St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Summary

August 24, 2026

The Vestry gathered for its August meeting with prayer and a devotional centered on Jesus' invitation to "come away and rest a while." The reflection was a timely reminder that faithful leadership includes trusting God, making room for rest, and remembering that we do not carry the work of the church alone.

Financial Stewardship

Although July revenues were below the monthly budget, St. Cyprian's remains in a strong financial position year to date. Through July, total revenues were approximately $36,600 above budget and nearly $59,600 higher than the same period last year. Year-to-date expenses remained slightly below budget, resulting in a year-to-date surplus of approximately $42,000.

Parents' Day Out also continues to perform better than anticipated. While the program was budgeted to operate at a loss, its year-to-date results are currently about $2,100 better than budgeted.

The Vestry approved the July financial report.

Outreach

Karen Stubblefield, chair of the Outreach Committee, presented the committee's recommendations for the 2026 Impact Partnership grants and regular outreach giving.

Six organizations applied for Impact Partnership funding for special projects or needs. The committee recommended a total of $14,300 in grants, while retaining a small amount for unexpected needs during the remainder of the year.

The committee also recommended distributions from St. Cyprian's regular outreach funds to organizations with which the parish has established relationships. The Vestry approved the Outreach Committee's recommendations.

Worship and Formation

Our worship ministries remain strong. The acolyte and Lay Eucharistic Minister programs continue to have good participation, including several new acolytes.

St. Cyprian's now has seven trained Lay Eucharistic Visitors, who have begun visiting parishioners and bringing Communion to those who are unable to attend worship.

The Altar Guild continues to evaluate liturgical needs, including replacement of worn linens and vestments and other items used in worship and at services.

Christian Education

Children's formation continues to show encouraging growth, with Sunday School attendance averaging approximately nine to ten children each week.

The new Hitched & Hatched ministry for parents and families with young children will begin with Rally Day. Plans include opportunities for fellowship, formation, and family service projects. Work is also underway to develop welcome bags for visiting and new families.

The Vestry also discussed the condition of the current playground and agreed that it is time to explore a significant improvement. Initial concepts will focus on a durable, shaded play area that serves a wide range of ages and includes ADA-accessible equipment. Estimates and design options will be brought back to the Vestry before decisions are made regarding scope and funding.

Parish Life

Plans are underway for Rally Day, including food, music, children's activities, games, and opportunities to learn more about the ministries of St. Cyprian's.

The Vestry also discussed this year's Blessing of the Animals and ways to make the event accessible to both parishioners and the wider community.

Property and Grounds

Several improvements have recently been completed or are underway around the church campus. The bells have been repaired, the sprinkler system is once again operating properly, and treatment has been completed for chinch bugs affecting the lawn.

Plans are also underway to address the longstanding drainage problem near the front of the church by installing drainage beneath the roadway.

Columbarium

Planning continues for an expanded columbarium. The committee is considering an area near the south transept door, which would provide protection from the weather and convenient access from the church for committal services.

The proposed area could accommodate approximately 70 niches, with space for future expansion. Preliminary estimates place the project in the $30,000–$40,000 range. Designs and additional details will return to the Vestry for approval before the project moves forward.

Music Ministry

Dr. Michael Murphy reported that SFA notified the church that the work authorization previously used for our international students, Sangeun and Yunkyo, could no longer continue, requiring them to stop their paid work at St. Cyprian's. Both are in the U.S. on F-1 student visas, and the church must ensure that any future arrangement complies with the requirements of that status. Dr. Murphy and church leadership are continuing to explore academic or curricular options that may allow them to participate in the future. In the meantime, the Vestry approved temporary financial assistance for both students, who had relied on their church income to help meet living expenses. Dr. Murphy is working to secure a temporary organist.

Transition Update

Fr. Josh Thomas joined the Vestry to provide an update on the timeline for the next phase of St. Cyprian's transition. He and diocesan leadership recommend beginning the search for permanent clergy in late 2027, with a transition anticipated in mid-2028, while Rev. Ashley continues serving the parish during that time. Fr. Josh noted that Bishop Doyle will determine whether Rev. Ashley may be considered in the search. The Vestry will vote on this recommendation for a search timeline at the September Vestry meeting.

Fr. Josh noted the significant improvement in stability, morale, ministry participation, children's programming, outreach, and the overall health of the congregation. As St. Cyprian's continues to grow, he encouraged the parish to strengthen written procedures and organizational systems, intentionally develop new lay leaders, and continue building a healthy partnership between clergy and lay leadership.

The Diocese and Fr. Josh agree the congregation is in a healthy and productive period, and the present transition model will be allowed additional time to develop before decisions are made about the church's longer-term clergy leadership.

The Vestry emphasized the importance of keeping the congregation informed as this process continues.

Next Vestry Meeting

The next regular Vestry meeting will be September 28, at 5:30 p.m. in the church parlor.