

St. James' Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting (Hybrid)

March 25, 2025

Present: The Rev. Pilar Padron Parnell, Senior Warden Doug Smith, Junior Warden John Devins, Kathy Ploufe, Carol Murphy, Kris Perkins, Judy Holmes, David O'Neill, Beckie Hidy and Tara Covert-Lanning.

On Zoom: Nicole Bova

Absent: Marie Hughes and John Buterbaugh.

6:00 PM: Call to Order

Opening Prayer: Mother Pilar

An agenda was sent out to the Vestry, prior to the meeting, with supporting documents.

Quick Action Items:

1. February Minutes: The Vestry reviewed the minutes and found no errors. Tara Covert-Lanning made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Carol Murphy seconded; Vestry members approved.

Reports

1. Treasurer's Report:

A. February Financials: Nicole Bova presented the February financial reports. The Vestry reviewed the Balance Report, YTD Budget and Giving Report. Our Giving Report continues to be better than expected and Nicole noted that March is usually the time St. James' receives an unpledged large donation. David O'Neill made a motion to approve the reports; Kris Perkins seconded; Vestry approved.

B. The Vestry entered into a discussion regarding how St. James' should use large donations. St. James has always paid the Diocesan Assessment, however payment of our Diocesan Pledge varies each year according to St. James' budget. Due to our budget deficit, St. James was unable to pay our 2025 pledge. It was suggested that St. James' should donate a certain percentage towards our pledge when we receive large donations. Vestry members strongly agreed. Senior Warden Doug made a motion to pay \$2,500 towards our Diocesan Pledge upon receipt of the \$25,000 donation.; Judy Holmes seconded; Vestry approved.

2. Senior Warden's Report:

A. The Vestry is grateful to the Spalding family for housing the Parnell family until 5/25.

B. Fencing permit has been obtained and is moving forward.

C. Siding for the Rectory is on hold.

D. Perusing estimates to refinish kitchen floor. Judy Holmes will get a bid from Stanley Steamers and email Vestry members with estimate. Approval of selected bid can be approved by Vestry via email.

3. Junior Warden's Report:

A., Through discussions with Cathy Hobart, Controller for the Episcopal Diocese of CNY, Junior Warden, John Devins learned that she has resources available for building repairs via foundations, grants and loans. He suggests we consult with Cathy Hobart when other major projects arise.

Old Business:

1. Jumble Sale: Beckie Hidy is recruiting volunteers and form a Planning Committee that will be within a few weeks.

2. Stewardship: Mother Pilar stressed that stewardship is a year-round program. April will focus on time and training for Worship Ministry. The following months will highlight a different ministry each month.

3. Piano: Approval to receive the donated piano is on hold until moving estimates and letter regarding ownership of piano and moving cost payments is received from donor.

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New Business:

1. Rectory Renovations:

A. Mother Pilar thanked Laura Posecznick, Nicole Bova and Doug Smith for their quick actions, calling police, National Grid, fire and insurance, when the tree fell on the Rectory. Doug Smith took pictures verifying the damage. The staff and Doug Smith worked non-stop to find housing for the Parnell family and start repairs as soon as possible.

B. Status of Damage: Mother Pilar reported that the Rectory sustained extensive damage to the inside of the house, the back of the house and foundation. Father Scott's car was also totaled. One Stop Tree has accepted full responsibility for the accident and is relying on the church's insurance adjustor for assessment. Our church insurance is keeping St. James' claim as an open file, as there will be on-going assessments while the back of the Rectory is torn down and an environmentalist inspects the building for possible asbestos contamination.

C. Actions Taken as of 3/25/25:

- Housing secured for the Parnells.
- Pod for furniture ordered.
- Stanley Steamer has cleaned the downstairs of the Rectory.
- The Parnells are pursuing car replacement.
- Fencing around the Rectory will start once the tree stump has been removed.
- MCE Construction has been hired for rebuilding the Rectory, with a primary focus on stabilizing the building.

D. Martha Berry, Esq. Vice Chancellor for the Episcopal Diocese of CNY, has asked for updates, as the Rectory assessments and repairs continue.

2. A Practical Guide to the New York Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act:

Cathy Hobart, Controller for the Episcopal Diocese of CNY, met with Mother Pilar to review the Vestry's plans to make withdrawals from the Foundation in 2025. Due to the percentage amount the Vestry might draw from the Foundation to balance the 2025 budget, the Vestry must review and approve the 8 suggestions given on page 2 of the Practical Guide to the New York Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act as follow:

Standard of Conduct in Managing and Investing Institutional Funds (N-PCL § 552) The Act provides that each person responsible for managing and investing an institutional fund "shall manage and invest the fund in good faith and with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances." N-PCL § 552(b). The Act sets forth basic requirements for satisfying the standard of prudence, including a requirement that an institution make a reasonable effort to verify facts relevant to the management and investment of the fund, and that an institution only incur costs that are reasonable and appropriate. The Act also requires that the following factors, if relevant, be considered in managing and investing an institutional fund: (1) general economic conditions;

- (2) the possible effect of inflation or deflation;
- (3) the expected tax consequences, if any, of investment decisions or strategies;
- (4) the role that each investment or course of action plays within the overall investment portfolio of the fund;
- (5) the expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments;
- (6) other resources of the institution;
- (7) the needs of the institution and the fund to make distributions and to preserve capital; and
- (8) an asset's special relationship or special value, if any, to the purposes of the institution.

Tara Covert made a motion: Upon the advice of Cathy Hobart, Controller for the Episcopal Diocese of CNY, the Vestry has reviewed and is in agreement that the St. James' budget, passed for 2025, is well within the bounds of the New York Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act, and it is our intent to continue with our budget and investment draws as previously passed; David O'Neill seconded; Vestry approved.

3. Lawn Mowing: David O'Neill made the Vestry aware of the need for volunteers to mow the lawn. Several members of the team are unable to continue to participate due to illness.

Rector's Report:

1. Seminarian: Mother Pilar will be mentoring John Gillmester from September 2025 to May 2026. He will be at St James' 8 to 12 hours each week, attending and/or participating in a variety of programs.

2. AED Training: A reminder for Vestry members to attend the AED training this coming Saturday.

3. Director of Children's, Youth and Family Ministries: The job description for this position will be emailed to Vestry within the next few days.

4. Constant Contacts: St. James' is now using Constant Contacts for emails. Please check your Spam folder if not receiving church emails.

The meeting ended with the praying of the Compline.

The meeting ended at 8:00 PM.

Next Meeting: 4/22/25 at 6PM

Respectfully submitted,
Bethany Quattrociocchi, Clerk