

CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTIANA HUNDRED

Finance Committee Meeting

March 18, 2026

Finance Committee members in attendance: Ruth Beresford (Rector), John Olsen, Allison Ayers, Terri Carpe (Finance Manager, Breakwater), Mark Parsells (Treasurer), Jaqueline Whalen (vestry), Bob Reardon (Assistant Treasurer), Ran Barton (Senior Warden)

Absent: Christine Cook (Convener), Barbara King (vestry), Hardy Drane

The minutes of the February meeting were reviewed and approved.

Financial Performance Summary: The Finance Committee reviewed February and March financial performance, showing typical seasonal fluctuations with pledge income down but average pledge amounts up.

Income Status: February collections: \$15K actual vs. \$20K budget (not atypical); March through 17th: Down 6.6% vs. budget, 5% vs. prior year; Year-to-date: \$117 behind budget with two weeks remaining in March; Contributing factors: Snowstorms canceled/reduced services in January and February; many parishioners still traveling or on vacation.

Pledge Campaign: 391 pledges received (up 5 from prior month); Down 9 pledges from 2025, down 29 from 2024; Average pledge amount increased despite fewer pledges; 43 households pledged this year but not last year.

Special Collections: Green Show: \$99K received vs. \$90K budget; Ash Wednesday: Appears low in February because most recorded on March 15.

Audit Update: External audit commenced last week with on-site work conducted. Auditors questioned the Master Fund A “loan” structure; expectation is this will be reclassified/removed from financial statements in final audit report since it represents internal fund transfers.

Cash Management: Current sweep account balance: \$1.6M in M&T earning sweep interest; CD holdings: \$250K currently vs \$700K at end of 2024; Dividend/interest budget impact: Sweep interest significantly exceeding \$5K budget while dividend income well below \$35K budget due to temporary cash concentration in M&T; Reinvestment plan: Once leak remediation checks clear, Mark will transfer funds to LPL for CD investment, retaining \$200-250K operating cash; Merchant fee administrative cost-sharing will continue at current 20% participation rate; committee discussed potential website encouragement improvements.

Expense Highlights: Benefits and pension timing: Church Pension Group now on autopay causing year-to-date variances; Payments shifted from end-of-prior-month to beginning-of-current-month; Approximately one month of savings may appear in February, potentially correcting in March. Maintenance expenses: Parish House and Chapel maintenance: \$8K+ over budget year-to-date; Major items: \$5K boiler repair, \$3K quarterly maintenance payment.

Stock Donation Issue: A stock donation received while Mark was in New Zealand couldn't be traded due to LPL geographic restrictions. Former Morgan Stanley contact was unavailable (had resigned and moved to competitor). Stock value dropped 25% before trade execution upon Mark's return. Donor received credit at original receipt date per policy; fluctuation absorbed by church's stock variance account.

Leak Remediation Project Reconciliation: The leak remediation project accounting requires clarification, with total costs now appearing at \$1.513M versus original contract of \$1.524M. Discrepancy identified: Original Whiting Turner contract: \$1.524M; Mike's initial report to Vestry: Whiting Turner expenses only, omitted TBS design services (~\$100K); Revised total project cost: \$1.513M all-in; First expense recorded: \$26K to TBS in February 2024; Outstanding invoices paid: Three invoices totaling \$220K+ paid as of meeting date.

Related Capital Question: Two exterior doors (chapel to patio, patio to education wing) are interior-grade and degraded; need replacement with exterior-grade doors; Upper ramp ADA door lacks automatic opener (potential code compliance issue); ADA door project decision deferred until full cost information (including automatic openers) is available and leak remediation accounting is reconciled.

Endowment Strategy Discussion: The committee initiated a strategic discussion about restructuring endowment fund naming and presentation to improve legacy giving marketing and storytelling. Ruth presented Cathedral of St. Philip (Atlanta) endowment communication model as best practice example. Their approach includes clear fund purposes, named funds honoring donors, and organized presentation under strategic buckets (Today/Tomorrow/Legacy).

Current Christ Church Challenges: 15+ endowment line items with unclear naming (Parish Operations, Buildings & Property, Special Maintenance, Capital Projects); Limited historical documentation on fund restrictions and origins; Names don't tell compelling donor stories (e.g., "Choir" fund vs. "H.F. DuPont Choir Fund"); Unclear distinctions between similar categories.

Proposed Improvements: Research historical fund restrictions and donor intent (Keith Dawson consultation, legal review if needed); Rename funds with descriptive, inspirational titles honoring original donors where appropriate; Create strategic "buckets" for marketing purposes (similar to Atlanta model: Mission/Outreach, Operational Support, Capital/Building); Establish minimum threshold for new named funds (\$25K-\$250K range discussed); Develop clear communication tools for legacy giving campaigns.

Examples of Potential Rebranding: Lydia Chichester DuPont Adult Education Fund (already partially named); H.F. DuPont Fund for Christ Church Choir; Woolard Pledge Fund (could invite others to endow pledges following Ed Woolard's example).

Pending Confirmation: Leak remediation final accounting due Friday: Mike and Terri to provide comprehensive breakdown including all Whiting Turner and TBS expenses, separating prepaid vs. loan-funded payments; ADA door costs: Jon Payne to provide complete estimate

including automatic door opener installation; Morgan Stanley contact: Mark still needs assigned representative after ours departed; affecting stock donation processing; Endowment fund restrictions research: Keith Dawson and legal review needed to clarify usage restrictions on historical funds (especially Church Organ fund scope).

Action Items: Mark Parsells: Transfer sweep account funds to LPL CDs once leak remediation checks clear, retain \$200-250K operating cash and secure new Morgan Stanley representative contact; Mike & Terri: Provide comprehensive leak remediation accounting by Friday including all vendors, prepaid vs. loan-funded breakdown, pivot table format; Jon Payne: Provide complete ADA door project cost estimate including automatic openers; Ruth & team: Consult Keith Dawson on endowment fund history and restrictions and develop endowment fund naming/bucketing strategy with marketing narrative; Stewardship Committee: Receive list from Finance/Terri/Mike of regular non-pledged givers for outreach.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaqueline Whalen