



SAINT MARK'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

**January Vestry Meeting
Minutes**

**Tuesday, January 20, 2026 6pm
Diocesan House Council Room
Dinner hosts: Potluck**

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 (Zoom)
Martha Craig
Phil Haas, Junior Warden for Finance
Greg Hamm, Senior Warden
Sam Herring
Hannah Hochkeppel (Zoom)
Becky Kacel, Diocesan Member (Zoom)
Julia Logan, Junior Warden for Facilities
Mark Lundquist
Sarah McCord (Zoom)
Deborah Person
The Very Rev. Steve Thomason, Dean
Alexandra Thompson
The Rev. Gail Wheatley, Diocesan Member

Vestry Members Absent

Peter Snyder, Junior Warden for Stewardship

Officers Present

Lynne Cobb, Treasurer (Zoom)
Barbara Erickson, Clerk
Re Knack, Chancellor

Staff Members Present

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

Dean Thomason opened the meeting with our Land Acknowledgement and a prayer at 6:13 p.m.

Approval of Vestry Meeting Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to adopt the December 9, 2025 meeting minutes as written.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution on Vestry Election-Dec 23, 2025

The vote on the number of vestry candidates for election at the Annual Meeting was done by email.

Vestry Resolution #25-GO-04 passed on December 23, 2025.

Affordable Housing Updates

The architects have finished their schematic design work and will pause until the permitting begins in the Fall. Community engagement: Uncommon Bridges, the consultant hired by Redwood, will guide the application process. Kendall Clawson, our Community Based Organization consultant, will be joining us at the upcoming Vestry Retreat on Saturday, January 31, 2026.

Redwood also informed us that the 98102 has been removed from the “Difficult to Development” Federal Registry which provides access for about \$9 million in bond funds, which is needed for the project to be financially viable. Because this qualifier would end on 12/31/2025, the team made application for funding in 2025 (before year end). If all goes well, we are on schedule for the bond fund approval in late 2026, permitting in 2027, and the groundbreaking in late 2027 – early 2028. Amistad has been given early termination notice effective June 30, 2027.

Capital Campaign

Dean Thomason reports the campaign continues in this quiet phase. A total of nearly \$8.5 million was raised and \$4.5 million of that amount has been paid in 2025. The HVAC project for Cathedral House and Bloedel Hall received final edits for city permit approval and will go out for bidding. The project will begin in May. The Dean will be visiting St. Paul’s, Emmanuel on Orcas Island, and Grace Episcopal on Bainbridge Island and we are waiting for response on three grants.

Emergency Response Manual

Marc Aubertin, Julia Logan, Erik Donner, and Re Knack guided the conversation. This is a living document that is for internal use. The Rev. Emily Griffen and Erik are working on the training. The document residing in Dropbox is the continuation of four years of work. Incorporated into the document that the Junior Warden for Facilities will review contents every two years.

A motion to adopt the Emergency Response Manual as presented was made, seconded, and passed.

WA Clean Building Early Adopter Status approved

Being approved as a WA Clean Building Early Adopter brings incentives from the utility company. The document has been signed to receive \$5,500. Marc and Emily are working on the next steps.

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Meeting Agenda, Election Rules, Volunteers

Dean Thomason reviewed the schedule for the voting on Sunday, January 25, 2026. The meeting will be called to order at 8 a.m. with in-person voting beginning at 8:05 a.m. and ending at 12:45 p.m. The business portion of the meeting will begin at 12:30 p.m. and will be in-person and via Zoom.

Outgoing/Retiring Vestry and Officers

Greg Hamm identified the Vestry members whose terms, along with his, are ending – Alexandra Thompson, Peter Snyder, Lynne Cobb, Sarah McCord, and Becky Kacel – and thanked everyone for their commitment.

Election of Secretary and Treasurer

Dean Thomason announced that Barbara Erickson has served faithfully and has agreed to continue as Vestry Clerk. As there were no other nominations, nominations were closed.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to elect Barbara Erickson as Vestry Clerk.

Lynne Cobb has served faithfully as Treasurer and has asked to be relieved of these duties effective at the end of the Annual Meeting. Parishioner Mary Dickinson, a retired CPA, is excited to assume the role.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to elect Mary Dickinson as Treasurer.

Appointment of the Chancellor

The bylaws require the Dean to appoint the Chancellor.

Dean Thomason reappointed Re Knack as Chancellor.

Clergy Housing Allowance Resolution

A review of the proposed housing allowance, Vestry Resolution #26-FI-01, was discussed for The Rev. Carol Westpfahl, Director of the Center for Spirituality and Action.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adopt Vestry Resolution #26-FI-01.

Employee Handbook

Dean Thomason expressed his gratitude to Re Knack and an associate, Lexie Smith, Human Resource and Labor Attorney, for their review of the handbook. Almost all changes were related to statutory “tweaks and edits” and a clarification in the Vacation Time section. Steve also expressed his gratitude for Lexie’s pro-bono work.

A motion to adopt the revised Employee Handbook as presented was made, seconded, and passed.

2025 Discretionary Fund Report

Dean Thomason explained that the clergy has access to funds supported by gifts from parishioners and others. Last year much of the funds went toward rental assistance, utilities, and food, as well as the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and Lowell Elementary, for example.

Visual Storytelling Exhibit- Historic Housing Injustice

Dean Thomason talked about how this exhibit is a key component of our focus with Affordable Housing to address the historic redlining and restrictive covenants on Capitol Hill both graphically and with images. This will be done in partnership with the University of Washington’s Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project. Scott Kovacs will be chair of the working committee along with a member of First AME. Steve asks the vestry to be supportive and raise awareness when the project opens this winter or in the spring.

RFQ for Owner’s Rep for Construction Project 2027

Dean Thomason discussed the Request for Qualifications for an Owner’s Representative for the construction projected for 2027 after Easter and into the summer. The search is starting now for two reasons: early pledge fulfilment and the need to relocate due to construction in the cathedral nave. This will also reduce the possibility of two construction projects happening at the same time.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the Request for Qualifications for the Owner’s Representative, and by extension the general timeline for construction.

Parochial Report

Dean Thomason stated there will be a short meeting of the vestry on February 24, 2026 6 p.m. by Zoom to approve the 2025 Parochial Report, which is due March 1.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Dean

Thank You letters received from: AFEDJ, Operation Nightwatch, Michael Kleinschmidt, Erik Bauer, and a thank you and seminarian letter from Emily Meeks. Steve expressed his appreciation for all the prayers and good will for his surgeries in December, although his knee is not coming along as hoped.

Senior Warden

Greg expressed his gratitude to the vestry for placing their trust in him over this two-year period. He found it interesting and rewarding. Accomplishments:

- Strategic Plan
- St. Nicholas plan – Affordable Housing, Amistad, and the women shelter
- Helped install our new bishop
- Dedicated The Memorial Garden
- Successful Capital Campaign that shows we can do so much more together
- Renovation of Cathedral House – staff lounge, new window and shades
- Helping others – Lambert House, Lowell Elementary
- Communications Tool Kit developed by the Communications Committee
- Celebrated the dean’s 20th anniversary to the priesthood
- Launch of Center for Spirituality and Action
- Terra Ball

“So much has happened and we also have new challenges all the time. It is wonderful to be a part of all of that. Thank you and keep it going.”

Deanery Shower

Dean Thomason excused himself for the remainder of the meeting. Julia Logan provided the background on the shower issue beginning with the previous owners who built a primary suite in the attic space. Repairs have been done to repair the leak but have not corrected the problem. Four vendors have reviewed and provided estimates ranging from \$15,000 to \$40,000. The lower range bids did not address the cost of repair to the interior or the structural work. The deanery is part of the cathedral’s assets and the cost for repair would be a capital expense from savings. Marc Aubertin added that the facilities staff investigated the “leak,” and found water in the room below as well as in the timbers. The shower area needs work too and accessibility needs to be addressed. All of this will add to the cost.

MINISTRY/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Worship & Prayer:** Julia attended the Liturgical Ministry planning session; next meeting is virtual and was scheduled for February 8 prior to the Seahawks playing. Should not interfere with the game.
- **Finance:** Lynne will give her report on the year-end budget to actuals at the parish meeting on Sunday. Phil stated that at the December 8 Finance Committee meeting, they received the October financial report. Next meeting is Friday January 23 where the December financial report will be available.
- **Facilities:** Julia reported that an electrician is being scheduled so the stop sign is not up yet.

- **Stewardship:** Deborah reported there will be no meeting this month and that the campaign did well.
- **Creation Care:** Deborah states there is no committee, but it continues to do the work of the cathedral and parish. Steve will be contacted to add to the agenda for the Vestry Retreat. Gail mentioned that Christopher sent out information about an upcoming event.
- **Intergenerational Council:** Martha stated the committee met via Zoom on January 12 and the next meeting is March 23 via Zoom. Registration will open for an Intergenerational Prayer Partner during Eastertide. Wendy is asking for everyone to share in the Meaningful Lenten Practices and to suggest names for the Cathedral Commons evening. Elizabeth Clark-Stern and Doug Thorpe are seeking someone to help shepherd the Labyrinth Ministry. Wendy used the Christmas Pageant as an example of how the Intergenerational Council aligns activities with strategic goals.
- **Restorative Justice Council:** Christopher reported their notes are in the Dropbox. Experienced their first accompaniment and had learnings that include plans to work with other entities to do more accompaniment work; invitation for ushers for a play called *Detention Lottery* on March 23 at St. James.
- **Communications:** Alexandra wearing her Accessibility Task Force hat offered that the latest version of the recommendations are in the drop box and will be added to the Retreat agenda for discussion. This is an active committee, and they can provide group or one-on-one training.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER

Checkouts were given, and the closing prayer was offered by Becky Kacel. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Erickson
Clerk

Erik Donner
Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of note

1/25 Annual Parish Meeting
1/26 Vestry New Member Orientation
1/31 Vestry Retreat