

**SAINT MARK'S CATHEDRAL
VESTRY MEETING MINUTES**
April 24, 2007 – 6:00 to 8:15 p.m.
St. Nicholas Building – Room 216

Vestry Members Present:

Betsy Greenman, Bp. Rep.	Connie Espe
Robert Taylor, Dean	Ben Porter
Carol Hoerster, Senior Warden	Margaret Rothschild
Jordan Gross, Junior Warden	Diane Stevens
Bob Muglia, Junior Warden	Randy Urmston
Barbara Erickson, Clerk	
Miller Adams	Tracy Garland, Treasurer
Paula Clapp	

Staff:

Mary Coon
Ryan Marriott
Karen Scott

Absent:

Sam Fleshman
La Verne Hall
Michelle Hasson
Herb Williams

Call to Order

Dean Taylor called the meeting to order, extended apologies from those unable to attend, and noted the Revised Agenda, which contained changes to the Consent Agenda and postponed the Education/Inspiration piece to the June meeting, in order to provide more time for the “Main Thing.”

Spiritual Reflection

In his spiritual reflection, the Dean focused on the “Stations of Light.” A spiritual concept developed by the Roman Catholics, the Stations of Light is a joyful balance to the violence of the Stations of the Cross. Robert quoted the Dalai Lama, who said that “spirituality is our common immune system”. In a loving, joyful way the Stations of Light focus on the spirituality of the resurrection appearances of Christ, and call us to love and to see the Christ figure in one another, even when we experience pain and confusion. Robert saw Holy Week, the Stations of Light, and this time between Easter and Pentecost as strong, life-giving containers for the Saint Mark’s community during a challenging time. The Dean closed his remarks with prayer.

Action Item

Consent Agenda

The Vestry accepted the Consent Agenda consisting of the following:

- Approval of Minutes of 3/24/07 Vestry Meeting
- Receipt of Reports/Notes/Minutes of Meetings of Vestry Committees
 - Facilities Committee minutes -- 3/20/07
 - Personnel Committee Meeting Report – 4/19/07
- Receipt of Master Planning Task Force minutes – 2/26/07

Postponed to the June meeting were the April 4 Stewardship & Development Committee minutes, withdrawn for revisions, and the April 10 Holy Orders Committee minutes, received after the Vestry packet deadline.

Reports/Discussion

Dean’s Report

Staffing News: Robert announced that he offered Becky Morrill the position of Cathedral Liturgist, and Becky accepted. The appointment is effective immediately. Becky has a Masters in Divinity degree and experience in other churches before coming to the Cathedral.

Robert also announced that Laura and Bob Muglia are taking on the project of upgrading the Cathedral’s computer system, especially the servers, an improvement that will greatly enhance and facilitate the work of the Staff. (#7 on the Deferred Maintenance List.)

In response to discussion of whether the Cathedral is staff- or lay- driven, an either/or discussion, Robert offered images of collective leadership and collective shared ministry. For example, a healthy Cathedral has strong lay leadership working in collaboration with a strong staff, or strong staff teams working in ministry and collegial relationship with strong lay leaders.

Robert expressed appreciation to Karen Scott, whose last day is scheduled for Friday, April 27, for her years of service at the Cathedral and for staying beyond the date she originally planned as her final date. Robert wished Karen well in her new endeavors.

Upcoming Cathedral Events: Robert noted that Sunday, April 29, would mark the end of the Cathedral's 75th Anniversary Year, and the beginning of the final quarter of the Cathedral's first century. A member of Saint Mark's has commissioned, and Mel Butler has composed, a new mass setting which will be offered on 29th, as part of the celebration.

On the afternoon of Sunday, April 29, a party is planned to celebrate the ministries and service at the Cathedral of Janet Campbell, Ann Redding, and Heather Hodsdon.

Robert reported that Janet Campbell has accepted an interim rector position at St. Steven's, Laurelhurst.

Robert announced that during their "walkabout" week in the Diocese, the candidates for Bishop Diocesan have been invited to Saint Mark's Cathedral on Thursday, May 3, from 1 to 3 p.m, to get acquainted with the Cathedral and to meet members of the Vestry, Staff, Master Planning Task Force, and Cathedral Foundation.

Saint Mark's Celebrates Seattle: Robert announced that Paula and Bill Clapp will be honored for their work to end global poverty through their micro-lending organization, Global Partnerships. Mimi and Bill Gates, Sr. are the honorary committee chairs. Ryan Marriott distributed and explained a five-page document giving details of this year's event.

The Urban/Suburban Clergy Conference Letter: Robert noted that at its recent meeting in Canterbury, the Urban/Suburban Clergy Conference drafted a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury (copies at each Vestry member's place) urging the Archbishop to continue the Anglican precedent of inviting all bishops of the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada to the 2008 Lambeth Conference, contrary to certain pressures in the Anglican Communion to exclude these two groups. (Note: Though Dean Taylor was not at the conference in Canterbury, he subsequently found the opportunity to add his signature to this letter.)

Senior Warden's Report

Carol congratulated Miller Adams on a highly successful fund raising breakfast he chaired to raise money for Scouting in King County.

Carol gave an overview of the bishop election process, describing the candidate walkabouts during the first week in May and noting that the election would be at the Cathedral on Saturday, May 12. Eligible to vote will be those who were delegates to the 2006 Diocesan Convention. The new Bishop Diocesan will be consecrated in September at a service at Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue.

On August 18, there will be an Agape Feast celebrating the tenure of Bishop Vincent Warner. At the Bishop's request it will be an informal fun picnic at Annie Wright School rather than a formal sit-down dinner.

Treasurer's Report

Saint Mark's Balance Sheet and Income Statement for First Quarter 2007

Tracy Garland reported that the Finance Committee had reviewed the Cathedral's first quarter financial statements and found the accounts to be in order. Copies of these reports were included in the Vestry packets.

March 31, 2007, Year-to-Date Performance Report of Saint Mark's Operating Fund

Tracy noted that the Year-to-Date Actual figures, both Revenue and Expenses, were in line with the Year-to-Date Budget. Both Annual Campaign and Gifts & Grants Income were on target. The bottom line was that Income exceeded Expenses by \$17,000 at the end of the first quarter.

Three Draft Budgets: 2007 Operating Budget, 2007 Master Planning Budget, and Capital Campaign Budget

Mary Coon presented the above three budgets. The 2007 Draft Operating Budget contained three columns, as follows: 2006 Actual, 2007 Approved Budget, and 2007 Forecast Budget. She explained that when the 2007 budget was approved, it contained provisions for part of the salaries of the Dean, the Vice Dean/COO, and the Development Director to be transferred to the Capital Campaign budget. However, even though this concept was approved by the Cathedral's auditors and by the Vestry and Finance Committee,

further reflection by the Dean and others deemed it unwise to make this transfer in 2007. Consequently, these salaries will be covered in 2007 by the Operating Budget with 70% of the Development Director's salary to be covered by the MPTF; expected hire of the Development Director is October 1. The additional Personnel Expense in the Operating Budget will be met by a reduction in the Variable Expense budget.

The Master Planning Budget had columns for actual revenue and expenses for 2005 and 2006 and columns showing projections for 2007 and 2008. Through 2007 Master Planning revenue will exceed expenses by \$171,000. This surplus will carry over to 2008 and be increased by \$25,000 in 2008 pledges received to date for a total of \$196,000. To date projected expenses for 2008 are \$423,000, which includes architectural designs and increased personnel costs; therefore, the balance to be raised for Master Planning is \$227,000.

The Capital Campaign Budget will be developed when the results of the feasibility study are received; the feasibility study is scheduled for completion by December 31. There is \$98,000 in the Cathedral's Investment Account earmarked for physical improvements.

2007 Annual Campaign Update

Ryan Marriott reported that income from the Annual Campaign continues to be strong. The number of pledging households has increased over 2006 and the total amount pledged to date is \$1,273,512, which is \$45,000 more than any previous year. In response to the recent staff downsizing, some pledges have been withdrawn or reduced, but these reductions have been more than compensated by new pledges.

“Main Thing” – Listening and Responding

The Main Thing was devoted to discussion of Vestry/Clergy response to reactions from the congregation to the staff downsizing in March, and to possible outcomes and next steps as a result of this process. Comments and observations from the Dean, the Vice Dean/COO, and the Wardens preceded general Vestry discussion.

The Dean emphasized the need for addressing the Cathedral's communication strategies. He noted that the e-mail subscriber list is an important means of communication and needs to be increased. Cindy Spencer sees an opportunity for communicating with the Cathedral community by telling the story of the children and youth ministries at the Cathedral. Some of the arts programs that have been adversely affected by the lay-offs may be restored by including them in the Church in the World program, especially those with a social justice focus.

Robert noted that he was pleased that he cancelled his travel plans during this time, since it has provided him opportunities to meet and talk with many people.

Mary Coon reported that the packet of information prepared for the April 1 forum was very well received and appreciated. She also reported the Staff have had difficulty adjusting to the loss of co-workers, and a service of lament and opportunities to talk have been provided.

Carol Hoerster said that the Cathedral has always had its ups and downs and difficult times can have positive results. For example, as a result of the current situation there is a renewed recognition of the importance of and the need for transparency. Carol said that ambiguity provokes skepticism and frustration and transparency promotes understanding and engagement. She also said that the congregation is feeling the need to be alert and to engage in inquiry in order to assume responsibility in the life of the Cathedral.

Bob Muglia announced that in the interest of greater transparency he is designing a new web site that will be available to lay ministers and others to communicate with the congregation.

Jordan Gross expressed appreciation to the Dean for his recent transparency. She said that the committee chairs will work to find ways to sustain transparency and to support the Dean. She expressed the need to find ways to welcome people who will attend Vestry meetings as guests and to increase the flow of information back and forth between and among various ministries.

The Dean opened the floor to general discussion about next steps, and the following ideas emerged:

- Bear in mind that people often do not grasp information being provided until they are emotionally and personally impacted.
- In Cathedral communications, de-emphasize the sense of Cathedral as “corporation” and increase emphasis on the Cathedral as church. Use good stewardship images rather than business language.
- Emphasize the fact that everyone at the Cathedral is part of the whole and shares the responsibilities and benefits that come from being part of such a community.
- The new Web site being developed by Bob Muglia is for the community. People will need to take ownership of it.

- Review the Cathedral’s relationships with the press.
- In efforts toward better communication and greater transparency at the Cathedral, try to de-emphasize an “us vs. them” paradigm. Increased interactivity among the parishioners and the Dean and the Vestry and the Staff is the answer. Seek ways to create community.
- Look for the presence of God and of Spirit in the recent happenings at Saint Mark’s.
- Consider having Vestry members visit the various ministries.
- Re-consider the idea of living room groups.
- Consider providing a follow-up forum to the April 1 forum, and/or consider having regularly scheduled quarterly forums focusing on the Cathedral community and the Cathedral finances.
- Provide regular financial reporting. Decide on locations for such information and a consistent format for financial reports.
- Have a Vestry member present after each Sunday morning service to answer questions and receive comments.

Comments and Report from Betsy Greenman, Diocesan Canon to the Ordinary

Betsy commended the Dean for going public with information about salaries.

She stated that there are two questions congregations have for both lay and clerical leaders. They are 1) *Do you care?* and 2) *Are you congruent?* That is, do your actions and your words go together? The most important of the two is, *do you care?*

Betsy reported that through action of the Board of Directors of the Diocese, funds were provided from the Diocese to enhance the severance packages of the three Cathedral staff persons. At the request of the Board of Directors, Betsy, as Canon to the Ordinary, wrote and distributed copies of a letter to the Dean and the Vestry explaining this action.

Dean Taylor expressed appreciation to Betsy and to Bishop Warner for their support and assistance.

New Business

Open Mike

Robert shared with the Vestry that Herb Williams was unable to attend the meeting because the child of one of Herb’s co-workers had died. Robert asked for prayers for Herb and the family of the child.

Ben Porter reminded everyone that the last Sunday evening dinner with residents of Tent City would be on Sunday, April 29. Urging everyone to attend, he said he would be cooking his extra special Seafood Gumbo.

Barbara Erickson gave the first of what will be the Facilities Committee “Factoid of the Month”. This factoid highlighted how relatively easy it will be for the Cathedral to become ‘carbon neutral’ because of Scott Gibson’s ongoing efforts to keep the Cathedral ecologically compliant.

Diane Stevens offered praise for the Vestry’s response to the congregation while they adjusted to recent staff reductions.

Carol Hoerster recognized Karen Scott for her contribution to Saint Mark’s as the Dean’s Executive Assistant the past 2 years and wished her well in her new undertakings as she leaves the Cathedral on Friday, April 27.

Meeting Evaluation – Barbara Erickson expressed appreciation for the Agenda revision to provide additional time for the Main Thing discussion.

Closing Prayer/Adjournment

To close the meeting, Connie Espe offered an inspiring vignette and a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean S. Greene
Assistant Clerk to the Vestry
St. Mark’s Cathedral Vestry Minutes, April 24, 2007

Barbara Erickson
Clerk of the Vestry