

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Vestry Retreat Minutes

February 20 and 21, 2026

In Attendance:

Vestry – In person: Kay Lee, Kathy Corcoran, Jordan Moody, Nick Theyrel, Beth Floyd, Jacob Geiger, Tracey Laird, Kelli Gantt, Paul Hinson, Cristin Davis (Friday), and Carol Bartlett (Saturday)

Clergy - Amy Dills-Wright & Carmie McDonald

Ex officio – Randy Shearin (Saturday)

Meditation and Site Visit:

The Vestry gathered on Friday and Saturday at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Decatur for its annual retreat. On Friday evening the vestry and clergy shared short spiritual biographies about their faith stories. On Saturday the retreat began with a meditation and reflection led by Rev. Rhett Solomon, who serves at Holy Trinity. Rev. Solomon noted that as Episcopalians we are bound together by common prayer, rather than common theology. He invited us to consider our own personal altar and what is on it before asking us three questions:

1. What do we want to keep on the altar?
2. What do we want to remove?
3. What do we want to add?

We each prepared a piece of art—a painting or poem—as we thought about those questions.

We also toured the offices and food pantry of DEAM, the Decatur-area Emergency Assistance Ministry. DEAM was set up by a group of Decatur-area churches, including Epiphany, to collectively respond to the needs of those in poverty in the area. It is headquartered at Holy Trinity. Epiphany supports DEAM's work through the community engagement budget, and parishioner Doug Runnion is a volunteer in the DEAM office.

Consent Agenda: We did not have a consent agenda at this meeting.

Review of Parish Priorities:

Following the reflection we reviewed the Parish Priorities, which were adopted in spring 2023, and the church's core values, and the Vestry Covenant that guides us in how we conduct our shared work. We discussed how vestry members discern the best course of action by listening to the people in the parish and to God working in our midst, and how this differs solely from making decisions. We reviewed the vestry liaison roles for 2026.

New Business:

Review and Approval of Parochial report:

We reviewed that Parochial Report that is submitted to the diocese and national church. Jacob motioned that we approve the report, Nick seconded, and all voted to approve.

Finance Overview and 2026 Budget Review:

Randy explained the purpose and function of the Finance Committee. He noted that the church entered 2026 in a strong financial position after several years where revenues have come in over budget, leading to surpluses that helped launch the Enduring Light Operating Endowment and allow us to build a capital reserve fund for major maintenance expenses.

Randy explained how the church's endowments and restricted funds work and how the annual budget is prepared. Because of pledges that arrived in January after the Vestry had reviewed

the budget, he and Jacob presented an amended budget for adoption. After review and discussion, Jacob motioned that we approve the amended budget, Tracey seconded, and all voted to approve.

Potential Credit Union Relationship:

Randy also updated the Vestry on ongoing conversations about whether a portion of Epiphany's banking should be done with a local credit union. Randy and others noted that a credit union is unlikely to be able to handle all of our banking needs, which are handled through Truist, because of the limited online banking capabilities that credit unions and other small banks have, but that it may be possible to conduct other work with them. Randy is planning to speak with leadership at Bond Credit Union in Little Five Points to explore what might be possible. A parishioner serves as Bond's CEO.

Community Engagement Update:

Carmie discussed the community engagement budget of \$20,000, which this year will support DEAM, Church of the Common Ground, Emmaus House, Gateway Feeding Ministry, and Inspiritus. The Community Engagement ministry has about \$3,000 in uncommitted funds that can be used to respond to emerging needs throughout the year. The funds in the budget are greatly supplemented by the Harvey Fund, which makes annual grants each fall to support ministries around Atlanta that help people achieve self-sufficiency and financial stability. The amount available from the Harvey Fund varies each year based on market returns but in recent years has been at or above \$30,000.

Nominees for the Endowment Committee:

The group discussed potential nominees for the Endowment Committee. Because we did not have a full slate prepared, we agreed to conduct a vote by email at a later date (see below).

Approval of Annual Meeting and January Vestry minutes:

Jordan moved that both be approved as presented; Carol seconded, and all voted to approve. Sally asked vestry members to get all reports to Shea by 9am Monday and send Shea any photos of church activities

Old Business

Solar Installation:

Giraffe Financial has filed a tax credit application on our behalf to the IRS. It could take up to a year to receive the credit. If we receive the credit, the net proceeds to the church after paying a preparation fee to Giraffe would be approximately \$7,500. We have money left over in the Path to Solar campaign and will continue to explore how that might be used to support the reduction of the church's carbon footprint, with ideas ranging from battery installation to saving the money for a date in the future when we replace the roof and could add a larger solar array.

Cleaning Service:

Amy informed us that our contract with the outside cleaning service will conclude in mid-March. Jason, our facilities manager, will take over this work and increase his hours to approximately 25 per week. The increase in pay to him will be offset by not paying the outside cleaners.

The retreat ended with Eucharist.

Respectfully submitted,
Jacob Geiger
Junior Warden