

St. Alban's Chronicle

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
3001 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

July 15, 2005

Who is Louis Wheeler?

This sounds like a deep theological question taken from the General Ordination Exams (GOE's) given to those seeking ordination in the Episcopal Church. I will attempt to answer this question in a few words without evolving into an ongoing theological reflection that would be great to use for GOE'S.

I am originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and am a hardcore Pittsburgh Steeler Fan. I also love other Pittsburgh sports teams and the Duke Blue Devils College Basketball team. (My wife is a Maryland Terrapin Alumnae.) While growing up, I attended an African Methodist Episcopal Church and was active as a youth and adult in the life of the church. I was also ordained in the A.M.E. Church.



After working many years in the Telecommunications industry, and working at an A.M.E. church in Washington D.C. as a Youth Minister and Pastoral Assistant, I came to the Episcopal church five years ago and started working at The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Gaithersburg as the Director of Youth Ministry and Pastoral Associate. I have also worked on the Diocesan level here in Washington as the Chaplain for the Committee on Youth. Overall, I have been working in parish ministry for over 12 years.

I have been married to a wonderful woman named Tracy since 1989, and we are blessed with two fantastic children, 11-year-old Alec and 8-year-old Caitlin. My parents still live in Pittsburgh and visit the D.C. area quite often. My in-laws who recently moved to the Tampa Florida area from the D.C. area also visit on occasion.

I enjoy reading, sports and I love to listen to music. I was a former disc jockey on a local radio station near Erie, Pennsylvania during my undergraduate years.

My ministry is to preach, teach and share relationship with God and explore how to apply that relationship to everyday life. I look forward to getting to know each of you. As we move forward together, I am a firm believer in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

To note

For additional information on these events, contact the Parish Office at 202-363-8286, Office@st-albans-parish.org

Mustard Seed Offering, July 17 for Ndhiwa Parish in Homa Bay, Kenya. See Page 2.

Fellowship Sunday, July 31 between the 9:15 and 11:15 services. To host, contact Linda Vitella 202-363-6324 or Jane Volkema 202-363-8286, ext 204.

Vacation Bible School, July 18-22, 5:00-8:00 pm.

The Chronicle will be published once a month during the summer. Articles for the August 15 Chronicle must be received by August 1st. The Chronicle will resume twice-monthly publication in September.

Going away this summer?

We're not!

The worship and ministry of St. Alban's—and the cost of keeping it up and running—continue 52 weeks a year. God's work happens here seven days a week. If you're heading out of town, remember not to take a vacation from your pledge!



We welcome the faithful, the seeker, and the doubter, for God's embrace is wide and God's Good News is for all.

WORSHIP AND PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. ALBAN'S

SUNDAY

8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I
 9:15 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II
 11:15 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I
 5:30 pm Holy Eucharist, Rite II

TUESDAY

7:30 am Holy Eucharist

WEDNESDAY

11:15 am Healing Eucharist

THURSDAY

Noon Centering Prayer

SATURDAY

9:00 am Prayers for St. Alban's

CLERGY

The Rev. J. Carlyle Gill, Interim Rector
 The Rev. Margot D. Critchfield, Senior Associate Rector
 The Rev. Louis T. Wheeler, Jr, Associate Rector
 The Rev. Loren B. Mead, Honorary Associate
 The Rev. Douglas A. Greenaway, Assistant Rector

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN
 Carolyn Seaton

DIRECTORS

Day Dodson, Director of Children's and Youth Ministries
 Ron Hicks, Director of Operations
 Norman Scribner, Director of Music
 Vilma Smith, Director of Financial Affairs
 Sonya Subbayya Sutton, Director for Parish Music Ministries
 Jane Volkema, Director of Communications and Evangelism

OFFICE STAFF

Bob Bascom, Maintenance
 Shirley Dickey, Receptionist
 David Johnson, Community Life
 Marcia Welch, Communications Assistant

VESTRY OFFICERS

Gordon Avery, Senior Warden; Kate Bouvé, Junior Warden;
 Margery Dunn, Secretary; Christopher Holmes, Treasurer

VESTRY MEMBERS

Paul Brewster, Bob Dunn, Diana Dykstra,
 Cay Hartley, Douglas Lapp, Chris Larsen,
 Susan Morris, Jim Nix, Tricia Pinkard,
 Jon Sawyer, Jo Turner, Bob Witten
 Duncan McKenna, Youth Representative,
 Russell Eckel, WSA Board

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Mustard Seed Offering

The Mustard Seed Offering on July 17 will be devoted to Ndhiwa Parish in Homa Bay, Kenya. This parish is known to us because it is central to the ministry of Tobias Otieno and his brother Malachi, who have both visited St. Alban's and addressed our Africa Roundtable. Tobias was blinded in the Nairobi embassy bombing, and parishioner Kendall Montgomery has been his liaison in obtaining proper care through the U.S. Government. Tobias contributed his settlement from the bombing to the parish, and he and his brother have worked to develop a micro-enterprise bookkeeping-type program so the people in the area can sustain themselves.

The Ndhiwa Parish has 10 churches, and its core objectives are mission and evangelism, care and support for AIDS orphans and widows, and stewardship through microenterprise development. Their immediate need is for funding to support theological education for their vicar, Kapis Owuor. The Africa Roundtable convenors strongly believe that institution-building, particularly strengthening the church, is key to a long-term improvement of Africa's situation.



Author of Liberty

Gordon B Avery, Senior Warden

It was almost Independence Day, I was driving on Old Georgetown Road, and the radio was playing "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." The final verse began, "Our fathers' God, to thee, author of liberty, to thee we sing." Tears welled up in my eyes, my throat became tight, and I almost pulled off the road to deal with my racing thoughts and emotions. God is the author of liberty. God has given us free will and choice. God allows us to make wrong as well as right choices, all the while loving us and wishing for the best. God regards us as children not as creatures. This is where the possibility of evil came from. This is where the need for God's grace came from. This is what we as loving parents would wish for our own children. This brings together God the creator and God the loving father. Thus we can pray, "Our father, who art in heaven..." Perhaps, as well as "God's Chosen People," we should say, "God's Choosing People." More than animals, guided largely by instinct, we are persons, makers of choices. On purpose. God's purpose.

"Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light, protect us by thy might, Great God, our king." This is a thing for which we can fervently pray. Freedom's holy light will show things in their true perspective. Our foolishness and wrong choices need not alienate us from the Holy Spirit and from God's grace. Grace we cannot do by ourselves, but we can repent, and pray, and open ourselves to that grace. I hope you had a blessed Independence Day. The paradox is that we are both independent and profoundly dependent.

What You Should Know

The Rev. J. Carlyle Gill, Interim Rector

Because we are a parish in transition and because there are important priorities to weigh and decisions to be made, I want to assure you of two things: my commitment to open discussion and full disclosure, and our intent to bring you increased and more timely communication about what we are doing, our calendar of events, and the myriad opportunities for individual and corporate worship and work.

To start, let me share with you some of the ways we intend to bring you more information.

The Chronicle

Our newsletter has historically sought to bring the parish news of upcoming events – both sacramental and programmatic. We have, however – as you are painfully aware – been at the mercy of the bulk rate’s postal delivery system that often misses our calendar advisories.

We are now committed to re-focus the Chronicle to bring you interesting, important and illuminating, but less time-specific, news and features.

New display racks in the Narthex

By now, you have seen new racks in the narthex that more than triple our display availability. With no more fighting your way to and being hunched over the Ushers’ table, these increased racks will service multiple missions:

- To bring you timely notice of upcoming events, forums, adult & children’s education, book groups and special worship services. [Additionally, both the Sunday Announcements and the Sunday @St. Alban’s weekly e-mail will continue to alert you to events and programming on the short-term agenda.]
- To hold literature, in a Q&A format, on our fixed programs and ministries, inviting your participation and talents. The pieces will serve as a handy reference and as a complement to our award-winning Parish Book, published annually in September.
- Make available to all parishioners summary minutes of Vestry meetings.
- Provide regular communication from our all-important parish committees, such as the Finance and Building committees.

By summer’s end, we should have the racks brimming with news and opportunities. If there’s information you want but don’t find, let us know by contacting Jane Volkema at 363-8286, JaneV@st-albans-parish.org, or me on ext. 204, CarlyleG@st-albans-parish.org.

Vestry Communications Committee

This newly-formed committee has taken as their mandate to contribute materials and ideas to better inform our parish community. They will, for example, write the Vestry Minutes

summary for the narthex racks, as well as make a full copy of the minutes available in a notebook for your perusal in the Parish Office. If you have an idea or desire for Vestry communication, speak with Vestry members Tricia Pinkard, Jo Turner, Cay Hartley or Bob Witten; or Nathalie Bramson.

Beautification Committee & St. Joseph’s Guild

Our energy levels are high, but our look is, we all might agree, a bit tired. The Beautification Committee, composed of Mary Jane Shackelford, Didi Smith, Helena Dunn, and Vestry Liaison Susan Morris, has met to begin taking inventory of our needs and priorities. Much of the work, we hope, can be done by our St. Joseph’s Guild, a volunteer guild of St. Albanite handy and skilled workers, composed of Walter Abbott, Bill Bond, Rick Dirksen, Don Durkee, John Frantz, David Johnson, Chris Larsen, John Nickum, Stephanie Pendell, Andy Purnell, Tom Snitch and Jim Tate

Funds to pay for materials for the Guild and, if necessary, licensed work for the beautification and increased productivity of Satterlee Hall will come from the Maintenance line item in the budget and from Resource Management. If you would like to join St. Joseph’s Guild and help with an occasional odd job in Satterlee, the Church or Rectory, contact Ron Hicks at 202-363-8286 ext 206, or RonH@st-albans-parish.org

Parish Weekend at St. Alban’s

A new idea is in the works: A “Parish Weekend at St. Alban’s.” Because many parishioners have been unable – due to distance traveling – to participate in our perennial Parish Weekend at Peterkin Retreat Center, and because we’re unable to book an alternative site for this fall, we could all stay in town but come together for a fun weekend in October here at St.

Alban’s. Parish Weekend at St. Alban’s could include a Saturday with a variety of activities for all age groups, and a special liturgy on Sunday – all with no one having to sleep on an out-of-town lumpy mattress. If you are interested in bringing this idea to fruition and working on it with me, contact me 202-363-8286, or CarlyleG@st-albans-parish.org

New offices

By the time you get this issue of the Chronicle, my office will have been relocated to Room 212 The Rector’s Aid on the main floor of Satterlee Hall. Rector’s Aid will now be located in the Library of the Rectory (Ten Broek). This move will make it possible for all clergy to be on the same floor and make clergy and all staff more accessible to parishioners and to each other.

As we move forward together in this time of transition and renewed service to one another, we invite ever-more urgently your ideas, requests, talents and prayers.



“Where’s Margot?”

As I write this, I’m sitting in my office counting down the days—with increasing anticipation and trepidation—before I leave on a five-week retreat at the Jesuit Spiritual Center in Wernersville, Pennsylvania. I’m finally going to do the 30-day Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. By the time you read this, I will have been immersed in the exercises for at least 15 days.

This is something I feel very called to do. Part of that call began with the realization that there’s a whole “school” of spiritual practice that formalizes what I’ve been intuitively drawn towards all my life—and by that I mean an approach to scripture and prayer that is very visual and sensory in nature, engaging the imagination as well as the intellect. I’ve always been a very visual thinker and learner. I get the most out of scripture when I imagine myself in it, try on the roles of different characters, imagine the way things would smell, what I’d hear, how they’d feel, even have imaginary conversations that continue beyond what is given in the text. Turns out that’s very Ignatian. Who knew?

Certainly not me. I had been working with an Ignatian-trained spiritual director (who is also an Episcopal priest) for a couple of years before realizing it was his grounding in Ignatian spirituality that was making him such an effective director for me. I’ve always been impressed by the way he focuses so much on God’s grace – praying for specific graces in one’s daily prayer, noticing the grace-filled moments in one’s daily life, and taking the time at the end of each day to recall and to thank God, for those graces. His example as a listener, discerner and spiritual guide ignited in me an increasingly powerful call to pass on to others this experience that so enriches my life.

Last April, I made the requisite eight-day silent retreat at the Center, and came back feeling transformed and even more committed to being trained as an Ignatian director. But when would I ever have time to make the 30-day retreat for

doing the Spiritual Exercises that is a pre-requisite?

The answer soon became obvious: This July, for the only time this year, the Center is offering the 30-day retreat. This July, my teenage daughter will be gone all but four days of the month, first with her J2A group on the pilgrimage to Greece; then as a Student Ambassador with the People to People program in Europe. And this July, I will turn 50. What better birthday present to give myself than a 30-day chance to deepen my relationship with God in Christ and get one step closer to certification as an Ignatian director?

So, what are the Spiritual Exercises anyway? If you don’t know, you’re not alone. Most Episcopalians are not familiar with them since this is a traditionally Roman Catholic approach to spirituality. And not having done them yet myself, I can only rely on a summary from Jesuit priest Robert Gleason’s introduction to Anthony Mottola’s translation, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: St. Ignatius’ Profound Precepts of Mystical Theology*.

As Gleason explains, the Exercises are divided into four weeks of five daily meditations under the guidance of a retreat master or spiritual director. Each week of daily meditations focuses on a different aspect of the spiritual life; the norm is to devote one hour of prayer to each of the assigned five daily meditations.

The meditations of the first week are drawn from the sin of Adam and Eve, man’s personal sin, death, etc. and are designed to help the retreatant “purify his soul and put his life in order” by helping him recognize his own sinfulness and failure to depend on God alone.

The meditations for the second and third weeks are drawn from the public life and Passion of Christ: The second week’s meditations are meant to “lead the soul to a greater knowledge of and love for Jesus Christ,” and to strengthen the desire to “identify with Christ as the concrete norm of Christian perfection.” The third week’s meditations are intended to “free the will from the psychological obstacles that stand in the way of a generous decision to follow Christ.”

The meditations of the fourth week are drawn from Christ’s risen life, and are meant to “purify the heart in the highest

degree from false attachments to creatures, goods, or worldly ambition and honor” and to “engender unselfish love, joy in Christ’s glory, and an unchanging trust in Christ the Consoler.”

Finally, “crowning the whole work of the Exercises is the Contemplation to Obtain Love, which synthesizes the effort of the four weeks so that one lives one’s life exclusively for God in joyous service, finding Him in all things and all things in Him.”

All of this, writes Gleason, requires “active participation in the meditations given, the maintenance of complete silence, the constant observance of the movements of the soul from indifference through compunction to devotion in Christ, contemplation of His life and reform of one’s own life, and finally, the union of the will in perfect familiarity with God.”

It all sounds pretty daunting to me; maybe now you understand why I’m counting the days with a certain degree of trepidation!

So I ask for your prayers—prayers that, as I make this retreat, I am open and responsive to God’s grace, and that through it all I am sustained by the sure and certain knowledge of his unconditional love made known in Christ. Godspeed and I’ll see you in August.

—The Rev. Margot Critchfield



To the left, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits and author of the “Spiritual Exercises”

The “Exercises” recognize that not only the intellect but also the emotions and feelings can help us to come to a knowledge of the action of the Spirit in our lives.

Update

Search Committee

The Profile Subcommittee is now finishing its careful review of all the information provided by the Parish Survey and the many Focus Groups. Within the next few weeks we will have a website address where you can read for yourself the composite results of the Parish Survey, question by question.

At the same time, the Subcommittee is beginning work on

writing the Parish Profile. Examples of the information included in the Parish Profile are: our Christian education program, worship at St. Alban's, our financial picture, and other varied aspects of our life and community. Your participation in the Survey and Focus Groups is helping to make the writing of the Parish Profile possible—and much easier—by giving us a wealth of great information. Thank you.

St. Alban's Parish Rector Search Committee

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August Sunday Forum Schedule

The Sunday Forum is at 10:30 a.m.
in Satterlee Hall

Religion & Public Life

AUGUST 7 – Representative
(and Reverend) John Buchanan and
former Senator Birch Bayh

John Buchanan is a former Congressman from Alabama. An Abraham Lincoln Republican, he was the first of his party to represent Birmingham. An ordained Baptist minister, he also served churches in Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama and the District of Columbia. Committed to the inalienable rights of humankind at home and abroad, he believes our faith should guide us in every aspect of life, but that

no one is authorized to speak for God in American politics.

Birch Bayh is a former U.S. Senator from Indiana. He is a student of the Constitution (having authored the 25th and 26th Amendments), and an ardent defender of its First Amendment. He believes that in today's public discourse, the "religious clause" is a matter of increasing concern: "Congress shall make no law representing an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, . . ."

AUGUST 14 – Ambassador Robert Oakley and Assistant Secretary of State Phyllis Oakley

Robert and Phyllis Oakley are both retired Foreign Service Officers of the State Department. Bob retired in 1991 after serving as Ambassador to Pakistan,

Somalia, and Zaire; Phyllis retired in 1999 as Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research. She also had been Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees, and Migration. Their talk will be on religion and foreign policy.

AUGUST 21 – Maureen Shea,
Director, Office of Government
Relations, Episcopal Church

As part of our baptismal covenant, we pledge that we "will strive for justice and peace among all people." Maureen Shea, Director of the Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations, will explore with us how that pledge is fulfilled in public policy advocacy. Shea will also discuss current peace and justice issues. And, ways the Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations works with the government and the grassroots will also be discussed.

Update

Building Committee works to honor pledges, care for our Spiritual Home

As many parishioners are aware, the scope of the building project envisioned for St. Alban's capital campaign has undergone unforeseen but critically necessary adjustments. As reported in May's annual meeting and a special parish meeting in June, engineers determined that our old heating and cooling system is living on borrowed time and must be replaced. It is clear that we cannot spend parish dollars, so faithfully pledged, to build around a crumbling piece of church infrastructure.

The good news in this unexpected situation is that the funds to solve the problem are at hand in our gifts and pledges. Over one-third of the projected construction costs are needed to support the installation of new institutional-quality mechanical systems that will be flexible and reduce energy costs. We can only imagine the impact of a sudden HVAC failure without this resource. We witness grace even in unexpected obstacles. Our response to this grace and to the parish is to keep you well informed, and we will provide prompt responses to your questions and monthly updates on the project. We trust that capital campaign donors will respond by continuing their pledged support.

Here is where we are as of the end of June:

The committee issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for architectural work to undertake the major interior renovations for the Narthex and Nourse (formerly Guild) Hall. The suggested scope of work defined in the RFP encompasses renovations on each floor that maximize gathering space wherever possible and add circulation routes. We will confine the immediate work to the existing building envelope, although some minor work may be required to the facades of the buildings. All work detailed in the RFP can serve as building blocks for the expansion envisioned in the original Transformation Campaign concept when additional funding becomes available.

On the main floor, the renovations will increase the gathering space adjacent to the narthex, reconfigure the layout of the existing assembly area in Nourse Hall, reconfigure and upgrade the restrooms, add an elevator, and possibly add an additional interior stair.

Renovations of the lower level of Nourse Hall will include underpinning the structure and lowering the slab-on-grade, replacing all mechanical systems (including heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning), and reconfiguring the existing choir/assembly room area and Flower Guild facilities. Renovations of the small upper level of Nourse Hall will include the refurbishment of existing areas and a small addition of floor space. We will add badly needed storage space on all levels wherever possible.

Seven firms responded to the RFP. The committee interviewed six, with the assistance of Realco Project Management Services, the firm that the vestry retained in December 2004. Selection criteria included prior experience in ecclesiastical architecture, space-planning experience, proposed scope of work and price structure, and the proposed architectural team that would be assigned to this project.

The committee unanimously recommended the selection of MTFA Architecture, a firm with demonstrated expertise in preserving important religious and cultural

landmarks while enhancing their usefulness and economic viability. Chevy Chase Presbyterian and Christ Lutheran Churches used MTFA for comparable renovations. With approval of the senior warden by vestry consent, we anticipate starting the re-articulated design work very soon. Approvals by the relevant review boards will then be expedited to file building permits in early 2006, and we look for construction start-up during Lent. At this time, the estimated duration of construction is eight months.

Rising costs make it imperative that we proceed promptly even though construction on Cathedral property will have already compromised our parking situation. We're planning additional parish meetings this summer to update you on the progress, but we welcome your questions and comments at any time.

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A Year of Special Programs

The Rev. Margot Critchfield

It's often said that the time between rectors is an "in-between" time—a time of almost but not yet, a time when things tend to slow down, almost as if they were on "hold." But nothing is slowing down at St. Alban's with the new program year full of special teachers and preachers we have planned. From September to May we will be blessed every month with one or more extraordinary guest after another. Here's the line-up so far:

September

September 17 & 18, 2005

PHYLLIS TICKLE—an authority on religion in America, a much sought after lecturer, and the author of more than two-dozen books.

Tickle will lead a workshop for us entitled, "North American Christianity in the 21st Century" on Saturday, September 17. She will then be available for a book-signing event at the Parish Forum and be our guest preacher at the 11:15 am service on Sunday September 18.

Phyllis Tickle has been a Contributing Editor in Religion to Publishers Weekly for many years. Because of her expertise on religion in America, you may have seen or heard her quoted in the media—everywhere from The New York Times and Christian Science Monitor to PBS and NPR. A faithful Episcopalian, she has been a Lay Eucharistic Minister and Lay Reader, as well as a vestry member and teacher. She serves on a number of advisory and corporate boards, is the mother of seven children and—when not traveling—finds time to relax at home on a small farm in rural West Tennessee with her husband.

October

October 30, 2005

THE REV. HERBERT O' DRISCOLL—an Anglican priest and native of Ireland, a well-known preacher, teacher of preachers, pilgrimage leader, and author of numerous books on prayer and spirituality.

O'Driscoll will be our guest preacher on October 30 at both the 9:15 and 11:15 am services. He will also lead the day's Parish Forum entitled, "How Firm A Foundation?" exploring "the struggle in Western Christianity to recapture a grace-

giving relationship with Holy Scripture." Note: O'Driscoll is currently leading a pilgrimage to Iona and Lindisfarne; before leaving he reserved the right to change his forum topic in light of his travels!

October 28, 29 & 30, 2005

STEVE EDMUNDSON—Assistant Professor Church History at Virginia Theological Seminary will lead a retreat on Julian of Norwich—about whom he's writing a book. The retreat will be held October 28, 29 and 30 at Dupont House, Rehoboth. Watch for additional details in the Chronicle and Sunday announcements.

November & December

November 29, 2005 (beginning date)

THE REV. DR. KATHY GRIEB—Professor of New Testament and Biblical Greek at Virginia Theological Seminary, a distinguished author, teacher, and preacher, as well as an amazing speaker.

Grieb is a well-known scholar on the Gospel of Mark (which we will begin reading with the start of the new church year this Advent) and will offer us a special program on Mark's Gospel on six consecutive Tuesday nights during the season of Advent, beginning November 29.

January & February

Advent 2006 (beginning date TBA)

THE REV. CANON MICHAEL WYATT—Canon Theologian and Director of Education at the Cathedral College, Washington National Cathedral and a highly regarded teacher and preacher with particular expertise in religious education to both the church and the un-church.

Wyatt will engage us in a special program on "Christianity and a Religion-free God" on six consecutive Thursday nights during the season of Epiphany. Michael joined the Cathedral's senior staff in the summer of 2001 in the position of Director of Programs in Religious Education. He now serves the Cathedral as Canon Theologian, focusing particularly on Biblical scholarship and interfaith initiatives.

March

March 4 & 5, 2006

THE REV. SUZANNE GUTHRIE—Episcopal Chaplain at Cornell University, columnist for *Christian Century* and *Episcopal Life*, author of several books, and well-known retreat leader.

Guthrie will lead us in a Lenten Quiet Day on Saturday, March 4, and will preach at the 9:15 and 11:15 am services on Sunday, March 5. She is known for teaching and leading retreats on Christian mysticism, the Bible and prayer. She's particularly interested in ritual play and worship as a way of sanctifying time and place for sacred encounter. Suzanne and her husband Bill live in the beautiful Finger Lakes region of New York State.

March & April

Lent, March 9, 2006 (beginning date)

THE REV. MARTIN L. SMITH—well-known spiritual director, lecturer, retreat leader and writer.

Smith will bring us a special Lenten program on five consecutive Thursday nights beginning March 9. Some of you may remember using Martin's book *Reconciliation in the Lenten book groups* a few years back, and I highly recommend his *A Season for the Spirit* as a daily Lenten devotional.

Martin is former chaplain to the House of Bishops, is on the staff of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and has recently joined St. Columba's Church as a priest associate.

April & May 2006

Easter 2006 (beginning date TBA)

EMILY BLAIR STRIBLING—poet, teacher, lay preacher, retreat leader, and recipient of the American Book Award.

"Experiencing the Risen Jesus" is the title of a special program held on five consecutive Thursday nights for the season of Easter. This program will be co-led by Stribling and the Rev. Margot Critchfield, Senior Associate Rector at St. Alban's.

Stribling has served as Poet-in-Residence at Wesley Theological Seminary, led programs at the Washington National Cathedral, and her poems have appeared in many magazines and anthologies. She has taught writing in schools and colleges in New York, Connecticut, and Washington, DC. She is a cradle Episcopalian and received her Master of Divinity from General Theological Seminary. Emily is currently serving as lay pastoral associate at St. John's Norwood Parish. She lives with her husband Robert and an array of animals on their farm in rural Virginia.

Watch the Sunday announcements for details on registration for several of these programs.

Our Sextons

Jan Grogan, Parishioner

Imagine that there are ten to fifteen separate meetings at your house every weekday and twice that number on Sunday. For these meetings, you must have the house clean inside and tidy both inside and out. You also have to set up the rooms according to the requirements of each meeting and provide coffee and sometimes refreshments. Often the meetings follow each other in the same space so speed is needed to clean up after one and prepare for the next. When your not setting up for meetings, the house needs constant cleaning because of the traffic. All this must be accomplished with the help of one assistant. This is a simple picture of what our sextons do every day of the week.

A dictionary definition of a sexton is as follows: an official of a church charged with taking care of the edifice and its contents, ringing the bell and sometimes with burying the dead. The bell ringers at St. Alban's tend to be the eager youngsters with an assist from adults. For the rest, we have three fine men.

Armando Pena has been working full time at St. Alban's for three years. He works Monday through Friday. The workday begins at 7:00 am and ends at various times. He works approximately 60 hours a week. He says his favorite part of his job is helping people His welcoming smile and easy nature make him a good ambassador to strangers trying to find their way in our various buildings. He sees his occupation as a Christian ministry. His strong faith is evident after only a brief conversation.



Milton Marrow is our man at St. Alban's on Saturday and Sunday. He has been employed by St. Alban's for fourteen years. He has a very full Saturday preparing for Sunday when every space we have is used to the maximum. He is the patient person we all run for help on Sunday mornings. His days also begin at 7:00 a.m.

Jimmie Russell is our Sexton Emeritus. Jimmie first retired several years ago—but we just couldn't let him go. For the past several years, he has continued to serve St. Alban's for rehearsals and weddings and some meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. For those of you who haven't received a big hug and greeting from Jimmie, I strongly recommend it. His joy is infectious! Now that Jimmie is officially retired, he will certainly be missed but we wish him a well deserved and happy retirement. We also give Armando and Milton a big thank you for all they do for us quietly and efficiently every day.



James and Ruth Ann McDonald

Many of you may remember our former Associate Director of Music, Ruth Ann McDonald and her husband James. They left St. Alban's when James accepted a teaching position at the University of Indiana, Bloomington. We have received news that the McDonald's will be moving to Brookline, Massachusetts, where they will be teaching and coaching singers at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. Many of Jim's students at Indiana University have gone on to sing in young artist programs around the country, and in opera houses in Vienna, Austria, and Stuttgart, Germany. Jim and Ruth Ann also direct the German for Singers and Vocal Coaches portion of the summer language immersion program at Middlebury College in Vermont. They are looking forward to returning to the east coast and will begin their work at the Conservatory in September.

The State of St. Alban's Super Sixties

Samiha Mishalani, St. Alban's Super Sixties Coordinator

Not too long ago, as I was rummaging through some old files, I came across a document stating that the parishioners of St. Alban's desired to create a place for seniors to gather for fellowship, coffee and an occasional meal and program. In the early 1960's the program came about and was called St. Alban's Super Sixties. Then, in 1975 IONA Senior serviced collaborated with St. Alban's—in a supervisory capacity. We now have a five-day a week program that runs from 9 am to 1 pm and offers educational and recreational programs. Supers gather for lunch and other activities such as art, bridge, knitting and exercise. Speakers and other programs are offered twice a week. I have had the good fortune of working with St. Alban's Super 60's since 1998.

St. Alban's Super 60's is supported in part by the DC Office On Aging, and recently said the following about our program, "St. Alban's provides activities that thoughtfully include experiences for mind, body, and spirit. Other nutrition sites should consider replicating some of these activities."

What a wonderful compliment. But all flattery aside, the DC Office On Aging has specific requirements we must follow to received their aid. A new requirement for mid-day programs like ours is that attendance must average 25 participants per day. Our average attendance has dropped significantly over the past few months. Although we are not sure how to account for the drop in attendance—whether it be the loss of van transportation or other factors—the drop is significant enough that we may lose funding from the Office on Aging and end this wonderful program for our seniors.

If you are a DC resident, 60 years of age or older, and have transportation to St. Alban's, we would love to have you become a Super 60'er and help save our funding and program. Those who attend depend on the continuation of this program and you help is greatly appreciated.

If you would like to join Super Sixties, give me a call at 202-363-8286 ext 212, or, just show up. We meet in Satterlee Hall every weekday beginning at 9 am.

EDITORS NOTE: Loss of the van was due to the high cost of automobile insurance that the parish could not afford.

Rector's Aid — "Changing of the Guard"

Claire Murphy

The Rector's Aid has elected a new slate of officers for 2005-2007. We are proud to announce:

Sharon Spilhaus, President; Mary Jane Shackelford, Vice President; Susan Niedenuhr, Treasurer; Sally Kreisberg, Recording Secretary; and, Claire Murphy, corresponding Secretary.

Board Members are Elaine Nashashibi, Catherine Davis and Claire Murphy.

The past two years serving a President has been a wonderful ride, with challenging speaker luncheon programs, fund raising events and outreach efforts. Now it will continue to grow with Sharon Spilhaus and Mary Jane Shackelford at the helm, supported by their capable fellow officers, board members and faithful Rector's Aid members.

Having been the President of Rector's Aid has been an experience to remember—and trust me, I have lived long enough to have had a variety of experiences. I would like to say "thank you" once again to our program speakers of Spring 2005. Dr. Ruth Cline, archivist/historian, the Hon. Samuel Lewis, career diplomat, and Julie Hamilton, Fashion Consultant, Chico's Chevy Chase, Maryland. Each presentation was special in its very own way.

The final gathering of the season, on June 17th, was to wrap it all up and enjoy the pleasure of being members of the Rector's Aid. I shall never forget the incredible support I received from fellow officers, board members, members of the parish and friends. Also, the cooperation of our neighborhood merchants: Whole Foods, Starbucks and others.

A personal moment I will cherish was the presentation of a lovely silver cross and chain by Susan Niedenuhr on behalf of the Rector's Aid. I am not going away, just returning in a different role.

Our many projects and productions would not have been possible without the assistance of the St. Alban's administrative and maintenance staff and the blessing of the clergy, for which I am deeply thankful.

So, please join in the Rector's Aid and support our new slate. I promise—you will be happy that you did.



Some of the members of St. Alban's Rector's Aid:

Front Row: Jean Miller, Mary Schreiber, Claire Murphy, Elaine Nashashibi, Ann Becker, Catherine Davis, Louise Mann Kenny.

Back Row: Gwen Kelso, Dorothy Allan, Betty Volpe, Mary Jane Shackelford, Sally Kreisberg, Nancy Lewis.



Claire Murphy received a lovely silver cross and chain in recognition for her two years as president of the Rector's Aid.

Rector's Aid is a women's service organization that meets for fellowship and project planning. Rector's Aid sells Christmas cards, note cards, cookbooks, tote bags and aprons. Their bake sales are very popular and much anticipated. Proceeds from the sales of these items are given to the rector to be used for projects within the parish. Contact: Sharon Spilhaus 301-299-8781 or Mary Jane Shackelford 202-965-4189.

5% Community Giving Day

July 27 at Whole Foods Market, Tenleytown

On July 27, shoppers at the Whole Foods Market in Tenleytown will do more than pick up groceries, they will also support area low income seniors. The Whole Foods Market located at 4530 4th St., NW will contribute five percent of its sales that day to the subsidy fund of ESM Cares. In addition, care managers from the staff of ESM Cares will be at the store on the 27th to offer free consultations to assist shoppers in locating resources and services for seniors. These free consultations will be held from 9 am to 1 pm and from 5 to 8 pm.

ESM Cares helps seniors, their families and caregivers handle the health and lifestyle challenges associated with aging. ESM is a non-profit service of Episcopal Senior Ministries, helping seniors of all faiths throughout the Washington metropolitan area. Seniors are provided affordable assistance through a subsidy fund. All funds from the five-percent day at Whole Foods will go directly to increasing the subsidy fund.

Whole Foods Market is the world's leading natural and organic foods market in America. Each Whole Foods Market holds a 5% Community Giving Day four times every year as part of their commitment to the local communities they serve. For more information on ESM Cares, call 202-364-0020.

10th Annual Shelter Open Golf Tournament

Monday, September 26

On Monday, September 26 at Ft. Belvoir Golf Course we will hold our 10th annual tournament to raise money to help cover the cost of operating the Crossroads Shelter. We will have golfing, dinner, raffle and an awards ceremony. Come and play or come and help out and stay for dinner. Golfers and sponsors are needed to raise the money and just plain people who want to help. Additional information and costs will be announced in the August 15th Chronicle. But for now, save the date.

J2A Pilgrimage Greece

"It was great to worship in different places besides a church."

"It was amazing. Both from getting to know better people in the group, in a new setting, and from seeing places where people who believe the same things we do lived so long ago. It was like seeing the history of our faith."

"I really enjoyed saying Compline while standing in the ocean in Thessaloniki."

"Worshiping outside made me realize that the church really is the people. One night we went into an orange grove to read Compline, but nobody had brought a flashlight! We used the light from a leader's camera until the battery ran out."

"These are people I trust. We take worship seriously, and everyone's willing to pray out loud."



Pilgrims gather before a monument to Paul at Veria, a site where the apostle preached

"The monasteries were my favorite. The view was incredible."

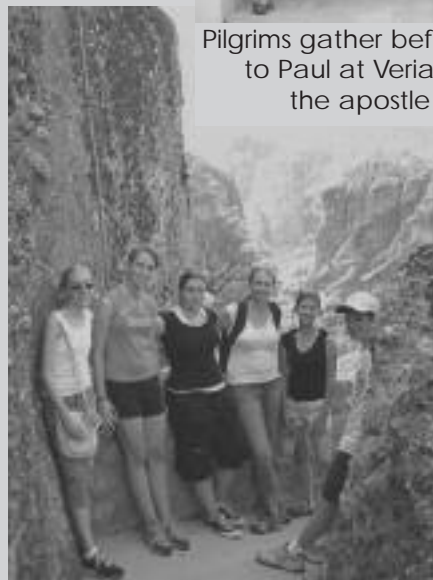
"And the chapel was extravagantly decorated, with Bible stories painted on every available surface."

"The monasteries were so different from anything I had seen before; it was amazing how they integrated faith and nature!"

"The Eucharist at the site of Lydia's baptism was the most spiritual experience for me. It was peaceful, with the sound of running water. It really put the Bible in context."



Pausing to reflect at the site of Lydia's baptism



Hiking in the mountains around Kalambaka



Learning about the ancient ruins at Phillippi

On the roof of the Varlaam Monastery, Meteora



"Before the pilgrimage, we all got along but were separated (because we knew some people better than others). Now everybody knows each other really well."

"Kalambaka was my favorite town. It was smaller and less crowded."

"Athens was my favorite; I'm a big city person."

"Corinth was cool. It's less of a tourist site; a cool archaeological dig."

Reviews—Sunday Parish Forums in May & June

Here are brief review of the May and June Parish Forums. Parish Forums are held on Sundays at 10:30 am in Satterlee Hall. If there is a forum you would like to hear in its entirety, contact Kitty Bayh at KittyB@st-albans-parish.org for a cassette tape.

The Search Process and You

On May 8th, Gordon Avery, chair of the Search Committee for a new Rector, and several members introduced themselves and explained the search process. Parishioners' responses to the Search Committee questionnaire have been immensely helpful and the committee hopes that many will also participate in the focus groups. The information that those in the parish provided in these and other ways, will be vital for the comprehensive self-study and profile the Search Committee will put together for candidates this summer. The Search Committee will give some feedback to parishioners when its analysis is complete.

— Cynthia B. Cohen

The New Pope: Roman Answers, American Questions

On May 22, John Langan, S.J., Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Professor of Catholic Social Thought at Georgetown University, spoke to parishioners about Benedict XVI and the future of the Roman Catholic Church. Father Langan presented the new Pope's agenda as that of any pope succeeding John Paul II. Benedict must face an "ongoing personnel crisis" involving aging priests, etc. in a preeminently sacramental church. Another challenge lies in finding ways to embrace differences between Catholic communities without decentralizing the Church. The secularization of Europe, tense relations with Islam, and Africa's need for advocates constitute persistent external problems.

Dr. Langan described the new Pope as "quite conservative, pragmatic, and smart," and as "a man unlikely to make major changes, but also unlikely to do needlessly foolish or rigid things."

—Christine V. Oblitas

Ask the Experts: On Being a Teen in 2005

On Youth Sunday, June 5th, parishioners heard from an impressive and engaging panel of our high school juniors and seniors—Ellie Travis, Sara Ickow, Elizabeth Thorne and Allan Thorson. You may have seen them singing in the choir, acolyting, ushering, cooking and serving everything from Parish Pancake Breakfasts to Gala Dinners to Grate

Patrol, or participating in parish retreats. They all have been at St. Alban's since they were very young—Ellie Travis described herself as a "lifer"—and the parish has clearly been a significant part of their lives. They reported that school and homework keep them very busy and that their friends are very important to them. In their limited spare time they like to go out to the movies or make some money babysitting. All four spoke about learning, growing, and faith-deepening experiences on the group's pilgrimage to Estonia still resonating with them. Ellie, Sara, Elizabeth and Allan go out into the world pursuing interests across the board—business, teaching, international relations and building projects, and Hungarian cooking. And they credit St. Alban's with the support they have received from the congregation, clergy, and staff as they have grown up in the parish. At the end of the presentation they each gave the audience an important lesson they had learned in their J2A group:

Keep an open mind—be fully present in the group. Be flexible. You find God in unexpected places. When you get in trouble, apologize (and flowers are good too!).

—Noell Sottile

Hearing Isaiah in Sudan

Dr. Ellen Davis spoke to us on June 12, describing how she became connected with the Episcopal Church of the Sudan through a former student, Bishop Daniel Deng Bul, who founded Renk Bible College in 1999 for the training of clergy and lay ministers. The Old Testament, in particular, speaks for the Dinkas of Sudan who, with their tribal nomadic heritage, can readily identify with the ancient Israelites. Many Sudanese refugees from the nearly constant warfare, including the children known as the "lost boys" (and girls), became Christian and took up the cross as their symbol. Refugee children even began to write their own psalms and sing them as they traveled along the paths. Through the friendship of Dr. Davis and Bishop Daniel, a visiting teachers' program has been established at Renk College, cosponsored by Duke Divinity School and Virginia Theological Seminary. Teachers, including advanced Hebrew and/or Greek students, are sent to help build up a program in Biblical language instruction. The long-term goal of the program is to endow a fund that will sponsor teaching in a variety of theological subjects.

For further information, or to make a contribution, contact Dr. Ellen Davis at Duke Divinity School, Box 90967, Durham, NC 27708; email edavis@div.duke.edu.

O Baba [Papa], peek out from
your heavenly abode
Grasp our hands, Lord Jesus Christ;
grasp our hands, O Lord.
God who created us, bring us
out from the evil that oppresses us...
that we may grow in freedom as our Father has
brought us out of the slavery that oppressed us.

From the Songs/Psalms of
the Sudanese Children

—Diana Smith

The Doctors are In: More Humble Experts on Parenting Teens

On June 19, Richard K. Jung, Ed.D. and Martha Donoghue, MD, shared insights on parenting teens. Previously the Bullis School Headmaster, Dr. Jung is now Headmaster of the SEED School in southeast DC. Dr. Donoghue works as a pediatrician in private practice. These two experts also have personal experience raising children.

Dr. Jung debunked three myths. First, present day teenagers are not "worse" than those from their parents' generation; in fact, data related to drugs and pregnancy, as well as statistics on youth volunteering, suggest that teens of this generation are actually doing "better" at growing up than their parents were when they were in their formative years. Second, teenagers are not the only ones under stress: raising adolescents while caring for elderly parents and retaining two household incomes can make the teenage years harder on the parents than on the teens themselves. Third, it is wrong to assume that teenagers want their parents to be their friends.

Dr. Donoghue encouraged parents to help adolescents take responsibility for setting limits. Parents need to choose their battles and allow for some experimenting within the limits. They should also strive to be good role models while permitting other adults to help raise their children, as teenagers may benefit from outside figures in whom to confide.

—Christine Oblitas

Book of the Week Club

Wednesdays, 6:30 pm, . Rectory

June 22

Viewing and discussion of ABC-TV's
Resurrection episode of 20/20

June 29

Ann Bissell on Margaret Visser's Geometry of Love

July 6

David Dulles on C.S. Lewis' The Problem of Pain

July 13

Gail Lewin on Rupert Shortt's biography Rowan Williams

July 20

Ann Bissell on George Woegel's The Cube and the Cathedral

July 27

Laurie and Derrick Crowe on Thomas Cahill's How the Irish
Saved Civilization.

We meet every Wednesday evening beginning with a potluck supper. Following supper, someone will give an informal "book report" presentation on a book of his/her choosing, followed by a group discussion. Instead of needing to prepare ahead of time by reading the book, now you can just drop in any Wednesday evening, listen to the "book report," join the conversation, and decide for yourself whether or not this book is one you want to add to your summer reading list.

Summer Music:

Guest musicians and Summer Singers

Sonya Sutton will be away during much of July and the second half of August, because of family commitments. Norman Scribner always takes off the three months of summer. In their place St. Alban's is very fortunate to have the Assistant Music Director from St. Columba's, Diane Heath, filling in at the 9:15 and 11:15 services. Guitarist Reuben Musgrave will be at the 5:30 services on the Sundays that Sonya is gone.

At St. Columba's, Diane Heath works with young choristers and handbell choirs, and plays the organ. In addition she teaches organ and piano, and frequently performs recitals around town. She has developed a program about the life of J.S. Bach that she will

present here on July 10 at 10:30 in the church. Reuben Musgrave has been the musician for the Cathedral's 10 am Folk Eucharist for more than 20 years, and performs around town, most recently at the DC Folk Life Festival.

Make a Joyful Noise in July and August!

The Parish and Senior choirs are officially "off" for the summer. We have invited some talented soloists to sing the anthems during these months and St. Alban's parishioners are invited to join available choir members in leading the hymns and service music at the 9:15 and 11:15 am services. There are no rehearsals, just bring your love of singing and look for the Summer Choir sign before services near the Narthex or in Nourse Hall. We'll have hymnals there for you and we will process together in street clothes.

This is a good opportunity to explore your own musical gifts in church or even to do it as a family activity. Contact: Jo or Rich Turner, 202-362-8442, joturner@speakeasy.net.

The Opportunity Shop's Sensational Summer Half-Price Sale

Friday, July 29 through
Thursday, August 4th

FOLLOWED BY THE

\$6.00-a-Bag-Sale on
August 5th and 6th

The Op Shop volunteers would like to thank all of you who have made donations throughout the year. Your support keeps us going. Please note that the Shop will be closed after August 6 for four weeks. We will be unable to accept donations until after Labor Day, September 5th.
Thanks Again!

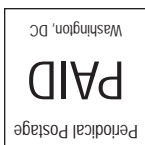
The Op Shop is open Tuesday through
Saturday, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Submit articles for the Chronicle to: JaneV@st-albans-parish.org

Articles for the August 15, 2005 Chronicle must be received by August 1, 2005

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St. Alban's Communications Team: The Rev. Carlyle Gill, The Rev. Margot Critchfield, and Jane Volkema



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