



SAINT MARK'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

March Vestry Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, March 24, 2026 6:00 p.m.
Zoom

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
Sarah McCord
Michael Monnikendam, Diocesan Member
Deborah Person, Junior Warden for Stewardship
The Very Rev. Steve Thomason, Dean
Canon Charles Thorne, Bishop's Representative
Cynthia Tidwell Stelle, Diocesan Member
The Rev. Gail Wheatley, Diocesan Member
James Wilcox

Vestry Members Absent

Mark Lundquist

Officers Present

Mary Dickinson, Treasurer
Barbara Erickson, Clerk
Re Knack, Chancellor

Staff Members Present

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

Staff Members Absent

Erik Donner, Cathedral Administrator

Guests

Susan Ferentinos and Maddie Levesque, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the January 20, 2026 Vestry Meeting minutes was made, seconded, and passed.

A motion to approve the January 25, 2026 Annual Parish Meeting minutes was made, seconded, and passed.

A motion to approve the January 31, 2026 Vestry Retreat minutes as amended below was made, seconded, and passed.

A friendly amendment was made to replace "... has been working during the Dean's absence." with "... working in preparation for the dean's absence." under Strategic Conversation 2.

A motion to approve the February 24, 2026 Vestry Meeting minutes was made, seconded, and passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Affordable Housing Updates

Dean Thomason stated behind-the-scenes work with the Office of Housing, lenders and other funding sources is now in progress. Tori Laughlin-Taylor and Dean Thomason are in conversation with First Security Bank regarding community service lending. Community engagement is unfolding and ways to provide input will be available in the coming weeks. Scott Kovacs, John Hoerster, along with the committee and Kendall Clawson are working on an updated plan.

Capital Campaign

Dean Thomason reported the fundraising continues with his preaching in other parishes once a month. We are now approaching \$8.8 million in total pledges received. Further fundraising is needed as the cost will be closer to \$10 million. We have applied for a major grant from the Norcliffe Foundation and expect to hear back in June. Emails were sent to parishioners who have not yet made their pledge to the Campaign.

Re Knack, co-chair of the Design Committee, reported that during Steve's sabbatical, they will be keeping the community engaged and updated through publications and Sunday morning forums as needed.

Deanery Shower

Julia Logan reported the contract was signed for \$38,000, with about half being discretionary based on materials and choices. Marc Aubertin, Julia Logan, and Kathy and Steve Thomason will select the materials and finalize the costs.

Cathedral House HVAC Retrofit

Marc Aubertin reported that there has been a great deal of interest in the project. Permitting is in progress with construction happening during the May to August timeframe.

Exit Drive Stop Sign

Julia Logan and Marc Aubertin reported the sign is now electrified and the radar is being adjusted.

Sabbatical Planning

Dean Thomason will be on sabbatical April 6 – July 31, 2026. He reported Julia Logan, Emily Griffin, Marc Aubertin, and Erik Donner are guiding the details, and all is going well in planning. Julia and Emily shared that copies of Joan Chittister’s book, *For Everything a Season*, are available to the Vestry members with discussion plans forthcoming. The Sunday forums on June 14 and 21 will be a reflection on the seasons of life.

Draft Mutual Ministry Goals 2026

A review of the draft ministry goals was led by Julia Logan. The goals will measure our accomplishments at the end of the year. Dean Thomason clarified that the name “Cathedral Place” is a placeholder within our internal documents and may be subject to change. Redwood, noting concerns about the religious orientation of the name, requested the establishment of a process to select a mutually acceptable alternative. Wardens Julia Logan, Deborah Person, Amanda Davis, Martha Craig, and Vestry member Sam Herring were thanked for their contributions to this document.

A motion to adopt the 2026 Mutual Ministry Goals as written was made, seconded, and passed.

Greenbelt

Re Knack provided a summary of the current activity at the greenbelt, explaining ongoing challenges with tree classification, property boundaries, and permit processes. Soil stability assessments and arborist reports are still pending.

NEW BUSINESS

Visual Storytelling Exhibit – Historic Housing Injustice

Dean Thomason provided a summary regarding a partnership with the University of Washington Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project to develop an art installation in the back of the cathedral nave, highlighting historic housing injustices in North Capitol Hill. Christopher Breunig, chair of the Restorative Justice Council, is a member of the team. The vestry is encouraged to attend Anti-Racism training on June 13 9:00-3:00 at Saint Mark’s, led by The Rev. Canon Carla Robinson, Canon for Multicultural Ministries and Community Transformation of the Diocese of Olympia.

Letter of Support for Candidacy for Emily Meeks

Dean Thomason proposed the adoption of the Nomination for Candidacy for seminarian Emily Meeks. Erik Donner will send the Certificate of Rector & Vestry for Emily’s candidacy via DocuSign for the vestry members to sign. Emily will be the guest preacher on October 25, and will also host the forum that morning. This summer, Emily intends to visit England to gain insight into their approaches for involving individuals with dementia in worship activities.

The Vestry unanimously approved the nomination of Emily Meeks for Candidacy.

LGBTQ National Historic Registry – Maddie Levesque – DAHP/ Susan Ferentinos (State of WA)

Dean Thomason introduced guests Susan Ferentinos, contract worker with the State of Washington, and Maddie Levesque, State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation. They presented a proposal to nominate Saint Mark's Cathedral to the National Register of Historic Places as part of a broader initiative to document LGBTQIA2S+ history in Western Washington. The owners’ authorization is required for properties not publicly owned; therefore, this opportunity is being brought before the vestry.

Maddie explained that National Register listing would provide recognition of the church's significance in queer history, potential property value benefits, access to grant funding, and a plaque, while

emphasizing that it is purely honorary and does not restrict use or maintenance of the property. The project is funded by a National Park Service grant, and the nomination process would be completed by Susan without cost to the cathedral. This year marks the 50th anniversary since the Episcopal Church passed its initial resolution regarding homosexual persons stating that they “have a full and equal claim upon the love, acceptance, and care of the Church.” Maddie shared this link:

<https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-registers/national-register-of-historic-places/what-does-listing-a-property-mean>.

A motion to support the nomination of Saint Mark’s Cathedral for application to the National Register of Historic Places was made, seconded, and passed.

Vestry Appointment to CFDO Board

Julia Logan, chair of the Cathedral Foundation of the Diocese of Olympia, reported parishioner Greg Hamm has offered to serve a term on the board, and would succeed parishioner Marc Aubertin.

A motion to appoint Greg Hamm to the Cathedral Foundation of the Diocese of Olympia board was made, seconded, and passed.

New Saint Mark’s Processional Banner

Dean Thomason shared that a new processional banner has been gifted to Saint Mark’s in memory of Corey Streat. Clifford + Chally was selected to provide the banner which will become the Cathedral banner. Emily Griffin and Julia Logan will determine when it will be blessed and used.

Staff Updates

1. Evans Ousley will serve as Interim Director of Communications beginning April 8, as she and her husband are planning a year-long trip traveling the world in 2027. A job opening for the permanent position will be posted this fall. We appreciate Evans joining Communications Assistant Josh Judd-Herzfeldt and Emily Griffin in leading our communications and marketing efforts. Thanks to Emily and Josh for their ongoing support.
2. Senior Accountant Barbara Kelley resigned effective March 26, which opened up the possibility to outsource our financial services to a professional firm for nonprofits and churches. Mary Dickinson, Marc Aubertin, Erik Donner, and Dean Thomason explored options, conducted interviews, and narrowed the search down to two firms, ultimately going with Jitasa, a well-established and worldwide firm based in Idaho that serves non-profits, including churches. The transition to Jitasa is intended to provide economies of scale and reduce dependency on a single person's technical skills. Re Knack has reviewed the contract and offered minor changes, and hopefully implementation will begin in mid-April.

Christian Nationalism and State of Our Democracy

Travel writer Rick Steves and his partner, Lutheran bishop Shelley Bryan Wee (ELCA), will be at Saint Mark’s on April 26 6:00 as they speak out about the threats to our democracy. This event is free and will be livestreamed. If registration numbers continue to climb, a second presentation will occur at 4:00.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Senior Warden

- Attended a brunch with current and former wardens and Pro Christo et Ecclesia award recipients, which provided a valuable opportunity for fellowship. Thank you to Dean Thomason.
- If you are approached by a parishioner anxious about Steve’s sabbatical, be a good listener. Individuals may also be directed to Julia Logan or Emily Griffin.
- Wear your name tag and be visible while Steve is away. Attend events if possible, to let the community know we are here and functioning well.

Dean

- Files of note: Thank you letters from the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, Hunger Offering-recipient food banks, and Carbon Offsets to Alleviate Poverty.
- St. Michael’s South Sudanese Episcopal Church, Auburn gave a \$1,000 gift to the Living Stones II Capital Campaign. “A remarkable demonstration of generosity from a very impoverished church startup, and doing so with faithfulness to the broader church, so I’m grateful for them.”
- Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, March 29 with many services to follow.
- Bloedel Hall renovations are almost complete, with new shades hung, and the order placed for acoustical tiles to dampen the “liveliness” of the room. A faithful use of the gift from Lee Schneider, part of the Bloedel family.

MINISTRY/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Worship & Prayer

Emily Griffin reported on the February 8 meeting: a good discussion around prayer, current and upcoming liturgies.

Stewardship

Deborah Person stated that the Annual Campaign for 2027 will run from September 27 to October 25. The committee plans to launch the campaign with a dinner like what was done in fall 2024.

Creation Care

The Rev. Gail Wheatley, The Rev. Canon Rich Weyls, and Deborah Person met to brainstorm and recognize that much work was happening, despite there not being an actual committee. Tentative thoughts are for the formation of a task force or a roadmap gathering, and how to get energy into this.

Restorative Justice Council

Christopher Breunig shared that during the council’s meeting, a question was asked about our actions concerning the Duwamish and other Indigenous tribes. Emily Griffin noted that on March 21, Saint Mark’s co-sponsored a production of the play, *The Detention Lottery*, at St. James Cathedral, along with First Covenant Church and St. Joseph Parish. The event drew more than 220 attendees and raised \$6,000 for AIDNW, effectively increasing awareness and strengthening partnerships.

Communications

Julia Logan is looking forward to Evans Ousley’s arrival and reconstituting the committee.

Accessibility Coordination

Hannah Hochkeppel identified the need for the Accessibility Task Force to convene, and determine how to reach out to other committees and move forward with some of the task force's recommendations.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER

Checkouts were given, and the closing prayer was offered by Gail Wheatley. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Erickson
Clerk

Erik Donner
Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of note

3/29 Palm Sunday
4/3 Good Friday
4/5 Easter Day
4/25 Cathedral Day
4/26 Rick Steves and Bishop Wee on Christian Nationalism