



September Vestry Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, September 23, 2025 6 p.m.
Diocesan House
Dinner hosts: Phil & Christopher

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

Vestry Members Absent

Mark Lundquist

Officers Present

Re Knack, Chancellor

Officers Absent

Lynne Cobb, Treasurer
Barbara Erickson, Clerk

Staff Members Present

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

Guest

Don Argus, Accessibility Task Force Member
Wendy Claire Barrie, Accessibility Task Force Member
John Hoerster, Affordable Housing Committee Chair and Chancellor Emeritus (Zoom)

Dean Thomason opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with the land acknowledgement and a prayer, and thanked Christopher Breunig and Phil Haas for dinner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The motion to approve the August 26, 2025 Vestry Meeting minutes was made, seconded, and passed.

STRATEGIC CONVERSATION

Affordable Housing Development Agreement. John Hoerster reviewed the proposed Joint Development Agreement (JDA) noting that this “agreement establishes the relative economic interests of Redwood (Housing Partners) and Saint Mark’s and thereby allows Redwood to proceed with incurring very substantial pre-development cost.” The key business terms, estimates of potential payment to Saint Mark’s, financing by the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), and non-financial aspects were reviewed. John emphasized the project's mission-driven focus and the potential benefits of a community-based organization affiliated with Saint Mark's, which could align with the Washington State Housing Finance Commission's requirements.

The members of the Affordable Housing Committee, Pacifica Law Group attorney John De Lanoy, Dean Thomason, consultant Tory Laughlin Taylor, and John all recommend the approval of the JDA. John Hoester was thanked for his work in getting us to this point.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to authorize the execution of the Joint Development Agreement as recommended by the Affordable Housing Committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Community-based Organization

Dean Thomason shared that after a subcommittee interviewed three potential consultants, a consultant had been selected to help form the Community-Based Organization (CBO). John Hoerster, Judy Andrews, and other committee members are developing the CBO's legal framework, aiming for operations to begin in January and focusing on supporting communities affected by historic redlining in North Capitol Hill.

Capital Campaign

The continuation phase continued at a reception for members of the Bishop’s Society and as we begin moving into our annual fall stewardship appeal. Dean Thomason reported the following: he will be preaching once a month at different parishes during first quarter of 2026; a \$25,000 grant was received from the Joshua Green Foundation; and we have been invited to apply for a \$1 million grant from the Norcliffe Foundation.

Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) Retrofit Proposal – Solarc

Dean Thomason reported Solarc Energy Group will submit design drawings to the City of Seattle by November with the city to respond within 60 days. Subcontractors can be identified to begin the HVAC replacement in Cathedral House in April.

Accessibility Task Force Report

Alexandra Thompson provided a summary of the Accessibility Strategic Plan which includes immediate, short-term, and long-term recommendations for improving accessibility across the cathedral campus.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adopt the Accessibility Strategic Plan as presented.

Bishop's Designee to SMC Vestry

The designee to the vestry is still under discernment by Bishop LaBelle.

Clean Building Early Adopter Application

Canon Griffin reported progress on the Clean Building Early Adopter Application, with Solarc Energy Group expected to submit materials by October 10. Thank you to Subdean Marc Aubertin and Solarc for their work on this.

Dean Thomason also mentioned that Solarc is working with Marc on identifying a vendor to replace the gas furnaces in Leffler and Carriage Houses, and the relocation of a ductless heat pump from the second floor of the St. Nicholas Building to the Donna Jean's Place women's shelter.

NEW BUSINESS

Falling Stone Thomsen Chapel Window Arch

Dean Thomason addressed the falling grout from the window arch over the Thomsen Chapel entrance door. Pioneer Masonry, who has done work for St. James Cathedral, quoted \$18,000 to repair the damage.

Hannah Hochkeppel Contractor Work in Choir School.

In addition to her role as Interim Wedding and Funeral Coordinator, Vestry member Hannah is the paid piano instructor for the 12-week Choir School term. This also requires Vestry approval, and Hannah was excused from the meeting for the vote.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve Hannah Hochkeppel's contractor work as the piano instructor for the Choir School.

Stewardship Annual Appeal

Peter Snyder reported the fall stewardship campaign will launch October 5 with guest preacher and consultant The Very Rev. Julia McCray-Goldsmith, and conclude October 26 with Ingathering Sunday. Deborah Person asked vestry members to help with setup or bringing food for the October 26 coffee hour.

Amistad NNN Reconciliation 2024

The discussion focused on addressing the financial challenges of St. Nicholas Building tenant Seattle Amistad School, particularly regarding a \$100,000+ operating expense reconciliation for 2024. Dean Thomason discussed striving to work with Amistad leadership to avoid this being an unusual financial burden. We discussed ideas for this. The Vestry agreed that this approach would be beneficial as it would encourage Amistad to stay in the building while providing financial relief, with the understanding that the lease terminates in 2031 but could be ended earlier with proper notice.

Ministry Directory

Dean Thomason stated that Greg Bloch and Josh Judd-Herzfeldt have updated the Ministry Directory for the fall.

Braver Angels Forum 10/22/2025

Wendy Barrie and Deborah Waddell are arranging the Cathedral Commons forum on October 22 entitled “*Depolarizing Ourselves* Introductory Workshop” facilitated by Braver Angels. Dean Thomason encourages the Vestry to attend to be an example for the parish.

Interfaith Work

Dean Thomason shared that Seattle University’s Center for Ecumenical and Interreligious Engagement is guiding the interfaith work, and Steve will participate in a follow-up group with Christian and Jewish leaders talking about the Holy Land. Saint Mark’s is also co-sponsoring an interfaith prayer vigil on November 5.

LEADERSHIP REPORT

Senior Warden

- Commends Dean Thomason’s three-part series on the Book of Revelation which was recorded and available at this link: [Sunday Forum: Reclaiming the Book of Revelation in the Face of Current Events - Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral](#).
- Shared the Nominating Committee's progress and plans for selecting candidates for vestry and convention delegates. The committee aims to finalize the slate of candidates by early December, with introductions scheduled for January 18, and elections at the Annual Parish Meeting on January 25. Requested assistance with 1) information for the handouts of what vestry service means to you, and 2) help with staffing the committee’s table after a Sunday service.

Dean Thomason

- Gratitude for John Hoerster, Tory Laughlin Taylor, and the Affordable Housing Committee for all their work.
- Upcoming events: Braver Angels, Prayer Vigil, baptisms, and the Terra globe exhibit in the nave.
- A lot of pastoral care is occurring. The clergy take retreat time away.
- Files of Note
 - Thank You Letters—AFEDJ, Immanuel Community Services
 - Thank You Note—seminarian Emily Meeks

MINISTRY/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Worship & Prayer

Sarah McCord reviewed the last meeting – compliments on the choirs and young cantors, enriching the worship services and using more inclusive language for the 11:00 service Eucharistic Prayer A, and Joan Chittister’s book, *The Liturgical Year*.

Finance

Phil Haas noted the July net operating income was \$40,000; reported a year-to-date net income of \$288,000 (exclusive of capital expenditures and depreciation); investing \$300,000 from the capital campaign operating account into the Fidelity stock transfer account where the interest rate is 3.5-4%. Budget season is upon us. Lynne Cobb and Senior Accountant Barbara Kelley are working on a capital campaign quarterly report to satisfy a request by the Finance Committee. Dean Thomason indicated that 1) the year-to-date figure is a little misleading, \$300,000 will whittle down, and 2) we were understaffed in the first part of the year, and we are now overstaffed so the expenses will run higher.

Facilities

Julia Logan presented these highlights: 1) The stop sign for the south exit driveway is moving toward completion, and Marc Aubertin is ensuring the emergency lighting works. 2) The Garden Committee continues their work. 3) Marc, Julia, and Pam Gray met about new shades for the offices and Bloedel Hall, and acoustical paneling in Bloedel.

Creation Care

Dean Thomason reported we are in discussion with Earth Ministry leaders (the organization has dissolved) for the Creation Care Ministry be the holder of records and assets, pending further details.

Intergenerational Council

Wendy Barrie reported: 1) She's seeking help for the October 4 Blessing of the Animals. 2) An intergenerational hike is scheduled for October 19. 3) Planning is underway for the November 23 Alternative Gift Market.

Restorative Justice Council

Canon Griffin discussed recent migrant accompaniment training through the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN), emphasizing the importance of witness and support for immigrants facing legal challenges.

Communications

Alexandra Thompson reported that the Communications Committee is reassessing its purpose and function. No monthly meetings are planned for now, but the meetings will return once the committee has established a plan.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER

Checkouts were given, and the closing prayer was given by Sam Herring. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Erickson
Clerk

Erik Donner
Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of note

10/4 Diaconal Ordination (10:30am)
10/4 Blessing of the Animals (4:30pm)
10/5 Stewardship Launch
10/22 Braver Angels forum
11/2 All Saints Sunday w/ Baptisms
11/5 Interfaith Prayer Vigil