

# St. Alban's Episcopal Church The word

March 2018 Volume 17, Issue 2

Hopefully you all are aware that I leave for a three-month sabbatical on April 8. "Why is he taking a sabbatical," you might ask yourself? According to a 2006 study, the only major lifestyle factor for which clergy are at greater risk than the larger population is stress and, according to this same study, clergy are more likely to suffer depression than the general population.<sup>1</sup>

Before you read any further, let me say that I am in good health, physically, mentally and spiritually (I think...). The priesthood vocation is a rewarding vocation. Priests share the joys and sorrows of life with parishioners; walk the lonely paths of illness and death with those we have come to love; and, have the amazing privilege of being invited into the most sacred and intimate life events. But with this vocation comes an emotional, spiritual and, yes physical, cost, and so most dioceses require, or at the very least strongly encourage, parishes to provide for sabbatical time for their priests.

I have been with you for almost 13 years now. (Pause while I catch my breath!) It doesn't seem possible. According to our diocesan standards, I am overdue for a sabbatical. A sabbatical *can* be a financial hardship on a parish, but by God's Grace, that will not be the case at St. Alban's. We have been blessed with a rather large grant that will pay for my sabbatical and includes funds for any supply or interim clergy assistance we might need. At the time I applied for the sabbatical grant, I was the sole priest here, but now we are blessed to have **Fr. Paul** on our staff, a very capable, mature and deeply spiritual man. I am comfortable knowing that, with Fr. Paul and the Wardens of this parish, St. Alban's is in very good hands in my absence.

So back to my sabbatical, it will be a busy three months, but it will be three months of doing the things that **Kate** and I truly love. My sabbatical begins with a week-long bread baking course at the Cordon Bleu in Paris. Following that, Kate and I will walk 200 miles of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela--and we'll need it, after a week-long baking school! If you're not familiar with this ancient pilgrimage road in Spain, I encourage you to google it. Kate and I are very excited about this leg of our three-month journey.

Following our time in Spain, Kate and I travel to Poland where we'll spend time in Warsaw and Krakow. We plan to tour Auschwitz and the famous medieval Wieliczka Salt Mines. We'll make a side trip to Czestochowa to see the most famous of the Black Madonna icons, Our Lady of Czestochowa at the Jasna Gora monastery. And, of course, no trip to Poland would be complete without "dropping in" on our St. Alban's friends, the **Dillworth's**, while we're in Warsaw.

Next, we travel to Germany to see our daughter and her fiancé, and Kate and I will travel to rural western Germany, the place we met and were married some 34 years ago. Our son will join us in Germany, and at some point, all five of us will meet up in London for a rollicking adventure north to Scotland and the Isle of Skye. Our time in Europe will end with a short stay in Edinburgh before we return home in mid-June.

While my sabbatical time doesn't end until July 8, I plan to be at St. Alban's on June 24 for **Bishop Johnston's** Episcopal visit and, of course, the parish picnic (which would happen to be in my front yard, anyway!). While I will truly miss you all, at the same time I'm looking forward to my time away and am equally looking forward to my return when I can share with you my stories and experiences. I hope you all keep Kate and me in your prayers, and we will most assuredly keep you all in our prayers.

-Fr. Jeff

<sup>1</sup><http://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/article/60/clergy-wellness-the-role-of-vestries>



*The dynamic duo, **Fr. Paul** and **Fr. Jeff**, sporting the famous St. Alban's red "hospitality apron," help the vestry with the February 13 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner. Thanks to all Vestry members and other helpers who made for a delightful evening.*

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At our Annual Meeting on February 25, parishioners were updated on our parish and annual budget and elected new vestry members. Welcome to new Vestry members **Nancy Harrell, Jim Kilby, Margaret Pendley & Rick Weinberg.**

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## The Warden's Pen

I'm writing this the day after our February Vestry Meeting and a few days before our Annual Parish Meeting. I hope you attended as that's the one opportunity in the year when all the business of the church is addressed, and our clergy, committee chairs, and Vestry members are assembled to answer questions and hear your ideas.

Physical plant projects continue to be a priority for the Vestry, and I'm pleased we've added replacement of the choir rail to our list. We're all used to what we have, and any change we make will be different and, possibly, require an acceptance adjustment on our part. But...if you've ever gone up to the choir loft and seen the high, elevated spot where music director **Fred** stands.... Well, let's just say my stomach did a flip. And what if someone on a riser lost their balance? I'm delighted we have a donor who wants to correct this, and our new choir rail will meet the necessary county codes for safety. Fortunately, our carpenter will provide a mock-up for the Annual Meeting, and we can expect installation by summer.

Our Annual Meeting is when we elect new Vestry members to serve a three-year term. I want to thank **Betsy Murray, Moira Skinner, Chuck Blanchard** and **Peter Larson** for their significant work on the Vestry. I also want to thank **Alan Aument** for his thirty-plus years of service to our parish, guiding the oversight and management of our finances. We are strong financially due to his efforts and those who worked with him. I also want to thank **Allison Blanchard** for her many years as chairman of the Stewardship Committee. Allison brought new and beneficial ideas, and our pledges for 2018 hit a new high. Allison and Alan are both "a hard act to follow," but we can all have great confidence in the leadership of Chuck Blanchard on the Finance Committee and **Ron Vogel** on Stewardship. Thank you, Ron and Chuck, for taking on these important positions.

*Thanks to all the wonderful folks who ran for Vestry positions. Your willingness to serve is appreciated.*



*April Kreller, Fr. Jeff, Cheryl Sinsabaugh, Debbie Rosse and senior warden Linda Cummings, helping with the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper.*

*-Linda Cummings, Senior Warden*

## Capital Campaign Update

This past December, many of us heard **Betsy Anderson** talk about how we are applying our mission statement of being a "vibrant, Christ-centered community witnessing God's love for all people" by focusing on building and infrastructure improvements that further our mission. During her talk, Betsy identified that a Capital Campaign would likely be necessary to support the kitchen renovation. Late last year, **Fr. Jeff** asked me to lead the development and progression of the Capital Campaign, which I accepted. While the Capital Campaign is still in its "forming" phase, I want to take this opportunity to share what we have learned, and the next steps.

In January, I invited Mr. Jack Walton to St. Alban's to speak with the Vestry and other leaders about church capital campaigns. Jack is the Music Director at St. David's, Ashburn and was a recommended resource from the Diocese as he had a 25-year career as a non-profit capital campaign consultant. Jack provided us invaluable first-hand recommendations regarding the conduct of a campaign, and provided a critical assessment of issues St. Alban's experienced during the last campaign in 2002. He cited the critical need to build a solid case that supports our future vision for the kitchen project and to conduct a consultant-led feasibility study meant to assess donor support for the project prior to project initiation. The meeting offered robust and frank discussions and helped support the decision process at the January Vestry meeting to establish a budget line item for a consultant-led feasibility study and the authorization to begin assessment of consultant firms.

As St. David's is also in the process of accomplishing their own Capital Campaign (a few months ahead of us), Jack was able to share with me recommendations and contact information for the consultant firms they interviewed. I have asked **Matt Anderson, Nancy Harrell** and **Jim Kilby** to join me as we contact and interview consultant firms to find the one that matches our energy and interests. While interviews and hiring of a consultant firm is on hold while leadership examines the impact of the Westminster lease situation, we are continuing the pre-planning efforts for the Capital Campaign, including developing the Case for Support and tabulating a list of potential donors. The next steps, following the resolution of budget issues, will be to interview and hire a consultant firm to conduct a feasibility study with the potential donors and report the results back to the Vestry. If you have any suggestions, questions or would like to help with the Capital Campaign, please contact **Bill Calvert** at [billandnancyalvert@verizon.net](mailto:billandnancyalvert@verizon.net). -Bill Calvert, Capital Campaign Chair

## From the Assistant Rector

Growing up in Minnesota in the 1980's, it would be almost unthinkable that a pastor's kid might slip through the cracks and graduate from high school without going through Confirmation. And yet, that's just what happened to me. My dad was the pastor of a very small congregation, and I was the only teenager in my age group, and somehow, it just never happened.

My twenties were a time of great doubt and anxiety. I questioned everything about the faith I'd received. After a time, in my early thirties, I began to open my heart again to the possibility of embracing an active faith in Jesus Christ. That renewed faith was nurtured by the love of the people of a small Episcopal parish in Brattleboro, Vermont: St. Michael's.

And so, in early May of 2011, I stood with a group of a dozen or so new Episcopalians—some coming from other denominations, some fresh converts—and received the sacrament of Confirmation. The bishop's hands on my head that day felt unexpectedly heavy, powerful and large. He then spoke these words: *"Defend, O Lord, your servant Paul with your heavenly grace, that he may continue yours for ever, and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more, until he comes to your everlasting kingdom...."* Unexpectedly, I felt the burn of tears as he said these words; it was as though all those years of difficulty and struggle to make sense of my own faith and relationship with God had been leading me to that place, that day, that moment.

This month, a new group of Confirmands begins to meet; to study and wrestle and pray as they prepare to make their own renewed promises, and receive Confirmation on the Bishop's visit (coming up on June 24.) My hope is that this will mark a new season of hopefulness and trust in God's grace—not only for those seeking Confirmation, but for all of us, as we support them in their journey. Over the coming weeks and months, I ask that you keep them in mind and in prayer as they seek to embark on a time of new life in Christ.



*"... God we thank you that by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ you have overcome sin and brought us to yourself, and that by the sealing of your Holy Spirit you have bound us to your service. Renew in these your servants the covenant you made with them at their Baptism. Send them forth in the power of that Spirit to perform the service you set before them...."* (The Book of Common Prayer, p. 418)  
-Fr. Paul

**Bishop Shannon** will visit on June 24, and will confirm candidates during his visitation. In preparation, Confirmation classes began February 25. If you are interested in deepening your Christian faith, and receiving the sacrament of Confirmation, please speak with **Fr. Paul** for more information, or send an email to [pmoberly@stalbandsva](mailto:pmoberly@stalbandsva).

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**Next Edition April 2018**  
**Articles/photos welcome!**

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*Fr. Paul accompanied youth group members to Flight Trampoline on February 18.*

## From the Deacon

### Labyrinth Walking Through Lent

For many years, I've walked labyrinths as a meditative practice. Walking the circuitous paths toward and away from the center, I often gain insights about my relationship with God or my life.

I recently walked "The Labyrinth of the Dancing Christ." This labyrinth included a wooden cross lying through the circuits. The design was a reminder that Jesus' life was a dance toward the cross and away from it over and over. He faced temptations and turned back toward God. Jesus taught us about turning from death and toward life in the resurrection.

Our own lives are likely circuitous as we follow Jesus. We may find ourselves doing the same things that keep us in bondage to sin before we turn back toward God and new life. Lent is a focused time of noticing and returning. It's a time we may begin a new spiritual practice, notice the things that keep us separated from God and experience the grace to return.

Reflections from labyrinth walking are most useful when they are integrated into everyday life. The insights we gain about ourselves through our Lenten practices can lead us to new life as we weave them fully into our lives. -Deacon Theresa

### St. Alban's Intercessory Prayer Group

St. Alban's Intercessory Prayer Group works to reach the troubled bodies, minds and souls of those with long-term problems.

Each day, we pray for approximately 100 individuals, that they know God's strength and protection and that we love them. Although all have been requested by our parishioners, about two-thirds are not themselves members of St. Alban's. Thus our efforts are part of St. Alban's outreach. Those who are feeling isolated by their failing health or limitations, those undergoing difficult transitions, or those with daunting challenges of difficult family situations know that we are a Christian community that cares. We also send handwritten cards, designed by **Melanie Jillson** and printed by **Tammy Gaines**, to over 50 people each month.

For many, it can be the only handwritten mail they receive. Each card also includes an inspirational small card; we hear that the latter are tucked into people's mirrors, refrigerators and computer screens not only here in the United States but also abroad. We also pray daily for our clergy and staff, St. Alban's ministries and the Anglican Communion.

If you would like to add someone you care about who has serious long-term challenges, please call the church office with name, reason for putting him or her on the list and your name. If you wish for the person to receive cards, please provide a valid mailing address. (You may choose not to have a card sent). Then periodically let us know how the person is doing so that we can update our prayers and messages. Because of the sensitive information of some requests, we keep it to ourselves – and God, of course

-Jo Hodgkin, Kay Lusk, Moira Skinner

## From the Seminarian

While job hunting I came across a review on a parish's Facebook page that is intended to be positive. It reads, "The rector preaches on the New Testament, our Loving Creator God, the need for redemption since we cannot be saved by the Law."

I for one am thankful that this person is fed and nourished by the preaching at this parish. However, the emphasis on the God of the New Testament being one of Love makes a contrast with the God of the Old Testament that many of us are familiar with—the Old Testament God is vengeful, angry, legalistic and punitive.

I love the stories in the Old Testament. They speak of a people who were earnestly trying to discern the ways in which God was present in their lives and reflecting on how they were carrying out God's will. It is important to remember that just because the violence is in there, it doesn't mean that God condones it. It was one group of people's response to God in their lives. What is certain when we look at the Bible is that when God speaks to humans, humans respond either very well, or very poorly. The Bible itself is a collection of stories, of books, that show us how people have responded to God's Word in time. We are to find ourselves in it and ask ourselves where are we? Which person in the story am I? We are to reflect on who we are before God. And I, for one, can think of few better disciplines to adopt during Lent. -Adam



*A photo from our January 14 meeting. From bottom left: Margaret Pendley, Moira Skinner, Kristi Potts, Ann Gates, Melanie and Gwen Jillson, Ginny Peters, Jo Hodgkin, Sandra Sawicki, Helen Cassidy and Kay Lusk. (Not pictured: Ann Zuvekas, who was unable to attend but previously had led the group.) We were joined by Fr. Jeff, Fr. Paul and Deacon Theresa. The group is pleased to welcome Lee Huff in February. We were so pleased that Ginny Peters, who founded the group, was able to attend.*



## CHOIR NOTES



**March 4.** Last month we sang *O Savior of the World* by Sir John Goss (1800-1880), who served as organist and choir-master at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. This Sunday we present another of Goss's works, *God So Loved the World*. Some of you may recall that we have sung this text before, to music from John Stainer's (1840-1901) oratorio, *The Crucifixion*. The words are adapted from John 3:16.

**March 11.** Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) was born a generation before Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) and survived the latter by almost as many years. The two Austrians were friends and borrowed ideas from each other. Haydn is just as much a musical giant as Mozart. Because he lived much longer than his younger compatriot, Haydn produced more music than the very prolific Mozart. Haydn did not invent the symphony, but he brought this musical form into prominence with his 104 (!) numbered symphonies (plus a few others). Haydn's sacred works include a great oratorio, *The Creation*, from whence comes today's anthem, *The Heavens Are Telling*. The text is based on Psalm 19:1-3.

**March 18.** The English organist and composer Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876) (SSW) was the son of Samuel Wesley, a noted composer and keyboardist, and the grand-nephew of John Wesley, who broke away from the Anglican tradition to found the Methodist Church. SSW was highly regarded as an organist with exceptional improvisational skills; but he found it difficult to hold down a job because his prickly personality led to his dismissal or resignation from a number of church and cathedral positions. His organ and choral compositions are relatively modest in number, and include this Sunday's anthem, *Wash Me Thoroughly (from My Wickedness)*. The text is from Psalm 51:2-3.

**March 25.** Tomás Luis de Victoria (c1548-1611) was Spain's preeminent renaissance composer; some would say he was the greatest this nation has ever produced. Victoria studied and worked for a number of years in Rome. He may or may not have been taught by the great Italian master Palestrina, but at least he was influenced by him. Victoria was ordained a priest in 1574. Returning to Spain, he became chaplain to Philip II's sister, the Dowager Empress María, and served in this position from 1587 until her death in 1604, at which point he became the organist at her convent. We will be singing Victoria's composition, *Hosanna Filio David* ("Hosanna to the Son of David"), the text of which is from Matthew 21:9.

-Clarence Zuvekas

*The Deep Crater Boys Band got people up and dancing at their Muldoon concert on January 14. Shown are the "Boys" and dancers Marc and Jane Cheek and Jo and Larry Hodgkin kicking up their heels to this classic country combo that specializes in the "golden era" of the country music songbook.*

### Muldoon Concert Series March 4 John Bullard, Classical Banjo

Come hear a banjo that sounds like a harpsichord. John Bullard has gained international attention for his work in developing and transcribing classical repertoire for the banjo. His music has been featured in several films. He will be joined by pianist Markus Compton.

Please join us for the free  
concerts of the  
Muldoon concert Series  
All concerts start at 4:00 pm



### Chili and Cornbread Cook-Off February 3

A hot and spicy time was had by all on a cold winter's night. Thanks Parish Life!

And the winners were:

- Spiciest Chili - **Bob Weschler**
- Best Veggie Chili - **Cole Lieberthal** (shown)
- Most Creative Chili - **Cole Lieberthal**
- Best Cornbread - **Melinda Patterson**
- Best Display - **Bob Weschler**
- Best Overall - **Fr. Jeff**



**Ash Wednesday Children's Service**  
Fr. Paul led this year's lessons about the church and Lent at the February 14 Children's Service .



**2018 Super Bowl Sub Sale**

Youth group members sold subs on February 4, Super Bowl Sunday, to raise money for their summer mission trip.



## Shrove Tuesday Pancakes & Games February 13



*Above: Fr. Paul kicks off the Pancake Games with the first fierce competitors: Sam, Felix, Will, Cole and Cecilia. Emma Conkle and Emma Cheek hold the finish line. Rest of photos clockwise: Will and Cole flip out; Sunday School teachers in fierce competition; Marta Hyde and granddaughter Adriana looking festive. Thanks to the Vestry for their superior cooking and serving skills and Frs. Jeff and Paul for making a fun time for all.*



## March

### March Birthdays

Andy Aument	2	Ralph Hassig	17
Karen Deck	4	Sharon Belanger	18
Jonquil Traum	4	Alan Aument	21
Alison Dilworth	5	Clarence Zuvekas	21
Ralph Kelley	6	Carson Hotard	22
Lynn McCaffree	6	Maureen Findorff	23
Howard Lallande	9	Bill Gamber	23
Victor Zorin	9	Heath Conkle	24
Jane Lesko	10	Linda Fraunfelder	26
Peter Larson	12	Lola LeCraw	27
Jake Dilworth	17	Julia Lesko	29
		Ray Hanlein	30
		Kaela Huheey	30
		Helen Cassidy	31

### Passages

Peggy Davis, mother and mother-in-law of parishioners **Ron Hardcastle** and **Benny Robles**, passed away in February.

Betty Cleland, mother and mother-in-law of parishioners **Wendy Cleland Hamnett** and **David Hamnett**, died on February 10.

Please keep Ronnie, Benny, Wendy, David and their friends and families in your thoughts and prayers.

*"Receive, O Lord, your servants Peggy and Betty into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company*



## March Calendar Highlights

March 2 **First Friday Lunch Bunch**  
Anthony's Restaurant, Falls Church

March 4 **Muldoon Concert**  
John Bullard, Classical Banjo 4:00 pm

March 7, 14 **Lenten Program**  
6:00 pm soup dinner; 7:00 pm program

March 11 **Adopt-A-Road Clean-Up** 3:00 pm

### Holy Week Services

March 25 **Palm Sunday** 8:15 am, 10:15 am

March 28 **Tenebrae** 7:00 pm

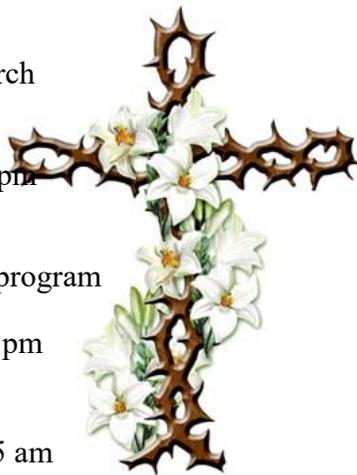
March 29 **Maundy Thursday** 5:30 pm Children's service, 7:00 pm

March 30 **Good Friday** 12:00 pm, 7:00 pm

March 31 **Great Vigil of Easter** 7:00 pm

April 1 **Easter** 8:15 am, 10:15 am

**Book Discussion Group** —A small but mighty book group meets to discuss religious works on Saturday mornings an occasional basis. Please contact **Kristi Potts** for more information.



## Wednesday Evening Lenten Program

The Rev. Dr. James Farwell, Professor of Theology and Liturgies at Virginia Theological Seminary, will be presenting a series on the worship traditions of Holy Week, the Triduum, and Easter, on Wednesday evenings. The sessions started on February 21 and continue through March 14. Dr. Farwell's instruction will help us to deepen and enrich our understanding of the central observance in the Church year, and the significance of the Paschal (Easter) Mystery, as we journey through Lent toward the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord. Wednesday evenings, with dinner at 6:00 pm, and the educational program beginning at 7:00 pm.

