

**St. Alban's Episcopal Church**  
**Minutes of Vestry Meeting, As Approved**  
**Wednesday, March 16, 2022**

**Officers Present:** Geoffrey Hoare (Rector), Trevor (Ted) Swett (Senior Warden), Stephanie Cucuru (Junior Warden), Hollis McLaughlin (Treasurer) and Carol A. Aschenbrener (Secretary).

**Members Present:** Michele Armitage, Carol A. Aschenbrener, Erin Bowers, Ted Cage, Rachel Colson, Matt Cunningham, Lisa Garnett, Brian Glosch, Tom Gustafson, Megan King, Suzy Mink, Karina Rodriguez.

**Youth Representatives:** Alex Mello

**Diocesan Delegate:** Candice Brown

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

**Others:** Robin Rudd (WSA), Tom Roth (Chancellor)

**Call to Order:** Rector Geoffrey Hoare called the meeting to order via Zoom conference call at 6:35 PM and led the vestry in prayer.

**Opening Meditation:** Vestry member Carol Aschenbrener shared an opening meditation on ways that words, particularly written words, have influenced her spiritual journey. Participation in Sacred Ground groups moved her to read works of more novelists, poets, theologians and religious leaders from Native American, African American and international backgrounds. The Four Vision Quests of Jesus by Steven Charleston explores the Native American perspective on vision quest as something available to and even encouraged for all, often at the point of life transition. In contrast to the European notion of a quest where a heroic individual puts himself in harm's way to retrieve a prize, the Native American intentionally puts himself or herself in grace's way in search of a point of intersection where they are likely to encounter God, seeking guidance for an important decision, reconciliation of relationships or blessings. Charleston is a citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, a retired Episcopal bishop, and the descendant of two Episcopal priests. Carol found his words relevant to the work of the vestry in calling the next rector, suggesting we ask ourselves how we might intentionally place ourselves in the way of grace as we search for vision, a new rector and blessings for St. Alban's.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting:** Upon motion seconded, the Vestry unanimously approved the minutes of its regularly scheduled meeting held on February 16, 2022.

**[Vestry Action 2022.3-1]**

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Hollis McLoughlin referred the vestry to Finance Director Doug Dykstra's summary, noting that we are on target in every respect for the first two months of 2022.

Hollis presented the 2022 budget as approved by the Finance Committee, a balanced budget of \$2 million. He drew the vestry's attention to some specific details with respect to both income and expenses: operating income includes \$170,000 in pledges from 2021 that were booked this year; adjustments were made in salary for both clergy and staff in accord with diocesan guidelines; outreach will be maintained at \$247,000, including our contribution to the diocese; health insurance and some other line items are increasing secondary to inflation. For the last several years, we have taken a 4% draw from the endowment; the budget proposes a one-time increase to 6% to cover expected increased operating costs related as we emerge from pandemic restrictions. He also noted that Diana Smith and Memorial Lecture restricted funds may also be used for parish events that promote fellowship.

Upon motion seconded, the Treasurer's Report and budget were adopted unanimously.

**[Vestry Action 2022.3-2]**

Hollis reported that St. Alban's received an unsolicited gift of \$75,000 from a person who "discovered" St. Alban's online during the pandemic and expressed gratitude for the recorded services. He offered a motion from the Budget and Finance Committee to allocate that gift to one-time needs (\$17,500 to the Sprinkler Assessment Project, \$30,000 to equipping lower Satterlee Hall, \$10,000 to Emily Griffin Sabbatical Fund, \$17,500 to potential personnel changes not including Rector Transition already in the budget.

Motion was unanimously approved.

**[Vestry Action 2022.3-3]**

**Sprinkler Assessment Project:** Senior Warden Ted Swett presented a motion from the Executive Committee as follows: 1. The Director of Operations is authorized and directed to enter into the proposed contract with WFT once the Executive Committee is satisfied with the written contract. 2. If, in view of delay WFT negotiates for a price adjustment, the Director of Operations is authorized to agree to a price of up to \$17,500. 3. The Director of Operations is also authorized to compensate Gary Baker at a reasonable hourly rate for his services in procuring the WFT contract. Ted noted that WFT specializes in fire safety and that its bid was superior in price to the second bid.

Motion was unanimously approved

**[Vestry Action 2022.3-4]**

**Discussion of Mask Mandates and Re-introduction of the Common Cup at Communion:** After a wide-ranging and lengthy discussion, the vestry arrived at consensus that it was appropriate to move to mask optional. The decision came with the understanding that it is not

possible to arrive at a risk-free decision; we may need to return to restrictions if there are additional COVID surges; and we should emphasize that individual decisions to remain masked should be respected. Reinstitution of the common cup is a liturgical decision made by clergy and will be implemented on Maundy Thursday, which all agreed was most appropriate.

**Rector's Report:** Rector Geoffrey Hoare referred the vestry to his written report. He noted that the report on the Episcopal Parish Network will be deferred until the April meeting when vestry member Matt Cunningham is able to attend.

**Senior Warden's Report:** Senior Warden Ted Swett reminded the vestry of their meeting with Canon Anne-Marie Jeffery via Zoom on March 23 to discuss preparation of the Parish Vitality Report. He noted that we will need to launch a crisp, efficient process soon after that meeting to gather and synthesize broad input from the parish. Ted suggested that everyone try to hold all Wednesday evenings open for the next few months for additional vestry meetings and sub-group work.

Following up on a topic he initiated at the February vestry meeting, Ted proposed that the vestry charter a task force composed of vestry members and other parishioners to develop a calendar of events that could help attract people back to church and revitalize the sense of community at St. Alban's. Vestry member Megan King will shepherd this initiative in her role as liaison for Parish Life and would appreciate having a co-chair.

**Junior Warden's Report:** Junior Warden Stephanie Cucuru submitted a detailed update on the various buildings and grounds issues. HVAC work in the church is complete and awaiting completion of centralized computer control. The Op Shop has agreed to postpone reopening until work and clean-up in Satterlee is completed. At present, it appears that we should be able to fully occupy Satterlee (all functions) by September. Work on security upgrades is delayed because of issues with mechanical parts.

**Other Reports:** There were several additional written reports, with highlights as follows.

Associate Rector Emily Griffin alerted the vestry that an event will be held between the services on May 1 as a send-off for seminarian Omar Rodriguez on his last day with us.

Associate Rector Jim Quigley expressed appreciation to the vestry for their support of staff, including the proposed increases in compensation. He pointed to the compelling conversation about face masks tonight as an indication of our welcoming spirit as a church.

After closing prayers, the vestry went into executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol A. Aschenbrener, Secretary