

CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTIANA HUNDRED

Vestry Minutes

October 9, 2025

7:00 PM

Present: Ran Barton, Ruth Beresford, Cindi Cozza, Barb King, Shelley Kinsella, Kendall Meldrum, Thorpe Moeckel, Scott Nickle, MJ O'Connor, John Olsen, Jamie Poston, Wil Stith, Alexia Wolf

Also Present: Thom Peters, Erin Richardson Severin

Absent: Chuck Arensberg, Jaq Whalen

The meeting was called to order by the rector at 7:02 PM, and she offered the opening prayer.

Leading the Congregation

Rector's Report: Ruth related that in the past week, she, Thorpe, John Faulkner, and Mike Sayer met with representatives from five architectural firms to discuss the creation of a facilities master plan, and all were enthusiastic about the opportunity to partner with us. She, Ran, Thorpe, and Eliza Phillips also met with Jim Klote, whose firm assisted with our 2006 capital campaign, and he is eager to make a proposal to work with us again on our upcoming one.

Leak Remediation Project Report: Thorpe summarized Jon Payne's written report. The project is substantially completed, but some work remains to be done. Warranties have been issued for the PVC membrane that covers the flat roofs that were formerly topped with paving stones. Only the north section of the patio has pavers now. Two exterior doors were found to have been intended for interior use and had deteriorated significantly; temporary replacements will be installed until new permanent exterior doors are sourced. Thorpe commended Jon for his daily oversight of construction activities and his success at negotiating us out of multiple change orders the contractors presented to us, sparing us significant additional expenditures. With the money saved, we will be able to carry additional interior finish work to repair damage from past leaks.

CCEP Update: Cindi recounted that at the last Trustees' meeting, they reviewed the budget line by line but did not pass it, as there were some small changes to be made. The final budget will be voted on at the upcoming meeting. Enrollment stands at 65, with good class size ratios. The budget is essentially balanced, but it anticipates higher event income and fundraising than last year. The school website has links for both the annual fund and sponsorship of Running of the Rams (taking place on October 25) and the Gala, and she encouraged all Vestry members to sponsor or volunteer for these events and contribute to the annual fund. Work continues on the strategic plan with subcommittees rotating to report monthly to the Trustees. An open house is scheduled for October 18. As part of their Goal 2 team's work, Cindi and Jaq have had ongoing meetings with Sheila Abio on communications between the school and parish. Shelley added that the school is in the early stages of planning an event for Earth Day on April 22, in conjunction with the parish's Creations

Care and Fellowship teams. Ran reiterated that it is helpful to Sheila's fundraising efforts to be able to say that all members of the parish Vestry contribute to the preschool's annual fund at some level. Ruth clarified that this donation must be made separately from the pledge to the church and/or sponsorship of CCEP events.

Presence of Vestry at Parish Events: Ruth reviewed the list of fellowship, formation, and ministry events from October 12 through November 2. She highlighted that Christian formation is finally beginning for the fall, with a few classes meeting in alternative locations due to ongoing construction.

Driving the Strategic Plan: Each goal team gave a brief report on their next steps coming out of the Vestry Retreat.

Goal 3: Thorpe reported that they had previously focused on a benchmark for a campus usage plan, which has now morphed into a facilities master plan (FMP). He shared the draft of the Year 3 benchmarks, which mention the FMP, preparations for the capital campaign, year-round stewardship communications, and the launch of the 1848 Legacy Society.

Ruth noted that growth in number of pledging households was originally included only in Goal 1, but was added to Goal 3's stewardship benchmark, and stewardship of members' time and talents, originally part of Goal 3, is being added to Goal 2's benchmark on deepening relationships.

Goal 2: Cindi reported that the survey questions within Ministry Match are being redesigned and a lot of the information in the tool needs to be updated. Jamie reported that Mason Cruz will give a report on ministry to children and youth at the Vestry meeting next month. Cindi mentioned that adult formation got underway with the first session of a new series having taken place the previous night, and the team is considering how best to gather feedback on that programming.

Goal 1: Ran reported that the team discussed the roles that Christ Church fills in people's lives, both how to ensure that we are ready to fill them and how to reach people who may be looking for those connections. They want to learn more about the church's marketing plan and the specific tasks to be done to implement it.

Third quarter updates to the parish on strategic plan progress are due and should be emailed to Jenno. Ruth asked for a summary to go in the eNews on the Vestry's work at the retreat; Cindi volunteered to write it.

Managing Parish Resources

Property: Thorpe reported that the Property Committee's meeting was postponed to next week. He elaborated on recent activity related to the FMP: the request for proposals was sent to five firms, all of whom responded positively. A 90-minute meeting was held with each one to answer their questions on the RFP, and they were given a tour of the site. Proposals are due October 20, and the Property Committee will meet October 24 to decide which firms to interview on November 3. He recalled that before we sign a contract, we committed to determining how we would pay for the FMP project; the Finance Committee will develop a recommendation on that. Ruth mentioned that an odor of gas was detected in the church undercroft the Sunday prior; this was eventually traced

to rusted pipe connections in the boiler. Similar issues were found with the parish center boiler, indicating a pattern of insufficient maintenance by our HVAC contractor. As a result, we have switched providers. Ruth noted that all of the teams from the FMP candidate firms praised our maintenance of our facilities.

Stewardship: Scott reported that a new pledge form and brochure featuring updated photographs were designed by Deborah Webb and Ruth and will be mailed to the parish shortly. The Ingathering will take place at services on November 8 and 9, after which follow-ups by the Stewardship Committee will begin. The committee is already planning their communications cadence for 2026. Scott encouraged the Vestry to lead the parish in returning their pledge forms timely.

Finance Update: Ruth commented that the October financial results are so new that the Finance Committee has not yet had a chance to review them, but the Vestry should look them over.

Ruth recapped the prior work and discussion on the Funding Priorities document. She distributed the existing text, the proposed revisions prepared by Barb, Cindi and Jaq, and her own effort to combine the two. She walked through her draft, noting where she drew the language from for each priority statement, as well as an addition about fair compensation of staff. She asked John to join Barb, Jaq, and Cindi in finalizing the draft, which should also be shared with the Finance Committee to ensure it aligns with their vision of our priorities. The final draft should be ready the week before the November meeting so that its adoption can be voted upon at that time; Barb volunteered to schedule a meeting with the others to complete that task.

Ruth reported that our treasurer Mark Parsells emailed her that it is time to withdraw funds from our endowment to cover roof construction costs. He forwarded two draft resolutions: for the Vestry to authorize a one-time withdrawal of \$500K by October 15, and a second resolution authorizing four \$250K withdrawals on the 15th of each of the next four months, November 2025 through February 2026. Discussion followed, validating that the withdrawals are necessary and the expenditures have been duly approved. Shelley moved the second resolution with a correction to the total amount (\$1 million, not \$10 million), the addition of the word “maximum” to “monthly withdrawal,” and corrections to the November and February dates to fall on business days (11/14/25 and 2/16/26). Barb seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Barb moved the first resolution for the \$500K withdrawal, John seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Gift Acceptance Policy: John reported that he, Barb, and Shelley are making progress on the revisions to the December 2023 draft, having received feedback from the Finance Committee. Additional work remains around standardization of how gifts are acknowledged and disclaimers that should be modified and used more broadly, necessitating changes to language on the website and our documentation and internal policies. One issue may not be solvable within the gift policy: what to do if someone receives cash from a third party to give to the church. We do not want to expose individuals to claims of not having proper controls. John expects that the team will be able to present the completed revision at the November Vestry meeting.

Meeting Tasks and Takeaways

Approval of Minutes: Review and approval of September's meeting minutes was deferred to November.

Concerns and Thanksgivings: Ruth echoed Thorpe's expression of gratitude for Jon Payne's service to the parish, and she would like to do something for him in acknowledgment. Ruth thanked everyone for the celebration of her birthday at the retreat. Barb thanked everyone for the unique skillsets and enthusiasm they bring to our work.

To-Do Assignments and Talk-Abouts: Ruth and Jenno recapped the tasks identified throughout the meeting. At the retreat, Vestry members expressed a desire to meet with the members of the Renovation and Strategic Planning Teams as well as their Prayer Team. Cindi volunteered to organize a meeting with all three groups at once. Shelley made an appeal for donations to the Green Show silent auction.

The closing prayer was offered by Scott. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer O'Connor, Clerke