

Iona-Hope Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 29, 2025, 2:30 p.m.

Attending: The Rev. Jenny Scott-Jones, Rector

Vestry: Paula Paquette, Senior Warden
Alison Kinch, Junior Warden (Zoom)
Marcia Leidig
Deb Prather
John Hufnagel
Rob Ricca (Zoom)
Steve Walsh (Excused)
Susan Crawford (Zoom)

Treasurer: Joe Mulino (Zoom)

Assistant to the Treasurer: Thom Price (Excused)

Thrift Shop: Eileen Carrara

Administrator: Marnie Ike (Zoom)

Media Director: Margaret Carr

Chaplain: Marilyn Moore (Zoom)

Clerk: Teresa Hufnagel

Opening Concerns/Prayer

Marilyn asked the vestry prior to the meeting to remember a time in each person's past when they didn't have enough or felt like they didn't have enough. Several vestry members provided examples. In each case, God provided enough to make it through the difficult time.

Marilyn then provided an opening prayer.

Thank you to Mother Jenny for one year of service to Iona-Hope!

Mother Jenny received a signed card, a Starbucks card and a cake for all to share.

Approval of previous minutes June 24, 2025

Deb made a motion to approve, John seconded. All in favor.

Thrift Store Update: Eileen Carrara

Eileen discussed a letter from one of the TS Grant Recipients – Hearts and Homes for Veterans. This organization purchased 27 new mattresses at a total cost of \$5,030.00. The grant from TS of \$5,000.00 essentially completely covered this cost.

Finance: Joe Mulino

Joe prepared a projection of cash flow for the remainder of 2025. The projection was updated on July 31st to negative \$117,673.00 for all of 2025. This includes the anonymous gift of 50K received in the first half of the year.

Audit Committee

Audit completed; waiting on report. Susan Bailey led audit with assistance from Marnie and Joe.

Procedures are being updated as part of audit to include second person – procedures had included second person, but that was changed during Covid.

Mold

Capital Environmental Assets took water, air, surfaces samples from modular buildings and Sanctuary. Awaiting report. Wall of modular buildings near front door has standing water within it. Discovered that when canopy was repaired after Hurricane Ian, water-proof screws were not used and water has been seeping into the modular buildings since March 2023. Discussed visible mold at various locations in modular buildings. Drainage in back of buildings may not be sufficient. Mother Jenny asked what the life expectancy of a modular building should be. Prior to the current mold issue, it was thought to be 5-8 additional years. Since the meeting on July 29th, it has been stated that when modular buildings were installed 25 years ago, they were not new.

Junior Warden

AC people coming tomorrow. Obviously, very busy with mold situation.

Senior Warden

Presented a new brochure and flyer. Sent to Bishop. The why statement developed in vestry retreat was added.

Discussed upcoming stewardship drive in November. Training session in August.

Paula provided reasons for hope – new people are coming to the services. “Greet people! Interact!” “With hope and joy and optimism, we will see the fruits of our labor.”

Rector

Discussed new counting procedures from audit. We should have them soon for review and approval. Make sure you are not alone when money is counted.

Discussed Congregational Covenant.

Discussed meeting with Diocesan mentor – topics include where Iona-Hope will be in 5-10 years.

Diocesan Convention is October 10th and 11th. All vestry members are welcome to attend on Friday Oct. 10th. Voting will occur Saturday.

Discussed vestry vacancy as Neil stepped down. Group seemed to be in favor of a replacement now as opposed to waiting for January voting at Church Meeting. Recommendations for replacement to Mother Jenny by the end of the week.

Mother Jenny’s remaining vacation schedule for weekends is Sept. 6-7, Nov. 8-9 and Dec. 27-28. Other dates were included in Mother Jenny’s report,

Discussed Luau but during August 5th meeting it was decided not to pursue at this time.

Decided to define calendar during August 5th meeting.

Decided not to have holiday craft fair in 2025.

Only 4 people attended first summer movie session. Movies discontinued after the second one due to poor attendance.

Discussed Welcome Back BBQ that Ingrams are hosting and covering costs. Hope to link to stewardship campaign.

Bingo

Mother Jenny stated that bingo in Sanctuary is acceptable.

Active Shooter Defense

Delayed discussion to a future vestry meeting.

Rector's Report July 2025

Updates:

Pastoral Offices:

This past month has been one filled with a reminder of the rich beauties of the pastoral office and the liturgies that come with it. Beyond the regular weekly communions this month has included: home communions, confessions/rite of reconciliation, last rites/prayers at the time of death, and funerals. While many of these are heavier emotional experiences, it's such an honor and privilege to journey with others through life and through these often challenging times. It's been a month of, "Yes! This is why I do this!" and has filled me with joy.

Coach:

I have had my first meeting with coach Rev. Timothy Hodapp. It was an exceptional meeting and I believe he will be of great support to me. The Bishop has offered to pay for half the costs. I am waiting to hear on the actual fees.

The two primarily objections of the sessions at this point are:

1. Find a healthy way forward with some of the personality conflicts and ongoing healing from past congregational pains.
2. Helping Iona-Hope vision and plan for the next 5-10 years. What is the Iona-Hope of tomorrow and how do we get there, realizing that it will likely take some serious out-of-the-box thinking. How do we help the parish embrace out-of-the-box ideas?

Lunch with Rabbi Luna:

I had lunch with Rabbi Luna to discuss the possibility of some shared outreach interfaith discussion groups. She is interested in further conversation.

For Consideration:

Congregational covenant:

Last month we discussed possibly reviewing and further implementing the "Congregational Covenant" sent to use (again) by Canon Norman. Once amended, if need be, I suggest this fall we spend time getting ministry leaders and small group leaders to commit to this and then have it spread from there as a means for encouragement and accountability. *Document attached.*

***Vestry Vacancy:**

I had lunch with Neil Tousley recently. After a pleasant conversation he informed me that he has decided to resign from vestry. He feels that he is not physically up for being involved the way vestry requires. He would still like to help out occasionally with different events/programs/projects and so please do not hesitate to ask for his help.

This leaves us with a vacant position. We could either: 1) Wait until January to fill at Annual Meeting, or 2) Ask and fill that position by vestry vote.

***Approval of New Counting Procedure:**

There is an updated Counting Procedure put in place. This is part of the audit so good to have done before the audit later this week. It reinstates some older practices that got put on hold during COVID and never restarted and adds in a few new ones.

The primary thing to know as vestry is that we are asking that whichever vestry member is making announcements for the service meet the MC at the credence table directly after the service once the candles are extinguished. Then the two take the collection to the safe together. Until money is counted they should never be in the hands of just one person. While I trust our MCs completely, this will protect them from any unnecessary accusations.

See attached document

Diocesan Dates to Consider:

Aug 23 - Stewardship Training Day (DaySpring, Parrish, FL)

Sept 13 - Race and Reconciliation Training Day (St Mary's, Bonita Springs)

Oct 10-11 - Convention (Charlotte Harbor Conference Center, Punta

Gorda) *This is open to all. Friday is primarily open sessions and workshops.*

Saturday is the business stuff. I think it would be great to get more Iona-Hope folks making the trip on Friday. Who's got a minivan?

Vacation Schedule:

Tentative schedule:

Sundays: Sept 6-7, Dec 28; *possibly a date in November but details are being worked out*

Weekdays: Oct 6-9, Nov 4-5, Nov 23-28; *will also likely plan some time later in August*

2026 - Jan 9-16th

Observation/concern:

Are we trying to do too much? I sense our energy levels are low and there are a small group of people doing a lot of things. Yet there are other things we talk about knowing we want or need to do but they just aren't getting done, likely because we're all stretched too thin. I've been wondering lately if we need to "prune back" a bit. Do we need to center our focus as we regain strength? Just a thought that has been running through my mind an awful lot lately.

VESTRY REPORTS JULY 2025

Rector's Report—Mother Jenny

Mother Jenny's Report to follow

Agenda to follow

A Note from your Chaplain—Marilyn Moore

Have you ever been in a situation where you were sure you wouldn't have enough, but then you found that you did? I experienced that after the breakup of a bad marriage where I got out with little to nothing. Somehow day-to-day God provided and I made it through the rough place. We'll spend a few minutes before the next meeting listening to each other's experiences. See you then.

Treasurer's Report—Joe Mulino

Recap of Financial Statements—June 2025—Respectfully submitted. Joe.

Discussion/Updates

- Review of Mid-Year Financial Statements.
- Discussion regarding the condition of the Modular Buildings

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
400300 Contributions-Pledged	\$ 40,818	\$ 12,103
400301 Contributions-Non Pledge	\$ 1,735	\$ 2,460
400500 Contributions-Plate	\$ 673	\$ 532
400700 Special Contributions	\$ 50	\$ 0
 Total Contributions Revenue-June	 \$ 43,276	 \$ 15,095
Total Other Revenue-June.	\$ 440	\$ 20,361
Total Pass thru Revenue-June .	\$ 836	\$ 418
Total Revenue- June.	\$ 44,553	\$ 35,875
Total Expenses-June.	\$ 39,645	\$ 50,970
Net Income/Loss-June.	\$ 4,908	\$ 15,095
 Year to Date Income	 \$ 333,195	 \$286,911
Year to Date Expenses	\$ 302,092	\$267,234
Year to Date Net Income/Loss	\$ 31,103	\$ 19,678
Year to Date Contributions-Pledged	\$ 186,287	\$190,168
Year to Date Contributions- Non-Pledged	\$ 21,676	\$ 59,969
Year to Date Contributions- Plate	\$ 5,198	\$ 5,821
Year to Date Special Contributions	\$ 53,673	\$ 1,215
 Year to Date Total Contributions	 \$ 266,834	 \$257,173

Recap of Financial Statement June 2025—Thrift Store Account

<u>THRIFT STORE RECAP-June. 2025</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Revenue Income – June.	\$ 31,892	\$ 25,041
Interest Income-Money Mkt-June	\$ 439	\$ 0
Total Revenue-June.	\$ 32,332	\$ 25,041
Total Expenses – June.	\$ 32,274	\$ 42,126
Net Income/Lose-June.	\$ 58	\$ 17,085
Year to Date Income	\$ 257,660	\$234,550
Year to Date Interest Income	\$ 2,726	\$ 0
Total YTD Income	\$ 260,356	\$234,550
Year to Date Expenses	\$ 187,313	\$172,875
Year to Date Net Income/Loss	\$ 73,073	\$ 61,675

Thrift Store Report—Eileen Carrara

On July 17th we completed our outreach distribution for 2025.

We shipped twenty-two boxes of heavy winter clothing to St. Joseph's Indian School in Chamberlain, SD. The postage was \$1,868. Making our 2025 Outreach \$61,764., the highest amount in 21 years.

Our shoppers are reacting favorably to the charities we have supported this year and, as a result, are telling their friends to shop with us.

To date we have received heartfelt acknowledgements from six of the charities that received. I am including the letter and attachment in this report from Laces of Love because it put a huge smile on my face and I think it might do that for you, too.

Although July is a slow month of sales, this year we are a little ahead of 2024.

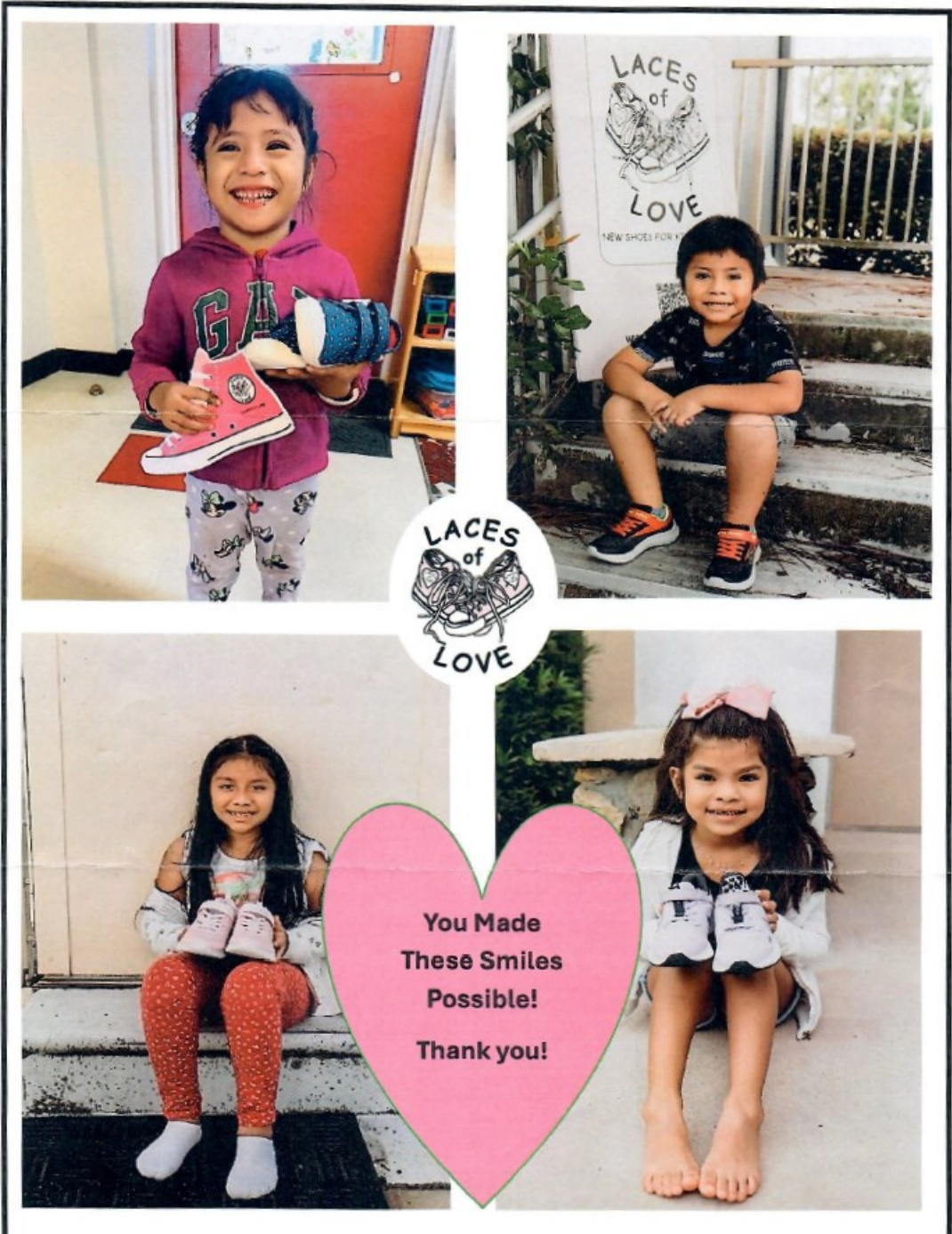
July 9, 2025

Dear Reverend Jenny Scott-Jones,

Thank you for the generous support and donation to Laces of Love. Your donation of \$5,000.00 on July 7, 2025 contributed to providing new shoes to low income and disadvantaged children primarily in Collier and Lee Counties, Florida.

From September 2005 to-date, over 300,000 children in need have received a new pair of shoes from Laces of Love. Because of your generosity, we will be able to continue to distribute shoes through school nurses, guidance counselors, school staff and human service organizations to children in need throughout our regional community.

By donating to Laces of Love you are helping to provide self-esteem and confidence to a child with a new pair of shoes. When a child receives a new pair of shoes, they feel confident and know someone cares about them. Thank you again.



Junior Warden Report — Alison Kinch

No report this month

RaiseRight Program — John Hufnagel

Bingo

- Obtained written confirmation from Lee County Zoning that churches do not need a license or permit in order to host bingo. Provided confirmation to diocesan lawyer who agreed with the conclusion and added that bingo needs to be held on Iona-Hope property.
- Ready to proceed but told by Paula to wait until results are back from mold testing in the Gathering Space. Planning to hold bingo second Saturday of each month at 6:30 pm in Gathering Space. If interest is shown, might add fourth Saturday of each month.

RaiseRight

- Began advertising to promote parishioners to buy gift cards for Iona-Hope office in order to help with budget deficit. Iona-Hope office purchases majority of its supplies from Amazon, Walmart and Office Depot and these companies are in RaiseRight program. Rev. Jenny stopped the advertisement for weekly email and bulletin and wants to re-evaluate program.
- Received request from parishioner for assistance with purchase of hotel gift cards for an upcoming trip. Stated she would like to use program but does not know how to purchase cards. Will provide assistance.
- Trying to determine if Iona-Hope received a check in early June for \$231.50 for April rebates. This should be credited to RaiseRight program.
\$295.91 earned from May rebates and successfully electronically deposited.

Direct Mail

Rev. Jenny wanted to review program. Decided on social media advertising instead of direct mail. Hufnagels were willing to pay for Facebook/Instagram advertising. Told not to proceed and that Rev. Jenny knew how to advertise on Facebook and would do so.

T-shirts

Rev. Jenny stated not to proceed and that Communications team would take care of this. Told not to step on toes.

Saint Andrew's Day

Spoke with Irish dance school and bagpiper. Need to finalize date.

Waiting on mold results in Gathering Space as to whether or not a dinner could be considered.

Summer Movies

Helping to schedule volunteers.

Interfaith Report—Margaret Carr

July Interfaith Update

Iona-Hope hosted the Monthly Interfaith Meeting this past Thursday July 17th in the Sanctuary. We had twenty-one attending in person and four on Zoom. We led off discussing our plan moving forward as a group.

It was suggested by **Bill Zeeb of Cypress Lake UMC** that we utilize suggestions from Scriptural Reasoning (<http://www.scripturalreasoning.org/>). This is a tool for interfaith dialogue whereby people of different faiths come together to read and reflect on what their scriptures mean to them.

Unlike some forms of inter-faith engagement, it is not about seeking agreement but rather exploring the texts and their possible interpretations across faith boundaries and learning to 'disagree better'. The result is often a deeper understanding of others' and one's own scriptures, as well as the development of strong bonds across faith communities. SR is now practiced globally, including in places affected by religion related tensions and conflict.

We started discussing "Faith" as our first topic and shared personal reflections and stories on what faith meant to each of us personally.

Our next discussion will be about **Origin/Creation**; How did everything begin? Where did the universe come from? Where did humans come from? Was I created (versus evolved)? How did the world get to be like it is today (assuming it started with the big bang? Implied in these questions is do we believe in a creator/intelligent design or evolution or some combination of the two or something else?

**Our next meeting will be at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday August 14th at Temple Judea
14486 A&W Bulb Road Fort Myers.**



LIFE Update—Steve Walsh

Abbreviated Minutes from the June LIFE Board Meeting

Financial Update— Our income in May was \$2,690, and expenses were \$1,909, leaving a surplus of income over expenses of \$781. For the year through May, our income totaled \$16,198, with expenses of \$9,463, resulting in a surplus of \$ 6,735.

— Our cash on hand at the end of May was \$39,515, which includes \$825 in our checking account at Busey Bank and \$38,890 at First Horizon.

— Past due payroll taxes have been paid. The payroll returns have all been processed. There are a few minor corrections regarding the correct quarters for a few of our deposits. The IRS currently states that LIFE owes them approximately \$34,500 in unpaid penalties and interest.

— Our IRS Taxpayer Advocate has left her position. John tried calling four times yesterday to see if a new advocate had been assigned. (Three times, he was hung up on. One time he waited for a long time and hung up.)

Website Update: Patricia Zimmerman reported that she has located the necessary information, namely the name and passcode, to keep our website live — lifejustice.org.

Housing Report: The Housing Committee will continue to monitor the actions of the advisory committee and hopes that it will recommend improvements in the use of the AHTF at a future meeting.

CONGREGATIONAL COVENANT: RULES FOR RESPECT

The habits of holiness put forth here provide a wonderful way to live out our lives in mutual ministry.

In our baptismal covenant, we are called to “respect the dignity of every human being.” Here are some simple Rules for Respect for community interactions. I invite you to hold yourself and one another accountable to these rules as we share our lives together.

If you have a problem with me, come to me, privately.

If I have a problem with you, I will come to you, privately.

If someone has a problem with me and comes to you, send them to me. I’ll do the same for you.

If someone consistently will not come to me, say, “Let’s go to him/her together. I am sure he/she will see us about this.” I will do the same for you.

Be careful how you interpret me—I’d rather do that. On matters that are unclear, do not feel pressured to interpret my feelings or thoughts. It is easy to misinterpret intentions. Assume the best of me and ask if you have questions about my intentions.

I will be careful how I interpret you. I will assume the best of you and ask if I have questions about your intentions.

If it’s confidential, don’t tell. If you or anyone comes to me in confidence, I won’t tell unless (a) the person is going to harm himself/herself, (b) the person is going to physically harm someone else, (c) a child or senior has been physically or sexually abused. I expect the same from you.

I do not read unsigned letters or notes.

I will not introduce anonymous comments into meetings (*“Someone in the parish told me”, “I have heard from a couple of people”* etc). If there is an issue to bring to the group, name the source— that provides credibility and the opportunity for the source to be engaged with by the leadership in a healthy manner.

I do not manipulate; I will not be manipulated; do not let others manipulate you. Do not let others manipulate me through you.

I will not preach “at you.” I will leave conviction to the Holy Spirit .

When in doubt, just say it. The only bad questions are those that don’t get asked. Our relationships with one another, at the end of the day, are the most important things, so if you have a concern, pray, and then, if led, speak up. If I can answer it without misrepresenting something, someone, or breaking a confidence, I will.

Pray for one another. That’s not just a throwaway line. Lifting one another to God in prayer is how we learn, slowly and sometimes painfully, but ultimately joyfully, to see each other with God’s eyes, hear each other with God’s ears and love each other with God’s heart. Pray for each other, for our leadership team, and for our wider community.

Step by Step Procedure – All Services

- 1) *When donations are received at the credence table two people must walk the money to the safe. This can be a vestry member or any two people serving on the altar at that time.*
- 2) *When donations are picked up from the safe, both counters must be present in walking the donations from the safe to the finance room where the donations are counted.*
- 3) *Two people must be present when the cash is counted.*
- 4) *Checks, any envelopes or notes included with the donations must be copied and then scanned to Marnie. Original deposit sheets will go in the finance office to file. If there is cash in an envelope, please write the amount and name on the envelope before scanning if it isn't already on there.*
- 5) *Once deposit is fully counted and scanned, only one person is needed to return the donation to the safe.*

Each deposit will be broken up into 3 separate deposits. Please try to keep the checks in the same order as they were copied. If a mistake is made, it will be easier to backtrack this way.

Anything for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund do not include in these deposits. All Pastors Disc. Donations go into Deposit #5

OPEN PLATE and ENVELOPES CASH AND CHECKS (Deposit 1 & 2)

Collect and arrange by denominations, all the PLATE OFFERING (loose cash) and record it on the top half of Sunday Tally Sheet (Deposit 1). Record the check and cash total on the Deposit Recap Sheet. Record the totals on the Deposit Recap Sheet. Attach checks and cash to the deposit ticket and put all supported documentation in envelope # 1. Keep this deposit separate from others.

Make copies of all envelope checks. Open each envelope and write the envelope number on the memo line of the check. Make sure the 'amount' and the word 'cash' is written clearly on the cash envelopes along with their name and amount. Separate the

cash envelopes from the check envelopes. When all the church envelopes are opened arrange the ENVELOPE CASH by denomination and record total on the Deposit Recap Sheet Create deposit ticket for the total amount of envelope checks and cash only. Attach checks and cash to the deposit ticket and put all supported documentation in envelope # 2. Keep this deposit separate from others.

DESIGNATED CASH AND CHECKS (Deposit 3)

Record and total any designated check amounts on the Deposit Recap sheet - Animal Ministry, Building, Flower, Chair Fund etc. etc. on their labeled line, if no category exists use Other. Make copies of all special designated checks by category. These designated checks will be recorded on Deposit 3. Attach checks and cash to the deposit ticket and put all supported documentation in envelope # 3. Keep this deposit separate from others.

MISC. CHECKS AND CASH (Deposit 4)

Record and total any miscellaneous check amounts on the Deposit Recap sheet Broadway Palm, coffee hour, and special events etc. etc. on their labeled line, if no category exists use Other. Make copies of all special miscellaneous checks by category. These miscellaneous checks will be recorded on Deposit 4. Attach checks and cash to the deposit ticket and put all supported documentation in envelope # 4. Keep this deposit separate from others.

PASTORS DISCRETIONARY CASH AND CHECKS (Deposit 5)

Record and total any Discretionary check amounts on the Deposit Recap sheet . Make copies of all checks. These checks will be recorded on Deposit 5. Attach checks and cash to the deposit ticket and put all supported documentation in envelope # 5. Keep this deposit separate from others.

All deposits get put in the usual bags and put in the safe. (One bag per deposit)

updated by MI 07-13-2025