

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Minutes of Vestry Meeting, For Review
Wednesday, October 27, 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, Paul Brewster, Rachel Colson, Matt Cunningham, Stephanie Curcuru, Lisa Garnett, Megan King, Suzy Mink, Susan Morris, Josepha Musabyemariya Nelson, Karina Rodriguez, Dudley Winthrop. Youth Representative Hana Keenan.

Absent: Vestry Member Stephanie Curcuru and Youth Representative Annie McLean.

Staff Members Present: Emily Griffin, Yoimel González Hernández, and Jim Quigley (Associate Rectors), Doug Dykstra (Director of Finance), and Omar Rodriguez de la O (Seminararian).

Others Present: Robin Rudd (WSA) and Candice Brown.

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 Lisa Garnett offered a meditation on the process and approach by which we get from the Platonic ideal of a life well-lived that only our mind can hold to the actual physical form of a life well-lived. Lisa and her family enjoy watching *Ted Lasso* the sports comedy-drama in which a college football coach is hired to coach a soccer team in the English Premier League. Ted Lasso's character (played by Jason Sudeikis) was inspired by John Wooten, the former UCLA basketball coach. In his book *Wooten*, John Wooten writes that values should drive everything we do and be the underpinning of our vision; results are secondary and flow from the values and process you set up in your life. For her, she keeps coming back to a positive worldview, even in difficult times, with faith as an underpinning. That's why she enjoys Ted Lasso—because of the positive, active engaged worldview it conveys. Lisa closed with the poignant example of her beloved aunt who died recently. Her aunt's values (family, love) underpinned by faith, and her vision of how that should be expressed (a million small acts of love for those around her) got results—a satisfying, well-lived life.

Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting: Upon motion seconded, the Vestry unanimously approved the minutes of its regularly scheduled meeting held on September 21, 2021

[Vestry Action 2021.11-1]

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Hollis McLoughlin noted some key items from Finance Director Doug Dykstra's detailed written report that was submitted in advance of the meeting. Overall, we

are in good shape. Pledge income was weak in third quarter, but we still expect to meet our pledge receipt goal. Year-to-date income and expenses show a current operating deficit of \$38,000, which is fairly typical of this time of year. Several key items will soon be posted to income, including accumulated gifts from last year of \$70,000 and various designated funds totaling \$150,000.

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

[Vestry Action 2021.11-2]

The 2019 and 2020 audits are in progress with the help of outside auditor Karen Fleming (Hozik & Company, PLC).

The 2018 Audit Report was recently presented to the Finance Committee (Stephanie Curcuru, Lisa Garnett, Dudley Winthrop, as well as Bill Cline and Hollis McLoughlin) by outside auditor Karen Fleming. The 2018 Audit was clean, with no material weaknesses. It was reviewed thoroughly by the Finance Committee and approved. The report mentioned three suggestions, including to detail donor's wishes for how endowment funds are to be used and to spend designated funds before operating funds.

Suzy Mink offered to help provide model forms for documenting donors' wishes on how endowment funds are to be used and spent.

Upon motion seconded, the 2018 Audit Report was accepted.

[Vestry Action 2021.11-3]

Geoffrey asked Doug to convey to the Diocese the clean audit for 2018.

In its recent meeting, the Finance Committee discussed how the endowment is handled. Committee members will soon meet with a Vanguard representative for an update. In addition, the Committee discussed cash flow related to the capital project. The budget for the capital project is roughly \$2.4 million. To date, cash proceeds from the capital campaign are roughly \$1.1 million and the Vestry has authorized the use of up to \$300,000 from the endowment for the capital project. That leaves a roughly \$1 million differential on a cash flow basis. The Finance Committee is beginning to consider how we want to cover the gap—a bridge loan, a loan against the endowment, or excess cash as vehicle.

In accordance with St. Alban's Bylaws, the need to tap the endowment was noticed to the parish. We received no positive or negative comments in response.

The Executive Committee offered a motion to allow us to withdraw up to \$300,000 from the endowment to put toward the cost of building improvements to air-handling systems, security upgrades and bringing the kitchen to code.

Motion from the Executive Committee was unanimously approved.

[Vestry Action 2021.11-4]

Report on Adult Formation: Vestry member Suzy Mink reported that adult formation is strong, even in the face of the pandemic. 30-40 parishioners participate in weekly offerings. Those offerings include the following: Wednesday morning Bible study, led by Jim; Education for Ministry (EfM), led by Rich Jenson and Margit Williams; Adult Enquirers, led by all clergy; Sacred Ground, led by Geoffrey and Carol Aschenbrener; two Way of Life groups, led by Laura Ingersoll and Jan Grogan; GIFT Young Adults, led by Geoffrey; and Men's Spirituality Group, which is a shared leadership process.

Suzy noted that Sacred Ground currently has 9 participants, which brings the total number of parishioners to 41.

Suzy, Jim, and Geoffrey shared that James Alison will likely be with us during March 2022. James Alison is a theological interpreter of the French cultural critic Rene Girard. St. Alban's is working with Christ Church, Charlotte and Christ Church, Cranbrook MI to bring him to the U.S. With the help of the Memorial Lecture Committee, he may do a lecture series (or retreat, perhaps) during March 25-27, 2022. Members of the Memorial Lecture Committee include the following: Laura Ingersoll, David Brown, and a third member to be named to replace Harry Lightsey (who moved to South Carolina).

Yoimel noted that some adult formation activities are offered for Spanish speaking members, including an Enquirer's Class for one person who was confirmed at the beginning of the year and Bible studies during specific liturgical seasons for the whole congregation in Spanish.

Report on Worship Groups: Vestry member Dudley Winthrop reported that worship ministries are thriving. In fact, many are now back to functioning much the way they were prior to the pandemic. In the detailed report submitted prior to the meeting, Dudley briefly summarized the following worship groups: Altar Guild, led by Michelle Bond; Flower Guild, led by Katie Wilson; Ushers, led by Marty Kerns, Hollis McLoughlin, and Ruth Cline; Lay Readers, led by Lisa Birchard; Acolytes, temporarily led by Stephanie Curcuru; Children's Chapel, the Spanish Language Service; and Vergers.

Candice Brown said she was moved by Dudley's acknowledgement of and appreciation for the tireless job Emily puts forth to make our worship ministries a success. Geoffrey noted that Emily will be taking a well-earned sabbatical in 2022. Geoffrey also thanked all the volunteers who make worship happen since worship is what we do, even if it's the only thing we do.

Report on the Annual Appeal: Vestry member Lisa Garnett provided relevant details in report. We are trying to reach 286 households to get to \$1.325 million (or about \$4600 per household). As of today, 46 pledges \$265,056 (increase of 4.9% over last year). She reminded Vestry members to pledge and encouraged Vestry members to submit short video clips to be used during the annual campaign. Lisa expressed thanks to Vestry members for their efforts to connect with fellow parishioners.

Report of the Nominating Committee: Vestry member Paul Brewster said the committee expects to present a full slate at November Vestry meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee include the following: Paul Brewster, Dudley Winthrop, Ken Patterson, Josepha Musabyemariya Nelson, Joe McLean, Laura Ingersoll, and Bob Witten.

Senior Warden's Report: Senior Warden provided an oral summary of the written report submitted before the meeting, which included an update on the Ron Hicks memorial altars, the state of directory, a thanks for the capital campaign, and a reminder to submit 2022 pledges.

Junior Warden's Report: Junior Warden Ted Swett reported a late-breaking development to his written report. Specifically, the kitchen range hood did not pass inspection; inspector says it leaks; contractor says we asked for fan, which is going to leak. The Project Manager will see to it that the matter is addressed and resolved.

Rector's Report: Rector Geoffrey Hoare provided a detailed written report of personnel matters, services and technology upgrades in advance of the meeting. Noted his joy at worshipping with Spanish speaking community for the first time since shutdown, as we continue to work on being one parish in two languages.

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

Music Director Matthew Steynor expressed appreciation to the Vestry for approving expenses to upgrade the organ and noted that the majority of the technology has now been installed, including the sequencer. Additionally, Matthew became a member of the Association of Anglican Musicians.

Associate Rector Yoimel González Hernández reported that about 11 youth attend classes on Sundays. During October and November, he plans to meet with parents to explore topics such as expectations during the pandemic recovery, needs, fundraising, and the senior class pilgrimage. Yoimel led a four-week Bible study on "Immigrants in the Bible" during Hispanic Heritage Month (9/15-10/15). He continues to lead the academic formation of three Latino postulants in his role as Dean of the Latino Deacon's School in the diocese.

Associate Rector Emily Griffin provided an update on the upcoming celebration of All Saints Day on November 7. On that day, Yoimel will lead a forum on the different ways countries in Latin America celebrate Day of the Dead, as well as the theology and symbolism that give context to honoring ancestors and the community of saints that surround us. After the 11:15am service, there will be an outdoor gathering in the Columbarium. Additionally, Emily noted that

the Spanish service will be livestreamed via Facebook on Sunday 10/31. Folks continue to work out kinks related to livestreaming the English service, but we still hope to go live mid-November.

Associate Rector Jim Quigley reported on initial discussions about whether and in what form to offer a Christmas community dinner. While it's a major St. Alban's tradition to offer food and community and fellowship, we're also in a vulnerable place with a high-risk population.

After closing prayers, the vestry went into executive session at 7:47 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Rachel Colson, Vestry Member