

**St. Alban's Episcopal Church**  
**Minutes of Vestry Meeting, As Approved**  
**Wednesday, June 17, 2020**

**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, Walker Carter, Leo Coco, Rachel Colson, Glenn Davis, Lisa Garnett, Megan King, Barbara Manard, Josepha Musabyemariya Nelson, Karina Rodriguez, Dudley Winthrop. **Youth representatives:** Ruthie Rhodes.

**Youth Representative not Present:** Annie MacLean.

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

**Others Present:** Robin Rudd (WSA ) and Heather Sondel (Diocesan Delegate).

**Call to Order:** The Rector called the meeting to order via Zoom conference call at approximately 6:30 PM and led the vestry in prayer.

**Opening Meditation:** Vestry member Walker Carter shared a thoughtful meditation about the importance of moral leadership by institutions during these challenging times of racial and economic injustice. He shared correspondence with an institution he attended that raised the challenge of balancing the assertion of moral leadership with avoidance of partisan politics. The letters exchanged remained respectful even though not in agreement about the need for action in the face of social injustice. His question, "At what point is restraint hurtful rather than helpful?" prompted a serious discussion of the role of the church to speak out against injustice and violence. The vestry agreed that this is a topic that deserves continued attention.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting:** Upon motion seconded, the Vestry approved the minutes of its regularly scheduled meeting held on May 20, 2020.

**[Vestry Action 2020.5-1]**

**Report of the Nominating Committee:** On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Vestry member Leo Coco moved that David Ridenour be appointed to the position of Chancellor, effective upon conclusion of any necessary formalities, to serve until the vestry takes up nominations for all officers in 2021. Upon motion seconded, the vestry unanimously approved the motion.

**[Vestry Action 2020.5-2]**

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Hollis McLoughlin reported that, with the recent market rebound, the St. Alban's endowment fund exceeded \$5 million, still below its position at the

beginning of 2020 but \$526,419 higher than its low point of the year on March 31<sup>st</sup>. The church remains in a strong position with respect to cash flow for operating expenses, although there has been a notable decrease in Pledge Income and Parish Support over the three weeks after Memorial Day. The Director of Finance, Finance Committee and Vestry Executive Committee will continue to closely monitor the total financial position of the church, including cash flow and transfers from the reserve fund. Hollis noted that we have met all social ministry and diocesan obligations to date. With closure of the Op Shop, however, international grants have not been made but will be considered soon. Hollis reminded the Vestry that we will need to think strategically about the substantial financial implications associated with re-opening the buildings and resuming in-person gatherings.

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

**[Vestry Action 2020.5-3]**

**Discussion: What are your hopes and wishes about re-gathering?**

In advance of the meeting, Geoffrey distributed "Expanding the Community of Jesus", a first draft document about Covid-19 response planning and requested that vestry members review the guidelines for DC Reopening stages, the Diocesan phases and the Diocesan Covenant for Regathering in Worship. Some views raised in the discussion included the following:

- We are engaged in a period of "radical waiting." How can we reconcile sensible caution for the public health with maintaining personal connection. Are there ways that people could gather in small, low risk groups outside until we can re-gather safely as one body inside?
- Geoffrey has begun to explore opportunities for outside worship on the grounds of the Cathedral.
- There was a general sense that we should wait to resume worship inside the church until all can regather as they wish.
- When we do re-gather, opportunities for worship are likely to remain hybrid for some period of time. For example, there might be live-streaming from in-person services. Live streaming now can be done from Nourse Hall as well as from the nave. Audiences for the recorded liturgies continues to grow. In May, the average number of YouTube 'views' (one or more people checking out the video) for English and Spanish language services combined was 350. Both clergy and vestry members reported comments from some parishioners that they feel more engaged and are getting to know more people through online liturgies and Zoom sessions.
- People have expressed a sense of loss of the church community. This is particularly true for some in the Spanish-speaking community who see church as the "family" they have while separated from relatives in other countries.

**Rector's Report:** In addition to the items in his June 10 letter to the parish, Rector Geoffrey Hoare noted that clergy have been exploring how best to respond to the societal unrest in the wake of recent killing of George Floyd and other incidents that have raised awareness of the ongoing violence against Black people. They are considering two proposals, both with the goal of learning anew how to listen deeply and without judging to the stories of those whose experiences differ from our own. Geoffrey expressed appreciation for the "tremendous amount

of work” that Matthew Steynor and Deborah Potter have contributed to the online worship services.

**Senior Warden’s Report:** Senior Warden Ken Patterson will chair a task force to focus on the multiple components of re-opening, including worship, technology and communication, facilities, music and financial implications of modifications needed to comply with public health recommendations until a vaccine is widely available. Several members of the vestry volunteered to participate and he will reach out to others in the congregation. He expects to have the task force populated by the July Vestry meeting.

**Junior Warden’s Report:** Junior Warden Ted Swett updated the vestry on the status of previously approved projects on buildings and grounds. Progress continues despite some interruptions in schedule related to COVID-19.

**Other Reports:** A number of other reports were received by the vestry. Highlights from those reports include the following:

- Associate Rector Yoimel González Hernández engaged 13 youth in the June 14 Youth Sunday service. Rite 13 and J2A youth wrote the Prayers of the People and 4 of the 12<sup>th</sup> graders shared the sermon. Their contributions were well received and gave parishioners some sense of the spiritual concerns of these young people. The Youth Bible Study on the Book of Revelation will launch in July. Yoimel has also shared some resources on racial healing with youth and their parents.
- Associate Rector Jim Quigley reported that GIFT group met with clergy to discuss possible topics for Zoom meetings over the summer. After three well-populated Bible studies to end the program year, the Wednesday Morning Bible study will meet monthly in June, July and August. Jim will oversee a pilot of conversation groups on racism, using the film-based dialog curriculum “Sacred Ground” offered by the Episcopal Church. If that proves helpful, the curriculum could be offered to others in the fall. The Diocesan Commission on Ministry on which he serves approved 8 candidates (4 for the priesthood and 4 for the Diaconate) for ordination to be presented to the Standing Committee for final interviews. He commented that a recent diocesan webinar focused on three objectives that church could benefit from at this, or any, time: Connecting (by narrowing focus and sharing personal stories), Engaging (through simplification, forgoing our church “jargon”), and Sharing (by pivoting outward and utilizing social media platforms for communication).
- Director of Music Matthew Steynor has collaborated with Emily and Yoimel to plan the Spanish music for an entire year. They have established a database of about 100 liturgically suitable songs designed for congregational singing that we are permitted to reproduce under the church’s license and they intend to keep adding to this repertoire. He commended Deborah Potter for producing the two virtual choir videos for the Pentecost service. During the summer, choir members, mainly staff singers, will do solos for worship services.

After closing prayers, the vestry went into executive session at 8:13 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Aschenbrener  
Secretary