

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Minutes of Vestry Meeting
Tuesday – April 19, 2016 – 6:30 pm
Nourse Hall

Vestry Officers Present: The Rev. Dr. Deborah A. Meister, Deborah Potter (Senior Warden), Rich Turner (Junior Warden), Hollis McLoughlin (Treasurer), Tom Jansen (Secretary).

Vestry Members Present: Ivan Fermin, Marcy Fisher, Marcus King, Sandy Kolb, Tomás Montgomery, Ann Morrison, Donna Palmer, Ken Patterson, Joan Phalen, Marty Welch; Emma Morrison (Youth Representative).

Staff: The Revs. Emily Griffin and Debbie Kirk.

Others Present: Susan Morris (WSA Representative); approximately seven members of the Parish.

Call-to-Order: A meeting of the Vestry was called to order at 6:33 pm by the Rev. Dr. Deborah Meister. An opening prayer was offered by Donna Palmer.

Check-in Period: Rev. Meister offered kudos to the Gala organizers. Donna Palmer asked if anyone had information on a cultural diversity issue brought up during the meetings among parishioners discussing the book *Enrique's Journey* – during which there was discussion of a potential project to determine if St. Alban's parishioners who are attorneys could represent, on a *pro bono* basis, local undocumented immigrants seeking to become citizens. Deborah Meister said that Lauri Fitz-Pegado had done some work with KIND, a group seeking help for undocumented children who were entering the country as unaccompanied minors. Sandy Kolb said that we had trained some people, but the group never came forward with clients, so in the end there was no work for St. Albanites at this time. Kolb and Ken Patterson noted that there would be a number of jurisdictional issues involved, and that attorneys employed by the U.S Government would be precluded from participating in such a project.

Joan Phalen presented a document entitled "Written Recommendation of Additional Vestry Candidates" (Attachment A), by which a number of parishioners were nominating four candidates to be added to the slate of candidates for election to the Vestry, pursuant to Article III, Section 8, of the parish Bylaws. The additional candidates are Julie Clements-Smith, Mary Lou Savage, Sharon Whitehouse, and Adrienne Allison. It was agreed that the slate of candidates would be re-published to the Parish with these additional names included.

Approval of Minutes of March 15 Vestry Meeting: Sandy Kolb made a Motion, seconded by Tomás Montgomery, to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2016, Vestry meeting. Ken Patterson requested that the last sentence of the first full paragraph on page 3 be amended, so as to more accurately reflect what he had said, to read: "Patterson then apologized to Ms. Tate and Ms. Geyer, explaining that since the dismissal of Ms. Sutton he had received, along with

other Vestry members, a number of emails questioning their integrity, and had observed a number of Facebook posts from parishioners condemning the Church leadership, and he had let that affect him.” Joan Phalen requested a change to the penultimate sentence of the second full paragraph on page 3, to more accurately reflect what she had said, to read: “Phalen stated that she had lost faith and trust in the Rector and Vestry, and said several Vestry members had asked her to resign, but that was not the reason for her resignation.” Sandy Kolb requested the following third sentence be added to the first paragraph on page six: “Rev. Hanisian said he spent at least 35 hours a week with the youth.” Ann Morrison requested the last sentence of paragraph two on page 8 be revised to read: “Morrison said there could be another explanation for why Sonia was quiet in the Parish meeting.” Tomás Montgomery requested his statement on page 9 be clarified to read: “He said it was wrong to send accusatory emails to the children of St. Alban’s.” Rich Turner requested that his statement on page 9 be amended to read “There was a lack of understanding the context, he said, to the firing.” With these amendments, the Minutes were unanimously approved.

Consent Agenda:

Parish Weekend Committee – Marcus and Megan King will again lead the planning for the Parish Weekend again this year, with the understanding that someone would commit to planning the Weekend in 2017 and could “shadow” them in planning this year’s event. He asked that anyone with ideas for a theme provide them to him as soon as possible.

Gala Committee – Ken Patterson reported that the Gala was a great success, with 145 people attending and 106 items auctioned off. Highlights for the live auction were Matthew Hanisian’s restored straight razor going for \$425, and Jim Quigley’s art raising \$2,700. Patterson estimated the Gala brought in approximately \$27,000. He offered thanks to all attendees, auction donors, monetary donors, and volunteers, and special thanks to Ann Morrison and Lisa Sams for coordinating the servers, and to Dennis and Robyn Gatens for coordinating the bartenders. Sandy Kolb expressed thanks to the Silver Strings, and especially to band member and parishioner Paul Loether, for providing musical entertainment for the event. It was noted that children’s art donated by Tubman school, which had decorated the dining room, would be auctioned by sealed bid this coming Sunday.

Associate/Assistant Clergy Reports – Reports from the Revs. Quigley, Griffin and Kirk (Attachments B-D) were moved for acceptance by Marty Welch; Ivan Fermin seconded the MOTION, and all present voted in favor.

Treasurer’s Report: Hollis McLoughlin provided a document entitled “2016 Financial Summary of Operating Activity for the first Quarter of FY 2016, Jan 1-Mar 31, 2016”. He noted the Endowment balance improved to \$3.4 million because of recent market gains. He reminded the Vestry that they had previously authorized special draws from the Endowment in order to balance the current budget. One of those draws, for \$109,000, has not yet been taken and may not need to be taken in full, as a result of the District of Columbia’s downward adjustment to the recent water bill, and Rev. Hanisian’s departure. McLoughlin noted that the number of

parishioners pre-paying their pledges is down from the previous year, perhaps because the stock market was down at the end of last year. McLoughlin said that he is closely tracking whether those pledges are now being paid weekly, and urged the Vestry to take care to maintain discipline on expenditures. He noted that the Reserve Fund is down to \$502,000 and may decline further to \$460,000 when we make the final payment for the Satterlee Hall boiler replacement, but that by Vestry resolution the Reserve Fund should be maintained at \$600,000. Donna Palmer remarked that Director of Finance Douglas Dykstra is concerned that the fund is low. McLoughlin presented a proposed engagement letter to the audit firm (Hozik and Company) that will conduct the 2015 Parish audit beginning in June 2016, and requested Vestry approval of the letter. He noted the Vestry has already budgeted \$15,600 to pay for the audit. Sandy Kolb made a MOTION, seconded by Tomás Montgomery, to approve the engagement letter, and all present voted in favor. Ann Morrison raised the question of how long the same firm should perform the church audit. McLaughlin said Hozik has been used for several years and he would look into whether it is time to consider another firm.

Governance Committee: Ken Patterson provided a Report of the Governance Committee, dated April 19, 2016 (Attachment E). Patterson made a MOTION that the Report be accepted; Tomás Montgomery seconded the MOTION and all present voted in favor. Patterson explained that the Report sets forth the Committee's purpose and performance; expands its scope of work beyond the original charge from the Vestry; and expresses the intention of coordinating closely with the ad hoc Human Resources Committee. It also explains that the Committee's work would be forward- looking, although informed by past events. In response to a question from Marcy Fisher, Patterson noted that the Committee anticipates recommending that a mutual ministry review not take place until such actions as recommended by the Committee and enacted by the Vestry have been in effect for at least six months. He further noted that, as he had informed the Vestry during a prior meeting, virtually all authorities recommend against conducting such reviews during the period in which a parish is in turmoil. Patterson said that if directed by the Vestry the Governance Committee report could modify the timing of its report. Marcy Fisher and Joan Phalen both stressed the importance of having the Committee complete its work as soon as possible.

In response to a question from Marcy Fisher, Rev. Meister reported that the Committee on Reconciliation, being led by Suzy Mink, was in place and has four non-Vestry members.

Human Resources Committee: Marcus King reported that the *ad hoc* Human Resources Committee, which he is chairing, consists of Vestry member Ann Morrison as well as parishioners Kathryn Booker, Lisa Birchard, and Tony Quainton. He explained that the Committee's charge is to help prepare for a staff management review and to define roles and responsibilities of staff; this work should be completed by September 2016. A second charge is to identify tools for performance reviews and establishing best practices; in doing this, they will look to other parishes and outside organizations rather than try to reinvent the wheel. In addition, the Committee plans to develop a code of conduct for staff members who are also parishioners. King expects to have an Interim Report by the June 5 Parish Annual Meeting. Joan Phalen asked if the HR Committee is receiving assistance from the Diocese, and King said there had been discussions

with Diocesan staff, who provided the Committee with a 500-page book on Human Resources practices. Ann Morrison stated she is aware of parishioners' desire to have tangible information about progress, and indicated that the Committee would be meeting three times in the coming six weeks. But she pointed out that all this work is being done by volunteers who have limited time available, and that anxious parishioners need to understand this.

Discussion of Special Parish Meeting: Rev. Meister invited discussion about the recent Special Meeting. Joan Phalen said she was greatly disappointed with the Meeting, and believed it a huge step backward. She said it was mean-spirited of a parishioner to call Ruth Cline out of order for not talking directly to the Resolutions when another parishioner had been permitted to go on about nothing related to the matter at hand. Phalen expressed dismay that Mary Shaffran had been informed several days before the Meeting that she was not going to be allowed to introduce a Resolution as planned, because her baptismal records were not on file with the Parish. Rev. Meister explained that it was she who had contacted Shaffran because while checking to ensure the Meeting could proceed in order she had discovered that Shaffran's baptismal information appeared to not be on record, which meant that she was not a Parish Member able to introduce the Resolution. Rev. Meister said she asked Shaffran to provide baptism information so that she could introduce the resolution, or else find another sponsor. When Shaffran responded that she had furnished the information earlier, the Parish record was updated to reflect Shaffran's status as a Member, allowing her to introduce the Resolution.

Ken Patterson commented that he is not in favor of running the parish by resolutions, and he takes no pleasure in "winning". He suggested that many of the Resolutions may have been defeated because the majority of parishioners are tired of the conflict. Joan Phalen said she believes people should have been treated more kindly. Marcy Fisher said that people should try to understand the value of Joan Phalen's and others' perspectives. Speaking from the floor, parishioner Lin Tate stated that a number of people on both sides worked very hard to try to come together on the Resolutions, but there is a lack of a sense of community in the Parish. Rev. Meister noted that she saw grace in the fact that as the times prescribed for the Special Meeting expired the overwhelming majority of participants voted twice to extend the time to allow the Meeting to conclude the scheduled business.

Junior Warden's Report: Rich Turner thanked Bob Witten for his efforts in obtaining and arranging for installation of the new sign in front of Satterlee Hall and thanked the Flower Guild for providing the funding for it. Work on the Satterlee Hall boiler is finishing up, but there have been a few setbacks. Extra equipment, including replacement valves, was needed to do the job correctly. He noted that some old equipment being taken out is sought to be repurposed. Turner announced he was seeking volunteers to repaint the upstairs of Satterlee Hall during the last two weeks of August after the St. Alban's Early Childhood Center (SAECC) has moved out. Rev. Meister reported that the departure date negotiated with SAECC was July 15, but that the new site for SAECC had recently fallen through and although SAECC has found a replacement facility it hasn't yet received proper permits from the District, which is why they are seeking to extend their occupancy. They had asked to use the basement of Satterlee Hall for a short period if the permits are not obtained in time for a July 15 move, but this will not be possible because the

rooms are being used by the Teddy Bear Camp. Rich Turner pointed out that the parish has about \$20,000 of painting that needs to be done, and he hopes that work by volunteers can help defray that cost. Finally, Turner reported that the Satterlee Hall men's room is being repaired.

Senior Warden's Report:

Nominating Committee Report – Deborah Potter pointed out that May 6 is the deadline for nominations by petition to the Vestry. Candidate Statements and photos need to be submitted by that date so they can be translated into Spanish and circulated to the Parish. Emma Morrison volunteered that she and other youths could assist in translating the documents. Potter noted that Sunday Candidate Forums are scheduled for May 22 and May 29, when each candidate's statement will be videotaped for posting on the website. Candidates who cannot attend either one of those dates can have statements videotaped by Potter ahead of time for presentation at a Candidate Forum.

Strategic Plan Update – Deborah Potter provided a document entitled "Implementation Plan and Monitoring of St. Alban's Strategic Thinking" (Attachment F). Sandy Kolb said that a May 8 Sunday Forum will brainstorm in small groups for ideas on the five focus areas. She noted that there will not be a Strategic Plan, but instead a document calling for Strategic Thinking that can be tied to the planning and budgeting process will be presented for approval at the May Vestry meeting.

Rector's Report: Rev. Meister reported highlights from her written Rector's Report, which is here reproduced in its entirety:

Rector's Report: April 2016

Liturgical:

- ⊕ This month included Holy Week, followed by another big Sunday to honor the conclusion of our time with the Rev. Matthew Hanisian.
- ⊕ Holy Week went well thanks to the dedication of Laura Weiss, Charles Porter and the clergy staff, who worked with significantly less lead time or certainty than we usually have for that season. We adopted a bilingual format for the blessing of the palms (on Palm Sunday), which was received well. Thanks to Ann and Jim Nix for leading our Maundy Thursday dinner.
- ⊕ I have preached, celebrated, or assisted in twelve Sunday services, in addition to five midweek ones. We also had a baptism.
- ⊕ We are using the Sundays in Easter to introduce the focus areas of the strategic plan in sermons and parishioner testimonials.

Pastoral:

- ⊕ The parish extends its condolences to parishioner Katie Wilson, head of the Flower Guild, on the death of her husband, Stephen May.
- ⊕ The WSA hosted a beautiful reception to thank the volunteers who people the Opportunity Shop.
- ⊕ I made ten pastoral visits and led one session of baptism preparation.
- ⊕ The parish Gala was a joyful event, well-attended, and gives promise of raising a substantial sum to assist children at St. Savior's School, the Hope and Resurrection School, St. Philip's Early Childhood Development Center, and the Harriet Tubman School. Thank you to the Gala committee: Emily DiBari, Ken Patterson, Sandy Kolb, Abby Davis, Katie Wilson, Dudley Winthrop, Laura Ingersoll, and Tom Jansen for a job well and graciously done.

Personnel:

- ⊕ The Rev. Matthew Hanisian and seminarian Samantha Gottlich concluded their time with us on April 3rd.
- ⊕ I have met with John Wimberly, Jr., about leading a team-building retreat for the staff. He will be meeting with the staff to conduct confidential one-on-ones on Tuesday, April 26th and Wednesday, April 27th. The retreat itself has been set for May 11th. John has agreed to report to the vestry at our May meeting on how we can work together to support the staff. Mr. Wimberly is a retired Presbyterian pastor and a former consultant with the Alban Institute; he is the author of *The Business of the Church: The Uncomfortable Truth that Faithful Ministry Requires Effective Management and Mobilizing Congregations: How Teams Can Motivate Members and Get Things Done.*

Administrative:

- ⊕ After 162 years, St. Alban's Church has a sign! The sign is a gift from the Flower Guild, who give it to the glory of God with grateful acknowledgement of the many contributions of parishioners who appreciate beauty in worship. Thanks also to Bob Witten, who has supervised this project through design and permitting for more than two years.
- ⊕ I met with Donna Mason, Executive Director of the SAECC, about their move-out date. They are waiting to receive permits and licenses for their new location, and may not make the originally-agreed July 15th deadline. The Property Committee are trying to assess the availability of volunteer labor to paint and fix up the upstairs rooms for the Sunday School classes in the fall; that will determine the date by which the SAECC must leave our premises.
- ⊕ I was privileged to meet with pastor Danny Awad of the Baraka Bible Presbyterian Church in Bethlehem.
- ⊕ The Special Parish Meeting called for by petition was held on April 10th. I'd like to extend enormous thanks to parishioner Mary Kostel for serving as Parliamentarian at that meeting and for her work to prepare for it.
- ⊕ I spent nineteen hours in staff supervision and attended seven other meetings.

Formation:

- ⊕ Jim and I have begun the next session of the Core Curriculum and are at week five of six.
- ⊕ I also taught a session of the Wednesday Bible Study and have the first session of the adult inquirer's class.

Looking Ahead:

April 22-24	Eastertide Retreat at Holy Cross Monastery.
May 8	Youth Sunday. Preachers are Katie Shillman and Sophia Higgins.
May 14	Spring Confirmation 10:00 a.m. at the Cathedral.
May 15	Pentecost. Bilingual worship at 11:15.
May 22	Candidates Forum.
June 5	Annual Meeting and Vestry elections. Begin Summer Schedule: 8:00, 10:00, 11:00.
June 19	St. Alban's Day.

The meeting concluded at approximately 8:25 pm with prayer led by Rev. Meister.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Jansen, Secretary