

The Roles and Responsibilities of Vestry Members and Officers at The Episcopal Church of Saint Peter & Saint Paul (6/10/15)

Vestry Mission Statement: To help grow disciples of Jesus Christ by leading parish ministries and stewarding our time, talent, and treasure in a Godly way.

Parish Vision: God has a vision for our parish as a Christian community, empowered by the Holy Spirit and active in the worship of God, discipleship of all ages, and serving Christ in the world.

All leaders at St. Peter and St. Paul, regardless of specific role, should strive to:

- Demonstrate a commitment to growing disciples of Jesus Christ
- Be passionate about Jesus and the work He is doing at St. Peter and St. Paul
- Welcome and serve others as Jesus did
- Demonstrate Christian maturity and character in everyday life
- Honor the Bible as the standard for the Christian faith and life and pray regularly
- Demonstrate an eagerness to lead proactively

The Vestry:

Being a vestry member involves discerning God's vision for us, communicating this vision to the congregation and committee leaders, developing and supporting parish leaders, and personally and actively advancing the mission and vision of St. Peter and St. Paul and its various committees in all settings and interactions.

The vestry is specifically charged with oversight of the temporal affairs of the parish (usually finances and property). The vestry is elected by the parish and operates according to the parish by-laws and the canons of the Dioceses of Atlanta and the Episcopal Church. Each fall, three new members of the vestry are elected to a three-year term. Vacancies are filled by the vestry. By Canon, the Rector is a member of the vestry by virtue of the office, and presides at all meetings.

Officers of the Vestry include:

A Rector, a Senior Warden, a Junior Warden, a Clerk, and a Treasurer. Annually, the Rector calls the Vestry to appoint a Senior Warden from among the vestry members. The Senior Warden and Rector appoint committee chairs and approve leaders of teams and other efforts in the parish. The Clerk is elected each year from among vestry members. The Treasurer is appointed by the Rector and Senior Warden. These officers form St. Peter and St. Paul's Executive Committee, which is charged with setting the agenda for the work of the vestry and providing collective counsel to the Rector on a range of parish matters.

Chief Responsibilities of the Vestry:

- Discerning, communicating, and supporting our vision for ministry at SPSP and our goals. This requires an ongoing review of our vision and mission and follow-up with ministry leaders and the congregation so that we stay focused and effective
- Provision for and oversight of the financial and material resources of the parish in response to the parish mission, vision and ministry goals, chiefly through raising financial pledges and setting the annual budget
- Developing and supporting Forum Chairs and other ministry leaders through vestry liaisons on committees and personal conversation with leaders and the congregation at-large
- Praying for the congregation and its ministry and leaders
- Leading by example in spiritual growth, ministry, and stewardship
- Establishing and maintaining a continual financial commitment to the church
- Creating a strong, relational culture that encourages service, participation, and lifelong learning

In addition to the leadership expectations noted above, nominees for Vestry should be devoted Disciples of Jesus Christ who are:

- Committed to attendance at all vestry meetings and retreats, and to the mission and vision
- Financially committed to the church
- Faithful in ministry, stewardship, and Christian formation
- Clear, direct communicators; responsive, but not emotionally reactive
- Positive, solution-oriented collaborators who can think strategically and prayerfully about the whole scope of Christian ministry
- Confirmed, and parish members for at least one year
- Off of the vestry for at least one year before re-election
- Not immediate relatives of staff or other vestry members

Vestry Members:

- Attend vestry meetings once per month for two hours, and attend other meetings as needed
- Attend the overnight vestry retreat in January and a likely half-day mini-retreat in summer
- Actively and personally promote the mission, vision, and ministry goals of the parish, by word & example
- Serve as committee liaisons and lead specific tasks relating to the ministry of the vestry as needed
- Serve as “Vestry Person of the Day” on a monthly basis, which includes greeting people in the Narthex as people enter the sanctuary
- As much as possible, participate in church events
- Advocate for, and actively create a strong sense of Christian community within the parish

The Rector, (with respect to Vestry responsibilities):

- Presides at all meetings; keeps the vestry focused on the mission & vision, and grounded in prayer
- Calls for the election of the Senior Warden and Officers of the Vestry
- Meets regularly with the Senior Warden to set meeting agendas and collaborate on the direction and leadership of ministries and the vestry
- Facilitates the leadership of vestry members and ministry leaders
- Cultivates a personal relationship and strong sense of community with each vestry member

The Senior Warden:

- Meets regularly with the Rector to collaborate on direction of the ministry and leadership of the vestry
- Facilitates the leadership of vestry members and ministry leaders
- Signs documents subject to financial authorities on behalf of the Parish as needed
- Maintains leadership of the parish during clergy vacancies
- Communicates the financial and ministerial health of the parish to the congregation
- Presides at Vestry or Parish meetings in the absence of the Rector
- Calls Vestry Officers to periodic executive meetings to prepare for Vestry meetings and attend to other matters as defined in the Parish by-laws and as required by financial authorities

The Junior Warden:

- Presides at Vestry or Parish meetings in the absence of the Rector and Senior Warden
- Performs the duties and responsibilities of the Senior Warden in his/her absence
- Serves as counselor to the Senior Warden and Rector on all parish matters
- Leads all matters related to maintenance of building and grounds

The Treasurer:

- Regularly communicates the financial health of the parish to the Rector and Vestry
- Leads the parish budgeting process in pursuit of St. Peter and St. Paul’s mission and vision
- Appropriately challenges financial decision-making when needed
- Advises the Rector and Vestry on all financial matters

The Clerk:

- Signs documents on behalf of the vestry where appropriate
- Oversees the maintenance and keeping of records of the Parish

The Recorder (Secretary):

- Attends vestry meetings, capture and communicate minutes of these meetings as appointed by the Vestry