

St. Alban's Chronicle

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

July 15, 2006

Hello and Goodbye

The Rev. J. Carlyle Gill, Interim Rector

Someone said to me a long time ago, "The two most important words in the English language are Hello and Goodbye." At twenty-five, I thought, "That's it?" The older I've gotten, however, the wiser that statement has become.

At St. Alban's we have been engaged in an eighteen-month period of saying Hello and Goodbye or, more accurately, Goodbye and Hello. This is what is meant when we say that a parish is in transition. In January of 2005, Frank Wade announced his intention to retire in April of 2005. The transition, the Goodbye, began at that moment in January. We began to have all the feelings around Goodbye: anxiety, sadness, disappointment. How would we manage without Frank?

Then we began to say Hello to me in my new role as the Interim Rector. Over time we learned that we could survive without Frank—and even thrive. We have faced great challenges: the building project, the search, and stewardship. The Vestry rose to challenge of leadership during this interim time. The Search Committee rose to the challenge of finding a new rector for this parish. Our anxiety lessened. We settled into the interim time.

Then a rector was called. A new Hello is on the horizon, and another Goodbye is before us. Again the feelings of anxiety, sadness, anticipation and excitement are with us. What will the new rector be like? What does this mean for us as parishioners or as staff?

What is most important to recognize in this process of transition – or more accurately, transitions – is that feelings of anxiety, sadness, anticipation, and excitement are normal and natural.

For my part, I know that God saved the best for last. I have loved being with you both as priest, Associate Rector and as Interim Rector. I recently re-read the Parish Profile. Here is what you said St. Alban's was looking for:

"The people of St. Alban's seek a rector who will challenge, lead, and support our congregation as we strive to faithfully serve our God..."

I think you have found him. It's time to say, "Hello."



Combo (9:15/11:15) Service on July 23 at 10:30 am
Followed by a Building Committee Report to the Parish

8 am and 5:30 pm services will be held as usual



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
SCHEDULE 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
7:30 pm Centering Prayer

WEDNESDAY

11:15 am Healing Eucharist

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. Douglas A. Greenaway, Assistant Rector
The Rev. Loren B. Mead, Honorary Associate

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN
Carolyn Seaton

DIRECTORS

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

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VESTRY OFFICERS

Gordon Avery, Senior Warden; Kate Bouvé, Junior Warden;
Sylvia Mahaffey, Secretary; Christopher Holmes, Treasurer

ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

3001 Wisconsin Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20016
Tel.: 202-363-8286 Fax: 202-363-6828
Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Web site: www.AlbansDC.org

Saying Goodbye

Cay Hartley, Vestry member

*When we think of loss, we think of the loss,
through death, of those we love.
But loss is a far more encompassing theme in our life.
For we lose not only through death,
but also by leaving and being left,
by changing and letting go.*

This is the way that Judith Viorst begins her book, *Necessary Losses*, and I believe that it speaks to us at St. Alban's as we now deal with our loss of Carlyle. Goodbyes are difficult, even when the new will be exciting and energizing. William Bridges has written a wonderful and useful book called *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*. He talks about how every transition has three parts: an ending, a neutral zone, and a beginning. All three phases are important and deserve our attention. We each have our own style for dealing with this transition process: some people spend too much time dwelling on the ending, so much so that they have a very hard time moving to new experiences. Others skip over the ending and focus directly on the beginning, which may result in conflicted feelings and unexpected disappointment. Another person may be drawn to the middle phase, finding it comfortable—neutral, as the name implies, and a convenient place for inaction. From a positive standpoint, the neutral zone can provide a state of mind where a person may rest from the goodbyes and re-charge to embrace the beginnings.

We have experienced an unusual situation at St. Alban's in that our Interim Rector has not been someone from the outside, but Carlyle, whom we know and love. She has been our shepherd—a loving, holding force for us as the search committee did its job, the building committee faced hard decisions, and we continued to uphold this parish community and worship together. This provided unusual continuity but also makes the goodbyes more difficult. Now we are in the process of saying goodbye to Carlyle.

Saying goodbye is not something that most of us enjoy because it often produces feelings of sadness and grief. The great temptation is to flee from saying goodbye in order to avoid the pain. But such avoidance can result in stifling our emotional lives so that we shun connections and wrap ourselves in an emotional cocoon. Roy Osborne tells a story of his childhood where he and his brother faced a choice every day as they walked home from school. They could take the long way home, circumventing a thistle patch, or they could take off their shoes and race through the thistles. It was often painful but they made it through quickly, and the reward of cookies and milk was not delayed by the long walk around! The story is a good metaphor for how to say goodbye: go straight through the hard parts, bear the pain, and know it will be worthwhile on the other side.

So where are we in the process? Carlyle has on occasion told us about her experience at St. Alban's and how she feels about being here, and we treasure each of these last opportunities to have her in our pulpit. We had a wonderful party where people in our parish spoke about what she has meant to them. We sang a song of praise for Carlyle (and we may sing it again). The party was terrific, and it also served to face us directly into these goodbyes.

What can still be done? Each of us will remember Carlyle's wisdom, and how she was there for us when hard times may have bowed our spirits. We can reflect on how her presence and words of inspiration and truths have affected us, and how she has assisted our spiritual growth. We are assembling a memory book for Carlyle (as we did for Frank), and parishioners are encouraged to record their memories of the journey with her—funny or sad, inspirational or hard. We can ask for forgiveness when there may have been hurts; we can all “run through the thistles together,” and we can say a heartfelt Thank You for being with us these 10 years.

Continued on Page 3

A wonderful aspect of our Christian theology is that this goodbye process—endings and beginnings—is a parallel to the central tenants of our faith of death followed by resurrection. In Rite II, we proclaim, “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.” This goodbye to Carlyle may feel like a little death, but we know that there will be an exciting new ministry for us when Scott arrives. With this assurance, we can wish for Carlyle that she will go on to a transformed life and many wonderful experiences. As for ourselves, we will be sustained by our memories and confidence in God’s loving presence as we move into the future.

Cay Hartley is a clinical social worker in private private practice in DC. One of her specialties is helping people deal with grief and loss

Remember that time...

Chris Larsen, parishioner

In a few short weeks Carlyle will say her formal goodbyes as Interim Rector of St. Alban’s. It will be a very sad day for all of us. She came to us as a temporary Associate Rector in 1997 after serving as Rector of St. Stephen and the Incarnation. While there is only one Frank Wade, I think many of us always felt comforted by the idea that we had two powerhouse “Rectors” at our church.

Many have mentioned and even more have noticed that Carlyle has blossomed during her time as interim, having stepped out from the very considerable shadow that Frank cast in this our church, Diocese and Communion. My own view is her sermons have grown in wisdom, eloquence and humor. The past year was potentially trying, but she filled it with joy, comfort and wonder.

I have been asked to collect your thoughts, memories and thanks for a book to be given Carlyle on her last Sunday at St. Alban’s. Our “Beach Party” last month was raucous fun, but the final goodbye-soiree will indeed be bittersweet. The book will likely reflect this great span of emotions.

Here is part of my contribution:

St. Alban’s was suggested to me by my friend Barrie Tron in 2000. He said, “It is a wonderful place with a great preacher... Carlyle Gill.” Frank loved this story. I came to give thanks and I found a home I never really felt existed for me. Carlyle was a great part of that welcoming feel. She guided me through the Confirmation process and then asked me to help take part in future classes. We planned Parish Weekend retreats together and outings to Camden Yards. Many lunches of spicy Thai food (she always got my extra chillis), where she shared her wisdom about God and Jesus; about life, family and relationships – her future and mine with grace, comfort and an infectious laugh. Through the tears and good humor she became my friend.

One moment in particular will remain with me forever. I had called the church to say my ailing father was near death Carlyle and Margot Critchfield were at Sibley Hospital within minutes. Margot found at the door trying to call my family. When I returned, Carlyle was standing next to my father’s gurney praying for him and me and probably you too. Moments later, she and Margot held me as I asked the doctor to let my father die. There can be no more difficult decision to make and I felt the loving comfort of Carlyle and Margot as it was being made – I felt the love of God.

I jokingly call Carlyle “Father” every once in a while. The fact of the matter is she would have made a wonderful mother. Through the great sermons, sage advice and laughter there is an endlessly loving heart and a great peacefulness brought on by prayer and faith. It is this prayerful life she with pursue and teach in her second retirement and is the gift she will leave behind.

Send messages and remembrances to Chris Larsen 4513 Q Street NW, Washington DC 20007 or email cclars42@gmail.com



Beach Party

St. Alban’s Beach Weekend

On June 17 and 18, St. Alban’s celebrated the ministry of retiring Interim Rector, the Rev. Carlyle Gill with a Beach Weekend. On Saturday there was a beach party with games and gifts, and on Sunday a barbeque.



Parish Picnic



Mustard Seed Offering for July

Jeff Harwood, parishioner

The July 16 Mustard Seed offering will go to Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) to assist those affected by the large-scale flooding in the eastern United States. Needs and damage assessment have already begun in the most devastated areas. Affected dioceses plan to use the emergency funds toward meeting immediate needs of the evacuees: temporary shelter, medicine, food, water, baby formula, and clothing.

The Diocese of Albany has been in contact with the emergency operations center to work on assessing the immediate needs of the communities and residents affected by the disaster. The Diocese of Easton, which covers the Eastern Shore region on Maryland, is working with the local Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) to determine what kind of assistance is needed most in the region.

“This is the worst flooding that parts of the Northeast have seen in over 50 years,” said Richard Ohlsen, ERD’s Director of Domestic Disaster Preparedness and Response. ERD has been able to provide emergency assistance to several dioceses in New York State, such as Albany and Central New York, where many of the communities are still under water.

For more information or to contribute online, visit www.er-d.org. Donation checks can be made out to Episcopal Relief and Development Fund and designated for the “Emergency Relief Fund.” The mailing address is Episcopal Relief and Development, P.O. Box 12043, Newark, NJ 07101. Please be prayerfully generous during the offertory at the worship services on July 16.

Sunday Parish Forums

July 16 *Partner Arms and St. Alban’s: Helping the Homeless Get Back on their Feet*

Since the day many years ago when St. Alban’s provided the Transitional Housing Corporation with a check to kick off the development of Partner Arms, Polly Donaldson remembers, our church has been a significant force in its work. Partner Arms II now serves 27 homeless families. Polly and Tom Mahaffey will show a video depicting the programs in which these families participate and THC’s work.

July 23 *No Forum — Building Committee Report to the Parish at 11:30 am*

The 9:15 and 11:15 am services will be combined into one service at 10:30 am, followed by a Building Committee Report to the Parish at 11:30 am in Trenbath Assembly.

July 30 *No Forum — Fellowship Sunday*

If your group, ministry, committee, guild or group of friends would like to host this month’s Fellowship Sunday, contact Linda Vitella at 202-362-6324 or Jane Volkema 202-363-8286 ext. 204.

Planning for Fall:

Sonya Sutton, Director for Parish Music Ministries

No one really wants to think about planning for fall yet, but just a brief reminder that there are so many ways to participate in the music at St. Alban’s.

For children in grades 2-3

St. Cecilia Choir

Rehearsals on Wednesdays, 3:45-4:30 pm

Begins September 13.

For children in grades 4-9

Junior Choir

Rehearsals on Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 pm

Begins September 13

For adults and teenagers

Parish Choir

Rehearsals every Thursday, 7:30-9:00 pm

Begins September 7.

For adults and teenagers

Handbell Choir

Rehearsals every Tuesday, 6:30-8:00 pm

Begins September 12

NEW this fall - Music 101, Thursdays at 7 pm in the choir room. Learn basic music reading and sight-singing skills. All are welcome, though this class has been developed for those in the Parish Choir who wish to increase their skills as a choir participation. Contact Sonya Sutton at SonyaS@st-albans-parish.org if interested.

Combo
(9:15/11:15)
Service
on
Sunday,
July 23
at
10:30 am

Followed
by a
Building
Committee
Report
to the
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8 am & 5:30 pm
services will be
held as usual

NEW ORLEANS: Enter Into the Conundrum

Jean Fairman, parishioner

This is the second view of the experience of going down to New Orleans to gut houses ruined by the floodwaters of Katrina and Rita, in the hope they can be rebuilt. The work is superbly organized by Katie Mears, former St. Columba's parishioner, now employed by Episcopal Relief and Development. Volunteers from around the country are housed in the lovely, spacious parish house of St. Andrew's in a part of town not directly affected by flooding. Like most of the natives of "The Big Easy", they want to go back to life as before but beneath their positive initiatives, their fear of being forgotten by the rest of the country—especially Washington—leaks out, and their frustration and depression with city, state, and national politics gets expressed. In April, the city was electioneering, hoping a new administration might better address the many problems. (Most street signs were still gone, traffic lights not working, and only one trolley returned to partial service. Schools are closed for the duration, and the big Baptist hospital was closed,

to be demolished

because all the doctors had left town.) A large part of New Orleans' economy is based on tourism, and in April tourists were non-existent—Antoine's was empty, and one painfully solemn New Orleanian pled with his eyes for our patronage of his restaurant.

Huge areas of greater New Orleans, where we did not work, were totally demolished (what you saw on TV). Our work was between the high ground river crescent and Lake Pontchartrain, flooded because of the Corps of Engineers' failure to ground the

levees properly, plus a canal (Mr. GO) which the Corps had pushed through but which compounded the flooding and has since been shut down. Day after day the *Times-Picayune* lambasted the local extension of FEMA. Large fenced fields sit full of new FEMA trailers for the homeless, unused for lack of water and power connections. While we were there, FEMA guidelines were published for qualifying flooded houses for flood insurance and money for rebuilding: it will no longer be enough to pass "mold inspection" following gutting—now the whole house will need to be raised on stilts above sea level to qualify. Needless to say, most lower and middle class homeowners cannot afford all this. As of May, the Episcopal Church has gutted 250



TOP: OAK ST. CAFÉ: OUR TEAM AT BREAKFAST – ANN RAMSEY-MOOR, STEPHANIE GRAY TERRELL, KATIE MEARS, FAY HASKINS. PHOTO TAKEN BY JEAN FAIRMAN (NOT PICTURED)

RIGHT: VOLUNTEERS STAYED AT ST. ANDREW'S PARISH HOUSE. OUR "HOME AWAY FROM HOME"



houses, and another 1000 by another charitable consortium, but there are thousands to go, all supposedly to be completed within a year of the hurricane—a deadline mercifully extended.

Then there are the even more difficult elements to gauge, such as global climate change and rising sea levels, subsiding land, and wetlands washed out to sea because of oil companies' and the state's failure to heed Corps warnings about disturbing them.

The personal involvement of those who went down to gut is tremendously appreciated by the homeowners, even though they are caught in the crazy-making rules of gutting to qualify for rebuilding funds, raising their homes on stilts for flood insurance, or allowing their home—sometimes a three-generational one—to be razed. If they move, they may gain a safer site, but lose their community.

What can we do? As people reaching out to our brothers and sisters, we can personally put ourselves on the line of caring by being present there. It is bone-tiring work, relieved at the end of the day with a shower and New Orleans seafood, blessed by the company of fellow team members and personal contact with the good hardworking people whose homes we are deconstructing. I came away feeling I had done a really good thing, in spite of the political confusion that abounds. And by being vastly more informed of the situation, may with others move policymakers to not forget, but expedite more enlightened policies for our New Orleans family.



THE PERSON CONTACT MAKES THE PROBLEMS VERY REAL
ST. ALBAN'S PARISHIONER JEAN FAIRMAN,
SHOWN HERE WITH A HOMEOWNER

Pianos at St. Alban's

Sonya Sutton

Director for Parish Music Ministries

I think many of you appreciate the music on Sunday mornings, but you may not be aware of how much music-making goes on here during the week. Besides rehearsals of the parish's choirs, church spaces are used by many other choirs for rehearsals and by music teachers for lessons. I think it's safe to say that something musical is happening every single day of the week. And the parish's pianos get a real workout in support of our own music and as part of the outreach that our buildings provide to other organizations.

St. Alban's has had an agreement for the past few years in which we were loaned pianos by a local company, but the company has recently decided to end its institutional-loan program and the grand pianos you see in the sanctuary and in Trenbath Assembly will be taken away in August. The piano in the choir room has been on a long term loan by a parishioner, and it too will be leaving in August. To complete this rather dire scenario, the electronic instrument in Nourse Hall is coming to the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced, with something more suitable for the music in Children's Chapel and the many rehearsals that happen in that space.

It sounds rather bleak doesn't it! Four spaces, all heavily used, and all suddenly in need of a good piano—the choir room, Nourse Hall, Trenbath Assembly and the sanctuary.

Before we begin spending some of the money available in the music budget for pianos, or begin fund-raising in earnest, I want to know if anyone out there has a good grand piano that is taking up space in their house and no longer of use to you. Norman Scribner and I would love to have the opportunity to come and see if it is suitable for our use.

Contact me by email at SonyaS@st-albans-parish.org or by phone at 202-363-8286, ext. 205. I hope to hear from one of you soon. Thank you for your tremendous support of the music at St. Alban's.

New bulletins

Jane Volkema

Director of Communications & Evangelism

Those who attend the 9:15 or 11:15 am service have been using a new style of bulletin (the liturgy and the announcements) in a booklet format. So far the comments on the new layout has been positive. I have received, however, four comments regarding the size of the type. Some have thought it has been reduced, when actually it is one-half point larger. In the old tri-fold version the point size of the type used to vary depending on the liturgy. We typically used 9.6 point type. For services that included baptisms, or when the readings were longer than typical, it was necessary to reduce the type size to 9 point in order to get everything to fit on the single sheet of 11x17 paper. With our new booklets we have been able to up the size of the type to 10 point and, for services with baptisms and longer readings we can keep the point size consistent by add additional pages.

Another comment was a concern that fewer bulletins would be recycled because parishioners would now be taking the entire booklet home, not just the announcement sheet. Since there is no paper-recycling program on the Cathedral Close, there are more opportunities parishioners will recycle their bulletin at home.

Then, there was another concern about the booklets costing more. The cost of legal-size paper is less than 11x17, but we are using five sheets per bulletin instead of two. So yes, there is a cost increase of \$170-\$200 annually. On the flip side, there is a cost savings in that is no longer necessary to run everything through the folding machine and hand collate.

The next step is possibly changing to an unbleached paper. This would be dull white to tan color paper. An unbleached paper produces less glare under the lights in the nave, making the bulletins easier on the eyes, easier to read *and* better for the environment.

New bulletins for the 8 am and 5:30 pm will be coming soon.

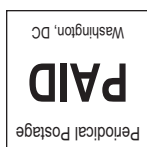
Submit articles for the *Chronicle* to: JaneV@st-albans-parish.org

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During the summer the Chronicle is published once monthly on June 15, July 15 and August 15.

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



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