

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2025

Vestry Members Present:

Rev. Neil Willard, Rector
Tom Van Arsdel, Senior Warden
John Wallace, Junior Warden
Sheeba Thomas, Clerk
Ken Alexander
Jeanine Baker
Rosine Hall
Betty Key
Kip Krause
Pam Lovett
David Madrigal
Michael Massey
Sue Murphy
Dick Viebig
Shannon Wallace

Assisting Clergy Present:

Rev. Katherine Tuttle, Director of Parish Life and Membership
Rev. Allen Junek, Associate Rector

The hybrid in-person and Zoom meeting began at 5:30 PM.

1. Check-In and Opening Prayer (Rev. Neil Willard)

Neil invited personal updates and opened the meeting with Evening Prayer (Book of Common Prayer, p. 109).

2. Review and Approval of Consensus Items (Rev. Neil Willard)

Minutes from the July 15, 2025 Vestry meeting, the Financial Summary from Jessica Evans (Finance Manager), and reports from the Congregational and Community Engagement Council, Facilities and Grounds Council, Finance Council, Membership Council, Outreach Council, Pastoral Care Council, Stewardship Council, Worship Council, Senior Warden, and Rector were unanimously approved.

3. Facilities and Grounds Council Report (Kip Krause)

- Arrangements are being made to obtain a comprehensive structural engineering assessment of Palmer's campus, with itemized cost estimates for all needed repairs (including foundation and roof work).
- The council aims to complete this assessment by February 2026.

4. Finance Council Report (Dick Viebig)

- Year-to-date, 66% of pledged funds have been received. If this rate continues, the budget should be balanced at year's end.
- 75% of regular funds have been moved to Texas Gulf Bank (FDIC insured); 25% remain in CDARS (also FDIC insured). These changes will generate \$16K annually in interest income.
- The rectory mortgage has been refinanced through Texas Gulf Bank at a lower interest rate, saving Palmer \$13K annually.
- Palmer currently maintains about 30 restricted accounts for various causes.
 - To date, 5 accounts have been consolidated and the vestry unanimously approved those consolidations:
 - Episcopal Church Women Fund + Women's Retreat Fund
 - Prison Ministry Fund + Palmers Assisting Re-entry Fund
 - Angel Tree Fund + Salvation Army Fund supporting Angel Tree
 - Palmer Place Fund + Ronald McDonald House Fund
 - Building Insurance Fund + Buildings & Grounds Fund
 - A motion was unanimously approved authorizing the Finance Council to continue reviewing accounts, contact associated donors, and—if donor permission is granted—consolidate additional funds where appropriate.

5. Stewardship Council Report (Ken Alexander)

- Stewardship Kick-Off Sunday will be held on September 21, 2025, alongside a Warden's Forum.
- Some expenses are currently funded outside the regular budget (e.g., garage parking, salary for the Director of Parish Life and Membership). These need to be incorporated into the budget over time, as donor support is temporary.

- For the 2026 fiscal year, the Finance Council projects \$1.9 million in expenses (an increase from the \$1.72 million pledged for 2025).
- Covenant Sunday will be observed on November 16, 2025.

6. Senior Warden's Report (Tom Van Arsdel)

- Warden's Forum scheduled for September 21, 2025.
- Vestry meeting minutes will be posted on the Palmer website within 21 days of each meeting.
- A motion was unanimously approved to hold the **Annual Parish Meeting** on February 1, 2026.
- Vestry candidate videos will be released in January 2026.
- A **Meet the Vestry Candidates Forum** will be held on January 18, 2026.
- Tentative date for the **Vestry Retreat** is February 21, 2026.
- The Nominating Committee will hold its first meeting in October 2025.
- A **special vestry meeting** will be held on October 14, 2025 to:
 - Provide an update on the comprehensive Building and Grounds assessment
 - Begin planning for Palmer's 100th Anniversary Celebration in 2029

7. Gratitude Reflection (Tom Van Arsdel)

- Tom expressed thanksgiving for the full complement of clergy and the growing number of newcomers at Palmer.

8. Closing Prayer (Rev. Allen Junek)

Allen closed the meeting with prayer.

Accounts

Assets		
LIQUID FUNDS ACCOUNTS		
CHECKING ACCOUNTS		
101701 - TGB - OPERATING FUND	\$459,841.52	
101702 - ORIGIN BANK - OPERATING FUND	\$100,000.00	
101704 - TGB - PPP LOAN OPERATING FUND	\$292.91	
Total CHECKING ACCOUNTS	\$560,134.43	
Total LIQUID FUNDS ACCOUNTS		\$560,134.43
LAND		
181100 - LAND-GENERAL	\$100.00	
Total LAND		\$100.00
Total Assets		\$560,234.43
Liabilities, Fund Principal, & Restricted Funds		
Liabilities		
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE		
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE - GENERAL		
201200 - CLERGY RETIREMENT W/H PAY	\$100.00	
201407 - CLERGY HSA PAYABLE	\$933.36	
201500 - MISCELLANEOUS/SUSPENSE	(\$8,555.09)	
208000 - LAY RETIREMENT W/H PAY	\$2,062.68	
Total ACCOUNTS PAYABLE - GENERAL	(\$5,459.05)	
Total ACCOUNTS PAYABLE		(\$5,459.05)
NOTES PAYABLE		
207001 - TGB - LOAN PAYABLE	\$660,848.84	
Total NOTES PAYABLE		\$660,848.84
DEFERRED INCOME		
211225 - 2025 DEFERRED INCOME	\$40,805.31	
Total DEFERRED INCOME		\$40,805.31
Total Liabilities		\$696,195.10
Fund Principal		
301100 - BEGINNING BALANCE - OPERATING	(\$617,474.67)	
Current Year Net Activity	\$123,184.18	
Total Fund Principal and Current Year Net Activity		(\$494,290.49)
Restricted Funds		
Total Temporary Restricted	\$358,329.82	
Total Restricted Funds		\$358,329.82
Total Liabilities, Fund Principal, & Restricted Funds		\$560,234.43

Worship Council Meeting, Aug 7

Present – Fr. Neil Willard, Shannon Wallace, Allan Nunley, Leslie Douthwaite, Margie Dieter

Neil opened the meeting at 5:34 with prayer.

Upcoming Activities:

Mary Reddick – she will join Aug 10, she visited Palmer this week to check things out and learn a bit about Palmer and our services. She has her own vestments, and will review what to do with incense.

JBP will be at the service (the reading and the psalm will be read by students, not the scheduled readers).

Blessing for the beginning of the school year.

There will be a JPB event at 6:30 with a dinner to follow.

New Priest – Allen Junek! He is moving in tomorrow (8/8) and will take a little time to get settled. First Sunday will be Aug 24. On 8/31, Allen will visit at the education hour.

Aug 24 – Serve Sunday

The new Intern Organist will arrive soon (looks like she was there 8/10 – MD).

10/4 – A wedding!

10/11 – Another wedding, Jeffrey Walker will officiate. Sullivan is bride, family is connected with Fr. Walker.

Advent starts during the Thanksgiving weekend.

Clergy Updates: Covered

Music Updates:

Choir will begin processing again.

Margie is wondering about bringing back Summer Choir, when anyone could show up in the morning and sing in the choir.

Service Updates:

Aug 10 will be the first test of the frozen bread. (MD-seemed to go well, loaf is small for 190 people, but better to go to wafers than have too much bread if we had used 2 loaves. Smaller pieces of bread would help a lot. Mary and Allen will need to learn bread manipulation. Bread texture and taste was good after thawing)

We will go back to Rite I on Nov 30, start of Advent.

Dustin needs to know about the Psalm sound levels. Also, sometimes the service can be heard over the speakers in the narthex and sometimes not.

Gospel procession – save it for Christmas eve, late service and Easter Day at 11:00. Otherwise we will continue to read the gospel from the pulpit, censing the book there to reduce resistance to incense.

Kirking of the Tartans – proposed date is Nov 23.

Taize Service – Recommend that David follow up with Beth Ann. Brief discussion was held about “voluntolding” groups like the youth or Canterbury. If Canterbury is not interested, we can look for interested parishioners to host the Taize service.

Verger Updates: Accolades for James as verger. He might need a reminder about the Server position duties, in order to help others.

Acolytes: nothing to report.

Lectors: Need to schedule a fall training.

Ushers: Two new ushers coming on board, they will start Aug 17th. Katherine will continue to recruit families to bring up the bread and wine. Consensus is highly positive for having non-ushers bring up the gifts.

Bell Ringers: They have been asked to tie up the ropes for cleaning. Has the cleaning been completed? What was cleaned?

Acolyte Video: Status? MD will email Dustin.

Meeting ended 6:00 pm

Next meeting will be Sept 4th.

Palmer Worship Council Meeting Minutes

September 4, 2025

Attendees: Rev. Neil Willard, Rev. Allen Junek, Margie Dieter, Lesley Douthwaite, Brady Knapp, Victor Lamas, David Madrigal, Allen Nunley and Libby Spoede

Prayer – Victor opened the meeting with prayer.

Upcoming Activities –

- Sept.28 – Parish Potluck in the Parish Hall following 10:00 am service
- Oct. 4 – Wedding at 4:00 pm in the Nave
- Oct. 5 – Evensong at 4:00 pm in the Nave
- Oct. 6 – Taize Worship Service at 7:00 pm in the Nave
- Oct.11 – Wedding at 6:00 pm in the Nave
- Oct.12 – Dual Services at 10:00 am (Inside the Nave and Outside on the South Lawn for Blessing of the Animals)
- Oct.26 – Parish Potluck in the Park following 10:00 am service
- Nov.1 – All Saints Day Service at Noon in the Nave
- Nov. 2 – All Saints Requiem at 10:00 am in the Nave
- Nov.16 – Covenant Sunday
- Nov.23 – Kirking of the Tartans at 10:00 am in the Nave
- Nov.30 – Start of Advent

We welcomed The Reverend Allen Junek to the Worship Council.

Clergy Updates –

Neil mentioned that a new Associate Organist will be joining Palmer in September.

Neil also stated that the Reverend Katherine Tuttle would not be attending Worship Council meetings on a regular basis because she will be facilitating the work of two other councils.

Neil requested that we hold the service for Blessing of the Animals one week later on October 12th as most clergy will be away on October 5th.

Music Updates –

Lessons and Carols will be on December 14th at 4:00 pm in the Nave.

Service Updates –

Oct.6 – A Taize Service in the Nave with Eucharist is planned for 7:00 pm for Rice students and Palmer parish. The Reverend Beth Anne Nelson will be the celebrant. Soup and refreshments will be offered at St. Bede's at 6:00 pm.

Nov.30 – Start of Advent and we will go back to Rite I at 10:00 am services.

Issues on Sound System – #1 - Dustin believes there is not a great way to remedy the Psalmist being louder. The mics in the area are adjusted to balance the choir voices and the pipe organ.

Because of the placement of the choir in proximity to the pipes, adjusting the gain would make the audio peak as soon as the organ starts playing (for online audio).

Note: Any suggestions or comments should be addressed to Dustin.

Issue #2 - Dustin also believes someone may be adjusting the volume (lowering or turning off) at the controls in the Narthex and he has advised the AV guys to double check it on Sunday mornings when doing mic checks.

Verger Updates –

Libby will forward updated information on services to the vergers and will also include a note for vergers to remind the altar party (including youth) that services are being recorded and all should try to keep distracting behavior or movement around the sanctuary to a minimum.

Acolyte Updates –

Status on Acolyte Training Video – Dustin will do his best to have a version done this week to use for training this fall.

Discussion of Subs signing up for Acolyte/Reader roles –

The discussion was about making sure that multiple people have the opportunity to sign up as a sub for roles such as readers. One thing that has limited a few volunteers from being able to do that in a timely manner is access to technology. It was suggested that the system administrator monitor the situation and possibly make future adjustments and manage notifications for assigned roles as needed.

Lectors Updates –

Margie will speak to Sarah to see if there are any plans for fall training and if overall refresher training may be needed either this year or next year.

Ushers / Bell Ringers Updates –

Ushers are planning to meet soon to review responsibilities and the upcoming schedule.

Cleaning in the Bell Ringing Room has been completed.

Other Business –

Next Worship Council Meeting date – October 2

Outreach Council Report

Submitted by Sue Howard

Meeting Date: August 14, 2025

Present: Sue Howard, Jenn Macia, Denise Zwicker, Deacon Mary Reddick

Absent: Danna Kurtin

Meeting Agenda:

Background On Team Creation

Purpose: Goal/Vision – Strategic Initiative Report

Identify Challenges – Discussion

Current Outreach at Palmer

- PAR
- PDAP
- Archway Academy
- Gulf Coast Blood Center
- Community of Hope
- Refugee Resettlement
- Yellowstone Academy
- Jerusalem Peacebuilders

Meeting Roles

Adopt Procedures for Collaborative Planning -- Discussion

Key Relationships

Ministry Fair

Review Council Membership

Next Steps:

Meeting Schedule/Next Meeting Date

Background on Team Creation

Outreach Parish Council Description Approved by Vestry

This council will work directly with the Deacon* on outreach services to create new and enhance existing community partnerships. They will help plan Serve Sunday, strengthen community partnerships focused on services, supporting existing outreach, ministries (PAR, PDAP, Archway Academy, Gulf Coast Blood Center, Community of Hope, Refugee Resettlement, Yellowstone, Jerusalem Peacebuilders)

Members:

- Linda Shelton
- Jeff Dieter
- Danna Kurtin
- Jenn Macia
- Denise Zwicker
- (Rice University Representative)

Opportunities and Challenges: Discussion

- We would like to look at Palmer's ministry imprint, while stepping back and assessing our world in 2025. We draw from a limited number of resources, many of our parishioners volunteer again and again for multiple ministries and may become weary. And some ministries draw on volunteers who are aging. We need to find an effective way to attract more people with emphasis on newcomers as we celebrate new growth in the parish community. COVID interrupted momentum and a lack of centralized leadership for several years for outreach left individual ministries operating independently. A major focus should be on creating Palmer's outreach identity in the community.

Current Outreach at Palmer: Discussion

- Serve Sunday should be a ministry category in itself and include the organizations served as we work to optimize our relationships with community institutions.
- Community of Hope should move to pastoral
- Current status of Yellowstone Academy is unclear. Would this be a meaningful opportunity for Palmer youths?
- We will change refugee resettlement to migration
- Identify other ministries: e.g. Emergency Aid Coalition (Palmer used to be represented on EAC board), Alternative Gift Giving, Salvation Army Christmas gift giving

Meeting Roles: Sue Howard will chair, Jenn Macia will be secretary

Adopt Procedures for Collaborative Planning: Discussion

- Become involved in planning monthly outreach partner conversations during the Sunday Adult Formation Hour
- Become involved with planning and participation in Ministry Fair.
- Increase the number of Serve Sundays to nourish relationships with community organizations we support.

Next Steps:

- Update outreach on the Palmer website
- Ask Rice missionary about having a representative on this council
- Look into adding a Serve Sunday in December

Objectives for next meeting

Develop 2026 Serve Sunday schedule proposal

Next Meeting: October 9, 2025, 5 PM, Zoom

Pastoral Care Council Report for the Sept. 2025 Vestry Meeting

Seven Palmers have been invited to become members of the newly formed Pastoral Care Council, which is one of the parish councils created by the Vestry earlier this year. Once those members have accepted the invitation to join this council, the Vestry will receive a list of their names. The Rev'd Allen Juneke will also be a member of this parish council and will be convening it as the "conductor" of our pastoral care ministries.

Congregational and Community Engagement Council Report
August 2025
Submitted by Katherine Tuttle

Date of Meeting: 08/05/25 at 6 pm via Zoom

Present: Katherine Tuttle, Roger Hutchison, Joey Hunter, Beth Anne Nelson, and Lauren Kirkwood.

Absent: July Lutkis, Jim Key, Franchesca Sentmanat, and George Thomas.

Agenda: The agenda sent out to council members was as follows:

- Go over the responsibilities and duties of the council.
- Discuss feedback on:
 - current 9 AM adult formation offerings
 - our 55+ group
 - our youth and family ministries
- go through ideas and plans for our new 20/30s ministry to start in October
- Cover an ideas and questions the council has
- Elect someone in the group to take minutes for future meetings.
- Confirm our next meeting time.

Summary of Meeting:

We covered the expectations and scope of this council which is to help with the alignment of all adult and multi-generational programming across all of Palmer's activities. This council meets to discuss and plans ways to support our current members and friends including: Christian formation opportunities (9 AM adult formation and other adult education), supporting small group ministries, planning outings and programs for diverse ages, and connecting volunteers to meaningful service opportunities. This council will meet every other month and there will be additional invitations to volunteer at events planned by the council (as you have time for) but no one is obligated to attend additional events.

Lauren and Joey shared the different ministries they are involved in.

Much praise was given to Andrew Kreabel's 9 am formation hour on mysticism and Will Parker's Two Way Prayer discussion. It was discussed that it would be nice to have the folks active in meditation lead an adult formation hour and Katherine agreed to reach out to folks to invite them to present.

Roger discussed the upcoming parish retreat and the spring discussion with The. Rev. Lizzie McManus-Dail about her book *God Didn't Make Us to Hate Us*.

Beth Anne shared that it is helpful to continue to have treats provided by Palmer for Monday nights, and requested new name tags for the year.

An Open Mic Night as a potential program was briefly discussed as well as engaging with Rice more across the street such as asking Stephen Fox to lead Palmers on an Architectural Tour of the campus. We agreed to convene the meeting on the First Tuesday of every other month at 6 pm via Zoom.

Lauren Kirkwood has volunteered to take minutes going forward.

Date of Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting has been set for **Oct. 7th at 6 PM via Zoom**. A zoom link will be sent out a few days prior to the meeting.

Membership Council Report
July 2025
Submitted by Katherine Tuttle

Date of Meeting: 7/27/25 at 5 pm via Zoom

Present: Katherine Tuttle, Stephaine Davidson, Rob Vines, and Joan Gallagher

Absent: Sue Howard, Kyle Raese, Mark Marotoo, Rebecca Synder, Cindy Wallace, and David Wallace

Agenda: The agenda sent out to council members was as follows:

- Go over the responsibilities and duties of the council.
- Discuss the upcoming newcomer classes starting in September.
- Discuss improvements that could be made to the Welcome Tent.
- Encourage discussion of other areas of feedback you would like to offer before the program year starts in September.
- Elect someone in the group to take minutes for future meetings.
- Confirm our next meeting time.

Summary of Meeting:

At the meeting, Katherine explained that this council will focus on assisting with the membership and community goals of the strategic plan. It will support current members, prospective members, newcomers, and those in-between. This council meets to discuss and plan ways to provide hospitality and connection to newcomers and visitors including: the welcome tent, newcomer classes, providing a ministry of presence, and reaching out to the surrounding community through: targeted mailings, outdoor programming, and continuing to host community events at Palmer.

We then discussed the upcoming newcomer class and how to structure and advertise the class. Membership council members are invited to attend as "shepherds" but are not required.

We briefly talked about the Welcome Tent and ways to improve it, including better signage when there is a ministry group hosting, and putting the ministry group host in the bulletin. Katherine agreed to discuss this with Dustin.

Joan Gallagher agreed to take minutes at future meetings.

We agreed to convene the meeting on the last Sunday of every other month at 5 pm via Zoom. Joan Gallagher has volunteered to take minutes going forward.

Date of Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting has been set for **Sept. 28th at 5 PM via Zoom**. A zoom link will be sent out a few days prior to the meeting.

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church
Finance Committee Minutes
August 14, 2025

Present: Dick Viebig, Davis Maxey, Pam Harvey, Pam Lovett, Rosine Hall, Richard Avant, Jessica Evans, Posey Saenz and Bet Hunter

Opening Prayer – Rosine Hall

Discussion Items

- Rectory Mortgage – A new rate of 7.25% has been committed for 5 years which results in an approximate decrease in interest of \$13,000.
- Move \$100,000 in Origin Bank funds to Texas Gulf Bank
- Maintain \$175,000 in operating account at Texas Gulf Bank and invest the balance in CDARS

Motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to authorize Pam Harvey or Dick Viebig to sign the appropriate loan and deposit documents to reduce the rectory mortgage rate to 7.25% and invest operating funds in excess of \$175,000 in CDARS.

Minutes from July 10, 2025, were unanimously approved as amended.

July 2025 Financial Reports were reviewed and unanimously approved as presented.

A motion to accept changes to the Church insurance policy recommended by Kip Krause (to drop coverage on two storage units and increase the deductible for named storms) resulting in approximate savings of \$19,880 was unanimously approved.

The committee unanimously approved a motion to recommend that the Vestry make the following changes to streamline restricted funds:

- Move ECW to Women's Retreat
- Move Prison Ministry to PAR
- Disburse Angel Tree funds to Salvation Army
- Disburse Palmer Place donations to Ronald McDonald House
- Consolidate Building Insurance with Building & Grounds Funds

Pam Harvey will discuss funds currently held in Major Improvement account with the donor to determine if these funds should be held in this restricted fund or can be moved to Building and Grounds fund.

Dick Viebig offered the closing prayer.

September 9, 2025 Stewardship Council Report to the Vestry

The Stewardship Council met most recently by Zoom on September 3, 2025 to work on plans for 2026 Stewardship efforts.

Members:

Ken Alexander, Chair

Jeanine Baker

Rosine Hall

Betty Key

Pamela Lovett (not attending)

John Wallace

Peter Yacoe

Vestry Action Items for September 16, 2025 Meeting:

1. Vestry participation in 2026 Stewardship efforts.

Vestry members received on September 5 and 8 information for the preparation of letters and emails to Palmers requesting Stewardship Pledges for 2026, along with 3 versions of draft letters. These drafts have been approved by the Stewardship Council, and Vestry members are encouraged to personalize them for themselves and the recipients. At the Vestry meeting, we will have postage, envelopes, and pledge cards, along with letterhead for those who wish to use it.

Vestry members have been each assigned a “Group” of Palmers in Shelby Next to send letters/emails seeking Stewardship Pledges. These lists have been recently updated. Vestry members should review their Group and the Stewardship Notes regarding the Palmers in their Group.

At the Vestry meeting, we will review how to use Shelby Next to prepare the Stewardship letters, and how to make Stewardship Notes regarding communications with Palmers about stewardship. Vestry members should make a Stewardship Note once letters/emails are sent out: 2026 Stewardship letter mailed [emailed] [date sent].” Responses that a Vestry member receives regarding stewardship from a Palmer should also be recorded in the Stewardship Notes.

As discussed at the July Vestry meeting, Neil will preach on Stewardship on Sunday, September 21, and there will be a **Warden's Forum** following the 10 AM service, a portion of which will include a presentation about Stewardship. The Stewardship Council requests that all Vestry members attend the Warden's Forum.

We plan to send out the Stewardship letters/emails together on September 22.

We will discuss at the Vestry meeting some recent developments regarding Stewardship for 2025 and 2026.

Other Stewardship News

2. Rosine Hall has updated her PowerPoint and video presentation that is posted on Palmer's website, "**How to Pledge: Info on Pledging and Good Ways to Give.**"



https://youtu.be/kQA7_ZVHY_U

Links to this video are included in the draft Stewardship letters.

3. We plan to recruit speakers for brief announcements at services in advance of Covenant Sunday and publish articles in *The Palmer*. Please pass along suggestions of Palmers who would be good speakers or authors on stewardship.
4. The Stewardship Council has set a schedule for further meetings:
Monday, September 29 at 6 PM CDT (by Zoom)
Monday, October 13 at 6 PM (by Zoom)
5. Covenant Sunday is set for November 16, 2025, two days before the November Vestry meeting. Like last year, we will have a lovely catered

brunch following the 10 am service. Betty Key and Jeanine Baker are taking the lead on arrangements. The Stewardship Council asks that all Vestry members attend and help serve at the buffet.

Palmer Building and Grounds Council Meeting

August 18, 2025 - 12 Noon

Invitee	Attendance
Tom Van Arsdel – Sr. Warden	Present
John Wallace – Jr. Warden	Present
Kip Krause – Vestry – Chair	Present
Gerry Sandoval	Present
Johnna Kincaid	Present
Ric Tharpe	Not present
Michael Massey – Vestry	Present
Sue Murphy – Vestry	Present

Discussion notes

1. Confirm Next Meeting Date – September 8, 2025

2. Diocese Risk Assessment and Facilities Follow-up

- Cavalry Construction completed work on Roof – Invoice received from Cavalry on 8/12/2025 (\$11,377.22)
- Blaine is on leave at the moment – waiting on letter of completion amendment regarding warranty. **Gerry to follow-up with Blaine.**
- Draft of Planning Guide received Friday (8/15); B&G Team to review and provide input and comments to Kip for consolidation (e.g. foundation work, stucco repairs)
- Will follow-up with a meeting to review and discuss to reconcile these results with prior proposals.
- Recommend that everyone walk the property (Aug. 25, 6PM) and compare to findings.

3. Follow-ups to prior Meeting

- New water stain in ceiling of hall by choir room
 - Done:** Gerry to investigate and made repair; confirmed that no longer leaking. Painting is complete.
- Playground repairs – Required playground inspection by state for safety certification has been completed and all required repairs finished. **Tom to follow-up with Roger** to provide his vision of how the Palmer family will use the playground going forward. GISH is primary users of the playground.
- We can ask for an estimate of cost for repairing the equipment – this would inform 2026 Budget requests.
 - Spongy membrane cost (\$60k) vs wood-chip (\$15k)
 - Gather stats on usage by GISH and dimensions

Palmer Building and Grounds Council Meeting

August 18, 2025 - 12 Noon

- iii. Gravel, sand, membrane, mulch layers (consistent with state regs regarding schools)
- iv. Review of the contract Palmer has with GISH (Tom to find and share with Gerry/Michael to determine our responsibility)

4. Updates on regular priority items

- a. Fellowship Hall – water leak found in ceiling near East stairway.
 - i. Not due to a roof leak, could be either condensation on chill water pipe or could be leak in pipe. MLN will inspect the pipe to determine source. **We are still waiting for their review**; however, it appears to be a pipe insulation issue, not a pipe leak issue. Inspection due within the next month or so.
- b. Choir Room Leak – ceiling tile collapsed onto cabinets and materials, but piano not affected. Not a roof leak, but due to condensation from A/C and backup in main drain and auxiliary drain. **ACTION: Gerry to clear out drain lines and schedule regular maintenance of same. Will also consult with MLN for alternative solutions.**
- c. Rectory
 - i. Soft spot under the tiles in Rectory – propose to defer action into 2026 budget (to be shared with Finance Comm when 2026 Budget process begins)
 - ii. Rectory foundation issues (?)
- d. St. Bedes Chapel –The chapel itself remains comfortable for large groups. We have a quote of \$11-\$12k to repair Air Handler, but the group feels that a full replacement of the air handler is a better approach, and we will seek a full quote before moving forward. **Consider deferring to 2026 budget if the situation does not worsen further.** Received a quote for full replacement of air handler (\$42k); issue remains how best move old equipment out and new equipment in.

5. Fresh Air Intake Fan – Done!!

- 6. Stained Glass window in front of the church appears to be unlit most of the time. **Gerry to check timer settings for LED lighting; Michael will be sure to drive by after dark to check if the lights are working again.** – **Done: lighting is working and looks great.**

7. Campus Maintenance Strategic Planning

The group discussed the need for a strategic, long-term approach to address facility maintenance issues, with Michael suggesting that a capital campaign may be necessary due to the scale and age of the problems. They agreed to work with Cavalry Construction to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for the campus, with a focus on clear communication about specific needs and expectations. The conversation ended with a recognition of the growing challenges and the importance of persistent, detailed planning. Action steps include:

- 1. Let's document what scope of work has been addressed by Cavalry to date
- 2. Gerry: Locate and share the previous capital expenditure spreadsheet from Tara showing 5 and 10-year predictions
- 3. Gerry: Provide Cavalry with clear, technically detailed requirements for their assessment

Palmer Building and Grounds Council Meeting

August 18, 2025 - 12 Noon

4. Gerry: Look for and compile the previously mentioned list to help Cavalry

8. **Possible volunteer project for Fall/early Winter:** painting and repainting handrails around the church; corrosion remediation. Johnna and Gerry to identify all the sites and get a general idea of linear feet to be painted. Volunteers to paint, Gerry/Jimmy to deal with corrosion remediation.

Senior Warden Report

For the September 16, 2025 Vestry Meeting

1. Parish Councils
 - a. We have assigned Vestry members to the Vestry Councils. The only remaining council to be officially launched is the Pastoral Care council, which will be headed by the Rev. Allen Junek. Invitations to serve on that council will be going out in the next few weeks.
2. Parking
 - a. Over the summer, the Memorial Hermann Medical Plaza Garage has been used less than it was in April and May, which is expected given the lower attendance during summer months. We continue to collect data on the parking usage to evaluate our costs going forward.
3. Buildings and Grounds
 - a. We have been working with Cavalry Construction to provide a satisfactory, complete assessment of the repair needs of the campus. We have made progress but are still not quite to a point where we have what we need. The buildings and grounds council is singularly focused on this task.
 - b. Members of the council conducted their own walkaround with Gerry Sandoval to eyeball as much of the pressing repair needs as possible. We identified a few repairs and maintenance items that can move ahead in the near term.
4. Facility Sharing Agreements
 - a. Review of all agreements (GISH, Archway and PDAP) are in review with the other parties to be current through summer 2025. Sue Howard has completed interviews with the principals of our tenants, and we have the groundwork for renegotiating and renewing those agreements.
5. Pam Harvey has accepted our invitation to serve as the Treasurer, and that nomination has been confirmed unanimously by the Vestry
6. Warden's Forum – We conducted a Warden's Forum on July 20 following the 10 o'clock service
7. Jim Rosenbach was elected to the board of the Palmer Endowment, and will serve as Chair of that Board.
8. Serve Sunday – August 24 was Serve Sunday and we received many accounts of high Palmer turnout, good community engagement, and enthusiasm for more opportunities to serve
9. Strategic Plan Updates

The following are updates on our Strategic Plan initiatives, reflecting actions taken since the Vestry's special meeting in April:

- a. Working Groups statuses are noted below
 - i. People Strategy
 1. Processes for Personnel related Objectives were reviewed, and most objectives are already in place, or will happen later this calendar year.
 2. Membership of Parish Councils have been largely formed. See update above regarding the Pastoral Care council.
 3. We will be populating the Vestry page with photos and short bios.

This work has been assigned to the Communications council.

4. We will brainstorm ways to thank our volunteers in a more engaging and meaningful way
5. Along with the church staff, we will plan and execute events that serve as a “side door” introduction to Palmer
6. Our new Associate Rector, Allen Junek, and Deacon, Mary Reddick, and now on staff

ii. Place Strategy

1. Campus Improvements and Maintenance (Master Plan)
 - a. The Facilities and Grounds Council is gathering estimates from Cavalry Construction – paid for by the Diocese of Texas – and are working to ensure those estimates meet the scope of work the Council envisions for the premises. See the Facilities and Grounds minutes and reports for ongoing updates.
2. Safety
 - a. A small working group, including members of the staff, met with Jack Harvey to discuss his recommendations. Several follow-up items were identified and are currently in process. Jack presented on this topic at the 9 o'clock hour on June 22.

iii. Program Strategy

1. Membership of Parish Councils has been reviewed, and new members have been identified and invited to join. These councils include Membership, Parish Life (aka Congressional / Community Engagement), Christian Formation and Outreach.
 - a. Strategic Plan initiatives with these groups are in process.
2. These are related to the People strategies

iv. Pay Strategy

1. The formal objectives of this strategy are to be launched with the Finance and Stewardship Councils
 - a. These objectives are a part of their regular discussion
2. Earned Revenue
3. Donated Revenue
 - a. Under the purview of the Stewardship Committee.
 - a. Many of the tactics noted are already in the prevue of this committee.
4. Increase Operating Reserves
 - a. This Objective includes Year 2 tactics, so will not be addressed until Earned Revenue and Donated Revenue Objectives are established

The Rector's Report for the Sept. 2025 Vestry Meeting from the Rev'd Neil Alan Willard

1. On Sunday, August 10, we welcomed to Palmer the Rev'd Mary Reddick who has been appointed by the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas to serve as a deacon in our congregation. She will be facilitating the Tuesday morning women's Bible study, the Tuesday afternoon women's Bible study, and the work of the Outreach Council. You'll often see her in worship not only at 10:00 AM but also at 8:00 AM.
2. On Sunday, August 24, we welcomed to Palmer the Rev'd Allen Junek as our new Associate Rector. The following Sunday, August 31, I facilitated a conversation with Allen in St. Bede's Chapel during the 9:00 AM education hour. The Sunday after that, September 7, he gave his first sermon here. Allen will be the "conductor" for our pastoral care ministries and facilitate the work of the newly formed Pastoral Care Council. He will also be teaching part of a series on Thursday nights this fall.
3. During the month of September, we will welcome to Palmer our new Associate Organist, who is Laura Smith. So please be sure to greet her warmly this month.
4. On Sunday, August 10, part of the Jerusalem Peacebuilders group (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim teenagers, mostly from Israel/Palestine) that came to Houston this summer attended worship at Palmer. That evening, as we have done in the past, the entire Jerusalem Peacebuilders group led an interfaith service at Palmer, offering personal reflections on their experiences at Camp Allen over the previous week, sharing songs that they wrote together about those experiences, and sitting at tables in the Parish Hall with Palmers and other guests during a festive meal after that interfaith service. This was the most challenging year ever to run this program.
5. On Sunday, September 14, with the permission of the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, we will have a guest preacher, Dr. Elias Farah, who is the new executive director of Jerusalem Peacebuilders and a practicing Maronite Christian.
6. There is also a new face in the Houston office of Jerusalem Peacebuilders, located near my study at Palmer, since the Rev'd Will Parker has moved on to full-time parish ministry. The new Houston educator/site-coordinator in that office is Blake Burns.
7. On Thursday, August 21, I officially completed the video and live trainings required by the Episcopal Diocese of Texas to extend my certification, required as a member of the clergy, in Safeguarding God's Children (Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth), Safeguarding God's People (Policies for Safe Ministry with Adults), and Safeguarding God's People in the Workplace (Policies Prohibiting Sexual Harassment).
8. On Tuesday, September 9, I attended an event at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy. It was titled "Science Under Siege: A Conversation With Dr. Peter Hotez & Dr. Michael Mann." As most of you know, Dr. Hotez is a vaccine researcher and a physician-scientist. He was often on national media during the height of the COVID-19 global pandemic, and I recently heard him being interviewed on NPR

while on my daily commute. I've interacted with him previously on social media, and he knows we pray for him and his colleagues in the Texas Medical Center each Sunday in worship. After this event, I was just quickly going to introduce myself formally, shake his hand, and thank him for what he does. But he must of guessed who I was when he saw my clerical collar because he walked toward me, stretched out his arm to give me a hug, and thanked me for always being supportive of him. I also had an extensive conversation with a young Hindu from India who sat at my table, wanted to discuss how I understood the relationship between religion and science, and was very curious about how I deal with the personal pain that people bring to me when they talk to me about their lives. It was an interesting afternoon.

9. On Monday, August 25, I attended a breakfast for Christian clergy at Holocaust Museum Houston. Among those present who had also been invited were a priest from Trinity Episcopal Church in Midtown, Bishop Andy Doyle of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, the outgoing Lutheran bishop (ELCA) and several Lutheran pastors (ELCA), and other local clergy from Houston. This was an opportunity to meet the new CEO of the museum, Gary Weisserman, who is a longtime Jewish educator and son-in-law of a Holocaust survivor. It was also an opportunity to provide feedback about awareness of the museum and how the museum could become a leading voice for human rights within the community of Houston.
10. As most of you know, conversations and presentations in St. Bede's Chapel during the 9:00 AM education hour on Sundays continued throughout the summer, making that a year-round offering. Also during the summer months, the Holy Cross Children's Room was open and available for households who wanted to use that space during the 9:00 AM education hour, but many households gathered on the playground each Sunday after the 10:00 AM Choral Eucharist. Other year-round offerings include "Liturgy Prep" for young children during the sermon and prayers at the 10:00 AM Choral Eucharist and "Reel Theology" on Zoom on the evening of the first Sunday of each month to discuss theological themes/questions in a movie.
11. Sunday, September 7, marked the beginning of a new program year at the church. During the 9:00 AM education hour, Christian faith and music skills were woven together for children through storytelling and games in Holy Cross Children's Room, a parenting group resumed their meetings upstairs in the Canterbury Room, and the Rev'd Beth Anne Nelson, Missioner to Rice University for the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, and Carrie Willard, Assistant Dean in Rice University's Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, had a conversation in St. Bede's Chapel about the diocesan ministry with Rice students and how to support them, both undergraduate and graduate students. After the 10:00 AM Choral Eucharist that morning, the largest newcomers class in recent memory met in the Parish Hall, and the youth group resumed their meetings in the Youth Room. "Reel Theology" met later that night.
12. The Men's Retreat will take place at Camp Allen from Friday, Oct. 3, to Sunday, Oct. 5.

13. The date for our annual "Blessing of the Animals" has been moved to Sunday, October 12, so that we will have enough clergy present to hold parallel services that morning during the 10:00 AM hour. One will be the regular service inside the church, while the other will be an outdoor service on the south lawn with all of the pets that people will be invited to bring with them. That worked very well last year.
14. This fall there will be two classes offered on Thursday nights for seven weeks from October 9 through November 20. This will include a gathering time from 6:00 to 6:30 PM in St. Bede's Chapel for those who want to talk to one another and have a snack. This gathering time takes into account the variable of traffic delays and the fact that people can park on Main Street after 6:00 PM. Then the classes will run from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. One will focus on artistic and creative themes, meeting in Holy Cross Children's Room. Roger Hutchison will be facilitating this class, and I'll assist him in leading it on four of the seven Thursdays. The other will be an exploration of the Book of Common Prayer, both how to use it and also the spirituality within its pages. The Rev'd Allen Junek will be facilitating this class, although I'll be teaching it on three of the seven Thursdays. So please consider joining us for one of these.