

Vestry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Richmond, Virginia
Minutes of the April 21, 2026 Meeting

The following vestry members were present: Molly Anderson, Bill Davis, James Discoll, Meg Eckman, Katherine Farley, Wortie Ferrell (virtual), Darrell Headrick, Chip Jamerson, Greta Kidd, Elizabeth Peay (virtual), Joan Putney (virtual), Andrew Robertson, Gayle Royals.

Staff Present: John Rohrs, Will Stanley, Kathleen Wilson-Kennedy, Cate Anthony, Sarah Bartenstein

Welcome and Check-Ins:

Opening: vestry members shared the "Heart of their Week."

John Rohrs opened the meeting with prayer.

The vestry approved the minutes of the March 2026 meeting.

Focus Time:

Cate Anthony spoke about her sabbatical coming this summer. She will be walking St. Cuthbert's Way in Scotland and then will travel to northern England. Cate will conclude the summer with several weeks in Maine. In Cate's absence, Will will coordinate with the family ministry team, and John Rohrs will coordinate adult formation.

Sarah Bartenstein announced that she will be retiring after more than 20 years at St. Stephen's, probably in mid-September 2026. Staff will conduct a search to fill Sarah's position as director of communications.

On-going Business:

Kathleen Wilson-Kennedy reported on the search for a new financial management accounting firm. She received five RFP's. John Rohrs, Will Stanley, Kathleen Wilson-Kennedy, Randy Seibert, Jay Moore, and Molly Anderson interviewed the top two firms, Trustward and Jitasa. They chose Richmond-based Trustward. We anticipate Trustward will be more responsive to our needs. The provider cost is \$74,000 per year. Kathleen reported that plans are in place for the migration of financial information. On May 1, Trustward will take over all financial procedures, and GuideServe will no longer be involved as the provider. GuideServe has stated that by July 10, they will be in compliance for all reporting that has been lacking, including April, May, and June. Trustward's COO will be the main point of contact for St. Stephen's, along with their head of accounting. A motion was made and seconded to change our financial management to Trustward, with a unanimous voice vote in favor of the change.

Executive Director's Report:

Kathleen Wilson-Kennedy reported that our cash amounts are healthy for now, as are our investments. There is a surplus, as revenue is higher than expected due to prepaid pledges and partly due to endowments. Expenses are also greater than predicted because of the

amount of ice and snow cleanup needed. Personnel costs are higher due to salary bonuses and healthcare premiums that were paid out in the first quarter rather than spread out over the year. The cash amounts are doing well, as we received about \$40,000 more than anticipated. We are largely on track with the budget in spite of the unexpected costs due to the winter weather. Kathleen reported that the Facility Use Policy is in final form.

Junior Warden's Report:

John Rohrs gave the update on capital projects. Roof repairs were done last week. The leak under the foundation needs to be further investigated, and the company who did the initial repair is to return. Regarding the fellowship hall flooring, David Ellis is to finalize arrangements for the return of the firm which did the original work. We are still awaiting more bids to compare with James River's bids for HVAC work. Parking lot restriping will take place in early summer. The patch above the lectern will be painted.

Clergy Reports:

Rector's Report:

- John Rohrs discussed a security concern involving a person who entered the sextons' office, using their computer and a sexton's credit card to place a personal order. Senior staff followed up and took appropriate action to ask her not to return to campus and to repay the purchase cost. When she came back to campus two more times, staff sent a formal, written notice forbidding her from being on campus with the threat of further action. This step was taken in consultation with the wardens and the bishop's office. The person is not deemed to be a threat but likely needs help and support that we cannot provide.
- John also reported that information we have received information from our insurance carrier permitting the use of sexton Randy Ransone for security. Randy has the necessary certifications for this position and will be providing security on Sundays. John also discussed the possibility of using an off-duty police officer for our Saturday farmers market. This plan is likely to be implemented in the next week or two.
- John discussed the vestry retreat scheduled for June 14 at Roslyn. Shirley Smith-Graham will lead us in a Mutual Ministry Review of how we are all working together as governing leadership. Molly Anderson added to the discussion, explaining that we would analyze how we are doing against our core values instead of the goals formulated two years ago. Vestry members expressed interest in reviewing those goals, and John will include them in the retreat packet.
- John discussed the diocesan convention to be held on November 5-7, 2026. Those who have attended in the past and have expressed interest in attending again this year are Gussie Bannard, Kathy Brock, Bill Davis, Darrell Headrick, Lynn Ivey, Anne Pinion, and Meg Tucker. John also proposed Chip Jamerson, Allen Jamerson, and Gayle Royals as delegates. The vestry approved this slate.

- John discussed the information in the vestry packet regarding the Lilly Endowment and stated that St. Stephen's is well-positioned to apply for a grant. The vestry will approve the application when it is completed. John has discussed this with the whole staff and reports positive initial feedback.

Vicar's Report:

Will reminded everyone of the Ministry Night on May 7 and requested notification if your committee is meeting. Please also let him know who will be the liaison to give a committee report. This information should be sent to Will by the end of next week.

Will shared information about Stephanie Peramus and Candace Pate, who are both in the discernment process for ordination and explained where each of them is in this process.

Will also discussed the upcoming visit by Bishop Bourlakas. During this visit, we expect 65 parishioners to be confirmed and five to be baptized.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Gayle Royals, Register