

**Minutes of the Vestry
St. Mark's Church Capitol Hill
April 20, 2008
Adams Room
Approved May 18, 2008**

Present:

<i>Clergy:</i>	Paul Roberts Abernathy, Rector Kay Johnson, Interim Associate Rector
<i>Warden:</i>	Louise Walsh, Senior Warden
<i>Vestry:</i>	Kenn Allen, Doris Burton, Joe Calizo, Kristen Hartke, Don Mosher, Bruce Sherman, Susan Thompson-Hoffman, Mary Lee Watts
<i>Register:</i>	Susan Sedgewick
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Kathryn Powers
<i>Human Resources:</i>	Ed Cousins
<i>Counsel:</i>	Rosemary Harold

Absent:

<i>Warden:</i>	Jim Michael, Junior Warden
<i>Manciple:</i>	Jack Richards

The Rector convened the meeting at 1:15. Bruce Sherman offered the opening prayer. Kay Johnson, Susan Thompson-Hoffman and Joe Calizo were welcomed to their first meeting. Seminarian Helen White was also in attendance as an observer.

Paul Abernathy distributed copies of a letter to the Vestry from the David Dill family.

Agenda Items:

Nametag Initiative

Jane Michael joined the meeting to discuss the Hospitality Committee's Nametag Initiative. She reported she and Michelle Strange had discussions and a focus group with newcomers. These yielded that knowing names would help integrate newcomers into our community. The nametags are to be made available for parishioners in the vestibule outside of the Nave entrance starting April 27. After services, the nametags can be returned to that location. Jane then handed out a suggested Vestry Greeter script. She and Doris Burton alerted the Vestry that a new process is being finalized for the Vestry to use in obtaining newcomer information. Louise Walsh reminded Vestry members that their Greeter duty also requires them to beadle duties at the 3rd Street door, participating in the collection and head count duties.

Vestry Liaison Duties and Assignments

Louise Walsh provided a list of current Vestry liaison assignments that showed the positions vacated by the outgoing Vestry saying that the assignments would be made at the May retreat (May 16-17) along with a review of Vestry Liaison Roles and

Responsibilities to ensure clarity in how those responsibilities are met. She asked the Vestry members to let her know their preferences and she would reconcile the assignments. As for Vestry liaison duties she suggested a staggered reporting schedule that would require a liaison report bi-monthly. She added that this would require the Vestry liaison to meet with pillar and program heads.

Paul Abernathy requested a new Vestry Liaison position be added for Pastoral Care Ministry as this activity, currently led by Lily March and Peter Hawley, is working to meet the growing needs across all age groups in the Parish. Questions exist such as scope, who performs the care, how does it happen, how does a member of our community access such care, etc.

Vestry Calendar

The calendar for the year was reviewed. The Vestry was alerted that due to various church or holiday conflicts, there is a need to schedule several Vestry meetings on days and/or dates other than the afternoon of third Sunday of the month, our standard meeting time. The Register is to complete the calendar and will distribute it.

May Retreat: "Dreaming our Way into Giving: The Bigger Picture."

Louise Walsh, in introducing the theme, told the Vestry it is based on a Greg Niblett observation that our giving does not reflect our activity. Paul Abernathy added that in spite of our vast resource base, the parish appears to be insular—the question is how do we engage the world; what is our bigger picture? Bruce Sherman expressed the hope that the Vestry would be able to take this theme from the general to specific actions.

In response to Susan Thompson-Hoffman's suggested need to integrate and potentially re-direct pillar activities to meet overall parish goals, Paul Abernathy reported that he is meeting regularly with the Christian Education co-directors and Louise reported the Parish Calendaring meeting where pillar heads meet to discuss schedules and potential common themes.

Bruce Sherman asked how to incorporate others into a planning session at least once a year. He said the Vestry needs to articulate policy and suggested a "reaching in/reaching out" framework that would be comprehensive so not to be taken too narrowly.

Louise Walsh talked about the expectation that Vestry Members would attend Shrine Mont which will be led through the efforts of the Race Reconciliation Committee. In addition, she suggested there is a need to re-institute the fall Parish Managers Meeting.

Vestry Reports and Votes:

Request for Endowment Funds for Shrine Mont Facilitators

Paul Abernathy presented a memorandum drafted in accordance with Endowment Fund procedures requesting funding from the Endowment Fund for external facilitators for leading the discussions at Shrine Mont. (Both the memorandum and Endowment Fund

policy and procedures were distributed to Vestry Members prior to the meeting. They are Attachment A and B, respectively.) The Shrine Mont team believes experienced outside facilitators are needed due to the sensitivity of the subject. The cost of such facilitator(s) is estimated to be \$ 7- 8000. Concern was expressed about using the funds for this purpose would reduce what might be available for other purposes. Paul Abernathy responded that Endowment Funds have not been used every year as there have not been appropriate requests.

Scope of the proposed facilitation contract and management of it was discussed. The facilitators would report to the Shrine Mont Content Team (Priscilla Mendenhall, Loretta Veney, and Charlie Rupp), the Rector and Senior Warden. The work at Shrine Mont will extend beyond that weekend and will be conducted through the efforts of the Racial Reconciliation Committee.

The Vestry approved the following motion

The Vestry supports the Racial Reconciliation Committee proposal dated April 20, 2008, to fund a contract or contracts with an external facilitator/consultant (or facilitators/consultants) with demonstrated experience and expertise in anti-racism work and large and small group process and facilitation. The total of these contracts is not to exceed \$8,000.

A second motion was approved:

The 2008 Shrine Mont Content Team is empowered to engage and direct facilitators/consultants who will be responsible to them, with approval of the Rector and Senior Warden.

The Vestry requested to be briefed by the Shrine Mont Content Team prior to Shrine Mont.

2008 Housing Allowance for Interim Associate Rector (at Attachment C)

The motion to approve the following was made, seconded and carried:

Resolution: To provide a housing allowance for the Interim Associate Rector in 2008.

2009 Canvass Chair

George Meng was approved as the “Convener of the 2009 Canvass Committee.”

Vestry Reports

- The Treasurer’s Report was approved. Louise Walsh announced that she was asking Susan Thompson-Hoffman, Mary Lee Watts and Kenn Allen to serve on the Finance Committee.
- The Register’s Report: Minutes of the March 16, 2008 Vestry meeting were approved as amended. Minutes of the March 30, 2008 meeting were approved as submitted.

What's new, what's working, what needs attention, who needs acknowledgment

- Bruce Sherman invited Vestry Members to consider to be part of Christian Ed class: 'Your life, Dead or Alive.'
- Louise Walsh announced she has appointed Kristen Hartke to facilitate the next steps with regard to the St Mark's Players. Serving with Kristen will be Margaret Wood and Tom Wickenden. Jerry Dale and another Player representative will be part of the effort.
- Doris Burton handed out notepaper to Vestry Members to use when writing acknowledgements on behalf of the Vestry. Kenn Allen is to write one to Tucker Harris for her work improving the kitchen. Kristen Hartke will write to the Outreach Board for the Lenten Mite Box effort. Mary Lee Watts will prepare one for the organizers of the Wake Up the Earth. Susan Thompson-Hoffman will write to Kathy Gerhard for the Easter Flowers.
- In response to Kenn Allen's request for an update on the Search for an Assistant/Associate Rector, Louise reported:
 - The search team reconvened on March 16, 2008.
 - They are reviewing 18 submissions from the diocesan Deployment Office that supports clergy searches
 - Members of the Search Committee will travel to visit selected candidates.
 - In 2007, a budget of \$5000 was provided to the Search Committee. Kathryn Powers reported that she is not aware of funding for this purpose in the 2008 budget.
 - The following was moved, seconded, and carried:

Funds in the amount of five thousand dollars to support the Search Committee efforts be identified and allocated.

Don Mosher offered the closing prayer. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Sedgewick
Register

To: The Vestry of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, Washington, DC

From: The Racial Reconciliation Committee

Date: Sunday, April 20, 2008

Re: Request for Disbursement from the General Fund of the St. Mark's Endowment¹

Description

The Racial Reconciliation Committee (RRC) hereby requests funds for the purpose of entering into a contract with an external facilitator (or facilitators) with demonstrated experience and expertise in anti-racism work and large and small group process and facilitation. The facilitator(s) will be responsible for leading the Annual Parish Weekend to be held at Shrine Mont in Orkney Springs, Virginia, Friday-Sunday, June 6-8, 2008, as well as a similar and subsequent process at St. Mark's (specifically designed for those unable to attend, but open to all). The preference of the RRC is to contract with a facilitation team, balanced by race and gender. However, given the challenge of time and the potential financial constraints, we have focused on having a facilitator work collaboratively with a Content Team of St. Mark's members as selected by the Senior Warden. The facilitator will be thoroughly "briefed" on the St. Mark's functional education discipline so to inform the design and implementation of Annual Parish Weekend.

The theme for the Annual Parish Weekend is **Expanding our World: Celebration and Challenge**. The purpose of the weekend experience is to launch our communal journey towards what radical welcome² might mean at St. Mark's.

St. Mark's Mission Statement begins with the words, "St Mark's is an open community, welcoming people wherever they are on their faith journey." This proposal attempts to address the "open community" – to continue a dialogue that can begin to allow us to assess how we are and can live into that promise. Our Mission Statement continues with a call that we "engage boldly in the struggles of life." This proposal is intended to help us face the challenge of one of these struggles, a struggle rooted in our racial history, our separateness and our differences (individually and collectively) in a bold manner, that is, openly and in community.

Proposal Cost

¹ The following is outlined and detailed in accordance with the guidelines delineated in *Vestry Policies and Procedures for Requesting Disbursements from the General Fund of the St. Mark's Endowment* (attached).

² The idea and practice of radical welcome is greatly informed by the work of the Rev. Stephanie Spellers as described and detailed in her book, *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, The Other, and the Spirit of Transformation* (Church Publishing, 2006).

We estimate that \$7,000.00-\$8,000.00 will be required to cover the costs of an external facilitator, which will include planning for the Annual Parish Weekend, attending the Annual Parish Weekend, and additional expenses (e.g., travel and lodging).

Confirmation of Availability and Sufficiency of Funds for Disbursement

According to the St. Mark's Endowment Funds Treasurer's Report, as of March 24, 2008, \$20,637.00 is available for disbursement from the General Fund.

Responsibility for Managing the Program, Project, or Activity

The RRC has established criteria for the selection of a facilitator³ and job description.⁴ The facilitator will be recommended by the RRC for the approval of the Senior Warden. The facilitator will work collaboratively with the content team as stated earlier, and will operate under the auspice of the RRC.

³ Facilitator Selection Criteria:

- Demonstrates extensive skills at facilitating large and small group processes.
- Expert in doing anti-racism work.
- Experienced in collaborating with faith groups.
- Able to discern the particular ethos of St. Mark's.
- Accustomed to multiple process models.
- Open to learning about functional education.
- Willing and interested in continuing collaborating with the content team, Paul and others in development of process and content.
- Accepting of ultimate authority to choose and guide process.
- Comfortable asserting authority during Annual Parish Weekend and St. Mark's class/workshop/discussions.
- Grounded when managing challenges.
- Excited and knowledgeable about creating multigenerational dialogue and activities

⁴ Facilitator Job Description – The facilitator will:

- Work collaboratively and continuously with the St. Mark's Content Team, Louise Walsh, Senior Warden, Paul Abernathy, Rector, and RRC members.
- Be responsible initially for acquiring a thorough understanding of the Radical Welcome theme, purpose and outcomes as well as the functional education approach.
- Conduct a series of "key informant" interviews with the Senior Warden, Rector, the RRC planning group, the Director of Youth and Family Ministries and Board, in order to discern the ethos of St. Mark's and firmly grasp the background and prompts for our doing this work.
- Select the process model for use in guiding our conversations, recognizing and to the extent possible, utilizing elements of functional education.
- Train a group of small group facilitators selected for their experience with RRC and ability to manage "safe" conversations.
- Lead the Annual Parish Weekend, consulting with the Content Team as the weekend progresses and delivering a verbal/written report of the weekend.
- Lead a post-Annual Parish Weekend workshop/class at St. Mark's designed to parallel and deepen the experience of the weekend. The outcomes of both the weekend and the post-weekend workshop will be folded together by the facilitator and presented to the Vestry along with recommendations for future steps on the journey.

Vestry Policies and Procedures for Requesting Disbursements from the General Fund of the St. Mark's Endowment

[Approved by the Vestry on September 19, 2004 and by the Endowment Board on October 14, 2004]

The St. Mark's Endowment Fund includes a specific Fund called the General Fund. In accordance with approved procedures, disbursements from this Fund are made by the Endowment Committee at the request of the Vestry. The following policies and procedures shall be used by the Vestry to make such requests.

Policies

Funds from the General Endowment shall be used for the following purposes:

1. Seed money for new initiatives or other activities that expand the mission of St. Mark's
2. One-time programs, projects or activities which expand the mission of St. Mark's but were not provided for in the Parish Operating Budget.

Funds from the General Endowment will **not** be used for the following purposes:

1. Normal operating expenses of the parish, which should be paid for by the Parish Operating Budget, such as salaries and compensation, parish activity expenses, utilities, and building maintenance;
2. Building repair, expansion, or improvement projects which could be financed within the scope of other Endowment Funds, regardless of whether those funds have amounts available for disbursement;
3. Hiring of new personnel.

Procedures

1. A proposal for disbursement may be made at any time by any member of the Vestry. A Vestry member may make a proposal on behalf of any member of the congregation, but the Vestry member must serve as sponsor.
2. The sponsoring Vestry member shall prepare a written proposal which shall include the following information:
 - a. description of the proposal, including benefit to St. Mark's mission,
 - b. cost of the proposal, both initially and long term,
 - c. confirmation that sufficient funds are available for disbursement,
 - d. responsibility for managing the program, project, or activity.
3. The written proposal shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for inclusion on the Vestry agenda.
4. The Vestry shall discuss the proposal at a Vestry meeting. If continued funding is required, the Vestry may submit the proposal to the finance committee for consideration and recommendation.
5. A majority vote of the Vestry shall be required to further the proposal to the Endowment Committee for final approval.

To: The Vestry of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill

From: The Rev. Paul R. Abernathy, Rector

Date: April 20, 2008

Re: Housing Allowance Resolution 2008

Whereas, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to her as part of her compensation to the extent used by her for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and

Whereas, the Reverend Michaela M. Johnson, Interim Associate Rector, is compensated by St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, exclusively for the services as a minister of the gospel; and

Whereas, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, does not provide the Reverend Johnson with parish provided housing, therefore, it is hereby

Resolved, that \$2,090.00 (two thousand ninety dollars and no cents) of the total compensation paid monthly to the Rev. Johnson during the term of her interim employment is hereby designated to be a housing allowance, and be it further

Resolved, that in accord with the Internal Revenue Service Publication 517 (Housing and Social Security Taxes), which states, in part, that although the housing/parsonage allowance is not subject to federal income tax, it is subject to social security taxes, an amount of \$159.88 (one hundred fifty-nine dollars and eighty-eight cents), representing a parish contribution of 7.65% of the corresponding FICA tax be added to the monthly compensation paid to the Rev. Johnson.