



# ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

## Vestry Meeting Minutes

August 16, 2020

4-6 PM, Held via ZOOM Conference Call

**Attendees:** Jennifer Allen, Thomas Barbour, (Treasurer), Audrey Chapman, Kathleen De Mars, Broderick Greer, Leigh Grinstead, Bryant Harris, Michael Koechner, Richard Lawson, Toya Nelson, Meg Parish, Robin Paulson, Katie Pearson, Ilana Poley, Helen Richards, Shirley Traettino, (Finance Committee Member), Angie Thomson, Michael Vente, Mark Wherry

**Absent:** Elizabeth Drummond, David Rote

**Guests:** The Rev'd Yoimel Gonzalez Hernandez, Associate Rector, Saint Alban's Episcopal Church, Washington, DC; Evans Ousley, Director of Communications, Saint John's Cathedral

### Summary of actions taken:

- Approved Minutes of the June 14, 2020 Vestry Meeting
- Approved Executive Committee recommendation to authorize the Director of Operations to negotiate and ultimately sign a contract with Real Property Management to manage the Kimberly Apartments for 2021, contingent upon Saint John's counsel review and approval.
- Approved Finance Committee recommendation to approve a maximum budget of \$130,000 to design and install AV system, to be paid from Fund 8.

1. **Call to Order/Opening Prayer** - Leigh Grinstead/Richard Lawson – Richard opened the meeting with a prayer at 4:00 PM. He welcomed Vestry guests the Rev'd Yoimel Gonzalez Hernandez, and Evans Ousley.
2. **St John's Day Update** – Michael Vente – Michael introduced the plan for this year's **September 13, 2020** St. John's Day events, modified by the necessary health and safety requirements under COVID-19. On-line Services will be held at 10 AM, followed by several "Community without the Commute" – modeled gatherings hosted across the metro-area. In addition, five (5) outdoor groups of 10 each will gather on the Cathedral grounds at 1-2 PM for Evening Prayer service to celebrate St John's Day on Cathedral grounds. Plans are in the final developing stages and will be described in more detail in the August 21 **Voice**. On-site and remote gatherings will follow all local, state, CDC and Episcopal Diocese social distancing protocols. Those wishing to serve as hosts are encouraged to contact Helen, Katie, or Michael for more information. On-site registration will be limited to forty-five (45) individuals since a maximum of 50 is allowed on the Cathedral grounds.



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**3. Continuing the Conversation, Latinx Ministry, Guest, The Rev'd Yoimel Gonzalez Hernandez, Associate Rector, Saint Alban's Episcopal Church, Washington, DC** - Broderick Greer, Richard Lawson - Richard introduced guest, Rev'd Yoimel of St Alban's to discuss his experiences in establishing the Latinx Ministry. Rev'd Yoimel described the evolution of the Ministry beginning 15 years ago with the call from lay congregants to establish a Latino congregation at the National Cathedral. The opportunity arose to establish a place of worship responsive to the Latinx congregation at St Alban's. The original model developed as *"two separate congregations"*, one Spanish speaking and one established, traditional, English-speaking congregation, with separate parishioners, leadership, budgets, services, etc., with no integration between and among the congregations. Without Latinx representation on the Vestry the two congregations struggled to institutionalize the organizational elements of stewardship, governance, leadership, administrative actions, logistics, music and other elements which only heightened the divide. This model was unsustainable. Three years ago a new goal was developed to establish a *"One Congregation, Two Languages"* model, fully integrating Latinx and traditional, English-speaking congregations, within all parish ministries, including youth, music, stewardship, leadership, governance, formation and fully integrated pastoral duties among all priests with all parishioners. Lessons learned include the following:

- 1) avoid making assumptions about people;
- 2) bi-lingual services are not popular with either group and are now limited to a few specific services;
- 3) change takes time and patience;
- 4) development is a learning process involving changing expectations and compromise;
- 5) "small" ministries (flowers, music) are critically important and meaningful;
- 6) integrating "spaces" is important in establishing a sense of belonging and sharing;
- 7) population disbursement across the metro-DMV region means participation in week-day and week-night activities are difficult to maintain.

Reverend Yoimel noted that constant discernment is required for success, and he offered his best wishes and on-going support. Richard concluded with the following highlights:

- 1) small, core ministry elements may have big meaning to the congregants;
- 2) the Cathedral has experience with the first model, with the Sudanese congregation; finally,
- 3) the Vestry is asked to think critically about Latinx ministry issues, coupled with broader, long-term, sustainable membership growth and development issues. Further Vestry discussion is coming in October and November.



- 4. Canon Pastor's Report - Stewardship of Relationship – Katie Pearson –** Katie reported on the outreach “calling campaign” held recently. Initial outreach was focused on pledged members. Four hundred sixty-two (462) calls were made, resulting in 192 conversations, 32 subscriptions to the Voice, and 20 specific requests for clerical contact. Responses to the calls were positive, with the following observations: several parishioners expressed concerns about returning the on-site services and receiving holy communion; some expressed concern about homeless encampments. The call campaign also highlighted the need to address the data-base issues. Over 15,000 names are in the Cathedral data-base, and a massive effort is needed to clean, purge, update and maintain an effective and efficient system. The calls also confirmed a need for long term post-COVID video services. Michael and Leigh noted the importance of managing the data-base for on-going communications, pastoral and prayer services, fund-development, stewardship and the relationship with developing sustainable membership growth, as with the Latinx ministry. Data-base administration is an important administrative function that needs to be fully integrated as an on-going, fully-staffed management priority. Richard noted that the Cathedral has been working with a contractor to help with that database clean-up work, which will hopefully help Cathedral staff better interact with those for whom they have contact information.
  
- 5. Mutual Ministry Review – Leigh Grinstead and Richard Lawson –** Richard and Leigh presented the MMR Analysis, prepared by Senior Warden Leigh Grinstead and Junior Warden Micahel Vente. The analysis discusses the survey results, observed trends, subsequent analysis, and recommended next steps. (The assessment, completed in June and July, with 100% participation by the Vestry, and feedback from Richard, is included in the Vestry Packet.) Major themes that emerged from the survey are:

  - a. Concern about the wider SJC community, clergy and staff, and how to remain connected during, and following, the stress of COVID-19.
  - b. Well-being and work/life balance of staff and Clergy are important.
  - c. Vestry has an important role to protect the clergy so that the core gospel ministry of the Clergy and the Cathedral are supported.
  - d. Outreach and communications with congregants are critical. Congregants must be aware of, and feel connected to the comprehensive pastoral and social justice role of clergy and staff during this challenging time.
  - e. Goals for the Church and leadership are unclear, in part because of shifting priorities and administrative challenges during the pandemic.



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- f. More opportunities for Vestry members to connect socially and build deeper relationships through smaller group inter-action, break-out meetings, attention to physical and spiritual health and feelings, congregation out-reach and information sharing are needed.
- g. The MMR analysis suggests new metrics are needed to assess the effectiveness of communication, outreach, video, You-Tube, Facebook and other remote efforts which are now more likely to be permanent, core features.
- h. Further discussions are needed to consider strengthening community, Vestry social interaction, strategic development and annual goal-setting, evaluation metrics, and more robust communication strategic goals, action steps, and outcomes.

Richard discussed his goals for past three years.

- a. The profile for the dean's search called for a dean who is kind, which Richard takes as an important goal for his conversations with individuals and groups.
- b. Richard also tries to preach and interact with people in such a way that people sense that God is real."
- c. Early in his tenure, the primary goals were to reduce expenses and eliminate positions due to severe budget restraints, re-build administrative staff and develop management competencies relevant to new strategic goals and culture. Richard has now hired 12 of the 14 positions-almost 100% administrative turnover-which could have been just disastrous, but has led to supportive, productive and healthy organizational culture. These organizational goals are now finally being realized.
- d. With a new director of operations in place (Audrey Chapman) they created a five-year plan and stabilized expenses. The financial picture is now "stable, but not sustainable" (in the words of the treasurer).

Richard concluded by saying that he believes the two biggest opportunities for the Cathedral in addition to stewardship of resources and buildings is a strategy for increasing the racial diversity of the Cathedral (perhaps adding a Latinx service and/or programming) and, after COVID 19, becoming an in-person and on-line community for worship and programs (hence the need for the new A/V system for the nave).

### **6. Director of Operations' and Treasurer's Report - Audrey Chapman, Tom Barbour**

- a. 2020 Quarter 2 Financials – Audrey presented Second Quarter highlights, noting a stable and healthy financial picture, despite COVID – related challenges, as summarized in the Financial Statements of the Second Quarter, included in the Vestry Packet:
  - i. Total revenues are up
  - ii. Pledged revenues are up
  - iii. Non-Pledged revenues are down slightly
  - iv. As expected, Plate revenues are down
  - v. Other income is down, as revenue-generated activities have ended





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Burbage, James Taurman and Michelle Hurd. The committee will now turn its attention to recruiting Vestry nominees for 2021. A diverse listing of 30 individuals has been compiled and the committee will be reaching out to speak with these people in the coming months. This list includes diversity by ages, representation by age, genders, race and professional experience.

### **9. Information**

- a. Annual Liability Insurance Renewal (In Packet)
- b. Minutes, Finance Committee Meeting, June 9, 2020
- c. Email Record Vote Regarding Quitclaim Deed for Dean's House

### **10. Consent Agenda –**

- a. Minutes, Vestry Meeting, June 14, 2020

**11. Prayers –** Broderick led the closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM