported that the Design Committee has been meeting with architect Richard Glasman, general contractor Abbott Construction and owner's representative Spectrum Development Solutions. The project scope is now \$10.6 million, including \$500,000 needed to redesign traffic flow and to repave the south parking lot. Financially, 583 pledges totaling \$9.9 million have been secured, and a cash flow analysis will be available by the end of the month. The projected schedule is to submit permits and finalize the guaranteed maximum price by October 2026, complete construction documents in February 2027, obtain permitting in April, mobilize in June, and finish the project in October 2027.

STRATEGIC CONVERSATION

Affordable Housing Updates

Uncommon Bridges Community. Dean Thomason reported that the Uncommon Bridges community engagement process is complete, and neighbors, parishioners, and stakeholders responded overwhelmingly (but not universally) positively to the project. The report will be presented at the October 7 Cathedral Commons forum.

Project Name. The project name was confirmed as "Cathedral Place," after resolving previous concerns from Redwood Development about the name's religious connotations.

Visual Storytelling Exhibit. Christopher Breunig and Hannah Hochkeppel updated the vestry on the Visual Storytelling Exhibit. The eight-panel display about redlining and exclusionary practices in Capitol Hill will be featured in the nave for two months beginning September 20.

CBO Development and Final Documents. John Hoerster explained the formation of the community-based organization (CBO) affiliated with Saint Mark's, which will support residents, create third places for community engagement, and deepen the cathedral's housing and hunger ministries. The CBO will operate separately from the affordable housing project, with a founding board of 5-7 members (including Dean Thomason, ex-officio) to be established by December 2026. The board will approve the articles of incorporation and bylaws, followed by expansion to 11–13 members in the spring.

Financing and Funding Applications. John clarified that Saint Mark's qualifies as a CBO in its role as general partner, while the affiliated CBO will focus on tenant engagement. He noted that financing applications must be completed by the end of 2026, with upcoming meetings planned with the working group, the Affordable Housing Committee, and the Vestry to discuss financing and construction costs. Action required of the vestry includes the approval of applications for funding from the Washington Housing Trust Fund and the City of Seattle Office of Housing, with John explaining that various documentation including certificates of formation and existence will be required for both St. Mark's Cathedral Parish and St. Mark's Properties, LLC.

Action Items for Proposed Bylaws Changes and Authorization to Apply for Funding

1. Vestry Resolution #26-GO-03. The vestry discussed amending Saint Mark's bylaws to meet the Housing Trust Fund requirements for a \$100 million housing project grant, which needs to be completed before the September 17 application deadline. The proposed bylaw amendment will be posted for three weeks with opportunities for parish input, and a special vestry meeting is scheduled for September 15 at 6 p.m. via Zoom to vote on the amendment, requiring a two-thirds majority to amend the bylaws.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve Resolution #26-GO-03, to proceed with the amendment to the St. Mark's Cathedral Parish bylaws.

2. Vestry Resolution #26-GO-04. Vestry approval for submitting applications for funding of up to \$1 million from the Seattle Office of Housing.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve Resolution #26-GO-04, that authorizes the submission of funding applications for affordable housing development.

3. Special Vestry Meeting will be held via Zoom on September 15 at 6 p.m. to formally vote on amending the by-laws after sufficient notice has been given to the parish.

Dean Thomason expressed gratitude for John's tireless leadership in this effort.

NEW BUSINESS

Investment Distribution Resolution

Dean Thomason discussed Vestry Resolution #26-FI-04, which authorizes the 4% annual distribution from the Diocesan Investment Fund portfolio.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve Resolution #26-FI-04.

New Housing Allowance Resolution for Adam Conley

At Adam Conley's request, Dean Thomason presented an update to Adam's 2026 clergy housing allowance.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve Resolution #26-FI-03.

Nominating Committee Appointments

Dean Thomason proposed the following individuals for the 2027 Nominating Committee: Julia Logan and Martha Craig as co-chairs, Greg Hamm, Christopher Breunig, Carrie Davis, Peter Snyder, Nancy Valaas, Hilary McLeland-Wieser, and Steve Thomason as an ex officio member.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the Nominating Committee appointments as presented.

Disposition of Bequests to Saint Mark's Cathedral

The following bequests were made in conjunction with the Gifts Acceptance Committee (senior and junior wardens, treasurer, chancellor, and dean), and their recommendations are:

1. Alan Quigley unrestricted bequest of \$9,839 to the Living Stones II Capital Campaign.

The vestry voted to approve the recommendation as presented.

2. Joel Connelly unrestricted bequest of \$100,000 divided evenly between the Vestry Designated St. Mark's Endowment and the Living Stones II Capital Campaign.

The vestry voted to approve the recommendation as presented.

3. Karla Koon 2026 bequest of \$20,000 (\$20,000 per year 2025-29) "for the Outdoor play area or after school program space for the new Cathedral Place affordable housing project."

The vestry voted to approve the recommendation, per the Koon family's directive it be used for the CBO.

4. The remaining \$3,606 from Nick and Amelia Canaday's charitable remainder trust (distributed in 2025) will be divided evenly between the permanently restricted endowments St. Mark's and Century II Mission. **The vestry voted to approve the recommendation, per the trust's directive.**

Electronic Giving Station in Narthex (GoodBox)

Dean Thomason led a discussion for the implementation of a GoodBox, an electronic giving station, in the narthex. It will allow contactless donations using a card or phone, like a point of sale transaction.

Amistad Request for Rent Relief

Dean Thomason summarized Seattle Amistad School's financial situation, and their request for rent relief. After reviewing the alternatives, the recommendation from Chancellor Re Knack is the issuance of documents that capture the total past due for unpaid contractual obligation payments.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to prepare such documents and provide to Seattle Amistad School.

Grant Updates

Dean Thomason listed the grants we have been awarded:

- FEMA Security Grant—awarded \$152,000 in the fall 2025 with work still to be done.

- Norcliffe Foundation—awarded \$1 million grant for Living Stones II, with the distribution in spring 2027 after the construction permits have been issued.
- Global Missions Grant—received a \$5,000 grant from the Diocese of Olympia, plus \$5,000 from Saint Mark’s Clergy Discretionary Fund, was distributed to Sudan Sunrise for the benefit of an Episcopal girls’ school in South Sudan.
- City of Seattle Decarbonization Grant—Canon Griffin, Interim Communications Director Evans Ousley, and Dean Thomason worked on and applied for a \$150,000 grant for Living Stones II carbon reduction efforts.
- The final \$75,000 installment of Trinity Church Wall Street’s third and final \$150,000 grant for CBO development and affordable housing will be awarded after the interim report is submitted on September 1.
- Bloedel Hall Renovation Grant—Lee Bloedel Schneider’s \$250,000 gift provided for the updates to Bloedel Hall: windows, floor, acoustical tiles, and dishwasher. A small residual amount remains.

Discernment Process Updates

Emily Meeks, a candidate for the priesthood, will be ordained as a transitional deacon in December and a priest in June 2027. Jon Achée, a postulant for the diaconate in the Diocese of Los Angeles, lives in Seattle and attends Saint Mark’s. Diocesan discernment groups will begin in September for Colton Carothers, Casie Danielson, Johnathan Riopelle, Jen Younggren, Karen Petersen, and Hannah Hochkeppel.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Senior Warden

- The in-person Diocesan Convention will be held on October 23–24 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Seattle Airport in SeaTac. Julia will be seeking help staffing the exhibit table and providing cookies.

Martha Craig presented Julia with a gift card from the Vestry in recognition of her leadership during the dean’s sabbatical, April 6–July 31.

Dean’s Report

- His sabbatical was great, *and* it is great to be back! The September 9 Cathedral Commons forum will be about his sabbatical experiences.
- The greenbelt trees, Affordable Housing Project, and Design Committee continue to require significant time and attention.
- Fundraising efforts continue for the Living Stones II campaign.
- Gerry Boler applied for and was rehired as Cathedral Buildings and Grounds Specialist.
- The Joyful Noise Choir School program is seeking a music teacher.

Files of Note

- Threshold Fund Report—August 2026 over \$200,000 dispensed
- Thank You Letters—American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, Low Income Housing Institute, Operation Nightwatch, Emily Meeks

MINISTRY/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance

Amanda Davis reported that the June financial reports are available, but remain a work in progress with Jitasa.

Creation Care

Deborah Person reported that informal conversations have begun regarding new leadership.

Intergenerational Council

Sarah McCord reminded all of the intergenerational hike on Sunday, August 30.

Restorative Justice Council

Christopher Breunig reported on the Migrant Justice Group's work. Many members have been trained as accompaniment volunteers for a new partnership that expands beyond current opportunities with the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN), and joins with the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice (JCIJ) to develop additional opportunities in these communities. The group will also provide hospitality and welcome to migrants and their families outside U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Accessibility Coordination

Hannah Hochkeppel reported that the committee confirmed the Design Committee had the information it needed, and will wait to move forward on communications until a permanent Communications Director is hired.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER

After checkouts, Hannah Hochkeppel offered the closing prayer, and the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Erickson
Clerk

Erik Donner
Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of Note

9/9 Dean's sabbatical forum
9/13 Homecoming Sunday and All Parish Picnic
9/15 Special Called Meeting of the Vestry (on Zoom)
9/25 Stewardship Dinner and Stewardship Kick-Off
10/3 Ordinations (Diaconal and Priest)