Grace Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2025

Members of the Vestry Present

Roosevelt Carter (2026)

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)

Clergy Present

The Rev. Martin Elfert

The Rev. Liz Klein

The Rev. Laura Halsey

Others Present

Sue Jensen, Organist and Choir Director

Charles McGee, Co-Sr. Warden, Meeting Chair

Robin Gault, Substitute Clerk

Members of the Vestry Absent

Xander Almeider (2028)

Zane Barlow (2028)

Warren Burkholder, Treasurer

Marissa Cheplick (2028)

Jennifer Yeast (2026)

Formation

The meeting began at 12:05 with Roses and Thorns. Martin thanked everyone for the work that went into the great Easter services. The Choral Scholars were a wonderful addition to the music. Yetunde reported that we need more volunteers for ongoing Grace ministries, such as coffee hour cleanup. There was a discussion about way to recruit more people, perhaps with targeted "asks." Martin noted that we have a Welcome Committee, and Martin visits newcomers, but neither of these involves a focused "ask" for volunteer help. Martin thinks that trying to immediately recruit newcomers would seem welcoming to some folks but off putting for others. ("Some folks need to be needed, but others don't.") We will use the State of Grace Sunday June 29 (all church potluck) to seek more volunteers. Yetunde thanked Sue for sweeping the courtyard and church grounds on Easter weekend. Liz thanked Nik for setting up the Parish Hall chairs for the Easter Vigil.

This was followed by the Song of Songs, Canticle 6, read in an abbreviated form of lectio divina.

(Note that the Development Project Updates on the agenda were not presented. We hope to have more information soon.)

Items

<u>Consent Agenda</u>

Charles asked if there were any corrections to the Vestry minutes from the March 2, 2025, meeting which were distributed prior to this meeting. There being no corrections, Nora made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, and Roosevelt seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented.

Martin commented on the Rector's Report that we need more information from Northwest Housing Alternatives. Many changes are happening.

Yetunde said that there is nothing new for the Junior Warden's report. It's great that the basement is now dry. Kevin is contacting roofing companies about reroofing the church building. Martin thinks that we should seek some financial help from the diocese and the community. Our buildings are in use seven days a week. Martin thinks that the present roof will last for another 5-7 years, giving us time to possibly raise the rent. Should we ask Grace Institute for support? PHAME? Yetunde reported that Grace Institute plans to expand when PHAME leaves, but Martin thinks that PHAME is likely to decide to stay at Grace.

Yetunde noted that we need to increase access from the parking lot for those using walkers or wheelchairs.

Yetunde reported that Rose's Equipment has given us an estimate of $13,561 for the commercial dishwasher that Grace needs. After some discussion within the parish over the merits of another gas stove versus an electric range, it was decided that we should get a gas stove with an electric ignition system which would not need a pilot light. She will seek a combined estimate from Rose's Equipment for the two appliances.

Finance Committee Report

Roosevelt reported that the Finance Committee budget report is in process. It should be ready by the next Vestry meeting. The committee wants to convert it to Excel format. It should be ready by the June 1st Vestry meeting. Roosevelt will be stepping down as the Committee Chair after the second quarter report. He is creating a transition plan for a new Chair and new members.

Vestry Retreat

The next Vestry Retreat is planned for Saturday, June 7. Martin will find a venue, and Charles will notify absent Vestry members of the plan.

Grace Centennial

Martin, Charles, Kevin, Yetunde, and Sue will form a committee to plan the Grace Centennial celebration in 2026 or 2027 *(*to celebrate the completion of the sanctuary.)

Grace Columbarium

Sue suggested that we publicize the columbarium and provide information about when people can visit as well as about how to make arrangements for interment.

Equity & Inclusion Policy and GMEC Bylaws Annual Review

This has been postponed.

Safe Church Training

Liz reported that a few people still need to take this.

Grace Gala 2025 Update

Yetunde reported that the theme of this year's Gala will be "For the Love of Christ." Liz suggested that we consider raising funds for a new ramp to provide better access for those using walkers or wheelchairs.

Fundraising Calendar

Sue and Nick are working on a calendar showing Grace fundraising dates and special events. Charles suggested that we assign a specific Sunday to celebrate each of Grace's ministries.

Communications & Conflict of Interest Policies (Vestry Members Signatures Required)

These were not distributed.

Proposal to Paint West Wall of Church

Fr. Martin reported that Grace Institute has submitted a design of swimming salmon to be painted by Art Camp members on the exterior west wall of the church building. After some discussion, Nora moved that we approve the project, and Jennifer T. seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Kevin volunteered to mark the plantings in that area so that the Art Camp members could avoid stepping on them.

Curate Updates

Rev. Lara reported that we are having good participation in the Sunday night dinners. Lara is planting peas for Grace Institute to work on gardening. She also plans to arrange a board game night once a month.

Cathy Gibson, Grace Foundation Board Nominee

Yetunde nominated Cathy Gibson as a new member of the Grace Foundation Board. Nora moved to accept the nomination, and Jennifer T. seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Yetunde reported that the Foundation Board voted to give Grace Institute $50,000 per year for each of the next three years.

Companion Parish Project Report

Charles reported that the press release about the project is being widely distributed.

Moment of Grace

Nora read "By Which I Mean Repent," a poem by Catherine Abbey Hodges.

Other Business

Martha is working on Grace's social media presence. We should form a committee for this.

Next Meeting

The next Vestry meeting will be Sunday, June 1st, at 12 noon. Charles will notify absent members.

Closing Prayer/Go in Peace

Rev. Liz gave the closing prayer, and Charles adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Gault, Substitute Clerk