

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting Agenda

6:30 pm - Tuesday, August 18th, 2026

 Attendees	Yes	Zoom	No
Anne Styx	x		
Teri Tucci	x		
Chris Francis		x	
Charles Bopp	x		
Madie Redfern		x	
David Schilling		x	
Jackie Mennella	x		

Opening Prayer

Prior Meeting Minute Approval (*action*)

Madie Redfern

Anne moves to approve July meeting minutes, seconded by Jackie. All approved, none opposed, motion carries.

Financials

Chris Francis

- July 2026 Treasurer's Report (*action*)
 - Money was moved from the Money Market.
 - We are still in a deficit, but not as bad as it has been.
 - A previous bill was incorrectly filed, and has been fixed in the files.
 - The water bill was high in June, however Bryan shared context noting possible causes.
 - Charles asked per previous discussions, Chris did not review interest for the Money Market, but will look into this.
 - Hall rental is continuing to do well!

Charles moves to approve July financial report, seconded by Teri. All approved, none opposed, motion carries.

Chris has been looking into Tech Soup - Lauren M. says that we have it. We need the Diocese tax exempt number. Chris will follow up with Lauren M to see if we have an account, and next steps, as well as the Diocese of Chicago tax exempt number.

Bryan is working to create a Finance Committee to help Chris - please see Bryan if you know anyone that is interested (or have them reach out)!

Bryan is unable to find the documentation for Lazarus taxes - we may have to apply for a new status (501c3). However, there is a document stating that we have the EIN number, but it is unable to be found in our DataBase.

WE CANNOT MIX FINANCES WITH LAZARUS

Grace in Action is service projects within the church.

Committee Reports

- Grace in Action
 - Back to School Drive - All items were collected and dropped off to the Village.

- DMV Event - This will help people in the area get either state IDs or Driver's Licences. The committee needs volunteers for specific roles! We are going to fundraise with a goal of ~\$1,000 to cover all the costs of this event (maybe a profit share restaurant night). If we raise above what is needed, is "earmarked" to stay for charitable efforts without noting a specific effort. This event will have 50 slots that we are responsible for filling, with the intent of those with the highest need.
- Buildings and Grounds
 - Sidewalk on Pine St fixed
 - Chip in ramp fixed
 - Gravel on the North side of the church has been washed away by the recent high rainfall. A lot of the water causing this erosion is estimated coming from our water spouts on the hall. The internet recommends fixing how the water moves during rainfall, however there are other things that can be done such as larger gravel or plastic mesh that can be placed over gravel.
 - The recent storm knocked over one of the handicapped parking signs, Charles and Bryan will connect to find a time to have them both set in concrete.
 - Many thanks to Dave Poole and Jerry Huddleston for their work on the Building and Grounds projects!
 - Jackie asks that before the weather changes, if the railing on the ramp be sanded and repainted. A local 4-H group is looking at helping us with this project.
 - Our slides were powerwashed by the Rentfro's
 - A friend of Bryan's is going to fix up our wifi!
- Finance Committee
 - Pumpkin Patch Fundraiser - Pumpkins USA
 - October 18(ish)-31, however we do not have an exact delivery day. We must open within 24 hours of getting the pumpkins. We are going to need the manpower to run the patch daily from 12-8
 - Lauren and Bryan will cover Monday-Thursday 12-4.
 - Anne intends to be the person to close the patch daily.
 - Any volunteers under 18, must have a person over 18 with them.
 - Accept Square, Zelle, and Cash - learning more about sales tax
 - We do not need any special permit for parking per Jenny Newbauer at the village.
 - Pass out leaflets during pet blessing
 - We are going to ask to borrow any wagons, fall directions, and items for a photo opportunity.
 - Anne is looking at ways/activities to get people to come. - Temporary tattoos, and coloring sheets!
 - Pumpkins will be left out overnight, and we are not responsible for any damages.
 - Should we have open bathrooms? Anne suggests not advertising this but if it is a high need we can keep the back door of the hall open and they can be directed to the bathroom.
 - Since nothing from the patch will be in the hall, we will continue to allow for hall rentals with a note that we are also having the pumpkin patch at the same time. As of right now we have a rental during this time frame, can we shift our hours for one day? Other evening church events will continue during this time. Bible Study outside!
 - Audit Complete

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- Ruth & Debby Poole shared a physical copy yesterday, which will be scanned and shared for a vote. Chris W. also helped before her passing.
- Stewardship campaign coming soon - October (ish)
 - Madie will be on the backburner for help pending medical treatment.
 - We will need one or two more people to help!
- Children's Ministry
 - Little Box of Good News (3yo [must be potty trained]-5th grade) 10:15-Sign of Peace
 - Boxes have been ordered and should be here on Friday!
 - Youth Group (6th grade-12th grade) Monthly
 - Meet monthly with help from Allison and Matthew.

Collection Counting Schedule

Rector's Report

- Pride Fest
 - We need people to set up, tear down, and work it.
 - Do we need swag and things to give out? David is going to look at what we currently have!
 - Teri will bring her Plinko!
 - We need a freestanding tent. Bryan might have one.
 - The door that was painted during our pride celebration, will be transported to Pride Fest as well!
- Charles may have a fridge to donate!
- The bell needs to be fixed again.
- Name Tags
 - People often forget to take them back up after Coffee Hour. Let's have a hook by each door where the name tags can be taken back up each week.
 - All name tags will be reprinted on Directory Sunday.

Pastoral Care

- Persons to be Mindful of (*closed*)

Closing Prayer

Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 15, 2026 at 6:30pm

IMPORTANT DATES

Sun Aug. 23rd	Slammers Game	1:10pm
Fri. Aug 28th	Hymn Sing	6:00pm - 8:00pm
Sun. Sept 13th Hour	Directory Kick off	Coffee
Sat., Sept 19th 5:00pm	Joliet Pride Fest	12:00pm -
Date TBD	Pumpkin Patch	
Mon, Nov. 9th 2:00pm	Mobile DMV	10:00am -
Tue. Nov. 10 & Sat. Nov. 14 @ 6:30pm on Zoom	Diocesan Convention	Nov. 10 Nov. 14 @
9:00am-4:30pm in		Rockford, IL

BRYAN AWAY DATES

September 6th	Friend's Wedding	Morning Prayer that Sunday Anne Officiating
October 7th-14th	Friend's Wedding in London	Morning Prayer that Sunday

CLOSING PRAYER & DISMISSAL - VESTRY MEETINGS

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work or watch or weep this night. Give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.
Amen.

Pause for Intercessions may be offered silently or aloud.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Rector's Report

August 18th, 2026

Submitted by Fr. Bryan Matias

Starting this month, I plan to submit a more formal report to vestry each month about what I am working on and what is going on in the church. My hope is that sending this out ahead of time will allow me to share a more complete picture of what is going on at Grace and to also respect the time of everyone who is attending the meeting. I would appreciate feedback on this format. Is it too short, too long, just right? Is this the sort of information you would like to know or are there other things I should focus on? Please help me to make this most useful to all of you.

Liturgy and Worship

I have been doing quite a lot of work in this area. I began several months ago by switching Altar Guild to a new 3 month scheduling system. This has been working well, so I have also begun scheduling liturgical ministers in this same way. My hope is that, once this system is in place, I can hand off the schedule creation to a minister coordinator. I will be looking to identify who that could be in the coming months.

Things have also been going well with the introduction of the Discovery Service. The July service had 57 people, more than any other service besides Easter Sunday. We will continue to tweak this service, iron out bugs, and integrate it into our new Children's program.

Other new developments include the introduction of a Wednesday evening Eucharist and a quarterly healing service. These had both been requested by several parishioners and we will be trying them out to see if there is actual interest. There is also the possibility of a Taize service (a prayer service focused on music) in the coming months. Chrissy and I are working on when that would make sense.

The other change has been the reintroduction of the common cup. I have been talking to parishioners for several months about this change. Some people are very happy to have that option and others are frustrated about the change. My hope is that retaining the individual cups for juice will help make this a compromise that everyone can live with, while still bringing us closer to being in line with our Episcopal theology being one community, united in Christ

The final worship item is that we will be doing planning for our fall services and St. Francis pet blessing soon. We expect to make the pet blessing an outdoor service and include time for drop in blessings for people in the community afterwards. More information on liturgical planning will be coming soon.

Fellowship and Community Outreach

The Friday night fellowship events continue to be very popular. We have had an average of about 20 people at these events and the mix of events is drawing people from different age demographics. Our next event will be a Hymn Sing in the courtyard. This event was very popular at my previous parish and it will also help Chrissy and I to improve our music program by learning what sort of music people are most excited about.

I am also very pleased that people have stepped up to plan their own events, including the men's outing to the White Sox earlier this summer and the Women's outing to pick flowers in September. It is the sign of a healthy church when there are events that are being planned by people other than the priest.

Our next big community outreach event will be Joliet Pride Fest. We will have a table where we will hand out rainbow goodies, tell people about Grace, and share the message that God loves all people. I have created a pamphlet about Grace that we can pass out at Pride Fest and we will also be bringing our door art project.

Another note in this area is that we have been far more consistent in getting people to host coffee hour. Thank you to everyone who has hosted or assisted other people who are hosting.

The last item for fellowship is our directory. We voted in the spring to approve Instant Church Directory. We will be launching that on September 13th and trying to get as many people as possible signed up. I would also like us to consider how we would like to proceed with nametags. If we want to keep nametags, I would propose we push to get consistent nametags for all parishioners who join us on a regular basis. Right now some are handwritten and this could make some people feel less welcome than people with printed tags. If we want to continue with nametags, I would institute a schedule of printing new tags monthly and providing stick on tags for visitors. If we decide we don't want to commit to this, I would recommend getting rid of nametags entirely. I would like vestry input on this issue.

Children's and Youth Ministry

I already explained the Little Box of Good News in a previous email, but I want to say again how excited I am about this program. Jackie Mennella has agreed to continue to lead Sunday School. Thank you to her for her hard work in the past year and her recent work in vetting different curricula. She is working on recruiting teachers to teach during the service. If we are not able to find at least 3 teachers willing to serve once a month, we will keep Sunday School at its current time, between services.

Youth Group will also be back starting next month. The group will meet once a month, on the third Sunday of the month 6-8pm. Matthew Gellert and Allison Ayers have agreed to lead the program. We have been discussing ideas for teaching, praying, and fun activities for this coming year. I think it will be a lot of fun for the older children at this church. We have also decided to keep the age range for Youth Group 6th-12th grade. There are many different districts in this area that cut off schools at different ages. We decided to stick with 6th grade because Sunday School goes up to 5th grade.

Stewardship

Last year, the Stewardship Campaign began the first week of October. Our plan would be to keep a similar timeline. I will be looking for 1-2 additional people to help with this campaign. The diocese offers a campaign we can use for free called Plenty Good Room that was created by The Episcopal Network for Stewardship. We can also come up with our own theme and base the structure on last year's drive.

Pumpkin Patch

We will be moving forward with the Pumpkin Patch fundraiser this fall. Anne Styx has agreed to help coordinate the program. There will be two different types of asks from the congregation. The first will be unloading. It is recommended that we have 15-20 people to help unload our truck of pumpkins. We will announce the date of delivery as soon as we know it. The second ask is staffing the patch. Lauren and I will staff it during our regular working hours. We will need people to staff the patch on weekday evenings and weekends. This will mostly involve sitting in a lawnchair and collecting money when we have visitors. It should be a fairly easy volunteer ask because it doesn't require much beyond showing up. We will also be using other events to get people to come to the patch. I will be looking into giving free cemetery tours to drum up business too. I would like everyone on vestry to sign up to help for at least one shift over the course of the patch.