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**Minutes of the Vestry
St. Mark's Church Capitol Hill
September 16, 2007 Adams Room**

Present: *Clergy:* Paul Abernathy, Rector
 Wardens: Louise Walsh, Jim Michael
 Vestry: Kenn Allen, Eileen Blumenthal, Doris Burton, Kathy
 Gerhard, Kristen Hartke, Don Mosher, Bruce Sherman, and
 Margaret Wood
 Officers: Pete Carlson, Acting Treasurer
 Counsel: Rosemary Harold

Absent: *Manciple:* Charley Donnelly
 Vestry: Lisa Sotir Ozkan

The meeting opened with a prayer by Bruce Sherman

Doris Burton reported 195 people attended the Parish Picnic on September 2nd.

Director of Youth Ministries

Sian Jones, Director of Youth Ministries, presented her proposed plan for the youth program. Before starting her presentation, she reported that the Youth and Family Forum held earlier in the day at 8am was useful and a good kick off to the year's activities. She also reported that the Summer Sunday school had collected about \$489.57—just \$15 shy of the amount required to “buy” a heifer through an international program that provides livestock to impoverished farmers. Bruce Sherman immediately pledged the needed amount.

Sian proposed, for Vestry endorsement, a Youth Ministries Council. Her written proposal included roles and responsibilities for adults to serve our youth. These positions include two volunteer liaisons, a four member Middle School team, a four to five member High School Team, a four member Special Event Committee, a four member Summer Sunday School Committee (to include the Director of Youth Ministries), and a four to six member Shrine Mont team. Her role is to provide the framework and provide logistical support to these teams which she views as action teams, not “talk” teams.

Sian plans to annually survey parishioners to gather individuals' interests and willingness to serve in volunteer roles. She plans to create a volunteer data base from this information.

Several Vestry members praised her for an organized, coherent presentation. It was suggested that she enlarge her charts for posting on the bulletin board. Members of the Vestry asked Sian what the Vestry could do for her. She suggested that the Vestry be a

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voice to publicize the program. Paul suggested that the Vestry become conversant with the program and to help Sian maintain her focus on the larger picture and direction of the whole program. It was suggested that she report back with a program implementation progress report.

Paul, in speaking to Sian's efforts to put a youth framework in place, encouraged the Vestry to support her in *our* youth program. He projected, given her age and career building stage of life, her tenure might be two to three years.

Bruce Sherman moved and Kathy Gerhard seconded the motion that the:

Vestry endorse the our St. Mark's Youth Program.

The motion carried unanimously.

Canvass Presentation

Pete Carlson provided the background on the Finance Committee's decision to set the 2008 Canvass goal at \$925,000. Pete also discussed the process and timeline for developing the 2008 budget that will be presented to the Vestry in early January 2008. A key input is the result of the November retreat where priorities will be discussed and direction will be provided to the Finance Committee. Other inputs will come from pillar heads. Margaret Wood suggested the committee also review how programs spent their allocated funds in 2007.

Bruce Sherman noted the St Marks does not have a 2-3 page strategic direction or plan that could be used in budget development. He believes this would give a framework to help evaluate proposals and would mitigate the problem of weighing the relative value of ad hoc items proposed for Vestry approval.

Don Mosher expressed concern about a looming Capital Campaign suggesting we allocate a level of funding in each budget to build up a fund for these type of expenditures. Jim Michael provided an alternative view driven by the size of what will need to be done saying that the concept Don presented might work for a stable physical plant, but noted our physical plant is unstable. Continuation of this discussion was deferred to the November retreat.

Josie Jordan, Canvass Chair, provided the "shape" of the Canvass itself. The Canvass will run from September 30 to November 30 with the theme: "Giving Humbly from our Abundance to a World in Waiting." September 30th will be a special Sunday with post sermon discussions to kick off the Canvass. Paul will preach on the theme on October 14th. There will be a special dinner in the Nave on October 26 to "Celebrate St. Mark's." Kathy Gerhard is coordinating table captains and would like Vestry members to volunteer for this job. Drinks and appetizers will be start at 6:30 in the Parish Hall.

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Dinner is at 7 and the program will start at 8:15. There will be a second dinner for first time pledgers.

Josie requested that Vestry members create a “buzz” around the Canvass events by participating and volunteering as much as possible. Also she requested Vestry members complete their own pledges by September 21. The materials are on the web site. Another avenue would be to write Susan Block an email message.

Kenn Allen moved and Doris Burton seconded, and the vestry voted unanimously to endorse the 2008 Canvass goal and plan.

Space use for “Political” purposes

Paul Abernathy encouraged the Vestry to establish a process to engage the Parish in conversation about the use of our church space by political groups or for political purposes. By way of background he noted both our location and history make us attractive to political organizations. He went on to say that he heard from both sides on the potential support to the Farm Workers and decided it is time to engage the congregation. He suggested that a process similar to the one used for examining same sex unions would be appropriate to address this question, noting that we have experience in identifying a sensitive subject and putting it on the table. At least two questions are underpinning this issue: Do we have a common definition of politics? Do we have an intersection of religion and politics?

Paul noted that, canonically, he can make all space decisions; however, at St Mark’s, we converse about these types of things.

The discussion that followed included responding to Vestry member questions about how space use decisions are made and the timing of a task force, etc. One Vestry member suggested that the conversation may be broader than space, but where we, as a Parish, want to be engaged.

The Vestry passed the motion the Rector and the Senior Warden initiate the process to develop a proposed plan by November for a process to engage the Parish in conversation on use of St Mark’s space for political purposes. (Kenn Allen moved; Margaret Wood seconded. There was one nay vote.)

September 30 Event

Louise Walsh discussed the plans Paul, Kenn, Woody Osborne, and she have for the September 30 Shrine Mont follow-up. They have been sharpening the Shrine Mont summaries, processing the survey of parishioners’ interest, etc. The desired outcome of the small group discussions on the 30th is to collect information that will be used at the Vestry Retreat, not decisions. Vestry was asked to be present and to assume the role of listener.

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Lichfield Link

Doris Burton provided the background and history of how the link with the people of Lichfield Cathedral was first made and how it has continued over the years. Significant changes have happened with the Lichfield leadership in the last year. Paul expressed the need for the Vestry to discern whether the link should continue. He reported that he recently turned down a request from Lichfield to support a tour of their choir as critical resources required for such an undertaking would not be in place. Those resources included Keith Reas, who would be away on sabbatical.

St Mark's Players Parish Survey

Kristen Hartke and Eileen Blumenthal reported that under the leadership of Rick Rutherford, the Players have drafted a survey that will be distributed by email. In addition to the survey they will conduct focus groups. They plan to have a report with recommendations for the Vestry by December.

Search Committee Update

Documents required by the Diocesan deployment office are nearing completion. These documents include a job description and Parish Profile. Once the Diocese approves these documents, they will be circulated and will be available to parishioners.

November Retreat Planning

Susan Sedgewick reported that she will be distributing logistical information via email.

Vestry Reports

Minutes of the July 15, 2007 meeting were approved as read.

The Acting Treasurer, Pete Carlson, reported the financial picture was in good shape. Don questioned that conclusion given the balance in the Christian Education line in the budget. The leaders have a need to make deposits on weekend retreat sites for which the account will be reimbursed by students' class payments. These deposits exceed the amount currently available to Christian Education. Louise alerted the Vestry there may be an e-Vote on this issue. Kenn requested that the Vestry review the Christian Ed budget in the October meeting to see the cash flow history.

Margaret Wood moved, Kristen seconded that the Treasurer's Report be approved. Motion passed unanimously.

Junior Warden, Jim Michael, presented his spread sheet showing how the building maintenance funds have been spent. He pointed out 30% of expenditures are due to air conditioning issues. He reported the parking area improvements and repair of the nave terrazzo were complete.

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Votes

Vestry approved the “Informational Items for Vestry Meeting, September 15, 2007” be included in the minutes.

Vestry approved the letter addressed to the Bishop and the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Washington which provided the grounds for the judgment that David Sloane Dill is qualified to be a Candidate for Holy Orders.

(Kenn Allen moved, Kathy Gerhard seconded. Passed Unamniously. Vestry members and Wardens signed the letter.)

Vestry approved giving Nancy Karpeles a \$50 gift certificate for ticket to a Maryland Hall performance to accompany the previously passed Vestry Resolution recognizing her service to the young children’s choir.

Closing prayer was offered by Kathy Gerhard.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Sedgewick

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**Informational Items for the Vestry
September 16,2007**

1. Vestry approval of Pillar Heads

An e-Vote request with subject "Vestry vote to approve Pillar Heads 2007-2008" was sent to the Vestry on August 18,2007. The motion was to approve the following as the Pillar Heads, affirming those continuing. It was carried with 5 members voting to approve. There were no negative votes.

Outreach: Christine Farrell (ongoing) and Jack Burton

Parish Life: Linda Huntington and Elizabeth Long

Worship: Linda Chandlee and Jim Steed

Arts: Rick Hayes and Chuck Divine (completing Larry Cardwell's term)

Christian Education: (all ongoing) Bill Jordan, Martha Conner Donnelly, Marilu Sherer and Dave Evelyn

2. Cathedral Centennial Announcements

ATTENTION PARISHES: CATHEDRAL DAY 2007

Washington National Cathedral's Centennial Office invites parishes and parish groups to participate in Cathedral Day (formerly called Open House) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 29. Cathedral Day will kick off a year's celebration of the Cathedral's Centennial. A special area will be designated for diocesan representation. Parishes are invited to highlight some of their mission work at an information table, offer items for sale, recruit program volunteers or other activities. For more information, contact Elizabeth Stafford at 202/537-6397 or estaffordcathedral.org

The St Mark's Players are participating. See this note from Rick Rutherford:

The St. Mark's Players was asked by the Washington Diocese to create a production celebrating the 100th year anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone. The production will be in conjunction with a da-long festival on September 29th at the Cathedral. The production will be done in a reader's theatre style with period costumes.

They are also looking for assistance on doing costuming. Please contact Rick Hayes at rick.hayes@yahoo.com if you are interested in helping out.