

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
Vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church
August 17, 2026**

The regular meeting of the Vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church was held on Monday, August 17, 2026, in the Foster Room. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Senior Warden Paul Bugas.

The following members were present: Lindlee Baker, Paul Bugas (*Senior Warden*), James Dungan, Mary Faulkner (*Junior Warden*), Fred Odell, Kristin Reichert, Zebulen "Zeb" Riley, Donald Romanik, Jean-Paul Shibut. and Karen Tate. Also present were The Rev. AJ Heine (*Rector*) and Phillippa Holley (*Vestry Clerk*).

Charles "Rick" Chittum and Kathy Frazier were absent. Molly Brown (*Treasurer*) and The Rev. Cara Modisett (*Associate Rector*) were also absent.

Fr AJ opened the meeting with remarks about faithful giving, reading a statement by Herb Miller, a reading by Ted Jordan on stewardship and closed with a prayer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes were submitted. It was moved by Fred Odell and seconded by James Dungan that the May 18, 2026, minutes be approved. The motion passed.

Year-round Stewardship: The revised plan and timeline for stewardship at Trinity was discussed. The report is attached.

Finance Committee Minutes: The minutes were submitted. They are attached. It was moved by Donald Romanik and seconded by Fred Odell that the Minutes of July 30, 2026, be approved. The motion passed.

- There was discussion about the Financial Review Checklist for The Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern VA.
- For transparency purposes it was suggested that an abbreviated form of the finance report be published for the congregation. The form could consist of income, pledges, expenses, budget and year-to-date. Also, it is suggested that a QR code be attached with the entire monthly financial report.
- Another suggestion is that all vestry members sit in at budget meetings.

Property Committee/Junior Warden's Report: The report was submitted and is attached. Also attached is the VA-250 Project Status Report, 8/15/2026. For transparency purposes, it was suggested that the status report be published for the congregation.

Adult Formation Report: The report was submitted and is attached.

Youth and Children's Ministries: The report was submitted and is attached.

Mission and Outreach Committee: The report was submitted and is attached.

Community Life: The report was submitted and is attached.

Worship: There will be an Organ Recital in Memory of George K. Taylor on September 6 at 5 p.m. A music report was not submitted.

Senior Warden's Report: Paul Bugas is planning to start submitting a synopsis of the approved vestry minutes after each meeting. A copy will be on the bulletin board in the parish hall and published in the Trinity Weekly News.

Associate Rector's Report: The report was submitted and is attached.

Rector's Report: There will be a Parish meeting on November 29.

New Business: None.

There being no further business, it was moved by Kristin Reichert and seconded by Karen Tate that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled Monday, September 21, 2026.

Compline followed adjournment.

Fr. AJ Heine, Rector

Phillippa D. Holley, Vestry Clerk

Attachments:

- Revised plan and timeline for stewardship
- Finance Committee Minutes
- Property Committee Report
- Adult Formation Report
- Youth and Children's Ministries Report
- Mission and Outreach Committee Report
- Community Life Report
- Associate Rector's Report

Year-Round Stewardship at Trinity Episcopal Church – Staunton, VA
Revised Plan and Timeline
August 15, 2026

Vision: To embrace and incorporate Christian Stewardship as the recognition that all we have comes from an all loving and generous God and that stewardship is a spiritual discipline and a life practice rather than an obligation.

Goal: to develop a holistic and comprehensive program that emphasizes gratitude, generosity, celebration and giving-back, while, at the same time, enhancing participation in the annual campaign and other fundraising initiatives.

Key Components: Mission, vision, communication, transparency, consistency, context and culture.

Timeline:

August 2026 and ongoing – post monthly minutes of Vestry meetings and financial reports

September/October – Weekly Thanksgiving Message – a biblical passage, poem, quote or personal reflection on gratitude
Submit to Autumn on Monday, posted on social media on Wednesday and Trinity Announcements on Thursday

September 7/9/10 – AJ
September 14/16/17 – Donald
September 21/23/24 – Helen
September 28/30/Oct 1– Zeb
October 5/7/8 – AJ
October 12/14/15 – Donald
October 19/21/22 – Helen
October 26/28/29 - Zeb

Sunday, September 20, 2026 – AJ's Stewardship Sermon 1 (theological overview) with complementary music and Prayers of the People

Sunday, September 27, 2026 - Generosity Moment 1 – a 3-to-5-minute reflection by a member of the congregation – "What Trinity means to me and why I give." (TBD)

Thursday, October 1, 2026 – Annual Fund Letter and Pledge Card ready to distribute to include giving step chart and pie charts on budget
Working Theme - "For All the Saints"

Pledge packets will be available to pick up in church on Sunday, October 4 and 11 with remainder mailed out on October 13

Sunday, October 4, 2026 - Adult Forum – “Time, Talent and Treasure: The Impacts of Giving at Trinity” - Details TBD

AJ's Stewardship Sermon 2 focusing more on giving with Stewardship Collect (Helen) and Offertory Sentences (call and response)

Sunday, October 11, 2026 – Reminder Announcement and Generosity Moment 2 (TBD)

Sunday, October 18, 2026 – Reminder Announcement and Generosity Moment 3 (TBD)

Sunday, October 25, 2026 – Reminder Announcement

Sunday, November 1, 2026 – All Saints Day, Ingathering and Festive Reception – Details TBD

Rest of November - Reminder announcements, thank you calls and calls to those who have not yet pledged (LYBUNTS and SYBUNTS) by members of the Vestry

Sunday, November 29, 2026 – Advent 1 – Annual Meeting with elections, written and oral reports, pledge drive update and preliminary 2027 Budget

December – Follow-up and clean-up

Early 2027 – In conjunction with a comprehensive Planned Giving Initiative, focus on “Stewardship of Self and Family” with presentations and resources on retirement, estate planning, end-of life issues, advanced care directives, planning for college, IRAs and RMDs etc.

Lent – possible forums on Money

Post Easter – focus on Stewardship of Creation with Ascension Day as a Celebration of All Creation

Trinity Finance Committee Minutes
Thursday, July 30, 2026

Method: Email Discussion and Vote

A subcommittee consisting of Lee Beam, Fred Odell, Rick Chittum, Tom Fechtel, and Molly Brown reviewed, revised, and approved the annual financial checklist required by the Diocese in lieu of an audit, consistent with the process followed last year.

Because the next Vestry meeting is scheduled for August 17 and the Finance Committee will not meet until August 25, the committee agreed to conduct its review electronically.

Committee members were asked to review the completed checklist and submit a yes or no vote by replying to all via email.

Emails with “yes” votes were received from Paul Bugas, Tom Bell, Stuart Cochran, Rev. AJ Heine, Rick Cason.

No votes were cast in opposition.

The Checklist was approved by the Finance Committee to be presented to the Vestry for consideration.

Minutes prepared by Anastasia Duncan

August 10, 2026

Minutes of the Property Committee August 10, 2026

Present:

Erik Boody
Rick Chittum
Emily Cochran
Dick Coleman
Bill Frazier
Kathy Frazier
AJ Heine
Sally James
Jeff
Mike Mahler

At 5 pm the meeting opened with Emily Cochran presiding in the absence of Zeb Riley. The meeting began with a prayer by Rev. AJ Heine

First on the agenda was the Parent Breathing Room ceiling: Jeff spoke about leak in HVAC system in room upstairs. How to repair? He suggests a dropped ceiling do if another leak occurs there's an easier fix. Consensus: Look into drop ceiling, as leaks are easier to repair. Such a leak due to condensation could reoccur. Bill Frazier mentioned that the VA 250 grant can help with moisture problems.

VA 250 update Bill Frazier: note the list of completions. He has a schedule that is more complete.

Alex Davis is coming for grave marker resetting etc. in the next two weeks. Upcoming workshop on gravestone repair

A text came today from valley landscaping to power wash walks, can be part of grand handicap walk.

Gutter works: Mark Horne gutters. If he doesn't respond look elsewhere. Sally suggested Lynch in Charlottesville. They did the copper roof at Emmanuel.

Bill F. Suggests putting slate topping on brick steps. Less problem with snow, no repointing.

Blanton, archaeologist, is gone. Try to reach him. We want to dig around old foundations. Otherwise find another archaeologist and there is one from Charlottesville who were very expensive.

Emily Cochran says Louis Jones may be able to help with McCracken Hall. Should we replace the floor? Eric suggests white oak that is cut into wider boards. Ask Louis who could lay the floor.

Danner is working on the fences. Finding parts. Should be done in a month. Need to rehang gates in front. Danner could do it.

Erik has offered to install handicap hardware for ground level right church door.

Expensive! \$2,500 opener and \$800 for opening button. AJ asks if we should install an automatic opener on the door from nave to into the bathroom hall. Let's begin with the outside door and see how it goes. The mechanism will be on a post beside door.

Ushers must unlock crash-bar so the mechanism will work. We have to get building permit from city for door, its on the door and they must come back. We need to talk about which parking spaces to be marked off for handicap. Federal ADA regulations.

Sally suggested looking at carpeting on ground floor: clean or replace?

Bill Frazier: Outdoor lights that light the windows? Eric says it takes a lot of power.

Bill says we still have \$46,000 to spend from the grant by the end of this calendar year.

Brite light sign coming to look at installing signs

Interior plaster will be done after we figure out the source of moisture.

Sandy Hanger can help with interpreter signs in mid-Sept

Upgrade sound system for McCracken Hall? Cara had asked about that. Could we put what we took out of the church 3 years ago? Erik thinks it might work.

Indirect lighting in the church? Can it be done? Rick Chittum says look at Virginia Seminary lighting, same architect. Eric says use LED lights above the beams and Light the ceiling, that lights the room. The dimmer panel is also 25 years old, unreliable and temperamental. This seems to be another need for an upgrade. Ask Dave Brooks.

Erik suggested lighting engineer for lighting in the church. Maybe we can keep cans and add indirect?

One Ruth Stevenson grave marker really bad. Pricing to put new stone down one was \$9,500 and marble \$14,000 for marble. Dick Coleman suggested a bronze plaque like on the Stuart stones.

New signage: metal and quite handsome.

Bicycle rack is suggested for churchyard. Kathy Frazier suggests placing the rack where they, by Church Street entrance. Zeb has found a 6 bike stand that is portable.

Company is in Lexington, Va. Weighs 92 lbs. Committee consensus is to buy it and try it. Black. Can come from VA 250 grant because it is for accessibility. Bicycle Racks Park and Pools in Lexington

New Business

1781 chair rededication. Chair moved from the church to rector's office for duration of the music festival

Fertilizing the trees has been done. Emily asked about grass aerating. Lets do it in the spring.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Sally James
Secretary for the meeting

Adult Formation
Vestry Report August 2026
Rev. Cara Ellen Modisett

We extended adult formation into the summer in a more intensive way this year, starting with a six-week book study of John Fea's *Was America Founded as a Christian Nation?*, a book recommendation from Rev. John Petereson (Covenant Presbyterian) to AJ. Discussions were led in rotation by AJ, myself and Chris Yoder, our six-week seminarian intern from Sewanee. That series finished the Sunday before July 4 weekend.

On July 5, Bill Frazier and Tom Howell gave a talk on Trinity's history as part of our 250th celebration, with around 100 people attending. For the five weeks following, we reprised our Lenten model with discussion cards, each "deck" containing opening and closing prayers, questions to help us know each other better, lectio divina on the Sunday's Psalm, reflection questions on the Sunday's Gospel and an optional visio divina using the images on the card backs.

Participation was strong and lively for all, with 12-16 each Sunday participating in the book and lectionary discussions. For our final three weeks of the summer, Katie, AJ and I have been working on three Discovery Sundays – Ambulatory Learning Experiences, or ALEs, as AJ has termed them – that bring our parishioners into the "rooms where it happens" (to borrow from *Hamilton* for a minute) – learning about the ways we can learn and serve and be involved at Trinity. August 16 focuses on the Parish House (formation, small groups, pledging, office volunteers, etc.); August 23 on our feeding and fellowship ministries – with a pancake breakfast! – and August 30 on worship ministries, followed by an instructed Eucharist at the 10:30 service.

Tom Howell offered two docent training sessions during July and will offer additional ones in September. Lois Johnson, one of our office volunteers, spent a good amount of time copying our docent training materials and creating 20 binders for docents to take home with them. We plan to tap a volunteer for scheduling so that we can welcome and educate visitors on more days this fall.

Formation re-launches the week of Labor Day (September 6), and we'll have several new offerings besides continuing the Rector's Book Group, Writing our Faith, Men's Bible Study, Women of Faith and EfM.

Stephanie Otteni will be teaching a yoga class on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. in the church. Women of Faith, the Evening Edition, will meet on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m., following the same curriculum as the daytime Women of Faith group. We are looking to add a second track on Sunday mornings, Faithful Adulting, responding to younger adults (20s-40s) who are seeking a deeper study, and hoping to encourage more families participating in children's Sunday School classes. We also have a group of women who

would like to move a currently monthly Bible study to Trinity and schedule it weekly, possibly on Friday afternoons – part of this group overlaps with Daughters of the King.

Field trips will pick up again in October – more information to come on those locations. BJ Regi has been holding informal, beautiful “Crafternoons” with plans to open them up to more participants. The fall and spring schedule of adult Sunday School is in process and uploaded to this folder. Between the Collars, which has sparked great conversation over the past year, will continue monthly.

We’re excited to see new faces on Sunday mornings, to hear lots of questions and encounter curiosity and seeking among adults across a range of ages and experiences.

Children and Youth Formation Vestry Report August 2026 Rev. Cara Ellen Modisett

Our teachers have worked so hard this past year, creating lessons every week, designing curricula, finding ways to respond to varying class sizes and age gaps, and I’m grateful to all of them, as well as to the YCM committee, an incredible group of creative minds that help shape and advise our programs (they’ll be re-launching at the end of this month – monthly meetings also include our teachers as they are able to attend). Michelle Tillery-Duval has agreed to lead the Christmas Pageant again this year.

A number of our upper elementary students have moved into the Triniteens age range (middle and high school) and so we will be consolidating our two middle classes, Crafting Faith and Common Ground, into one (Crafting Faith) that blends the pedagogy of both – scripture reading and conversation with creative activities that respond to each week’s lectionary. Krissy Jordan and Crystal Fiechtl will continue to teach Godly Play to our pre-K and early elementary (pre-readers, primarily through first grade), and John Becker is stepping in as lead teacher for Crafting Faith – I’m currently working on recruiting one or two teachers to act as second, and build our roster of subs.

Additionally, our Triniteens mentors (CJ Hill, Heather Derr Smith, Wade and Leighton Carruth) will be leading Sunday youth every week at 9:15, as well as Triniteens gatherings (with pizza!) on second Sundays after the 10:30 service, using Faith Lens (ELCA) and Echo the Story (TEC) curricula. Two of our youth, Melina and Adrienne Fiechtl, are serving as leaders on the diocesan Youth Ministry Team (YMT), and recently participated in a weekend retreat at Phoebe Needles.

We are working on incorporating an idea from Building Faith – journals for each age group that students can write or draw in (especially depending on age) for the priests to read and respond to – a sort of in-church Pen Pal system.

Classes will begin the Sunday of Labor Day weekend with an open house while classes are in session for all ages. One more calendar change: Advent Event (an all-ages parish tradition) will take place a week earlier this year, the Sunday *before* Advent I, to allow for a full season of Advent formation.

**Trinity Episcopal Church
Staunton, VA
Report of the Mission & Outreach Committee**

The Committee met on Thursday, August 6, 2026

Persons in Attendance: Donald Romanik (Chair), AJ Heine, Kathleen Garcia, Rudi Nollert, Margaret Pearson

The M&O Survey has been finalized and will be sent out shortly. The Committee will review and analyze the results at the next meeting.

The August 23 Discovery Day will provide an opportunity for parishioners to sign up for various service activities. This event will be supplemented and enhanced by the survey and the forum on October 25.

The Adult Forum on Mission & Outreach will be held on October 25. It will include a facilitated panel discussion by representatives of various ministries (Trinity Gives, SACRA, Noon Lunch, Honduras, La Familia and Virginia Haiti Collaborative) followed by table time for people to obtain more information and sign up to volunteer.

The Committee discussed the Harry Potter Dinner on September 26 and the need for volunteers for prep, set-up, serving and especially clean-up.

Given the interest expressed by past participants and other interested persons the Committee decided to move forward with planning a Mission Trip to Honduras:

- Tentative Dates – June 1 to 9, 2027
- Estimated Cost - \$1,500 per person
- Capacity – 12 to 15 persons
- Open to all parishioners but children under 18 would need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

- Purpose – subject to additional feedback from local leadership, to renew and enhance Trinity's relationship with the church communities in Copan, to engage in moderate work projects, (e.g. painting, wall repair, etc.) and to create other opportunities for fellowship, engagement, and connection.
- Recommended use of a travel agent for transportation logistics including insurance
- Mandatory orientation for all potential participants to emphasize the nature of the trip – this is not a vacation or a tour.

A fundraising concert for La Familia will be held on Saturday, October 11 at 5:00 PM in the sanctuary. Details to follow.

NEXT MEETING : Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 4:00 PM in the Foster Room

Agenda items will include the survey results and budgets.

**Community Life Coordinator
August 2026**

- Memory Café
- Volunteer spots are being scheduled and quickly filling through Summer of 2026
- We are seeing new participants each month.
- Eucharist at Baldwin Park
- AJ & Cara rotate
- Tuesdays at Trinity will resume September
 - Choir
 - DOK
 - Mostly Millennials
 - Honduras (Spaghetti)
- Mostly millennial groups
- Established communication thread and will provide 3rd Tuesday dinner and meet after the dinners.
- Organized Adopt a Street
- Trinity Untapped
 - Monthly schedule established through September.
- Inner Soul

- Meet 2nd Thursday of each month at 11am in Gooch Room. Women above 70 meet to discuss and study life and spiritual needs of the group.
- Trinity Cares
 - New Team of Volunteers added (Teal Team)
- Community Life Committee
 - Funeral Guild Committee Continues
 - Greeters Continues And Officially Implemented
 - Scheduling for 10:30 Service
- Next Community Life Committee Meeting is August 19th at 5:30 pm in the Foster Room
- Parish Retreat September 18-20
- Supper Clubs Begin September

We are having a wonderful time expanding our Trinity community and involving as many people as possible in our growth and development I have been overwhelmed by all the support and willingness from our parishioners. We welcome all inspiration and participation from each of you. Contact me to share any brainstorm ideas you have. Thank you.

Associate Rector's Report
Vestry August 2026
Rev. Cara Ellen Modisett

Summer has flown by, as it does, bookended by new and noteworthy goings-on.

On June 5, Trinity hosted a talk and community conversation on Christian nationalism. I enjoyed working with the Rev. Brett Iserngagen, pastor of Christ United Methodist in Staunton at the time, and the Rev. Daniel Hess, pastor of Christ Lutheran in Staunton and chaplain of the Legacy, both active members in the Staunton-Augusta County Clergy Gathering – in February, we co-wrote and published an ecumenical letter in opposition to Christian nationalism. We invited Dr. Jacob Cook, a Baptist theologian and professor of ethics at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, to speak, followed by an enthusiastic Q&A and continued conversation over cookies and lemonade in McCracken (using newsprint questions, a great suggestion from AJ, as prompts).

Daniel, Brett, Jacob and I will be meeting again later this month to debrief and plan followup to the June 5 talk, which drew an audience of 150 and a lot of attention online,

as well as coverage by the *Staunton News Leader*. This event was a strong continuation of some similar events we've had in the past, specifically film screenings of *The Philadelphia 11* and *A Case for Love* at the Visulite, followed by panel and small group discussions, respectively, and the timing was particularly appropriate, leading up to Trinity's VA250 celebration and book discussions we have been delving into in adult formation.

Just after that talk I was able to get away for nearly a week with family, to the Outer Banks, and came back a couple days early for the consecration of Bishop Karin MacPhail. I was grateful to be involved as a member of the Standing Committee, as a presenter and as the clergy representative on the consecration music committee, headed up by Michael Milam, music director at St. John's, Roanoke.

In July, I soloed while AJ and Shannon were traveling for two weeks – it is our quieter season, so my work was focused on formation, continuing pastoral care and our regular liturgies (Mass on the Grass, Morning Prayer and Sunday Eucharists), as well as planning and officiating John Parrott's funeral, which was earlier than expected. I'm glad that we have been able to walk with the Parrott family through that loss and to provide pastoral support in a particularly poignant grief.

I'm grateful to continue to assist with the ministry of two of our outreach projects. The Virginia-Haiti Collaborative, whose work is becoming even more essential as Haiti becomes increasingly unstable and Haitians in the U.S. have lost their protected status as of this month. I also continue to assist with the Familia Fund, a grassroots effort shepherded by Louella Hill supporting refugee families impacted by detention and deportation. Donald Romanik and I both were interviewed by WVTF/Virginia Public Radio and WMRA Public Radio during a potluck event on June 28, which raised more than \$2,000 for a Staunton High School student who has been forced to self-deport back to Honduras. This is such important and brave work for Trinity to be doing.

Diocese-wise, I've been invited to serve on a committee planning a first diocesan youth pilgrimage for next summer in New Orleans – registration has just opened for that. Bishop Karin has also asked me to serve on the diocesan Board of Governing Chaplains as the resource for liturgy and music. I enjoyed working with our Sewanee seminarian intern Chris Yoder early this summer, and through my work on the Standing Committee, getting to know him and Jake Webb, about to be ordained a deacon and just named curate in charge of St. Elizabeth's, Roanoke, my sending parish, and Bishop Karin's last post before becoming bishop. The Standing Committee's work has quieted since the election, and our weekly Zoom meetings have moved to monthly. It's a wonderful cohort.

I'll be attending diocesan fall formation day at the end of this month, and virtually (and probably asynchronously, given the time change) attending the College of Preachers Festival of Preaching in Cambridge, UK in September.

In the community, I recently taught a writing workshop earlier this month at Gallery 22 on Beverley, invited by parishioners Misa and Robert Stuart – attendees (over our max, from ages 18 to 80-plus) included a number of folks from our congregation and extended Trinity “family.” (Also, a new experience for me – I have a photo in the current exhibit, *The Latent Image*, at the Staunton Augusta Art Center).

This kind of creative work dovetails with the work I do at Trinity with Writing our Faith and publication of liturgical and theological writing elsewhere, as well as one more new initiative that has been in the pipeline for a while now, and is finally coming to fruition. A working group including Misa, Heather Derr Smith, Ty Buckman and Shanna Swenson have helped develop a plan for a series of arts events connected with this coming year’s Evensongs and Concerts at 5, based on reading series I led at Church of the Holy Communion in Memphis and St. John’s, the Roanoke Symphony Green Room and Liminal Artspace (Community High School of Arts and Academics) in Roanoke. The structure is three-fold, building on the charism of artistic work that exists at Trinity, in our programming and in our congregation – teachers, visual artists, musicians, published poets and novelists, composers – inviting the creation of work in response to themes generated by the music events, inviting creatives to engage with our musical offerings and then following up with organized evenings sharing that creative output. We are finalizing a name for the series, and plan to add at least one connected, longer event – a Stations of the Cross exhibit of visual art and text during Lent.

These last few weeks before September, I’m focused on recruiting two or three more teachers, making sure our formation folks are resourced, scheduling our Sunday afternoon field trips and seeking ways to inspire more of our families to have their children in Sunday School!