

Vestry Meeting Minutes: August 28, 2025 4:30 p.m.

Attendance: Rev. Kelly Steele, Marianne Kosiewicz, Dave Sweeterman, A.L. Addington, Regina Holderness, Shanti Stone, Mary Lee Beach, Gwen Gissendanner, Beth McDonald. Zoom: Georgine Scott. Guest: Rebekah Matthews. Clerk: Suzanne Thomas Absent: Ken Cote, Richard Sullivan, Susan Roberts, Rev. David Wantland.

Intention: Discuss our strategy, mission, major projects and finances.

Consent Agenda: *The Forsell family has made a bequest of \$10,000 designated to the music program. Julia Tucker wishes to purchase *Lift Every Voice & Sing* hymnals for the pews. The cost is \$7000 which will be taken from the Forsell bequest. *Shanti Stone, chair of Finance, motions to have the Vestry appoint Pete Kastner to the Finance Committee for a two-year term. *The Market Committee has chosen Loop It Up and Magdalene House as their charity recipients this year. *The Vestry approves the electronic vote accepting the minutes from the July meeting. *All approved.

Mission Discussion: Read chapters 4 & 5 from Alice Mann's *The In-Between Church*. Vestry discussion 45 minutes in groups of 3.

New Business:

Amended Motion to Change Vestry Size

WHEREAS, in recent years, St. Peter's has struggled to recruit an adequate number for Vestry service, *and*

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 2(A) of the By-Laws of St. Peter's Episcopal Church provides:

"The number of members of the Vestry shall be determined by the Vestry but shall not be fewer than five (5) and not more than fifteen (15). Each member of the Vestry shall hold office for the term for which he or she is elected or until his or her successor is elected and qualified...."

AND WHEREAS, The Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, Title I, Canon 14, Section 1, states:

"In every Parish of this Church the number, mode of selection, and term of office of Wardens and Members of the Vestry, with the qualifications of voters, shall be such as the State or Diocesan law may permit or require, and the Wardens and Members of the Vestry selected under such law shall hold office until their successors are selected and have qualified."

AND WHEREAS, Article I of St. Peter's By-Laws affirms:

"The Parish accedes to and acknowledges the authority of the doctrine, discipline, worship and the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Georgia, and the foregoing shall take precedence over any provisions contained in these By-laws which are inconsistent with or contrary to the foregoing."

RESOLVED:

That the Vestry of St. Peter's affirms:

"The number of members of the Vestry shall be nine (9), beginning with a transition plan as of Annual Meeting in January 2026. Each member of the Vestry shall hold office for the term for which he or she is elected or until his or her successor is elected and qualified, subject to the provisions of Section 3 hereof. The members of the Vestry must be confirmed communicants of The Episcopal Church and at least eighteen (18) years of age."

Proposed Process

1. Notice & Transparency: Written notice of this proposed amendment shall be given at one regular meeting of the Vestry, and again in the notice of the Vestry meeting at which the change will be considered.
2. Discussion: The Vestry will engage in a period of discussion, including a review of how the transition will be handled (e.g., allowing current Vestry members to complete their terms and electing to the new, reduced size at subsequent annual meetings).
3. Vote: At the subsequent meeting (with a quorum present and a month of consideration in-between), at least two-thirds of the Vestry members present must vote in favor for the change to be adopted.
4. Parish Communication: Communicate the decision and process to the congregation in clear terms.
5. Alignment with Canons: The change will not take effect in a manner that brings St. Peter's out of compliance with the Constitutions and Canons of The Episcopal Church, or with the laws of the State of Georgia.

Discussion ensued: No action to be taken at this meeting. This is informational and up for discussion at the next meeting. Beth McDonald, Mary Lee Beach, Regina Holderness and Ken Cote all rotate off the Vestry in January 2026.

OLD BUSINESS:

Finance: Shanti Stone reviewed the finances for July 2025 and YTD. July had a drop in both non-pledge and pledge income. Non-pledge income was down 32% and Pledge income was down 9.5%. Total income for July was \$36,167, \$6K or 12 % below budget. The feel is that St. Peter's parishioners are still in summer travel mode. Expenses were pretty much on target. YTD (Jan – July) total income is \$805,000, up \$31K or 4% and expenses are down 4% or \$26K. Expenses are being managed carefully.

2024 CPA Review: Shannon Brett of Holland, Bromley, Barnhill & Brett presented the results of the CPA review of St. Peter's 2024 financial accounts. The CPA review identified no issues requiring management action. She discussed the "Management" (Communications) letter and presented the financial statements and notes in detail.

Stewardship: The Stewardship campaign will start September 21st with a celebration brunch. The theme is "I am the Bread of Life". The focus will be Stewardship as our grateful response to God's generosity. The committee intends to celebrate all of our gifts, time, talent and treasure which work together to enable the Mission of St. Peter's. At the brunch, we ask the Vestry members volunteer to be table leaders to assist with planned activities.

Associate Rector Report: *Small groups will be starting. 100 parishioners have signed up to participate. Leaders will be contacting parishioners to discuss weekly meeting times. *Building & Grounds is still working on the HVAC system. It needs a humidistat and Carrier didn't install it. *New Comer's - a few new people have come to church. Kelly gave names and contact info for Vestry members to talk to.

Rector's Report: *Strategy – Kelly & David held the first leadership meeting which was very successful & informative. Need to hold them more often. * Communications: phase 1 of the comms proposal. Kelly is still working on the new logo. The website is still be worked on. *REALM – what do vestry members think of it? Kelly to investigate Planning Center and Tithely to compare to Realm. Need to review what we use Realm for. Right now, it's basically a directory. *Endowment – Regina and Ken met with Ed. The Charter for Endowment will be reviewed. *Finance Capital Campaign – Ann Richardson specialized in endowment creation. She will help St. Peter's move forward with a capital campaign. *Discernment: Susanne is a postulant and started General Seminary. Rebekah Matthews has been recommended for Nomination. Interviews are scheduled for early October.

Executive Session

Adjourned 6:35 p.m.

Next Meeting: September 25th, 2025 @ 4:30 p.m.

