

CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTIANA HUNDRED

Vestry Minutes

May 8, 2025

7:00 PM

Present: Chuck Arensberg, Ran Barton, Ruth Beresford, Audrey Bruce, Cindi Cozza, Barb King, Ted Ledden, Alexander Maynard, Scott Nickle, Eliza Phillips, Bart Reese, Jaq Whalen, Alexia Wolf

Also Present: John Faulkner, Jon Payne, Deb Piper

Absent: Thorpe Moeckel, Jamie Poston

The meeting was called to order by the rector at 7:03 PM, and she offered the opening prayer.

Managing Parish Resources

Property Update – Leak Remediation Project: Ruth welcomed John Faulkner and Jon Payne to provide an update on the roof project. Jon reported that a bid meeting was held with contractors who had expressed interest in the project. Their bids are due shortly to our construction manager Whiting-Turner, who will tabulate and level the bids, with the goal of providing a guaranteed maximum price by May 28. Since the order of magnitude estimate was prepared last fall, the project scope has been expanded to encompass a few more areas of concern, and the costs for the additional items will be broken out separately. The final decision will be made by key lay leaders along with Mike Sayer. We will have air quality testing carried out in the coming weeks; Jon remarked that it is prudent to do so both before and after a construction project like ours.

Vestry Resolution to Authorize Application for Diocesan Funds: Ruth outlined the process and timeline to apply for a loan from the Diocese, one of the options we are considering to cover construction costs. Our application must include the selected bid, and it is due to the Trustees on May 29. To support our application, the following resolutions were presented:

Ted moved to engage TBS (architect) and Whiting-Turner (general contractor) to address the leaks in the Parish House beginning June 2025 by replacing the flat roofing of the 2000 construction and the flashing and masonry where it meets the 1952 building and to repair masonry affected by water damage. Jaq seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Barb moved to authorize the rector, wardens, treasurer, and finance committee to apply for loans and grants from The Episcopal Church in Delaware's Advancement & Development fund and other sources and to fundraise to finance the necessary repairs for leak remediation in the Parish House. Chuck seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Finance Committee Monthly Report: Ted reported that pledge income through April is down 5% or \$32K. Utilities expenses have been higher than budgeted. We have received 398 pledges to date,

compared to 403 at this time last year. An additional 20-30 pledges totaling \$50K would enable us to make budget this year. Deb added that we have narrowed the list of households that give but do not pledge to 26.

CCEP Monthly Update: Cindi reported that the gala netted \$35K. Three more faculty members announced they will not be returning in the fall; two are continuing their education and one is taking a year off with her new baby. Chuck noted that the school was over-staffed this year, so these departures may serve to alleviate financial pressures. A summer camp director has been hired. Sheila Abio has devoted much of her time to giving tours to prospective families; she believes enrollment of 72 for 2025-26 is achievable, with the maximum possible being 78.

Personnel: Ruth has drafted the letter of agreement for a new associate rector with a goal of a start date of July 1. She reported that as soon as Michael Kurth notified her of his new call, she began seeking candidates for the curate role, and she has interviewed one so far. Michael's last Sunday will be June 8.

Driving the Strategic Plan

Goal 3: As stewards of the gifts that God entrusts to us, we will faithfully manage our property, financial resources, and the time and talents of our members to support our ministries in and beyond Christ Church and will increase the use of our buildings and grounds to connect with our community.

The team's written report was distributed in advance, and Eliza reviewed highlights.

Campus usage plan – This benchmark was not addressed this year due to the need to focus on the roof leakage mitigation project. That work and the capital needs discernment team's discussions brought to light the need to develop a more comprehensive facilities master plan instead.

Year-round stewardship communications – Deb reported that she has been working with Sherry Lawton-Fasic to include occasional short messages on stewardship in the eNEWS. Eliza added that we could do more storytelling about the impact that people's gifts have had.

Legacy giving – Deb referred to the case statement for planned giving drafted by Paul Parvis, a parishioner with experience in this field, that was distributed in advance. Ran offered to polish the draft. The team is reviewing the list of Planned Giving Society members to learn if they still want to be included and what their gift instructions are.

Report on the Discernment Process for Capital Needs: Eliza distributed the draft report from the discernment team she led. She reviewed the team's purpose and process, emphasizing the value brought by the members' diverse perspectives on our church. Their key recommendation is to separate the roof project from capital campaign planning, though unrestricted gifts could be used to pay back any loans taken for the roof work. The team identified a number of potential facilities and grounds improvements, for example to preschool spaces and music education and rehearsal spaces, as well as green initiatives that could reduce utilities expenses. They recommend using the next six to twelve months to investigate these opportunities more fully. The team further identified some programmatic needs that might be eligible for different grant sources than traditional capital

projects. This aspect of their discussion complements the Outreach Committee's plans to reimagine how we think of and do outreach, beyond distributing funds. The team also listed potential ways to fund these endeavors.

Discussion of the draft gift acceptance policy was deferred to the June meeting.

Leading the Congregation

Presence of Vestry at Parish Events: Ruth reviewed the list of fellowship, formation, and ministry events from May 11 through June 28.

Report from the Rector: Ruth distributed the attendance figures for Holy Week and Easter services from 2017-2025; the total attendance this year was the highest within that period.

Report from the Wardens: Ran reported on planning the agenda for the upcoming annual meeting. Alexia reported on a productive conversation at the last Outreach meeting on reconciling varying perspectives on the development of the parish budget.

Meeting Tasks and Takeaways

Approval of Minutes: April's meeting minutes were approved as presented.

Concerns and Thanksgivings: Ruth gave thanks for the service of the outgoing Vestry members.

To-Do Assignments and Talk-Abouts: Ruth asked all to encourage others to vote for Vestry and to attend the annual meeting.

The closing prayer was offered by Chuck. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer O'Connor, Clerke