Vestry Retreat: Leading Together In Christ - May 9, 2026

Purpose:

* Build trust and relationships among vestry members
* Reflect on the identity and mission of the vestry
* Strengthen communication and navigate hard conversations faithfully
* Celebrate the strengths of St. Peter's while discerning areas of growth
* Ground leadership in prayer, unity and transformation

Schedule:

Arrival, coffee and donuts
Opening Prayer, announcements and Framing the Day
"The Story Behind You"
Lectio Divina: Leadership Rooted in Christ
Break
What does St. Peter's do well? Where are we being called to grow?
The Role of the Vestry: Spiritual and Practical Leadership
Communication
Lunch
Time with David Page
Session on Finances with Connie
Closing Prayer

SEE YOU TOMORROW FOR YOUR COMMISSIONING!

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Vestry Retreat Notes and Regular Meeting Minutes

May 9, 2026

Members present: Mother Sarah Minton (Rector), Trey Warren (Junior Warden), Annette Bell, Kevin Green, Emily Haas, Jayne Jeney, Diane LoCastro, Kathy McLean, John Myers, Ted Pappas, Diane Woodside

Absent: Laura Lee Skillman, Tracy Smythe

Opening: Beginning at 9:00, the group enjoyed fellowship over coffee and donuts. Mother Sarah assembled the group, led us in prayer, and then explained the day's schedule together with her primary purposes for the retreat which included building trust and relationships among vestry members and reflecting on the identity and mission of the vestry.

Sharing: "The Story Behind You"—Mtr. Sarah asked that everyone share an event in their lives that was highly impactful/helped to make you who are today. Members freely shared their stories.

Lectio Divina: Mtr. Sarah led the group in a slow, meditative reading/discussion of Philippians 2:1-11

Group exercise: Mtr. Sarah asked the group to participate in a brainstorming exercise addressing the questions—What does St. Peter's do well? and Where are we being called to grow? Annette Bell acted as our scribe. The transcribed lists are included below.

Discussion: Mtr. Sarah led the vestry in a discussion centered on the role of a vestry and practices which can lead to more effective service. Using materials provided, we reviewed our Vestry Norms and agreed to abide by them. Mtr. Sarah introduced a Vestry Covenant; all members readily embraced it and agreed to abide by it. The four responsibilities of a vestry according to the Episcopal Church Foundation are: 1) Discerning God's call, 2) Identifying new leaders, 3) Stewarding and developing resources, 4) Special duties in the absence of a rector. Mtr. Sarah fully explained these responsibilities. We briefly discussed Robert's Rule of Order for the conduct and recording of business meetings.

In the afternoon, the vestry switched gears from team building exercises to a regular business meeting.

Listening Session: In reaction to the recent addition of a uniformed, off-duty police officer's presence on campus as a safety measure during Sunday services, David Page thoughtfully and passionately expressed his feeling that officer's presence is simply not needed—that we are safe here at St. Peter's. David handed out statistical information in support of his position. Additionally, although as a minor point, he questioned the expense of the added security. Eric Corbett, present at David's request, spoke briefly expressing some opposition to the officer's presence. Vestry members listened, asked a few follow-up questions for clarity, and thanked both men for sharing.

Instruction: Connie McDaniel, treasurer, joined us for a short training session focusing on financial stewardship including the checks and balances we have in place at St. Peter's and the authorized uses of restricted accounts.

Late Lunch Break

Discussion: Mtr. Sarah and vestry members discussed the listening session, recognizing that the comfort level of parishioners with a uniformed officer's presence varies widely. We discussed proceeding with all increased safety measures in a thoughtful, deliberate manner, keeping these differences in mind. We also discussed the possibility of cost-sharing safety expenses by collaborating with other area churches.

Our retreat/meeting concluded with prayer at 2:15.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy McLean