

Vestry Covenant

St. Francis Episcopal Church, San Jose

As the vestry of St. Francis Episcopal Church, we understand our work as a ministry, not merely as a corporate governance. We are called to serve as spiritual leaders of this congregation, exercising our responsibilities in a way that reflects the love, wisdom, and mercy of Christ.

Our Call and Identity

- We affirm that vestry service is a ministry rooted in prayer, worship, and discernment, not only in administration and budgets.
- We understand ourselves as partners with the rector, staff, and people of St. Francis in seeking and supporting God's mission in this place.
- We recognize that our decisions shape the spiritual, relational, and financial health of the parish, and we will treat this trust with care and humility.

Our Spiritual Commitments

- We commit to grounding our work in regular prayer, scripture, and worship, both personally and together.
- We will seek to listen for the Holy Spirit and to one another with discerning hearts, especially in times of disagreement or uncertainty.
- We will strive to lead this congregation "in spirit and in truth," keeping our focus on the Gospel and the mission of the Church rather than on our own preferences.

Our Practices as a Body

- We will approach vestry meetings as occasions of shared ministry: beginning and ending in prayer, and conducting our business in a spirit of mutual respect and hope.
- We will speak honestly, listen carefully, and disagree charitably, avoiding gossip, triangulation, and personal attacks.
- We will maintain appropriate confidentiality, trusting one another and honoring the dignity of every person we discuss or serve.
- We will support the decisions of the vestry once made, and communicate them to the congregation with clarity and goodwill.

Our Stewardship

- We accept responsibility for the faithful stewardship of the parish's resources—spiritual, human, physical, and financial—not just for “balancing the budget.”
- We will seek to align our priorities and decisions with the stated mission, values, and vision of St. Francis.
- We will encourage the congregation by our example in generosity, participation, and Christian practice.

Our Support for One Another

- We will pray regularly for one another, for our rector and staff, and for the people of St. Francis.
- We will attend to the spiritual and emotional well-being of this vestry, asking for help when we are stretched or discouraged.
- We will welcome the ministry of the Vestry Chaplain in helping us stay rooted in prayer and discernment.