



March Vestry Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 6pm
Diocesan House Council Room
Dinner hosts: Julia & Barbara

Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.

Vestry Members Present

Christopher Breunig
Martha Craig
Phil Haas, Junior Warden for Finance
Greg Hamm, Senior Warden
Sam Herring
Hannah Hochkeppel (Zoom)
Becky Kacel, Diocesan Member
Julia Logan, Junior Warden for Facilities
Mark Lundquist
Sarah McCord
Deborah Person
Peter Snyder, Junior Warden for Stewardship
The Very Rev. Steve Thomason, Dean
Alexandra Thompson
The Rev. Gail Wheatley, Diocesan Member

Vestry Members Absent

Canon Valerie Reinke, Bishop's Representative

Officers Present

Lynne Cobb, Treasurer (Zoom)
Barbara Erickson, Clerk
Re Knack, Chancellor (Zoom)

Staff Members Present

Erik Donner, Cathedral Administrator
The Rev. Canon Emily Griffin, Canon Vicar

Guests

John Hoerster, Chancellor Emeritus and Affordable Housing Committee chair (Zoom)
Scott Kovacs, Affordable Housing Committee member (Zoom)

Dean Thomason opened the meeting with our Land Acknowledgement and a prayer at 6:00 PM. Thanks were given to Julia and Barbara for providing this evening's dinner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the January 21, 2025 Vestry Meeting minutes.
A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the January 26, 2025 Annual Parish Meeting minutes.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the February 1, 2025 Vestry Retreat minutes.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

Affordable Housing Update

John Hoerster, committee chair, provided background and reiterated the themes present since the start of this committee in November 2022 and the consistent “yes to affordable housing” from the vestry. This leads to the news and opportunity to select Redwood Housing as our development partner on this project.

The themes are 1) the cathedral community accepted affordable housing as best use of the land, 2) the criteria were consistently applied when interviewing potential partners, 3) “No decision have been made.”, 4) during our “pause” with the project, Redwood Housing and Great Expectations expressed interest. Interviews took place with Redwood Housing impressing the committee with the quality of their submission and their alignment of with our criteria.

Therefore, the Affordable Housing Committee recommends vestry approve Redwood Housing as our housing development partner.

A motion to authorize the Affordable Housing Committee to engage in the negotiation of a Memorandum of Agreement with Redwood Housing was made and carried.

Anticipating positive action from the vestry, John provided the next steps as a draft of the agreement was requested and received from Redwood.

1. Memorandum of Agreement will be finalized and brought to the vestry within the next month or so.
2. Communication roadmap – meeting with public officials to seek input and support and coordinate with Redwood, who is also interested in community engagement.
3. Consideration in the Affordable Housing project that Saint Mark’s entity serve as a community-based organization, not only for funding needs, but outreach in the Capitol Hill area for affordable housing and justices issues.

Dean Thomason expressed deep gratitude for John for his leadership and patience, Scott Kovacs, Re Knack and Greg Hamm.

Sanctuary Update

The Rev. Canon Emily Griffin reported that 50 members have signed up to be involved with sanctuary. Training for the staff, greeters, and ushers is underway and signs stating “Not a Public Area” have been posted around the cathedra. A judicial warrant is required for entry. We have renewed our partnership with Casa Latina.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to modify Statement of Lament and Commitment to Action, item 7 of the Commitment to Action, to remove the language “...we will block, interfere with and obstruct the deportation of immigrants...” to now read “...we will oppose the deportation of immigrants...”

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Vestry went into Executive Session and Barbara Erickson, Lynne Cobb, and Erik Donner were excused.

OLD BUSINESS

Parochial Report

Dean Thomason reminded the vestry that the Parochial Report was approved by electronic vote and filed prior to the March 1, 2025 deadline. A copy of the filed report is in the Dropbox.

Mutual Ministry Goals 2025

Greg Hamm, Senior Warden, conducted a review of the changes made which led to a discussion about the purpose of the Mutual Ministry Goals. The current order of the goals was reordered to:

- 1) Execute a successful capital campaign in 2025,
- 2) Continue the development of Affordable Housing on cathedral grounds,
- 3) Strengthen the vision of stewardship a year-round spiritual practice, and
- 4) Explore an appropriate role for St. Mark's in migrant and immigrant justice.

A motion was made and carried to approve the Mutual Ministry Goals 2025 as amended.

The Dean thanked the wardens for their work on the goals.

Donna Jean's Women's Shelter

Dean Thomason reported Donna Jean's Place opened the last week of February, and the women staying there are very grateful. Plumbers are onsite to fix the bathroom plumbing issues. Additional gifts and Operation Nightwatch helped with this expense. Volunteers are needed to drive vans to bring the women to the shelter in the evenings and in the morning to deliver a light breakfast and lunch. Contact Dean Thomason if you are interested in helping.

Accessibility Task Force

Alexandra Thompson reported that Listening Sessions will be held at the end of April and work is moving forward. They are on track to provide recommendations to the vestry in June.

Pedestrian Safety System

Julia Logan, Junior Warden for Facilities, reported that a quote from TAPCO has been received. Subdean Marc Aubertin, Julia, and a representative from the City of Seattle will meet on March 28 to review the system. The system has several components – a warning sign, flashing light for drivers leaving the driveway and a warning system with light, sound, and vibration for pedestrians. A stop sign will also be placed on the property.

Capital Campaign

Home Gatherings. Greg Ham reported that home gatherings are currently underway and 14 have been held to date. The groups, a mix of those who have previously participated in a campaign and those relatively new to the parish, have been enthusiastic. Questions are being collected and will be shared.

Formation Offerings. Peter Snyder shared that he, James Davidson, and Greg Simon are leading a two-week series, *Generosity as Resistance* on March 19 and March 26.

Special Dean's Forum. Dean Thomason will hold an informal forum on Sunday, April 6 10:10 AM titled "*Why This Capital Project, and Why Now?*"

Campaign Advance Commitments Gathering May 17

Dean Thomason highlighted Saturday, May 17 4:00-6:00 PM in Bloedel Hall when the Advance Commitments Gathering is taking place, with hors d'oeuvres, entertainment, building excitement, and make their pledge. Vestry members should confirm their commitment that evening. If you are unable to attend or require more information, please contact Steve.

Campaign Donor Recognition

Dean Thomason shared that all donors for Living Stones II will be recognized for their generosity, similar to the donor wall on the elevator annex level 4 for Living Stones I. The campaign leadership team has considered the possibility of special recognition or naming opportunities for donors underwriting major projects.

A motion to approve a donor acknowledgment appropriate to the level of giving was made, seconded, and passed.

Steve's Sabbatical Planning

Dean Thomason has submitted a grant application to the Lilly Endowment for his sabbatical, which is planned for April 2026 after Easter Day through the month of July. The grant provides for travel related to the themes and includes family as well as funds for the congregation. Recipients of the grant will be notified in August.

NEW BUSINESS

Leffler Book Fund Withdrawal for Preaching Workshop

Dean Thomason reported that a Preaching Education for Clergy Workshop will be held on April 3. Fifty preachers have registered to attend the workshop in Bloedel Hall and via Zoom in the afternoon; attend an off campus 5 PM reception with the pilgrims who went on the 2024 Celtic pilgrimage; and then return to the cathedral nave at 7 PM to attend a public reflection "The Better Angels of Our Nature" which has over 415 registrations. The afternoon workshop is underwritten by the Leffler Book Fund and is held approximately once every 18 months.

A motion to authorize a \$6,000 disbursement from the Leffler Book Fund (part of Diocesan Investment Fund) for the preaching workshop was made, seconded, and carried.

Appointment of new Diocesan Member of the Vestry

Becky Kacel is in her third year, and The Rev. Gail Wheatley is in her second year as diocesan members of the vestry. Our bylaws require the vestry to appoint the diocesan member with the advice and consent of the Bishop of Olympia. Dean Thomason has met Sophie Hager Hume, a retired attorney and a parishioner of Epiphany Parish, Seattle who is thrilled to serve on the vestry and in the broader church. With the consent of the vestry and the bishop, she will be invited to join the vestry in April.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to appoint Sophie Hager Hume to the vestry as a Diocesan Member, term expiring Annual Meeting 2028.

Global Missions Grant

Elizabeth Antley, our grant writer, applied for and received a \$7,500 grant from the Global Missions Grants for the benefit of Princess Basma Rehabilitation Center for Children in East Jerusalem. They opened a satellite clinic in Gaza City to care for children who were injured and have rehabilitation needs from the ongoing reality of the Gaza war. The \$7,500 grant money plus an additional \$2,500 from the Clergy Discretionary Fund has been sent for the work of the satellite clinic.

Amistad Lease Issues

Dean Thomason informed the vestry on the status of Seattle Amistad School who has been a St. Nicholas Building tenant since early 2022. Amistad experienced challenges during the school year that affected their enrollment and tuition, which in turn had a negative impact on the cash flow to Saint Mark's. With Gage Academy of Art having departed summer 2024, and no new tenants due to accessibility issues, conversations with Amistad resulted in deferred rent. Amistad expects an infusion of cash from their tax returns to repay the deferred rent. Any revision to their lease agreement is dependent on the repayment of the rent due.

Letters of Support for Ordination to the Priesthood

Dean Thomason announced that Lynne Markova and Kelly Moody will be ordained at Saint Mark's on June 14, along with Adam Conley from St. Paul's, Seattle. Kelly will remain in Tennessee with the Diocese of Tennessee. Both her and her husband's families are there, and they are at home. Lynne Markova is completing her work at General Seminary, and has been called to serve as Priest-in-Charge at St. Paul's, Port Townsend. Adam will serve a two-year curacy at Saint Mark's beginning July 14, 2025.

A motion was made and carried to support Kelly Moody for ordination to the priesthood.

A motion was made and carried to support Lynne Markova for ordination to the priesthood.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Senior Warden

Greg Hamm reflected on his experience of home gatherings and how it different it feels to gather with the parish in smaller groups; struck by the concept of welcome – all about welcoming people being in, helping newcomers be comfortable, reflection of this at home gatherings. The phrase “Wherever you are in your spiritual journey you are welcome here” brought and kept Greg here. We are a place that welcomes people which enables a sense of community. Related to Capital Campaign thought expressed that you can have a church without a building but it is a lot harder. Hold on to the idea of Welcome.

Dean

- Thank you notes
- Vandalism on campus was caught on the camera on the north side of the cathedral. The person removed a parking sign, damaged the security camera, and dumped the compost bins over.
- The Rev. Canon Pat Taylor died March 21 in her sleep. Her service will be held on April 4 2:00. Her wish was to have her ashes committed on the south end of the front lawn; the site selected is under the cypress tree.
- As part of the community engagement for affordable housing by calling on elected officials, a 15-minute meeting with Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal turned into 45 minutes learning about all the good things Saint Mark’s is doing in the community. Will be meeting with Seattle City Councilmember Alexis Mercedes Rinck.

Files of Note—

Thank you letters: AFEDJ, Ballard Food Bank, Operation Nightwatch
2024 List of Donors
St. Luke’s, Seattle Giving Statement

MINISTRY/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Worship & Prayer—Julia, Sarah, Deborah, Mark, Hannah

Quarterly meeting occurred in February. Anyone is welcome to attend the meeting.

Finance—Phil, Lynne

Full audit of 2024 to be completed and submitted to diocese by June 15. What happens with money while waiting? Funds are invested in low-risk and high yield. Early campaign money placed in the Fidelity account. Amistad could potentially affect our balance sheet – deferred rent line.

Facilities—Julia, Lynne

Several new members.

Stewardship—Peter, Deborah, Alexandra

Met beginning of month and thinking about stewardship campaign. It will be a little bit different since the Capital Campaign is shortening our Annual Commitment Campaign in the fall to four weeks. Looking for new members, especially younger people. The Ministry Fair will be held on May 4 celebrating the gifts of time and talent.

Creation Care—Deborah, Gail

Deborah attended their Thursday morning coffee meeting; they were happy to know vestry is supporting their efforts. Gail met with Marjorie Ringness and Kathy Minsch for a long conversation about folding into the Restorative Justice Ministry. They expressed their investment in the gains made over the years and concern about any loss of goals; without leadership and no meetings, they feel a connection can be maintained with the congregation through what they, individually, can do at home. More dialogue to come.

Intergenerational Council—Martha, Valerie, Sarah, Mark

Minutes include posted links to videos, sending out calls to action for confirmation sponsors, a replacement for Natalie Willis whose meal train role is ending, and Wendy needs help for the Easter egg hunt.

Restorative Justice Council—Christopher, Hannah, Peter

Fruit borne from the two book discussions is leading to next steps.

Communications—Alexandra, Sam, Mark

The committee has been reviewing the social media survey and discussing how the results can impact the communication strategy for the cathedral.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER

Checkouts were given, and the closing prayer was offered by Alexandra Thompson. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Erickson
Clerk

Erik Donner
Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of note

April 13-19	Holy Week
April 20	Easter Day
May 3	Cathedral Day
May 17	Advance Commitments Gathering
June 6	Parish Banquet for Campaign
June 8	Campaign Ingathering/Pentecost