



St. John's Episcopal Church

3 Cross Street, P.O. Box 422, Essex, Connecticut 06426

(860) 767 8095

Vestry Meeting Minutes

Date & Time: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 from 6:30 – 8:30 PM

Location: Choir Room and Zoom

Members: Elaine Ellis Thomas, *Rector*; Jan Perruccio, *Warden*; Wesley Henry, *Warden*; John Rogers, *Treasurer*; Stephanie Patterson, *Clerk*, Linda Board, Lois Bennett, Leigh Dorrington, Nat Eddy, Peter Holland, Jane Riggio

Guests:

Regrets: Tony Custodio, Patti Pickering, Kevin Walsh

Agenda Item

1.	Reflections & Opening Prayer	
2.	Consent Agenda: December 2025 Minutes, B&G Report, January Agenda	
	<i>After brief discussion, December minutes attendance will be corrected and the B&G Report to be incorporated to Rector's Report. Wesley Henry moved to accept the consent agenda; Lois Bennett seconded. Motion passed with one abstention.</i> <u>See Meeting Materials.</u>	
3.	Action Items: 1. IOC Appointments 2. IOC & Hayden Trust Document Review After long discussion, Peter Holland will compile several questions and comments discussed at the vestry regarding Portfolio Construction guidelines, and voting/quorum and deliver to Elaine to share with the IOC. Of primary concern are several points: language that permits utilization of investment grade or high yield bonds (i.e. 'junk bonds') in a church portfolio; the absence of a requirement for counter-signature by Investment Manager for receipt and acknowledgment of policy documents (a requirement for the then sitting IOC appointees); selection of IM approval by	

	vestry; clarification of Investment Manager investment decision-making power (not resting with IOC appointees); and further points for clarification and editing of documents. <u>See Meeting Materials.</u>	
4.	Rector's Report and Building and Grounds Report B&G: Rev. Elaine shared the following: A. A snow removal contract has been finalized with the contractor who services All Saints in Ivoryton. B. The tree in front of church is healthy and no longer on the "take down" list. C. The request to solicit bids was received with a cautionary advisement from B&G noting that the contractor group who work with St. John's may view the solicitation with hostility and it may damage long-standing and highly valued relationships. Jan Perruccio suggested the presentation of the requests be prefaced as a "no offense intended and following fiduciary duty/good stewardship of church monies" approach. D. Locks will be re-keyed, and keys will be issued based upon role and need for access to the building. The cost for a fob-swipe access system is too high. Fewer keys will be outstanding. The passcode on the entry box will be changed frequently. Rector's Report: Elaine shared the following: A. Parish Administrator position: Meghan Wrinn and Elaine have come to an agreement that will allow Meghan to work 30 hours per week in the administrator position for 4 weeks. This is a pilot to see if the arrangement is a good fit for all. They have re-organized tasks and assignments. During this pilot period, Meghan will continue to organize for hospitality and events with a limit of 5 hours per week. This change highlights the need for a true Hospitality Team to "do the work" when the structure has been set. Both the organization and physical work for events had fallen to Meghan during the transition. B. Parish-wide Leadership & Participation: In addition to a true Hospitality Team, there is a need for Rummage Sale Leaders. Additional needs have been identified for Sunday services for Altar Guild, Ushers, Greeters, Readers. C. Retreat & Annual Meeting: A Saturday or overnight retreat will be scheduled to focus on congregational development. The Annual Meeting material is ready, date firm subject to weather. D. Gift Card Theft: Gift cards were taken from gift bags for SSK guests. After lengthy discussion of locking doors, installing cameras and overall security downstairs, and impact on guests as well as overall vibe downstairs, a tentative decision was made to store items vulnerable to theft by not leaving anything unattended downstairs and storing items in the office as needed.	

	E. Christmas Services were very well attended. Services for Easter and Christmas 2026 will be structured a little differently. We need the support of more people from the congregation for the roles of ushers, Altar Guild, church decorating and more. F. News from the Pews: Rev. Wilk and Dagmar Miller have transferred to Christ Church, New Haven. G. Important Dates: Vestry will meet the following week, as the regular meeting time falls on Ash Wednesday this year. Please see the calendar of upcoming dates on the agenda.
5.	Treasurer's Report John Rogers presented the final report for 2025. The projected deficit for 2025 was \$115,581. The actual deficit for 2025 was \$18,992. The change was due in part to the rector vacancy, savings in B&G, and income on investments in a favorable market. Final adjustments to the 2026 Budget were discussed. A deficit is projected, albeit much smaller than 2025. The following year, 2027, is the year we target for a return to a balanced budget. <i>Lois Bennett moved to approve the 2026 Budget, Peter Holland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.</i> <u><i>See Meeting Materials.</i></u>
6.	Co-Warden's Report – Jan Perruccio The wardens and treasurer now meet with Elaine before the vestry meeting for discussion of timely topics.
	With no further business to attend, Closing Prayer. Meeting Adjourned.