Vestry Meeting Minutes, St. Christoper By-the-River, 04/19/2026 (R0)

Attendance. *Present:* Father Gabriel Lawrence, Charlene Currutt, James Gallagher, Dr. John Irwin, Ron Lee, Linda Sylor, Kitty Thomas, Brian Wright; Rick Hamilton, Treasurer *Absent:* Hayley Kosmatka, Aud.D.

Openings

Prayer and Welcome, Rev. Gabriel Lawrence. After sharing our opening prayer, Fr. Gabriel noted that some of the today's agenda items will be addressed during the Vestry retreat on Saturday morning, May 9.

Minutes, January 18, 2026. ***Moved: Approve the minutes, Dr. John Irwin; Second, Charlene > Carried***

Report, Priest-in-Charge, Fr. Gabriel

—Fr. Gabriel thanked all for a wonderful, busy Holy Week. Overall, there were 65 more attendees this year.
—His visits with homebound parishioners — and "Getting to Know You" sessions with Vestry members continue.
—He is working with The Ven. Brian Gilooly for a signed letter so that Lydia Bailey can continue serving as Deacon.
—He attended the installation service for the Rev. Rev. Charlie Knuth, Christ Church, Hudson.
—The Audit review meeting on Tuesday April 14 went well.
—Summer projects include creating a Centennial celebration planning committee — and meeting with young families to learn about parents' expectations for their children's faith ministry.

Open Vestry Seat. ***Moved: Nominate Rick Hamilton to fill the vacant Vestry seat through the 2027 term, Dr. John Irwin; Second, Kitty > Carried***

Senior Warden's Report, Dr. John Irwin

The Vestry retreat will be held on May 9 at the home of Dr. Irwin. A menu for luncheon choices was circulated.

Junior Warden's Report, Charlene Currutt

Steeple

Estimates. Three quotes were received; $77,750 [Steeplejacks], $86,470 [SteepleUSA] and $94,885 [Frost]. Vestry considered the feasibility of these proposals. Discussion summary:

—The SteepleUSA rep went inside the steeple. [Char noted that there was no work to be done inside.]

—Frost is a local company, and does not require a down payment. They will acquire the permits; we cover their costs. They are the only contractor that recommended using scaffolding. Before raising the boom, they will remove the flagstone, then replace the stone afterward. It was noted that some items may be brought to their shop for work. Char feels that Frost is most vested in the project. Also, Kitty knows about the company from prior Vestry projects. They can be available to do the work in July, sometime after the July 4. [There are no weddings this summer.] Noted: We do not need permitting or approval from the Village of Gates Mills.

Financing

—Christopher Whitaker, Diocese Interim Canon of Operations and Finance will be here for Bargain Box.

—A 4.5% loan or a grant, possibly from the Diocese are options. Vestry will explore these at our May meeting.

Moved: Approve Frost to perform the steeple repairs per their quote, Dr. John Irwin; Second, Char > Carried

Other Items

— Payment to contractor McHugh is pending until all their work is completed.
—Charlene asked Ron to research the history of the building of our steeple based on a book that was found.

Treasurer's Report, Rick Hamilton

Q1, through March, 2026

—Our finances are currently $13,000, in the black.
—All financials are now on par. This summer, if there are fewer donations, we may have to look to USB to fill gaps.
—Patti has begun working on a cash flow picture to help manage the financials process.
—At the audit meeting on April 14, the issue of expense approval controls was discussed. Rick noted that the Diocese expects to see two signatures on all payments. However since so many of our financial transactions are conducted online, some thresholds need to be set — and a suitable process defined and approved. The Audit committee proceedings will be shared with Vestry.

Funds

—**UBS.** We have three funds with them, currently at around $3M. The General Fund holds about $500,000; this supports the needs of the church.
—**Vanguard.** This fund is dedicated to the organ. Dividends can be used to cover expenses.

Event Planning, Ron Lee

Class Picnic. This luncheon will be held on May 31. Ron has asked Charley Marston if the park we use is available.

Funeral. Ron will be leading the *Prayers of the People* at the funeral for Bruce Long on April 20 at St. Paul.

Items for Discussion/New Business

Safe/Vault for Documents and Valuables, James Gallagher. James researched safes that are fireproof, waterproof and floodproof safe.

—We have 3.5-5.0 cubic feet of items to store. Space is also needed to store our silver elements.

—The budget is around $1,000; funds are likely available internally to cover this. The safe capacity would be about 4.75 cubic feet with a height of around 36". It would weigh between 176-200 pounds, and be located in the Sacristy, below the high shelf. To conceal it, two doors could be built.

—James found three options to consider; he thinks two are preferable, both available at Home Depot and Amazon. If Vestry approves the purchase, measurements will be taken in support of the acquisition.

Moved: Approve the purchase of a safe at no more than $1,000, Linda; Second, Charlene > Carried

Camera for Choir Loft TV, Dr. John Irwin. The camera Yuri uses in the loft needs to be replaced. Images from that camera project on the choir loft TV — and also to a screen in the guild room. John noted that the guild room screen uses special wiring, so it should be left alone. He will source a camera for use solely with the choir loft TV.

Upcoming Dates, Fr. Gabriel

—**April 26, 1:30 p.m., Church Reimagined for Vestry and Staff.** Lunch will be provided at 12:45. [All churches with new clergy are required by the Diocese to participate in this program.]

—**May 9, Vestry Meeting, 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.** Rather than holding our monthly meeting on May 17, we will convene at the home of hosts Dr. John and Nancy Irwin during our planned retreat.

Closing

Fr. Gabriel led our concluding prayer. The meeting ended at 12:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Sylor, Vestry Clerk