

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting Minutes

6:30 pm - Tuesday, September 15th, 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

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

Financials

Chris Francis

- August 2026 Treasurer's Report (*action*)
 - We are 67% of the way through the fiscal year. We have about 75% of income and 66% of expenses.
 - In 15 days our checking account went down by approximately \$3,000
 - Chris states that income was lower due to our largest monthly donation not coming in for one reason or another, and expenses were high due to paying half of building insurance.
 - This should be considered in our upcoming stewardship season.
 - Bryan suggests a separate meeting with Chris to discuss this situation further.
 - Charles and Madie will help with this pending personal availability.
 - Chris suggests moving \$15,000 to the checking account
 - While we do need to move this money, this will only bring out
 - Charles moves to transfer the \$15,000 to the checking account, David seconds. All approved, none opposed, motion carries.
 - Charles would like to see a report showing the Money Market decline.
 - The Bopp family has kindly donated an old refrigerator. Chris F. will research the estimated value to write a tax form for the family.
 - Chris is going to call the IRS to get a determination of tax exempt status before we can sign up for TechSoup and get the anticipated discount. If we can get the EIN or 501c3 of the Diocese. Bryan is going to get Chirs in contact with Gracie V. with the Diocese to support Chris with the tax steps for the discount.
 - Charles moves to approve the Treasurer's Report for August, Jackie seconds. All approved, none one abstained, motion carries.

Committee Reports

- Buildings and Grounds
 - Looking into tree trimming on property
 - Fixing gravel in parking lot

- Looking for a permanent solution as this continues to happen.
 - There are some lights in the Hall that are not working and they are looking into making these LED lights.
 - Charles also has some fluorescent lights that he can donate until we can get an electrician.
 - Charles and Bryan are going to use concrete to set up the accessible parking sign that has been knocked over.
- Grace in Action
 - The DMV Event is coming up soon. If it does not go well this year, we can support Morning Star Mission if they do their own next year.
 - After that we will work with the village and/or Morning Star Mission to Adopt a Family again.

Pumpkin Patch Fundraiser

- The first day is covered! Other shifts are being filled. 11A-7P weekdays, 10A-7P on Saturdays, and 12P-7P on Sundays from October 13-October 31
- Bryan and/or Lauren will work during the time the office is open.
- Anne reached out to True Country via Facebook Message letting them know about this event.
- Anne is working on activities to add, and some ways of advertising it.
- We are looking for volunteers to help unload the truck. They will arrive at 11 on Monday, October 12.
- Trunk-or-Treat is October 18 and the pumpkin patch will be open during this. This is a Discovery Service week, and Trunk-or-Treat will follow coffee hour. Children can wear church appropriate costumes, and weapons or accessories will be left in the church hall during service.
 - Charles suggests having Trunk-or-Treat from 1-3.
- If pumpkins are not sold we dispose of them being mindful of state laws. The city has a pumpkin pickup program. If we want to continue the sale beyond October 31, we can sell them at a discounted price.
 - We will brainstorm how we want to dispose of the pumpkins.

Collection Counting Schedule

Rector's Report

- Morning prayer - mixed reviews on not having Eucharist and how having Morning Prayer is a part of what makes us Episcopalian.
- Pet blessing on October 4 outside.
- Hymn sing turned out well, about 12 people, and it was quite fun.
- Do we put on the Bears during coffee hour?
- Super Smash Bros is Sept 25 from 6-8

Pastoral Care

- Persons to be Mindful of (*closed*)

Closing Prayer

Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 6:30pm

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting Minutes

6:30 pm - Tuesday, September 15th, 2026

IMPORTANT DATES

Sat., Sept 19th
5:00pm

Joliet Pride Fest 12:00pm -

Fri., Sept 25th
8:00pm

Super Smash Bros. 6:00pm -

Oct 12-31

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

9:00am-4:30pm in

Nov. 14 @

Rockford, IL

BRYAN AWAY DATES

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 Interventions 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

September 15th, 2026

Submitted by Fr. Bryan Matias

Liturgy and Worship

In my experience, liturgy is always somewhat of an experiment. Different congregations need different things and a healthy church is always trying new ideas to see what best serves the people. One of those ideas we have tried out is lay lead Morning Prayer, rather than paying supply priests when I am out of town. I know people miss Eucharist when we do morning prayer, but I think it can also be a beautiful service and a good way to show that lay leaders are important in our congregation. I am curious to know what you all have thought of Morning Prayer.

We have also tried out adding anointing for healing to our services and, to me at least, it seemed like a welcome addition that fit in fairly smoothly to our service. I hope everyone who took part found it a moving and healing experience.

Two other updates on ongoing liturgy changes: The first is that I believe the reintroduction of the chalice is starting to get a little smoother. I have been working with our LEMs to try to clear up any confusion and make things easier for everyone. Thank you all for your patience there. The second item is the Discovery Service. I am always working to make little changes that hopefully help make it more meaningful to people of all ages. The service is always controlled chaos, but I know we leaned a little more chaotic this past week. Margo Lahey offered to help me with some classroom control strategies for when things get a little loud and I plan to take her up on that.

The final item to mention is that we had a meeting to plan for the Pet Blessing. The service will be outside and we will have drop in blessings following the service. I am excited about this as both a worship service and as a way to connect with our community.

Fellowship and Community Outreach

We have had 2 big events in the past month, the Hymn Sing and Back to School, Back to Grace. I think both were a success. We had about a dozen people for the Hymn Sing, including one previous parishioner who is considering returning. She mentioned that an outdoor event felt like a safer way to dip a toe back in. That is definitely a good thing to know when we are planning other events. Everyone who came seemed like they had a good time, especially Chrissy. I think we will plan to do this event again next year.

The other event, Back to School, Back to Grace just happened yesterday, so I haven't had as much time to reflect. I think I learned a few things, like I need a designated grill master even though I love to grill. But I think the people who came enjoyed being there. I

also think the face painting was a huge hit. Thank you to Brenda! I am also considering making having the Bears games on the projector a regular thing at coffee hour. I would love to hear what others think.

We also debuted our directory this past Sunday. Lauren and I are working on getting names entered and will be putting out instructions for how to access the directory. I would appreciate your help in encouraging everyone to join our directory so that it can be as complete as possible. It will be a huge help in connecting our community.

The next event coming up is Joliet Pride Fest. Thank you to David for organizing! We seem to have a good group of volunteers and a good selection of items to hand out. I will also plan to be there for the whole event. I also have the door art project ready to take with me to the event. I am hoping that will draw more people to our table.

We are also having a Super Smash Bros Tournament at the end of the month, on September 25th. When we did Mario Kart earlier this year, several people asked if we could also do this. It was a huge help to have Teri assist with that event, so I would love to have someone who plans to come to this one offer to help with set up and clean up.

The last thing to mention for this section is that I have multiple coffee dates lined up with people who are interested in our church. I am talking to new people all the time and I really think there is a lot of excitement about our church. I want to thank you all for being welcoming to new members and supporting me as I try to get the word out about what a great community we have.

Finance

The plan for stewardship is still to begin in October. I am working on finding a partner for that work and should hopefully have a campaign put together soon.

Looking ahead, we will need to start thinking about drawing up next year's budget. That will be work that Chris and I will do, but it would be very helpful to have additional people involved. Please let me know if you are interested.

Pumpkin Patch

We have an official kick off date of October 12th! Anne has already begun asking for volunteers for unloading the truck and for staffing the patch. We are also planning lots of fun events for the patch, including the return of our Trunk or Treat. This event will definitely take a lot of volunteers, so I appreciate any time you all can offer. We have been working to make the cashier system as easy as possible so it should be a pretty low stress volunteer activity.

Pastoral Care

I wanted to include this to let you all know that, while it doesn't come up in the announcements, I am doing this work in the background. In the past month, we have had two deaths of people connected to Grace. I spent time visiting and praying with both of those people and their families before and after their deaths. I also assisted the Diddens

family with funeral planning and we held that funeral this past weekend. In addition, I have visited several parishioners in the hospital, providing comfort and prayer. I am trying to encourage anyone who is experiencing health issues or personal difficulties to contact me, and if they are amenable to it, I am trying to visit. I also have done baptism prep with one teenager and there are two more children who are considering being baptised. I am excited to hopefully speak with them soon about what the journey to baptism will look like for them.