

**Grace Memorial Episcopal Church**

**Vestry Meeting Minutes**

**June 28, 2026**

**Members of the Vestry Present**

Marissa Cheplick (2028), Treasurer

Kirstin Greene (2029)

Martha Humphrey (2027)

Shannon Jones (2-year, 2028)

Yetunde Laniran (2029)

Nora McLaughlin (2027) Co-Sr. Warden, Rector's Advisor

Kathleen Park-Lindsay (2029)

André Pruitt (2029)

Jennifer Traeger (2028)

Stephen Weeks (2027) Co-Sr. Warden, Meeting Chair

**Clergy Present**

The Rev. Martin Elfert

The Rev. Lara Halsey

**Others Present**

Seth Truby, Family Promise Executive Director

Cathy Gibson

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk

**Members of the Vestry and Clergy Absent**

***Prior to June 28, 2026, Vestry Meeting:***

Stephen sent the following motion via email to Vestry members prior to the June 28 Vestry meeting:

*I move that the Vestry authorizes the transfer of \$50K from investments to checking in order to meet expenses. This will cover roughly four months of deficit spending.*

Yetunde seconded the motion via email, and the motion passed via email votes prior to the June 28, 2026, Vestry meeting.

## **1. Formation**

### **1.1 Opening**

- The meeting was called to order at 12:07pm by Stephen followed by an opening prayer in song led by Martin. Stephen welcomed Seth and Cathy and briefly explained the format of the Vestry meeting.

## **2. Items**

### **2.1 Moment of Grace**

- Kathleen shared a story about one of the regular sack lunch guests who asked if he could play the piano that is in the narthex. He was told he could, and he played beautifully for a time, and his playing was enjoyed by all who heard him.

### **2.2 Roses**

- Stephen offered a rose to Seth for striving to make the Family Promise (FP) program work with Grace. Yetunde thanked Myra Clark and Cathy for requesting further discussion in response to budget-related emails; she is grateful to those who speak up with concerns. She also thanked Marissa for all her work on the Finance Committee, and Kirsten added her thanks to the entire Finance Committee for their many hours of work. Lara gave thanks to Nick Fox for his help with campus clean-up and keeping the campus safe for Art Camp participants.

### **2.3 Consent Agenda**

- The Consent Agenda contains the Rector's Report, the May Vestry minutes, a Grace Sanctuary Centennial Committee update, a report on the Sunday Night Dinner ministry, and a 2026 budget template. There was a correction to the minutes. Yetunde moved to accept the Consent Agenda as corrected and André seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion was approved.

### **2.4 Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) between Grace Memorial Episcopal Church (GMEC) and Family Promise**

- The MOU was distributed to the Vestry prior to the meeting, and Stephen asked Martin to explain it further. Martin said Chris Scott, who is a real estate attorney for the Dioceses, drafted the MOU and has done many prior to this one. Seth did not make

many changes and none that needed a legal review. Martin noted there is language in the MOU for a buy-out provision in case of a radical change for either GMEC or FP. The goal is a long-term partnership between GMEC and FP, and the lease, which will be reviewed at a later date, will aim to anticipate possible rough spots and work on building trust. Seth added some comments and noted the project at GMEC was highlighted on a recent national FP call. He asked the Vestry for questions and a discussion on financial matters regarding lease protections followed. It was noted that the MOU is a promise and the lease will be binding. Families will not move into either house until the lease is signed. Seth suggested a lease discussion in October, the lease signed in November, and families moving in during January. Full rent will be paid beginning in November when some staff members move into the houses. There will be a full-time case manager on site. Several Vestry members requested that lease discussions begin prior to October in order to allow enough time to fully understand the document. Seth was asked for his ideas on possible boundaries and interactions between FP and GMEC, and he said the partnership will be developed as time goes on but will be preceded by legal considerations. There will be a document with items such as volunteer opportunities, which will be developed with GMEC, and he noted the relationship will develop organically. Seth was asked to share some current relationship agreements to give the Vestry an idea of possible aspirational goals. It would also help to share ideas of potential benefits with the congregation beyond the financial benefits. Martin and Kirsten offered to work with Seth to develop an aspirational document.

- Nora summarized the MOU discussion by noting the following:
  - Seth will provide copies of current agreements for the Vestry to review.
  - An aspirational document will be available as the Vestry is working through the lease review.
  - Beginning the lease review process was requested to begin well before October.
- There was no further discussion, and Kathleen made a motion that the Vestry directs Martin to sign the Memorandum Of Understanding with Family Promise as circulated to the Vestry on June 18, 2026. André seconded the motion. There was a brief discussion about allowing enough time for future decisions. The Sr. Wardens, Martin and a Finance Committee representative will work together on the lease, and Martin will be GMEC's representative for decisions needed as described in the MOU. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed with one abstention.

## 2.5 Finance Committee Recommendation Re: Solar Panels

- Stephen noted the Finance Committee has discussed the proposed expenditure for solar panels on the two campus houses and recommends moving forward with the project. It is anticipated that the initial outlay by GMEC will be refunded when GMEC's tax return is filed in 2027, resulting in a net cost of \$0. Martin added additional information about the benefits of using solar energy including a reduced electric bill, increased value to the houses, and an outward and visible sign of the house improvements and overall project.

Seth spoke about the benefits of solar energy from personal experience. The roofs will need to be replaced before adding solar panels, but reroofing was already planned. The solar company selected, Earthlight Solar Solutions, is local and highly rated. There was concern about the quick timeline, and Seth noted the FP board had similar concerns. Seth only very recently found out about this solar opportunity and quick action was needed because of rapidly approaching deadline. There was additional discussion with clarifications on timelines and rebate concerns. Marissa explained that there is a line item in the budget for capital projects, which can be used for the solar panels. It was noted again that a full rebate is expected, so the net cost for GMEC should be \$0, and the Finance Committee recommends the expenditure.

- André made a motion that the Vestry directs Martin to sign the two contracts with Earthlight Solar Solutions as circulated to the Vestry and Finance Committee on June 19, 2026. Yetunde seconded the motion, and there was a further brief discussion. André called the motion, and it passed.

## 2.6 New Business

- Stephen said additional business will be discussed at the next Vestry meeting, which will be August 23 following the recess in July.

## 2.7 Adjournment

- Martin offered a blessing, and Stephen adjourned the meeting at 1:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk