

St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Vestry Regular Meeting – August 25, 2025
AGENDA

1. Adoption of Agenda

Formation

2. Order for Evening Prayer

Discussion

3. Approval of Minutes
4. Youth Director Search Committee Update (Kim Hicks)
5. Interim Rector Report
6. Our Little Roses Mission Trip
7. AARP Driving Class
8. Treasurer/Finance Report

Action

9. Approve 2026 Diocesan Pledge
10. Adopt What We Believe Language Update

Information

11. Liaison Reports
12. Junior Warden Report
13. Senior Warden Report
14. Key Upcoming Dates:
 - a. Deacon Annette Farewell – August 27th @ 5:30 pm in Burns Hall
 - b. Fall Kickoff/Ministry Fair – Sunday, September 7th
 - c. September Vestry Meeting – September 22nd @ 5:30 pm in Room 201

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2025

Members Present: Fr. Doug Hodsdon, Ken Saitow (Senior Warden), Jim Carpenter (Junior Warden), Leigh Coulter Beal, Annette Bell (Clerk), Kevin Green, Rob Hicks, Diane LoCastro, Connie McDaniel (Treasurer/via videoconference), Laura Lee Skillman, Tracy Smythe, Beth Thornton, Diane Woodside

Absent: Jayne Jeney

Others Present: Kim Hicks (Youth Director Search Committee Chair)

Fr. Doug called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Quorum was met.

Adoption of Agenda: Several items were requested to be added to the agenda: a discussion on a nominating committee for the 2026 Diocesan Convention, a discussion on the CAT Next Steps/Renewal Weekend, and a discussion on the youth director's salary. Leigh moved and Laura Lee seconded a motion to adopt the amended agenda. Motion carried.

FORMATION

Fr. Doug presented the Order for Evening Prayer.

DISCUSSION

Approval of Minutes: Fr. Doug requested amendments be made to the *Interim Rector Report* and the *Clergy Transition and Ongoing Support: Mother Rachel's Hours* sections of the July minutes. Fr. Doug read the changes aloud which were documented by Annette. Beth moved and Laura Lee seconded a motion to accept the amended minutes. Motion carried.

Youth Director Search Committee Update (Kim Hicks): Kim reported that a ten-member committee has been formed, consisting of three adult EYC volunteers and four youth involved in EYC. Kim meets weekly with Ministry Architects, the consulting firm hired to assist with the search, and the committee meets regularly and has met with Ministry Architects as well. They have decided to maintain the job responsibilities described by Jacob before his departure. Ministry Architects will use this description to create a job posting, which will be approved by Fr. Doug, Ken, and the committee before being widely advertised. The committee's next meeting is on September 7th to discuss interview training and preparation. Kim expects the job to be posted in the second week of September, with potential interviews by the end of the month. Ministry Architects noted that the process timeline is variable, with a possible start date for a new hire in January, but more likely for the next programming year. Kim and the committee are pleased with the support from Ministry Architects.

Interim Rector Report: Fr. Doug reported on the following:

Mother Rachel's Canonical Residence – This has been finalized, and she is now a priest in the Episcopal Church rather than the Church of England. In addition to her preaching responsibilities, she will primarily focus on pastoral care, with Fr. Doug also providing support in this area.

Youth Program Coordinator - He noted that Jen Lasserre is doing a fabulous job with the youth program.

Choir School - Rev. Dawn Mayes, Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, and he are still trying to connect to discuss a potential collaboration with our choir school. There is nothing new to report.

Acolytes - This year, each of the four acolyte teams has an adult coordinator who will be present on their service Sundays. Fr. Doug is creating written guidelines and adjusting roles to ensure all runs smoothly and efficiently. Training took place yesterday, and the acolyte year starts on September 7. A suggestion was made to include the adult coordinator position in the Ministry Scheduler Pro app and the paper list for the 9 AM service.

Rector Search Committee – The committee met yesterday and conducted a mock interview, with Fr. Doug role-playing as a candidate. Several applications have been received and the committee is considering extending the application deadline to the end of September to allow for more.

Ministry Fair - The event will take place between the 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM services on Sunday, September 7. Melanie Grimley is the fair coordinator. All ministries at St. Peter's are encouraged to participate by hosting an information table. Fr. Doug and Ken will participate in a "Battle of the Baristas," competing with one another to see who can make the best coffee creations.

Stewardship and Adult Formation – Starting Sunday, September 7 and continuing over the following weeks, Fr. Doug will focus his sermons on the theme of trust and freedom from bondage. The Wednesday Adult Formation sessions will begin on September 10 and involve interactive discussions on our mission and the unique aspects of St. Peter's that will impact how we fulfill our mission.

2026 Diocesan Convention – The 2026 Diocese of Florida Annual Convention will take place on September 11-12, 2026, at which time a new bishop, if called by the search committee, will be elected. The Diocese Canons require that delegates for the 2026 convention be selected within 30 days of this year's convention on September 19-20, 2025. A proposed resolution to uncouple delegate selection from the convention date will be voted on at this year's convention. If it doesn't pass, we must hold a parish meeting to select delegates by October 18, 2025, to retain our voting rights in the bishop election. A discussion on the nominating committee has been added to the agenda and will be discussed later.

Deacon Annette's Farewell Celebration – This Wednesday, August 27, from 5:30-7 in Burns Hall. Chad Wykle and Leigh Beal have been the event planners. Fr. Doug encouraged all of us to attend.

Our Little Roses Mission Trip: Our Little Roses is an organization that supports at-risk girls in Honduras through its residential home for abused, abandoned, and neglected girls. Jen Lasserre has suggested a mission trip to this orphanage for our senior youth as an alternative to the Ecuador trip. Beth, who has previously been on a mission trip there, described the facility as a wonderful place with great programs. She feels the area around the orphanage is safe, and St. George's Episcopal Church in Nashville has sent youth there in the past. A representative from St. George's will be here on October 5 to share more about their experience.

AARP Driving Class: AARP Driver Safety has inquired about our willingness to provide space for the AARP Smart Driver Program twice a year, as we have in the past. Information materials were provided and reviewed by the vestry, who expressed no objections.

CAT Next Steps/Renewal weekend: A discussion was held to clarify the next steps. The importance of providing an effective program that respects the time and energy of our congregants was emphasized. This fall, Fr. Doug will initiate discussions on the topic of mission, which is the first piece. Ken will inquire with Susan from Holy COW about programming options, e.g., in-person, virtual, or a combination of both, and her opinion on the effectiveness of each option. Fr. Doug and Ken will review the church calendar to set a firm date(s) for the program in early 2026, allowing time to promote the event, encourage attendance, and for our congregation to prepare. We also discussed the engagement of parishioners at Coffee with the Vestry Sundays, as to how they would like to see this initiative implemented. Ongoing discussion on this will be held at future vestry meetings throughout the fall as needed.

Treasurer/Finance Report: Connie prepared and submitted six financial statements, along with an analysis document, in advance of the meeting. She noted that our revenues are below last year and the average of the past three years. Our expenses are under budget due to open staff positions, with some savings reallocated to Creation Care. Future expense trends will depend on hiring practices. Historically, giving decreases in the summer months. She recommended monitoring the situation without any changes for now. Ken outlined several points for us to keep in mind and consider communicating should our revenues continue to track behind budget.

She addressed a question about expense errors raised at the last vestry meeting, explaining that Rachel Davis was accidentally paid for an extra pay period and that a payment for organist services should have been a one-time payment, but was instead set up as a recurring payment. Both errors were identified by our review processes as intended, and these are being corrected.

Fund transfers approved by the vestry at the July meeting have been made, including the transfer of funds from the Rector Sabbatical restricted account to the Schuyler Reserve Fund. We will need to begin accruing rector sabbatical funds when our rector position is filled. The solar panel tax rebate was deposited into the Schuyler Reserve Fund to replace those borrowed funds. The balance on the Thackara Reserve Fund increased by \$50,000 thanks to the generous donation from a parishioner as discussed at our July vestry meeting.

She proposed moving the Unrestricted Net Assets (#2999 on the Balance Sheet), which represent the accumulation of revenues in excess of expenses from previous years, currently totaling \$38,169.25, to the Thackara Reserve Fund. This transfer will bring the Thackara Reserve Fund

balance to just under \$100,000 and consolidate all vestry-directed funds in one place. Ken moved and Tracy seconded a motion to transfer the Unrestricted Net Assets balance of \$38,169.25 to the Thackara Reserve Fund immediately. The motion also stipulated that funds would be transferred into or out of the Unrestricted Net Assets account on an annual basis to maintain a zero balance. Motion carried.

Regarding Youth Offerings restricted accounts, the 2025 Pilgrimage Fund has been fully reconciled. The EYC Mission Trip, which currently has a negative balance, will be reconciled this month or next.

ACTION

Approve 2026 Diocesan Pledge: The Diocese of Florida has requested that our 2026 pledge of \$122,732.70 be approved by September 15. This amount aligns closely with our budgeted amount. Portions of this cost will be allocated to the youth program and the appropriate restricted accounts so that it won't be fully reflected in the Profit and Loss statement. Beth moved and Rob seconded a motion to pledge \$122,732.70 to the Diocese. Motion carried.

Youth Minister Salary Range: Ministry Architects has recommended a salary target of \$60,000, plus benefits, for the youth director position, depending on training and experience. A discussion regarding this recommendation was held. Tracy moved and Diane W. seconded a motion to establish a salary range of \$55,000 to \$60,000 for the youth ministry director, based on training and experience. Motion carried.

Approve *What We Believe* Language Update: Two alternatives to the second paragraph of the current *What We Believe* statement on our website were proposed without unanimous vestry approval in the past. Therefore, a third option was proposed for the vestry to vote on, with unanimous approval required to move forward with adoption. A unanimous decision on the third proposed statement could not be reached, so a change to the *What We Believe* statement was tabled to be revisited at the discretion of our new rector.

Nominating Committee for Diocesan Convention: Fr. Doug and Ken will review our bylaws and send an email communication to the vestry outlining a plan to select delegates to represent St. Peter's at the 2026 Diocesan Convention.

INFORMATION

Liaison Reports: A written report from our Youth Ministry liaison was distributed and reviewed prior to the meeting. An opportunity for questions and discussion was offered with none held.

Junior Warden Report: A detailed written report was distributed and reviewed prior to the meeting. There was an opportunity for questions and discussion with none held.

Senior Warden Report: Ken reported on the following:

Campus Safety - Fr. Doug, Ken, Jim, and Philly did a walk-around with members of the Fernandina

Beach Police Department and noted their recommendations. A security team will be established to implement these recommendations and enhance campus safety. Ken has asked us to notify him of any parishioners with military or law enforcement experience who may be willing to serve on this committee.

“Fun” Committee - Trey Warren wants to put together a committee on “fun” and is looking for ideas and people to collaborate on this.

Ministry Liaisons - Ken asked the ministry liaisons to let him know who the primary contact will be.

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Diane L. moved and Tracy seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annette Bell, Clerk of the Vestry