

**ST. ALBAN'S PARISH, WASHINGTON. D.C.**  
**VESTRY MINUTES –April 21, 2009**

**Attendees: Clergy and Staff:** Scott Benhase, Tim Boggs, Ron Hicks, Douglas Dykstra;  
**Wardens:** Kate Bouve, Jim Sottile; **Vestry:** Nathalie Bramson, Bill Edgar, Andrea Farr, Marc Fetterman, Kammie Hedges, Chuck Holmes, Keith Jones, Danette Gentile Kauffman, Sam Lewis, Jennifer Martin, Eric Melby, Robert Woolfolk; **Youth Member:** Oliver Eid; **Treasurer:** Chris Holmes; **Secretary:** Stephanie Kinney; **WSA President:** Joanne Brainard; **Hospitality Commission Chair:** Lacey Gude; **Diocesan Delegates:** Bill Hall, Dee Dykstra

### **Opening Prayer by the Rector**

**Announcements and Minutes:** The Minutes for February and March were approved.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- Treasurer Chris Holmes asked the Finance Chair, Jim Sottile, to present the Vestry through the **attached 2009 pledge summary, the 2008 Year End Financial Summary of the Operating Fund, and the 2009 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financial Summary of the Operating Fund**, all of which were completed just prior to the meeting. Highlights of these reports included:
  - A slight drop in pledges from 444 (\$1,243,393) in 2008 to 421(\$1,114,404) in 2009, which includes 64 new 2009 pledges. The average 2009 pledge was \$2,647, with the most frequent amount equaling \$1,200, a better than expected response in light of the financial crisis.
  - An expected 2008 operating surplus of about \$18,000, without the budgeted transfer from the Endowment Fund.
  - 2009 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter income (\$400,666) ran slightly ahead of budget (\$398,155), while 1<sup>st</sup> quarter expenses (\$361,823) were slightly less than budgeted (\$366,092).
  - Douglas Dykstra's careful review and scrutiny of utility invoices has helped recoup \$20,000 in previously paid sales taxes.
  - Nathalie Bramson **moved** and Jim Sottile seconded that the Vestry **commend Douglas on his fine accounting work, which it did.**
  - Chuck Holmes **moved** and Bob Woolfolk seconded **that the Vestry approve the three reports, which it did.**
  - Jim Sottile promised Marc Fetterman that he will report at the May meeting on disposition of the anonymous gift to support Ruth Cline's new book, Church at the Crossroads—The History of St. Alban's Parish 1854-2004.

### **Diana Smith Fund (Jim Sottile):**

- Jim introduced a resolution to establish the Diana Smith Fund for Spiritual Growth, based on her memo (**attached**) describing the vision for the Fund and its operation. Jim underscored the importance Diana attached to broad guidance that "would not hamstring future Vestries." Members of Diana's Way of Life Group will be invited to serve as initial members of an Advisory Committee for the Fund. Per Diana's wishes, from time to time, the Rector in his discretion may add members to the Committee.

- Bill Edgar **moved** and Eric Melby seconded **approval of the Resolution, which the Vestry supported.**

### **Junior Warden's Report** (Jim Sottile):

- **Handicap Ramp:** Marc Fetterman reported that he will have a progress report for the May Annual Meeting. In response to a question from Scott, Marc said that ground breaking on the ramp will be in a week. He also pointed out the amount of pro bono work that has gone into this project.
- **Satterlee Hall Roof Solar Panels:** Jim Sottile reported that two bids have been received on replacing the flat roof at the rear of Satterlee where solar panels will be installed, one for \$18,000 and another for \$14,475 respectively. The lower bid from Maryland Exteriors has been approved and the bidder has been instructed to work with Sun Edison to ensure proper construction and coordination for the eventual installation of the panels.
- **Nurse Hall Kitchen Renovation:** Ann Bissell prepared the new design for the space and the Property Committee has reviewed the design and consulted with others. Jim anticipates Committee approval of the project, which he plans to present to the Vestry for its approval at its May meeting. The estimated cost will be \$10,000. Jim confirmed that the kitchen will have a dishwasher and that the children's group has been consulted.

### **Senior Warden's Report** (Kate Bouve):

- **Parish Planning Retreat:** Kate noted the report to the Parish on the Retreat and progress to date in the six areas of focus. A letter has been received from Royster suggesting a 12 month review aimed at tracking follow-through. Kate noted we may need to focus more effort in one or two areas than others. Communication is crucial to keep participation and engagement robust.
- **May Annual Meeting:** David Johnson was complimented for his past work organizing the election process. David is stepping aside now and search for a replacement is underway. Tim Boggs will ask for volunteers since it is better that the Vestry not be involved. There has been a decline in voter participation between 2005 (264), 2006 (291), 2007(117) and 2008(193). Kate highlighted the need for a study of Parish trends. Nathalie inquired whether there is a percentage of voters below which the election is not valid, but no one knew of such a requirement.

### **Rector's Report** (Scott Benhase):

- **Premature Announcement:** Scott apologized again for premature announcement by the Cathedral staff of the name of St. Alban's new Assistant Rector before his candidacy was approved by the Vestry. The Canon of the Cathedral has sent a strong letter of "mea culpa" and apology. Scott emphasized the excellence of the selection process and the fact that the selection of Jared Webber-Johnson was unanimous among those who did the interviewing. Jared was ordained a deacon April 18, 2009 and is expected to be ordained a priest in October 2009. He will begin at St. Alban's July 1, 2009. Jared and his wife are expecting their first child about the same time so will go on paternity leave shortly after taking up his duties here. In response to questions, Scott assured everyone that gender balance had been taken into account in the selection process but that Jared was the most fit for the job. To complete formalities, Keith Jones moved and Andrea Farr seconded **approval of Jared Webber-Johnson to be called to replace Erin Hensley as Assistant Rector at St. Alban's, and the Vestry concurred.**

- **Holy Week Feedback:** Vestry feedback was strongly positive, including regarding the music, except that both the length of the service and the third hour of music on Good Friday might have been a bit heavy. Members puzzled over why the Vigil is so sparsely attended, given the beauty and quality of the service.
- **Second Op Shop Theft:** Scott introduced the **attached memo** to him from Russell Eckel, the Opportunity Shop Manager, which details response to the latest Op Shop robbery, which took place March 29 at about 8:00 p.m. Scott is confident that changes outlined in the memo will greatly enhance security and that adding a sound alarm will help “intruder alert.” The next step is to arrange a “definitive deal” with the Cathedral Police, which is in process. Sam Lewis pointed out the resistance to change by many older volunteers, the need for more interaction between staff and management and the need for Board oversight, noting that the Op Shop Board has not met for four years. Nathalie pointed to the importance of disincentives such as signs that indicate “No cash left here.” Ron noted that five thefts ago, the safe itself was taken. All focused on the importance of security of local volunteer staff.
- **Summer Schedule & Stephen Ministers:** Scott announced that St. Albans will switch to summer schedule starting June 6<sup>th</sup>, the first Sunday in June. He also praised the work of Stephen Ministry Leaders Jo Turner and David Johnson, who are stepping down at the completion of their two-year term to be replaced by Dee Dykstra, Aida Kugajevsky and Richard Parkins.

## Old Business

- **Arts and Memorials Committee:** Marc Fetterman presented the very thorough **attached Committee Report to the Vestry on “Orphan” Art** on which he would welcome comments. Scott noted that Georgetown had accepted nine of our Biblical prints rendered in black and white. Nathalie questioned the need to keep reproductions. Marc moved the Vestry authorize the committee to dispose of the “orphan” art by sale or other means. Bob Woolfolk seconded the motion, which the Vestry approved.
- **Ruth Cline recognition:** Danette Gentile Kauffman moved and Sam Lewis seconded approval of a Resolution of Appreciation for the work of Ruth Cline in researching, writing and publishing The History of St. Alban’s Parish 1854-2004. The Vestry concurred and Scott noted that Ruth would be given a copy of the Resolution and recognized at the May Annual Meeting.
- **Departing Vestry Feedback:** Scott invited departing Vestry members, who took up duties at the same time he did, to share thoughts and feelings:
  - **Bob Woolfolk** noted the call for Scott to join St. Albans and his Vestry experience focused on the church’s budget challenges as high points of his tenure. He identified his inability to work on the Database as the low point.
  - **Marc Fetterman** highlighted the opportunity to serve and to get to know fellow Vestry members and his outreach and Sunday School activities. He urged confidence in dealing with the National Cathedral.
  - **Kammie Hedges** appreciated the great spirit of the Vestry and its respect for others. She cited the formation of the Outreach Commission as crucial to “opening doors and windows” on Church finance and decision making.
  - **Sam Lewis** praised the talented Vestry and everyone else involved in the “transformational process” the Church has gone through, a first for him. He underlined the important work of the Arts and Memorials Commission, plaques of recognition and keeping the history of St. Albans alive and the talent of those committed to budgetary discipline. All these factors have enabled St. Albans to

find a way “to build in hard times.” Proud to be a part of the Vestry team, he thanked Scott and promised to take advantage of the Vestry’s Open Meeting policy and attend more meetings in the future.

- **Chris Holmes**, who is stepping down as Treasurer, took pride in three balanced budgets, renewed staff with needed skills and the balance struck between boilers and the basics that really draw people to the church.
  
- **Rector’s Response:** Scott thanked those departing members who had started out together with him for their support and wisdom throughout a time that proved to be “quite a ride.” He praised the presence of God and generosity of spirit whenever things got tense and urged everyone to continue to “pay attention to the Spirit.” Scott also praised the members’ willingness to keep perspective, a sense of humor and to keep an eye on the mission of the Church, qualities that have marked their service. Marc Fetterman underscored the importance of keeping in touch with institutional history, in its many forms, and noted the importance of regular meeting minutes of record and offered minutes he has kept to fill in some archival gaps.
- **WSA-**Scott noted that he would attend the May meeting of WSA.

**Compline** was offered by Kammie Hedges.

Stephanie Smith Kinney, Secretary