

**St. Alban's Episcopal Church**  
**Minutes of Vestry Meeting, As Approved**  
**Wednesday, February 24, 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, Stephanie Curcuru, Matt Cunningham, Lisa Garnett, Megan King, Barbara Manard, Suzy Mink, Josepha Musabyemariya Nelson, Karina Rodriguez, Dudley Winthrop. **Youth representatives:** Hana Keenan, Annie McLean.

**Staff Members Present:** Emily Griffin, Yoimel González Hernández, and Jim Quigley (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 6:35 PM and led the vestry in prayer.

**Opening Meditation:** It is customary for the Senior Warden to do the opening meditation for the first and last vestry meetings of the year as part of the spiritual formation of the vestry. Senior Warden Ken Patterson focused on a recent incident relevant to the stated goal of the Episcopal Church to become a Beloved Community. He participated in a feedback session with Bishop Mariann Budde and Cathedral Dean Randy Hollerith. That session was convened in response to significant public reaction to an invited speaker at the Cathedral who was known to have made disparaging and hurtful comments about members of the LGBTQ community in the past. This incident was a reminder that the Episcopal Church still allows clergy to refuse pastoral care and marriage rites to individuals who identify as LGBTQ. He commended the church for the work it has begun to address systemic racism and expressed hope that it would soon also address LGBTQ bias. No one should feel the need to ask whether they are really wanted in the Episcopal Church.

**Report of the Nominations and Elections Committee:** Vestry affirmed the Nominating Committee comprised of Ken Patterson, Barbara Manard, Paul Brewster (chair), Dudley Winthrop, and Josepha Musabyemaria Nelson.

Chair Paul Brewster reported the following nominations from the committee

- Vestry officers for 2021: Hollis McLoughlin as Treasurer and Carol Aschenbrener as Secretary. There were no other nominations from the floor. Officers were elected unanimously.
- David Ridenour to continue as Chancellor. There were no other nominations from the floor and he was confirmed unanimously.

- Youth representatives Annie McLean and Hana Keenan. Both were unanimously confirmed.

Paul noted that election of diocesan delegates will be deferred to the March meeting.

The following vestry committees and their chairs were affirmed as a single vote.

- **Executive Committee:** Rector, Senior and Junior Wardens, Secretary and Treasurer.
- **Personnel:** Ted Swett (Chair), Tom Gustafson, Lisa Birchard, Abel Smith.
- **Buildings and Grounds:** Junior Warden (Chair), Bob Witten, Barbara Manard, Lucy Fraser Cage, John Nickum, Noel Sottile, Bob Pinkard.
- **Budget and Finance:** Treasurer (Chair), Dudley Winthrop, Bill Cline, Ashley Biachi, Lisa Garnett, Stephanie Curcuru.
- **Governance:** Senior Warden (Chair), Bob Pinkard, Rachel Colson, Matt Cunningham, Chancellor (ex officio).

Upon nomination, the vestry confirmed the continuing appointments to the Memorial Lecture Committee of Laura Ingersoll (through 2021) and David Brown (through 2022). A replacement is needed for Sally Craig, who was confirmed to serve a 4<sup>th</sup> year on the committee through 2020. The new member would serve 2021 through 2023 and would be eligible for a 4<sup>th</sup> year through 2024.

Geoffrey noted the need for two changes in the by-laws to clarify that vestry members whose terms are ending may stand for election as wardens. Changes will be recommended to the vestry later this year.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Hollis McLoughlin reported that pledge income was down in January, following a record surge in December with contributions reaching 99% of budgeted goal for 2020. Parish support continues to be down as well. On the positive side, financial liquidity continues to be steady and the endowment was at an all-time high as 2020 closed. Thanks to the generosity of parishioners and astute management, St. Alban's continues to pay its bills, meet its payroll and manage its daily, weekly and monthly financial obligations without interruption. While the reserve fund continues to hold steady at \$378, 912, it is at its lowest level in several years.

As noted in the Stewardship Committee's final report for the 2021 Annual Appeal (received), the campaign closed at 251 pledges with a value of \$1,254,085, which is 95% of the amount pledge for 2020. Approximately 40 [check this] persons or families who pledged for 2021 have not done so for 2022, but it is hoped they will be a source of continuing parish support as and when their means permit.

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

**[Vestry Action 2021.2-1]**

Hollis addressed the proposed draft budget that was distributed February 23, 2021. At the January vestry meeting, he alerted the vestry that an initial draft budget projected a deficit of \$133,000 for 2021 and that options to close the gap, including applying for a federal Payroll Protection Plan loan (PPP) were being considered. Since that time, pledge income from 2020 came in greater than expected and that, along with 2020 pledges received after year end, allowed for a budget that projects a more reasonable deficit, one that reasonably could be closed with increase in parish support and/or reduction in expenses. As is customary, the budget includes a 4% draw from the endowment, which is accrued throughout the year but usually does not result in a movement of cash until late in the calendar year. He emphasized that, despite the uncertainty, St. Alban's will maintain its outreach contributions at the 2020 budgeted amount of \$247,000; the church maintained that level in 2020 despite an income reduction of over \$100,000.

To address the potential for some deficit, the Finance Committee and Vestry Executive Committee recommended that the vestry authorize authority to take an additional 1% draw from the endowment, should that be necessary to cover a deficit. Should that be necessary, the draw would be taken late in 2021.

Upon motion seconded, the vestry voted unanimously to authorize an additional 1% draw from the endowment, should that be necessary.

#### **[Vestry Action 2021.2-2]**

**Initiation of Capital Campaign:** At the February vestry meeting, Senior Warden Ken Patterson reported that a capital campaign to cover essential expenditures associated with safely reopening our buildings would be deferred pending a clearer idea of the goal. The largest expenditure by far will be for replacement of the outdated HVAC system, which does not provide adequate fresh air in certain spaces and is prone to malfunction. The arduous process of obtaining engineering analyses associated with this complex process is nearing a close; although the current estimate is \$1.9 million, we will be looking to manage costs through reasonable trade-offs that would not compromise quality. Therefore, it appears reasonable to launch a capital campaign with a goal of \$1.75 million, with \$857,963 in pre-rollout pledges and payments already received from 22 households. In addition, a recent contribution is designated to cover the cost of a new kitchen stove. Ken and vestry member Suzy Mink will co-chair the campaign.

Junior Warden Ted Swett alerted the vestry that the Executive Committee likely will seek their approval to award the engineering design proposal as a sole source as putting that out for bid would add additional time to an already lengthy process. He also noted that bids will be solicited for a project manager and environmental engineer and, if needed, for a general contractor. The logistics of the project and the impact on availability of our buildings during construction cannot be determined until after a project manager and contractors work out a schedule for the HVAC project. As the reopening projects move forward, the Executive Committee is beginning to think about how to better avoid accumulation of deferred maintenance in the future, a topic for future discussion by the vestry. Extensive discussion followed this report.

Upon motion seconded, the vestry voted unanimously to approve moving forward with a capital campaign for the purpose of regathering safely with an initial goal of at least \$1.75 million.

**[Vestry Action 2021.2-3]**

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting:** Upon motion seconded, the Vestry unanimously approved the minutes of its regularly scheduled meeting held on January 20, 2021.

**[Vestry Action 2021.2-4]**

**Report on the Diocesan Convention:** Vestry member and diocesan delegate Barbara Manard shared highlights of the recent diocesan convention, convened virtually. It was the second year of a bilingual approach and she noted that Associate Rector Yoimel González Hernández played a prominent role in making technical improvements. Leadership from St. Alban's was prominent in several ways, including Associate Rector Jim Quigley's renewed appointment to the Commission on Ministry, Yoimel's appointment as an alternate clergy delegate to the General Convention and Anton Vanderpool's renewed appointment at alternate lay delegate. Four resolutions on equity and justice were introduced; Yoimel was a co-sponsor of a resolution on Immigration Detention Ministry that was approved.

Barbara commented briefly on the latest St. Alban's parochial report (distributed in advance of the meeting), noting that responses to the narrative questions aligned with discussion at the vestry retreat. She thanked all who contributed to the report.

Upon motion seconded, the parochial report was unanimously adopted.

**[Vestry Action 2021.2-5]**

**Rector's Report:** Rector Geoffrey Hoare reported briefly on the continued vitality of many parish activities. He extended thanks to Ken Patterson and Charles Porter for their many contributions to a successful virtual annual meeting with online voting for vestry. He noted that St. Alban's video of "Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning" was featured during one of the diocesan convention breaks, the only church offering that included both adults and children. Geoffrey briefly shared reactions to his announcement that he is a candidate in the Episcopal election in South Carolina.

**Senior Warden's Report:** In addition to his comments on the capital campaign, Senior Warden Ken Patterson expressed exuberant thanks to Rachel Colson and Lisa Garnett for the energetic

and fruitful work on the 2021 annual campaign. He also noted that, just in case the wardens' prayers that Geoffrey come in a "strong second" in the South Carolina Episcopal election not be answered, the Executive Committee continues to consider contingency plans. Ken has had exploratory conversations with Bishop Mariann Budde and The Rev. Dr. Robert Phillips about options should there be a change in clergy leadership.

**Other Reports:** Written reports were received from several others. In addition to the detailed update on the various capital projects essential to safe regathering, Junior Warden Ted Swett noted that the arborist would soon complete the last stage of the workplan approved last summer.

Associate Rector Emily Griffin reported that her experience as Co-Chair of the Godly Play Foundation's Anti-Racism Task Force has been an asset in her continued development of new materials for our Godly Play groups. She shared her joy at baptizing Jade and Jeremiah Colson during the February 7 liturgy.

Associate Rector Yoimel González Hernández provided an update on youth ministry. In addition to his usual activities, he is designing formation opportunities for the Latino congregation and participating in one of the Sacred Ground groups.

Associate Rector Jim Quigley updated the vestry on the highly engaging *Grappling with Racism* series in St. Alban's Engages and other adult formation activities. He expressed gratitude that 9% of the 2021 operating budget will be allocated for Christian Social Ministries and will provide a report on the projected allocations next month.

Music Director Matthew Steynor reported on the continued vitality and dedication of the adult choristers. He announced that Chorister Program Director Joseph Kaz recently relocated to Massachusetts for permanent full-time employment; a search for a new director and tenor staff singer will soon commence.

After closing prayers, the vestry went into executive session at 8:24 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Aschenbrener  
Secretary