

**Minutes of the Vestry
St. Mark's Church Capitol Hill
March 22, 2009
Penniman Room, Baxter House**

Present:

Clergy: Paul Roberts Abernathy, Rector
Susan Beth Pinkerton, Assistant Rector
Wardens: Louise Walsh, Senior Warden
Jack Richards, Acting Junior Warden
Vestry: Kenn Allen, Doris Burton, Don Mosher, Joe Calizo,
Bruce Sherman, Mary Thuell, Susan Thompson-
Hoffman, Mary Lee Watts
Treasurer: Kathryn Powers
Counsel: Rosemary Harold
Register: Susan Sedgewick

Absent:

Vestry: Kristen Hartke
*Human Resources
Officer:* Ed Cousins

Paul Abernathy called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm, followed by an opening prayer by Bruce Sherman. Susan Pinkerton joined the meeting late as she was conducting a memorial service at Congressional Cemetery.

1. Proposal to change Annual Meeting Vestry Election voting procedures.

Don Mosher moved the vestry adopt the voting procedures as proposed in Attachment A. Kenn Allen seconded the motion. During the discussion, observers Rick Rutherford, Rob Hall, and Charlie Rupp addressed the Vestry with their concerns and asked the motion be defeated. Doris Burton allowed that the proposal may have merit, but more time was necessary to review and consider it, she expressed concern that a month before the election did not provide enough time for it to be fully discussed and considered. Louise Walsh was critical of the lateness of the distribution of the proposal to the Vestry for its consideration at this meeting. After the question was called, **the resolution to change the voting procedures was defeated with 1 vote in favor, 10 opposed, and no abstentions.**

2. Strategic Map/Parish Priorities for 2009-2010

Bruce Sherman presented the strategic document with history, challenges, goals and priorities. He talked about the document itself and then, how to use it. Bruce explained the front page of the two-sided document, created with the help of a graphic artist, gives the big picture of who we are, what we need to focus on. Side 2 gives the specifics. The intent is to use the document at the Parish Pillar/Vestry offsite scheduled for March 28. Many of the actions under the goals line up with parish programs. In those cases it would make sense to assign the goal to the appropriate parish manager or pillar head; other programs are distributed under several goals. Some of the items will require the Senior or Junior Warden to identify who should take action for the work. Bruce asserted this document can be used for assigning accountability.

Members of the Vestry praised Bruce in accomplishing this effort in record time. Noting the seemingly large number of goals, Kenn Allen reflected that we have to do all these goals; this is our community. Doris Burton expressed concern about the Arts pillar not being

highlighted, but assumed the Community Building goal lined up with the Parish Life pillar. Bruce responded to her concerns about some of the Outreach entries noting they drew upon earlier documents but may require additional conversation and that there was not an assumption that every program would have a numbered goal. Paul Abernathy thanked Bruce for his effort saying that it would empower individuals and, in addition, that it is important to identify policy. Bruce, in speaking how the document can be used, said in two years when the Vestry reviews accomplishments against this plan, if something in the plan is not done, they should ask “do we still need to do it?”

The motion to “adopt the Strategy document pending final editing” was approved unanimously.

Bruce agreed to introduce the Strategy document with its Parish Priorities with a 10 minute presentation at the Annual Meeting.

3. Membership Initiative

The revised “Draft St. Mark’s Membership Action Plan” prepared by Susan Thompson-Hoffman and Doris Burton was distributed to the Vestry. Kenn Allen’s resolution thanking them for this effort and creating a parish membership development committee is at Attachment B.

The motion to approve the resolution creating a Parish Membership Development Committee passed unanimously.

4. Annual Meeting Preparation

Susan Sedgewick reviewed the various Vestry team assignments. Kenn Allen offered his resignation from the Vestry to the Rector as of 10 AM, April 19, 2009. Additional discussion ensued about how best to fill this unexpired term. The consensus of the Vestry was that the person receiving the 4th highest votes would be elected to the unexpired term.

5. March 28 Pillar head/Vestry Offsite

Louise Walsh reviewed the agenda for the Pillar Head/Vestry offsite and reported that Sian Jones will be joining the conference to be held at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation. The goal of the offsite is to start assigning actions for implementing the Strategic Plan. The Lutherans will be providing us coffee, a favor we are to return when they use our space for their offsite.

6. Officers’ Reports

• Treasurers Report

Kathryn Powers reported the financial accounts are in order. In addition she reported that she has placed funds needed for later in the year in a series of Certificate of Deposit and Money Market accounts that will yield income.

• Register’s Report

Minutes of the February 22, 2009 Vestry meeting were approved as amended.

7. Outgoing Vestry members acknowledged

Don Mosher, Bruce Sherman, Mary Thuell, Jack Richards and Louise Walsh, at Paul Abernathy’s invitation, offered parting comments and shared their wisdom at this, their last Vestry meeting.

What’s new? What needs attention? What’s working? Who needs acknowledgement?

- Shrine Mont theme: “Seasons of Life; Season of Love” will explore how St. Mark’s can support its various age-defined groups and explore what we can do to make us feel part of one group. The content team includes: Scilla Adams, Steve Dalzell, Amber Palmer, Will Long, Ray Hahn and Otis Gaddis.
- Paul Abernathy announced Keith Reas has resigned to take a position in Tennessee. Paul will be organizing several actions to include a review of our music program and organizing a search committee for a new leader for our music program.

The meeting adjourned to Kathryn Powers’ home at 4:45 for the annual Vestry Dinner.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Sedgewick
Register

Don Mosher Proposal for:

PROCEDURES FOR ELECTING THREE- YEAR VESTRY MEMBERS

At each Annual Meeting of St. Mark's Church the election of members to three-year Vestry terms will be conducted as follows:

If there are three nominees for three- year Vestry terms the Chairperson may choose to conduct voting for each candidate by separate ballot, by a show of hands or by voice vote. If by show of hands or by voice vote the Chairperson will present the name of each candidate in alphabetical order to be voted upon, asking in each case for "Those in favor" and then for "Those opposed." If, in the judgment of the Chairperson, more than one-half of those present and voting vote "In favor," the Chairperson will declare that the nominee has been duly elected. If the voting is equivocal, the Chairperson will then call for voting by ballot to determine the outcome. If, in the judgment of the Chairperson, more than one-half of those present and voting vote "Opposed" or abstain from voting, the Chairperson will declare that the nominee has not been elected.

If there are more than three nominees for three-year Vestry positions, voting will be conducted by ballot. Before votes are cast, the Chairperson will announce the following:

Voters are encouraged to vote for three nominees.

Voters may choose to vote for one or two nominees. Doing so will not result in their ballots being disqualified.

No nominee's name may appear more than once on any ballot or that ballot will be disqualified.

Appointed tellers will count the ballots to determine which of the nominees received votes from at least 50% of Members attending the meeting. If more than three nominees meet this requirement, the names of the three nominees receiving the first, second, and third largest number of votes will be reported to the Chairperson who will declare them to have been elected.

In the case of a tie vote between the two nominees receiving the largest number of votes, both of those nominees and the nominee receiving the second largest number of votes will be declared to have been elected.

In the case of a tie vote between the two nominees receiving the second largest number of votes, both of those nominees and the nominee receiving the largest number of votes will be declared to have been elected.

In the case of a tie vote between the two nominees receiving the third largest number of votes, another vote will be taken by ballot to determine which of them is elected.

Challenged ballots or disputed tallying procedures will be resolved by a majority vote of the tellers.

This supersedes previously enacted procedures for regulating the election of three-year Vestry Members.

Resolution Presented to the Vestry of St. Mark's for Consideration on March 22, 2009

Creation of the Membership Development Committee

Recognizing the value of strengthening our parish community by becoming a more welcoming and inclusive congregation – better engaging and serving our members and pro-actively drawing in new members who will join us in our shared faith journey – we:

- Accept with deep appreciation the report “Draft St. Mark’s Membership Action Plan” submitted by Susan Thompson-Hoffman and Doris Burton and thank them for the hard work they have done over the past several months to bring us to this point; and,
- Create the Membership Development Committee as a standing committee of and accountable to the Vestry, as described below; and disband the current Hospitality Committee and subsume its responsibilities under this new committee.

The charge of the Membership Development Committee is:

To create and implement a plan to make St. Mark’s a more welcoming community, as reflected in:

- Stronger bonds of understanding, caring and support for one another, across boundaries of age, race, family status, sexual orientation, economic status and time at St. Mark’s;
- Increased engagement of our members in the leadership and life of the parish; and,
- A larger and more diverse membership.

The committee will be composed of one member from each vestry class, the Rector, the Assistant/Associate Rector and no fewer than six additional members. The Senior Warden will be an ex officio member of the committee. The overall composition of the committee will reflect the diversity of the congregation – age, race, sexual orientation, family status, length of time at St. Mark’s, etc.

The chairs and members of the committee will be appointed by the Senior Warden with the approval of the Vestry. They will serve for three years. The term of vestry representatives will end with the conclusion of their vestry term.

The first group of six members will be divided into three ‘classes’: two people will serve 1 year, 2 people will serve 2 years, 2 people will serve three years. Each class will rotate off in the same manner as vestry members and be replaced with staggered three-

year terms. The Senior Warden is responsible for appointing the new class of two members each year with approval of the Vestry. Vestry members are eligible for appointment upon completion of their vestry term.

The initial chair and co-chair, who shall be neither clergy nor vestry, and members of the committee will be approved by the vestry at its May 2009 meeting. The Senior Warden will appoint, with approval of the Vestry, new members as old members roll off. This pattern will be maintained until such time as it is altered by the Vestry.