

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

Date: November 18, 2025

Meeting Format: Hybrid (In-person and Zoom)

Start Time: 5:30 PM

Attendees

Vestry Members Present:

The 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

Vestry Members Absent:

Shannon Wallace

Assisting Clergy Present:

The Rev. Allen Junek, Associate Rector

The Rev. Katherine Tuttle, Director of Parish Life and Membership

1. Opening Prayer — The Rev. Neil Willard

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

2. Review and Approval of Consensus Items — The Rev. Neil Willard

The Vestry unanimously approved the minutes from the regular Vestry Meeting of September 16, 2025, and the Special Vestry Meeting held on October 14, 2025. The Vestry also received and accepted the Financial Summary from Finance Manager Jessica Evans; reports from the Worship Council, Outreach Council, Congregational and Community Engagement Council, Membership Council, Finance Council, Stewardship Council, and Facilities and Grounds Council; as well as the Senior Warden's Report and the Rector's Report. The 2026 Clergy Housing Allowance Resolutions were also reviewed and approved.

3. Facilities and Grounds Council Update — Kip Krause

- a. South Parking Lot: Repairs will take two days to complete and are targeted for early December 2025.
 - b. Rose Garden: The parish team will address the overgrowth. Tile cleanup will be postponed until after the holidays to allow Christmas decorating to proceed.
 - c. Engineering Assessment: The diocese has contributed 50% of the funds needed for the assessment. The remaining cost will come from accounts designated to support building maintenance. A contract has been signed with an engineering firm, and the assessment is expected to be completed in early January 2026, in time for the new Vestry's first meeting.
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4. Finance Council Update — Dick Viebig

Based on year-to-date fulfilled pledges, 2025 revenue modestly exceeds expenses, a trend expected to hold through year-end.

5. Stewardship Council Update — Ken Alexander

- 2025 Pledged Total: \$1.745M
- 2026 Pledge Goal: \$1.9M
- As of November 18, 2025, Palmer has received 177 pledges totaling \$1.5M (79% of goal), leaving \$400K needed to reach the target.
- More parishioners are paying via scheduled giving, which has improved budgeting accuracy. Some of those who give scheduled payments have not yet submitted a 2026 pledge; if their giving continues unchanged, this will add \$101K, bringing the total to \$1.6M (84% of goal).
- Of pledges received, 67% increased, 8% decreased, and 25% remained static.
- 25 new pledges have been submitted.

6. Senior Warden's Report — Tom Van Arsdel

a. Capital Campaign Planning

Both a Capital Campaign Committee and a Centennial Celebration Committee will be formed. Pam Lovett has agreed to serve on the Capital Campaign Committee.

b. Archway Academy Contract Update — John Wallace

Archway's new contract with Palmer will run through July 31, 2027. The contract reflects a 15% increase in the building usage fee (from \$38K to \$43K) and in maintenance. Archway is addressing financial challenges caused by decreased enrollment (40 students; goal of 50; past peak >100) and a higher proportion of students on scholarship. Archway leadership is focused on financial stabilization, and welcomes any vestry member on their quarterly financial calls; John has agreed to be on those

c. Nominating Committee Update — John Wallace

The nominations committee hopes to have a final slate of nominees by Thanksgiving.

d. Special Vestry Meeting in December

A special meeting will be held on December 16, 2025, to vote on the 2026 budget.

7. Rector's Report — The Rev. Neil Willard

a. Parish Archives Update (Related to Centennial Celebration)

Sherry Thomas and Sue Howard are reviewing archived materials. Leslie Douthwaite, who has experience with archival organization, has kindly agreed to assist them.

8. Gratitude Reflection — Tom Van Arsdel

Tom expressed gratitude for the success of Covenant Sunday, the Parish Retreat (which included many new participants), the high attendance at recent Newcomers' Classes, and the efforts to welcome and support new members led by Rev. Katherine Tuttle. Tom also gave thanks for the recent Dinner & Discussion event, which drew 55 attendees, including the parish bell ringers.

9. Benediction — The Rev. Allen Junek

**PALMER MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OPERATING FUND
October 2025**

	MTD ACTUAL 2025	MTD BUDGET 2025	YTD ACTUAL 2025	YTD BUDGET 2025	2025 ANNUAL BUDGET	% of ANNUAL BUDGET USED
Revenues						
BANK DEPOSITS						
OPERATING FUND						
CONTRIBUTION REVENUE	\$174,975.21	\$151,556.66	\$1,495,217.02	\$1,515,566.60	\$1,818,680.00	82.21 %
OTHER OPERATING REVENUE	\$39,663.34	\$37,814.34	\$448,715.58	\$378,143.40	\$453,772.00	98.89 %
Total OPERATING FUND	<u>\$214,638.55</u>	<u>\$189,371.00</u>	<u>\$1,943,932.60</u>	<u>\$1,893,710.00</u>	<u>\$2,272,452.00</u>	<u>85.54 %</u>
Total BANK DEPOSITS	<u>\$214,638.55</u>	<u>\$189,371.00</u>	<u>\$1,943,932.60</u>	<u>\$1,893,710.00</u>	<u>\$2,272,452.00</u>	<u>85.54 %</u>
Total Revenues	<u>\$214,638.55</u>	<u>\$189,371.00</u>	<u>\$1,943,932.60</u>	<u>\$1,893,710.00</u>	<u>\$2,272,452.00</u>	<u>85.54 %</u>
Expenses						
PERSONNEL						
PERSONNEL	\$82,212.79	\$86,527.43	\$792,394.59	\$865,274.30	\$1,038,329.00	76.31 %
DIOCESE						
DIOCESE	\$14,828.75	\$14,828.75	\$148,287.50	\$148,287.50	\$177,945.00	83.33 %
RECTORY						
RECTORY	\$1,453.41	\$1,383.33	\$10,873.13	\$13,833.30	\$16,600.00	65.50 %
CHURCH BUILDINGS						
BUILDING and MAINTENANCE	\$43,473.18	\$46,957.26	\$471,366.76	\$469,572.60	\$563,487.00	83.65 %
DEBT SERVICE	\$3,969.89	\$5,085.75	\$48,512.31	\$50,857.50	\$61,029.00	79.49 %
UTILITIES	\$12,509.21	\$11,750.00	\$111,956.58	\$117,500.00	\$141,000.00	79.40 %
FELLOWSHIP KITCHEN	\$2,109.32	\$1,508.33	\$14,745.07	\$15,083.30	\$18,100.00	81.46 %
Total CHURCH BUILDINGS	<u>\$62,061.60</u>	<u>\$65,301.34</u>	<u>\$646,580.72</u>	<u>\$653,013.40</u>	<u>\$783,616.00</u>	<u>82.51 %</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT						
ADMINISTRATION	\$1,765.59	\$1,886.25	\$24,329.40	\$18,862.50	\$22,635.00	107.49 %
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS	\$624.07	\$2,679.16	\$10,843.98	\$26,791.60	\$32,150.00	33.73 %
Total ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	<u>\$2,389.66</u>	<u>\$4,565.41</u>	<u>\$35,173.38</u>	<u>\$45,654.10</u>	<u>\$54,785.00</u>	<u>64.20 %</u>
MINISTRIES						
COMMUNICATIONS	\$6,042.96	\$3,633.33	\$43,649.74	\$36,333.30	\$43,600.00	100.11 %
OUTREACH	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$7,338.75	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00	61.16 %
EVANGELISM	\$2,307.26	\$708.33	\$10,191.17	\$7,083.30	\$8,500.00	119.90 %
FELLOWSHIP	\$1,671.62	\$1,833.33	\$21,527.46	\$18,333.30	\$22,000.00	97.85 %
MUSIC MINISTRY						
MUSIC-ADULTS	\$444.56	\$1,020.84	\$4,524.52	\$10,208.40	\$12,250.00	36.93 %
MUSIC-CHILDREN	\$0.00	\$333.33	\$1,465.16	\$3,333.30	\$4,000.00	36.63 %
Total MUSIC MINISTRY	<u>\$444.56</u>	<u>\$1,354.17</u>	<u>\$5,989.68</u>	<u>\$13,541.70</u>	<u>\$16,250.00</u>	<u>36.86 %</u>
PASTORAL CARE	\$0.00	\$183.32	\$250.00	\$1,833.20	\$2,200.00	11.36 %
WORSHIP	\$521.92	\$404.17	\$2,992.81	\$4,041.70	\$4,850.00	61.71 %
PRAYER & SPIRITUALITY	\$0.00	\$31.25	\$0.00	\$312.50	\$375.00	0.00 %
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/MEDIA	\$2,318.70	\$3,333.34	\$27,922.81	\$33,333.40	\$40,000.00	69.81 %
Total MINISTRIES	<u>\$15,307.02</u>	<u>\$12,481.24</u>	<u>\$119,862.42</u>	<u>\$124,812.40</u>	<u>\$149,775.00</u>	<u>80.03 %</u>
EDUCATION						
ADULT EDUCATION	\$3,838.85	\$1,333.34	\$14,878.37	\$13,333.40	\$16,000.00	92.99 %
CHILDREN'S EDUCATION	\$421.81	\$916.67	\$10,707.30	\$9,166.70	\$11,000.00	97.34 %
YOUTH	\$915.99	\$1,083.33	\$13,532.09	\$10,833.30	\$13,000.00	104.09 %
PARISH RETREAT	\$0.00	\$416.67	\$5,000.00	\$4,166.70	\$5,000.00	100.00 %
Total EDUCATION	<u>\$5,176.65</u>	<u>\$3,750.01</u>	<u>\$44,117.76</u>	<u>\$37,500.10</u>	<u>\$45,000.00</u>	<u>98.04 %</u>
OTHER EXPENSES						
WEDDING MINISTRY	\$1,075.00	\$316.67	\$2,728.55	\$3,166.70	\$3,800.00	71.80 %
FUNERAL MINISTRY	\$250.00	\$216.83	\$1,180.78	\$2,168.30	\$2,602.00	45.38 %
Total OTHER EXPENSES	<u>\$1,325.00</u>	<u>\$533.50</u>	<u>\$3,909.33</u>	<u>\$5,335.00</u>	<u>\$6,402.00</u>	<u>61.06 %</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$184,754.88</u>	<u>\$189,371.01</u>	<u>\$1,801,198.83</u>	<u>\$1,893,710.10</u>	<u>\$2,272,452.00</u>	<u>79.26 %</u>
Net Total	\$29,883.67		\$142,733.77		\$0.00	0.00 %

Palmer Worship Council Meeting Minutes November 6, 2025

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

Prayer – Libby opened the meeting with prayer.

Upcoming Activities –

- Nov.7 -9 – Palmer Parish Retreat at Camp Allen
- Nov.16 – Covenant Sunday
- Nov.23 – Kirking of the Tartans at 10:00 am in the Nave
- Nov.30 – Start of Advent
- Dec.14 – Advent Lessons & Carols at 4:00 pm in the Nave
- Dec.17 – Longest Night Service at 7:00 pm at St. Bedes
- Dec.24 – Christmas Eve Services at 3:00 pm, 5:30 Carols / 6:00 pm Choral Eucharist, Rite II, 8:30 Carols / 9:00 pm Choral Eucharist, Rite I w/Incense
- Dec.25 – Christmas Day, 10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I
- Dec.28 – 8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I, 10:00 am Christmas Lessons & Carols w/Holy Communion Rite I (First Sunday after Christmas)
- Jan.6 – Epiphany 5:30 pm – Burning of the Greenery in the Courtyard

Clergy Updates –

The Longest Night Service on Dec.17 will be a Taize type service with communion.

Music Updates –

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

Service Updates –

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

Dec.14 – Ushers are optional for Advent Lessons & Carols at 4:00 pm

For Nov.30 through January 4, 10:00 am services will be Rite I

For Jan.11 through Feb.15, 10:00 am services will be Rite II

Verger Updates –

Nothing new to report.

Acolyte Updates –

David Madrigal and Rev. Allen Junek are working on an Acolyte Training Program to review with both adult and youth acolytes on December 7th following the 10:00 service. Worship Council was asked about at what age should children be offered opportunities to serve and most agreed children should at least be in 5th grade.

Lectors Updates –

On October 12th following the 10:00 service, Margie met with about 8 current lectors for a brief overview of the lector's responsibilities. Margie mentioned that there are at least 2 new people requesting training to become a lector.

Ushers / Bell Ringers Updates –

Ushers are currently handling the task of assigning substitutes and will continue to monitor this task. Lesley and Danna will review the upcoming usher schedule for Advent season.

Bell Ringers – Allen Nunley thanked Neil, the bell ringers and over 12 Palmer newcomers who attended the October 12th tour of the bell ringing area. One of the newcomers, a teenager has taken an interest in bell ringing and has now even started lessons in bell ringing.

Other Business –

Sacristy Workroom Project – Special thanks to the Altar Guild donors who donated funds for the installation of new fluorescent lighting and new flooring in the workroom. The lighting has been installed and the flooring is scheduled later this month. There have been many compliments and thanks offered regarding the new lighting in this area. It has made a big difference to this work area. Thank you to Gerry Sandoval with Palmer Facilities for overseeing this project.

Next Worship Council Meeting date – December 2nd

Outreach Council Report for the November 2025 Vestry Meeting

Submitted by the Rev'd Mary Reddick, Deacon and Chair of Outreach Council

date of meeting: October 9, 2025 on Zoom

present: Rev'd Mary Reddick Deacon; Rev'd Linda Shelton Deacon retired; Dana Kurtin; Jeff Dieter; Sue Howard; Jennifer Macia, Secretary. Absent: Denise Zwicker

-discussed and scheduled an in-person longer meeting on January 10, 2026 from 9-12 am with the following goals and expectations:

- *define the general outreach ministries for Palmer to work towards developing or expanding in 2026

- *review the list of established ministries and their current leadership. Are those leaders wanting to continue their roles in 2026?

- *set policies for calendaring outreach events for maximum participation and coordination with other church events

- *discuss budget development and funding

- *discuss oversight of new ministries going forward. Will we need to have a short application/vetting process?

-discussed Angel Tree Ministry affiliated with Salvation Army. The Council is assisting John Wallace this year and will reassess which organization to work with going forward in our January 2026 meeting.

-after discussion-the overall feeling of the Council is to primarily focus on ministry in the immediate area of Palmer.

-Due to current legal climate, Linda Shelton has been asked to prepare a report and recommendations on refugee, resettlement and migrant ministry possibilities for the January 2026 meeting.

-At the request of some parishioners, the Alternative Giving Market will be offered again this year. The organizations selected for support are Emergency Assistance Coalition; Archway Academy and Palmers Assisting Reentry. This will be offered in December with donations on-line. Dustin is working on the format for the Palmer app.

-Community of Hope has been formally transferred to the Pastoral Care Council.

-Deacon Mary toured EAC and presented some ideas for expanding working with them. Palmer is a founding partner of this organization and they are doing important work in our community with vulnerable populations in our area. When the SNAP benefit funding stopped in November-she worked with EAC to set up a platform so Palmer members could order needed food and supplies on line to be delivered quickly to EAC to feed people in our area and 4 New Hope Housing (and a neighboring elementary school) food pantries they operate. Within a few days much needed food and supplies were being delivered to help.

-Archway Academy held a fund raising luncheon in October and invited some Palmer leadership to attend. Revd Katherine Tuttle, Rev'd Mary Reddick and Sue Howard attended to support Archway on behalf of Palmer.

-Deacon Mary is visiting current Palmer ministries and inquiring how the Council can support them going forward.

-Modification of Serve Sunday is under discussion. The idea is to expand the frequency to at least 6 times a year with a focus on going out in the community. Deacon Mary and Revd Katherine are also exploring developing opportunities that focus on engaging families; new members and the new 20-30s group.

-Deacon Mary presented a Formation series for adults idea for next year to focus on servant ministry. The specific presentation suggestion is "If You Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat" by John Ortberg. It is a book as well as a video series. It is being considered for Lent.

-Deacon Mary and Dustin are working on advertising an ongoing collection of items needed by organizations in our community from members as they clear out their homes. We need books for the Harris County Mental Hospital; baseball caps for EAC; men's warm coats and Jackets as well as men's athletic shoes for LOTS. Deacon Mary has a new pink wagon in her office to collect these items as they come in and she will arrange for them to get to the appropriate organizations.

-In October, the Rev'd Brad Sullivan presented current events in LOTS to the Formation class. While he was here, Deacon Mary asked him to assist with assembling a expedited way for Palmer members to send the two most needed items to LOTS- blankets and shoes. He selected some reasonably priced sleeping bags and shoes (less than 40.00) with links for purchasing. We will set up links so our members can purchase these on Amazon and have them shipped directly to LOTS before winter arrives.

-Ministry Fair is scheduled for February 8, 2026. At the request of the planning committee, the Ministry Fair will now be set for the second Sunday of February every year.

Palmer Congregational and Community Engagement Council Report

October 2025 | Submitted by Lauren Kirkwood

Date of Meeting: 10/07/2025 at 6pm via Zoom

Present: Katherine Tuttle, Roger Hutchison, Joey Hunter, George Thomas, Jim Key, Lauren Kirkwood, July Lutkis, and Beth Anne Nelson

Absent: Franchesca Sentmanat and Alex Doan

Summary of Meeting:

Palmer's **Taize** service October 6 in the nave with the Rice Campus Ministry was well received. Victor and David did a wonderful setup for the event. We're going to try incorporating Taize into the Longest Night Service.

The **meditation** discussion held last month during the adult formation hour resulted in three new people joining the Monday evening meditation on Zoom. In-person meditation is set to begin on Wednesdays at 6pm in St. Bede's Chapel. It will be facilitated by Peggie and John Raish for the first month, then Burdette Keeland will take over the following month. At least 5 new people have expressed interest in attending.

Yoga is doing well and averages 15 people per week.

The **newcomer class**, meeting from 11:30am to 1:00pm has been going very well with 30+ people. Meeting on Sundays allow for childcare to be provided. The last class is this Sunday, but there will be follow up, such as a future potluck, to ensure connections and participation will continue. The new Palmer app will provide contacts for people within the group.

The 9am **formation class** has been well attended. The **parenting class** for parents of young children meet during the formation hour and there are now about 15 people in the group. Roger mentioned they have nicely bonded.

The pros and cons to having the **coffee** set up outside the nave (rather than in the courtyard) was discussed. New people and visitors might feel more comfortable with it just outside the church doors. People driving by see the activity, and that is a positive. Also, there is easy access to the playground. When the weather is good, the courtyard might provide for better fellowship and could be considered in the future. Setting up some tables in the courtyard might be incorporated into the potlucks.

Recently, six people were **baptized**, including a father and two children.

Attendance for the **55-plus** group varies. 15 or 16 people went to the Project Row Houses, and 30 visited the cistern, which was followed by lunch at the Post food hall. We're trying to keep prices free or reasonable (\$10-\$15). Upcoming events include a walking tour of Rice University's campus architecture with Steven Fox. The tour will end at Valhalla (a "watering hole") and people can linger there or head back to Palmer. Preservation Houston was considered as a future field trip, with the group possibility meeting in the Ideson building downtown. From there several of the historic buildings can be seen. Jim Key volunteered to be the contact person for follow up. Another idea was to visit Bayou Bend, decorated for Christmas.

This is the second year of moving choir rehearsal to Sundays during the 9:00am formation hour. This has resulted in an increase to the **children's choir program**.

The **Youth group** has been averaging 15 to 20 kids, which is really strong for Palmer. The theme and focus is "You are more than enough" and there is discussion about stewardship. Roger writes them personal notes every week to keep them engaged. Roger noted that we now have interesting family structures coming to Palmer. Confirmation will be in the spring.

Dinner and Discussion continues to be popular, getting as many as 40 people. Shows that people want to build the Palmer community.

No men in the group attended the **men's retreat**. Katherine will get some feedback.

Palmer has been supportive of **Rice Campus Ministry** and students have offerings on Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays. An author will come talk to the students and the Palmer community around January 12.

Beth Ann and Katherine are collaborating on a 20's and 30's group, **Bibles and Brunch**, and the first meetup is October 19 in the Autry House after worship. Some of the newcomer class might be part of this new group.

October 18 will be the **Mental Health Quiet Day**. Kiki, the yoga instructor will lead a 45-minute session, a mindfulness meditation facilitator will then lead a 45-minute session, and brunch will follow.

On Thursday, **new weekly classes** starts. Rev'd Allen Junek will lead a class called Common Prayer for Common Life, the basics of prayer book spirituality. Roger will lead an art and faith series. Classes will begin at 6:30pm, with a social time beginning at 6:00pm. This is because street parking begins at 6:00pm. On October 23, a Brazos Bookstore event will be held and Palmers will be encouraged to use the parking garage.

The **parish picnic** is on October 26. The last one was successful and the elephants exhibit were a good draw. The carousel rides were popular and might be a good draw for the kids this year.

The **parish retreat** will give Palmers a great opportunity to get better acquainted with Allen. We want to encourage people to attend, even for just the day on Saturday.

Roger reminded us there will be two 10am services this Sunday. The outdoors service will have the **blessing of the animals**.

Date of Next Meeting: The date of the next meeting has been set for Dec. 2 at 6pm via Zoom. A Zoom link will be sent out a few days prior to the meeting.

Membership Council Report
September 2025
Submitted by Katherine Tuttle

Date of meeting: September 28, 2025, at 5:00pm via Zoom

Present: Katherine Tuttle, Joan Gallagher, Sue Howard, Kyle Raese, Rob Vines, Cindy Wallace, David Wallace

Absent: Stephanie Davidson, Mark Maratto, Rebecca Snyder

Agenda: The agenda sent to the Council was as follows:

- Introductions
- Go over the responsibilities and duties of the council.
- Review the newcomer classes that started in September.
- Discuss Newcomer follow-up post class
- Farmer's Market walk-through in Rice Village (Oct. 5th) 11:30-12:30
- Discuss other events coming up this fall that are good for Newcomers
 - Oct. 18th Mental Health Workshop 9-11:30
 - Oct. 12th Blessing of the Animals
 - Brazo Bookshop author visit
- Confirm our next meeting time.

Summary of Meeting:

Members introduced themselves and gave a summary of their connection to Palmer.

Katherine outlined the duties of the Council, which are largely to provide input and ideas on currently scheduled Newcomer related activities and to make suggestions for other ways to engage Newcomers.

Katherine gave an overview of the recent Newcomer Class and noted that committee members Rob, Kyle and Stephanie were part of the group of Shepards who sat in on the classes. She then asked for feedback from those who attended. Feedback was positive including the value of offering childcare. There was one question concerning how we can better familiarize Newcomers with Episcopal "jargon" with which they may not be familiar.

The upcoming Newcomer's Tour of Palmer on October 12 was noted.

There was extensive discussion about how to keep the momentum going once the Newcomer's class is complete. This included emphasizing the opportunity to meet more Palmer's at the upcoming retreats and holding a potluck reunion prior to the Annual meeting in January.

The final portion of the meeting was spent discussion various ways to spread the word in the local community regarding the Blessing of the Animals, the Mental Health Workshop, Brazos Bookstore event and The Longest Night service.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday November 30 at 5:00pm.

The meeting adjourned at 6:02pm

Notes on Finance Council Meeting

November 13, 2025

Attendees: Dick Viebig, Pam Harvey, Pam Lovett, Bet Hunter, Tom Van Arsdel, Richard Avant, Jessica Evans, Davis Maxey, Kip Krause

- Opened with prayer
- Action Items
 - a. Approved October meeting minutes – unanimous
 - b. Approved October Financial reports – unanimous

No areas of concern were identified following the publication of the October Financials.

The Treasurer, Chair and Jessica Evans discussed the 2026 draft budget and answered questions from the rest of the Committee.

- Awaiting the outcome from Covenant Sunday before proceeding further with the budget, the committee will then meet again to make adjustments/finalize as needed.
- Noted the Diocese assessment increase and this is included in the budget.
- PH has reached out to the endowment chair for a 2026 estimate.
- Discussed broad outcomes from the sub-committee of the Finance Committee that convened to review staff compensation. Various recommendations were passed from the sub-committee up to the Warden. In the hope that these recommendations can be funded in the 2026 budget they are shown in the laity staff and custodial services budget lines.

	2025	2026	Increase/ (decrease)	
CONTRIBUTION REVENUE	1,818,680	1,892,000	73,320	
OTHER OPERATING REVENUE	453,772	514,330	60,558	
Total Revenues	2,272,452	2,406,330	133,878	4% increase in pledges + rental increases + increase in endowment
Total PERSONNEL	1,038,331	1,089,905	51,574	
Total DIOCESE	177,945	195,740	17,795	
Total BUILDING and MAINTENANCE	563,487	610,000	46,513	
Other expenses	492,689	498,934	6,245	
Suplus/(loss)	(0)	(11,751)		

November 11, 2025 Stewardship Council Report to the Vestry

The Stewardship Council will meet on November 17, 2025, at 6 PM by Zoom following Covenant Sunday. We will review our progress toward 2026 Stewardship goals and to prepare for the Vestry meeting on November 18.

We plan to report to the Vestry on November 18 about:

- A. progress toward our 2026 Stewardship goals
- B. action needed to reach those goals
- C. the Vestry's assistance needed

Members:

Ken Alexander, Chair
Jeanine Baker
Rosine Hall
Betty Key
Pamela Lovett
John Wallace
Peter Yacoe

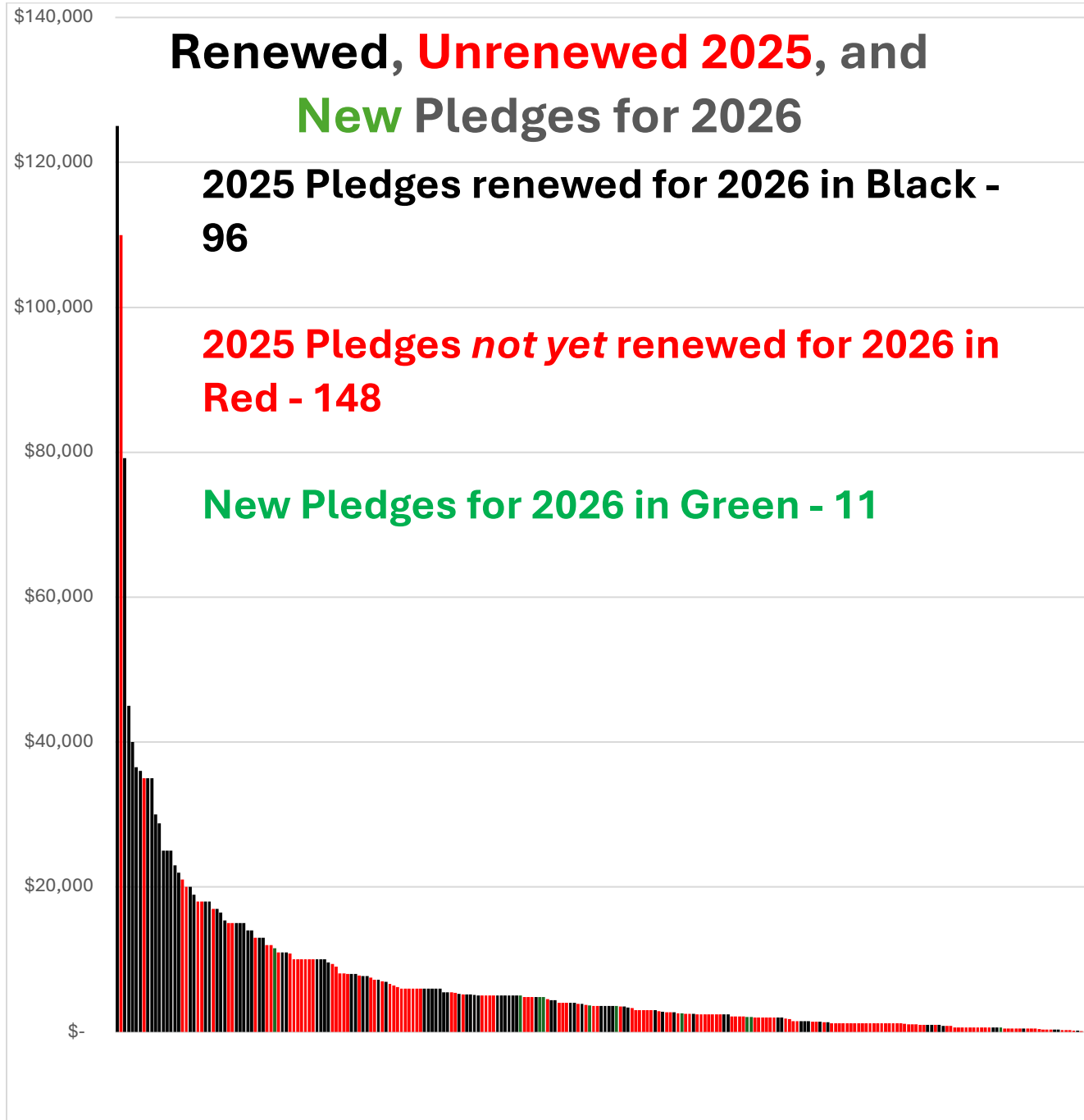
Vestry Action Items before our November 18 Vestry meeting:

1. Make follow-up communications with Palmers on your lists who have yet to pledge for 2026. Shelby Next accurately reflects in the Stewardship Notes those who have pledged for 2026.
2. Come to Covenant Sunday on November 16. Wear your Vestry name tag and be a server on the buffet line at the brunch following the 10 am service.

Progress to date on 2026 Stewardship

3. Every Vestry member has pledged for 2026. Thank you!
4. Currently, we have received 115 pledges totaling just over \$1.2 million toward our goal of over 250 pledges and \$1.9 million. We hope Covenant Sunday will bring us closer to our goals.

5. The graph below summarizes our pledges as of November 3. It is illustrative of the work that is left to be done.



Palmer Building and Grounds Council Meeting

November 10, 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	Present
Michael Massey – Vestry	Present
Sue Murphy – Vestry	Present

Discussion notes

1. South Parking Lot

- a. Gerry has contacted the contractor who will do the repaving of the parking lot and is currently awaiting a final schedule from the contractor.
- b. Possible dates are Friday 14th or the 21st of November, and the work should take two/three days to complete.

2. Rose Garden Clean-Up and Maintenance

- a. After discussions with parish member currently maintaining the garden, the consensus is that he will continue to support the garden throughout the autumn and winter, and we will revisit this topic in the spring of 2026
- b. Gerry will find a suitable contractor to trim the existing climbing rose vines that have grown into the roofline and tile roofing of St. Bedes. This will be done as soon as practical.
- c. Future maintenance and development of the garden will involve current parish members with suitable expertise in addressing sunlight limitations and plant choices.
- d. On-going maintenance costs of \$4,000/year can be saved if we get volunteers to tend the garden
- e. This issue is resolved, and the topic is closed for now.

3. Updates on Patio, handrails and outdoor furniture

- a. In order to not interfere with holiday season decoration, work to repaint handrails and fencing throughout the patio area is deferred until early spring.
- b. The work of setting up holiday decorations will shortly.
- c. Outdoor patio furniture power washing and re-oiling provides good opportunities for youth group volunteer work, and this is best timed in the spring; therefore, that work is also deferred until then, consistent with work on handrailing

Palmer Building and Grounds Council Meeting

November 10, 2025 - 12 Noon

4. Campus Engineering Assessment Work

- a. Tom Van Arsdel reported on discussions with the diocese regarding funding for Walter P. Moore's proposed work, estimated at \$150,000.
- b. Attending from Palmer were Tom, Michael Massey, David Robinson.
- c. Palmer proposed a cost sharing arrangement with the Diocese paying all of the fixed costs (\$80k) and Palmer would pay for supplemental studies, contingencies, and additional project risks (estimated to be as much as \$70k)
- d. Formal proposal was submitted to the Diocese executive committee for final approval (response still pending as of this writing)
- e. Walter P. Moore will provide structural and civil engineering expertise only; other work such as stucco and MEP will be done in supplemental study.
- f. Formal proposal emphasized the urgency of the request as Walter P. Moore is past their start date for completing the work by the end of January 2026.

Senior Warden Report

For the November 18, 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. Efforts will be made to encourage more people to use the garage.
3. Buildings and Grounds
 - a. We have a proposal in hand from Walter P Moore, a structural engineering firm, to perform an assessment of the property, which will help us plan for what to do to restore and possibly modify the campus to suit the needs of Palmer's immediate future. We have shared the budget for that proposal and some possible contingent work to support it with the Diocese. We are in dialogue with the Diocese about their willingness to pay for a certain portion of that work. The goal remains to have that work completed by the end of January.
 - b. Facility Sharing Agreements - 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. John Wallace is meeting with Archway to discuss the renewal terms, and our Chancellors are preparing a new version of the Agreement.
4. Following the October special meeting, the Vestry approved the formation of committees to begin planning for two initiatives: 1) a Capital Campaign to fund proposed work on the campus and Rectory following the engineering assessment and discernment about the scope of that proposal; and 2) plans for the celebration of Palmer's 100th anniversary in 2029. The Rector and the Wardens are discussing who to invite on these committees.
5. Nominations Committee – as of this report, we have 7 confirmed names for Vestry Nominations.

6. 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. See Buildings and Grounds update, above.
 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

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 Nov. 2025 Vestry Meeting from the Rev'd Neil Alan Willard

1. On Sunday, September 21, I gave my annual stewardship sermon and said:

For each of us, even if none of the examples I just mentioned reflects our own experience, there is a bit of distance between the words we pray together, the words we hear from the lips of Jesus, and the way we choose to spend our money, whether our own financial resources are great or small. If most of us still used paper checkbook registers, flipping through the pages would tell the tale of the location of both our treasure and our hearts.

But the living presence of Jesus in this place, in the people who gather here, and especially in bread and wine made holy food and received in outstretched hands can *relocate* both our treasure and our hearts. It can move us from standing at the center of a world we have created for ourselves to standing at the center of the world God is creating for all people. It genuinely has the power to move us a lot further than we can possibly ask or imagine.

2. On Sunday, September 28, two adults and four children were baptized at the 10:00 AM worship service, including a father who held his two children in his arms while he was baptized first and each of his children were baptized after he was. In the days leading up to those baptisms, I was able to have a conversation in person or via Zoom with each individual or household. As I said in a note to the Bishop about this, those conversations with parents of children about to be baptized and with adults about to be baptized have been more sincere than I can ever recall in all of my years of ordained ministry. And then on All Saints' Sunday, November 2, there were more baptisms at the 10:00 AM worship service. That is always especially meaningful to me since my own children were baptized on All Saints' Sunday.
3. Since our September meeting, Laura Smith has begun as Palmer's Associate Organist.
4. From Monday, October 20, through Wednesday, October 22, all of the clergy from Palmer attended the annual clergy conference of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas at Camp Allen in Navasota. Attendance is mandatory at this event in the fall of each year.
5. From Monday, October 27, through Wednesday, October 29, I attended lectures given by former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams in Waco. This event at Baylor University also included an interview with Rowan Williams and a breakfast with him for clergy in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. The whole experience renewed my spirit.
6. From Friday, November 7, through Sunday, November 9, Palmer's Parish Retreat was held at Camp Allen in Navasota. It was perhaps the largest one we've ever had with respect to participation, and that participation was heavily driven by newcomers who were happy to be there, many of them experiencing Camp Allen for the first time.

Housing Allowance Resolutions for the Clergy for 2026

Each year the Vestry is asked to pass housing allowance resolutions for the clergy, which does not in any way alter the expenses of the church but does alter the taxes that the clergy pay, which are somewhat complicated. It is best to set them too high rather than too low. Whatever part of the housing allowance a member of the clergy does not use for housing-related expenses, including furnishings, is taxable. The responsibility for proving the amount that was used for housing-related expenses falls on the clergy, not the church. Again, this does not affect the church's annual budget.

The wording used for these three resolutions comes from the Church Pension Group, which notes that these resolutions should be approved by the Vestry before the beginning of the next calendar year. The first resolution is different than the other two resolutions because the Rector lives in the Rectory, which is owned by the church:

Whereas the Rev. Neil Alan Willard is employed as a minister of the Gospel by Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas, which although providing a residence for him, does not provide the full cost of maintaining and furnishing such a residence, the vestry resolves that of the total compensation to be paid to the Rev. Mr. Willard during 2026, that \$30,000 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and be it further resolved that \$30,000 of compensation is designated as housing allowance for 2026 and all future years, unless otherwise provided.

Whereas the Rev. Allen M. Junek is employed as a minister of the Gospel by Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas, which does not provide a residence for him, the Vestry resolves that of the total compensation to be paid to the Rev. Mr. Junek during 2026, that \$48,773 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and be it further resolved that \$48,773 of compensation is designated as housing allowance for 2026 and all future years, unless otherwise provided.

Whereas the Rev. Katherine Tuttle is employed as a minister of the Gospel by Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas, which does not provide a residence for her, the vestry resolves that of the total compensation to be paid to the Rev. Ms. Tuttle during 2026, that \$41,140 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and be it further resolved that \$41,140 of compensation is designated as housing allowance for 2026 and all future years, unless otherwise provided.