

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Windsor, Connecticut

January 13, 2026

Attendance

Present: Father Don Hamer, Larry Young, Ken Roach, Margaret Shields, Debbie Hutchinson, Andrea Anderson, John Carpenter, Susan Burgdorf, Katrina Woodhouse, Linda Rickard, Carol Hall, Jan Bellinger, Jo Anne Harrison-Becker, Marcia Hinckley, Lynn Rhodes, and Dave Stender.

Absent: JoAnne McLeod, Debbie Boone, Rich Adessa, and Chuck Drake..

Guest: Joe Harrison-Becker

1. Call to Order

The January 13, 2026 Vestry Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Father Don Hamer.

2. Opening Prayer

Father Hamer led the vestry in saying the Opening Prayer.

3. Additions/Deletions to Agenda

There were three additions to the agenda:

4. Other Business

b. Insecure Railings

c. Visiting Poet

d. South Park Inn Update

4. Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the minutes as written from the December 9, 2025 Vestry meeting.

Old Business

1. Update on the St. John's Campus

Jan Bellinger reported that the St. John's campus is still on the market. We are attempting to find any heirs to a portion of the property so that the title to the property can be cleared. This will make the campus more attractive to potential buyers. (It has not yet been decided if we will sell or keep the property). A lawyer has been contacted to research possible heirs. We are waiting for the attorney to send Jan a letter requesting a retainer.

2. Ratify and Confirm Letter of Agreement Between Grace Church, ECCT and the Rev. Don L. Hamer

There is a required housing allowance in the agreement that everyone missed amounting to \$22,500. Father Hamer suggested he absorb half of this amount, \$11,250, and Grace Church will fund the remaining half of \$11,250. A motion was made, seconded and approved to ratify this agreement.

3. Roof Repairs

Marcia Hinckley reported that progress is being made on completing the Tuttle House roof. Larry stated that a possible gutter repair is needed on the south side of St. John's Hall; Marcia will ask the roofers to assess this. Eagle Rivet will also assess the roof over the Church to check for any needed repairs. There are leftover slates to store in a location yet to be determined; these may be used for future roof repair or for use in special projects. The roofer gave us a big box of cookies, perhaps to be used for coffee hour.

4. Ramp Update

David Stender reported that there have been no changes since the last ramp update. As stated previously, we currently have two bids for the ramp. We are waiting to receive a third bid on the project. It has been difficult to find a contractor who will bid.

5. Establish a Working Group to Review/Update Strategic Plan

Father Hamer stated that, when he first came to Grace Church, there existed a Strategic Plan, which is a wholistic plan for work to be done at Grace Church.

A committee was established to review the Strategic Plan, and it will be co-chaired by Ken Roach and Carol Hall. Other committee members include Katrina Woodhouse, Linda Rickard, David Stender, John Carpenter, Larry Young, and Marcia Hinckley. The committee will meet at St. John's on January 21, 2026 at 6 pm and, for a snow day or work follow-up, on January 28, 2026, also at 6 pm at St. John's. Ken will forward a copy of the Strategic Plan to committee members.

Father Hamer suggested the Vestry review the Ministry related parts of the Strategic Plan at an upcoming Vestry Meeting. Father Hamer is also open to the Vestry regularly discussing Ministry related topics every three months.

6. Partners for Sacred Spaces

There will be an additional Vestry Meeting on February 24, 2026 at 7 pm for a presentation by Gianfranco Grande. This is an important meeting for voting Vestry members; parishioners are also encouraged to attend.

New Business

1. Needs of Church School

Lynn Rhodes related that coverage for Sunday School is organized for the time she will be away. Maria Drenka, Linda Rickard, and Barbara Mansfield will provide coverage. Lynn will be back in March.

2. Bishop Laura's Visit on February 1, 2026

Bishop Laura will bless various merged communities including the Vestry, Altar Guild, Acolytes, and St. John's Hall, etc. A special recognition of Bob Keating will also take place to honor his more than

decade-long service to the church, especially in his role as Verger. There will also be a special coffee hour in honor of this event.

A sign is to be designed to honor the historic mergers of Grace Windsor, St. John's, and Grace Broadbrook. The sign will be hung in the St. John's Hall. Jan Bellinger will consult with Joy Dorin to discuss the history and feelings of the parishes and capture the essence of the three communities that will be incorporated into the design of the sign. Joy Dorin suggested perhaps hiring the iconographer who was used by St. Mary's and St. John's in Vernon when they merged. He created an icon (sign) that represented the two churches' history, and we would like to hire him to do the same thing for the St. John's, Grace Windsor, and Grace Broadbrook mergers.

3. 2026 Budget Workshop:

a. Financial Report

Larry Young reported that analyzing the budget has been challenging work because of the merger. Much work on budget comparisons between both churches has been done although a clear budget is yet to be realized; work continues. Larry distributed the 2025 Profit Loss Previous Year Comparison document. Data showed, for example, a drop in parishioner contributions and a rise in personnel, utilities, insurance, copier, and technology costs.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded and passed to increase the pay of salaried lay staff by 3.25%.

b. Annual Stewardship Campaign Report

Andrea Anderson provided a handout regarding the 2026 Stewardship Campaign. At this time, there are forty-nine pledges for the coming year; there were 57 pledges last year. Fourteen parishioners who made pledges last year have yet to make a pledge this year. Parishioners can still pledge for the coming year; as a result, the total number of pledges for this year is yet to be determined.

c. Review of Budget Requests from Ministry Groups

Larry Young stated that he is still receiving budgeting requests from ministry groups.

A motion was made to use the same amounts of money that on-going ministry groups spent last year for a proposed budget this year. This will be helpful until a more accurate budget can be made. The motion was seconded and approved.

d. Approve Budget for 2026

Larry Young stated the budget is still under development; when budget development is completed, a Vestry vote will be held.

4. Other Business

a. Nurturing the Heart Workshop

Jo Anne Harrison-Becker handed out a flier entitled Nurturing the Heart: A Morning of Self-Care and Faith which is a program to be presented by Jo Anne and Joe Harrison-Becker. The aim is to offer a gentle, supportive space for participants to nurture the heart in all its dimensions. This experience will be held on Saturday, February 14, 2026, from 9:30 am until noon in St. John's Hall. A sign-up sheet is located in St. John's Hall. Ministry funds are requested.

b. Insecure Railing

Sue Burgdorf spoke of an insecure railing by the water cooler and coat rack which could lead to injury; it needs repair. Action will be taken to fix the railing.

c. Visiting Poet

Marcia Hinckley spoke about a Poetry Reading which will be sponsored by the Art Center and Historical Society to be held on April 25, 2026, at the Art Center. The Poet, Sasha Debevec-McKinney, has published a book entitled, “Joy is My Middle Name.” It was suggested that Grace Church become a co-sponsor for this event. A motion for Grace Church to help financially supplement the poets’ travel expenses was made, seconded and approved; monies would come from the Rectors’ Discretionary Fund.

d. South Park Inn Update

Margaret Shields spoke of Grace Church preparing meals for people at the South Park Inn. Volunteers are needed to help prepare the lasagna and salad. Hopefully, preparation of the meal can occur at St. John’s. A sign-up sheet will be placed in St. John’s Hall. The date for the meal preparation and delivery to the South Park Inn will be April 4, 2026. Grace parishioners make the meal, deliver it, and it will be served by people at the South Park Inn. Ministry funds are requested.

5. Closing Prayer

With no further business before the vestry, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm. Father Hamer led the vestry in saying the closing prayer.

Joseph Harrison-Becker on behalf of

JoAnne McLeod, Clerk