



SEPTEMBER VESTRY MEETING

MEETING MINUTES
September 23, 2008 6:00-9:00pm
Saint Nicholas Building

Vestry Members Present

Randy Urmston, Sr. Warden
Bob Muglia, Junior Warden
Margaret Rothschild, Jr. Warden
Dennis Andersen
Terry Brandon
Kathleen Croston
Sam Fleshman
Carol Hoerster
Alan Mack, Bishop's Rep.
Janet McCully
Randy Revelle
Herb Williams

Vestry Members Absent

Antonio Foglia
Bishop Greg Rickel
Miller Adams
Phil Haas

Staff Members Present

Rev. Ralph Carskadden, Priest-in-Charge
Mary Coon, Interim COO
Rev. Marilyn Cornwell
Brian Fairbanks
Betsy Nelson
Cindy Spencer

Officers Present

Virginia Lenker, Clerk
Steve Moen, Treasurer

Officers Absent

John Hoerster, Chancellor

Guests: Jo Ann Bailey, Sally Hayman,
Bob Hayman, Julia Moloney

Call to Order

Randy Urmston called the meeting to order at 6 pm, and asked Vestry members to introduce themselves to the Rev. Dennis Andersen, our new Community Representative. Rev. Andersen is pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church. His background includes: ecumenical officer in regional and national Lutheran organizations, former chair of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board, and curator of photography and architectural drawings at the UW library. He is also an architectural historian. Dennis remarked that Lutherans don't have cathedrals, so they "borrow" Saint Mark's. He also said he appreciated Saint Mark's arts, music, leadership in social outreach, and openness to interfaith and ecumenical communities.

Spiritual Reflection

Ralph shared a picture of *St. George Slaying the Dragon*, and advised the Vestry to beware of riding the white horse and seeing others as dark or evil. He also cautioned against asking our leaders to slay our dragons for us— whether they are dragons of money, architecture, or anything else. At this, his last Vestry meeting, Ralph returned to the words with which he had begun his tenure, reading excerpts from his sermon from April 6 in which he urged R.E.S.P.E.C.T. and "Both/And Thinking".

Ralph displayed a scrapbook of stories compiled during this summer's weaving project. He remarked that Saint Mark's is a very public place, but he noted that there have been no newspaper articles during our time of healing and reconciliation. Ralph advised remembering the closing line of the Gospel reading from April 6: *Love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew.* He asked God to "give us courage, knowing that your hand is leading us and your love is supporting us."

Ralph asked prayers for Pat Taylor, who has broken her elbow and knee. Also for John Huston, who broke his pelvis, and Cindy Spencer's aunt who had a stroke. Randy circulated a card for Miller Adams, who is having surgery on October 8. Bob and the Vestry thanked Ralph for his time at Saint Mark's.

Action Item

Consent Agenda – (NO DISCUSSION):

The Vestry accepted the Consent Agenda consisting of the following:

- Approval of Minutes of July 22, 2008 Vestry Meeting
- Receipt of Reports/Notes/Minutes of Meetings of Vestry Committees:
 - Holy Orders– 8/19
 - Governance – *Draft* 9/16
 - Mission & Strategy Committee notes – *Draft* 9/17
 - Facilities Committee minutes – *Draft* 9/16

Committee Reports:

Stewardship Committee, Randy Revelle, chair– Jo Ann Bailey, stewardship committee member, shared stories about what Saint Mark's means to her, both when she first joined the parish and today. She has always been impressed with the comfortable diversity at Saint Mark's, and she especially appreciates the Vestry's and Bishop's willingness to "tackle the difficult issues and ask the tough questions."

Saint Mark's pledge base and donations are essentially unchanged since 2001. During Phase One of the Annual Campaign, people in leadership positions plus major donors (130 pledge units) will be contacted personally. Last year, pledges from this group amounted to 50% of the Annual Campaign's income. Randy circulated a signup sheet asking Vestry members to make some calls. The campaign's goals, ranging from "status quo" to "bountiful" levels, will require 8% to 36% revenue increase, and expanding to 600 or 700 pledgers. As of the meeting, 20 pledges from Phase One have been received, however a 100% commitment from the Vestry, by October 5, will be a very important show of support when launching the campaign's public phase. Those who prefer to make a donation rather than a pledge would be included in the 100% commitment. Randy acknowledged the challenges of conducting a campaign during these uncertain economic times, with a historically flat pledge base, and with a small but committed staff, not to mention the recent leadership turnovers.

Priest-in Charge's Report & Updates:

Children and Youth Choirs, Brian Fairbanks–Brian noted with pleasure that it was his first visit to a Vestry meeting in the 8 years he has worked at Saint Mark's, and indicates a closer cooperation between the staff and Vestry. He distributed a letter from Tom Joyce, director of the Boys and Girls Choir, and a booklet about the Saint Mark's Choir School. Choristers as young as kindergarten are trained in liturgical leadership and musicianship–music theory, ear training and vocal production. The older students have one-on-one music training with Mel and Brian every other week, at no cost. They are required to learn and discuss basics of the liturgy, write an essay, do community service, go on pilgrimage trips in the Diocese, sing in evensong, and participate in a Children's Choir Festival. Membership has stayed stable, despite the recent troubles. This year there are 9 Junior Choristers, 10 in Boys and Girls Choir, and 11 in Youth Ensemble, including 5 young men. The majority of the youth who are actively involved in ministry at Saint Mark's are also in the choirs. Brian is working to recruit new members outside of Saint Mark's parish.

Church School, Cindy Spencer–6 high school students and 3 adults went on a pilgrimage to Belize this summer. All are invited to hear their report to the congregation Sun Sept 28, 5-7pm in Bloedel. Church school has about 60 students, which is very similar to last year. Each class is taught by a team of 4 adults. Cindy explained Godly Play materials, curriculum and methods, and its heavy emphasis on stories. Cindy distributed a brochure put together by Rebecca McClain, our new Canon Missioner and executive director of the Godly Play Foundation, now located in Diocesan House.

Saint Mark's Celebrates Seattle, Marilyn Cornwell—The luncheon, in the Saint Mark's nave on Thursday, Oct 16, will help fund Saint Mark's outreach ministries. Invitations, as is usual, have been sent to community members who do not attend Saint Mark's. The Spirit of the City award will be presented to John and Laurel Nesholm. This year's event is structured significantly different from last year. The ticket price has been raised to \$250 (from \$150 last year), and per the Nesholms' request, there will not be an "ask" this year and the host committee will contribute \$1500-5000 (\$10,000-25,000 last year). Expected revenue has been revised down to \$75,000 from the \$125,000 originally budgeted. In the meantime, she asked Vestry members to be table captains at \$2500, underwrite tables for Cathedral staff and volunteers, or offer scholarships for those who can't afford the hefty ticket price.

Brazeau mural—Randy Urmston asked Sally Hayman, former Saint Mark's parishioner and retired PI art critic, to share her thoughts about moving the mural to GAGE Art Academy in the Saint Nicholas building, as discussed in last month's Vestry meeting. For Sally who was involved in bringing the mural to Saint Mark's, moving the mural "feels like banishment." She also indicated that concerns about racist content reflected on those who were involved in the original decision. In her opinion, feelings about the mural are tied up with the former staff members who were laid off in spring 2007 (Ann Redding, Janet Campbell, and Heather Hodsdon) and Dean Taylor. She also expressed concern around conservation of the painting, fearing the act of moving might present graver danger. Because of the complicated and unresolved deeper issues, and since the Bishop has set up structures for waiting and healing in other areas, Sally recommended against moving the mural at this time.

There was a lengthy discussion of the various sides of the argument amongst Vestry members. There was a review of the discussions at the forum that had been held on Sept 17 and the consensus of those who had attended that it should be moved. Many strong opinions and interpretations in the parish, the diocese and greater Seattle community have been voiced about the content. Several Vestry members noticed that the painting has been damaged, and were concerned about future damage and/or vandalism. There seemed to be concurrence that to move the painting now, after only a few months discussion, would be to rush the decision.

A motion was proposed to leave the Brazeau painting in Leffler Living Room uncovered, take steps to protect it, and begin a process for community discussion about the meaning of the painting. Ralph will write a one-page summary to post on the wall next to the painting, inviting commentary. The motion was seconded and passed, with one opposed.

Senior Warden's Report:

Transfer of Dean's Severance package: As discussed in the last Vestry meeting, a formal resolution was presented by the Finance Committee proposing payment of the former Dean's severance package out of a special fund in the Saint Mark's Endowment for September to December 2008. Payment of the 2009 portion will be voted on when the Vestry approves the 2009 budget.

A motion to approve Proposed Resolution #P08-FI-12 (Transfer Severance Package to Fund 16A) was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

Vestry & Staff Social Gathering: Randy Urmston will host this annual dinner at his home, on Monday September 29 at 6pm. Carol circulated a sign-up sheet for hors d'oeuvres and salads, and asked everyone to pay \$35. The main dish will be catered. Ralph will bring angel food cake, in honor of the feast day of St. Michael and All Angels.

Vestry Work Day: The October workday has been rescheduled to Sat. Nov. 1, 9am-4pm, at Diocesan House, and will include a regular business meeting. Rebecca McClain, the new Canon Missioner, has been working with Margaret and Carol on plans. Randy Urmston thanked Randy Revelle for offering the use of his home on Hood Canal, and said they hope to take advantage of it at the Spring Vestry workday.

Governance Committee, Margaret Rothschild, chair--Margaret thought Peter Steinke's visit went very well, people enjoyed it and everything went according to plan. The committee is holding a leadership forum on Sun. Oct 19 at 10am called *Saint Mark's Wants You*, to encourage people to get involved in governance, get connected, and be on Vestry. The Nominating Committee asked Vestry members to volunteer to be mentors to potential candidates. They have also asked the Vestry to identify skills and experience that would like to see in nominees.

Treasurer's Report, Steve Moen: The audit of the cathedral is currently underway. Steve presented the Operating Fund Summary as of August 31, 2008, which has currently projects a year-end surplus of \$94K and assumes netting \$75,000 at *Saint Mark's Celebrates Seattle* and bringing in an additional \$181,000 in major gifts. Pledge income is holding up very well, and expenses are being held down from budgeted numbers, due to leaving positions unfilled, hiring at less expense than budgeted and the possibility of reduced income. The staff is being stretched pretty thin. Staffing expenses may change when the Canon Missioner arrives.

Executive Session

Vestry members went into Executive Session at 9:00pm. Clerk, visitors, and staff left the meeting.

The next meeting is the Vestry's fall Workday and Meeting, which will be held at Diocesan House, from 9am-4pm on Saturday, November 1, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Lenker
Recording Secretary and Clerk

Liz Sloat
Executive Assistant to the Priest in Charge