

The Episcopal Church of St. John Baptist, Thomaston, ME
Vestry Meeting Minutes, Thursday, January 8, 2026

In Attendance: Rev. Van Bankston, Interim Rector; Brian Perkins, Sr. Warden; Chris Rector, Jr. Warden; Sandra Hoekstra, Treasurer; Jan Gaudio; Mark Ranney; Gayle Elfast; Ruth Anne Hohfeld; Paula Hannah-Mauri. Absent: Henry Hoecker

The Rev. Van Bankston opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. with prayer.

Brian emailed the meeting agenda to the Vestry on Tuesday, January 6, and Sandra sent out an email with the December Treasurer's Report, the December Financials, the 2026 Proposed Budget, and a separate sheet of items for discussion. All copies are attached to these minutes.

Sandra presented the December financial report and stated an update of 2025 pledges received during the month of January 2026, up to the 31st, would be available as an amended report during the February Vestry meeting. The bookkeeper, Trina Aimes, sent the end of year statements out on Tuesday, and any additional payments on the 2025 pledges would be counted to the month of December with a bookkeeper's note. A verbal explanation was given about the Income Less Expenses and how the New Rector Escrow was monetary funds that had not yet left the bank, so they were not reflected in the "Other Operating Income" line item in the Income section. The motion to accept the financials was made by Mark and seconded by Paula. The motion passed.

Sandra presented the Proposed 2026 Budget and reviewed each line item. Questions were asked and answered. Discussion ensued about when to approve this proposed budget, before or after the increases in salary were presented. Sandra requested this budget be approved first and then an amended budget with salary adjustments would be presented after the discussion. The motion to accept the Proposed 2026 Budget as presented and before the salary changes were discussed was made by Chris and seconded by Gayle. The motion passed.

Sandra finished the Treasurer's Report items number 2 through 5 on the attached sheet and reviewed the total funds on deposit.

The "Caretaker" was the second item on the agenda. Brian initiated a discussion starting with the caretaker proposed salary increase to \$30 per hour from \$25, and the number of weekly hours reduced to twelve from fifteen. Chris reminded everyone of the tasks that Rob used to do, as well as what needs to be done on a weekly basis in the building to keep it clean. It is hoped that someone local to the town might take this position now that the hourly rate is increased. A discussion about who might be interested included a town employee, a school janitor, a police officer, or one of the AA members who have a professional caretaking business. A motion to approve the increase in hourly pay as well as reduce the number of weekly hours was made by Chris and seconded by Mark. The motion passed.

Brian brought up the hourly wage of Gillian Thompson, the Administrative Assistant. The discussion centered on her good work and attitude. It was proposed that her hourly rate of pay be raised from \$25 per hour to \$30 per hour. Gayle made the motion to raise the pay and Chris seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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Item 3 on the agenda was “Security.” The current security policy drafted over a year ago by Brian needs updates. The priest in charge needs to work with a member of the parish on its revision. Jan volunteered to do this with Van.

Item 4 on the agenda is the lack of an employment contract with Tony Antolini, the Music Director. All other employees have contracts, and they are required by the Diocese. The last evidence of contract discussion that could be found was a draft of a contract in his employee file from 2008, and at that time there was no resolution to the contract negotiations. The proposed contract is labeled “Draft” and is unsigned. The email discussion from 2007 and 2008 has been printed and remains in the file. This will be addressed in the next month or two to bring us into compliance.

Item 5 on the agenda is the new Vestry members whose names will be presented at the February 1 Annual Meeting. Judy Laidlaw has accepted a nomination as a Voting Clerk of the Vestry; this is a position without a term limit. Ann Booher has accepted the nomination to replace outgoing member Ruth Anne Hohfeld both on the Vestry and as a representative on the Discernment Committee. Carolyn Garrett-Reed has accepted a nomination to replace outgoing member Paula Hannah-Mauri as a Vestry member. Chris Rector has retired from his position as Junior Warden and will retire from Vestry. The parish will need to nominate a new Junior Warden.

During general discussion, it was noted the Discernment Committee remains on pause. On Wednesday, January 21 at 2 p.m., the Vestry has its third session of mediation with the Rev. Cn. Michael Ambler. Should the Discernment Committee feel they need to work with the Canon, Brian will find out how that could be worked out. It is hoped that with these sessions, the Committee can come off pause. Van suggested the internet site, Holy Cow, as a helpful parish discernment website. The correct name is Holy Cow! Consulting and the website is: <https://holycowconsulting.com/>

During the general discussion it was noted that the term “Discretionary” was used instead of the term “Discernment” for the committee formed to find a new permanent rector in the Treasurer’s Reports. Sandra has promised to correct and to try keep her nomenclature straight!

Chris has a list of items that will need the attention of the new Junior Warden. These include the downstairs toilet (Rock Coast Plumbing); the inspection of the structure should be scheduled with the engineer; a contractor should look at and give an estimate of the replacement of the parish house roof; the drainage problem on the west side of the building will need to be contracted with both the engineering firm and professional excavator and oversight of this costly project will need to occur; and follow-up on the moisture problem with the newly refurbished stained-glass windows. Sandra will follow up with Willet Hauser on the windows.

Chris mentioned that in 2027, the town of Thomaston will celebrate 250 years of incorporation and is planning a series of celebratory events that will last for the entire year. In his role as a town council person, he is participating in the planning as a voluntary St. John Baptist representative. There is a meeting later this month with the town committee.

Jan wondered what the result was of our former Deacon Rob Laite. Rob has been medically retired and so his on-going health concerns are covered by the Diocese. He is permitted to attend the 7 a.m. meetings
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at the church but may not do cleaning after his meeting. He remains ordained as a deacon but will not be participating as an ordained member at this parish.

Brian adjourned the meeting at 11:46 a.m. and Van closed the meeting with prayer.

Gayle Elfast informed the Vestry that she will be away from Maine from January 28 to March 18.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Hoekstra, Treasurer