

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting
September 16, 2025

Present: Beth Bailey, Craig Brent, Gary Dreier, Betsy Ellis, Alan Liby, Courtney Manrod, Fr. Bailey Norman, Ben Shassere, Julie Webber
Absent: Leah Bailey, Ashley Hillis, Carol King, Roger Johnson, Tyler Walker

Call to Order: Fr. Norman
Fr. Norman called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Opening Devotional: Courtney Manrod
Ms. Manrod read selected prayers from the Book of Common Prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Fr. Norman
The agenda was approved unanimously as submitted. (Liby/Dreier)

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Rector's Report: Fr. Norman

Last Sunday a nice Newcomer's luncheon was held. Fr. Norman thanked Ms. Justice who arranged the luncheon with food provided by Off-Road Diner. This is the third week of the Inquirer's Class. There were 22 in the class and 35 for dinner. Fr. Norman believes there are five people interested in being confirmed and one to be baptized by the Bishop.

Senior Warden's Report: Leah Bailey
There was no Senior Warden's report because Mrs. Bailey was absent.

Junior Warden's Report: Ben Shassere
Purple Mouse Smart House SOW

See entry below in the Financial Actions section, "Approval of Key Card Quotes."
Mr. Shassere reported that he heard comments about this process taking too long. If anyone has heard any complaints, report them to him. They will be discussed at the weekly Warden's meeting.

FINANCIAL ACTIONS

Approval of the August Financial Statement: Courtney Manrod
We are slightly behind in expenditure but slightly ahead in revenue. The traditional summer downward trend for income is starting to trend upward. There were no unusual expenses. The issue with the lighting project being over available funds will be on the Finance Committee's agenda in October. A recommendation for funding the gap will be presented at the next Vestry meeting.

The August financial report was accepted as submitted.

There are still five G&M designated accounts in limbo. Fr. Norman expressed his idea about what to do with each one.

- EFM scholarships – leave in GM331 for future scholarships
- LEV – leave in GM332 for training and materials for LEVs

- Library – use GM333 funds to update the Pollard Room.
- Stripling funds designated for Haiti – because of the inability to travel Haiti, the funds in GM342 designated for equipment for the medical clinic are in limbo. Fr. Norman had no suggestion about what to do with them.
- Elwood Gift – the family designated to the Rector's discretionary fund.

Approval of Key Card Quotes: Ben Shassere

A new bid was prepared after PJ did a walk-through with the Wardens. Vestry received a copy of the new bid. It includes items that are in addition to what was proposed previously. Once the project is approved, installation can be completed in 3-4 weeks and implementation of a schedule to distribute the new key cards over a 2-month period. Old keys will not be functional after December 31, 2025. With the added scope to the proposal, the total is \$25,628. The motion to accept the bid as submitted was unanimously accepted. (Shassere/B. Bailey)

NEW BUSINESS

Stewardship Campaign: Adam Cavender, Fr. Norman

Adam Cavender has agreed to chair the campaign which starts this coming Sunday. To demonstrate to the parish the Vestry's commitment to the parish, Fr. Norman asked that the Vestry pledge early. New pledge cards are being designed by Nancy Carow and Simon Ballintoy. Pledge cards with a QR code will be placed in the pews. Letters to parishioners will go out as in the past. A proposal for this effort is being drawn up by Mr. Cavender. The in-gathering will be the first Sunday in November.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

New Mission Statement: Fr. Norman

Fr. Norman will put an article in the next Evangel about the new mission statement.

Grounds Keeping: Roger Johnson

Barbara Neill has been looking at a few people to do the mowing, weeding, and planting.

The stumps from the trees recently taken down have not been ground away, but payment was made for this activity. Once the company's stump grinder has been repaired, the job will be completed.

The idea of separating B&G into 2 separate budgets in 2026 was discussed.

Sunday Vestry Reps.: Gary Dreier

Mr. Dreier heard no complaints.

Memorial Garden status: Fr. Norman

Fr. Norman asked Cameron Ellis to become the chair, but he has not heard back yet. Mr. Dreier talked with an employee at Tennessee Naturescapes about weeding and planting, as appropriate, in the Memorial Garden. He gave a quote of \$120 per month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Vestry
Building and Grounds: Roger Johnson
No report.

By-Laws and Policies: Courtney Manrod
No report.

Christian Education: Ashley Hillis
No report.

Communication: Julie Webber
A targeted mailing to the community around the church has been proposed for Advent. Fr. Norman will make 3 videos to be placed on the website. Facebook posts will be made for all events presented by the Evangelism Team. Jen Davis is working on advertisements to be run on the TV in the Parish Hall. She has a computer she is willing to donate to run these ads. Before this can be implemented, it must go through Simon Ballintoy to add the computer to Hyperion.

Emergency Preparedness: Ben Shassere
No report.

Evangelism Team: Tyler Walker (Beth Bailey gave the report in Tyler's absence)
Evangelism will sponsor the next monthly breakfast on October 19, and DOK will sponsor the November breakfast. St. Stephens will participate in the Halloween event and parade in Bissell Park on October 24 from 5-8 pm. "Claws for a Cause" is scheduled for November 8. St. Stephens will have a float in the Oak Ridge Christmas parade with hot chocolate afterwards on December 13.

Finance: Courtney Manrod
The Vestry charged the Finance committee to update make a recommendation for compensating workers. A recommendation has been sent to the Wardens for review. A small group within the committee has been tasked to determine how we will do internal financial audits. Updated and approved policies are being posted online.

Gifts and Memorials: Beth Bailey
Policies 8 and 10 are being reviewed.

Hospitality Area: Beth Bailey
No report.

Liturgics: Ben Shassere
No report.

Memorial Garden: Gary Dreier
No report.

Outreach: Gary Dreier

The committee has designated \$500 from the Vestry allotment for Hope House. Torch is the designated organization for the October loose offering.

Parish Life: Leah Bailey (absent-no report)

Pastoral Care: Carol King

No report.

Personnel: Craig Brent

No report.

Technology/IT: Julie Webber

No report.

The meeting closed with the prayer at 8:17p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy Ellis
Secretary

Next Vestry meeting is October 21, 2025, at 6:30pm