

ST. ALBAN'S PARISH, WASHINGTON. D.C.
VESTRY MINUTES – March 17, 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, Chris Holmes, Danette Gentile Kauffman, Sam Lewis, Jennifer Martin, Robert Woolfolk; **Youth Member:** Oliver Eid; **Secretary:** Stephanie Kinney; **WSA President:** Joanne Brainard; **Hospitality Commission Chair:** Lacey Gude

Opening Prayer by the Rector

Announcements and Minutes: Due do a lack of copies of the February minutes, these will be approved at the next meeting in April.

Treasurer's Report:

- **EMP Report:** Tim Boggs reported as follows:
 - The 2009 EMP was concluded as of March 17 with a total of \$1,107,309.
 - \$2,665 was the average pledge; \$1,300 the mean and \$1,200 was the most frequent pledge amount. 64 new pledges in 2009 doubled the number of new pledges in 2008, although our total of 417 2009 pledges was short of the total of 444 in 2008.
 - Quality of stewardship conversation is improving.
 - Of 160 “Lost Sheep,” 80 are truly lost. The Lost Sheep who were “found” contributed \$100,000.
 - This year's new pledgers will require special efforts to involve and engage these individuals in church life. Letters to those being baptized and married remain an important way to retain additional people in our church. The 64 new pledges represent a contribution of \$60,000.
 - We should note how well we finished 2008 with over 100% fulfillment of our pledge budget. We believe plate collections were down because more people contributed using pledge envelopes .
 - **2008 Financial Statement:** Scott noted that the report is almost final and asked for Vestry approval. Jim Sottile noted the “long journey” to finalization and noted a pledge overage of \$2,400 and an increased gift total of \$95,000 compared to the \$46,000 originally budgeted. Collections came in below budget. The electricity bill is still pending, but the actual cost is expected to be less than the \$72,000 budgeted. The good news is that it appears there is no need to draw anything from the endowment fund at this point and we expect to have a small surplus for 2008, once the bank statements are reconciled and the postings review completed. Jim offered to bring a recommendation to the next Vestry meeting as to how to allocate the small surplus. All the numbers will be in by the annual meeting in May. Doug Dykstra was recognized for his superlative work.
 - **Capital Campaign Deficit and Reserve Fund Balance:** At the end of 2008, the Capital Campaign deficit stands at \$250,000 with some pledges still to be fulfilled. Tim reported that the Capital Campaign deficit is owed to St. Alban's Endowment Fund. Tim Boggs noted that a pledge-by-pledge review with take place this month, with an eye toward inviting those with outstanding pledges to

help us close the books on the Campaign. Jim Sottile will have a Reserve Fund Minimum Balance recommendation at the April Vestry meeting so that the fund can be replenished on an ongoing basis, and we will no longer need to rely on bequests to fund the Reserve Fund.

- **The Vestry approved a motion** offered by Sam Lewis and seconded by Nathalie Bramson **to accept the Treasurer's Report.**
- **Special Presentation from Hospitality Commission** (Lacey Gude, chair):
 - Lacey walked the Vestry through the Hospitality Commission's **Recommendations, which are attached**, stressing the broad consultation process and hard work of the ten member Commission that made the report possible. It was also noted that Erin Hensley had played a very important role in the work of the Commission and has left a significant legacy in that regard.
 - As noted in the report, the budget required to implement the recommendations is \$14,134.00, which will cover the cost of name tags, two custom designed mahogany buffet style cabinets with marble top insets for the narthex and matching framed display boards to blend with those already hanging in the narthex. This amount could be taken from undesignated memorial funds, whose donors would be appropriately recognized with a plaque in the narthex.
 - **The vestry approved a motion** by Nathalie Bramson and seconded by Kammie Hedges **to implement the Commission's report.**
- **Vestry and Diocesan Delegates Nominating Committee** (Bob Woolfolk, chair):
 - Bob Woolfolk lauded the committee (Marc Fetterman, Kammie Hedges, Sam Lewis, and Bob Woolfolk) for its work. He noted that more than a month is really required to complete the nomination process in a thoughtful way. Attention was called to the fact that the By-Laws call for starting the process in January and the requirements for alternates triggered a good discussion of how the process could be improved. Bob also suggested that a larger committee might know a broader spectrum of parishioners which could benefit the process.
 - **The Vestry approved a motion by Bob Woolfolk and seconded by Jennifer Martin to adopt the committee's report. A copy of the report is attached.**
 - Scott informed everyone that there would be an orientation for continuing Vestry and new Vestry members on May 16th and that Jim Sottile has offered to host a supper for Vestry members and their spouses/partners.
 - Later in the meeting, Danette Gentile Kauffman raised the issue of nomination for the Youth Representative to the Vestry and the need to "institutionalize" this function. Scott noted that Jennifer Martin and the Youth Committee would address this issue. Jennifer observed that a key issue will be whether the Youth Representative election is on cycle with the Vestry or keyed to the school year. The current Youth Representative, Oliver Eid, stated that he would have no problem serving until next year, if that is required by whatever action the Committee recommends.

Junior Warden's Report (Jim Sottile):

- **Satterlee Hall Boiler:** Everyone welcomed the good news that insurance will cover all but \$2,800 of the \$33,000 repair bill.

- **Satterlee Hall Roof Solar Panels:**

Jim reminded the Vestry of its previous approval of an arrangement whereby St. Alban's would not own the solar panels but rather Sun Edison would pay for and maintain them; this arrangement would result in only modest utility cost savings for the church but would have good environmental value. However, before any action on the panels can be taken, two other factors must be addressed:

- 1) replacement of the flat roof on which the panels will be located and
- 2) a determination that the roof is, in fact, structurally sound enough to support the panels. Jim has obtained a bid of \$18,000 to replace the roof and is waiting for a second bid to come in. He also informed the Vestry that both bidders have been asked to coordinate their bids with Sun Edison and a structural engineer will assess the roof's ability to support the panels.

Jim offered the following **motion, which was seconded by Bob Woolfolk and approved** after discussion: **The Vestry authorizes replacement of the flat roof on the rear of Satterlee Hall based on two estimates from roofers at a cost not to exceed \$20,000; however, this work will not proceed until the Property Committee is satisfied with an engineering review that the roof is structurally sound to support the proposed solar panels.**

Discussion clarified the following points: 1) Jim believes that the cost of the engineer's review would be included in the proposed \$20,000.00 budget. 2) This roof replacement will not affect the discussed longer-term Satterlee renovation. 3) Energy costs could appreciate, which would result in a larger savings if we have proceeded with a "fixed energy cost" contract now. 4) An adjacent small flat roof, over the east staircase, is showing signs of deterioration and will be replaced during this project.

- **2008 Cost Adjustments:** Jim flagged pending cost adjustments to the 2008 financial statement: 1) final settlement with Pepco of the electricity bill; 2) posting of some credit card bills; 3) compliance with recommendations from the two recent audits involving "modified cash basis accounting."
- **Enhanced Vanguard Money Market Account:** \$400,000 of a \$600,000 bequest currently in a non-interest bearing account at PNC Bank will be moved into the Church's Vanguard Money Market Account, bringing the total in that account to \$500,000.

Senior Warden's Report (Kate Bouve):

- **Parish Planning Retreat:** Kate announced that 40 people are signed up for the Planning Retreat scheduled for March 20-21 and that she has received a good agenda from the facilitator. She will ensure that everyone has copies of the summaries of the first two meetings. Three priorities for the Planning Session include: 1) taking stock of progress made on implementation of past goals and activities commitments; 2) introducing future need of a renovation of Satterlee Hall to better support our ministry; and 3) strengthening our community through clearer articulation and consciousness of the connections between the goals set out by the planning process and spiritual development.
- **Annual Meeting:** Kate flagged the date of April 15 to submit reports required to inform and support the Annual Meeting on May 3, 2009.

Rector's Report (Scott Benhase):

- **Diana Smith Memorial:** Diana has established an endowment fund gift of approximately \$300,000, which is to focus on “spiritual growth.” Diana was able to give considerable thought and have discussions with clergy about this before her death. Scott and Tim will prepare a formal proposal for the Vestry's next meeting, which will reflect Diana's thoughts and views on the kind of activities her gift could underwrite.
- **WSA:** WSA President Joanne Brainard informed the Vestry that from now on the Rector, Associate Rector and the Wardens would be included in distribution of the WSA Minutes, a decision welcomed by all.
- **Summer Intern:** Suzanne Toro, a senior at General Theological Seminary, will serve an internship at St. Alban's this summer. Tim is coordinating housing and needs a place the last three weeks in June. Scott distributed Suzanne's CV and noted that she is “gifted” and also comes highly recommended by Frank Wade.
- **Erin's Replacement:** Three “terrific” candidates are under consideration and have been interviewed by Lacey, Jennifer and Kate, who have also been very impressed. The decision will be made by mid-April and brought to the Vestry for approval.
- **Teaching duties for Scott:** Virginia Theological Seminary has asked Scott to teach in a three-week program this summer (last week of June and first two weeks of July). Tim will be in charge during Scott's absence.
- **Survey Monkey:** 75 young adults, contained in a list prepared by Erin, were surveyed with a 50% return response. The results include the following:
 - 60% desire bible study
 - 79% advocate “Theology on Tap”
 - “Regular attendance” is defined as once a month
 - Group has almost no free time
 - 40% have been attending St. Alban's less than one year
 - 53% go to the 11:15 service with 20% each to 9:15 and 5:30
 - majority would like to sponsor a Habitat House

Old Business

- **Ramp:** Marc Fetterman reported that Historic Preservation Office is happy with the plans and that suggested changes will result in cost savings.
- **Arts and Memorials:** Marc reported that there are 16 pieces of “orphan art” and no luck in finding other institutions interested in them. “Plan B” is to consider giving some of the pieces to the Op Shop or perhaps to the Gala Auction.
- **Archives:** Marc reported an estimated \$500.00 is needed as a next step to support organization and boxing of the archives currently the upper story of the Rectory.
- **Plaques:** Sam Lewis commended Ron Hicks on the handsome plaque for the elevator and noted the need to retrieve the bell rope, which has disappeared into the ceiling of the narthex.

Compline

Executive Session: The Vestry meeting was adjourned so that members could meet in Executive Session.

Stephanie Smith Kinney, Secretary