

**Galilee Church  
Vestry Minutes  
January 20, 2026**

**1. Fellowship and Opening Prayer - Fr. Buchanan**

Present: Fr. Buchanan, Robbie Berndt (Parish Executive), Linda Whitehead, Bud Syme, Michael Via, Wendy Pelton, Tony Zontini, Tom McAfee, Susan Freese, Don Clark, Betsy Cromwell, Dee Oliver, Katie Denton

Apologies received: James Noel, Fr. Randall

**2. Farewell to Retiring Vestry Members**

Wendy thanked the outgoing vestry members.

**3. Approval of Vestry Minutes**

Motion to approve: Linda/Tom

Motion approved by voice vote

**4. Rector's Report**

First, I am pleased to share that we ended 2025 with strong momentum:

- Christmas Eve Attendance: we reached our highest attendance to date, with approximately 1,750–1,800 attendees across four services.
  
- Sunday Attendance: Our average weekly attendance increased from 529 in 2024 to 587 in 2025--roughly an 11% increase.
  
- Youth Programs: Youth group participation has strengthened, and we anticipate a substantial confirmation class for 2026–2027.

Second, as we move through the winter, we will navigate the pipe organ project--and look forward to having that completed.

Third, I will travel to a seminary in Toronto, Canada in two weeks to begin looking for an additional member for the clergy team. This position will (ideally) satisfy three areas of growing needs: 1. pastoral care, 2. men's ministry, 3. newcomer integration.

Fourth, in this Wednesday's email we will announce the vestry nominees and explain again the process by which they are joining the vestry.

**5. Junior Warden Report**

Completed work since the last report:

- . The plaster and painting has been completed in the Sanctuary.
- . Montessori's bathrooms were epoxied during the December break.
- . The oldest HVAC unit has now been replaced.

This month:

The HVAC diffusers in the balcony, which control and spread air evenly into the Sanctuary, will be relocated by the Associated Mechanical Companies.

During the week of January 18, Kevin Kissinger from Quimby will arrive at Galilee to work on the chancel organ. He will tune and relocate two motors in the chamber which had been causing issues, tend to some other mechanical details, and install a couple of recently restored pipes that were damaged in transit the first time they were delivered. When the work is completed, Mary Dolch will begin using the Chancel organ on Sunday mornings.

On January 27, Quimby will come and begin the mechanical installation for the Skinner organ in the balcony. During this first phase, scaffolding will be put in place and approximately 6 rows of pews will be removed to make room for the scaffolding and other equipment. The hope is the pews will be removed from only one side of the aisle. The work is due to be completed by February 13. Immediately afterwards, Jerry Kent and his company, Mid-Atlantic Building Services, will install a new floor over top of some of the organ components. The work is scheduled to be completed by April at which point the scaffolding will be removed and the pews put back into place for Easter services. Phase 2 of Quimby's work will begin after Easter. They will finish installing the rest of the pipe organ along with raising the balcony balustrade to meet code. The project manager is Tim Stiffler.

The parking team continues their admirable job of managing the parking lot during church services and delivering folks safely up and down the hill. A monthly schedule has been put into place which helps with planning each month. Wind getting into the curtains of the golf cart has caused a tear in the back flap. Thoughts are to park the cart near the Rectory when high winds are forecasted. There is a light in this area, but perhaps a camera can also be installed.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda Whitehead, Junior Warden*

## **6. Senior Warden Report**

Thanks are due to our retiring vestry members for their three years of excellent service: Betsy Cromwell, Katie Denton, James Noel, and Bud Syme. It has been a pleasure to work with all of you. Your tenure has been marked as a time of notable parish growth and health. January heralds a time of peace and new beginnings. Even in the quiet winter months, attendance has been strong. Average Sunday attendance has increased from 529 in 2024 to 587. in 2025, and there were 617 in attendance for the first service of 2026. It is a great privilege and responsibility to shepherd Christian growth at a time when national church attendance remains in the minority.

This month, Galilee's vestry will be engaged in planning activities for 2026. We will be welcoming new vestry members, assigning roles and committee involvement, and reimagining ways to be more supportive of our ministries.

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." (Colossians 3:15, NIV)

Joyfully in Christ,  
*Wendy Pelton, Senior Warden*

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

(December 2025)

### GIVING/REVENUES

MTD 88K less than budget

MTD 126K less than last year

YTD 83K more than budget

YTD 126K more than last year

### EXPENSES

MTD 58K less than budget

MTD 109K more than last year

YTD 205K less than budget

YTD 178K more than last year

## **8. Old Business**

Review of final 2026 budget, with \$28,000 of changes from the December budget. Bud moved, Susan seconded, voice vote approved and adopted the budget.

## **9. New Business**

a. Process Survey

b. Mission Strategy Planning Session: Tom McAfee

## **10. Testimony and Faith Sharing: Betsy Cromwell**

## **11. Closing Prayer and Adjournment: Susan Freese**