



## ST. ALBAN'S CHURCH

### **St. Alban's Vestry News May 20, 2020**

Virtual Vestry for May began with our monthly meditation offered by Paul Brewster who shared readings from the diary of Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), a British member of Parliament and Secretary of the British Admiralty, chronicling his experience during The Great Plague of London. Pepys observations were hauntingly similar to the collective angst of today, but hinted at cause for hope. Paul then asked Vestry members to share one positive element from their pandemic experience, and the discussion that ensued included observations such as: building of new relationships with folks in our neighborhood; more frequent and regular contact with family members; enjoying the quieter time of weekends no longer occupied with social events and multiple errands; appreciation of how the clergy and staff and volunteers have risen to the occasion with our wonderful and varied online worship services; and, pride in how the parish has been able to show generosity through significant donations to the Diocesan Relief Fund and WSA's contributions to various feeding ministries (the WSA contributions being bolstered by a recent donation of \$10,000). There were also expressions of great sadness experienced by recent losses of parishioners --including David Johnson, John MacNeil, and Barbara Yeomans—for whom we have not been able to grieve together as we would have traditionally.

As to the business of the evening, the Treasurer's report was a positive one especially considering current conditions, with above-average pledge income and online contributions. Expenses are in line with average ones for this time of year, with minor diminution associated with the building being closed. Based on current budget conditions, the Executive Committee chose to decline a loan from the COVID-19 Paycheck Protection Act for which we had applied in an abundance of caution. It was believed that there were organizations and businesses who needed this money more than we did. Despite our current positive balance sheet, Doug Dykstra reminded us that the summer months in "normal" times are generally leaner as far as pledge income. I would like to express the Vestry's appreciation to all our parishioners; it is obvious that there are many people who feel very connected to St. Alban's and want to support it in these challenging times. For those who are in a position to take advantage of this, remember that another aspect of the recent COVID-19 legislation is to remove limits on the deductibility of charitable contributions; that is, large charitable contributions are 100% deductible.

Because there are unique expenses associated with responding to the pandemic, the Vestry approved the creation of a COVID-19 Fund within the Reserve Fund, and initially allotted \$50,000 to it. This will allow for expenditures to occur without prior Vestry approval for ongoing needs like improving our online worship, and additional expenses that will come with gathering again in person such as cleaning and disinfecting, thermometers, masks, etc.

In Governance Committee business, the Vestry approved a resolution amending the professional prerequisites for eligibility to serve as parish Chancellor. That position's charter currently allows for the Chancellor to possess a bar membership in the bar of any state. Based on the church's location in the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia, the Governance Committee learned that the lack of membership in the DC bar may expose a Chancellor to allegations of the unauthorized practice of law. Thus, the Vestry approved a change that the Chancellor must have and maintain membership in the DC bar. I wish to thank Laura Ingersoll, the incumbent Chancellor, for alerting us to the necessity of making this change, particularly because it means that she must step down as her bar membership is in another state. I thank

her for her service in that position. We hope to submit for Vestry approval Laura's replacement at the June meeting.

Finally, the Vestry began discussions related to what our services and parish life may look like once we are able to gather in person again. The Executive Committee, on its own and in collaboration with and based on guidance from the Diocese, has been considering this issue for some time. The Rector has developed a thorough "think piece" that will provide fodder for a more thorough discussion at the June Vestry meeting.

Personally, I commend to all parishioners recent "This Week at St. Alban's" emails that describe the exciting plans for upcoming services for Pentecost, St. Alban's Day, etc. I particularly direct you to the opportunity to be a video participant in singing the Doxology on Pentecost. Please consult the TWASA email sent on Friday, May 15 at 1:00 PM for instructions from Matthew Steynor, and consider joining this virtual choir (even if you feel the need to just lip sync!).

May God continue to bless us all and keep us safe,

Ken Patterson  
Senior Warden