Grace Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

March 2, 2025

Members of the Vestry Present

Zane Barlow (2028)

Roosevelt Carter (2026)

Marissa Cheplick (2028)

Martha Humphrey (2027)

Yetunde Laniran (2026) Jr. Warden

Nora McLaughlin (2027)

Jennifer Traeger (2028)

Kevin Walsh (2026) Co-Sr. Warden, Rector's Advisor

Stephen Weeks (2027)

Jennifer Yeast (2026)

Clergy Present

The Rev. Martin Elfert

The Rev. Liz Klein

The Rev. Lara Halsey

Others Present

Nik Grimsby, Diocesan Administrative Assistant

Charles McGee, Co-Sr. Warden, Meeting Chair

Kathleen Park-Lindsay

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk

Members of the Vestry and Clergy Absent

Xander Almeider (2028)

Warren Burkholder, Treasurer

1. Formation

1.1 Opening Prayers

- The meeting began at 12:06 pm with Charles extending a welcome to the new Vestry members and the two guests, Kathleen Park-Lindsay and Nik Grimsby. Everyone present gave a brief introduction of themselves. This was followed by Song of Solomon, Canticle 5, read in an abbreviated form of lectio divina.
- Roosevelt shared a Rose and Thorn noting it has been a challenging year for the Finance Committee to develop Grace's 2025 budget as the prior treasurer was a CPA who was able to draft the budget on his own. He gave many thanks to the Finance Committee and especially to Sue Jensen for her last-minute document creation for the budget presentation. Liz gave thanks for the wonderful music Sue brings to Grace. Yetunde was grateful that less paper will be used for future bulletins, thus saving some trees. Marissa thanked her fellow acolytes for their help when she is serving on Sundays. Martin had a great visit with Demetria Keck and reported she is doing well and enjoying her stay in the rehab facility. Charles remembered Barbara Leighton and all her support in the past. Following the Rose and Thorn sharing, Martin offered a prayer.

2. Items

2.1 Consent Agenda

- Charles asked if there were any corrections to the Vestry minutes from the February 18, 2025, meeting, which were distributed prior to this meeting. There were none, and Nora made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, and Roosevelt seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the minutes were approved as presented.
- Martin reviewed the 4 points he included in his report. He added he has told the Diocese he would love to be on a focus group to revise the parochial report format to help increase its relevancy. As part of his report, Martin included a letter from Dean Williams at Trinity Cathedral in Monrovia, Liberia regarding the Bore Hole Well Project. Yetunde expressed concern that water from the well is being sold instead of shared freely. Charles noted the expenses involved with maintaining the well and keeping it safe, and selling some of the water is necessary for Trinity to meet the expenses. He added that the Cathedral is struggling financially. Martin concluded his comments on his report by asking for the Vestry's help in promoting the Catechumenate, which will be starting soon and has proved to be very beneficial to many participants.
- Nik was present to represent the Diocese regarding Safe Church training, which all Vestry members should complete every 3 years. Background checks are also required as part of Safe Church Training, and Nik will e-mail Vestry members who need to complete the training or background check. The training can be done online or in person, and the Diocese offers both options. In person training will take place soon at Grace, with April 26 as a possible date. Confirmation will be provided soon.

- Yetunde reported that the Building and Grounds Committee will next be meeting on Tuesday at 8AM. The Committee will review the list of projects and determine which ones can be done now. She asked for any Vestry members interested in the proposed kitchen updates or community dinners to contact her. Kevin suggested adding an alarm system to Grace and said Nick Fox has received a proposal to add one. There was a discussion about the pros and cons of an alarm system, and the Building and Grounds Committee will discuss an alarm system and the issues raised.

2.2 Treasurer's Report

- Warren was absent and did not provide a report, but his hard work on the budget was noted. Roosevelt said there is a need for a quarterly report, which will be discussed by the Finance Committee.

2.3 Vestry Retreat 2025

- Martin said the Vestry holds 2 retreats each year, and the Spring retreat is usually a one-day event on a Saturday. Martin will check with Cameron Denney to find out if her property in Sandy is available on an upcoming Saturday as this has been a lovely location in the past for retreats.

2.4 Deacon Report

- Liz noted there is a Zoom class coming up soon from the Episcopal Church called "Love God, Love God's World." The course has 9 sessions, beginning April 23, and meets every other Wednesday from 6:30PM to 7:45PM.

2.5 Curate Report

- Lara said she is excited about the Community Dinners moving from a once a month to a once a week. She also noted Grace Art Camp will be doing a garden, and she would appreciate feedback on the best way to do composting.

2.6 Companion Parish Project Update

- Charles provided an update on his family's recent trip to Monrovia, Liberia, and the warm welcome they received. There will be a slide show soon about the Bore Hole Project to share at Grace. He said the upkeep of the well is challenging and security is needed to keep the well safe. An invitation was extended to Grace for a mission trip to Trinity Cathedral in 2026, and Charles will present the invitation to the Companion Parish Committee.

2.7 Other Business

- Kevin said he needs volunteers to do gardening on the Grace campus and asked for ideas to get the word out. A Grace Notes article and an announcement on Sundays in church were suggested, and Kevin appreciated both suggestions.
- Yetunde reported the Grace Foundation needs more Board members, and Cathy Gibson has offered to participate. As Vestry approval is needed for Grace Foundation Board members, Yetunde will provide biographical information about Cathy for the next Vestry meeting.
- Kevin noted the Equity and Inclusion policy needs a yearly review, and the Grace Bylaws also need a review. Additionally, he noted Grace's church building will have its 100-year anniversary either at the end of 2026 or beginning of 2027. A proposal will be coming soon to the Vestry to raise money for a project to produce a book of the history of Grace to commemorate the building's anniversary. He briefly outlined ideas for the project, but more information is coming soon.
- Martin noted all Vestry members should sign the conflict-of-interest document, and new Vestry members should have the communications document used by the Vestry, which Kevin said he has provided to the new Vestry members. He also noted that the Diocese will soon be providing support for parishes for audits, and that a review of Grace's staffing is coming up soon.
- Charles said he has updated the Sunday greeter and Moment of Grace lists.

2.8 Moment of Grace

- Roosevelt shared the lovely poem by Maya Angelou entitled "Human Family."

2.9 Closing Prayer

- Liz offered a closing prayer, and Charles adjourned the meeting at 1:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk