

**St. Alban's Episcopal Church**  
**Minutes of Vestry Meeting, As Approved**  
**Wednesday, April 21, 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, , Dudley Winthrop.  
**Youth representatives:** Hana Keenan.

**Absent:** Vestry Members Josepha Musabyemariya Nelson, Karina Rodriguez and Youth Representative Annie McLean.

**Diocesan Delegate:** Candace Brown

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

**Others Present:** Robin Rudd (WSA ) and Susan Morris.

**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:** Vestry member Barbara Manard offered a brief reflection, her last as a vestry member before moving to Sanibel Island on May 1. A cradle Episcopalian, Barbara recalled some highlights of her 30+ years as St. Alban's. She shared two principles that have guided her own spiritual formation. First has been following the oft-repeated biblical admonition, "Be Not Afraid." She read lyrics from Hymn #811 as a favorite reminder of the importance of giving up fear. The second principle has been a daily spiritual practice from which she is now reaping "some growing mastery and some glimmer of transcendence." She closed with some favorite lines from Phillip Larkin's poetry.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting:** Upon motion seconded, the Vestry unanimously approved the minutes of its regularly scheduled meeting held on March 17, 2021.

**[Vestry Action 2021.4-1]**

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Hollis McLoughlin reported that pledge income remained strong in March, with pledge income for the first quarter of 2021 totaling \$520,715, which was 8% above first quarter 2020 and 3% over budget. Parish support, however, continues to lag significantly, 45% below the same period last year and only 14% of the 2021 budget. Operating expenses were flat to budget for the first quarter and 7% below same period in 2020, but

expenses are likely to rise as the church begins to take steps to open its buildings. The church has a strong cash position (\$1.8 million), buoyed by cash from the capital campaign. The endowment topped \$6 million at the end of March, an all-time high.

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

#### **[Vestry Action 2021.4-2]**

Over the last few years, the reserve fund for ongoing capital expenses has dropped from about \$600,000 to \$377,000. The capital improvements to be funded by the capital campaign will reduce the need for ongoing repairs in the HVAC system. Thus, the Executive Committee believes that \$450,000 will probably be a comfortable figure for the reserve fund going forward. Allocating \$50,000 from recent bequests to the reserve fund, would bring it close to this target level.

Thus, the Executive Committee offers the following motion:

*To accept the generous bequests from the estate of Barbara Yeomans in the amount of \$59,452.56 and the estate of Samuel W Lewis and Sallie Kate Smoot Lewis in the amount of \$200,000. \$50,000 will be placed in the Reserve Fund and \$209,452.56 will be allocated to the Halleluiah Homecoming Campaign.*

Motion from the Executive Committee was unanimously approved.

#### **[Vestry Action 2021.4-3]**

**Discussion:** Geoffrey led the vestry in a discussion of the concept of “new power” and its implications for developing a mission statement. In advance of the meeting, he distributed an article from Harvard Business Review (Dec 2014) by Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms entitled “Understanding ‘New Power’.” The authors assert the “the battle and balancing between old power and new power will be a defining feature of society and business in the coming years.” Old power, the type that characterizes most social and business organizations “works like currency”: held closely by a few, closed and inaccessible, top-down driven by leaders. In contrast, new power, is driven by peer coordination and operates “like a current”: open, participatory, broadly distributed. While the goal of old power is to hoard it, that of new power is to channel it. New power is largely driven today by people under 30, who have expectations of participating actively in the shaping how they work and how they live. Since this population accounts for more than half of the world's population, organizations ignore new power at their peril. The authors emphasize the importance for organizations of all types to develop “new power capacity” and suggest that they take a close look at how they are using new power models and developing new power values and which core models and values they most want to maintain.

**Junior Warden's Report:** Junior Warden Ted Swett provided a detailed update on the retrofitting of the HVAC systems. The HVAC upgrade is expected to take considerable time because the complexity of this project requires input from a design engineer, mechanical

contractor, architect and other trades. In addition, there are time constraints beyond control of project personnel such as required permits from the City of Washington and delivery of materials. Once the project team is complete, a project calendar will be developed. For the time being, the vestry's cooperation is requested in managing unrealistic expectations for completion.

Ted noted that recently hired project manager Gary Baker is already providing valuable input into several key decisions that must be made to keep momentum on the project: evaluation of two firms for role of design engineer; determining relative merits of design/bid/build versus design/build approach; and determination of whether a general contractor is needed in addition to the mechanical contractor. The next key step will be to hire a design engineer, with a vestry resolution at or before the May meeting.

The vestry approved hiring of Mr. Baker at its March meeting "for a fee of up to \$20,000" (Vestry Action 2021.3-6). Since digging into the project in greater detail, Gary is better able to project the hours required and has requested a fee of \$35,000, still modest in comparison to other firms considered for this job. The Executive Committee will present a resolution to the vestry once details are completed, most likely in advance of the April meeting.

Other updates include the following:

- Environmental analysis identified need to remediate asbestos-containing material in parts of the church basement and mold in various places before construction can begin. Cost estimate is \$35,000 and the work will require permit from the city.
- Work on the kitchen continues to be delayed awaiting permit from the city.
- The Executive Committee considered applying for a Homeland Security grant to fund the security enhancements but determined that application requirements, time constraints and likelihood of success did not justify the effort.
- Bathroom upgrades are under consideration but "on hold" pending impact of HVAC upgrade.
- Replanting of Columbarium has been completed through generosity of the Strimple family and a commemorative plate will be placed later in the year. After review of the terms of the Pyle fund, originally designated for upkeep of the "bunny garden" the Executive Committee determined that it would be appropriate to designate the grounds from east of the church doorway to the southeast corner of the building as the Pyle garden.

**Rector's Report:** In addition to his written report about parish activities, Geoffrey conveyed the following recommendation from the Executive Committee:

*To allocate up to \$10,000 from designated funds for a technical upgrade to the church organ that will allow a greater variety of sound in a shorter period, producing a more kaleidoscopic effect.*

Motion from the Executive Committee was approved unanimously.

**[Vestry Action 2021.4-4]**

**Senior Warden's Report:** Senior Warden Ken Patterson reported briefly on the status of plans for roll-out of the capital campaign for regathering safely. As of this date, donations and pledges to the campaign total \$1,087,014.

**Other Reports:** There were a number of additional written reports.

Associate Rector Emily Griffin updated the vestry on Children's Formation, Worship and the Spanish Service, all of which continue to be robust. She noted that there will be four baptisms of children within 2 months, as well as three candidates for the May 1 confirmation, two from the English services and one from the Spanish service. Emily has formalized plans to supervise a bilingual seminarian who will engage in ministry in both languages during the 2021-22 academic year.

Associate Rector Yoimel González Hernández reported on Youth Ministry classes and the Latino Ministry, including preparations for Youth Sunday on May 9<sup>th</sup>. He shared his gratitude for presiding at his first Easter Vigil and Baptism as a priest.

Associate Rector James Quigley provided an update on Christian Social Ministries, Pastoral Care and Adult Formation. He noted that the 2021 Operating Budget includes \$40,000 for Global Missions, including \$19,000 for operating expenses at each of the two schools supported. Feeding ministries at Christ House and SOME remain on hold but food preparation and delivery for Grate Patrol continue. With Barbara Manard's departure, parishioner Susan Morris will assume leadership for Grate Patrol, while continuing to oversee the Christ House feeding ministry. Erin Bowers will lead the backpack food program for Harriet Tubman school; Tricia Pinkard will oversee classroom learning volunteers; and Tom Jansen and Laura Ingersoll will coordinate contributions for the Tubman clothing drives.

Director of Music Matthew Steynor updated the vestry on plans for increasing vocal music options during liturgy as pandemic restrictions are lifted. He expressed gratitude for the vestry's support of an upgrade for the organ – and on his birthday, too.

Before closing prayers, retiring vestry member Barbara Manard offered brief parting thoughts, opining that St. Alban's is "in wonderful shape" and that it was "hard to contain the gratitude" in her heart. We will miss her and her many contributions.

After closing prayers, the vestry went into executive session at 8:19 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Aschenbrener  
Secretary

