

St. Alban's Episcopal Church The word

June 2019 Volume 18, Issue 5

From the Rector

Change. “Change” sparks all sorts and kinds of reactions from us. For some, “change” can ignite visceral dread no matter the circumstances, but for others “change” presents an exciting challenge. When I was a child my family moved around – a lot – because of my father’s Air Force career. My siblings and I found every announcement of a pending move an exciting time of anticipation and... well, *change!*

When I learned I had been accepted as a Master’s student at Virginia Theological Seminary, I was eager to share the excitement of a new place and new experiences with my children. “We’re moving to the east coast,” I announced! “Isn’t this exciting?”

I wasn’t expecting the tears... and there were tears, not of joy, but of deep sadness and sorrow. An energizing time of change for me was a life-changing, scary plunge into the darkness and the unknown for my children.

When change affects your most intimate and personal space, it can be unsettling, and I believe that’s why churches are so reluctant to change. *Isn’t God supposed to be unchangeable, unmovable? So the Church shouldn’t change, right?* Well, we know that isn’t true. But by its very nature, changes at Church often push us well out of our comfort zone.

Eckhart Tolle, a German author and speaker on spirituality wrote, “Some changes look negative on the surface, but you will soon realize that space is being created in your life for something new to emerge.” We’re seeing some changes at St. Alban’s. There is, of course, the feasibility study currently on-going which will provide our leadership some much needed insight into our congregational health and vitality, and potential for a Capital Campaign to renovate our kitchen. And, as most of you know by now, we are in the midst of some personnel changes.

Jinsun Cho, our talented, gifted organist for over 10 years, is leaving us on June 16, and **Fred Binkholder**, who has beautifully and wonderfully led our music program for almost 20 years, will be leaving us on June 9. Both resignations were an unexpected and unwanted surprise, but I believe for both Jinsun and Fred, new doors are being opened and new opportunities are being pursued. They will be missed, and we wish them all the best.



Fr. Paul, Deacon Gaelyn, Jeffri Hare and Fr. Jeff at the May 18 commencement at VTS.

Congratulations to the **Rev. Deacon Gaelyn Evangreene**, M.Div, and parishioner **Jeffri Harre**, M.A., both of whom graduated from seminary on May 18 in the chapel at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria.

We will miss you, Gaelyn. Keeping you in our prayers as you prepare to be ordained a priest in June, and as you continue your ministry.

For St. Alban’s, it means carrying on our fine tradition of excellence in music while we determine our way forward, and then begin the search and hiring process. As we look ahead, and before we make any hiring decisions, our parish leadership will be taking time to examine and set our priorities in all areas of our common life. What’s important to St. Alban’s? What feeds us? What excites us as a congregation? Where are our growth edges? Where do we excel, and where have we fallen short? All of these questions must be considered, but we must also keep our eye on Christ, for He is our reason for being.

For now, I beg your patience and understanding as we take our time and are deliberate in our discernment. On a more practical matter, we have lined up substitute organists who will provide our musical accompaniment while the choir takes its summer break. As always, any of you with musical talents and gifts are invited, strongly encouraged, and welcome to schedule a Sunday morning offertory, prelude or postlude to enhance our worship life. If you sing or play an instrument—yes, *you!* *I’m looking at you*—call **Fr. Paul**, or me or chat with us on a Sunday morning. We’d be delighted to have you share your musical offering with your parish family. And, if I approach you to help us evaluate potential music ministry staff, I hope your answer is a resounding, excited “yes!” as, together, and with God’s help and guidance, we fill a now empty space with something new. -Fr. Jeff

From the Associate Rector



Fr. Paul (in clerical collar!) with Donna Archer and Salome Metzger.

Just a matter of weeks ago, I stood one morning with other Holy Land pilgrims in the entry courtyard of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. Many of the massive stones which comprise the wall date from the foundation of the great Temple of Solomon. As you enter, there is a large sign with a warning from the local religious authorities asking visitors to this sacred place to behave appropriately – describing the Wall as the “place where the Divine Presence rests.”

All around, young people and families from around the world gathered – many of them, to celebrate a bar mitzvah, or other solemn religious moment in their lives or that of their families. Most of the visitors to the Wall are orthodox or ultra-orthodox Jews, and most wear the characteristic black-and-white uniform.

Earlier that morning, we had ventured to the top of the Temple Mount, circumnavigating the platform upon which the massive ancient Temples once stood. Near the entrance to the Al Aqsa Mosque, a group of older women sat on white plastic lawn chairs, studying Qu’ran together. As we were finishing our tour, the entire piazza was being cleared for noontime prayers. On some Fridays, their holy day, hundreds of thousands of people would be here, making their Jumu'ah devotions.

That morning, I was struck by a question of Christian identity. All around me that morning were people for whom their identity was central to their faith. For people of devout faith in the Holy Land – whether Jews in Israel, or Muslims and Christians in Palestine – for most of them, there is not a minute of the day that they are not outwardly identified for who they are – their community, their piety, their values. Being an orthodox Jew is not an outfit you can put on and take off – it’s something you ARE. Being a faithful follower of the prophet Muhammad isn’t really a matter of something you think – you either are a Muslim or you aren’t.

As a priest, one thing I’ve always struggled with is the traditional clerical shirt and white collar. Most people, though not all, seem to know what it means. I’ve always believed it important to be visible in public as a minister of the Church, especially as it becomes more and more counter-cultural to be a Christian. Visibility is important. Just the same, I’ve heard horror stories from priests who wear their collars on an international flight and end up talking to their neighbor for nine straight hours. Sometimes, when I go to the grocery store, it’s easier NOT to wear it. Sometimes I have to challenge myself to do so because I know, often, I would really rather blend in.

The other day, I drove into my parking lot at my apartment complex and saw a man spreading out a rug behind his car. He was stopping in our lot to complete his evening prayer obligation. Devout Muslims pray five times a day no matter what. I thought, what a remarkable thing: he stops his car, spreads out his rug, and gets down on his knees.

I couldn’t help but wonder: what is it about a faith that is so deeply held, so integral, so much a part of a person’s identity that they will stop in a strange parking lot to pray?

What if we, as Christians, hadn’t turned our faith into a *maybe*-once-a-week thing? What if our identity as Christians wasn’t a matter of what we believed or thought in a particular moment, but became a way we think about ourselves – our community, our piety, our values? What if our faith was something that marked us, outwardly, so that every time we went to the bank, the laundry, the pool, people knew we were Christians? What if every time we went to the bank, the laundry and the pool, WE knew we were Christians?
-Fr. Paul

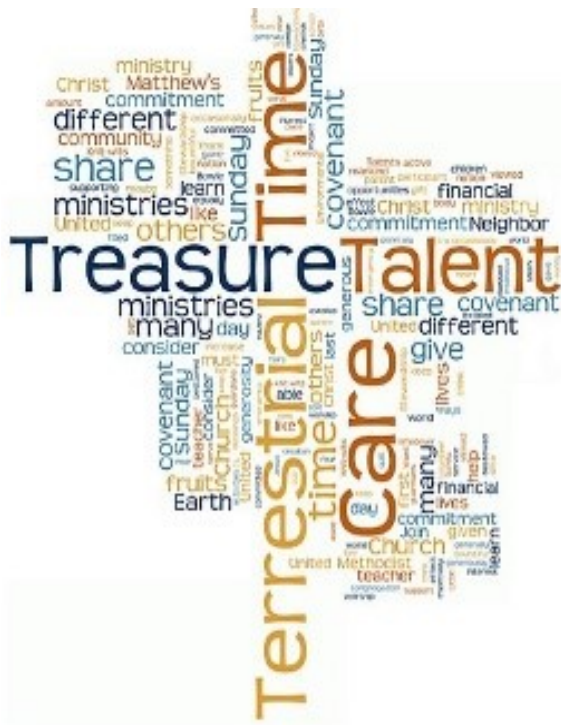
The Warden’s Pen

It has certainly is an eventful time at St. Alban’s.

The feasibility study should be ending by the time you read this. I hope everyone participated; your voice is important. Your Vestry will hear the results at our June meeting and will be discussing how to proceed.

If you have not already heard, we are losing both our organist and music director in June. **Fred Binkholder’s** last Sunday will be June 9, and **Jinsun Cho’s** last Sunday will be June 16. We will begin discussions on how our music program should proceed. Vestry, staff, choir, parents and many other facets of our congregation will be included in this process. Please join us to say goodbye to our very talented musical staff. I wish them nothing but success for their futures. They will be missed.
-Nancy Harrell

Stewardship



Well, summer will soon be here, and the livin' will be easy—unless, of course, you're obsessive about lawns and gardens. Summertime is family time with many of us planning out-of-town trips. And, as a consequence, on any given Sunday through the end of August, you'll note the absences among our parish family. That generally results in diminished financial gifts until we all come back to business as usual in the fall. The work of the church, however, goes on. Payroll must be met, and bills must be paid.

One attractive and very easy remedy to this seasonal "problem" is to ensure your pledged gifts keep coming in right on schedule—even if you are not personally present to drop a check in the plate. St. Alban's participates in myEOffering's program of electronic giving. Many of us already use this system and find it to be very simple.

If you're interested, check it out. MyEOffering has two versions, so if you decide to sign up, use version #2. Create an account by designating the credit card to which your gifts will be charged; 2) identify St. Alban's in Annandale as the recipient of your gift; and 3) define the value and frequency of your gift. Done! With each gift, myEOffering sends you receipt for your records. If you're so inclined, you even have an option to add the processing fees to your gift so that St. Alban's receives the full value of your pledge. And here's your vacation bonus—use a credit card that issues travel rewards and you're also on your way to another vacation some summer down the road—a real win/win.

-Ron Vogel

Baptism

Four month old Aiden Chase Popescu was baptized at St. Alban's on May 19. Aiden is the son of Christina and Alin Popescu. Aiden's Godparents are Emily and Matthew Hoagland. God bless our newest little Christian Aiden!

Welcome Rosalind Keiper!

Rosalind Marie Keiper arrived on May 7, to the delight and joy of mom **Catrin**, dad **Adam** and big rother **Edmund**. Rosalind had her first church visit on May 26.



WHAT WE DO WITH WHAT WE GIVE:

Over the past year, we have used this space to remind ourselves what we get for the time and money we give. We have focused on our various outreach ministries, our Sunday School program, our music program, our pledge to the Diocese, etc. This month, though, we turn our attention all too briefly to where most of our financial giving goes—clergy and other paid staff. This month we'll focus on the clergy; next month we'll look at our paid staff.



As the clergy goes, so goes the parish. Plain and simple. We want our clergy to be inspirational in setting our ministerial goals, spiritually compelling, sensitive our collective values and beliefs (religious as well as secular), empathetic to our life crises, consoling in our setbacks. Additionally, they must be capable administrators, prudent stewards of our financial gifts, gifted human resource managers, and capable recruiters/salespeople. It helps if they are easily approachable, have a gift for humor, but can impart a sense of solemn mystery and divinity at the appropriate times. Finally, they must know us all by name.

For the money we pay them, I think we as a parish have received a real bargain with **Fr. Jeff** and **Fr. Paul**. (I'd add **Deacon Teresa** as well, but she basically comes at no cost to us at all—an amazing return on no investment!!)

We all most likely have been a part of a parish or congregation in which the clergy fails to measure up to the one or more of the expectations streamed above. It can cripple a church and sour people of faith. We, on the other hand, are a blessed parish and a happy one, too.

We've gotten much for what we've given.

-Ron Vogel

Fire and Hurricane Victims Relief Concert May 4

Two of the many outstanding traits of St. Alban's parishioners, talent and compassion, were on display at the Frizzell Parish Hall on May 4 at the church's 2nd Annual Benefit Concert. The more than four-hour event raised over \$2800+ for the Episcopal Relief and Development fund for victims of last year's hurricanes Florence and Maria, the California wildfires and flooding in the Midwest. The audience, mostly parishioners, enjoyed a wide range of musical styles, from opera to classical piano to country rock and folk, from 17 different solo performers and groups, many of whom came from the St. Alban's community. Space here is too limited to recognize all the outstanding performances, but it would be remiss not to mention the musical contributions of talented young people, **Han Binkholder, Olivia DePasquale, Abigail LaFleur** and **Jinsun Cho's** students Bridgette and Megan Quan and Stacy Sun. Special thanks go out to the many volunteers who helped with all the non-musical tasks needed to make the concert a success. Thanks also to the many parishioners who helped recruit outside talent. (see more photos page 7)
-Harry Baisden



Harry Baisden





A Trip to the National Cathedral May 5

We had another lovely visit to The National Cathedral. We didn't do an official tour but enjoyed the service and lunch in the Baptistry.

We got to see the Lego model of the cathedral (see photo above) which is a new fundraiser. Buy your bricks at \$2 apiece online and they will place them for you. If you buy them there, you can place them yourself!

Some of us braved the rain to look for the Darth Vader grotesque with our binoculars. We went up to the 7th floor and looked out the windows but it was so cloudy we couldn't see much.

All in all we enjoyed each other's company and got to see the awesome cathedral. Hopefully, we will have another visit next spring.
-Debbie Rosse

Photo far right: **Bob Ensinger, Harry Baisden, Debra and Charles Becker, Nancy Harrell, Peter Larson, Robby Larson-Ensinger, Barbara Cook, Heath Larson-Ensinger, Debbie Rosse and Ted Blanchard.**



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**Next Edition July/August
Articles/photos welcome!**

Submit by June 15 to bhallman1@cox.net

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CHOIR NOTES



June 2. London-born John Rutter (b. 1945) has written a large body of sacred music—anthems, carols, a *Requiem* and other choral works—as well as orchestral and other secular music. He has also made significant contributions as an arranger and editor. Rutter studied at Cambridge and stayed on to found The Cambridge Singers in 1981. He still conducts this ensemble, which records on its own label, Collegium. For his services to music, Rutter was awarded a Lambeth Doctorate of Music by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1996 and a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) in the Queen’s New Year Honours List in 2007. Some hoity-toity musical gurus and avant-garde composers have not considered Rutter to be a serious composer because his music is too tuneful; but how many people listen to the music of Pierre Boulez? We will be singing Rutter’s anthem, *Thy Perfect Love*, the text of which dates from the 15th century.

June 9. This Sunday’s anthem is *Holy Spirit, Truth Divine*, by the English composer Andrew Carter (b. 1939). It is set to a text by Samuel Longfellow (1819-1892), younger brother of the more famous Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Carter attended Leeds University, joined the York Minster Choir as a bass and founded the Chapter House Choir at York Minster (York Cathedral) in 1965). His compositions include organ and choral works. He was invited to compose a mass to celebrate the 300th anniversary of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London in 1997. As a choral director, he has traveled widely in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

June 16. American composer Everett Titcomb (1884-1968) was influenced by the Second New England School of musicians (George Chadwick, Horatio Parker, *et al.*), French music and most notably the plainchant and polyphonic traditions of 15th-16th century Italy. He was largely responsible for reintroducing the latter forms into the Episcopal Church. Titcomb served for 50 years as organist and choirmaster at the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Boston, whose choir is now merged with that of St. Paul’s Episcopal Cathedral. We will be singing his Pentecost motet, *I Will Not Leave You Comfortless*, the sixth of his *Eight Short Motets for the Greater Festivals of the Church*.

June 23. Our anthem for St. Alban’s Day is *O Thou, Whose All Redeeming Might*, an arrangement of a plainsong tune by David Blackwell (b. 1961). Blackwell previously headed music publishing at Oxford University Press and now freelances as a composer, arranger, writer and editor. He and his wife, Kathy, have written books for young string players and have conducted workshops on string teaching in Europe, Asia and Australia. The text of today’s anthem is an English translation, by the Anglican cleric R.M. Benson (1824-1915), of an 8th century hymn.



June Birthdays

Trish Huheey	1
Barbara Cook	4
Dick Craig	4
Annette Dagg	5
Debbie Schrag	5
Audrey Shankles	5
Liz Clements	6
April Lieberthal	6
Fran Walinsky	6
Olivia Gamber	7
Laura DePasquale	8
Richard Grauel	9
Marcella Campbell	10
Lindsay Gelman	10
Brynn Farley	12
Walt Barbee	13
Aaron Chilton	14
Sarah Traum	14
Zack Kilby	16
Kendall Huheey	17
Olivia DePasquale	18
Rex Pendley	18
Sam Kilby	20
Mona Duvall	21
Richard Froh	21
Darius Zorin	22
Daniele Albergottie	23
Liam Andrews	25
Jeanne Martinez	25
DeeDee Brinkema	26
Rossington Deck	27
Sally Hanlein	27
Ivy Kilby	28
Sara Zimmerman	28
James Chilton	29
Brett Smith	29
Leneice Wu	29
Ethan Campbell	30
Thomas Ryder	30

From the Deacon

Evictions and Housing Instability—Our health and well-being are directly related to numerous factors, including stable housing. Fairfax County continues to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness, but income levels aren’t keeping pace with the cost of living in several areas of the county. In the 1980’s, I worked at a shelter for families and single adults who were returning to the community after hospitalization for mental illness. It quickly became clear to me that many are only one or two paychecks away from having to make difficult decisions about paying for housing, for food or for medication. Over 30 years later, this is still true.

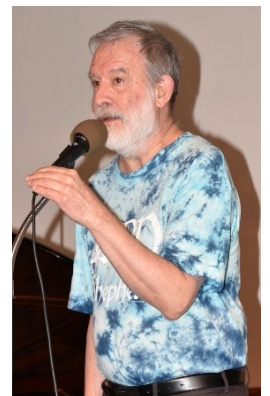
On June 13, the Fairfax County Alliance for Human Services’ annual meeting will feature a panel discussion, *“There’s a Knock at Our Door: The Growing Epidemic of Evictions and Housing Instability in Our Community* at 7:30 pm at Little River United Church of Christ, 8410 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Light refreshments will be served. The meeting is open to the public. Evidence suggests that there is an increase in evictions in our county, especially among people of color and our most vulnerable neighbors. Speakers will discuss how evictions affect the lives of county residents and Virginians, and lead a conversation about what we, as caring citizens, can do to stem this increase. Presenters include: Dipti Pidikiti-Smith, Deputy Director of Advocacy, Legal Services of Northern Virginia; David Levine, President and CEO, Good Shepherd Housing & Family Services, Inc. and senior staff from the RVA Eviction Lab at Virginia Commonwealth University, who have conducted important research on the effect of evictions in Virginia. I invite you to join me at the panel discussion and to consider exploring this issue and its impact on our community—Deacon Theresa

Youth Group “Foot Golfs”



*St Alban's Youth played “Foot Golf” at Pinecrest on May 19. As it turns out, it’s exactly what it sounds like. Fun was had all around! Shown here are **Heath Ensinger-Larson, Victor Zorin, Fr. Jeff, Macgregor Bickel, Fr. Paul, Darius Zorin, Landon Gates, Robby Ensinger-Larson, Ted Blanchard and Will Peck.***

More Scenes from our May 4 Benefit Concert



St. Alban's Episcopal Church
6800 Columbia Pike
Annandale, VA 22003



Vacation Bible School

Ann Gates and Melanie Jillson are once again conspiring to create an original, fun and Bible-based week of outreach to our neighbors! To register, pick up a form in the narthex or online. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Ann Gates, Melanie Jillson or Fr. Paul.

June Calendar Highlights

- June 2 **Youth Group End of Year Party**
- June 7 **Lunch Bunch Black Fin** 11:30 am
Contact Martha Kelley to reserve.
- June 9 **Blessing High School Graduates**
Sunday School Party
9:15-10:00 am
- June 13 **Homelessness Panel Discussion**
Little River United Church of Christ 7:30
- June 23 **St. Alban's Picnic**



2019 Vacation Bible School
July 29-August 2
Parish Weekend at Shrine Mont
September 27-29

St. Alban's Picnic June 23

Kick off summer with fun and food at our annual church picnic. See SAM for details.



Samaritan Ministry Toiletry Drive 'til June 16

Please donate new full-sized items like soap, toothpaste, deodorant, etc. \$25 gift cards from Safeway, Giant, Target or Walmart and Visa gift cards also most welcomed.

For more information, contact **Debbe Hughes.**