

Rector's Report for September 24, 2025 Vestry Meeting

A recap of events/activities/goings-on since the report for our August vestry meeting

Worship - We celebrated Irene Sahyun's life with a wonderful memorial service and reception on August 23. // The beginning of the program year was marked by a full Kickoff Sunday: the CGS church school resumed, after a summer of Summer Sacred Arts programming; the choir came back to 10am worship after a summer hiatus; the young adult group, Watershed, met over lunch and will resume monthly dinner church programming beginning in October; and, Compline services resumed after a summer break. // Given how full the church is during the 10am service, and how long it's been taking to distribute communion, we're trying - for a few weeks - adding a 3rd person distributing communion (at the back of the church for now; there may be other options) // In planning for our upcoming Pet Blessing, in honor of St. Francis' feast day, I reached out to SB Humane, to invite them to be with us for that event. They'll have a table set up, letting pet owners know of all the services they provide in the community. // Sarah and I have worked to set up 3 new discernment committees for 3 individuals discerning about ordained ministry. We'll be having a training for the groups in early October about the overall process, and about how to ask good, open questions and do deep listening.

Adult Education/Formation - We've had two weeks of our annual Episcopal 101 series, with about 25 people in attendance. // Sarah and I met with Christine Purcell to continue plans for a forum about Centering Prayer, which will kick off a 6 week program of offering a time of centering prayer. We also made further plans for a Lenten Day Book, with daily reflections about the scriptures of Lent, written by Trinity parishioners.

Pastoral Care / Newcomers: Over the past weeks since our last meeting, I met with 11 people for pastoral care or newcomer visits. // Sarah, Betty, and I have been continuing work on a more robust and structured newcomer process, making sure we're reaching out and following up on new folks and visitors to Trinity. This is part of the I/W/C (invite, welcome, connect) program.

Leadership - The leadership retreat about "Crucial Conversations", featuring Michele Mollkoy as our facilitator, took place August 29/30. The feedback from the 25+ participants was positive, and we'll spend a little time at the September Vestry meeting debriefing the retreat. Many thanks to Georgia Noble for her organizational efforts, and to everyone who helped with all the food and logistics. // Sarah and I met with some volunteers who are interested in helping launch and lead a labyrinth "guild", promoting more use of the labyrinth and helping people learn how to incorporate labyrinth walking into their spiritual practices. This idea of focusing on the community's use of the labyrinth was one of the things that came out of the I/W/C leadership retreat last year.

Financial things - I participated in the Investment Committee meeting with Mission Wealth on September 7, and with the Finance Committee a few days later. // On behalf of the audit committee, I presented their finalized audit and process improvement recommendations at the August Vestry meeting for their approval. The audit results were then sent to the diocese, along

with our 2024 financials (deadline was September 1). // Work continues on the draft budget for 2026, trying to come up with the “big” number that we aim for with annual giving.

Fundraisers - The Cookie Walk team is continuing its work to plan the 5th Annual Cookie Walk, to take place December 14. // The Art Auction (a “spinoff” from the Cookie Walk of 2023) took place on Friday, September 19. I’d call it a success! There were 37 works of art, by 25+ artists, available to bid on, and all but 3 of the pieces were sold. We didn’t keep a tally on the number of people who came through the auction, but I’d estimate at least 100. The accounting is still being done on financial results, but the initial numbers are that we grossed over \$7500 (we still need to subtract the food expenses, which were fairly modest). I don’t expect that this will be an annual event, given how much we ask of the artists, but perhaps every other year?

Young Adults: I mentioned in a previous section about the Watershed lunch on Welcome Back Sunday, September 7. Our regular monthly dinner programming will resume the first Sunday in October. // Theo and I, along with a team of parishioners, will be participating in the Thriving Communities program, offered through Westmont’s Gaede Institute, and funded by a Lilly grant. The first of 4 retreats is scheduled for September 27. The program is designed to help churches find ways to make their programming (in Trinity’s case, for young adults) thrive.

Broader church and community - The bishop search committee, of which I’m a member, met in early September to discuss what names to present to the Standing Committee, which approved and then announced the 3-person slate on September 12. We will find out later this week if any new candidates have surfaced through the petition process (those candidates may or may not make it to the slate - there are interviews and background checks still to be done.) Communication from the diocese about the times and locations of the “Meet and greets” has been published. As I mentioned previously (last month), Trinity’s clergy and lay delegates to diocesan convention will be the ones voting for the next bishop, and therefore need to attend the meet & greet sessions, but anyone - everyone - is welcome and invited to attend. // Sarah and I met with community organizer, Jeff Shaffer, about his 3-year pilot project to address the issue of human trafficking of young people. We’ll continue to learn from Jeff how clergy and members of Trinity might be able to help in this effort. // I’ve been working with Eileen Read and Isao Sugano on an Interfaith Dinner with the Islamic Society, to take place on Friday, September 26. This event has not been publicized, instead Eileen has been inviting individuals who’ve previously expressed interest in interfaith ministry, as there is limited seating (the Islamic Society is bringing 32 people, and we wanted to match their numbers.) If this goes well, we’re hoping for other future events, to which everyone can be invited.

Personal - I’m looking forward to a visit from my niece, Dana, in November, as she’ll be out in this area for business (she wasn’t able to be part of the family staycation in August). // We held our staff holiday outing (celebrating getting through Christmas 2024 and Holy Week/Easter 2025) at Lotusland, with a wonderful tour by docent Elizabeth Patterson, followed by lunch at the Public Market. It was worth the wait!

Respectfully submitted, September 22, 2025
Elizabeth+

Associate Rector Report for Sept. 2025 Vestry Mtg.

Parish Council

We spent a good amount of time at our September Parish Council meeting focusing on formation together. We explored the fruits of the Spirit, and did some storytelling around that. CYC will be doing a "ministry spotlight" in late September to draw attention to that council. I attended the Leadership Retreat in which parishioner Michele Mollkoy led us in a great workshop on having crucial conversations.

Hospitality

Isao and Georg are helping with preparation for the Annual Giving Kickoff Dinner that will take place on Oct. 11th. Isao and others helped with the hospitality for the Silent Art Auction and the upcoming Men's Breakfast. Coffee Hour Helpers is going well, with a regular rotation of volunteers. Isao and Georg sub in when needed.

JOC

JOC has begun their annual discernment process for which local organizations will receive Trinity grants. JOC is currently looking for a new person to take the lead for the Alternative Christmas Market that will take place in early December. Jennifer Bergquist has offered to make the transition easy, but a new leader is needed. Anita continues to do a great job on the monthly newsletter, with Betty's assistance. Elizabeth and I met with Jeff Shaffer (who works with Kingdom Causes) to discuss his local effort with human trafficking. We are looking for ways for Trinity to engage with Jeff around this justice issue.

Adult Formation

I attended the "Best Practices for Small Group Formation" led by Georgia noble and a steering committee. It was a great morning of Trinity's leaders gathering to learn new schools to support the running of small groups. Georgia did a terrific job. Episcopal 101 is off to a good start with about 20 participants. Elizabeth taught the first two and I will teach the remaining two.

Sacraments

I married two couples in September (one in the church, and one off-site), finishing up months of pre-marital counseling together.

Meal Ministry

Moving on from our Faro Center ministry, we will be beginning a monthly "Supper Club" next month at Vera Cruz Village, one of the buildings run by the Housing Authority that houses special needs adults who have been living on the streets. A team from Trinity will cook a homemade meal in our kitchen and then take it over to eat with the residents in their community room. This will be an opportunity of sharing a meal together and building relationships with those who have been experiencing some social isolation.

Compline

Compline is off to a great start. The first one of the year went well, with about 70 people in attendance. I am still working on recruiting storytellers for the remainder of the year. Word is getting out and a lot of people attend Compline from outside our congregation on a regular basis.

Pastoral Care

Norma Stuck is ready to pass the leadership of our Prayer Shawl ministry onto someone else after years of service in this special ministry. I am supporting her in this endeavor. We have so many beautiful prayer shawls ready to be given to those needing extra love and care. I continue to make home and hospital visits to Trinity folks. Our Lay Eucharistic Visitor team visits people with Communion when requested.

Worship

Elizabeth, Tom, and I continue to meet every few weeks to plan liturgy for upcoming Sundays.

Discernment Committees

Three discernment committees have been assembled and we will be gathering on Oct. 7th for a training.

Personal

Maddie is doing great in London and enjoying her classes very much. Zoe is loving her junior year at college so far. Gwyneth is off to a great start in high school! Mitch is back at work after his sabbatical and is in rehearsal for the fall theatrical production at Westmont. So life is very full at the moment!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Sarah Thomas, Associate Rector

Senior Warden Report September 2025

The Fall has launched and I have been pretty busy with a number of projects.

Welcome Team Support:

- Susan Kruttsch and I are leading the Invite Welcome Connect Steering Committee. We had a productive meeting at the end of August with plans for a new directory in the Spring and a new dinner group experiment.

Connect Team Support:

- Susan Kruttsch and I launched “Together at the Table,” a new program designed to bring people together for a single potluck meal at parishioners’ homes over the next two months.
- I led a morning workshop called “The Best Practices for Small Group Formation” on September 13 with the design team I have been collaborating with. We had 22 people register, and it was very well received. Our goal is for participants to apply what they learned to improve the groups they run.
- I supported a very successful Leadership Retreat on Crucial Conversations that Michele Mollkoy facilitated for us.

Other projects:

- Susan Kruttsch and I are co-chairing the Nominating Committee for the upcoming vestry slate. We have assembled the committee and will start our meetings next week. We are gathering names of candidates. If you have any suggestions, please pass them to me.
- Elizabeth and I are actively seeking a new chair for Building & Grounds. We have a great candidate who is 99% sure. Stay tuned.
- I have been meeting with Elizabeth to discuss plans for the fall, including the Fall Giving Campaign, Adult Formation, and the Vestry Nominating Committee.
- I am starting to plan the last few months of my term as Senior Warden. I want to pass the baton with good notes and organized files 😊

Blessings,
Georgia Noble, Sr. Warden

Junior Warden Report (People's Warden)

September 2025

Activities

Greeter and Welcome Table

Substituted 4 times for Greeters and Welcome Table

Shared meals with 4 couples from church

Played pickleball with another church member

Was requested to share my vocal therapy notes with member who has lost her singing voice due to surgery (still waiting to connect)

Attended the two day Vestry Retreat on Having Critical Conversations

Attended Doug and Kate singing get together at members' home

Cashier for Art Auction

Search committee for new Vestry Members

Community Outreach

Thank you to JOC for supporting Our Lady of Guadalupe Church with a financial donation after the threat of ICE decreased their Fiesta numbers decreasing their fundraising.

Personal

I had a wonderful visit with college roommates in MN.

Rehearsals are starting up for Mozart Requiem with the SB Symphony. There will be 5 singers from TEC for the November 15 and 16 performances.

Treasurer's Report to the Vestry

August 27, 2025

For the period of July 1-31, 2025

Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Snapshot

Profit & Loss (P&L)	July	YTD
Income	81,254.300	623,754.05
Expenses	86,321.46	587,240.26
Net Income	(5,067.16)	36,513.79

- **Current cash**, as of July 31, 2025
 - Montecito Bank and Trust Operating Account: 192,743.44
 - Montecito Bank and Trust Capital Projects: 68,335.69
 - Petty Cash: 50.00
- **Schwab Investments**, value as of July 31, 2025
 - Looking Beyond Ourselves (LBO): 1,180,800.11
 - Brackenbury: 1,493,182.36
 - Reserve Funds: 324,262.37
 - Mark Asman PT Fund: 85,365.87
 - **Total: 3,083,610.71**

Notes

- **Continued positive bottom line.** Our income for the month of July, and year to date (YTD), continued to be above budget. Our expenditures remain at or below budget, bringing us to a "bottom line" of a net positive (\$36K more than we budgeted at this point in the year). I am grateful for God's generosity, and the commitment of our Trinity community, towards our church.
- **Water (utilities) resolved, but will remain above budget.** While we were able to resolve our malfunctioning irrigation system and that expense is now back in line for July, due to the large expense over the first part of the year, we'll continue to see that category remain above budget for most of the year.
- **2026 Budget season has begun.** Elizabeth has already begun the 2026 budget process by meeting with department leaders and determining what our church's focuses will be in 2026. Elizabeth will meet with the Finance Committee in early August to bring them up to speed on the process and timing of getting from idea stage to Vestry approval to the blessing by the Trinity community.