

Statements by Candidates for Vestry and Diocesan Delegate -- 2017

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of candidates for elected office (candidates are listed in the random order in which they will appear on the ballot):

Candidates for Vestry (four to be elected for a three-year term)

Lucy Fraser
Brett West
Emily DiBari
Jane Schubert
Adrienne Allison
Michele Bond
Heather Sondel
Anton Vanterpool

Candidates for Diocesan Delegate (one to be elected for a two-year term)

Ted Swett
Alexandra Todd

All candidates were asked to respond to three questions in a written statement of 350 to 400 words. The questions were:

- 1. How long have you been part of St. Alban's and what activities or ministries feed you spiritually?*
- 2. What professional experience and personal strengths would you bring to your position if elected?*
- 3. As a lay leader in the church, you must work with people of diverse views and backgrounds. Share an experience you have had in this regard, if possible. What in your experience prepares you to work effectively with the entire parish community?*

The candidates' responses are found in this packet and on the St. Alban's website.

Candidates' Forum – May 21, 10:30 a.m. in Trenbath

Election – June 4



Lucy Fraser

Candidate for Vestry

My name is Lucy Fraser and I'm honored to be considered for a position on St. Alban's Vestry. I've been attending St. Alban's Parish since 2000 when I joined the Sunday evening Fellowship Group gatherings.

I love being part of our parish life and contributing in ways where I may best be of service. As a member of the Flower Guild, as well as the Building & Grounds Committee, I've recently assumed the lead with the Garden Guild and am implementing landscaping improvements with the invaluable guidance of Sandy Flowers, Director of Horticulture for The Washington Cathedral. I was raised by passionate gardeners, and I find "digging in the earth" to be immensely gratifying and spiritually enriching. One truly witnesses the cycle of life, death and renewal in the changing seasons of a garden.

My professional background is diverse, with 20 years in commercial real estate, ranging from property and asset management to leasing and acquisitions and leading to my current work in residential sales. Each of my roles has required skills in effective time management, negotiation, risk assessment, personnel management, and the ability to make timely decisions.

My education, which includes an MBA in Finance and Real Estate from George Washington University and a Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communications from VCU, prepared me to work with a range of stakeholders throughout my career - boards of directors, investors, government officials and civic groups.

For the past six years, I've served on the Board of Directors for Sutton Place Condominium Association, where I live, including two years as President. Sutton is a large community with numerous property management challenges. Given the scope of the buildings and landscaped acreage, as well as managing expectations of a diverse group of homeowners, I'm proud of the contributions I have made.

I believe in a balanced and fair approach to resolving issues and respecting differences of opinion. I look forward to serving, developing positive and constructive relationships and working to enhance and enrich the mission of St. Alban's Parish.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Brett West

Candidate for Vestry

We came to St Alban's two years ago by way of House Hunters: The Church Episode. After nearly a decade at our previous parish, we needed a place with greater growth opportunity for our wee one. We endeavored to find fellowship, superb sermons and diverse opportunities to enrich our walk with God. We found one church too cold, another too hot. St. Alban's was just right.

Involvement in Children's Chapel has helped our daughter grow from meek to bold; silent to singing; held to breaking free; announcing her name loudly in a group. My soul is fed seeing her grow with Jesus and God.

If I am called to serve, I willingly accept because St Alban's feeds me in so many ways.

For 22 years, I worked in strategic corporate communications and public affairs, and for the past decade, I've been a licensed residential Realtor. I'm a writer, trainer/ teacher, negotiator, project manager. I'm accountable, organized and creative. Highlights include taking cumbersome, complex issues to create palatable, succinct explanations. My commitment brings many options for consideration. If information is power, decision makers are most powerful when they have options.

In my career, there are no boundaries for the people with whom I work. They span all races, ethnicities and sexual orientation. My business mirrors my personal life. It is my task to help negotiate through some pretty sticky situations. It is always emotional for my clients. And it is sometimes emotional for me. But professionalism and a commitment to serving as a happy medium places my emotion at the end of the task, once it has been resolved for better or for worse.

Growing up gay in a very conservative family, I had strict requirements of myself, my friends and family each step of my coming out. And I use those same strict principles in how we remain engaged. We may - and we will - have points of disagreement. But if we understand and respect our commonalities, the values we share in the bigger picture, we are most likely to come together and find resolve. Diversity always brings a new way of seeing the world. Understanding what we have in common helps us identify and reach end goals together.



Emily DiBari

Candidate for Vestry

I am a working mother of two children (Ford, 10 months and Chet, 3). Along with my husband, Chester, we discovered St. Alban's when I was pregnant with Chet. I was immediately taken by the love our parish has among its congregants. For me, St. Alban's is much more than a place for worship; it's a place for personal reflection, fellowship, and spiritual rejuvenation.

My goal in serving as an elected member of the Vestry is to help St. Alban's be a place of comfort and growth, like it is to me, for all who enter. I adore the vibrancy of our community, not only young families and youth, but also parishioners who have enjoyed a few more trips around the sun than me. These individuals are the backbone of this parish. I think the work we do as Vestry members should always strive to make St. Alban's a place of enrichment, enlightenment, and fulfillment for all--young and old, weak and strong, sick and well, rich and poor.

I have previously served as senior youth Sunday School teacher and Co-Chair of the St. Alban's Gala and Silent Auction. Currently, I serve as the Vestry Secretary. As a Vestry member, supporting the various ministries will be a vital tenet to my service to St. Alban's. Our ministry work is a key component to the responsibility we have as a Christian community. I value the opinions and input from all Parishioners. The myriad of opinions and perspectives must be celebrated as they are the fabric of our strong and resilient tapestry. I hope as a Vestry member, people will share those thoughts with me so I can use them to make the best decisions possible to keep St. Alban's a place of comfort and growth for all who enter.



Jane G. Schubert (Woolfolk)

Candidate for Vestry

My experience in parish ministry at St. Alban's (23 years) and other parishes (10 years), together with my professional vocation (40 years) in international development, complement one another to meet four key responsibilities of a vestry member – leadership; management; governance; caring for worship life of parish.

I strive to deepen my spiritual and theological life in anything I undertake, such as: study (e.g. core curriculum, Wednesday bible study, monthly gatherings of Benedictine cell); ministry (e.g. Washington Home, lay reader, delivering homilies); or committee (e.g. GWW, Governance, TLC/DC, Transformation Grants). Each represents a 'call' to listen, learn, and 'do,' praying the action reflects gratitude and my relationship with a loving God.

My professional vocation is dedicated to education – domestically and globally. I managed large-scale, multi-partner projects in the USA, Africa and Egypt. The focus was to improve the quality of teaching and learning for disenfranchised groups of children (e.g. gender; economic circumstances, ethnicity). Examples of skills required to lead and manage such projects include: strategic planning and long-range vision; bringing people from diverse backgrounds and interests to the 'table'; recognizing that each has something to give and each has something to receive; reaching common ground; closing activities within budget and on schedule; and examining my own motivations.

For three years, I led the reconstituted Outreach Committee (mission & ministry outside the parish walls) to facilitate ongoing outreach ministries. A broader, more challenging mandate was to produce an integrated, deeper approach to outreach. This "rethink" resulted in a new governing structure, that represented a coordinated, planful approach (WSA; Gala; Mustard Seed; Operating Budget) to outreach mission and ministry. Our activities included a parish survey, and an overview of mission funding from 2009-2013. The overview shows trends, sources, and focus of funding from: WSA; Mustard Seed; Gala and the Operating Budget (the analysis reflects trends by population; type of ministry & geography). The vestry-approved (2014) governing structure is God's Work in the World and a ministry mission to "Transform the Lives of Children through Education."

As a member of the Welcome committee to greet our priest-in-charge, I was moved by the energy and fellowship of our gatherings. How important it is for all of us to actively engage in a climate of parish hospitality to one another, especially to new members, to live and grow together in a fellowship of faith!



Adrienne Allison

Candidate for Vestry

One year ago, I reaffirmed my baptismal vows in the Cathedral. In this affirmation, I repeated several times “I will, with God’s help”. A few weeks later, I was elected to a one year term on the vestry. I would like to express my deep appreciation to everyone who put their faith in me, perhaps anticipating the tumult we were about to encounter. For the next few months, I repeated over and over – “I will with God’s help”. Today, we witness together that God has indeed helped us – and give thanks.

For the past forty years, St. Albans has been my “shelter from the stormy seas”. Mercifully, I did not wander in the wilderness but returned again and again to the St. Alban’s community and the worship service that sustained me. And give thanks.

As I look around me, I remember mothers of parishioners who have died, and whose families have continued to sustain us, the curly haired beautiful little girl who grew up to sing in the choir, the vestry members in the 1980’s – with whom I served – who faithfully continue to support us, the lay leaders whose bequests enrich our worship – and again, give thanks. I have participated in many ministries. Perhaps the most humbling and empowering ministry has been volunteering with the Opportunity Shop, serving the strangers who come in, and ennobling them by serving them.

I am standing for election again this year. It is important to maintain continuity and to focus on the love we have for each other. Together we will rebuild and move forward to greater strengths than we have ever known.



Michele Thoren Bond

Candidate for Vestry

I was a Stoddert second-grader when my family joined St. Alban's in 1960, old enough to enthusiastically enjoy singing in the choir and going to Sunday school. I was confirmed at St. Alban's about 50 years ago, and Cliff and I were married here in 1982. When we were not serving overseas we were active members of the church; our four children benefited from St. Alban's many youth programs, and the kind guidance of fellow parishioners, as they grew.

I have been fortunate to participate in a variety of parish activities through the years, as a Sunday school teacher, altar guild member, lay reader and member of the handbell choir. For several years, thanks to a referral from a fellow parishioner, I volunteered as a literacy tutor. Cliff and I also enjoy Foyers.

As a retired diplomat, I have decades of experience working with others to develop and implement good solutions to various challenges. I am temperamentally programmed to listen to others' concerns, to seek common ground, and to stay focused on common goals. During tours in Central America, central Europe and Africa, I knew wise, good people whose personal histories were completely different from mine. They are linked in my mind to people like the Good Samaritan, reminders that virtues like character, resourcefulness, determination and charity are not limited to a narrow range of cultures, or to "people like us."

I am proud of St. Alban's long history of active, positive engagement to eliminate the economic and social barriers that limit life's options for many in our community and our country; we must continue to lead in these areas. I also believe we must build on initiatives like the Stephen Ministry, to support each other through difficult personal circumstances. I would like St. Alban's to be a place where we learn to identify and change patterns of thought and behavior that create conflict in our personal lives -- to explore the practical details that would help make our sincere wish to live together in peace a reality.

It would be an honor to work on these and other challenges as a member of the Vestry.



Heather Sondel

Candidate for Vestry

Hello St. Alban's. My name is Dr. Heather Sondel and I have enjoyed being a part of St. Alban's Church for the past five years. I was first introduced to this wonderful place when my son started at the St. Alban's Early Childhood Center. We were newcomers, but immediately my whole family felt welcomed not only by the school, but by the entire St. Alban's community. Being on campus daily, we would be greeted by both clergy and Church staff, and I was able to witness first-hand the St. Alban's commitment to "God's Work in the World" via youth outreach, Sunday School, luncheons for Seniors, the Opportunity Shop, the holiday Blanket and Wreath sales and First Wednesday celebrations.

My family and I are drawn to St. Alban's Church's thoughtful spirituality and discourse, its revered traditions and its mission to support the greater community through service under God. We have attended both the traditional and the Spanish-language services on Sundays. As a parishioner, I support our Church's calling to unite all of its people together under one house in the name of Christ. Ours is a diverse community, varied in cultures, ideas and backgrounds, but we are united by our common belief – the belief that through God, all things are possible. As a member of the Vestry, I will continue to support St. Alban's many traditions and work to ensure that the community has a safe place to worship, to share and to celebrate. I will strengthen our relationship with the Harriet Tubman School, seek out new partnerships through Youth Ministry and promote unity among our current congregation.

These are some of the personal reasons that I have chosen to make St. Alban's Church a central part of my life. I bring many professional strengths to the community as well. I am a school administrator in Fairfax County, Virginia. I lead a staff of 200 educators, 2200 local and international students and I have vast experience managing budgets, implementing policies and organizing large scale events. I speak Spanish, and as such I am accessible to varied populations and cultures. I have been elected to national boards, served on the Executive Committee and helped develop and manage a local non-profit theater arts group. I believe in the mission of St. Alban's Church and I believe that I can make a positive contribution to this outstanding community as a member of the Vestry.



Anton Vanterpool II

Candidate for Vestry

Since 1989, St Alban's has been a vital part of my spiritual nurture and personal development. As an active member of five Episcopal Churches since 1989, I feel truly blessed to be a member.

In my journey, I have developed several gifts of the Spirit. As a member of the St. Alban's choir, while singing, I am moved by the Spirit through Exhortation to inspire and motivate others to praise and worship. Next, as a lay leader I enjoy the gift of Service with our Church School team and Stewardship Committee. I volunteer at Diocesan conventions and meetings. Lastly, I have used my gift of Administration helping job seekers through hosting Career Confidence meetings.

Professionally, I had the honor and privilege to retire from the United States Air Force, after 20 years of dedicated service as a Captain. In this capacity, I was responsible for IT Communications and overseeing units of up to 20 people. As a Toastmaster for over 25 years, I have worked on my communications and leadership skills while serving in various leadership roles within eight Toastmaster districts. Today, I work for the Department of Defense with a focus on Cybersecurity.

Personally, my strengths include but not limited to; Collaborator, Analytical, Harmony, and Learner. Through these experiences, I have matured spiritually, worked diligently and served passionately.

As a Toastmasters leader, I have learned the art of conflict resolution and developed active listening skills. As a former Area Director, I met with club leaders regularly. We were coordinating a speech contest. One club was scheduling a special event for the same day and time as the contest. I listened to their concern and recommended that they bring the matter to our next Area Council meeting. At the meeting, we listened to the club leaders and decided to change the speech contest date. The decision showed how we, as Toastmasters, support our clubs and members in a collaborative environment. I offer both my Military and Toastmasters experiences, identifying ways to serve our diverse, multicultural, and multi-generational communities. I will offer insight through my expertise of outreach and education. Finally, I have learned to incorporate the discipline of seeking first to understand, intently and patiently listening to God and listening to the needs of our community, Is 32:3.



Trevor (Ted) Swett

Candidate for Diocesan Delegate

My wife Ann and I joined St. Alban's about six years ago. We came from another Episcopal church in the area, where we were parishioners for about 25 years and our now grown-up son and daughter were baptized. When we came to St. Alban's, I found myself drawn to become more actively involved in church life, joining the Grate Patrol and becoming a lay reader.

I am a candidate for Diocesan Delegate. I see the position as an opportunity to learn more about the broader church and help strengthen connections between our parish and others in the diocese. As I've grown older, I've come to place more importance on the institutional church as the vessel through which we pass along our faith, our traditions, and (not least) our music. These things nourish people in our materially rich but spiritually impoverished world, so it behooves us to take care of the broader church as well as our own parish.

As for working with people of diverse kinds and views: As an Army brat, I made new friends every couple of years when we moved from post to post. The place I lived the longest was El Salvador, where my school instructed the kids in Spanish and English in all subjects. This and later residence in Nicaragua left me with an affinity for Latin Americans and a love of the Spanish language, though my fluency has waned somewhat. When I went away to school in Massachusetts at age 14, I had a lesson in how people of goodwill sometimes disagree deeply, almost fundamentally. I had come from an Army base in Georgia, where my dad had just returned from commanding a battalion in Viet Nam, to a school and region that were aflame with enthusiasm for Gene McCarthy's antiwar campaign. The lesson has stood me in good stead, as I've spent most of my adult life as a litigation attorney -- which means interacting almost daily with people who disagree with me!

I would like to help St. Alban's flourish. If our parish thinks I can contribute by serving as Diocesan Delegate, I pledge my best efforts in that role.



Alexandra Todd

Candidate for Diocesan Delegate

I joined St. Alban's at the age of 18 in 1984 after being baptized and confirmed at Kent School where I attended high school. I attended off and on in-between time at college, in Peace Corps and other assignments overseas. I returned to St. Alban's more regularly in 2001 when I returned to live in Washington permanently. I have been involved with Children's Chapel and other children's ministries since my daughter Emily was born in 2004 followed by her brother in 2006. Since that time, the St. Alban's community has seen me through many challenging and heartbreaking as well as many very wonderful times and I can honestly say that I would not be here as happy as I am in one piece without St. Alban's.

Professionally, I have worked in International Health and Development for over 25 years and am proud to work for the US Agency for International Development for over 14 years now. I am quite sure that my diplomatic skills as well as those in community development and consensus building will help me work with St. Alban's diverse community and I look forward being part of the lay leadership during this very exciting time in the Parish.