

ST. ALBAN'S PARISH , WASHINGTON. D.C.
VESTRY MINUTES – August 19, 2008

Attendees: Clergy and Staff: Scott Benhase, Erin Hensley, Tim Boggs, Ron Hicks , Seminarian Shell Kimble; Vestry: Kate Bouve, Jim Sottile, Keith Jones, Nathalie Bramson, Marc Fetterman, Bill Edgar, Chris Holmes, Chuck Holmes, Danette Gentile Kauffman, Jennifer Martin, Robert Woolfolk, Sam Lewis, Kammie Hedges; Delegates: Bill Hall, Amy Whitcomb Slemmer; Secretary Stephanie Kinney; Hospitality Chair Lacey Gude

Opening Prayer by the Rector

Minutes of previous meeting: July 15 Vestry Meeting Minutes were approved as amended.

Treasurer's and Jr. Warden's Reports (Chris Holmes & Jim Sottile):

- Most important items covered in Jr. Warden's Report (attached): Treasurer yielded floor to Jim Sottile, whose Jr. Warden Report covered the financial issues of greatest interest, including details related to the positive July Financial Statement, major ongoing expenses that represent material variations from the budget. The report also addressed key property issues, which were reported on at this time and also later in the meeting: request for bids for the Satterlee Hall boiler, purchase of the Satterlee Kitchen food preparation table and update on the topographic survey needed in connection with design of the handicapped access ramp. A **motion** by Sam Lewis to accept this report was seconded and approved.
- Every Member Pledge Campaign (EMPC): In response to queries, Danni Kauffman reported on the EMPC, noting that letters to the Parish embracing the concept of "proportional giving and working toward tithing" would go out October 1 and it would be helpful to say something about Vestry support for the EMPC, recognizing that in the past not all Vestry members have pledged. Sam Lewis proposed and received two seconds for his suggestion that the EMPC letter note that "all vestry members have pledged and increased their pledge" [from last year]. Scott noted that no vote is required at this time, given that pledge cards will be available for signing at the September Vestry meeting and that he would have a draft EMPC letter ready for Vestry consideration at that time. Tim noted that the EMPC will be an opportunity for "both preaching and teaching" [about ways to interpret proportional giving and tithing].
- Audit update: Chris Holmes explained that St. Alban's current auditor is too large for our account and also too expensive, and that he has identified a solo practitioner, Jim Hozik and Co, who is a certified CPA specializing in non-profits, who has offered a much more appealing bid. The Finance Committee has recommended that the church contract with Hozik and Co. A **motion** by Jim Sottile was seconded and approved to retain Hozik and Co. for the '06 and '07 financial statements and for the 2008 audit. Chris Holmes indicated that Hozik could begin work in the next two weeks and finish the '06/'07 work by end of October. Scott expressed particular appreciation for Chris's efforts.

- Additional property issue updates: Jim Sottile reported that the topographic survey for the handicapped ramp has been completed; renovation of the handicapped bathroom in Satterlee has started, and the five safety lights in the Rectory will be installed. A **motion** by Bob Woolfolk was seconded to approve this report on property issues.

Hospitality Commission Report (Lacey Gude & Erin Hensley):

- Vestry feedback sought: Lacey described the Hospitality Commission's mandate and recent activities with an eye to soliciting Vestry comments and feedback on its thinking to date. She invited the Vestry to accompany her and Erin on a walk-through of relevant space (Narthex and Wade room) as they described ideas for making these spaces more inviting and usable over a three phase period between now and St. Alban's Day, June 21, 2009. The Commission will incorporate Vestry feedback in a new draft of recommendations it is preparing for the property and finance committees to approve and pass to Gardiner Hall Inc., the ecclesiastical interior design services which has provided some initial thinking and rough estimates of issues/items to be addressed. The Commission hopes to have a more refined proposal in September, which could be put to a vote at the next Vestry meeting.

Senior Warden's Report (Kate Bouve):

- Health Insurance for clergy and lay staff: Kate called to Vestry attention the fact that the Episcopal Church has identified this issue as a general concern and has asked the Church's pension group to address the issue. If the proposal before the General Council is adopted, it could impact St. Albans. We need to study the proposal and consider how to effectively influence the decision making process. Scott noted that current analysis claims a 30% savings if a church-wide policy is adopted with no option for opting out. This is something the Lutherans did some years ago to good effect.
- Planning Process Follow-Up: Kate reported that there has been good implementation in the following areas: 1) stewardship 2) hospitality (Lacy Gude) 3) nursery venue (Keith Jones) 4) outreach report for the web (Kammie Hedges). Sue Coco will coordinate ministry fair to publicize the planning process and promote follow-on participation in a workshop the end of September. The goal is to get people to sign up and participate in the Friday, September 26 workshop with our facilitator. It was noted that this is also the evening for one of the Presidential debates and timing should be organized appropriately.

A **motion** by Keith Jones to accept the Senior Warden's report was seconded and approved.

- Databases: Note was made of the crucial need for an accurate database and the need to identify "lost sheep" and "unknown whereabouts." Ron Hicks will get a "lost sheep" number for the September Vestry meeting. A group is needed to review St. Alban's current database with an eye toward beginning to identify what additional information fields will be required in order for the Planning Process's Program Management Group to move forward. Without an accurate inventory of existing programs and comparable categories of information about each, it will be difficult for this group to be productive. It was suggested that the Time and Talent pledge sheets might offer a good starting point for development of an inventory of church programs.

Rector's Report (Scott Benhase):

- Changes at Cathedral: Steve Rippe has resigned as Executive Director of the National Cathedral Foundation and the Bishop is looking for advice on a replacement.
- Survey Monkey: Survey Monkey is a web-based survey tool which might be useful. It could be made available to the Parish list serve three or four times a year in order to solicit high quality feedback and thoughts on any number of worthwhile issues, e.g. sung prayers and inclusive language. Its use would not exclude the use of more traditional, hard copy survey techniques, but the web-based tool could be very efficient and might be of interest to the Vestry to consider.
- Potential Solar Project: Per Brian Keane, Sun Edison is interested in a solar project with St. Albans School and our church. It looks like we could “go solar” with no extra cost within a year. Vance Wilson is the contact for the School on this and John Sawyer and Bill Edger are our representatives to explore the potential for such a project in greater detail.
- St. Alban's Café: We've asked Chris Larson, Kurt Large, Ann Nix, Neil Wilson, Elizabeth Pettit (a caterer), and Mary Ann Smith to work the issue with an eye to recommending what to do. Their collective experience and professional backgrounds give us confidence that we have the right people on the task.
- Michele Kimble: Michele is our new Seminarian. She spent the summer in Copan, Honduras, working with the local community and learning Spanish, which Bishop Chane has requested that more of us learn. Our Transformation Fund provided \$2,000 for Michele's stay in Copan and we are delighted to have her with us now.
- Fall Calendars (attached): The Alban Course calendar for the fall was handed out, as was a notice that starting this fall St. Alban's Parish will function as a central meeting/teaching place for the diocese by hosting three diocesan programs: 1) Fresh Start 2) Church Development Institute (CDI) and 3) the Washington Episcopal Clergy Association (WECA).

Old Business:

- St. Alban's Columbarium Proposed Changes: Scott and Marc Fetterman have done some benchmarking of other Columbarium arrangements. Marc provided a handout from the Rock Creek Cemetery, which includes a Cremation Garden (\$1,900) Columbarium Garden Niches (\$3,000-\$3,500) and Columbarium Niches (\$4,500). St. Alban niches cost a third of this (\$750-\$1,200). St. Albans may want to consider raising its rates to go for and cover perpetual care. Marc is also concerned about running out of space and the Arts and Memorial Committee has been asked to review and make recommendations in this regard. Its work will go to the Property Committee, which will in turn eventually bring the issue to the Vestry.
- Handicapped Ramp: the Vestry addressed the issue of moving from the field survey phase to the drawing phase for the handicapped ramp. Marc Fetterman indicated that with his pro-bono drawings, it would be possible to get a rough estimate of the cost of this phase from bidders but that such bids would only be good for 30 days. The lack of clarity at this point about probable costs (\$125-175,000) raises the question of when and under what conditions to send the issue to the Finance Committee for a recommendation on funding. Keith Jones offered a **motion**, which was seconded and approved, to send the issue to the Finance Committee now for a recommendation by the time of the October Vestry meeting. The Committee was urged offer, as part of its recommendation, its view on whether to look for the right donor (or 2) or take a more broad based approach.

- Nourse Hall Project Cost: Marc Fetterman reported that the project had been completed for \$98,000 under budget but that we are still \$150,000 short to pay for it. The Capital Campaign is still \$200,000 short of its goal.

Compline was led by Bob Woolcott and the Vestry meeting was adjourned.

Stephanie Smith Kinney, Secretary