



## St. David's Episcopal Church & School

November 15, 2023

### Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved 1/17/2024

This Vestry meeting was a hybrid meeting with options for in-person or virtual attendance via Zoom.

**Attending:** Vestry members: The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (Interim Rector), Jim Tracy (Sr. Warden), Jenifer Bluhm, Jr. Warden, Katherine Beckett-Goodwin (Treasurer, Register), Margot Culhane, Mike Gibson, Bobbie Johnson, Tanya Kerr, and David Schmidt. Also attending: Chaplain to the Vestry, Carol Bonifant, Maureen Carey, Clerk to the Register Sharon Easley, Ginny Maddock, Allan Steed, and Marilyn Tracy. Mathew Verghese attended for the Discernment Committee update portion of the meeting.

**Call to Order** – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (Interim Rector), called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

#### Administrative

**Discussion:** November 15, 2023 Vestry Meeting Agenda – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (Interim Rector)

- Are there any adjustments to the agenda? None.

**Decision:** Approve November 15, 2023 Vestry Meeting Agenda – Vestry

**Motion:** Move to approve the November 15, 2023 Vestry Meeting Agenda as presented.

Motion seconded and approved.

**Dwelling in the Word:** Attendees participated in the Dwelling in the Word exercise discussing John 15: 1-17, led by vestry member David Schmidt.

#### **Parishioner Comment Period, Parishioners**

- Margot Culhane provided her input on the recent Discernment Committee Town Hall meeting she attended and how exciting and motivating it was.
- Margot also shared that she would like to see the church partner more with the preschool to stay connected and grow that relationship further.
- Kudos to Maureen Carey for her work on adjusting the Trunk or Treat and making it a truly great event.
- Jim Tracy commented on what is it that makes St. David's unique, the way we incorporate children into the service is one of the most unique things about us per Rev. Shirley Smith-Graham from the Diocese. Margot noted she thinks we need to find more ways to engage the children.
- Jenifer Bluhm noted how important it was to have The Reverend Shirley Smith-Graham before the congregation. Maureen Carey commented that she liked how Rev. Shirley suggested that our next priest might not be full-time.

#### **Realm Update, Ginny Maddock and Jenifer Bluhm**

- There will be a soft relaunch of our Realm app.
- Training will be available to everyone.
- Ginny presented a handout with training information and how to access the online tutorials.
- Ginny would like everyone to do the training "Realm Essentials," there are 5 short courses which take about an hour to complete. Once completed you will be "Realm Certified."

**Discussion:** October 18, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes – Register/S. Easley

- Are there any comments/edits? Under Mission & Vision "support the" is in there twice.



## St. David's Episcopal Church & School

November 15, 2023

### Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved 1/17/2024

**Decision:** Approve October 18, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes – Vestry

**Motion:** Move to approve the October 18, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes with one correction as noted.  
Motion seconded and approved.

#### Property Items

**Discussion:** October 2023 Property Report – Allan Steed, Sr. Property Steward

- Marilyn Tracy reported on a couple of items that happened earlier in the day, she noted that there was an issue with the fire panel in the church causing it to go completely blank. If there had been a fire there is a possibility that the system would not work correctly and no message would have been sent out. They are working to get it fixed. This is a very high priority to get this fixed.
- Some of the newer people were not aware that there are numbers for each of the buildings on our campus. We are working on getting the unique building numbers added to the buildings on campus. The request for each building to have its own set of numbers came from the fire department. It's important for them to have the exact address.
- Carol Bonifant asked about the costs for landscaping which didn't include snow plow services. She also asked how the property team is prioritizing all of the items that are marked as high priorities. Allan noted this should be a collaborative process between the property team and the vestry.
- Waiting on parts for the projector.
- Susan+ thanked Allan, Marilyn and Richard (office) for their hard work.

**Discussion:** Sanctuary stained-glass windows needed repairs – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

Prior to the meeting Jim provided a report which documents the current state of the windows and the options for repair or removal and storage, plus the costs of the repairs.

- Damage to the windows is significant and there is risk that they could collapse.
- The industry which has the skills to repair them is quickly going away.
- The business that St. David's has been looking at is one of the few left.
- They are willing to expedite our repairs which are estimated to cost around \$50,000.
- When the windows were initially installed, they were not installed by people that understand the unique needs of stained glass. They were installed by regular window installers. Most likely they were not installed correctly and that is why we are having the problems that we are.
- The finance committee discussed this issue and recommends moving ahead with getting the windows.
- Tanya Kerr asked about the warranty and the life span of the repairs. The warranty is 10 years. Jim is hoping we can get another 30 to 40 years out of them after the repairs.
- One advantage that we have is that these windows are on the inside so they are not in danger of being struck from the outside and are not exposed to the outdoor elements. They are exposed to indoor elements such as temperature, humidity, sunlight changes.

**Decision:** Approve funds to perform needed repairs on Sanctuary stained-glass windows – Vestry

**Motion:** Move the Vestry approve the restoration of the stained-glass windows as proposed by Epiphany Studios in the attached proposal at a cost not to exceed \$50,000 to be withdrawn from the Capital Fund at the ToTF. The Wardens are authorized to accept and execute the proposal. A limited capital campaign will take place in January and February 2024 to help offset a portion of this cost. A restricted income line item (stained glass restoration) will be established to receive these gifts. Any excess received will go into the repair and reserve fund. The plan is to remove the windows after Christmas 2023 and re-install them before Easter 2024.



## St. David's Episcopal Church & School

November 15, 2023

### Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved 1/17/2024

Motion seconded and approved. (Vote was 7 to 1 in favor)

#### Committee/Ministry Reports

##### **Discernment Committee Update** – Mathew Verghese, Committee Co-Chair

- Detailed Parish Report has been posted to the website.
- Kick-off of the town hall meetings was quite successful; however, turnout could have been a little better. Maybe moving forward, we could target families with children. Maureen gave Mathew a list and he specifically invited them to participate. He is reaching out to try to hear everyone's voice to get a better understanding.
- Information from these meetings will be included in the Parish Portfolio which goes to The Reverend Shirley Smith-Graham.
- Next step is to gather financial/budget information for the Portfolio. Expecting Portfolio document to be completed in Jan. or Feb. 2024.

##### **Stewardship Campaign** – Jenifer Bluhm

- Updated numbers for 2024 financial pledge drive: ~~72 pledges for just over \$400,000. POST MEETING UPDATE: these numbers were miscommunicated. Update: 72 pledges for \$364,344.~~
- Jim noted that we went from 64 pledges to 72 pledges in a week and a half, which is a hopeful sign.
- A letter signed by the Rector and Wardens is going out.
- Thank you notes are being sent.
- Stewardship committee needs help with reaching out to those people that pledged last year but have not yet pledged for 2024.
- Susan+ thanked Jenifer and Margot for all they have done and are doing for Stewardship.

##### **Ministry/Worship Report** – Maureen Carey, Lay Pastoral Assistant

Report for October 2023 submitted prior to the meeting, see attached.

- Worship: Sanctuary Soft Space continues to be utilized during service, Maureen w/children during homily; meetings: Healing Ministry, vesting room; services: Blessing of the Animals, Prayer Vigil, Trunk or Treat; Sunday servers & Realm; monthly Kindness Rocks Project w/prep and cleanup.
- Children's Ministry: Sunday School registration ongoing w/2 new fams October; collected pet supplies for Blessing of Animals w/Sunday School; pinecone bird feeders-Caring for All God's Creatures curriculum; Christmas Pageant meeting.
- Preschool: monthly PS Board Meeting; wrote Children's Chapel article for newsletter; planned PS Carline Blessing of Animals; monthly Children's Chapel; PS Harvest Festival; planning Family Chapel in December.
- Youth Ministry: invite to participate in group Fuller Beyond Youth based at Fuller Seminary in CA; planning Youth Christmas party & 2024 YG signup.
- Pastoral Care: ongoing pastoral care & LEM visits; 2 prayer quilts; pastoral care visits w/2 former parishioners.
- Ministry Misc.: Outreach discussions, inventory, content for Advent brochure, Realm training, garden cleanup, collect supplies, created postcards & flyers for both narthex and preschool backpacks -Trunk or Treat; vesting room meetings, etc.
- Social Media: Web site content creation for Advent; FB/Insta - Blessing of Animals: 300+ views, Pop Up Prayer: 102 views; Children's Ministry Reel: 312 views, Trunk or Treat Reels; Baking w/the Bible FB Live: 72 views (up); FB Compline Sun-Thurs @9pm after summer pause.



## St. David's Episcopal Church & School

November 15, 2023

### Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved 1/17/2024

#### Mission & Vision

**Discussion:** Mission/Outreach Committee Report – Margot Culhane and Mike Gibson, Co-chairs

A report was distributed prior to the meeting for review.

- Mike Gibson is organizing a Thanksgiving dinner for any parishioners who may just wish to share a meal with their friends from St. David's. More details to follow, but it will be at the clubhouse in his community at noon on Thanksgiving Day. Susan+ is planning to attend.

#### Financial

**Discussion:** 2024 Church Operating Budget Review Process – Jim Tracy, Budget Co-Chair

- The budget committee is meeting with staff next week to get budget numbers from them for the areas they are responsible for.
- The committee is planning to get preliminary numbers to the Finance Committee and to the Vestry in early December so they will have the information for their December meetings.
- Margot noted it makes sense to wait a little bit before setting the final budget number until more pledges come in.

**Discussion:** Vestry Covenant – Susan Pinkerton, Interim Rector

- Susan+ suggested this document be reviewed annually and modified if needed.
- She is also working on getting the bulletin board and Vestry photos put up and wants to frame the covenant as well for all to see.

#### **St. David's Episcopal Church & School Vestry Covenant**

1. Provide complete information to the vestry.
2. Share what's on your mind with respect and respect what others share.
3. Come to meetings prepared.
4. Respect confidentiality with the vestry.
5. Present a united front once a decision is made no matter how one voted.
6. Leaders of the church serve as models for the congregation.
7. Encourage and support other vestry members.
8. Address vestry topics in the appropriate forum.

**Decision:** Approval of the Vestry Covenant

**Motion:** Move to approve the Vestry Covenant as presented.

Motion seconded and approved.

#### **REPORTS:**

**Convention Highlights** – Tanya Kerr & Bobbie Johnson

- There was a large focus on where the Diocese is going, focused on reparations and spiritual healing in the church.
- Four resolutions were presented. All were discussed, none were controversial. All passed easily.
- What was new were the vendors that were there. A lot of educational opportunities.



## St. David's Episcopal Church & School

November 15, 2023

### Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved 1/17/2024

- The resolution that was added at the last minute was about the war in Gaza. It was handled very well.
- See [www.episcopalvirginia.org](http://www.episcopalvirginia.org) for details. Note the web site name change from [www.thediocese.net](http://www.thediocese.net).

**Prayer for Discernment** – Offered by Carol Bonifant, Chaplain to the Vestry.

Gracious God, thank You for Your presence at our meeting with Rev. Shirley, as we listened, learned, and inquired about the process St David's is going through. We ask for Your blessing on each of our focus groups, helping our Discernment Committee to gain the information they need to write our profile. Help each of us attending to be transparent and honest with our comments, yet realistic with our hopeful expectations. Holy Spirit cause telling descriptive words to surface in these focus groups creating a true picture of who we are at St David's and what we want in a priest. Move through our hearts motivating our attendance to these groups, while rewarding us with deeper relationships with the other folks who attend. It has been said; "The way of the faithful is willing to pay the price even though the cost is unknown – come what may." Again Lord, we lift up, Dotty, Anne, H.L., Bob, Matthew, Richard, asking You to bless them 1,000-fold for their sacrificial time, dedication, and service to the work You have called them to do. With grateful hearts we pray in Jesus name, Amen.

**Interim Rectors Report** – Rev. Susan Pinkerton

Susan+ sent her report to the Vestry prior to the meeting, she added one item that she discussed with Jim Tracy:

- After participating in a Discernment Committee town hall meeting, Jim had mentioned how St. David's handles conflict. He noted that St. David's handles conflict well and we also handle conflict badly. The way we handle conflict now is a defined process involving both Wardens and Susan+. What he now realizes is that we are not communicating this to the Parish. We should communicate how the process works now so people understand that leadership wants to work with them to understand the conflict and deal with it. Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> the wardens, property administrator and I are meeting with 3 non-profit developers who work with churches to arrange a pro bono feasibility study at St. David's as a first step to explore options for developing possible revenue streams. We will provide an update next month.
- Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> meeting with Fr. Daniel of St. Gabriels to discuss possible joint worship and outreach opportunities.
- During the Advent season we are introducing a new healing ministry during the service. We have four healing ministers who will offer prayers for during the Eucharist at the far right corner of the sanctuary. If there is a positive response we will continue this ministry with a possible regular healing mid-week service.
- Episcopal 101 will be held on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> after the service in the sanctuary for all newcomers (who will receive invitations) and anyone interested in this basic review of our Anglican theology, Book of Common prayer and history.
- *Blue Christmas* service is scheduled for Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> at 7PM. This service is for those at St. David's and our larger community who struggle with the holidays and provides a sacred place to come together for comfort and reassurance.
- *Just Mercy* book group continues for the next two weeks. We will begin a new book group after the beginning of January 2024.



## St. David's Episcopal Church & School

November 15, 2023

### Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved 1/17/2024

- St. David's is holding a small wine & cheese reception for the Preschool teachers on 11/16/2023 prior to Thanksgiving break. Requesting approval to serve alcohol at the gathering.

**Decision:** Approval of serving alcohol during the wine & cheese reception for the Preschool teachers on 11/16/2023.

**Motion:** Move to approve allowing service of alcohol during the wine & cheese reception for the preschool teachers on 11/16/2023.

Motion seconded and approved.

#### **Wardens' Report** – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

The report was provided prior to the meeting.

- One addition, the postal carrier complained about having to get out of their vehicle to deliver the mail.
- Mike Gibson asked about the issue with the stolen checks. They are still working through the issue. Jenifer made an announcement during services. Katherine provided suggestions on what to say to the bank if parishioners find that any of their checks were stolen. So far, we know of 2 checks that were stolen.
- Margot asked about the marketing activities. Are we asking visitors how they hear about us? Susan+ noted she asks everyone how they heard about us.
- Many of the significant activities often included in the Warden's report have already been discussed during the earlier part of tonight's meeting.
- Stewardship Underway – Reported elsewhere tonight.
- Discernment Committee and Vestry Workshop – Discernment Committee reported to the parish this past Sunday.
- Attendance Report – October report will be handed out at the meeting.
- GRS Technology – GRS responded to 5 requests for assistance from SDECS. All completed satisfactorily.
- Marketing Activity – Half page ads have been published in the Winter Issues of the HOA newsletters for Belmont Country Club and Lansdowne. A half page ad is also scheduled for the December 2023 issue of the Ashburn Villager. These newsletters are delivered to more than 10,000 homes. Special thanks to Margo and Ginny Maddox.
- Mail Theft – Between October 19th and 30th, our mailbox was broken into and mail stolen at least once. It appears to have happened on the weekend(s). The mailbox was badly broken. So far we know at least two Preschool payments have been forged.
- The thefts have been reported to both the Loudoun County Sheriff and the USPS Inspection service. We set up for the mail to be removed each afternoon and placed in the office on the days the office was open. On the days the office was closed (Friday through Monday) we arranged for USPS to hold the mail for those time periods and deliver it on Tuesday. We met with the supervisor at the Dulles post office to coordinate a change to the mailbox.
- We installed a robust locking mail slot/box through the office wall on Monday. There is a heavy steel mail slot outside and a heavy steel box with a coded lock on the inside. We have removed the old mailbox and post and are replacing the old mailbox on the left side of the front door with a lock box.
- We are sending a letter this week to each parishioner who has given this year showing their gifts received in October and early November. We will indicate, in the letter as well, whether we have received a pledge for this year.
- Finally, the Wardens have responded to a series of concerns and questions from parishioners. When appropriate these concerns have been answered, directed to staff, or brought to the Vestry as discussed elsewhere tonight.



**St. David's Episcopal Church & School**

**November 15, 2023**

**Vestry Meeting Minutes**

Approved 1/17/2024

**Closing Prayer:** Offered by Carol Bonifant, Chaplain to the Vestry.

Father, we want to be good stewards for You. The stain-glass repairs, the Stewardship Campaign, our Ministry and Youth, our Outreach, our Worship, our Budget and Financial Affairs, and other issues were all discussed and managed to the Glory of Your Name. We use the gifts and talents You gave us Lord to properly care for Your Church at St David's. We do it out of our Love for You, may it please You as much as we hold You as our Great High King. We reiterate our post-communion prayer; "Lord Jesus Christ, You have put Your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours. Take us, renew us and remake us. What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you, still awaits us. Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.

**Adjournment** – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton adjourned the Vestry Meeting at 9:00 pm.

**NEXT VESTRY MEETING**

- **December 20, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the Adult Christian Ed. Room & Zoom. (Hybrid Meeting)**

Respectfully Submitted:

Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Register  
Sharon Easley, Clerk to the Register  
St. David's Episcopal Church & School  
January 12, 2024

Motions & Items of Note:

Approved: November 15, 2023 Vestry Meeting Agenda

Approved: October 18, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes with one correction as noted

Approved: Restoration of the stained-glass windows at a cost not to exceed \$50,000

Approved: Vestry Covenant Document

Approved: Serving alcohol during preschool teachers' wine & cheese event on 11/16/2023

**October 2023**  
**Worship/Children/Youth Ministry and Pastoral Care Report**

**Worship**

- ❖ Soft space continues to be utilized during service. Maureen has been sitting with the children during Rev. Susan's homily.
- ❖ Met with Richard and Rev. Susan about the vesting room space for vestments.
- ❖ Met with Rev. Susan about Healing Ministry plans that will begin Advent. Carol Bonifant leading
- ❖ Service info:
  - ❖ Blessing of the Animals: Thursday October 5<sup>th</sup>  
Blessings were held at preschool morning and afternoon car line and again at 6pm for the community.
  - ❖ Prayer Vigil: Led Prayer Vigil on October 19<sup>th</sup>. (16 attended)
  - ❖ Trunk or Treat Sunday October 29<sup>th</sup>  
This was a nice community event that included preschool families. Due to the weather we moved it indoors. I created postcards that were in the narthex weeks before to hand out in addition to a flyer I created that went home in the preschool backpacks. Both continue to support the ongoing church/preschool connection.
- ❖ Sunday Servers are utilizing the Realm system for sign up. Ongoing evaluating and feedback
- ❖ The Kindness Rocks Project took place on October 15<sup>th</sup>, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month after service. The Kindness Rocks Project Garden outside the church under the tree is growing. Each month I add pictures to the Kindness Rocks Garden FB Page which is international. St. David's is tagged and getting exposure. The church is listed on their website as an official site for this ongoing international project. If you see people coming/going/adding to/or taking a rock, that's ok and the purpose.

**Children's Ministry**

- Registration for Sunday School is ongoing. Two new families registered in October.
- Sunday School participants collected pet supplies as part of the Blessing of the Animals that were donated and that coincides with curriculum this month on caring for all God's creatures.
- Sunday School participants made pinecone bird feeders that are on the trees in the Restoring Eden Garden
- Met with Ginny about Christmas Pageant 12/17
- Two Sunday School

**Preschool**

- Attended monthly Preschool Board Meeting in October
- Wrote Children's Chapel Preschool Article for Preschool Newsletter for November.
- Planned and Organized Preschool Carline Blessing of the Animals with Rev. Susan
- Monthly Children's Chapel began this month
- Attended PS Harvest Festival
- Planning for Family Chapel in December has begun



### Youth Ministry

- I have been invited to participate in a group from the Fuller Youth Institute which is based at Fuller Seminary in CA. The group is based on the book Fuller Faith Beyond Youth Group. This identifies the reasons youth ministry often flops both short-term and long-term, and exploring ways adult youth leaders can cultivate character for a lifetime of growing closer to Jesus rather than drifting away.
- Planning a youth Christmas Party and 2024 youth group sign up

### Pastoral Care

- Ongoing communication and scheduling PC visits along with LEM to a few parishioners with Rev. Susan. (At this time only Rev. Susan and Maureen continue are doing LEM visits)
- 2 pastoral calls in October.
- Mailed 2 prayer quilts from Post Office
- 2 PC conversations with former parishioners

### Ministry Miscellaneous

- Collected and drove pet supplies collected for Blessing of the Animals
- Created post cards for both narthex and preschool for Trunk or Treat
- Created flyer for preschool backpacks for Trunk or Treat
- Set up Trunk or Treat on 10/29
- Assisted Cleaning and discarding the Restoring Eden Vegetable Garden clean up and final veggie donation
- Assisted preparing the Restoring Eden Vegetable Garden for shared ministry with the Preschool
- Continue working with Richard and Rev Susan to organize the vestments/vesting room
- Realm online tutorials ongoing
- Outreach discussions with Margot Culhane
- Prepping/counting current inventory supplies for Advent
- Creating Advent info brochure and calendar for the community

### Social Media

- Gathering Advent information for communications to put on website and working with communications for website page creation
- Created FB/Insta post with animated dog for Blessing of the Animals: Over 300 views
- Created Children's Ministry Reel: 312 views
- Created Trunk or Treat Social Media Reels
- Face Book/Instagram Pop Up Prayer 102 views
- October Baking with the Bible 72 views (up from last month)
- FB Compline Sun- Thurs (averaged 18 views/night as the rebuilding of this ministry after a summer pause)

Submitted by Maureen Carey

Lay Pastoral Assistant/ Director of Children and Youth Ministry

November 2, 2023