

VESTRY MEETING March 10, 2026

Present: Rev. Cn Melinda Artman, Alice Bennett, Bruce Carpenter, Margaret Cole, Doreen Marshall, Linda Murrelle, Diane Siebecker, Jeff Watson

Absent: Mitzi Mohn, Glenn Murrelle

Treasurer: Bruce Carpenter

Chairperson: Rev. Cn Melinda Artman

Opening Prayer - Lenten Devotions

Agenda: Motion to accept the agenda made by Linda, seconded by Jeff. Change made – approval of the February Meeting Minutes, not January. Motion carries with change as noted.

Minutes: Motion to accept the February 2026 Meeting Minutes made by Linda, seconded by Jeff. Motion carries.

Treasurer's Report: Motion to accept the February 2026 Treasurer's Report made by Diane, seconded by Jeff. Motion carries.

Highlights:

- The slow start to income continues but really no different than last year. This could be weather-related.
- Heating expenses are up. However, it is noted that our building has been comfortable for our parishioners leaving the thermostat at a constant 68 degrees.

Old Business:

- Use of our Parking Lot by Guthrie/Robert Packer Hospital – Cn. Melinda has not heard back from Guthrie administration on a specific proposal for using our parking lot to serve the hospital; therefore, we will table this item until we have received a concrete proposal.
- Appointment of “Conversation Partners” to attend a retreat and enter into discussions about whether and with whom we form a 6-2-6-1 partnership. Cn. Melinda has received a \$650 grant from NEPA Synod to have a one-day retreat for twin tier congregations. The purpose of the grant is to introduce the concept of 6-2-6-1 and to gauge interest in exploring moving forward with this partnership. Invited churches could include Redeemer, St. John's, Trinity LC and Christ Church Towanda, Presbyterian Church in Wysox, UCC Church near Wyalusing, St. Paul's Owego and the two congregations Pastor Scott used to pastor. The tentative date for this retreat is Saturday, May 2. Cn. Melinda would like one Vestry member and one non-Vestry member to participate in the retreat and continue to be in conversation with the group if we choose to

move forward. Margaret Cole agrees to be our Vestry member to participate and a decision will be made for a non-Vestry member.

New Business:

- VBS planning in progress with Pastor Sharon Knoell (Valley United Presbyterian Church) and Paula Kraus (Sayre Christian Church) for an intergenerational program presented by our 4 churches. One program found is entitled “Another Way” and it is available free of charge – costs would involve decorations, snacks, and supplemental materials. VBS will be hosted by Valley Presbyterian this year. Vestry in agreement that only one Vacation Bible School will be held.
- Audit – Members of Trinity Lutheran Church are proposing that their Council audit SJLC and SJLC’s Council audit Trinity. It could be that SJLC will turn down this offer. If that is the case, would we propose back to Trinity that we provide an audit team for them and they provide an audit team for us? By consensus, Vestry agrees.
- Parlor Flooring – Would St. Mary’s Guild contribute half of the purchase and installation costs for this? Cn. Melinda will ask the leadership of St. Mary’s Guild. Diane noted that Vestry had previously budgeted the full amount for parlor flooring.

Senior Warden’s Report:

- Our ministry members are expanding. We have added four ushers - Greg Garrity, Don Stevens, Corey Williams, and Noah Williams. We have added four members to Altar Guild - Rosemary Firestine, Emily Garrity, Nancy Whitt, and Rachel Williams.
- Counters - four counting teams have been established. These include Rose Carpenter, Mary Rhodes, Nancy Whitt, Amy Murrelle, Nina Seebeck, Rosemary Firestine, Linda Murrelle, and Diane Siebecker. Margaret Cole will be the alternate. Bruce will be providing training for all members.
- Our lawn mowing teams are all set.
- The Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was well attended.
- Our Youth Group joined with the youth from St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Owego for a get-together.

Junior Warden/Building & Grounds Chair Report:

- The LED light conversion is complete. As reported last month there were a few fixtures in the undercroft that could not be converted due to the way they were manufactured. Mountain Lake developed a method to convert these fixtures into LED saving us the expense of replacing the fixtures. We have also converted all of the incandescent lights in the atrium to LED bulbs. This conversion was done in house.
- Mountain Lake has conducted a safety survey of all the electrical boxes in the building and found that we have three issues with our breaker boxes. None of the issues are an immediate problem and will be addressed in the very near future. Additionally, Mountain Lake has found that the dimmer switch for the main lighting in the church is an issue. The switch which requires a transformer to

operate is suspect. The transformer type that we require has not been manufactured for over thirty years. Mountain Lake is looking for a suitable replacement.

- We have agreed to have Rob Hartman re-finish two sets of doors in our building. The first set of doors will be the entrance doors on the main aisle of the church. These doors will be removed and the work will take place in Rob's shop. *A suitable enclosure will be put in place and the tower door will be open as a second means of egress during services.* The second set of doors are the exterior doors to the atrium. These doors will be finished in place. We are scheduled to have this project start the second week of May.
- The exit sign for the Parking Lot will be repaired when the weather permits.
- One of the bumpers in the Parking Lot needs two nails replaced. Plan to do repair in house.
- Undercroft work is pending. The ceiling is coming down.
- Could the lights in the Parking Lot be adjusted to reflect Daylight Saving Time? Jeff will ask Mountain Lake.

Rector's Report:

- An overnight retreat is being planned for the Altar Guild. This will be held at the Brookland Retreat Center on May 8-9 (Friday into Saturday). The venue can sleep 10 and probably accommodate 30 daytime participants. The Brookland Retreat Center is located about an hour and a half west of here in Ulysses, PA (Potter County). The theme of the retreat is "Living into our Baptismal Promises". Cn. Melinda has a retreat leader lined up for Saturday, May 9th. There is a charge to cover the retreat center and food. Guests bring all their own food and prepare it themselves.
- In early February, the Youth and Sunday School had a very successful "Souper Bowl" with soup and sandwiches.
- Our youth are attending Family Fun Night at SJLC.
- No requests for the Discretionary Fund in February.
- The Rummage Sale March 6-7 was successful netting a \$1,400 profit. Additionally, some blankets, socks, underwear, and tee shirts were donated to My Brother's Keeper. They were most appreciative. Walkers and medical equipment were donated to Ukranium Relief.
- Cn. Melinda suggested that St. Mary's Guild evaluate why we have had rummage sales and whether we are meeting the goals of the rummage sales. If lack of volunteers is the issue, we can always ask for help from our partner congregation.
- Our annual Parish Park Fair will be held June 13, 2026.
- Tribute Quartet concert is Friday, April 17, 2026. Valley United Presbyterian Church is cosponsoring this concert. Linda Murrelle has volunteered to be in charge of advertising. Advertising to include radio, newspapers (Morning Times, Daily Review), local churches, posters, and social media. There may be a cost for some of the advertising.

In the very near future:

- We're at the mid-point in Lent

- We may have as many as 4 children to baptize at the Easter Vigil. Cn. Melinda hopes to meet with them and their families on March 22 to make sure they are prepared for this sacrament.
- Holy Week is coming! Our schedule will be similar to years' past. This year we host Good Friday (Maundy Thursday at SJLC with a focus on "foot washing"). The Vigil will remain at Redeemer this year as we have baptisms scheduled.

Adjourn with saying of The Lord's Prayer -

Motion to adjourn made by Margaret, seconded by Jeff. Motion carries 7:51 PM

Our next meeting is Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Siebecker
Clerk of Vestry