

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Minutes of Vestry Meeting, Approved
Wednesday, December 16, 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:** Annie McLean, Ruthie Rhodes.

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

Others Present: Robin Rudd (WSA).

Call to Order: Rector Geoffrey Hoare called the meeting to order via Zoom conference call at approximately 6:33 PM and led the vestry in prayer.

Opening Meditation: Vestry member Dudley Winthrop focused on the many opportunities for reflection during this season of Advent and Christmas. In a typical year, the press of holiday preparations and activities sometimes interferes with taking time to feel joyous. This year, the feeling of sadness that is often part of this season was accentuated by pandemic-related losses: missing the smiles that are hidden by masks, not being able to gather for worship, to enjoy community, or to grieve the departed. Dudley characterized this season as a light-in-the-dark time, a period of expectant waiting in which a candle in the dimness, casts light both back and forward in to the future. He encouraged a rekindled effort to find the light that leads us and look toward the reappearance of smiles and celebrations.

Update on Sacred Ground Curriculum: Associate Rector Jim Quigley and vestry member Carol Aschenbrener shared their experience in the St. Alban's pilot group using the anti-racism Sacred Ground curriculum developed by the Episcopal Church. This curriculum is linked to the mission of the Episcopal Church to become Beloved Community and, to date, there have been over 1000 Sacred Ground groups nationally. The film- and reading-based series of 10 sessions is designed to help white people talk with other white people about the impact of white privilege in our society and the aspects of our culture that contribute to persistent injustice for people of color in the United States. The mantra of the program is Listen, Learn, Act, in contrast to rushing to fix or solve issues as many of us are prone to do. The content explores the intersection of European-American histories with those of Indigenous, Black, Latino and Asian/Pacific American histories. The nine members of the pilot group found the experience very helpful in deepening their own awareness of white privilege, structural racism and what it takes to be an anti-racist ally. Additional Sacred Ground groups will be offered early in 2021. Geoffrey and

Jim noted that clergy are exploring what role this curriculum might play in the path to discipleship developing at St. Alban's and how it might contribute to our becoming one parish in two languages.

Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting: Upon motion seconded, the Vestry approved the minutes of its regularly scheduled meeting held on November 18, 2020.

[Vestry Action 2020.11-1]

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Hollis McLoughlin reported that operating expenses remain 8% below budget. If there is a surge in contributions in December, as is usually the case, we could end the year on or close to budget. However, pledge income was 82% of the 2020 budget at the end of November and \$245,152 would need to be posted by year end in order to achieve the amount of pledge income budgeted. Financial liquidity continues to be steady, as does the church's reserve fund. Despite earlier gyrations of the stock market, the church's endowment is at an all-time high. Hollis encouraged vestry members to read the report that Finance Director Doug Dykstra circulated several days earlier for detailed information.

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

[Vestry Action 2020.11-2]

Hollis noted that the church's operating budget for FY 2021 will not be approved by the Vestry before the new fiscal year begins on January 1. In accordance with past practice, the Finance Committee recommends that the Vestry approve the customary continuing annual spending resolution to authorize that spending levels previously authorized for fiscal year 2020's operations be extended into fiscal year 2021 until such time as the Vestry approves an operating budget for fiscal year 2021.

Upon motion seconded, the continuing resolution was approved unanimously. It will take effect on January 1, 2021 and will automatically expire upon the vestry's completion and approval of an operating budget in 2021.

[Vestry Action 2020.11-3]

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Hollis recommended approval of clergy housing allowances for 2021, noting that all were allocations not cash benefits: Geoffrey Hoare, \$92,000; James Quigley, \$30,000; Emily Griffin, \$30,000; and Yoimel González Hernández, \$30,000.

Upon motion seconded, the vestry unanimously approved the specified clergy housing allowances.

[Vestry Action 2020.11-4]

Report on the Annual Appeal: Vestry member Rachel Colson reported that 199 households had pledged as of this date, with an average increase of 5.8% pledges. Of the households who pledged in 2020, 91 have not yet made a pledge for 2021, 40% have increased their pledge, 40% have maintained the 2020 level and 13% have decreased their pledges. Overall, however, the campaign continues to lag the 2020 campaign by 30 pledges and \$85,436.

Report from the Governance Committee: In his role as chair of that committee, Senior Warden Ken Patterson presented a resolution to reconcile David Ridenour's pro bono service as St. Alban's Chancellor with the requirements of his law firm (DLA Piper LLP) for any pro bono work performed by one of their attorneys. The resolution establishing the role of Chancellor was created on April 10, 2019 [Vestry Action 2019.4-6] and included a limitation ensuring that the parish would seek and engage outside counsel in any matter presenting a need for formal legal advice or substantial representation. When Mr. Ridenour was appointed as Chancellor on June 17, 2020 [Vestry Action 2020.5-2], DLA Piper required, as a condition of his acceptance, that St. Alban's engage him, through Piper, as outside counsel *pro bono publico* under a formal engagement letter dated July 14, 2020. Thus, he has acted from the outset in the dual capacity as St. Alban's Chancellor and outside legal counsel.

Upon motion seconded, the vestry unanimously approved the resolution from the Governance Committee that "notwithstanding Vestry Action No. 2019.4-6, the limiting language quoted in the first paragraph of this Resolution with respect to the Chancellor's role shall not apply to David Ridenour's Chancellorship so long as the attorney-client relationship between St. Alban's on the one hand and Mr. Ridenour and Piper on the other hand remains in existence. This resolution be retroactive to June 17, 2020."

[Vestry Action 2020.11-5]

Rector's Report: Rector Geoffrey Hoare summarized recent conversations of the Executive Committee about the need for a limited capital campaign focused on the limited purpose of capital improvements essential for regathering safely in our buildings at St. Alban's. He noted that public health and safety improvements will be needed even after a vaccination program is in place and some changes are needed to comply with city codes. The current HVAC is a patchwork affair that needs complete overhaul to meet requirements for airflow and air exchanges. The vestry had extended discussion of these needs and potential options for financing them at their November 2020 meeting. On behalf of the Executive Committee, Geoffrey presented a motion: "To approve in principle a capital campaign for the limited purpose of regathering safely in our buildings, including a complete overhaul of our air handling and HVAC systems, security for Satterlee Hall, contactless restrooms and bringing the kitchen range hood to code."

The vestry unanimously approved this motion.

[Vestry Action 2020.11-6]

Several parishioners have made substantial advance gifts for this purpose but there is no mechanism in place for disbursing funds. An acceptable bid for the kitchen range hood has been received and was previously discussed with the vestry; this bid is time sensitive. Geoffrey

presented a motion from the Executive Committee: “To approve using early gifts for these purposes in order to replace the kitchen hood for up to \$125,000.”

Motion was approved unanimously

[Vestry Action 2020.11-7]

Senior Warden’s Report: Senior Warden Ken Patterson commended vestry member Leo Coco for his organization of vestry candidate statements and development of the platform for presentation. Initial information about the annual meeting January 24, 2021 will be sent out in late December with information about voting via election buddy app closer to the time of the meeting. Ken noted that our annual meeting precedes the diocesan convention this year.

Junior Warden’s Report: Junior Warden Ted Swett provided a detailed written update of progress on the major capital projects related to safe regathering in our buildings. Pending approval by the vestry for financing (motion approved Vestry Action 2020.11-7), the kitchen hood project can commence in the near future and should take about six weeks to complete. Three contractors have made proposals for the replacement and upgrade of the air handling system but the proposals are not comparable in scope. Thus, the next step is to get an independent engineering analysis and detailed drawings as the basis for comparable bids. Once physical work begins, the project is estimated to take 20-22 weeks for completion. In addition to the major capital projects, Charles has received a bid to update video capabilities to enhance the quality of recorded services and eventual streaming.

Other Reports: Several other written reports were received. Associate Rector Emily Griffin reminded the vestry of the children’s Christmas pageant on Zoom at 4 PM on December 24. She expressed appreciation to Katie Wilson, Michele Bond, Dudley Winthrop, Lisa Birchard, Marty Kerns and Hollis McLoughlin for their flexibility in managing Sunday services through transitions to and away from in-person gatherings. She also noted that she is working on the Diocesan Task Force to develop a Path of Discipleship for Children.

Associate Rector Jim Quigley provided an update on conditions at our two beneficiary schools in Africa. Conditions are dire at St. Savior’s School in Jordan, where families of the students have been reduced to having their children collect food from others’ garbage. There are humanitarian needs at Hope and Resurrection School in South Sudan, though not as severe. A Mustard Seed offering will be collected in January 2021 to address humanitarian relief in both areas.

Vestry member Barbara Manard commended Emily and Yoimel for recruiting volunteers for the most recent Grate Patrol. The need for food is very great and the volunteers provided bags to serve 212 people. Geoffrey applauded the robust response to the December clothing drive for Tubman school.

After closing prayers, the vestry went into executive session at 8:10 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Aschenbrener
Secretary