



CHAPEL of
the CROSS
an historic Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

The Reverend Doctor David Christian Parish Hall

Attendance: Meredith Bailess; Russ Markle; Clark Liddon; Liz Welch; The Rev. Tom Fanning, Associate Rector; Martha Frye; Becky Herren, Senior Warden; Ray Kinney; Trey Denton; Heath Wray; Ashley Herden, Clerk; Carroll Patton; The Rev. Will Compton, Rector
Out: Dick Dickinson, Junior Warden; Terri Hudson, Treasurer

- Opening Prayer and Keifer's
- March Agenda
 - Add new vestments/hangings to New Business
- Approval of the February 2026 Minutes
 - Motion to approve Feb. 2026 minutes made by Clark, 2nd Trey, unanimous approval
- Old / Ongoing Business
 - Treasurer's Report: Carol Hartman (for Terri)
 - February Financials
 - able to qualify for a reduced mortgage rate (7.25% to 6.5%)
 - discussion of March financial report
 - motion to accept March 2026 financial report made by Heath, 2nd Liz, unanimous approval
 - Junior Warden Report: Russ (for Dick)
 - Lighting Project
 - received 3 quotes ranging from \$200,000 to \$270,000
 - Russ wants to isolate lights for pathways and meet with contractor; get quotes to separate labor cost and materials cost
 - discussion of lighting plan and options
 - Chapel of the Cross Stabilization Project
 - proposal and timeline received from Mark Watson; will send to contractors

Last year, Russ Markle asked his Structural Engineer if he would be interested in helping with a structural assessment of the Chapel of the Cross. His Structural Engineer said he did not do that work on commercial buildings, but recommended Mark Watson from Watson Structural Engineers out of Tupelo, MS. Mark specializes in structural assessments of historical buildings and has the tools to do forensic structural assessments. Mark has worked with Belinda Stewart, Beard and Riser, etc. on historic renovation and restoration projects all over the state. The vestry engaged Mark Watson to provide a structural assessment of the Chapel of the Cross.

Mark and his team spent two days investigating the Chapel of the Cross to draft a report that he presented to the vestry and the Master Planning Committee last summer. His estimate of probable costs came from talks with Corey Ray with Ewing and Ray which does this type of work.

Since Mark was engaged by the vestry to conduct the structural assessment on the Chapel of the Cross and the estimate, the vestry feels that he is the person we should engage to be the Structural Design Engineer on the Chapel of the Cross Stabilization Project.

–motion to suspend financial procedures and accept Mark Watson’s proposal for \$49,000 to be the structural design engineer for the COTC stabilization project made by Carroll, 2nd Martha, unanimous approval

- Other Items

- Martha talked to MDAH about grants for work on the Chapel; will apply for grant from National Fund for Sacred Places next year

- Tom will reach out to connection about a grant for security items/personnel

- Senior Warden’s Report: Becky Herren
Nothing to report

- Tom’s Tidbits (with additional graphic of Tom on screen–Tom Talk)

- very successful Walking the Mourner’s Path class

- inquirer’s class has started

- added lighting and dimmer switches in offices (with help from Reed and Les)

- Gray Center chapel decommissioning; will be sold Friday to Quiet Waters Ministry

- motion to permanently change Tom’s Tidbits to Tom Talk made by Ray and 2nd by Ray, unanimous approval

- Rector’s Ruminations: The Reverend Will Compton

- Holy Week and Easter

- This Sunday is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week

- The Demisemiseptcentennial of the Chapel of the Cross

- 175th anniversary of the Chapel will kick off with Stewardship Campaign in September 2026; celebrations and events will continue throughout 2026 and into 2027, with the weekend of September 17-19, 2027 being the culmination of these celebrations (Sept. 19, 2027 will be 175th anniversary Sunday).

- New Business

- vestments and hangings (on lectern/pulpit)

- 2 separate sets for COTC and COTR; want to streamline and replace old vestments/hangings

- 1st set will be ordinary time vestments

- Cost: \$4,100.90 from CM Almy; \$2,350 paid by donors, so remaining \$1,750.90 will need to come from “Vestry Discretionary/Contingency Fund” in operating budget

- motion to approve \$1,750.09 from “Vestry Discretionary/Contingency Fund” in the operating budget made by Martha, 2nd Becky, unanimous approval

- Compline and Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn made by Liz, 2nd Meredith, unanimous approval