

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Minutes of Vestry Meeting, As Approved
Wednesday, August 18, 2021

Officers Present: Geoffrey Hoare (Rector), Ken Patterson (Senior Warden), Trevor (Ted) Swett (Junior Warden), Hollis McLoughlin (Treasurer) and Carol A. Aschenbrener (Secretary).

Members Present: Carol A. Aschenbrener, Rachel Colson, Matt Cunningham, Stephanie Curcuru, Lisa Garnett, Megan King, Suzy Mink, Josepha Musabyemariya Nelson, Karina Rodriguez, Dudley Winthrop.

Youth Representatives Present: Hana Keenan and Annie McLean.

Absent: Vestry Members Paul Brewster and Susan Morris.

Diocesan Delegates: Candice Brown

Staff Members Present: Emily Griffin, Yoimel González Hernández, and Jim Quigley (Associate Rectors), Doug Dykstra (Director of Finance).

Others: Robin Rudd (WSA)

Call to Order: Rector Geoffrey Hoare called the meeting to order via Zoom conference call at 6:34 PM and led the vestry in prayer.

Opening Meditation: Vestry member Dudley Winthrop shared a reflection that included memories about his father, family times on the island in Maine, the difficulties of forming community and the rewards of doing work that is challenging rather than easy. He referred to a favorite quote from essayist and novelist E.B. White about finding balance: “If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.” He related this challenge to St. Alban’s, expressing pride in where the congregation has come since he joined in 2014 and noting the need to balance varying viewpoints as we face the challenges of forming community. He stressed the importance of outreach and the need to bring more people into the church who will be team players to “do the most important thing.” He ended with a lovely quotation from White’s Charlotte’s Web: “‘You have been my friend,’ replied Charlotte. ‘That in itself is a tremendous thing...after all, what’s a life anyway? We’re born, we live a little while, we die...By helping you, perhaps I was trying to lift up my life a trifle. Heaven knows anyone’s life can stand a little of that.’”

Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting: Upon motion seconded, the Vestry unanimously approved the minutes of its regularly scheduled meeting held on June 16, 2021

[Vestry Action 2021.9-1]

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Hollis McLoughlin stressed some key items from Finance Director Doug Dykstra's detailed written report that was submitted in advance of the meeting. Pledge income was down in June and July, not inconsistent with usual summer fluctuations; cash position remains strong, with the added boost of donations from capital campaign; and the endowment is up 6% year-to-date. There are several issues that warrant close monitoring: the increase in expenses as re-opening continues; the rate of expense draw for capital projects against donations already made; and the state of the reserve fund, which is down to \$387,809 against a desired level of \$425,000.

Both he and Geoffrey emphasized that the 2022 annual campaign will be extremely important and encouraged vestry members to pledge even before the campaign is officially launched. While response to the 2021 annual campaign remained strong despite the pandemic, the number of pledging units dropped 9% and the total pledges 4%.

Geoffrey noted that Doug has been working to catch up on audit reports for previous years and these reports will be submitted to the vestry later this calendar year.

Upon motion seconded, the Treasurer's report was adopted.

[Vestry Action 2021.9-2]

Upon motion seconded, the vestry unanimously approved the following actions:

Motion: To ratify the Executive Committee's action of approving an additional \$6,306.60 from the reserve fund to cover the full cost of a contract to prepare the church for quality live streaming. This was necessary as it is the amount by which the contract led us to exceed the previously authorized \$50,000 COVID allocation within the reserve fund.

[Vestry Action 2021.9-3]

and **Motion: To approve a further expenditure from the reserve fund of \$10,700 for the purpose of preparing the library and Room 301 for hybrid meetings.** We anticipate this to be the last COVID-related expense. (A breakdown of these project costs was emailed to the vestry prior to this meeting.)

[Vestry Action 2021.9-4]

Report on Youth Ministries: Vestry member Matthew Cunningham provided a detailed written report and highlighted several issues. A new model is planned for Senior Youth (12th grade) that will involve them more in ministry and include a monthly reflection of their experience. A vestry member suggested pairing each senior with an adult engaged in ministry. Seven parishioners have committed to be youth leaders but it would be helpful to have a few more; interested parties should contact Yoimel. Meeting space will be a significant issue for the Fall as there is strong desire for in-person meetings, currently scheduled to begin September 12. The 2021 Pilgrimage has been cancelled due to COVID but planning has commenced for a trip in 2022.

Senior Warden's Report: Campaign co-chairs, senior warden Ken Patterson and vestry member Suzy Mink reported that, as of this date, the capital campaign has exceeded its goal with \$2,012,934 pledged to the capital campaign, with 57% of pledges already paid. These gifts came from 165 donor households and two bequests. As a priority of his final year as senior warden, Ken will be working on a lasting project for the church in memory of the late Ron Hicks. A memorial fund established to honor Ron will finance building of an adjustable height portable altar designed to serve both the Spanish language services and Children's Chapel. He also noted that creation of an online, password protected church directory will begin later this year, once a new Communications Director is onboard. The parish database has already been transferred to Realm software that will enable this project.

In his role as chair of the Governance Committee, Ken is currently reviewing possible changes in the St. Alban's bylaws that concern nominations and elections. After review by the Governance Committee and Executive Committee, any proposed changes will be brought before the vestry in time for consideration, with the stipulated advance notice, at the January 2022 Annual Meeting.

Junior Warden's Report: Junior Warden Ted Swett provided a detailed update on the various projects related to safe re-gathering in our buildings. He emphasized some of the interdependencies that influence the HVAC project: architectural drawings for system in Satterlee must be completed before equipment costs can be calculated and those costs are needed to finalize construction contract. This is a complex project and there have been a few unexpected complications. However, we are close to reaching closure on the construction contract. Once that is completed the Executive Committee will propose a budget for the package of capital projects and a construction timeline can be developed. Equipment for HVAC system in the church is expected to arrive in November, that for Satterlee 12-15 weeks after order entry. One significant issue to be resolved is agreement on what space can be used by contractors for staging; while Trenbath seems the preferred choice for contractors, this space will be needed for Fall programming. Please see Ted's written report for abundant additional detail on all projects.

Rector's Report: Rector Geoffrey Hoare noted that Fall planning continues and as close to a full program schedule as possible is anticipated. Clergy are preparing for hybrid programs but expect that most of our non-Sunday offerings will be online for another few months while we get some kind of handle on the Delta variant. Geoffrey reported that the first meeting to plan the 2022 annual appeal occurred today. This will be a critical campaign and he expressed his hope that the campaign could open with 100% pledging from the vestry.

Other Reports: There were a number of additional written reports, with highlights as follows.

Associate Rector Emily Griffin will be seeking volunteers to serve as nonvested "congregational lay readers" for the 9AM and 11:15 AM services as a means of increasing the diversity of the lay

reader corps. The vested “liturgical lay readers” will continue to serve at the altar as that is possible. Emily announced the composition of the Lay Support Team for seminarian Omar Rodriguez de la O. She expects to complete the search for a full-time Communications Manager by September 1.

Associate Rector Jim Quigley provided a thoughtful reflection on how COVID has altered the usual church rhythm over the past year, in ways challenging for both clergy and parishioners.

After closing prayers, the vestry went into executive session at 7:39 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol A. Aschenbrener, Secretary