

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting Minutes May 20, 2025

Vestry Members Present:

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

Vestry Members Absent:

Kip Krause

Clergy Present:

Rev. Neil Willard, Rector

Assisting Clergy Present:

Rev. Katherine Tuttle, Director of Parish Life and Membership

The hybrid in-person + Zoom meeting started at 5:30 PM.

- 1. Check-in and Opening Prayer (Rev. Neil Willard):** Neil invited personal updates and opened the meeting with Evening Prayer, including Psalm 62 and The Song of Simeon.
- 2. Review and Approval of Consensus Items (Tom Van Arsdel):** Minutes from the March 18, 2025 Vestry meeting, Financial Summary from Jessica Evans (Finance Manager), and reports from the Stewardship Council, Finance Council, Facilities and Grounds Council, Senior Warden, and Rector, were all unanimously approved.
- 3. Facilities and Grounds Council Report (Tom Van Arsdel):**
 - 1.** Cavalry Construction & Restoration completed inspection of Palmer's facilities. Based on the inspection, they have provided proposals to repair the foundation of Autry House, the areas of the roof that have deteriorated and are leaking, and the HVAC system.
 - 2.** The vestry unanimously approved appropriation of \$11,377.22 of the Kirk Waldron Fund (Cavalry's estimate – roof section A) to cover the estimated cost of

immediately needed roof repairs. The vestry recognized that the actual cost may be higher depending on what Cavalry finds when it removes the old roof. Cavalry's proposal includes a 2-year warranty on workmanship and a 10-year warranty on materials.

3. Michael Massey has written a planning guide to submit to Cavalry, and other contractors, asking for proposals for comprehensive campus repairs and modernization (including foundations, roofing, structural, exteriors, interiors, and systems) so that Palmer can assess costs and benefits of more comprehensive repairs compared to continuing short-term solutions.

4. Stewardship Council Report (Ken Alexander):

1. 56% of pledgers are 70 years of age or older
2. 27 pledgers account for 50% of the total pledge dollars
3. Covenant Sunday will be held on November 16, 2025. Suggested Covenant Sunday date for 2026 is November 15th.
4. The importance of stewardship should be included in Confirmation and Newcomers' Classes.

5. Senior Warden's Report (Tom Van Arsdel):

1. Parish Councils (Outreach, Pastoral Care, Communications, Membership, Care & Community Engagement):
 1. The Rev. Katherine Tuttle sent out email invitations today to potential candidates for the Membership and Care & Community Engagement councils
 2. The Pastoral Care Council will seek to include a diverse membership, including families with young children and college students.
2. Endowment Board
 3. Mike Soika's term is ending
 4. The board invited the vestry to provide suggestions for a new member. Several names were suggested and will be forwarded to the Endowment Board.

6. Associate Rector Search (Rev. Neil Willard)

1. Ongoing. Neil interviewed 3 promising candidates and expects to complete the search process within the next few weeks.

7. Gratitude Reflection (Tom Van Arsdel)

Thanksgivings were offered for:

1. The well-attended 5/18/25 10 AM service (277 people).
2. The 4 baptisms on 5/18/25 and 1 upcoming on 5/25/25
3. The fellowship opportunities provided by Serve Sunday, including at New Hope Sakowitz, where the Harvey, Van Arsdel, and Cromack families have been volunteering together since Serve Sunday started

8. Closing Prayer (Rev. Neil Willard): Neil closed the meeting in prayer

PALMER MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Analysis of Revenues & Expenses
April 2025

APRIL 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	\$106,673.76	\$151,556.66	\$751,165.06	\$606,226.64	\$1,818,680.00	41.30 %
OTHER OPERATING REVENUE	\$31,564.34	\$37,814.34	\$132,027.36	\$151,257.36	\$453,772.00	29.10 %
Total OPERATING FUND	<u>\$138,238.10</u>	<u>\$189,371.00</u>	<u>\$883,192.42</u>	<u>\$757,484.00</u>	<u>\$2,272,452.00</u>	<u>38.87 %</u>
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Expenses						
PERSONNEL	\$80,021.30	\$86,527.43	\$325,699.15	\$346,109.72	\$1,038,329.00	31.37 %
DIOCESE	\$14,828.75	\$14,828.75	\$59,315.00	\$59,315.00	\$177,945.00	33.33 %
RECTORY	\$1,188.38	\$1,383.33	\$3,126.94	\$5,533.32	\$16,600.00	18.84 %
CHURCH BUILDINGS						
BUILDING and MAINTENANCE	\$40,257.66	\$46,957.26	\$202,955.30	\$187,829.04	\$563,487.00	36.02 %
DEBT SERVICE	\$5,621.95	\$5,085.75	\$20,664.02	\$20,343.00	\$61,029.00	33.86 %
UTILITIES	\$10,498.07	\$11,750.00	\$39,766.81	\$47,000.00	\$141,000.00	28.20 %
FELLOWSHIP KITCHEN	\$292.33	\$1,508.33	\$5,109.22	\$6,033.32	\$18,100.00	28.23 %
Total CHURCH BUILDINGS	<u>\$56,670.01</u>	<u>\$65,301.34</u>	<u>\$268,495.35</u>	<u>\$261,205.36</u>	<u>\$783,616.00</u>	<u>34.26 %</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT						
ADMINISTRATION	\$1,279.82	\$1,886.25	\$6,843.52	\$7,545.00	\$22,635.00	30.23 %
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS	\$902.21	\$2,679.16	\$4,218.72	\$10,716.64	\$32,150.00	13.12 %
Total ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	<u>\$2,182.03</u>	<u>\$4,565.41</u>	<u>\$11,062.24</u>	<u>\$18,261.64</u>	<u>\$54,785.00</u>	<u>20.19 %</u>
MINISTRIES						
COMMUNICATIONS	\$3,998.48	\$3,633.33	\$16,643.30	\$14,533.32	\$43,600.00	38.17 %
OUTREACH	\$3,672.70	\$1,000.00	\$4,922.71	\$4,000.00	\$12,000.00	41.02 %
EVANGELISM	\$0.00	\$708.33	\$2,526.40	\$2,833.32	\$8,500.00	29.72 %
FELLOWSHIP	\$2,402.15	\$1,833.33	\$9,899.91	\$7,333.32	\$22,000.00	45.00 %
MUSIC MINISTRY						
MUSIC-ADULTS	\$0.00	\$1,020.84	\$1,276.21	\$4,083.36	\$12,250.00	10.42 %
MUSIC-CHILDREN	\$0.00	\$333.33	\$1,215.16	\$1,333.32	\$4,000.00	30.38 %
Total MUSIC MINISTRY	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$1,354.17</u>	<u>\$2,491.37</u>	<u>\$5,416.68</u>	<u>\$16,250.00</u>	<u>15.33 %</u>
PASTORAL CARE	\$0.00	\$183.32	\$250.00	\$733.28	\$2,200.00	11.36 %
WORSHIP	\$270.65	\$404.17	\$1,278.87	\$1,616.68	\$4,850.00	26.37 %
PRAYER & SPIRITUALITY	\$0.00	\$31.25	\$0.00	\$125.00	\$375.00	0.00 %
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/MEDIA	\$3,264.49	\$3,333.34	\$12,751.84	\$13,333.36	\$40,000.00	31.88 %
Total MINISTRIES	<u>\$13,608.47</u>	<u>\$12,481.24</u>	<u>\$50,764.40</u>	<u>\$49,924.96</u>	<u>\$149,775.00</u>	<u>33.89 %</u>
EDUCATION						
ADULT EDUCATION	\$1,926.26	\$1,333.34	\$4,934.06	\$5,333.36	\$16,000.00	30.84 %
CHILDREN'S EDUCATION	\$2,037.44	\$916.67	\$6,441.93	\$3,666.68	\$11,000.00	58.56 %
YOUTH	\$413.73	\$1,083.33	\$8,363.16	\$4,333.32	\$13,000.00	64.33 %
PARISH RETREAT	\$0.00	\$416.67	\$5,000.00	\$1,666.68	\$5,000.00	100.00 %
Total EDUCATION	<u>\$4,377.43</u>	<u>\$3,750.01</u>	<u>\$24,739.15</u>	<u>\$15,000.04</u>	<u>\$45,000.00</u>	<u>54.98 %</u>
OTHER EXPENSES						
WEDDING MINISTRY	\$0.00	\$316.67	\$900.00	\$1,266.68	\$3,800.00	23.68 %
FUNERAL MINISTRY	\$0.00	\$216.83	\$680.78	\$867.32	\$2,602.00	26.16 %
Total OTHER EXPENSES	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$533.50</u>	<u>\$1,580.78</u>	<u>\$2,134.00</u>	<u>\$6,402.00</u>	<u>24.69 %</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$172,876.37</u>	<u>\$189,371.01</u>	<u>\$744,783.01</u>	<u>\$757,484.04</u>	<u>\$2,272,452.00</u>	<u>32.77 %</u>
Net Total	<u>(\$34,638.27)</u>		<u>\$138,409.41</u>			

Palmer Worship Council Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2025

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

Prayer – Neil opened the meeting with prayer.

Upcoming Activities -

- May 3 – Funeral for Dudley Van Ness at 11:00 am in the Nave
- May 4 – Celebration of 20 year Anniversary of Installation of Bells at Palmer and Evensong at 4:00 pm.

Review of Holy Week and Easter Services –

Overall, services went very well. For Maundy Thursday, we need to start the procession of the elements to St. Bede's for the vigil immediately following the last hymn. The Clip on light for the lectern was very useful for the Easter Vigil. Look at using fewer materials for the Easter Vigil fire in efforts to better manage the flame. Need to look at possibly installing a fire extinguisher in the Narthex. For safety concerns, check to see if readers for Easter Vigil would prefer to sit in the chancel area rather than climb the stairs in the dark. Continue with services for Easter Sunday at 9:00 and 11:00 am. Betty Key's bread was the best.

Clergy Updates –

Neil will provide the bread for the next few weeks and he had a discussion with Gerry about possibly getting a compact freezer to keep in the Scaristy workroom to store bread for upcoming services. Victor liked the idea and will discuss this further with Neil and Gerry.

Verger Updates –

James Westin has completed verger training and will be ready to serve on his own with the next schedule.

Acolyte Updates –

Victor has trained Sarah Gamboa and Margie Dieter for thurifer and will train Claudia Stephens in May. Victor has trained Sara Haynes for server and torch bearer. At this time, she would like to hold off on training as a crucifer.

Service Updates –

Bishop Monterosso will be at Palmer on May 4th for confirmations at 10:00 service. Libby will check with John Van Arsdell about serving as Chaplain staff.

Neil recommended that the individuals who bring up the wine and bread during the offertory should start the procession as clergy approaches to prepare the altar and as the offertory hymn begins. Ushers should follow in efforts to start the collection of alms.

On Pentecost Sunday, June 8th, at the 10:00 am service, the gospel will be read simultaneously in different languages, just as in previous years. Contact Sue and/or Dustin to get list of readers from last year and to help coordinate this year's efforts.

On Trinity Sunday, June 15th, 10:00 am services will go back to Rite I and go through a date to be determined in August.

A request was made to look into possibly holding a few monthly Taize services at Palmer this summer. Look at discussing this with Rev. Beth Anne Nelson in efforts to get input / interest from Rice students.

David Madrigal will speak with Roger about getting more youth involved in the 10:00 services.

Lectors Updates –

Note that at the 10:00 services through Pentecost, there will be 2 readings.

After Pentecost, services will resume with 1 reading.

Ushers / Bell Ringers Updates –

Nothing new to report from the ushers.

The Palmer Change Ringers will co-host the annual 7 Towers Festival May 1 thru 4th at Palmer, St. Paul's Methodist Church and St. Thomas Episcopal Church. Ringers from seven towers in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas will be in Houston for a weekend of ringing, education and festivities. Additionally, Palmer's ringers will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the installation of the bells in the Palmer Church tower. Recognition of this anniversary will be made during the Evensong service at Palmer on May 4th at 4:00 pm.

Other Business –

Next Worship Council Meeting date – June 5

Finance Council Minutes

May 8, 2025

Present: Dick Viebig, Pam Lovett, Richard Avant, Pam Harvey, Jessica Evans, Davis Maxey, Rosine Hall

1. Pam Harvey Opened with Prayer
2. Prior Minutes: Rosine Hall moved acceptance, Pam Lovett seconded. Motion carried.
3. Financials for April and YTD.

Looking mainly at the Operating Fund for April. Donation revenue was down, and below budget for the month, only \$106K, down \$60K from April 2024. Dick is concerned, as so far this year we have been fine on donations. Expenses were above budget, but for the year so far, expenses have been below revenue, mainly due to the unfilled clergy position. Summer usually brings a fall-off in donations. His comment: he is concerned but optimistic. The committee discussed both restricted funds, and efforts by Buildings and Grounds to plan future expenditures. One idea was to move restricted funds to Vanguard, to earn more interest than we get at the bank. April Financials were accepted.

4. Stewardship – Ken Alexander has requested that we finalize next year's budget by July. Dick says that is much too early for a line-by-line revision. A suggestion was made that we get a "real" salary figure for the new clergy person as soon as they are hired, and then adjust the rest of the budget by a percentage... the word "aspirational" was mentioned. Will discuss this next month.
5. Rectory Mortgage – Dick will approach the bank about a possible refinance with lower interest.
6. Next meeting: third Thursday, June 19th. No meeting in July.
7. Dick Viebig closed the meeting in prayer.

May 14, 2025 Stewardship Council Report to the Vestry

The Stewardship Council met in person on May 5, 2025 to work on plans for 2026 Stewardship efforts.

Members attending:

Ken Alexander, Chair

Jeanine Baker

Rosine Hall

Betty Key

John Wallace

Vestry Action Items:

1. Pam Lovett has agreed to join the Stewardship Council. Thank you, Pam.
2. Peter Yacoe has agreed to join the Stewardship Council. Thank you, Peter.
3. Vestry participation in 2026 Stewardship efforts.

Vestry members received on May 8, 2025 a list of all Stewardship pledgers for 2025, with tentative assignments to pledging households for contact by individual Vestry members later this year. We would like to discuss this further at the Vestry meeting.

We are working with Dustin Jesudasen to make use of Palmer's ShelbyNext software containing membership and giving data and communication tools with the goal of greatly streamlining and improving our contact with Palmers regarding Stewardship.

4. We circulated on May 12, 2025 graphs showing the distribution of 2025 pledges by amount and age group. We would like to discuss the significance of this information at the Vestry meeting for our future Stewardship efforts.
5. We recommend the scheduling of a **Warden's Forum for fall 2025** in advance of Covenant Sunday, a portion of which would include a presentation about Stewardship.
6. We recommend scheduling Covenant Sunday for **November 16, 2025** and **November 15, 2025**, and placing these on the Palmer calendar now so as to assist in avoiding conflicts with these dates.

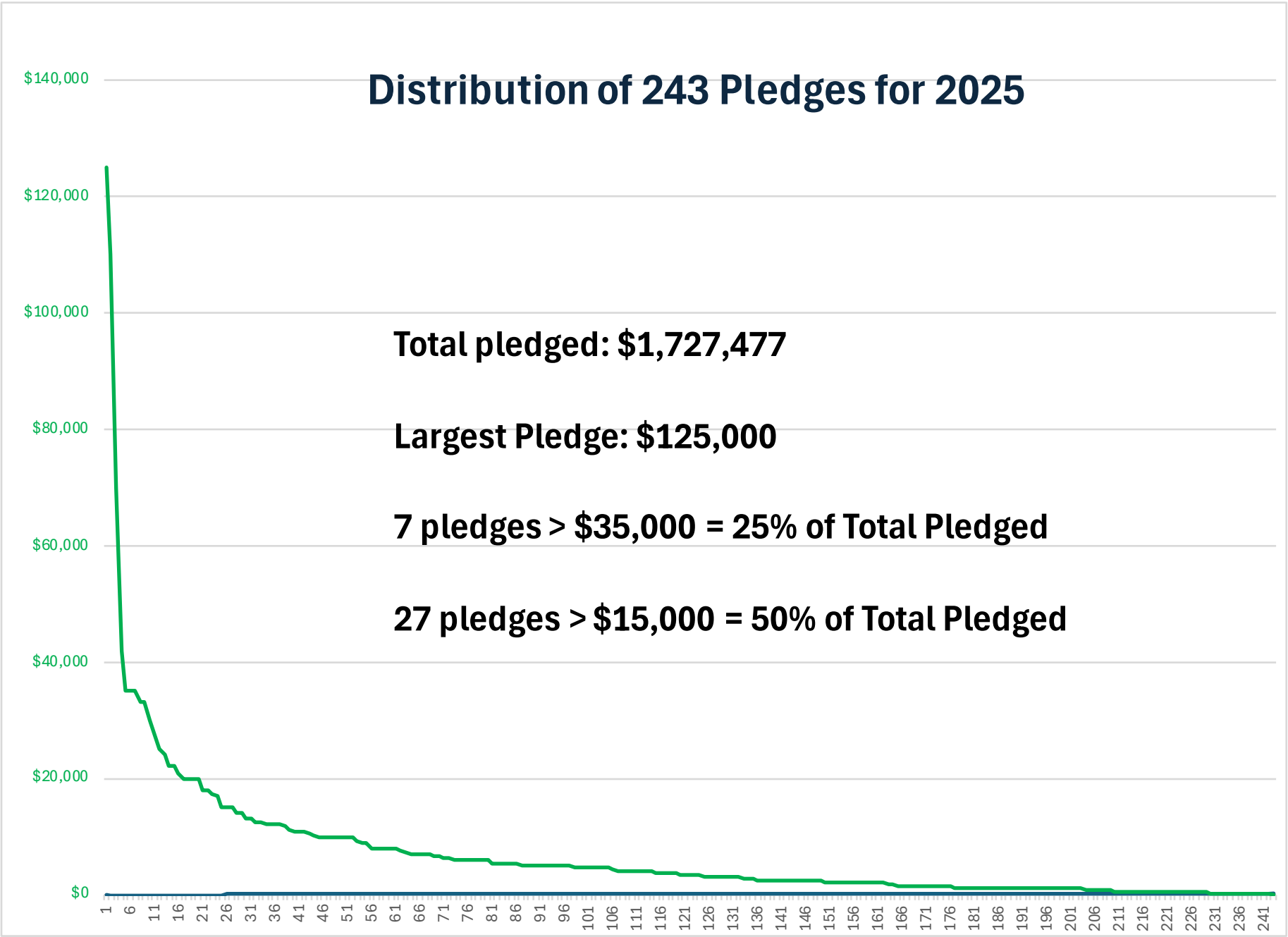
Distribution of 243 Pledges for 2025

Total pledged: \$1,727,477

Largest Pledge: \$125,000

7 pledges > \$35,000 = 25% of Total Pledged

27 pledges > \$15,000 = 50% of Total Pledged



2025 Pledges by Age Groups

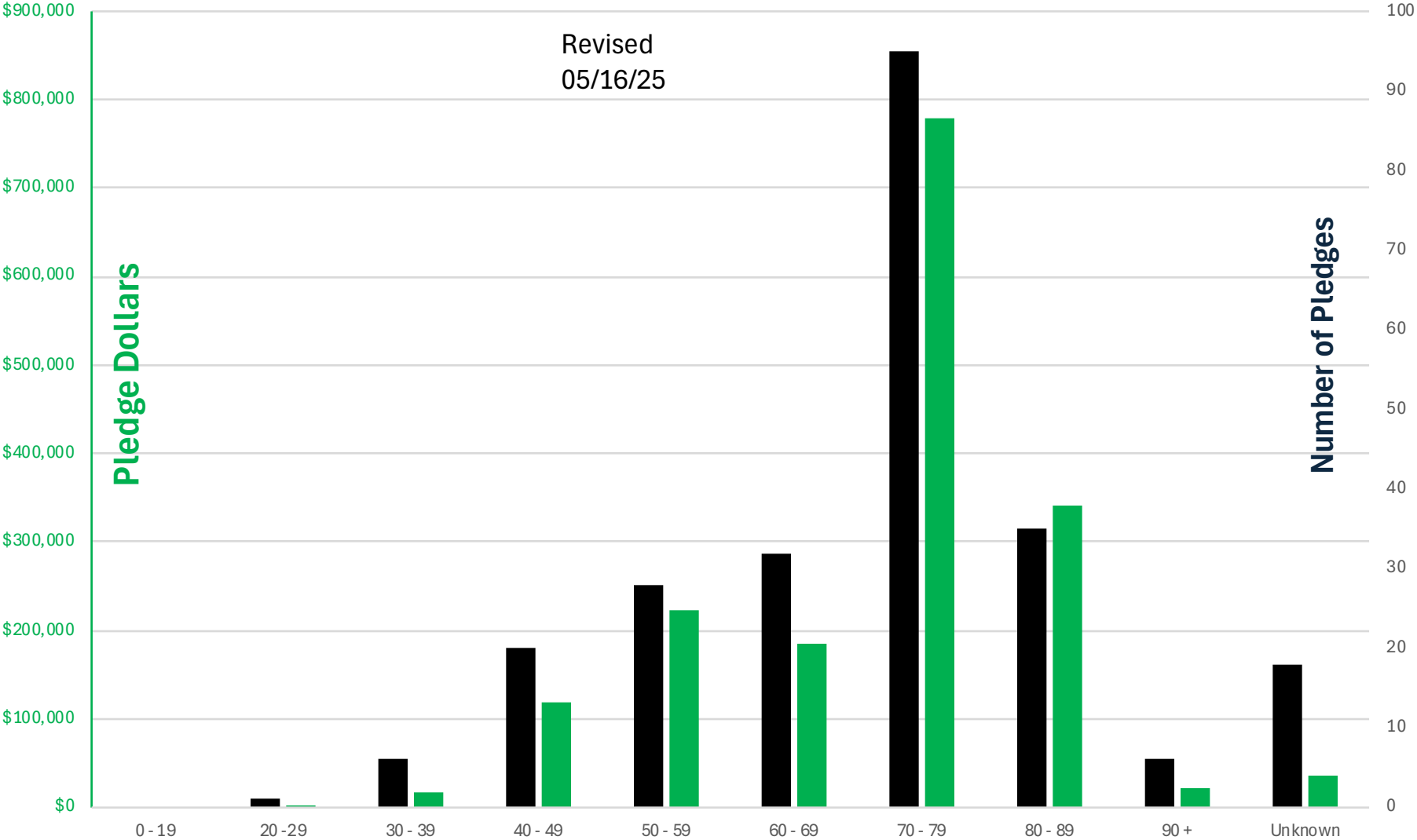
Revised
05/16/25

Pledge Dollars

Number of Pledges

0 - 19 20 - 29 30 - 39 40 - 49 50 - 59 60 - 69 70 - 79 80 - 89 90 + Unknown

Age Groups



Palmer Building and Grounds Council Meeting

March 7, 2025, 12pm

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

Discussion notes

1. Future Meeting Schedule

- a. Council will meet first Monday of each month @ 12:00 noon
- b. **Action:** Kip to setup persistent Zoom link on Palmer Zoom account

2. Recent Activities

- a. Gerry reviewed results of recent City and Health inspections
 - i. Identified need for minor plumbing repairs (backflow preventers: coffee machine, boilers, etc)
 - ii. Minor issues with food labeling, calcium buildup in ice machine; all issues resolved
- b. Gerry reviewed Fire Inspection results:
 - i. New requirement to have 2 replacement sprinkler heads on hand (fire suppression) – 2 spares for each head type
 - ii. One sprinkler head covered with paint needs to be replaced.
 - iii. Air conditioning Fire Damper inspection required
 - iv. Fire Marshall inspection due by May 2025
 - v. **Action:** Gerry to find source and purchase additional sprinkler heads (\$1,800 - \$2,500)
 - vi. **Action:** Gerry to schedule inspection with MLN (contract inspector)

3. Priority items / urgent decisions needed

- a. New water stain in ceiling of hall by choir room
 - i. No active leak, may be related to previous roof issue
 - ii. **Action:** Gerry to investigate and determine repair need

b. Playground repairs (GISH requested)

- i. Ms. Bianca (GISH) was presented the quote (\$13k for wood mulch), asked for second quote
- ii. Quote is to dig out for drainage, install gravel, membrane, sand, membrane, mulch.
- iii. **Action:** Gerry to seek another quote
- iv. **Action:** Gerry to raise this with the Diocese foundation inspector

4. Updates on regular priority items

a. Rectory

- i. Soft spot under the tiles in Rectory
 1. We have two quotes (\$9,700 and \$14,400)
 2. Quotes are to remove flooring, replace flooring, replace tiles
 3. Quotes do not include work for possible joist damage under sub-flooring;
 4. **Action:** Gerry to confirm this work included in 2025 budget
 5. Look into short-term stabilization plan while funding is confirmed/sought
- ii. Backyard removal of dead plants
 1. Volunteer opportunity for youth group, congregation, Serve Sunday(?)
 2. Include in overall spring cleanup effort

b. Site beautification

- i. Gerry requested that the Council organize a Spring Cleanup prior to Easter Week
 1. Planting of flowers, power-washing front steps and courtyard, cleaning of teak furniture
 2. Volunteer opportunities for various groups
- ii. **Action:** Kip to discuss with Roger and Katherine Tuttle; seek coordinator for effort while Kip out of country
- iii. Possible dates: March 22 & 29, April 5 & 12

5. Diocese Risk Assessment and Facilities Review

- a. Cavalry Construction has scheduled two inspections for March 11, 2025
 - i. Roof inspection – 3 spots identified in preliminary inspection
 - ii. Exterior plaster work – St. Bedes and other
- b. Other inspections to be scheduled
 - i. Foundation – entire campus with attention to St. Bedes
 - ii. HVAC



Cavalry Construction & Restoration

Insured: Michael Hilfinger
Property: 6221 Main St
Houston, TX 77030

Home: (713) 353-2135
E-mail: MHilfinger@epicenter.org

Estimator: Blaine Corvers (504)939-6707
Company: Cavalry Construction & Restoration
Business: 10633 W Little York Rd., Ste. 250
Houston, TX 77041

Business: (504) 939-6707
E-mail: bcorvers@cavalryconstruction.com

Date Inspected: 2/7/2025 2:00 PM

Date Entered: 2/12/2025 11:04 AM

Price List: TXHO8X_FEB25
Restoration/Service/Remodel
Estimate: PALMEREPI SCOPAL-ROOF

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this estimate. The total cost for the rebuild detailed in the following estimate is **\$11,377.22**.

The attached estimate details the specific work to be completed. Additional work outside of that specified in this estimate will be through separate proposal(s) and/or change order(s) detailing the additional/changed scope of work as well as the terms and pricing of those changes. Rebuild will be scheduled after a signed copy of this estimate is received.

This estimate is valid for 30 days from 3/27/2025. If you have any questions about this estimate, please contact Blaine Corvers to discuss those questions.

OWNER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ESTIMATE

By signing below, I the insured/property owner acknowledge that this is the agreed upon estimate (scope), written by Cavalry Construction Co., Inc, dated 3/27/2025 for the restoration of my project and due to this acknowledgement this estimate becomes an Exhibit to the previously signed Customer Services Agreement and Work Authorization.

I/we agree to the terms and conditions of this proposal.

Owner/Authorized signature

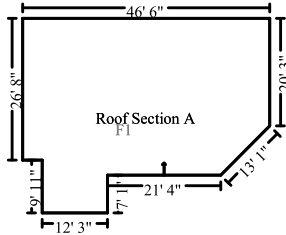
Date _____

Cavalry Construction Representative

Date _____

PALMEREPISCOPAL-ROOF

Main Level



Roof Section A

1,405.35 Surface Area

14.05 Number of Squares

160.75 Total Perimeter Length

DESCRIPTION	QTY	REMOVE	REPLACE	TAX	O&P	TOTAL
1. Tear off modified bitumen roofing (no haul off)	14.05 SQ	48.55	0.00	67.54	136.42	886.09
2. Modified bitumen roof	14.05 SQ	0.00	442.45	615.42	1,243.28	8,075.12
Apply new modified bitumen roofing along section A This cost is only associated with the modified bitumen roofing, and not the subroofing. If subroofing (roof board or insulation) is in poor shape upon discovery, additional charges may incur. Please be advised, Cavalry will advise the state of the subroof once the removal process is completed.						
3. Install Aluminum wall coping	153.00 LF	0.00	7.00	106.03	214.20	1,391.23
Remove and reset metal coping along parapet walls to ensure proper overlay and moisture protection. Please advise if you would like to replace the metal coping for an additional cost.						
Totals: Roof Section A				788.99	1,593.90	10,352.44
Total: Main Level				788.99	1,593.90	10,352.44

General Conditions

DESCRIPTION	QTY	REMOVE	REPLACE	TAX	O&P	TOTAL
4. Dumpster load - Approx. 20 yards, 4 tons of debris	1.00 EA	578.54	0.00	57.28	115.70	751.52
5. Cleaning - per hour	4.00 HR	0.00	52.59	20.82	42.08	273.26
Job site cleaning once job is complete						
Totals: General Conditions				78.10	157.78	1,024.78
Line Item Totals: PALMEREPISCOPAL-ROOF				867.09	1,751.68	11,377.22

Grand Total Areas:

0.00	SF Walls	0.00	SF Ceiling	0.00	SF Walls and Ceiling
0.00	SF Floor	0.00	SY Flooring	0.00	LF Floor Perimeter
0.00	SF Long Wall	0.00	SF Short Wall	0.00	LF Ceil. Perimeter
0.00	Floor Area	0.00	Total Area	0.00	Interior Wall Area
0.00	Exterior Wall Area	0.00	Exterior Perimeter of Walls		
1,405.35	Surface Area	14.05	Number of Squares	160.75	Total Perimeter Length
0.00	Total Ridge Length	0.00	Total Hip Length		



Summary

Line Item Total	8,758.45
Overhead	875.84
Profit	875.84
Comm. Rpr/Remdl Tax	867.09
Replacement Cost Value	\$11,377.22
Net Claim	\$11,377.22

Blaine Corvers (504)939-6707



24 24-IMG_6143

Date Taken: 2/7/2025



25 25-IMG_6144

Date Taken: 2/7/2025



26 26-IMG_6145

Date Taken: 2/7/2025

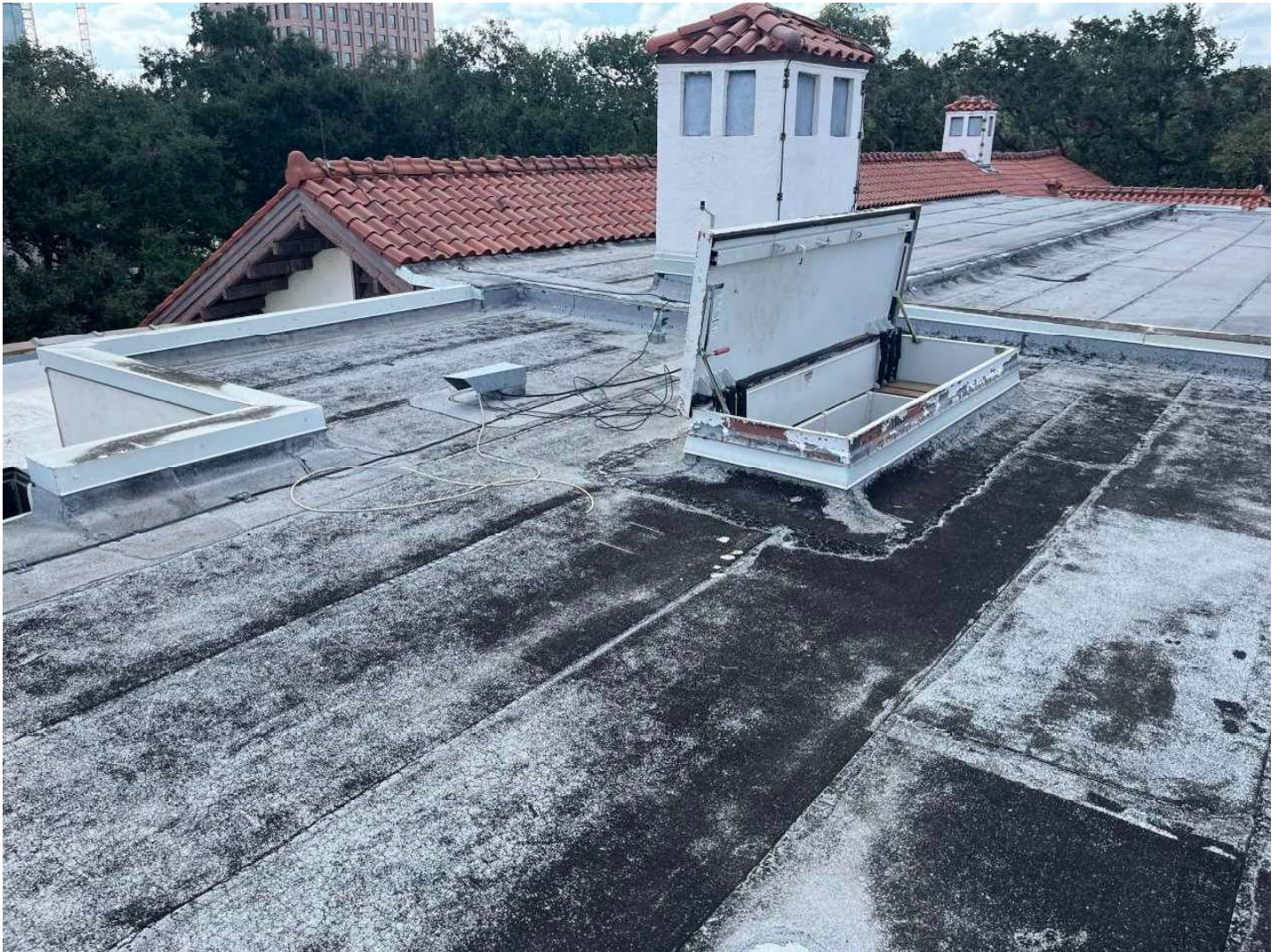


35 35-IMG_6162 Date Taken: 2/7/2025
Section A Roof - Roll Roofing needs to be replaced



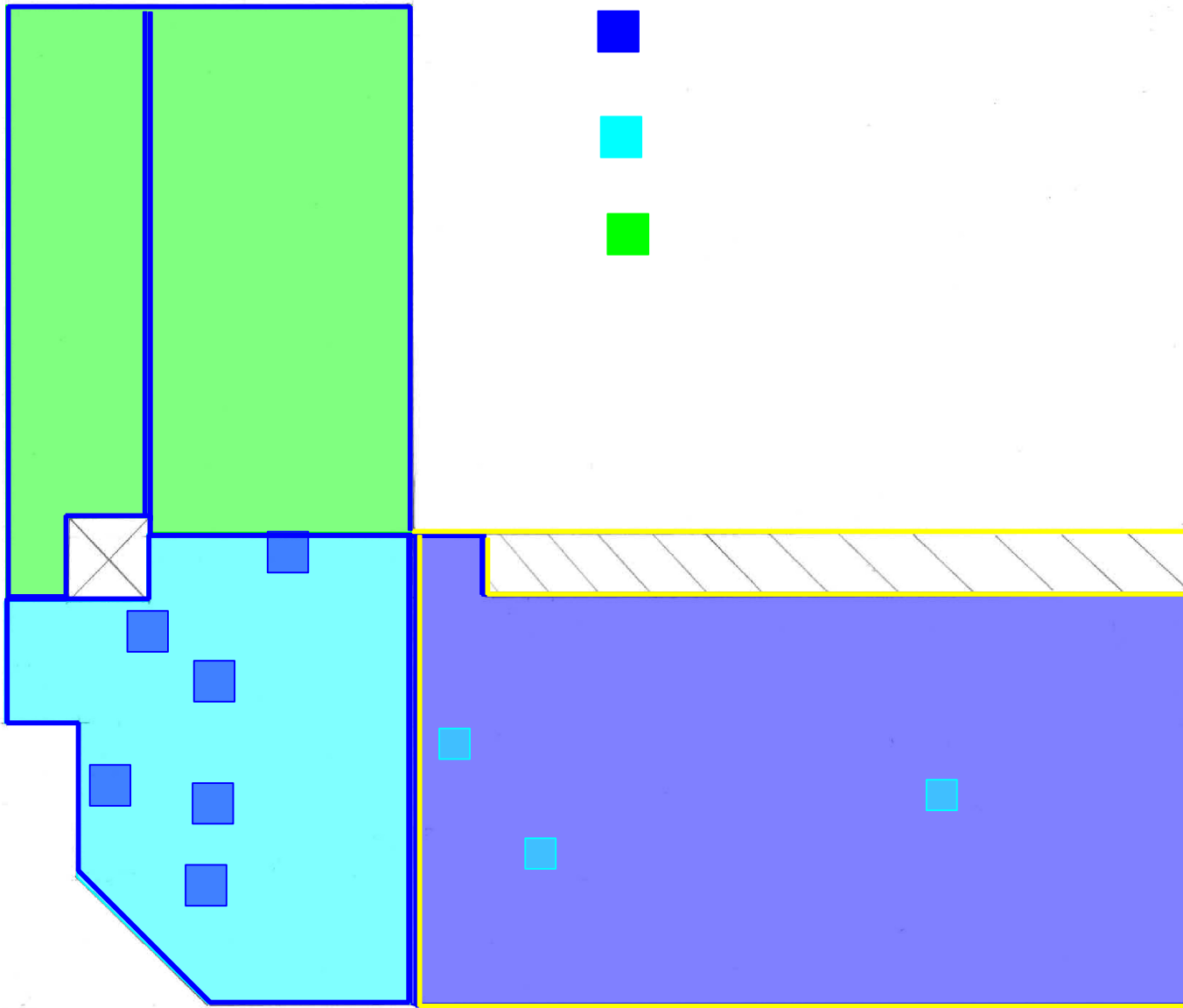
36 36-IMG_6163

Date Taken: 2/7/2025



39 39-IMG_6180

Date Taken: 2/7/2025



Senior Warden Report

For the May 20, 2025 Vestry Meeting

1. Parish Councils
 - a. We have assigned Vestry members to the Vestry Councils. After conferring with the Vestry and Staff, we have made recommendations for additional council members from the parish. Many of those invitations have been made already, and the rest will be made in the coming weeks.
2. Parking
 - a. We finalized a parking agreement with the Memorial Hermann Medical Plaza Garage. The Agreement covers unlimited parking use on Sundays and defined set of non-Sunday holidays. We have also been given the ability to park for \$5 per car for funerals, an arrangement that was used during the funerals of Dudley Van Ness and James Williams.
3. 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.
4. Rector Review – the annual Rector review took place on March 7.
5. Warden’s Forum – We conducted a Warden’s Forum on March 16 to update the Parish on various topics of importance
6. Strategic Plan Updates

The Vestry met in April to review progress on the Strategic Plan and chart our next steps to accomplish the various objectives in the plan. While every objective and tactic was discussed, the outline below is updated to include notes and some specific initiatives that were addressed at the April meeting.

- 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. These councils include Membership, Parish Life (aka Congressional / Community Engagement), Christian Formation and Outreach. The work of these councils is commencing and will be fully engaged by year end
 3. We will be populating the Vestry page with photos and short bios
 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
 - ii. Place Strategy
 1. Campus Improvements (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. Deferred Maintenance

- a. This working group is folded into the Building and Grounds council.
- b. The Council will continue to review the recommendations Cavalry and will determine which repairs to address and when

3. 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.

iii. Program Strategy

- 1. Membership of Parish Councils has been in review. These councils include Membership, Parish Life (aka Congressional / Community Engagement), Christian Formation and Outreach.

- a. Once confirmed, Strategic Plan initiatives with these groups will be launched.

- 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, May 15, 2025, from the Rev'd Neil Alan Willard

1. At the invitation of the Boniuk Institute for the Study and Advancement of Religious Tolerance at Rice University, my wife and I will be attending a special Religious and Civic Leader Gathering on Friday, May 16. This event, hosted by Rice University's Religion and Public Life Center, "will welcome the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations Trustees, members of [the Boniuk Institute] advisory board for the 'Revitalizing Interfaith Leadership in Houston and Beyond' project, and a distinguished group of religious and civic leaders from across the Houston community."
2. For the purpose of interviewing potential clergy to step into the role of either Curate or Associate Rector here at Palmer, I invited Senior Warden Tom Van Arsdel, Junior Warden John Wallace, Catherine Beebe, and Kelli Soika to serve on a search committee with me. We held three interviews on Tuesday, April 29, Thursday, May 1, and Friday, May 2, respectively. For each of those interviews, the person being interviewed met me at the church for an hour-long tour of the buildings, met with members of the church staff collectively for an hour, met with the search committee for an hour, and then went to lunch with a few of us from the search committee. The first two people interviewed were about to become seminary graduates and would be coming to Palmer as Curates. The third person interviewed is a priest finishing the second year of a curacy at a church in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. My own sense of things was confirmed by an overall sense among the committee and the staff that the third person was the best fit for Palmer at this moment. So I have reached out to this priest, who is also in one other search process. That's puts us in a temporary holding pattern until that process plays out and we talk further.
3. Most of you will no doubt have heard a lot of babies during our 10:00 AM worship services this year. That is translating into a lot of baptisms as well. This coming Sunday, May 18, there will be four baptisms, for example. We should rejoice in that!
4. During the season of Lent, I co-led a Lenten class with Roger Hutchison, Director of Children's and Youth Ministries, called "Painting in the Psalms," which met on Thursday nights in the Holy Cross Children's Room. I have also continued to offer a "Social Hour with the Rector" on the second Thursday of each month outside Valhalla on the campus of Rice University. And while we continue to search for an Associate Rector, I have been doubling up on Bible studies, facilitating both the Tuesday Morning Men's Bible Study and the Wednesday Noon Parish Bible Study.
5. Some of you will remember the Very Rev'd Andrew McGowan from his visit to Palmer as a guest preacher in the past. He is the Dean of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, which is the Episcopal part of Yale Divinity School. He was recently interviewed on The Leader's Way podcast about "The Church's Future." It was an interesting discussion of the rapid secularization in American society over the last decade or two, changing church attendance patterns, the difference between hope and optimism, and how we have been affected by consumerism. Food opinions are shared during the first seven minutes and some fun things appear at the end too.

Here's a link to the YouTube version of this conversation (just click on the photo below and you should be given the option to watch the complete interview online):

