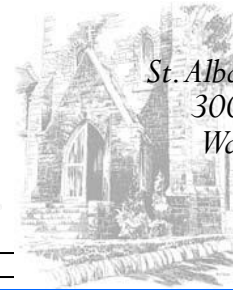


St. Alban's Chronicle

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
3001 Wisconsin Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20016
September 2008



Come to the Fair!

This year the St. Alban's Parish Ministry Fair
will be held on
Sunday, September 7th, all morning
in Trenbath and Nourse Halls and in The Old Rectory.

This is a wonderful annual opportunity to get totally familiar with the many, many ministries of the parish, which are presented by their lay and clergy leaders at interesting informational tables and displays. Refreshments and great conversation will be served!

This year the **Children's Ministry** will be featured in **Nourse Hall**, where you and your kids can learn about The Good Shepherd Program, Children's Chapel, Vacation Bible School, Children's Choir, Junior ushers and acolytes and the nursery offerings.

Youth and Journey to Adulthood Programs will be featured in the **Old Rectory**, where all may learn and sign up for this season's programs.

All other ministries of St. Alban's from the Op-Shop to the Grate Patrol and everything in between will be presented in **Trenbath Hall**.

All inquiries should go to Sue Coco at shcoco@wms-jen.com or The Rev. Tim Boggs at TimB@St-albans-parish.org.

Renewal of Marriage Vows at National Cathedral

Episcopal Senior Ministries will hold a special Eucharist and renewal of vows ceremony for couples throughout the diocese who have been married 25 years or more. The service is set for 2:30 p.m. Sept. 20 at Washington National Cathedral, with a reception immediately following at Satterlee Hall, St. Alban's. Registration fee for couples is \$50. Additional guests are welcomed to the reception for an additional cost of \$25 per person. A flyer, registration form and fact sheet are available at www.esm.org or by calling 202/414-6314. Registration by Sept. 10 is essential to ensure the certificate of the Renewal of Marriage Vows is prepared and for catering arrangements. Administrators and others should call 202/414-6314 for additional information.



SAVE A TREE!

The St. Alban's *Chronicle* is now available on our website BEFORE the printed copy reaches your doorstep. If you would like to be taken off of the "snail mail" list and access the *Chronicle* each month on-line instead (in living color!), please e-mail the Office at ericg@st-albans-parish.org to be removed.



The Alban Course for Fall 2008

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

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

MONDAY

12:05 pm.....Noonday Prayer

TUESDAY

7:30 am.....Holy Eucharist
12:05 pm.....Noonday Prayer

WEDNESDAY

12:05 pm.....Healing Eucharist

THURSDAY

12:05 pm.....Noonday Prayer

FRIDAY

12:05 pm.....Noonday Prayer

CLERGY

The Reverend Scott A. Benhase, Rector
The Reverend Erin S. Hensley, Assistant Rector for
Youth & Young Adult Ministries
The Reverend Timothy A. Boggs, Assistant Rector for
Stewardship & Outreach Ministries
The Reverend Harriette H. Sturges, Deacon,
Coordinator of Children's Ministries
The Reverend Loren B. Mead, Honorary Associate

EPISCOPAL CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Carolyn Seaton, Chaplain, American University

PARISH STAFF

Eric Gustafson, Parish Administrator
Ron Hicks, Parish Verger
Vilma Smith, Director of Financial Affairs
Sonya Subbaya Sutton, Director of Music
Dr. Norman Scribner, Director of Music Emeritus

VESTRY OFFICERS

Kate Bouvé, Senior Warden; Jim Sottile, Junior Warden;
Stephanie Kinney, Secretary; Christopher Holmes,
Treasurer

VESTRY MEMBERS

Nathalie Bramson; Bill Edgar; Andrea Farr;
Marc Fetterman; Kammie Hedges; Chuck Holmes;
Keith Jones; Danette (Dani) Kauffman; Sam Lewis;
Eric Melby; Jennifer Thorson Martin; Bob Woolfolk;
Chase Felker and Colin Mahaffey, Youth Representatives
Mary Jane Shackelford, WSA Board Representative

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.st-albans-parish.org

Being an adult member of St. Alban's Parish means that each of us takes personal responsibility to grow spiritually. Our parish provides many resources to do that. But there is no "one size fits all," because each of us is in a different place in our faith journey. So, spiritual growth and the development of one's faith is not a series of hoops to jump through, rather it is an intentional journey where one chooses to follow Jesus Christ in the fellowship of the Church.

For this journey, we offer what we call *The Alban Course*. This course comprises two 8-week series. One series is on the *Christian Narrative (CN)*, the story from God's Creation to our Consummation in God. The other series is on *Christian Practice (CP)*, how we live that story out in our daily lives. We offer this course from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Old Rectory living room. People can begin at any time and take as much time as they want to complete all 16 classes.

The Alban Course helps new and long-time parishioners continue to deepen their journey of faith here at St Alban's Parish. We do not take attendance nor test participants on the content of this course. For newcomers: we clearly expect them to participate and, when they are ready to join the Church, to let us know. Newcomers do not need to complete all sixteen sessions before becoming a member. We simply ask them to make it their intention to do so. Everyone is welcome at any of these sessions.

Here is the schedule for this fall:

Sept 07 - CN 8: How we understand Human Nature and our Formation in Christ

Sept 14 - CN 1: Creation & Crisis: Beginning at the Beginning

Sept 21 - CN 2: Calling: The People of Israel: Abraham, Sarah, Exodus, & Torah

Sept 28 - CN 3: Conflict: The Prophetic Word & Exile

Oct 05 - CN 4: Christ: His Life, Death, Resurrection & Ascension

Oct 12 - CN 5: Community: The Church as the ongoing Body of Christ

Oct 19 - CN 6: Consummation: Reconciliation & Restoration

Oct 26 - CN 7: How we understand & interpret the Bible: An Anglican Narrative Hermeneutic

Nov 02 - CP 1: Faithful Living: Keeping Sabbath Time

Nov 09 - CP 2: Christian Virtue: Incarnating Forgiveness

Nov 16 - CP 3: Hospitality & Household Economics: Ordering our Households

Nov 23 - CP 4: The Eucharist: Living Eucharist in our daily lives

Noted Anglican Priest and
*Author to Preach at St. Alban's on
September 11 and 14*

On September 11 and 14, we welcome the Reverend Kenneth Leech to be our preacher at St. Alban's. Fr. Leech is an Anglican priest and Christian socialist in the Anglo-Catholic tradition. He graduated from Trinity College, Oxford and after theological studies at St Stephen's House, Oxford he was ordained to the priesthood in 1965. He has served in urban London parishes afflicted by poverty and has confronted issues of racism and drug abuse in his long ministry. He co-founded the Jubilee Group in 1974 and is an advocate of contextual theology. He founded the charity Centrepoint which became the United Kingdom's leading national charity tackling youth homelessness. He was Director of the Runnymede Trust think-tank from 1987 to 1990.

His books include: Soul Friend (1977), True Prayer (1980), The Social God (1981), Experiencing God: Theology as Spirituality (1985), The Eye of the Storm (1992) Subversive Orthodoxy; Traditional Faith and Radical Commitment (1992), The Sky is Red: Discerning the Signs of the Times (1997), The Social God (2003), Race (2005), and We Preach Christ Crucified (2006).

Fr. Leech will preach at a special Evensong for Peace on Thursday, September 11 at 6:30 p.m. and will preach at all our morning liturgies on Sunday, September 14.

Margaret Parker Walk for St. Alban's Youth Ministry

On Saturday, September 27, Tony Parker and St. Alban's Parish will co-host the Margaret Parker Walk for St. Alban's Youth Ministry. This walk is a way to honor the life of Margaret Parker by raising money for a youth ministry endowment at St. Alban's Parish in her name. Margaret loved young people; she loved her stepson, Preston, and her six nieces and nephews, three of whom she managed to take on an overseas trip of their choice. Margaret also loved teaching young people at St. Alban's Church. To honor Margaret's love for young people, we're holding this walk to begin an endowment fund earmarked for youth ministries at St. Alban's Parish.

Youth from St. Alban's will be walking as well as helping to raise funds for this important event. Friends of Margaret's outside of the parish will also be part of this walk as walkers and or financial supporters. We are hoping that each walker can raise \$500 or more towards the beginning of the endowment fund earmarked for youth ministries.

In order to especially equip teens for this challenge, Mr. Parker has helped identify potential donors outside the parish and Erin Hensley is creating form letters and scripts for follow up phone calls. All members of the parish are invited to take part in this walk, whether as a walker or a sponsor. Doing so is a tangible way to be a part of life changing experiences for the young people of St. Alban's to come.

This walk will be the first of what we hope will be an annual walk in Margaret's name. To view pictures of Margaret, register as a walker, or make a financial contribution, go to www.margaretparkerwalk.com . You can also make financial contributions via checks made payable to St. Alban's Parish with "Margaret Parker Walk" in the memo line. If you have any questions, contact Erin Hensley at erinh@st-albans-parish.org or 202-363-8286, x207. Please do join us in honoring Margaret and honoring the faith journeys of future teens at St. Alban's Parish.

What: Margaret Parker Walk for St. Alban's Youth Ministry

When: Saturday, September 27, 2008; registration begins at 10:30am; walk begins at 11am; barbeque lunch and live music after the walk around 1pm

Where: The walk will begin and end at 4881 Potomac Avenue. The 2-mile walk goes through Battery Kemble Park and was Margaret's favorite walk with her dog Beau.



The Bible for Brunch

Beginning on Wednesday, September 3, *The Bible for Brunch* returns to its regular schedule at 11 a.m. in Nourse Hall. The first book of the Bible we will study this fall is St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians. The Rector invites everyone to join him in this study. No prior Bible study experience is necessary. Feel free to invite a friend to join you. Below is the schedule for the first series.

- Sept 3 – Introduction & Basic Argument of the Letter (1:1-10)
- Sept 10 – Paul's Authority as an Apostle (1:11-2:21)
- Sept 17 - The Torah's True Purpose (3:1-29)
- Sept 24 - The Torah's Role in the Christian Life (4:1-4:31)
- Oct 1 - The Nature of Freedom in Christ (5:1-6:18)



Ideas Alive @11:45 enjoys a great summer

Let us begin by offering our hearty thanks to those of you who made a special effort to stay after the 10:30 am Sunday Eucharists for Ideas Alive @ 11:45. We just completed an amazing and rewarding summer run in Nourse Hall. We are delighted that so many of you showed up, hung in for an hour or more, and put off lunch (or brunch) to engage our panelists and speakers in thoughtful dialogue on a variety of issues we confront these days as committed Christians in 21st-century Washington.

When the Sunday Forum Committee decided to try weekly Forums at this untested hour, we would have been satisfied if we had averaged audiences of 30 or so -- about what we were getting at the shorter 10:30 Forums we put on in the months before the summer schedule began. You surprised us by showing up at an average of 50 per week. We had no fewer than 35 on any Sunday.

The longer sessions -- sans time pressure, because no one in the audience had to rush off to a later service -- enabled us on June 8 to explore the global refugee crisis and the Episcopal Church's response to it with parishioner Richard Parkins, recently retired as director of Episcopal Migration Ministries. We also had a detailed scientific presentation on global warming by NASA meteorologist Peter Hildebrand on August 24. Both of these sessions were enhanced by audio-visual presentations and lively interaction with the speakers.

On July 13, we enjoyed "A Roman Adventure" with St. Alban's choir members reporting personally on their pilgrimage and performances in Italy in February. Their stories were so compelling that technical problems with showing DVDs of their concerts didn't dampen anyone's enthusiasm. The session on July 27, in which Senior Warden Kate Bouvé and representatives of the Parish Planning Retreat summarized what occurred that weekend, provided an ideal venue for meaty reports from six leaders of the event, and for ensuing discussion of our church's future direction.

Our July 6 panel on "Faith in a Heated Political Environment" generated much participation, as well as a couple of direct requests for more of the same. We responded with "Faith, Elections, and Public Policy" on August 10. These sessions gave us a feeling of fellowship among friends as we learned more about each other personally and were challenged to look at important issues in new ways. Along the same lines, on July 20, Sandra Hoffmann of Resources for the Future got us thinking about "Faith and the Not-So-Dismal Science," sharing how her personal journey and professional development proceeded in tandem.

She spelled out her views on why economics is more than a study of mathematical models.

An overflow crowd showed up on August 17 to listen and watch as George Keys and parishioners from the Overseas Mission Committee reported on "What We Saw in Cuba" earlier in the summer. An audience almost as large assembled two weeks earlier to hear the diocesan Latino Missioner, the Rev. Simon Bautista, report on "Latino Ministry: A Call in the Present, a Challenge for the Future."

Reviews of four of these sessions -- all written by members of the Sunday Forum Committee -- follow, including one on DC City Council Member Mary Cheh's visit on June 15. We hope you enjoy them, as well as the exciting schedule of Forums we have planned for this month and beyond as we return to shorter sessions and our school-year start time of 10:30 am. Our next Forum, on September 14, will feature the distinguished British theologian, the Rev. Kenneth Leech, who will speak on "Racism in British and U.S. Contexts."

We hope you can join us then. Again, thank you for making this a great summer for Ideas Alive!

— **Ann and Andrew Ramsey-Moor, Co-Chairs**
St. Alban's Sunday Forum Committee

Of refugees, immigrants, and displaced people

Ideas Alive! began its summer series with a lively **June 8** presentation by parishioner Richard Parkins, for many years the executive director of Episcopal Migration Ministries. For those who may not know exactly what it means to be a refugee, or comprehend the difference between refugees and internally displaced people, Parkins offered much to ponder, including a wealth of facts and figures on immigration/resettlement; an overview of EMM's work with those who have fled Iraq and southern Sudan; and a vision of what our government and our churches, respectively, could be doing for people abroad who no longer have a place to call home.

People tend to employ "refugee" as a generic term for someone who has fled a country in turmoil. But the word has a very specific definition. A refugee is someone who is able to be protected by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) because he or she has a **credible fear of persecution**. That person must (1) be out of their country of origin and (2) be unable to avail him- or herself of the protection of their own government. Unfortunately, said Parkins, internally displaced people do

not fall under this mandate, despite their very high numbers. Asylum seekers -- yet another category -- enter the country without papers, seeking refugee status. Only 20% of these individuals ever have an affirmative grant of asylum.

Every year in the U.S., there is a presidential determination of the total number of refugees from various parts of the world who can be admitted. (Recent target numbers range from a high of 28,000 from the Near East/South Asia to a low of 3,000 each from Europe/Central Asia and Latin America.) If, by September 30 of that year, these particular numbers are not resettled, the opportunity for that year is lost.

Parkins pointed out that the U.S. security apparatus since 9/11 has kept many people out of our country. He stressed that we need technical fixes to our immigration legislation so those impacted by terrorism do not continue to suffer from it. In his words, "hospitality has become an endangered trait at the official level." However, considerable advocacy of late has improved the percentage of refugees we can admit. 50% of refugees to the U.S. are being reunited with family members already here; 50% are free cases without such ties. 70% of the refugees resettled here move into the work force within three months.

Ironically, the poorest countries of the world are the ones that get the largest numbers of refugees. Still, less than 1% of refugees can avail themselves of resettlement; and large numbers languish for years -- sometimes decades or even a lifetime -- in camps. But the camp, noted Parkins, is a contrivance that came about because it was assumed that refugees needed to be "contained."

EMM has been doing critical work with Iraqi refugees, about 1500 of whom are presently in a "no-man's land." This is an especially vulnerable population; and there will be many deaths if these people are not resettled soon. It is also concerned about the 4.5 - 5 million Iraqis displaced to countries like Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon. The U.S. hopes to take 12,000 Iraqi refugees this year, as these impoverished people are impacting an impoverished and unstable situation in the countries where they are currently staying.

Another area of focus is southern Sudan, where Anglican missionary Mark Nickel did major work and 60% of the people are Anglican. There is a warm and cordial relationship with the Church of Sudan -- also the largest civil institution in the country. Since 2006, more than 125,000 refugees have returned to the Sudan from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, etc. Almost twice that number are ultimately

expected. Yet they will be returning to a country without infrastructure and resources, and where the socioeconomic and political structures are fragile. What will there be there for them? In addition, the Sudan has 2 - 3 million internally displaced people, whom the UNHCR has a mandate to protect, and who are also affected by the food crisis worldwide.

In the midst of this total situation, observes Parkins, the Episcopal Church has a certain peace-keeping role. It can continue to advocate for refugees and displaced people, urging both our nation and others to make a major commitment to resettlement. And -- as a number of Episcopal parishes have already done -- it can help make a new home for refugees when they do arrive here.

-- Ann Ramsey-Moor

Cheh offers a legislative report

At the Ideas Alive! session on **June 15**, guest speaker Mary Cheh of the DC City Council (Ward 3) shared her concept of the community as a holistic organism, which must have healthy "anchors" in order to thrive. Council Member Cheh said she seeks to understand the city's environment and to address its population's everyday concerns, such as family needs and the issue of homelessness. While Cheh focuses primarily on Ward 3, she sees her membership on the DC council as a "city job" that calls for attention to matters affecting other wards as well.

As chair of the Public Services and Consumer Affairs Committee, Cheh noted that she has used her influence over banking to help pass legislation eliminating payday lenders in the District. By working within her jurisdiction, she also was able to press for a foreclosure law that helps apprehend scam artists through the legislative process. Cheh has been involved in fashioning a new bill that proposes to increase the renewable energy portfolio. This legislation, which she is currently promoting, would also help fund a green-job training program. For Cheh, the creation of more green jobs is a moral imperative, not just an economic and environmental necessity.

Although Cheh's job puts her in charge of public services and consumer affairs, it also allows for some creativity in affecting other areas of concern to the city, such as education and health, that underlie some of DC's gravest social ills. Where education is concerned, Cheh supports additional opportunities for learning trades, as well as more rigorous academic standards in existing trade schools. She also recommends that UDC develop academic programs

that would prepare DC residents to hold jobs within their own city, instead of allowing commuters from outside of the District to keep filling vacant positions. (Currently, two-thirds of those who work in DC do not live in the city.)

Cheh engaged some 50 parishioners in attendance in an extensive Q & A session, willingly taking on questions even from those who had exceedingly negative overall views of DC government. She urged parishioners who are DC residents to keep up with current events that impact them and their city and to contact their council members with their concerns.

Cheh told her audience that she derives substantial satisfaction from the tangible effects of solving problems through the legislative process. She also very much enjoys her other job -- teaching constitutional law at George Washington University.

-- Christine Oblitas

Latino Missioner speaks of challenges

The Rev. Simon Bautista, Latino Missioner for the Diocese of Washington, spoke to the Ideas Alive! audience on Sunday, **August 3**. A group of about 50 interested parishioners engaged him in spirited discussion of issues related to his ministry, especially as it pertains to the Washington area. Bautista -- a former Roman Catholic priest from the Dominican Republic -- has been working in the diocese for four years. He served at Ascension Church, Gaithersburg, before taking the diocesan position.

Bautista noted the substantial population growth of Latinos in the United States -- from 23.3 million to 35 million in the past decade, with estimates of continuing growth to 125 million by mid-century. He noted population clusters in the region in neighborhoods like Langley Park, Adams Morgan, and a number of other areas, although population figures for the whole area were not available. He mentioned that the pressures of economics have shaped where these new persons, many of them immigrants, can afford to live.

Bautista, who serves as vice-president of CASA, an organization supporting area Latino immigrants, described the difficult adjustments immigrants face in different parts of the metropolitan area and pointed to the church's response to this population as a ministry of hospitality -- a ministry with deep roots in the biblical tradition. He noted the need for local churches to understand and support this ministry of hospitality, which is institutionally focused in several

local congregations with Latino ministries and, sometimes, services. He commended the work being done by the Rev. Sarabeth Goodwin, who now ministers at St. Stephen's and the Incarnation Church on 16th Street NW. (Sarabeth, with her family, was a member of St. Alban's prior to going to seminary.)

A series of penetrating questions by members of the parish pointed to language-related difficulties -- and real tensions around issues of "bilingualism." Bautista took no side on that issue, but pointed to his own need -- and that of all persons -- to "speak to God and listen to God" in the language in which he/they had come to know God. He further noted that Latinos present the rest of us with a real challenge because (1) they are often among us as invisible persons; (2) many of them are already in our pews; and (3) ministering with and to them is serving the future of our communities and the church.

St. Alban's rector, the Rev. Scott Benhase, joined Bautista in noting several things in the planning and development stage: (1) a bilingual Vacation Bible School next summer in cooperation with the Cathedral; (2) continued exploration of possibilities for ministry in Cuba, as evinced by the recent pilgrimage of St. Albanites, with Bautista, to the island nation; and (3) participation in advocacy for new laws related to immigration policy. Those interested in working on the immigration issue can get involved through the parish's connection with the Washington Interfaith Network program.

Excellent presentation. Excellent discussion, including a number of points of view.

-- The Rev. Loren B. Mead

Faith, elections, and public policy

On **August 10**, Ideas Alive! held its second summer forum linking religious faith to issues of public policy. About 40 parishioners heard a panel discuss issues involved with work in government and/or the political arena in the context of personal faith.

The panel, a sequel to the July 6 program on "Faith in a Heated Political Environment," was moderated by Andrew Ramsey-Moor. It consisted of Gray Maxwell, whose more than two decades of Senate service has included work with eight senators from both sides of the aisle; Stephanie Kinney, who has had a long and distinguished career in the U.S. Foreign Service; and Nathanael Stice, currently a grassroots organizer in the Democratic presi-

dential campaign in Virginia, who has a long-term interest in government affairs. Each made an opening statement and then responded to questions and comments from the moderator, their fellow panelists, and perhaps a dozen audience members.

Gray Maxwell lamented the polarization of policy discussions, as well as the decrease in both civility and willingness to compromise. He noted that diversity was less well tolerated than it had been in the past, and suggested that Episcopalians might have something unique to contribute because of their encouragement of diversity and open discussion. Gray's own faith has motivated him to be heavily involved in issues of social justice.

Stephanie Kinney felt that government organizations, such as the State Department, had been very slow to shift in response to changing realities. Their mind-set, she suggested, is overly anchored in the context of the 1960s-1980s. She observed that increasing complexity has engendered narrow specialization and parochial language. "Code words" can often beget misunderstanding. She noted that government is about managing change, not merely maintaining the status quo. What we need to improve the situation is more discussion across disciplines; a broader vision in understanding the issues; recognition of the limitations of the role of government; a continuing focus on what is practical and achievable; and finally, the quality of humility.

Nate Stice emphasized the need to be personal, and to emphasize personhood, in the face of polls, number-counting, and the results-orientation of a close political campaign. Working at the grassroots level, he found it all too easy for some to get into an "us vs. them" mentality, which regards members of the other party as enemies. Regarding individual religious expression in the context of a political campaign, Nate felt that hearing candidates' faith stories gives us a way of understanding who they really are.

Both Gray and Stephanie returned to their dismay at the lack of respect and unwillingness to compromise seen on issues such as oil and the environment. In the real world, progress is made by grappling with tedious details. Slogans and demonizing one another's views both stand in the way of constructive innovation and actual solutions. Once again, humility and just basic civility were emphasized. In one figure of speech, we are not a collection of red and blue states, but rather a nation of purple ones. Pogo Possum was quoted: "We have met the enemy, and it is us."

Other concerns included the influence of special interest groups, gerrymandered districts with "safe" officeholders who are no longer accountable, unfunded mandates, the excessive length of presidential campaigns, and the need for real public financing of elections.

Gray quoted the saying that *contempt* for government results in *contemptible* government.

An overarching theme, linking public policy and religion, was that a number of apolitical qualities fostered by faith communities -- among them, humility, compassion, generosity, kindness, civility, and mutual respect (and, dare I say, love?) -- would immensely benefit the secular realm of government and public policy.

-- **Gordon B. Avery**

Alban, Phoebe, Mary and You: Models of Hospitality

Hospitality is central to the history of St. Alban's Parish. Our patron saint, Alban, gave shelter to a priest who was fleeing from the deathly threats of Roman soldiers. Alban's conversion to Christianity was a result of his hospitality to the priest. Phoebe Nourse wanted everyone to be able to attend church, free, without paying excessive pew rent. Even before her untimely death at the age of eighteen, she began saving for the building of a free church on Mt. Alban. Once St. Alban's Parish was built, Mary Nourse was a faithful greeter always present at the front door to "make the chance stranger feel at home."

In the Gospel of Matthew (15:21-28) were reminded that Jesus was willing to extend himself to the least likely individuals. It seems in almost every Gospel story Jesus is welcoming the downtrodden, the foreigners, the poor, and those in greatest need. Jesus' heart always extended to the lonely, the lost, and the left out, paying no mind to their appearance, their heritage, their politics, even their sins.

And at St. Alban's Parish, "we welcome the faithful, the seeker, and the doubter, for God's embrace is wide and God's Good News is for all." Before Holy Communion every Sunday, we proclaim that Christ invites all to feast at God's table. We want to extend a warm welcome to all newcomers; yet, we discovered in last year's Mutual Ministry Review that many of us feel we are inconsistent in our welcoming of the newcomer and ensuring that they are incorporated into parish life. Thus, the Vestry created a Hospitality Commission, embracing several ministries that extend hospitality to the newcomer and to current parishioners as well. Hospitality was one of the six main priorities that arose at our Parish Planning Retreat last May. We are beginning to understand how central hospitality is to the incorporation of new people, as well as long-time parishioners, into our parish life and ministry.

During the coming year, you will read and hear more about different initiatives of the Hospitality Commission. Initial priorities of the Hospitality Commission, which include many of the recommendations of the Parish Planning Retreat are:

- Create a welcome area where newcomers can meet us and learn about St. Alban's;
- Expand our Greeting Ministry and provide specific orientation for Greeters;
- Encourage more parishioners to attend Newcomer Dinners;
- Ensure those who become members of St. Alban's are invited to join a Foyers' group;
- Reach out to our neighbors making sure they know about activities at St. Alban's;
- Revise the Time and Talent Pledge form;
- Make recommendations about the nametags and parish wide events at St. Alban's; and encourage every parishioner to extend hospitality to each other and to the newcomer.

We will share more about these and other ideas in the Chronicle this year. We are always open to your suggestions and ideas, so please don't hesitate to contact any member of the Hospitality Commission.

Very few of us are called to be martyrs, as was St. Alban. All of us, however, are called to be ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ. All we have to do is extend our hand, say, "Hello, my name is ___ I don't believe we have met." Try it and see whom you meet. Someone did that for me when I first came to St. Alban's and I am so grateful!

-- Lacey Gude

St. Alban's Transformation Fund

Have you seen the Blue Bags? Have you heard about Youth With Purpose or Bright Beginnings? Perhaps you've participated in Faith and Everyday Leadership!

These and other ministries are supported by St. Alban's Transformation Fund. If you have a special ministry and are interested in support from the Transformation Fund, please check out the St. Alban's website under Parish Resources/Outreach. Review the criteria and consider submitting an application. Drop it off in the parish office or email to Janeschubert@aol.com New applications will be reviewed by the Trustees in October. We look forward to seeing you at the Transformation Fund table at the Parish Fair on 7 September.

NURSERY-CHILDCARE IS MOVING

Our children's nursery is moving to a more convenient and safe space in the Warner Memorial Rectory. Instead of climbing stairs with babies and car seats, you may now stroll up the ramp, turn right into the building and enter into our new freshly painted (low-vac paint) and freshly scrubbed nursery. Fortunately, the same wonderful, capable caregivers will be there - Ana, Maria, Carmelina, Teresa, and Mercedes. There are always at least two every Sunday. The nursery is primarily for infants to children who are three years old. If you have questions or comments, please contact Harriette at hsturges@st-albans-parish.org. Thanks.

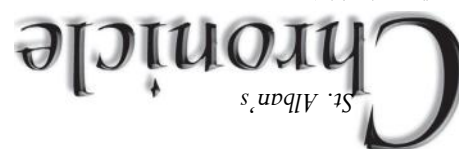
HEALING MINISTERS

St. Alban's Parish is blessed to have a group of Healing Ministers who are available at services to offer prayers for each of us. We may pray for ourselves, other individuals, the world, the creation, whatever and whomever that needs help or wholeness. But healing needs to be an "always-everyday" part of our lives and ministry. Come explore healing for yourself, the world, creation and the Church. We will be offering a six-weeks course on Sunday afternoons starting in September. More information will be available at the Parish Ministry Fair on September 7th or you may contact a healing minister or Harriette, the clergy liaison for the group, at hsturges@st-albans-parish.org. Thanks.

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

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