

St. Alban's Chronicle

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



Breaking news: We are very disappointed to report that Bishop Ulises' visit has been canceled due to travel visa complications.

On Sunday, October 5, Bishop Ulises (Agüero Prendes) of the Diocese of Cuba will visit St. Alban's Parish. He will also join us for Supper on Thursday, October 9 at 6:30 p.m. All people who want to learn more about the Episcopal Church's mission in Cuba are welcome to attend the supper. We do ask that you contact George Keys, the leader of our Cuba Mission Group, if you plan to attend. George's phone is 202-244-4437 or his email is gkeys@jordankeys.com. Our group visited with Bishop Ulises for five days in June and learned of the diocese's mission and ministry in the eastern part of Cuba.

Liturgical Feedback from our Summer Eucharist

Thanks to everyone who responded to our online survey. Over 100 people responded and the parish staff learned a lot from your thoughtful and insightful comments. As one might expect from a diverse parish, people's opinions varied widely about the use of inclusive language and singing more parts of the Eucharist. One item, though, stood out overwhelmingly. Over 85% of respondents said they would like to continue singing the *Great Amen* at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer. So, we will soon resume doing so in our Rite II Eucharist. Again, thanks for your feedback. We will use this online survey tool in the future as we seek to get more feedback on our parish life and worship.

The Feast of All Souls – A Requiem Liturgy on Sunday evening, November 2 at 5:30 p.m.

On the evening of All Saints' Sunday, St. Alban's Parish will solemnly observe the Feast of All Souls. A *Requiem* by Canadian composer Eleanor Daley will frame this special liturgy. Daley's *Requiem* uses an inventive mix of texts, including poetry by Carolyn Smart, the Latin *Missa pro Defunctis*, a Russian benediction, the Book of Common Prayer, and Psalm 130. The fourth movement is a lyrical setting of the poem: *Do not stand at my grave and weep*, a touching consolation on the loss of a loved one. The eight-movement *Requiem* is a gentle work, not unlike Fauré's beloved *Requiem*. The Alban Singers and the Salisbury Choir (with Mary Shaffran and Richard Dirksen as soloists) will perform this requiem.

With Daley's *Requiem* framing the liturgy, we will also read aloud the names of those who have gone before us in faith. During the Sundays of October, a special sign up sheet will be available on the table in the Wade Room for this purpose. Parishioners who desire to have a loved one remembered in the Requiem are asked to list those names on this sheet. Parishioners can also call (202-363-8286) or email Eric Gustafson (ericg@st-albans-parish.org) in the parish office to have the names of loved ones included.

Please plan now to join us for this special liturgy.

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.



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 Subbayya 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

Music Events

A Celebration of Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

On **Sunday, October 19**, St. Alban's will join other musical organizations around the world in commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of Ralph Vaughn Williams. Anthems and hymns by one of the leading composers of Anglican church music will fill both the 9:15 and 11:15 services that morning.

Wikipedia says it well in its article on Vaughan Williams: *In Vaughan Williams's style "one is never quite sure whether one is listening to something very old or very new." His style expresses a deep regard for and fascination with folk tunes, the variations upon which can convey the listener from the down-to-earth (which he always tried to remain in his daily life) to the ethereal. Simultaneously the music shows patriotism toward England in the subtlest form, engendered by a feeling for ancient landscapes and a person's small yet not entirely insignificant place within them.*

The Hermitage Singers, Russian Quartet, return to St. Alban's

Also on **Sunday, October 19**, the quartet of Russian singers who made a huge splash here two years ago are returning to sing another concert at St. Alban's at 7:00 pm. Anyone who heard *The Hermitage Singers'* last concert will remember it as an amazing evening of both sacred and secular Russian music. It will be wonderful to welcome them on their return. No charge to attend the concert, though they will be asking for a donation.

Diocesan Confirmation Service and New Member Retreat

On **Saturday November 1**, 2008, there will be a diocesan confirmation service at the Washington National Cathedral, including reception and reaffirmation.

—Confirmation is a mature, public commitment to Christ. Many people are baptized at an early age, and confirmation is an opportunity for people of faith, when they are ready, to commit themselves to the responsibilities of their baptism.

—If you were confirmed in another tradition or church, reception is a rite for being received into the larger Episcopal Church.

—Reaffirmation of one's baptismal vows is for people of faith who desire to recommit themselves to the living out of their baptismal vows.

Those who will be confirmed, received, or renewing their baptismal vows will receive prayer and the laying on of hands by the bishop. These two outward actions are signs of inward and spiritual grace - strength for the journey of discipleship.

If you feel led to be confirmed, received, or to reaffirm your baptismal vows, please join us for the New Member Retreat on **Saturday October 25**. Beginning at 9am and ending at 3pm, we will discuss sacraments, the prayer book, and church polity. We will begin and end with prayer as well as share a meal together. This important retreat will be held in Nourse Hall, the portion of the church building closest to Wisconsin Ave. Please RSVP for the retreat to Eric Gustafson by emailing him at ericg@st-albans-parish.org as soon as you can. Also, please complete the application for confirmation, reception, or reaffirmation that is available online at www.st-albans-parish.org/resources/pdf/confirmation_app.pdf and send this completed form via email or snail mail to Eric Gustafson as soon as possible. If you're an "oldcomer" who would like a refresher on sacraments, the prayer book, and church polity, you're welcome to join us as well. Just make sure to RSVP to Eric Gustafson by emailing him at ericg@st-albans-parish.org as soon as you can.

I invite all to prayerfully consider confirmation, reception, or reaffirmation as well as the retreat, a day of learning and study for our continued journey with and in God. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call or email me. You can reach me at 202-363-8286, x207 or at erinh@st-albans-parish.org.

—The Reverend Erin S. Hensley

IDEAS ALIVE! @ 10:30

"A savior? Who says we need a savior?" Four great teachers. Four points of view. Four Sundays.

Here's an early heads-up to St. Albanites, so everyone can make plans to attend our Ideas Alive! programs for the Advent season.

Why do we need a savior? Beginning with that question, your Sunday Forum Committee has fashioned a series of four talks by as many distinguished faculty members from Virginia Theological Seminary. Special thanks are due committee member Cynthia Cohen for doing much of the work in lining up our speakers. We think you will want to make as many of these sessions as possible.

Here's the Advent lineup:

November 30 -- The Very Rev. Dr. Ian Markham (Apologetics): "The Savior -- An Answer to the Problem of Evil." Why does God allow suffering? This is a question that haunts the Christian tradition. In this forum, we shall look at the ways in which Christians have seen the suffering Savior as an important part of the response to the problem of evil and suffering.

December 7 -- Dr. Timothy Sedgwick (Moral Theology): "Jesus and Healing the Cycle of Revenge." This session will explore the human problem of revenge and of revenge cultures and the need of salvation as given in the law (lex talionis) and in forgiveness.

December 14 -- The Rev. Dr. Katherine Grieb (New Testament and Theology): "Framing a Biblical Christology." The practice of New Testament writers of describing Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, using Old Testament categories and titles, will be the focus of this program.

December 21 -- The Rev. Dr. Roger Ferlo (Religion and Culture): "For The Time Being: Waiting for the Savior in Postmodern Times." In a tumultuous era of faux-messianic politics and postmodern apathy, does it still make sense to look for a savior? Come meditate on W. H. Auden's great mid-20th-century Advent sequence.

Reviews of August and September Forums follow. We hope they will be grist for your intellectual and spiritual mills, whether you were able to come hear our outstanding speakers or not.

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

Correction: A comment in the September review of the Dick Parkins program ("Of refugees, immigrants, and displaced people") about the 2 - 3 million internally displaced people in the Sudan was in error. The UNHCR actually does NOT have a mandate to protect these internally displaced people, which is what makes them so vulnerable.

Climate, water, and life on earth

Climate change and its causes and effects -- particularly on the water cycle, and thus on all of life on earth -- was the subject of an illustrated lecture by Peter Hildebrand at the final summer Ideas Alive! presentation on **August 24**. Dr.

Hildebrand, an award-winning NASA meteorologist with a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, also spoke as an active Episcopalian. He is currently co-convenor of the diocesan chapter of Episcopal Peace Fellowship and a member of the vestry at nearby St. Columba's.

After a presentation similar to one he gave at the Library of Congress in June, Hildebrand discussed what we could do to ameliorate these vast changes. He believes there are many steps that individuals and our country could and should take.

Hildebrand's time-graph slides were clear and persuasive about changes in temperature, air quality, and volume of greenhouse gases that have taken place over centuries. They showed patterns of relationships based on progressively deeper, older samples of polar ice cores taken in Greenland and elsewhere. There was a gradual warming from the start of industrialization in Europe in the 18th century to about 1940, then a more pronounced rise from that time to the present. This frozen record also shows that for the last 150 years, the level of greenhouse gases has risen ahead of rising temperature. (The previous causal sequence was for temperature to rise first, followed by volume of gases). The earth's atmosphere has clearly warmed in recent times, more so in our northern hemisphere where the land surface is larger (and warms faster than water) than with the ocean surface in the southern hemisphere.

Cycles of rain, snowfall, and evaporation have been affected. Records show that rainfall patterns became heavier during the last 100 years, while annual periods of snow cover, as shown by satellite photos, have diminished by as much as two months. Runoff patterns have also changed. Ultimately this means that there will be less water for agriculture. The speaker tentatively suggested, from available though limited data, that world production of grain is already receding, as are grain reserves. Ocean ecosystems are also affected, because the shrinking ice cover allows more solar energy to be absorbed rather than reflected by ice. Human activities **are** changing the earth -- not only by polluting the air, but on account of sheer increases in population and concomitant urban growth.

Taking questions, Hildebrand turned to public steps on which practical-minded members of the audience sought his guidance. What are the changes we can make? To reach some level of sustainability, he said, we must aim to reduce **all** kinds of energy use on the planet. There are encouraging precedents for this task. Other countries use far less energy, per person, than does the United States. (Many European nations use only slightly more than half what we do, while their quality of life is comparable to ours.)

Hildebrand was optimistic about the potential of public education, strong policy direction, and good legislation. He cited the real progress made in reducing pollution from the 1960s through the 1990s due to the Clean Air Acts. Europeans have followed our lead in this kind of effort. The negative arguments used to oppose the Clean Air Acts -- that they would wreck our economy -- are the same ones now being advanced against working to combat climate change. Similarly, the Montreal Protocol in the 1980s banned CFCs because these aerosols, after use, became greenhouse gases themselves. Again, the United States took the risk, and other countries followed. An earlier case with a positive outcome was the Cuyahoga River in Ohio, which burst into flames in 1971 from the hazardous chemicals it carried. People said that it could not be cleaned up, but it was - and adjacent Lake Erie was rescued.

Efficient use of all forms of energy is key. Coal, for example, can be more efficiently used; proper disposal of excess carbon waste is being explored. Reprocessing of nuclear fuel is also being worked on in France, Germany, and England. Several European countries use a high percentage of nuclear energy. We must still overcome the problem of nuclear waste disposal and remaining Cold War fears about nuclear proliferation. Renewable energy is the growth area around the world, with many different local sources to tap. A major concern is how much from all energy sources is lost on the way to being used (it may be as high as 70 %!).

Can the churches have a role? Hildebrand was strongly affirmative here. Energy has become a moral issue, a peace issue. It is also a food issue, and obviously an international security issue. An audience member recommended viewing Bishop Steven Charleston's launch of the Genesis Covenant last April in Seattle. (See www.healingourplanet.org and www.genesis.eds.edu.)

In closing, Hildebrand offered his own web-page reference. Those who want to take a closer look at the graphics and points of his talk, or who didn't attend the presentation, might wish to go to www.neptune.gsfc.nasa.gov.

-- Ginny and Steve Bergen

Leech offers challenges on race, class

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Leech, our guest at the first fall-season Ideas Alive! program on **September 14**, spoke to us about "Racism in Britain and the United States." Dr. Leech, an Anglican priest since 1965, has focused in his ministry on issues of social justice, poverty, racism, and drug abuse, primarily in parishes in East London. He has also spent much time in the United States, including two years on the South Side of Chicago. His many books include *Soul Friend* (1977), *True Prayer* (1980), and *Subversive Orthodoxy: Traditional Faith and Racial Commitment* (1992).

As a central point, Leech asserted that Christian ministry must have its basis in engagement and service, beginning in one's own community, and not in theological doctrines. He sketched the history of racism as he encountered it in East London, starting in the mid-20th century. It is telling that the word "racism" was not even in the English dictionary until 1960. When Leech began preaching and acting against racism, he received death threats and experienced other kinds of harassment. A fascist group, the National Front, began placing racially disparaging graffiti on walls in East London. When Leech and others erased these graffiti, they were arrested for "defacing" the buildings. Asked by the judge in the case whether anyone had been arrested for **placing** the graffiti, the police were taken by surprise, as indeed all the arrests had been of people **removing** the writings. In another act of civil disobedience, Leech and others took over the National Front building. A National Front candidate who had been elected to Parliament was later defeated -- not because many changed their votes, but because additional concerned individuals stepped up and voted.

The main victims of racism in East London were poor Bangladeshis. Many could not speak English, and they were frightened by the anger and violence that they encountered. Leech posited that while race and membership in an underclass are separate things, there was much overlap. Demonstrations, he said, were not enough. Legislation supporting equality and justice, contact and greater familiarity among the individuals involved, and the passage of time are also needed to change attitudes and achieve reconciliation. In addition, there is the significant challenge of ministering pastorally to racists while still strongly opposing their principles.

Unfortunately, Parliament and the Anglican Church were slow to take public leadership against racism. Anglicans who emigrated from the West Indies were not welcomed in English parishes. Public laws against racial discrimination were not enacted until a weak law in 1965 was followed by a broader one in 1976. But Leech offered that the church should be in the forefront acting for justice, not bringing up the rear.

Questions and discussion followed, with many parishioners expressing their concerns. Why is there so little discussion of racism in the churches? What is the connection between racism and current divisions in the worldwide Anglican Church? What about the low-information segment of our population, which can be easily swayed by false information? Time pressure limited follow-through on these broad issues. But Leech left us with his belief that advocacy and the demand for social justice must begin at once, start with local situations, and be firm and unceasing over the decades. His own life and ministry testify eloquently on behalf of this approach.

-- **Gordon B. Avery**

Assessing the Anglican divide through Lambeth

Jim Naughton, Canon for Communications for the Episcopal Diocese of Washington and editor of The Episcopal Café website, joined us for Ideas Alive! on **September 21** to offer his observations about the Lambeth Conference, this summer's decennial meeting of bishops from throughout the Anglican Communion.

Naughton's remarks were both insightful and thought provoking. He began by describing an exciting and moving time accompanying Bishop Gene Robinson, our own Rev. Tim Boggs, and others -- including Sir Ian McKellan -- in their Lambeth pre-conference activities in London. These activities included Bishop Robinson's sermon at St. Mary's Parish, Putney, and the screening of the movie *For the Bible Tells Me So*. Bishop Robinson, as readers will remember, was elected to his position in the Diocese of New Hampshire in 2003; and his service as an openly gay bishop has caused international controversy. He was not invited to participate at Lambeth, but a British bishop invited him to preach at St. Mary's, which he was free to do.

Bishop Robinson's sermon was attended by an enthusiastic crowd, broadcast in its entirety on the BBC, and followed by 17 separate press interviews. Sir Ian McKellan presented the movie to an even larger, packed, enthusiastic audience on the following Monday night. Naughton pointed out that the response in Britain to open, frank discussions on the issues of same-sex marriages and same-sex unions in the clergy was overwhelming. Where the Anglican Communion has tried to name the efforts to achieve acceptance of these practices as purely a "North American problem" brought to the Anglican Communion by the American Episcopal Church, it is not. From the reception they received, it was clear to Naughton that Americans are not alone in trying to deal with same-sex affections within the Church; he joked that his group felt that they had "outed the Church of England."

Naughton then switched his attention to the actual Lambeth

Conference, which was clearly structured to avoid these issues and which Naughton characterized as "working with jelly." The conference activities were divided into two sections. The one made up of the "Covenant Design Teams" enabled the bishops to discuss together in small groups a range of topics such as evangelism, interfaith efforts, the environment (especially global warming), and progress being made on the Millennium Development Goals. Designed so that the Lambeth Conference could deal with issues other than sex, it did have the intended effect of building relationships and enabling bishops with differing views to work together in a mutually respectful fashion. It also tended to "bring down the temperature" of the gathering.

The second section focused on the Windsor Report. Readers will recall that the original Windsor Report provided the initial set of guidelines for how the Anglican Communion was to come to terms with these issues. The group did not add anything of substance to the debate. Rather, it placed a moratorium on the whole question until the Anglican Consultative Council meets in March 2009, at which time it will issue a statement. Naughton noted that such a statement will come too late for careful consideration at the American General Convention in July 2009; so the drafting of a careful American position on this statement will likely have to be postponed until the 2012 convention.

Naughton had other interesting observations. He characterized Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams as someone clearly made uncomfortable by the whole process and resistant to change because of his "catholic," even "royalist," point of view, which assumes that changes in church policy should be largely crafted by those in the top echelon. He reminded us that no real change comes from the top down but rather from the bottom up -- for example, it took the streets of Birmingham to wake the world up to civil rights.

He also explained that bishops in the Church of England are appointed, not elected by individual dioceses; so the control in England is clearly from the top. He was asked about the Dean of St. Alban's Abbey, who was the clergyperson appointed to be Bishop of Reading and whose appointment -- initially made by the Archbishop -- was later retracted by him. He answered that when Jeffrey John took the position of Dean of St. Alban's Abbey, he attested to being celibate while also being in a legal civil union with a partner. There thus now exists something akin to a "don't ask, don't tell" in the English Church.

Naughton reminded us that those within the Anglican Communion who are opposed to sanctioning same-sex relationships (the GAFCON Group which met in June in Jerusalem) boycotted the Lambeth Conference. If this large group had been at the Conference, and if the idea of "full inclusion" had been put to a truly democratic test, their view would have prevailed.

Naughton also spoke about the concerns of Africa, and of the Sudan in particular, where Muslim majorities often oppress Christians, and where nonacceptance of same-sex practices has become another tool of that oppression. He reminded us that most of the world's poor within the Anglican Communion side with the GAFCON position. This division is causing those from the Anglican Communion who are on the acceptance side of the issue to be labeled as "privileged white folk." He suggested that this label is undermining efforts to provide effective assistance.

Finally, in response to a question about how Washington Bishop John Bryson Chane now sees these issues, Naughton described a posture of "heightened moral choice." Bishop Chane works closely with individuals who differ with him and whose relationships he values, and with whom he and the Church need to cooperate, because of the dire needs of today's poor, particularly in Africa. One understands that "drawing a line in the sand" on sexuality issues is a very hard choice to make; it comes right up against the effort to do God's work in the world.

-- Marina Bühler-Miko

More Upcoming Events

The Chane Gang Live! *Walker School Benefit*

Bishop John Bryson Chane and his band, The Chane Gang, will bring their hard-driving blues sound to Washington Episcopal School (5600 Little Falls Parkway, Bethesda) at 7:30 p.m., **Friday, Oct. 10**. The concert, proceeds from which will benefit the Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys, costs \$30 per person, with light fare and a cash bar. Wear your dancing shoes and show your support in style by becoming a Patron (\$500) or a Benefactor (\$1,000). Individual tickets are \$30. Support at these levels includes six tickets. RSVP by Oct. 3 to 202/299-6521 or fodonoghue@edow.org. Guest list at the door. If you are unable to attend but want to show your support, please donate online at www.bishopwalkerschool.org.

Yard Sale

Community of Christ Church (3526 Mass Ave NW) is hosting a yard sale **Saturday, Oct 11** from 10am-2pm; all proceeds will be donated to Friendship Place. Friendship Place participates in United Way/Combined Federal Campaign workplace giving. You can drop off furniture, toys, books, etc (no clothing) on Sunday Oct 5 from 1-5pm. Please contact Florence at fgubanc@gmail.com or 703-598-4228 for more details or to arrange an alternate drop-off time.

Memory Loss, Confusion, and Alzheimer's

Information to help ourselves and those we love
sponsored by
the Stephen Ministry of St. Alban's Parish

Saturday, November 8

10 a.m. – 12 noon

Nourse Hall

We are getting older... honestly, we *all* are! Even if we can't relate to that fact, we recognize that our parents, other relatives or friends are aging. We're hearing a lot -- or perhaps worrying -- about cognitive changes and how they can impact quality of life. Moreover, senior citizens are not the only ones who may experience these changes.

Come hear the facts. Find out about the different causes of memory loss and confusion, and clarify what is and is not Alzheimer's disease. Discover helpful strategies for maintaining brain health. We'll discuss caring for the sufferers AND caring for the caregivers. We'll talk about the legal and financial implications. And we'll learn about valuable community resources, as well.

Representatives from the Alzheimer's Association and Iona Senior Services will join us for this informative session, which we will open to the community. Caring for ourselves and each other is part of our walk in faith. Bring a friend!

2009 Announcements

*Stephen Ministry Training Now Scheduled for
Early 2009*



We are blessed with a high level of interest in St. Alban's one-on-one confidential caring ministry, but our fall training schedule seemed to be problematic for many. The training series for the next class of Stephen Ministers has been rescheduled to start in January. The new training calendar is available in the Wade Room.

Bottom line: If you would like to know more about Stephen Ministry and explore how your faith and care-giving skills might be put to use, there is still time! Contact Stephen Leaders David Johnson or Jo Turner, exts. 210 and 219 respectively, in the church office.

PARISH OFFICE: 202-363-8286

The Journey to Adulthood continues...

J2A's Pilgrimage Summer of 2009

The J2A group is the second section of the larger curriculum called Journey to Adulthood. In this second section, teens build on the foundation of Rite 13 and learn about important adult skills, such as active listening, negotiation, and leadership. These skills are part of preparing them for the holy pilgrimage they will make **June 26-July 3, 2009**. Last year, teens considered their goals for the trip and in March of 2008 emerged with five top choices: Northern Ireland, Scotland: Edinburgh, etc., Republic of Ireland: Glendalough, etc., Scotland: Iona, and England. After much consideration, they decided to go to Northern Ireland and have already done some research on places they'd like to go to in Northern Ireland; for instance, they are interested in hiking to the top of Croag Patrick, a mountain in the west, and visiting Belfast and Derry. The first draft of the itinerary will be ready in February of 2009 and the final itinerary will be ready in March of 2009. We are working with Wonder Voyage, a company that specializes in holy pilgrimages and itineraries tailored to groups' goals, to make this pilgrimage as powerful and transformational as it possibly can be.

The pilgrimage is not a European vacation or a work trip. Teens will stay in hostel like facilities and food will be simple fare. Prayer and discussion will be part of our life together. The J2A holy pilgrimage is time set aside to seek and encounter God in new ways. Pilgrimage is about seeking and as well as sacrifice. In the coming months, teens will be sharing more about their hopes for this next part of their journey to adulthood. They will be asking you to be a part of this pilgrimage through prayer and financial support.

Teens will be giving much time and talent in order to raise funds for the trip. The trip is paid for by a contribution from the parish, J2A fundraisers in the school years of 2007-2009, and families. Our fundraising goal for this year is \$18,000. We know these days are not the easiest economically. Youth will be encouraged to invite family friends in addition to parishioners to help with the trip. Please prayerfully and kindly receive the teens' invitation to be a part of this transformational experience by supporting them in their fundraising efforts and in prayer.

—The Reverend Erin S. Hensley

Around the Parish

Mustard Seed Miracles

How many of us have received news about a sudden disaster or pondered a severe, lingering social problem nearby or far away? For many years, our once-a-month Mustard Seed offerings have given us the opportunity dur-

ing the regular Sunday offertory to make an extra personal and direct contribution to helping alleviate such problems. I am happy to report on the miracles that those distinctive orange envelopes help foster.

At first our offerings focused almost exclusively on disaster relief, and that is still an important component of Mustard Seed. But over the past decade the offerings have supported development programs and various ministries--local, national, and international. Several of the ministries are ones initiated by parishioners.

In the past year our parish Outreach Commission has assumed the major role in guiding the direction of the offerings. More of the offerings are directed to ministries that the parish knows well and has traditionally supported over the years. Two examples of this are the September offering for the Downtown Cluster of Congregations for their on-street social worker program and the October offering for Samaritan Ministries of Greater Washington for their myriad of efforts. The Outreach Commission has the UN Millennium Development Goals very much in mind as it discerns the recipient of each month's offering.

The response to our Mustard Seed appeals has been extremely generous and heartfelt. For example, there was the \$3,474 in May to Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) for the Myanmar cyclone victims, and the \$1,608 in July for the Community Council for the Homeless. To date the 2008 total of offerings is \$13,004. A complete year-end report will be prepared for you as part of an overall Outreach Ministry summary.

The September and October offerings are to ministries traditionally supported by the parish. The November offering will go to the Hurricane Relief fund of the ERD. We have been particularly proud to be part of the ministry of ERD, our own global outreach effort, which just received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for sound fiscal management.

Thank you and bless you for your continuing support of God's work here at St. Alban's. If you would like to know more about Mustard Seed, please feel free to contact me or Outreach Commission chair Kammie Hedges or The Rev. Tim Boggs, Assistant Rector for Outreach and Stewardship.

--Jeff Harwood



Peter Spalding Honored for his Community Service

On **October 27th** at Washington National Cathedral, Peter Spalding will receive the Benjamin E. Cooper Community Service Award from the Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place “for his open-hearted ministry to the homeless residents of the Crossroads Shelter at St. Alban’s Episcopal Church during his decade of faithful volunteer service as Shelter Coordinator.”

Peter retired from the Foreign Service in 1995, after more than thirty years of service, primarily in Africa and Asia. He attended Virginia Theological Seminary, receiving a Master’s in Theological Studies, and began his next “career,” that of Shelter Coordinator at St. Alban’s. When asked about his response to Reverend Frank Wade’s summons to serve, Peter observed, “One does not say no to an invitation to ministry to the poor, especially from Frank.”

Ambassador Sam Lewis, who worked with Peter in Israel and again now at St. Alban’s, speaks highly of his commitment: “Even after retiring from the State Department, Peter still serves as a Concert Officer for 2-3 months at a time when they need him. He has been involved in a lot of activities including the shelter, and has great kindness and efficiency. He’s dedicated, hardworking, and caring.”

Under Peter’s stewardship, the Crossroads Shelter has grown from a six-month cold-weather shelter to what he describes as “a gift that keeps on giving all year long.” Crossroads Shelter now serves four men, many of whom receive supportive services through Friendship Place. Peter also serves as the shelter’s representative for Friendship Place Partners, a working consortium of homeless service providers in upper Northwest D.C.

“Today,” he remarks, “most of my friends are either formerly homeless or temporarily homeless.” Peter’s feelings are echoed by Danny Summerlin, a former Crossroads resident who now volunteers at Friendship Place. He credits Peter with giving him a chance, and a job, working at St. Alban’s. “He trusted me, and he gave his name that I would do a good job, and I proved him right by working hard. *He’s one of the best friends I’ve had in my entire life.*”

St. Alban’s Members Encouraged to Attend the October 27th Reception

The Benjamin E. Cooper Awards recognize outstanding contributions by members of our community to the cause of ending homelessness. Peter Spalding will be honored at the 11th annual Benjamin E. Cooper Awards, on **Monday, October 27** in the **Pilgrim Observation Gallery (7th floor)** of **Washington National Cathedral**, from **6 to 8 pm**. Parking is available on the Close and (for a fee) in the underground garage. *For information, including sponsorship opportunities and to purchase tickets in advance, please call 202-364-1419 or visit <http://cchfp.org/BenCooper.html>*

The Good Shepherd

We know the beautiful parable of the sheep and the Good Shepherd but do we internalize it? Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep, calls them by name and risks his life for them. This we understand. For the three year old, the parable is a story about a shepherd and sheep—literally. They hear the parable time and again, work with the materials, and somewhere between four and five understand intuitively that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and they are the sheep. This is a deep knowledge that lasts them all their lives.

You sometimes have a five-year-old pass by a younger child, usually a sibling, and try to explain that Jesus is the shepherd and they are the sheep, but it doesn’t seem to click or help the younger one. At each child’s own time the truth dawns. This love is internalized permanently and nothing can disturb it for long. Those of us who didn’t get this training when we were three to five seem to take longer to grasp the unconditional love of God and our precious relationship with Jesus.

St. Alban’s Parish has committed itself to the work of The Good Shepherd because it sets the environment and possibility for this type of “learning.” Yes, facts are given, but it’s this engagement with God that lasts and grows throughout the children’s lives. It can’t be received if the child isn’t a regular part of the community. It can’t be given if the community isn’t there for the child. Don’t wait until the child understands. Just as formation begins in the womb, this formation is a process and needs an early foundation to last. Contact me for more information and how you can help, even if you can’t be here every week. My email is hsturges@st-albans-parish.org.

—**The Reverend Harriette H. Sturges**

Vacation Bible Camp

Here’s the deal, my secret. There’s a new “theme” every year for each level of Vacation Bible Camp, but the theology is always the same. There are different crafts and activities but all for the same purpose. The theology comes from our Baptismal Covenant (BCP, pages 304-305) and the crafts and activities are all designed to foster “a spirit to know and love you (GOD), and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works.” (BCP, p308).

Of course, we want this theology and purpose to be presented in a palatable way, an enjoyable way, in community. We train leaders by having the 9-10 years participating in the planning and being the leaders in liturgy, activities, and projects. The adults are there to serve them and to learn from them.

I wish each of you could have seen the joy, wonder, delight and expertise of our 10 year olds as they lead, and the joy, wonder, delight and enthusiasm of our 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders. Their care of each other, their concern for the group, and their contributions to the task and worship was amazing. Look at the poster in the Wade Room. Ask the children themselves. Be sure you know at least one child by name. Contact me if you need an introduction. My email is hsturges@st-albans-parish.org. Thanks.

—**The Reverend Harriette H. Sturges**

There Is So Much Pain In The World

There is so much pain in the world, what can I do? It seems whatever is done is just a drop in the bucket or it is sucked away into a black hole.

I'm hurting so much, how could I possibly help others? I have no energy, no resources, no time.

Why do we keep destroying the earth, the creation? Don't we know our lives depend on it?

If you've ever felt compassion for the world's pain, needed solace for your own, or frustration for creation's destruction, it may be a sign, a call, to explore the concept of healing.

Healing isn't just for trained doctors, nurses, EMTs or healers. Healing is the mission of the Church, the mission Jesus gave us. Healing includes the sacraments, includes relationship, and includes prayer. Think about how each of these is true.

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 currently offer a six-week course on Sunday afternoons beginning in September. More information is available by contacting a healing minister or me, the clergy liaison for the group at hsturges@st-albans-parish.org. Thanks.

—**The Reverend Harriette H. Sturges**

The Greening of our Lives

With my most sincere apologies to an old friend, Kermit the Frog, it is, in fact, easy being green. One of the great outcomes of the recent Parish Retreat was a calling to be more environmentally conscious and be greater stewards of the earth than we have been. We have already taken

small steps at church like abolishing the used of disposable coffee cups, improved efficiency in the new HVAC system of the Church and Nourse Hall, "Idiot-proof" recycling bins, the phase-out of incandescent lights just for starters.

Kudos to the leadership of St. Alban's for leading by example, but what can you do at home. With many thanks to David De Rothschild and his "Global Warming Handbook," I have ten quick steps you can take the other six days of the week.

.Adjust your thermostat 2 degrees warmer in summer and 2 degrees cooler in winter.

Replace that old incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb. Some estimate this could save more than \$30 per lamp per year. Not only is it easy to do the right thing, but it can be profitable also.

That blinking 12:00 on your VCR/DVD is a wasteful use of power. Know that computers and many kitchen appliances are quietly eating valuable power and wasting valuable earnings. Unplug it or put a group of appliances on one power strip.

When shopping, carry your own bag. Billions of plastic bags end up in landfills each year and are guaranteed to outlast us all.

Shop at local farmer's markets. Most food in the grocery store has traveled over a 1,000 miles to conveniently arrive at your local grocery store. That is a lot of wasted gas for food that isn't as good as what you can get locally.

Follow St. Alban's lead and avoid using paper and Styrofoam cups. Bring your own travel mug along for even short journeys.

Take public transportation and save money on parking at the same time.

Walk or bike whenever possible. Do you need to drive to return the videotape or visit the library?

Take shorter showers. One minute less could save up to 800 gallons of water per year.

Plant a tree. According to De Rothschild, one tree provides enough oxygen for two people their entire lives.

So you see, most of these ideas are not just good for the environment, but they are also good for your budget.

These are just a few ideas to help preserve our planet. If you have more, please share them with the environmental committee here at church.

—**The Reverend Harriette H. Sturges**



Super Sixties at St Alban's

A fun gathering place for people 60 & older

The following activities are available to participants for a suggested donation of \$2, *although no one is turned away if unable to contribute:*

Heart-healthy, nutritionally balanced meals

On-site nutrition consultations and advice

Exercise classes such as chair & standing aerobics, chair yoga, Tai Chi

Movies, piano recitals, field & museum trips, special speakers

Phoebe's Knitting Circle – knitting warm wear for the homeless

Regular blood pressure checks

Birthday celebrations

Weekly "Gleaning Table" – organic breads & produce provided by our local Co-op & made available free of charge to our participants

Please contact Mar-E Robnett at 202-363-8286, ext 212 for a calendar or reservations

Passing of the Torch: Foyers An Expression of Gratitude

Foyers co-chair Didi Smith is leaving this ministry of parish fellowship after more than 20 years of faithful service. She is turning over the reins of this important program to Lin Schmale-Tate and Marcy Fisher. We all want to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation to Didi for her unflinching dedication to the parish family of St. Alban's.

Making music at St. Alban's – let me count the ways

Did you know that over 70 people are involved in the music program at St. Alban's? And that doesn't even include the many musicians who assist with Children's Chapel. This is a church that loves music and supports music-making in every way, including, for many, making the enormous time commitment to be in one of the choirs. Next month's (November) Chronicle will spotlight the dedicated people who contribute so much to this ministry.

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

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