

**ST. ALBAN'S PARISH, WASHINGTON. D.C.**  
**VESTRY MINUTES – December 16, 2008**

**Attendees:** Clergy and Staff: Scott Benhase, Tim Boggs, Ron Hicks, Interim Finance Director: Douglas Dykstra; Vestry: Jim Sottile, Andrea Farr, Eric Melby, Keith Jones, Nathalie Bramson, Marc Fetterman, Chuck Holmes, Danette Gentile Kauffman, Robert Woolfolk, Kammie Hedges, Sam Lewis; Youth Representative: Oliver Eid; Secretary: Stephanie Kinney

**Opening Prayer by the Rector**

**Minutes of previous meeting:** Thanks were extended to Chuck Holmes for taking the minutes in November. In light of limited time to review these minutes, the Vestry will approve them in January.

**Treasurer's Report (D. Dykstra and C. Holmes):**

- **Introduction of Doug Dykstra:** Doug was welcomed as St. Alban's new Interim Finance Director.
- **Audits:** Doug reported that the '06 and '07 audits have gone smoothly with all questions answered and documentation will be complete before Christmas. He observed that, "as an outsider," he found some records and procedures unnecessarily complicated and will offer recommendations in January.
- **The Financial Report (Attached):**
  - Doug stressed that the November financial report is "preliminary," given that income has been recorded and deposited but not yet posted on the internal accounting system. In addition, he found a large backlog of unpaid invoices when he took over his new function.
  - Per Doug, a priority has been to confirm all invoice payments and get appropriate income into the operating fund. This said, our financial status "looks good," due in part to the larger than expected settlement on the Nowlan bequest.
  - In response to questions about the Endowment Fund, Scott clarified that we will not take even the permitted 5% from the Endowment Fund this year if it is not needed due to the decline in Endowment Fund earnings. Scott hopes for a "Clean" end of year report and called for a round of applause for the work Doug has done and will continue to oversee.
  - Chris clarified questions related to electricity charges, noting that the bill for an actual reading (as opposed to an estimate) has not yet been received.

**EMP Report (Tim Boggs):**

- **Pledge Data:** Tim provided the following data: 288 '09 pledges to date totaling \$796,273. This equals: 66.2% of 435 '08 pledges, 64.2% of \$1,240,673 pledged in '08, and 66.3% of '09 budget pledge goal. Compared to 2008, 31% (of pledge pool) have increased pledge, 34% unchanged, 19% have decreased pledge and 15% are new pledges. Of '09 pledges the mean (average) is \$2,765, the median (middle) is \$1,500 and the mode (most common) is \$1,200.

- **Lost Sheep:** Although we are running slightly ahead of last year's EMP at this time, we need to focus on canvassing the "lost sheep," who number about 200. Tim provided Vestry members with names and urged that appropriate calls be made by December 31. Last year's "lost sheep" feedback to the Vestry was good. Vestry members should inform Tim of results. It was noted that last year a number of "lost sheep" appreciated the Vestry calls and others complained that "no one noticed or called." It was agreed that pledge envelopes could and should be made available on January 4.
- **Pledge Envelopes:** Danette and Keith stressed the importance of providing an option for pledgers to indicate when no envelopes are needed, thus enabling a reduction in size of the envelope order. Many people are now using direct deductions from bank accounts.

### **2009 Budget** (S. Benhase):

- Scott reviewed the proposed '09 budget, noting in particular the very conservative estimate for withdrawal from the Endowment Fund and the overall lowered estimate for total income, with only minimal amounts assumed from the Transformation Fund and WSA. On the expense side, he noted the increase in Total Outreach, and decrease in personnel expenses.
- In response to questioning, Scott indicated the following:
  - In 2009 remains of the Transformation Fund will go into the Endowment but since the books have not yet been closed on the Capital Campaign it is too early to estimate what the amount might be.
  - Survey Monkey and other methods will be used to seek input and ideas for Erin's replacement.
  - Scott hopes to have a Secretary in place by January.
  - \$5,000 has been given to Iona for the Super 60's program, not including the Church's "in-kind" contribution of space and facilities.
  - Chuck will be the new Chair of Outreach and specific questions about proposed outreach budget should be directed to him.
  - The Youth Budget numbers reflect the fact that the biennial pilgrimage necessitates \$10,000 in odd number years vs. \$4,000 otherwise. We budget to actual annual expense rather than \$7,000 annually for each of two years.
  - The communion wine issue has been addressed and a better quality wine will be acquired when the current stock is expended.

### **Junior Warden's Report** (J. Sottile):

- **Satterlee Boiler:** Heat exchanger was less than expected but repair of newly discovered leaking valve resulted in a total payment of \$23,400 or \$4,300 more than authorized. Vestry was reminded of the policy stipulating a \$5,000 limit for payment of non-authorized expense.
- **Leaky waterline:** \$6,000 was authorized for the replacement of the leaking waterline from the street to Satterlee Hall but the actual cost was \$2,500 to Shapiro and Duncan for the plumbing and \$200 for the stonework. Work will be double checked before payment. Members were assured that testing for lead in the water indicated no problem. **ACTION:** Jim will get the last test date and data and if more than six months has passed, the test will be repeated and results made known.

- **Bathroom plumbing issues:** Magnolia Plumbing charged over \$5,000 for series of fixes to toilets, which flags need to better coordinate future visits in order to keep costs down.
- **Satterlee Roof:** We have been advised that the roof is past its 20 year life and in need of replacement; we are getting estimates now.

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

- In Kate's absence, her written December Progress Report (**attached**) was distributed and vestry members were encouraged to raise questions with either Kate or Scott.

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

- **Parishioners' Concern:** Several parishioners have expressed concern that some of the Daily Cups messages and one sermon had a partisan tinge. Although he had trouble seeing the same problem as some did, when Scott heard about the issue, he raised the issue with the concerned people in order to acknowledge their feelings, discuss his and their perceptions and reassure everyone that he is thoroughly partisan for the Gospel but that political partisanship has been neither intended nor appropriate at St. Alban's. All conservatives should feel welcome and engaged at St. Alban's, even though it is arguably "a liberal church." The denigration of political figures or parties is not something with which any of us should wish to see St. Alban's associated.
- **WSA News:** Joanne Brainard has been elected as the new President of WSA.
- **Schedule Notes:** Scott reviewed the Christmas schedule of events and took note of the Inauguration Prayer Service on Jan.21 and announced postponement of the next Vestry meeting from Jan. 20 to Jan. 27.
- **Café Feasibility:** The study group has held its last meeting for the foreseeable future. We hope the AU Business School may be about to do a formal business feasibility study for us but only after the Satterlee Hall renovation because the café committee has recommended against starting the development process, only to have to interrupt it with the Satterlee renovation. Concern was expressed by two vestry members about the utility of having Café related factors identified and priced out when doing the Satterlee renovation but Scott affirmed his support of the study group recommendation.

### **Old Business**

- **Arts and Memorials:** The Sanford family is supportive of a painting illustrating their now concealed gift of a stained glass window above the organ console. This painting will be hung near the organ console.

**Compline** was conducted by Bob Woolfolk and the general meeting was adjourned.

**Executive Session:** The Vestry members met in Executive Session.

Stephanie Smith Kinney, Secretary

