SAINT MARK'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

September Vestry Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 6 p.m.
Diocesan House Council Room
Meal Hosts: Mary and Michael

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 (Zoom)
Phil Haas
Hannah Hochkeppel (Zoom)
Julia Logan, Senior Warden
Mark Lundquist
Sarah McCord
Michael Monnikendam, Diocesan Member
Deborah Person, Junior Warden for Stewardship
The Very Rev. Steve Thomason, Dean
Canon Charles Thorne, Bishop's Representative (Zoom)
Cynthia Tidwell Stelle, Diocesan Member (Zoom)
The Rev. Gail Wheatley, Diocesan Member (Zoom)
James Wilcox (Zoom)

Vestry Members Absent
Sam Herring

Officers Present
Mary Dickinson, Treasurer
Re Knack, Chancellor

Officers Absent
Barbara Erickson, Clerk

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

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adopt the August 25, 2026 Vestry Meeting minutes as presented.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adopt the September 15, 2026 Vestry Meeting minutes as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

Greenbelt Trees – Update

Seattle Tree Care has started the process of removing the identified trees, and expects to be finished by September 25. There is a meeting with the city and our consultants on September 23 to determine next steps in the restoration project.

Cathedral House HVAC Retrofit Update

As of September 22, the new heating and cooling systems are working. There remain some punch list items, but all is moving forward well.

Deanery Shower Project Update

The necessary refinishing of the bedroom floor has started after a long delay. This is to repair the damage done to the floors by the company during the bathroom repair and remodel. The project is expected to be finished in October.

Affordable Housing Updates

Financing and Funding Applications. After the Vestry approved Resolution #26-GO-03 amending St. Mark's Bylaws on September 15 to address the Housing Trust Fund's requirements, the grant was submitted. Redwood Housing is in the process of submitting the Low-Income Tax Credit bond application and the City of Seattle Office of Housing public funder support. These contribute to a necessary stack of funding for the project. We will know if these funds are granted in late December or early January. If they are granted, the project can move forward, with groundbreaking estimated for the 4th Quarter of 2027.

Visual Storytelling Exhibit. The Visual Storytelling Exhibit launched on September 20 and will be on display in the nave for the next several months. Initial feedback has been very positive.

CBO Board. Five members have been identified for the new community-based organization board. The goal for the size of the board is eventually10-15 members. Further board development will continue.

Saint Mark's 2025 Financial Review

The completed Financial Review was presented to the Finance Committee. It was a clean report. Treasurer Mary Dickinson reported that the biggest changes from the previous year were related to the capital campaign, with a large swell in assets due to donations and pledges for the project.

The Finance Committee recommended that the financial review be accepted by the vestry. The vestry voted unanimously to accept the 2025 Financial Review.

Financial Transition

Mary shared that there wasn't any new news to report on the transition. There are still growing pains, as both Jitasa and St. Mark's staff continue to learn both sides' needs for smooth information sharing and reporting. She estimates it will be several more months before operations are smooth. Dean

Thomason observed that operations are smoother than they were a few months ago, and all agree that trend will continue.

Living Stones II Design and Project Updates

There is a parish forum on September 23, with the Design Committee co-chairs, architect Richard Glasman and Abbott Construction.

Dean Thomason reported that project expenses have grown to $10.9 million. Part of this is due to cost increases since the initial estimate and added scope elements such as the parking lot improvements. New unanticipated expenses include the need to supplement the floor heating plan in the nave to meet code requirements. Contributions continue at a strong pace, however. Recent donations include an unanticipated $20,000 gift from a congregation, and a decarbonization grant from the City of Seattle for $148,000. Total pledges and gifts are now at $10.1 million.

Nominating Committee

Senior Warden Julia Logan reported the committee has had a few meetings, brainstorming names for potential vestry and Diocesan Convention delegate candidates. The committee will staff a table after services during the month of October, providing an opportunity for parishioners to suggest nominations. Nominations will close at the end of October.

Amistad Request for Rent Relief Update

Dean Thomason provided an update on the agreement Chancellor Re Knack and her team created in response to Seattle Amistad School's request for relief in the form of no rent increase this year, and forgiveness of utilities owed from last year. The agreement offers relief in exchange for St. Mark's retaining the security deposit and execution of a security agreement. It stipulates St. Mark's will forgive funds owed above and beyond the deposit if the school stays through June 2027 and they remain current on all other payments. Chancellor Knack pointed out that this was a solution that allowed a needed tenant to remain in the building and paying rent. Dean Thomason spoke with the head of school, and she agrees to this offer and will work with the board of trustees to accept the agreement.

NEW BUSINESS

Stewardship Update

Deborah Person gave an update on this year's stewardship campaign. It kicks off September 25 with an all-parish gratitude dinner. There will be a brief program including a couple parishioners speaking to the theme this year, "Boldly Proclaim." The campaign will continue through ingathering Sunday on October 25. Dean Thomason encouraged all vestry members to make a pledge, as it's important for there to be 100% vestry participation if possible.

Molbak Bequest

Dean Thomason reported that St. Mark's received notification of a generous bequest of $15,000 from Laina Molbak (predeceased by husband Egon). They attended St. Mark's some time ago, and included the cathedral in their will. The gift is unrestricted, and after review and discussion, the Gifts Acceptance Committee recommends this bequest goes towards the greenbelt restoration project. Given the Molbaks' well-known former nursery business, this seemed particularly appropriate.

The Gifts Acceptance Committee recommended that the $15,000 Molbak bequest, when received, be designated for the greenbelt restoration project. The vestry voted unanimously to accept this recommendation.

Building Together Honey Project with TDHS

Building Together is an organization that sells date honey in support of Israeli and Palestinian farmers. These farmers are working together, sustaining date agriculture, livelihoods, and communities. Temple De Hirsch Sinai and St. Mark's are collaborating on supporting this organization through honey sales. St. Mark's will sell the honey at this year's Alternative Gift Market. Temple De Hirsch Sinai is inviting St. Mark's parishioners to attend their November 20 Shabbat service in honor of this collaboration.

Ballot Initiatives I-638 and I-001

Dean Thomason presented information on two initiatives on the ballot this fall. The father of Corey Streat, a young man and former member of St. Mark's who sadly passed away in his sleep in 2025, contacted Dean Thomason with information on these two initiatives. The Dean has asked Canon Rich Weyls and Curate Adam Conley to look at ways the parish can be educated on these two initiatives, and encouraged the vestry to research them as well in advance of voting.

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 asked the vestry to help with providing cookies for and staffing of the exhibit table. She sent a sign-up sheet around for both.

Dean's Report

- 12 lay delegates are set for the Convention, and thanks to Clara Berg for convening the delegation.
- We received a thank you note from Operation Nightwatch. The organization had received a challenge donation, so $15,000 that had been set aside to give Operation Nightwatch when they moved out of the St. Nicholas Building, was given ahead of time so it could be matched with this challenge.
- Fundraising efforts continue for the Living Stones II campaign, currently in the diocesan/community fundraising phase.
- The pilgrimage to Greece and Turkey is in October with 36 pilgrims.
- The 2027 budget process has begun. The current work for staff and clergy is building projected expenses in advance of learning what pledges will be for the next year. The accounting transition to Jitasa is making this year's work more challenging. One known budget increase will be health and dental, which is increasing by 15%

MINISTRY/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Worship and Prayer

The September 19 liturgical ministry training went well with approximately 50 attendees.

Creation Care

There are forest therapy walks on September 26 and 30.

Intergenerational Council

There was a meeting on August 31. One of the topics was an article discussing ways to involve young people.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
The vestry moved into executive session at 6:53pm.

STAFF SALARY VOTE
After vestry moved out of executive session, a motion was made and seconded to approve a 4.5% COLA increase in clergy and lay staff salaries for 2027. The vestry voted unanimously to approve the motion.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER
After checkouts, Michael Monnikendam offered the closing prayer, and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Person	Erik Donner
Vestry Member	Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of Note
9/25 Stewardship Dinner
10/3 Ordinations (Diaconal and Priest, 10:30am)
10/3 Blessing of the Animals (4:30pm)
10/23-24 Diocesan Convention
11/17 November Vestry Meeting (third Tuesday)
12/8 December Vestry Meeting (second Tuesday)
1/24/27 Annual Parish Meeting and Vestry Elections