

**Minutes of the Vestry
St. Mark's Church Capitol Hill
February 22, 2009
Adams Room
(Approved March 22, 2009)**

Present:

Clergy: Paul Roberts Abernathy, Rector

Wardens: Louise Walsh, Senior Warden; Jack Richards, Acting Junior Warden

Vestry: Kenn Allen, Doris Burton, Kristen Hartke, Don Mosher, Joe Calizo, Bruce Sherman, Mary Thuell, Susan Thompson

Treasurer: Kathryn Powers

Counsel: Rosemary Harold

Human Resources: Ed Cousins

Acting Register: Hank Donnelly

Absent: Susan Pinkerton, Mary Lee Watts, Susan Sedgewick

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 pm, followed by an opening prayer by Bruce Sherman. Louise Walsh chaired the meeting, while Paul Abernathy participated along with other Vestry members.

1. Diocesan Convention Report

Delegates Bill Dickinson and Rick Rutherford presented a report (Attachment A) on the recent convention of the Washington Diocese. In discussion with the Vestry, Bill noted the serious budget problems confronting the Diocese, including staff cuts. But Rick emphasized the opportunities for St. Mark's to contribute in innovative ways.

2. Strategic Map Update

Bruce Sherman outlined recent progress of the strategic mapping process. He explained that participants had identified about a dozen major goals, but had agreed that there needed to be a focus on two or three of those priorities, specifically membership, finance and the building. He then explained the next steps in the process, stressing that it not drag on too long.

3. Parochial Report

The Vestry approved the 2008 Parochial Report, an annual document on parish membership and finance submits to the Washington Diocese.

4. Sunday School Report

Bruce Sherman reported on a recent meeting designed to obtain parish input on the Sunday School program. He stressed the importance of efforts to think about the future of the program, and to be open to new models.

5. Annual Meeting Preparation

Louise Walsh briefly reviewed preparations for the upcoming Annual Meeting, noting among other things that this year a minimum of 10 signatures were required for Vestry nominations.

6. By-Laws Change: Annual Meeting Date

With Paul's support, Don Mosher and Doris Burton proposed a change in the by-laws concerning the date of the Annual Meeting, which traditionally at St. Mark's has been held in the first week after Easter. They suggested instead that it be held on the 2nd, 3rd or 4th Sunday of Lent, to be determined each year by the Vestry, in order to give the newly elected Senior Warden more time to plan for Shrine Mont. The motion was approved without objection. However, it must be approved by the Annual Meeting before it goes into effect.

7. Alternative Voting Procedures

The Vestry considered and approved two proposals for alternative forms of voting on matters before it, with the goal of conserving time during meetings. (Attachment B) Proposal A, to enable pre-meeting voting by signature on motions, was moved by Don Mosher and approved on a 6 to 4 vote of hands. Proposal B, which provides for e-mail voting, spurred discussion among members about the benefits of expedited electronic action in comparison with the value of group discussion. It was approved by voice vote.

Before completing the new rules, however, members responded to a concern expressed by the Senior Warden concerning a provision calling on the Chair to cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie. She argued that the provision implicitly suggested that the Chair did not have the right to vote in other situations, in contrast to current Vestry procedures, and so diminished the power of that position. On a motion by Mary Thuell, the procedures were changed such that a motion would fail on a tie vote.

8. Membership Building Strategy

Doris Burton and Susan Thompson-Hoffman made a preliminary presentation of a draft St. Mark's membership action plan designed to maintain and grow parish membership. They emphasized that they were not seeking formal approval at this time, but rather wanted to get Vestry input. During discussion, Vestry members informally "voted" for their top five strategies for parish membership, producing the following list in order: "bond"; create a standing membership committee; call on members; involve members; and "welcome all."

Other discussion focused on the inclusiveness of the focus group that developed the report, with members urging that input from the 20s and 30s and others be included in the final report.

9. Speaker Costs -- Rev. Spellers

Paul reported on a projected financial shortfall involving fees and expenses for the upcoming appearance by Rev. Stephanie Spellers, author of the book "Radical Welcome," and explained the possibility of obtaining money from the Woman to Woman designated account. Kenn Allen moved that the Vestry authorize up to \$600 in contingency funding from the regular budget in case

the Senior Warden and Rector determine that no other funding is available.
The motion was approved without objection.

10. Treasurer's Report

In a brief report, Kathryn Powers indicated that the parish was solvent.

11. January Minutes

The minutes of the Jan. 25 meeting were approved with amendments.

12. Acting unior Warden's Report

Jack Richards gave a brief overview of current building projects, including the recently installed new signboards. (Attachment C)

13. Human Resources Report

Ed Cousins reported on recent meeting to organize activities for parishioners who have lost their jobs or are concerned about their futures in an uncertain economy. The ideas include a 3-hour workshop on job searching, looking at topics such as networking and values, a weekly support-group meeting, assistance from parish experts on various topics, and resume reviews. The programs would be directed towards St. Mark's members.

14. What's New, etc.

Paul: St. Mark's will participate in a joint Easter Vigil service with other Capitol Hill churches, which will be held on April 11 at 8 pm, at Christ Church.

Kristen Hartke: A document outlining the relationship between the parish and St. Mark's Players and an operations manual for the Players are going through an approval process.

Paul: A parish Town Hall meeting on the budget will be held after the Annual Meeting, probably in May.

Paul: On the first Sunday in May, the parish will dedicate the restored Columbarium and rededicate the Chapel of the Nazarene, which is the small enclosed area next to the High Altar.

Members noted the birth of a baby to member Mary Lee Watts.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hank Donnelly
Acting Register

Summary of the 114th. Convention of the Diocese of Washington

January 30-31, 2009

St. Mark's official attendees:

Rev. Susan Pinkerton

Bill Dickinson

Rick Rutherford

Major events

- a. Address by the Rt. Rev. Trevor Mwamba, Bishop of Botswana primarily on Anglicism in Africa
- b. Presentation by Rev. Brian McLaren on Change, Christian evangelism, church growth and the genius of Anglicanism (**Strongly suggest that clergy and lay leaders of St. Mark's view this presentation available on the Diocesan web site) Additionally, might be a good basis for discussion at an extended vestry meeting, the annual meeting, a vestry retreat or parish workshop.**)
- c. EDOW Millennium ministries including the "Trinidad Conservation Project" (St. Marks long term partnership with the ED of Honduras), and St. Mark's Volunteer Counseling and Testing in Meru, Kenya
- d. Bishop Chane's address and challenge (see below)

Resolutions:

- #1 – On Episcopal Senior Ministries - P
 - #2 – 1st. Sunday in Lent as Relief and Development day -P
 - #3 – Raise Pensions of spouses of deceased clergy-request to General – P/D
 - #4 – Non discrimination provisions of canon – P/D

P= Passed with little comment D= debate

Bishops Chane's Address - Challenge and Priorities:

- How to maintain EDOW services to parishes given economic realities
- Ministries to Spanish speaking community (EDOW has 5 such congregations), Bishop John Walker School, 20 related Episcopal Schools in EDOW, HIV/AIDS education in S. Africa
- In 2009, need to identify new revenue generation sources for 1) Youth ministry 2) College work 3) Spanish ministries 4) Parish growth and 5) Clergy and families

Bishop Chane’s closing priorities and challenges:

1. Reach out and encourage diversity and innovation in parish ministries
2. Experiment – e.g.
 - try new ideas for at least 4-6 weeks on a pilot basis
 - add new worship services to accommodate the needs and schedules of congregants
 - create and/or “plant” new congregations
 - provide a fresh expression of Anglicanism
 - appeal to the young
3. Change Church architecture and physical settings for worship
4. EDOW should become a transcending community of faith bringing in and attracting the full spectrum of Christian beliefs
5. Our parishes need to become places where people in need can be accepted – and thus become radically transformed
6. Membership per se is not the end game

Reflection Question: Given the 6 items listed above where do we see ourselves as a parish regarding our own willingness to embrace and act on these concepts locally and actively support them on a Diocesan level?

EDOW budget and parish ask: (in thousands \$ or K)

Revenue	2008 budget	2008 expectation	2009 budget w/contingency	Comment
Parish giving	\$2.830 K	\$2.627K	\$2.677K	Optimistic
Soper Interest	\$1.267K	\$.267K	\$1.267K	Fund asset value declining
Other	\$.538K	\$.404K	\$.434K	
Total Revenue	\$4.635K	\$4.298K	\$4.649K	
Salaries and Benefits	\$2,430K	\$2,441K	\$2,426K	Optimistic
Administrative	\$744K	\$699K	\$716.5K	
Growth and Development	\$170.7K	\$135.7K	\$120.7K	
EDOW Ministries	\$526.8K	\$530.8K	\$476.8K	
National and International Ministries	\$763.5K	\$763.5K	\$808.9K	
Total Expenses	\$4,634.7K	\$4,569.8K	\$4,549.3	
Contingency			\$100K	

Net position		(\$271.7K)		

St. Mark's along with 19 other congregations received a public thanks and citation from the Bishop and the Diocese for their commitment to tithe to the Diocese and their fulfillment of that commitment.

Given the extent to which St. Mark's has seen fit to support the work of the Diocese financially there might be some value in our having discussion about optimizing the value of that contribution for ourselves, EDOW at large and other congregations. Were we to have that type of discussion we might be in a position to have greater influence on such matters in the future. Some potential examples of innovation appear below:

Ideas on what EDOW could provide parishes to help them through the economic crisis while strengthening everyone's ministries? *(These are ideas based on informal conversations with other delegates)*

1. Provide an umbrella audit contract which parishes could use. Quality at lower per parish cost.
2. Other umbrella advisory services (e.g. architecture, engineering, facilitation,
3. Preacher supply and adjunct clergy and Christian Education teachers bureau
4. Procurement contracts/ bulk purchase for equipment and supplies – e.g. EDOW negotiates price agreements with supply firms (e.g. paper, janitorial, and food which all parishes could use). Similar arrangement for janitorial, electrical, plumbing and other support contractors. Use by parishes would be voluntary.
5. Facilitation of greater cooperation between and among parishes so that economies of scale might be realized i.e. joint programming in the areas of youth, adult education, outreach, etc.
6. EDOW assistance to parishes in website development and better employment of IT
7. Exploration with the central body of other religious groups on the centralized services they provide to their members (e.g. RC Archdiocese, Lutheran synod, Washington DC area Presbyter)

ALTERNATIVE VOTING PROCEDURES FOR THE VESTRY OF ST. MARK'S CHURCH

Matters placed on the agenda of a Vestry meeting by the Executive Committee and motions properly made and seconded during the course of a vestry meeting shall be discussed and voted on during that vestry meeting.

To conserve time in vestry meetings, the Vestry Chair may use either of the following two methods to call for a vote:

- A. Pre-Vestry Meeting signature voting. The Vestry Chair may submit motions for Vestry members' consideration and voting by signature during the 30 minute period immediately preceding the start of a Vestry meeting. Such motions shall be proposed and seconded by members of the Executive Committee or proposed and seconded by two different vestry members. The Chair or Senior Warden, with the Chair's concurrence, shall direct the Register to post the motion on an easel for Vestry members to indicate their votes or their desire to discuss. The following procedure shall be followed:
1. Such motions, with supporting documents shall be sent to the Vestry Chair, at least five calendar days before the Vestry meeting.
 2. The Register, at the direction of the Vestry Chair, shall provide all Vestry members, via e-mail or U.S. Mail at least three days of the Vestry meeting, the following information about each motion:
 - Who moved and seconded the motion;
 - The full text of the motion; and
 - Documents relevant to the motion, if any.
 3. Texts of motions to be acted upon under this process shall be posted on an easel by title or brief description and made available for voting at least 30 minutes before the meeting is called to order.
 4. Vestry members may cast votes on the easel by initialing columns labeled "Yea" (Favor), "Nay" (Oppose), or "Discuss."
 - If at least two Vestry members initial a motion under "Discuss," it shall be opened for discussion and vote during that vestry meeting.
 - If there is a quorum at the meeting, and less than two Vestry members initial "Discuss," the vote on the motion shall be determined by the number of initialed votes.
 - If a quorum of members is not present at the meeting, any vote on the motion under this procedure shall be void.
 - In the event of a tie vote, the Chair of that meeting shall cast the deciding vote.
 5. All motions to be decided using this process shall be grouped together within the meeting agenda distributed prior to the meeting date.
 6. The motion and vote on a motion shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

B. E-mail Voting. The Vestry Chair may approve e-mail voting for motions generated and seconded by members of the Executive Committee or proposed and seconded by two different vestry members. The Vestry Chair, or Senior Warden, with the Vestry Chair's concurrence, will direct the Register to send these motions via e-mail (or U.S. Mail, if needed) to every member of the Vestry to solicit his or her vote. These procedures, as adapted by the Register, may also apply to motions sent through the mail. The following procedures will be followed:

1. The Register shall send an e-mail to all Vestry members stating:
 - Who moved and who seconded the motion;
 - The full text of the motion;
 - The date and time when the voting will be closed. The close of voting will be a minimum of 7 calendar days after the motion is sent to the Vestry;
 - The instruction that all votes are to be cast by indicating "yes" or "no" via a "Reply to sender" return e-mail to the Register, only. A valid vote may not be transmitted via a "Reply to All" e-mail; and
 - A vote once cast by e-mail may not be revoked or changed.

2. Vestry members may cast votes by indicating "yes" or "no, " or discussing the motion.
 - A vestry member may discuss the motion via a "Reply to all" e-mail which includes the text of the discussion. If at least two members request discussion on the motion, the motion shall be automatically placed on the agenda of a future Vestry meeting for discussion and vote. In such a case, no e-mail votes shall be recorded or announced on the motion, and the motion shall be tabled until the next Vestry meeting, at which time it shall be on the agenda for discussion and a vote.
 - If a quorum of Vestry members does not respond by e-mail, all votes cast on the motion are void.
 - In the event of a tie vote, the Chair shall cast the deciding vote.

3. Results of completed voting shall be announced via e-mail at the end of the voting period.

4. The Register shall record the motion and the outcome of the e-mail vote in the minutes of the next vestry meeting.

5. This method shall not be used less than nine calendar days preceding a Vestry meeting, in which case the vote can be made at the Vestry meeting either by the signature or the normal voting processes.

Date approved by the Vestry: _____

ACTING JR. WARDEN'S REPORT, VESTRY MEETING, FEBRUARY 22, 2009

- 2 NEW EXTERIOR SIGN BOARDS WITH EPISCOPALIAN SHIELDS INSTALLED ON 3D STREET.
- SIGN BOARD ON A STREET WASHED; SHIELDS ALSO INSTALLED ON BOTH SIDES.
- JR. WARDEN'S CHAIR – FINNIAL – REPAIRED
- WORK HAS BEGUN ON REPAIRING AND REFURBISHING OFF SITE THE KNEELERS FOR THE DEACON'S CHAIR, THE BISHOP'S CHAIR AND THE TWO WARDENS CHAIRS.
- SINK ON 2D FLOOR, BAXTER HOUSE, REPLACED @1,500.
- SQUIRREL TRAPS BEING PLACED ABOVE DANCE STUDIO (ADCOCK'S TRAPPING SERVICE)
- GARDEN COMMITTEE HAS AGREED TO "SERVICE" THE "GARDEN" AREA IN FRONT OF BAXTER HOUSE, TO ENHANCE APPEARANCE.
- SURVEY RESULTS PENDING: ASSESSMENT OF 2008 SUPPLIES EXPENSES FOR FRAGER'S HARDWARE & FREEDMAN & SONS.
- I HAVE REQUESTED THE RICK HAYES TO EXPLORE A-FRAME TYPE SIGN BOARDS FOR BOTH 3RD AND A STREETS.
- PETER HAWLEY IS WORKING WITH ME EXPLORING IMPROVING A HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACE IN THE PARKING LOT.
- OUR FIRE ALARM CONTRACTOR, ANNTRONIX, WILL BE REPLACING THE BROKEN "PULL DOWN" SWITCHES IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS ION THE CHURCH DURING THIS FOLLOWING WEEK. ESTIMATED COST TO REPLACE THE SWITCHES IS APPROXIMATELY \$800.