

From the Rector

Top Ten Reasons I'm Episcopalian

In my sermon for the Second Sunday in Lent, I posed the question, "How would you tell someone about your Church?" As I thought about it, my sermon became my "Top Ten Reasons I'm Episcopalian." After the service, several people suggested my sermon be printed for "widest distribution possible," and so my article for this month is my "Top Ten Reasons I'm Episcopalian" – sort of like the old David Letterman Top Ten.

10: ***We don't profess to have all the answers.*** Neither will we tell you what you have to believe. We are not threatened by questions... in fact, we welcome questions. We're all on a journey of discovery about our faith, and we walk together, and we pray together, and we worship together.

9: Kind of goes along with number 10. ***We might not have all the answers, but we do have Jesus.*** We have Jesus here at the altar, but we don't hoard Jesus, or keep him all to ourselves – we share him with others because we believe in a loving, liberating and life-giving God.

8: ***Everyone is welcome, without exception.*** You can be who you are - all are welcome, and all are invited and encouraged to participate in our faith life together here. We preach forgiveness and love, not exclusivity and damnation.

7: is like number 8 – ***We take seriously Jesus' command to love our neighbor.*** It seems on almost any given week here someone is either cooking something – to feed the hungry; or bringing in groceries – to give away to our neighbors who can't quite get by on their income. We give generously to organizations in our area, and around the world, whose mission it is to care for the needy.

6: ***We are the best of two worlds – Roman Catholic and Protestant.*** We are Catholic in some of our traditions, and certainly in our beautiful liturgy and in our understanding of, and appreciation for the sacraments – Eucharist and Baptism. And we are Protestant because we are a product of the 16th Century Reformation movement. You know the old joke, right? What do you get when you cross a Catholic and a Baptist? Two Episcopilians...

5: For most of us, our salvation - when we were saved – cannot be pinned down to a specific place and point in time. ***We are on a constant journey of conversion and transformation that leads to salvation.*** Our salvation is an on-going process that began in the past and continues into the present and will continue into the future

4: ***We strive to see Jesus in everyone – all persons.*** Jesus embraced the outcasts and unwanted, fed the poor, healed the sick. We say that we are the Body of Christ – we are Christ's feet and hands and eyes and heart in the world, and so we strive to imitate Christ – to do what Jesus would do.

3: ***We do not use the Bible as a science book or a history book.*** We believe that the Bible is inspired by God, written down by human hands (and everything that implies). It also means we wrestle with scripture, we argue with scripture, we get mad at scripture, but we also find solace, and comfort in scripture.

2: ***Our worship services are filled with beautiful hymns, chanted psalms, anthems and glorious organ music.*** We see our music in worship as an offering to God, not as a way to rev us up and make some noise. Our music supports our liturgy and our worship, but it isn't our worship.

1: ***We have Coffee Hour.*** Even if it's just a simple cup of coffee after worship, it's an opportunity to catch up with each other. It's an opportunity to make and create community. One researcher noted that, "Churches that do not have a coffee hour at all tend to be declining rather than growing, as do churches that describe their coffee hour as 'typical' or 'formal.'" In most rapidly growing congregations the coffee hour was almost chaotic, but in a good way." Coffee hour brings us together and, in some ways, is almost an extension of our worship.
<https://www.episcopalcafe.com/is-your-coffee-hour-chaotic/>

These are just a few of the reasons I'm an Episcopalian. You might have some in your top ten that I don't. I struggled with putting them in any specific order and eventually just gave up - I mean, I think my salvation is more important than coffee hour. What I do know is I love the Church. I love our worship and our music. I love how we serve God. I love how we acknowledge our sinfulness, but know that our God is a loving, forgiving, compassionate God. I would love to hear the reasons you are an Episcopalian, and I would love to hear how your Church has shaped, and continues to shape, your faith as a disciple of Jesus.

-Fr. Jeff

Ministry of Company

During the last few weeks, I have been exploring an opportunity for ministry. At the invitation of **Fr Jeff**, I have been spending time a couple times a week with day-laborers in our neighborhood. Most probably you have seen them, standing in a parking lot, waiting to be picked up for a day's work. Our friends are usually at the parking lot sometime between 5:00 to 7:00 am and get picked up during the day. The earlier they arrive, the more chances they have of finding work for the day. A cup of coffee and a doughnut from the local store usually makes for breakfast and conversation while they wait. Conversation, laughter and friendship flourish, even in the cold mornings we have been having lately.

What do you do there then? -you might rightfully ask. Well, not much, and a lot, I would say. At this time, I am not helping in any material way. I have just been present, available, and have tried to be a friend. It has been a ministry of presence and accompaniment. I go and spend time with them. We talk, we get to know each other and we spend some time together. From time to time the conversation is serious, about family, work, justice, and yes, God too.

For the time being, I do not take anything material to share (we are in a process of exploration to see what is more helpful and appropriate, as we stand in front of a local store). But it does not matter so much that I am not "giving them" anything material, as **Deacon Theresa** reminded us in her last sermon. The most important thing we as Christians, we as the Church can offer, is not a cup of coffee or a sandwich. It is the love and hope of Jesus Christ. We are called by the Lord to stand up and help wherever we can, but we do this not as another non-for-profit organization. We serve as the body of Christ, as a community called by God to share the good news that God's love demands justice, equality and good life for all his children. Our presence and company--while not enough--is equally important. It says that the Church cares and is present and is a symbol of the provident and ever-present love of God.

Lent is a time of not only reaching up to God, but of also reaching to God, equally present around us. We were meditating last Sunday on the Second Letter to the Corinthians; that we are called to be ministers of reconciliation. We who have met God cannot keep him to ourselves, but have to share that experience with others. How are we called then to be ministers of this reconciliation? Well, it starts by being present; fully present.

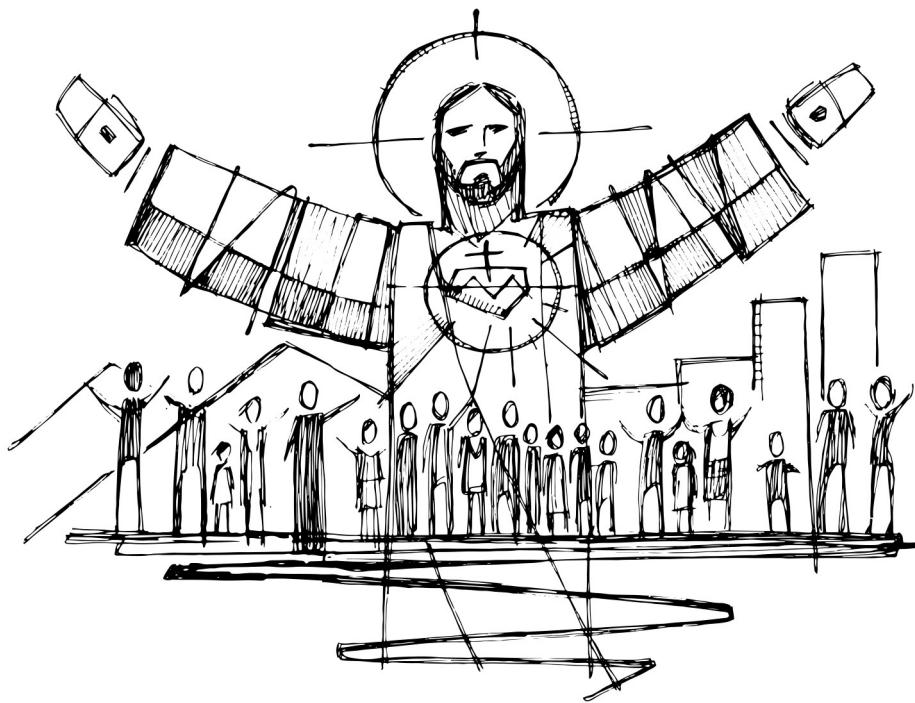
Take time to be present with your friends, your family, your coworkers. Listen to them, share with them, love them as they are, and when invited, share the merciful love you have known in Jesus Christ.

We meet God not only at the Altar and the Word, but also in creation and in the people around us. Every encounter is an opportunity to meet God who comes to us in his sacred image present in nature and the human family. Lent, with its traditional disciplines (fasting, self-denial, etc.), is a reminder of this corporeal and horizontal aspect of the spiritual life. Every ministry begins by being present. We are all called to be fully present with others, to be a companion, a friend that walks by with others (whether they are friends or family). May we feel encouraged to be fully present, as ministers of companionship and reconciliation with each other, in this time of Lent and in the days to come. Amen.

-Br. Luis



Br. Luis Hernandez Rivas



RenewalWorks: Our Spiritual Journey

As we've been reporting in past issues of *The Word*, the RenewalWorks Committee spent much of the fall and winter engaged in rigorous discussions and review of the "Spiritual Life Inventory" (SLI) of our parish.

As a result of its work, in early 2022 the Committee presented to the Vestry a series of twelve recommendations designed to enhance St. Alban's support for the spiritual growth of our parish. The Vestry has accepted the report and is forming a task force specifically to coordinate the adoption of these recommendations (where appropriate during the pandemic). You can download the complete report at <https://wearestalbans.org/renewalworks/>.

Where We Are as a Congregation

It's important to remember that the SLI is **not** an "evaluation" but a snapshot of a particular moment in time. Here's some of what our snapshot from last fall showed us.

The RenewalWorks process breaks the congregation down into four specific categories of spiritual development based on the anonymous responses to the SLI. Even though there are four stages identified, there is no "end point" to a relationship with God, as it is always dynamic.

Movement along the continuum is not generally something that just "happens" with time. Instead, people tend to stay within a certain stage until certain catalysts spur them into deeper stages. While the church can offer support and resources, and encourage discipleship, these are individual journeys first and foremost.

Exploring – The people in this group are taking the first small steps in an intentional spiritual journey. (24% of St. Alban's SLI respondents are in this stage, compared to the Episcopal norm of 18%).

Growing – The people in this group are more committed to their Christian faith, but still have lots of questions. (60% of St. Alban's SLI respondents are in this stage, compared to the Episcopal norm of 53%).

Deepening – The people in this group have a faith by which they rely on God's presence and power in their daily lives. (16% of St. Alban's SLI respondents are in this stage, compared to the Episcopal norm of 24%).

Centered – For the people in this group, the Christian faith is the most important relationship in their lives. (Less than 1% of St. Alban's SLI respondents are in this stage, compared to the Episcopal norm of 5%).

In general, the results for St. Alban's line up with what the RenewalWorks staff typically find in suburban churches with aging, long-tenured congregations. RenewalWorks refers to this model as an "80/20" church: about 80% of the population is in one of the earlier stages, even though they have been attending the church for a very long time.

A Few of Our Recommendations

For the complete data analysis and all of our recommendations, please take the time to download and read the complete report at <https://wearestalbans.org/renewalworks>. Here is a summary of a few of the recommendations:

- ◆ Re-emphasize voluntary adult formation and education programs;
- ◆ Launch a small group discipleship program to help interested participants increase their own spiritual depth (the first has been formed and will begin meeting after Easter);
- ◆ Offer a new monthly program of educational dinner programs (expanding on the success of the Lenten program);
- ◆ Arrange for sharing from laypeople during Sunday services about their experiences in St. Alban's ministries and programs;
- ◆ Encourage all committees and ministries to open all meetings and events with both prayer and Biblical reflection;
- ◆ Make a concerted effort to provide accessible education on Christian beliefs in services, the website, the newsletter, emails and special events;
- ◆ Invite all leaders of church ministries, communities and programs to meet annually with each other and the Vestry for discussion of their roles in the congregation's spiritual life;

And more – see the complete report at <https://wearestalbans.org/renewalworks/>.

If you have any comments or questions about the RenewalWorks process or its recommendations, please see any of the RenewalWorks Committee members, and we hope you will join with us in praying for our parish's continued vitality and growth.

-Kevin Holland

The RenewalWorks Workshop Team

Donna Archer
Harry Baisden
Monique Clark
Linda Cummings
Fay Froh
Kevin Holland
Debbe Hughes
Remy Jurenas
Peter Larson
Kay Lusk
Chris Martin
Pam Matthes
Fr Paul Moberly
Elissa Rosasco
Fr Jeff Shankles
Moira Skinner
Fran Walinsky

Warden's Pen

As we anticipate the Resurrection of our Lord on the Feast of Easter in a few short weeks, there's a sense of renewal and fresh opportunity for ministry emerging at St. Alban's. As mentioned at the recent Annual Meeting, opportunities include certification of the new kitchen, increased rental of the kitchen and parish hall, re-use options for the education wing once the Village School's lease expires in May, implementation of the RenewalWorks recommendations and many others. Through these and other opportunities, I believe we are being called to a deeper commitment to spiritual growth and to loving God and our neighbor in new and meaningful ways.

Your new Vestry will soon meet, elect new officers and continue the ongoing discernment of where God is calling us in this place and time. Vestry service is important and life-giving work, and I'm grateful for those who are called to serve in this way. On behalf of the entire congregation, I extend my sincere thanks to outgoing Vestry members **Donna Archer, Evangeline Clark-Wiles, Jane Lesko, Sue Mairena and Moira Skinner**. And I offer special appreciation to Moira for her dedicated and exceptional service as Senior Warden these past two-plus years, through onset of the pandemic, the start and completion of the kitchen renovation and so much more. We are forever grateful for your leadership during these challenging times.

We also extend a heartfelt welcome to the newly elected Vestry members: For full three-year terms, we welcome **Christine O'Connell, Debbe Hughes, Kristi Potts** and **Glen White**; and to a one-year partial term, **Monique Clark**. I look forward to working with you as we move forward in faith.

Finally, we also welcome spring, which seems particularly poignant this year given that - at least for now - we are at a phase of the pandemic that allows us to gather more frequently to reconnect and re-commit. We will remain cautious, of course, to safeguard each other's health. And I pray that through renewed connection we will gain a fresh sense of mission to continue our journey of loving, learning, growing and serving. Thanks be to God!

-Chris Martin

Welcome to Our New Vestry Members:



Monique Clark



Debbe Hughes



Christine O'Connell



Kristi Potts



Glen White

And a Big Thank You to Our Outgoing Vestry Members: **Donna Archer, Evangeline Clark-Wiles, Jane Lesko, Sue Mairena and Moira Skinner**

Face Masks Optional Starting April 24.

Excerpt from Vestry email of March 23:

....While we all long for the possibility of a "return to normal," we also recognize our responsibility to everyone in our community, including those most vulnerable to COVID-19 – **which, we must stress, has not gone away**.

Still, conditions have changed, and public health recommendations have also changed. Effective **Sunday, April 24** (the Second Sunday of Easter, or the week after Easter Sunday), **face masks will be optional** and no longer required to participate in worship and other activities at St. Alban's. Until that date, masks will continue to be required at Sunday services.

Please remember that "mask-optional" means that masks *are* an option, and we ask that you please respect the decisions of your fellow parishioners.

Annual Parish Clean-Up Day Saturday April 2 8:00 am to Noon

Please join the Building and Grounds Committee for an hour or two to help spruce up the yard and building.
Bring your gloves and clippers. Light breakfast foods and juice/coffee/water will be provided.

From the Music Minister and Organist

“Cute no longer, thanks be to God” – Towards a Vision for Children’s Music at St. Alban’s

As I mentioned in my submission to the Annual Report, **Fr. Jeff, Fr. Paul** and I, with the help of the Vestry and other lay leaders, are working to discern a path forward for children’s music here at St. Alban’s. Our hope is to launch a rigorous, graded chorister program in the fall of 2022, following the curriculum of the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM). There are many questions still to be answered about how such a program could work in our parish, but I wanted to take this opportunity to share a little bit about RSCM and my experiences working with children in RSCM programs.

RSCM America has developed a graded curriculum called Voice for Life. While some children’s music programs focus on learning music by rote or call and response, the RSCM curriculum builds music theory and sight-singing skills, placing a further emphasis on the development of a healthy vocal technique. Choristers sing “real” church music – the same “good stuff” the grown-ups do. To recognize Choristers for the importance of their work, they are given a small stipend for faithful participation in rehearsal and worship. As they progress through the curriculum, completing graded workbooks and completing certain skills-based assessments, they are awarded different colored ribbons (which are worn in worship) and given a small raise. RSCM offers a number of regional summer courses where young singers can make like-minded friends and sing under famous choral conductors. All children around age eight and up with grade-level reading skills and unchanged voices are welcome to participate – there are no “auditions.” By the time they graduate from high school, they are experienced and versatile choral singers, ready to join the college choirs of their choice; by the time they are living independently as grown men and women, they can find an instant community in the choir of their local Episcopal church; and by the time that karate, soccer, and ballet are no longer, shall we say, “age appropriate,” they’ll still be in church, singing every Sunday.

My first exposure to RSCM was during my year as Organ Scholar at Trinity Church in the City of Boston (on Copley Square) from 2014 to 2015. While there, I worked under Richard Webster and Colin Lynch, two prominent church musicians and experts on building and growing children’s choirs. They remain good friends and faithful mentors of mine. At Trinity, a cohort of just over twenty boy and girl singers rehearsed twice a week, sang Evensong every Wednesday, and served as the soprano section for the choir at the 9:00 am service of Holy Eucharist, singing two anthems and an Anglican chant Psalm each week. Numbered among the altos, tenors and basses were several parents of Choristers, as well as other adult singers, making this a truly intergenerational group. As boys underwent “the change” and their voices deepened, or some of the girls matured into true altos, they simply switched sections within the same choir. Periodically, the Trinity choirs would go on pilgrimages to England, singing daily Evensong for a week at a time “in residence” at cathedrals and major parish churches.

A few years ago, Richard wrote an RSCM “manifesto” of sorts for the Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians (of which I am a member), titled “Cute no longer, thanks be to God.” It’s long, so I’ll just quote pieces of it here, but I am happy to share it in its entirety with anyone who may be interested – it’s a fun read. Richard writes:

“Now one of Trinity’s most vibrant and racially diverse groups, there are twenty-six Choristers and eleven high schoolers, themselves former Choristers and now role models from central casting. How and why does such a program work? Our mission, expectations, rules, myths, and rewards are clear, and our tool – music – is powerful. The mission: drawing worshippers closer to God. The expectations: commitment, punctuality, professionalism. The rules: never panic, no whining, and no drama, except in the music. The myths: tired, sick, stuck in traffic, and too much homework. The rewards: music for a lifetime – long after the soccer uniform is retired, the true fun of worthy toil, enduring friendships in community, and a ministry that makes a difference in countless lives.”

Inspired by these experiences, in my most recent position at Christ Church in Columbia, I started my own RSCM program in January of 2019. By the time COVID hit, we had twenty young boy and girl singers – roughly half of them stayed on during the 2020-2021 program year for rehearsals over Zoom. Our program attracted a number of families from outside the parish, especially those who were eager for their children to study music but may not have been able to commit to the purchase of a musical instrument or regular private lessons. We were also successful recruiting from a local home-school cooperative – these parents were especially eager for musical enrichment. We also offered no-cost pre-rehearsal snacks and monthly post-rehearsal dinners as a form of community outreach. To accommodate the busy schedule of the over-programmed capital area preteen (you may remember that I was once one myself), we offered a choice of two weeknight rehearsals. Choristers could come on Tuesdays or Thursdays - though many asked their parents to bring them to both!

(Continued page 5)

From the Music Minister and Organist—Continued

There are a number of churches in the DC area with RSCM programs of different sizes, with different rehearsal schedules and expectations – though none are terribly close by. I am listening and gathering information about how best such a program could be implemented here at St. Alban’s – there are many questions to answer about, for example, scheduling and space usage. Building a successful program will take a firm commitment from the parish and from the Choristers, their parents, and a robust volunteer apparatus. Richard writes:

“An effective children’s choir is not about cookies and punch. This is serious business. Everyone – clergy, staff, Christian Ed leaders, choir parents, and parishioners – must uphold the program as a vital, worthwhile endeavor. Choristers should understand that they have an honored place in the community and that what they bring to worship matters. Parents with video cameras, like flies at a picnic, are not helpful. Cute is never the goal. Children know when they are being taken seriously. They have infallible lie detectors and know when they are being patronized. Our charge is to open their minds, fire their imaginations, instill self-discipline, and offer consistency... **Through the challenge that a fine choir program offers spiritually, musically, and intellectually, we help them discover God’s purpose in their lives. We are training them to run the Great Race.**”

It is tough work. But I have done it before, and I know that it can be done here. With our location just within the Beltway, ample parking and extensive campus, we are well-positioned to attract young singers and their families to such a program. I invite your comments, your questions, your concerns – and your prayerful support. We need your help - we will change lives!

-In Christ, Adam Detzner, Minister of Music and Organist



Adam's Trip—Alkmaar, Netherlands

From March 17 to 21 I was in the Netherlands for a sort of “orientation” weekend for my competition in June. I practiced on the three competition instruments – including the enormous van Hagerbeer / Schnitger organ, and the smaller van Covelens organ from 1511 – the third oldest organ in the world!

Thanks to **Fr. Jeff** and the Vestry for their support (and the Sunday off)! - Adam



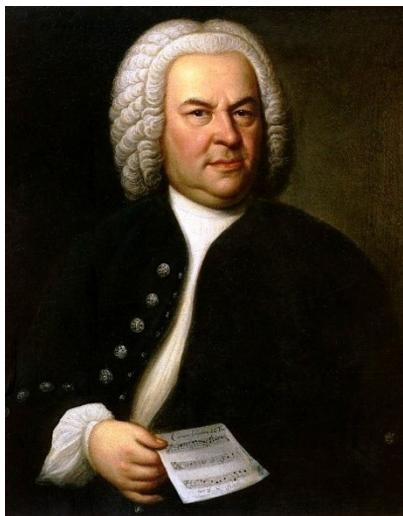
Muldoon Concert 2021-2022 Series

Sundays at 4:00 pm Free and Open to the Public

Spend a nice Sunday afternoon with music! Bring friends and neighbors!
Concerts followed by informal receptions, Covid permitting.

Dr. Caroline Robinson, Concert Organist April 3, 2022

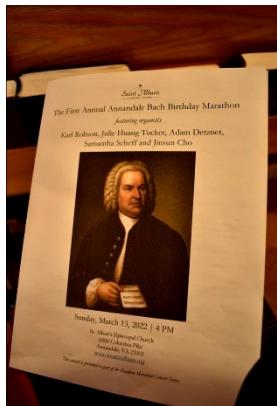
Dr. Robinson is the Associate Organist-Chormaster at the Cathedral of St. Philip Episcopal in Atlanta. She holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music and the Eastman School of Music. She also studied in France as a Fulbright fellow. She has performed in venues such as St. Thomas Church in New York and The Memorial Church at Harvard. She also won second prize in the National Young Artist Competition in Organ Performance in 2018. A reception follows.



Muldoon Concert Series March 13: A Bach Birthday Marathon

The first annual Annandale Bach Birthday Marathon took place on March 13 at our Muldoon Concert Series to a full house of music lovers. The Marathon featured five talented Episcopal Church musicians who each performed a twenty minute set of organ music by J. S. Bach on the St. Alban's mechanical action organ Leek Op. 1: **Jinsun Cho** (Epiphany, DC and former St. Alban's organist), **Adam Detzner** (St. Alban's, Annandale), Karl Robson (St. John's Norwood, Chevy Chase), Julie Tucker (The Falls Church Episcopal, Falls Church), Samantha Scheff (Grace, Alexandria).

To enhance audience enjoyment, **Adam, Carlos** and **Fr. Paul** figured out how to set up a screen in the front of the sanctuary that projected both the performing organist as well as his or her hands and feet! It was so interesting to see the intricate movements that produced such beautiful music. Much thanks to Adam for pulling this all together, and to the concert series team (including **Fran Walinsky** and **Jo and Larry Hodgin**) who provided set up and hospitality at the reception following. The reception featured beer and wurst, so fitting for a Bach birthday. Happy Birthday J.S. Bach!



A packed house!
Clark tried to attend!

Five talented Episcopal Church musicians performed organ music by J. S. Bach on the St. Alban's mechanical action organ Leek Op. 1: **Jinsun Cho** (Epiphany, DC), **Adam Detzner** (St. Alban's, Annandale), **Karl Robson** (St. John's Norwood, Chevy Chase), **Julie Tucker** (The Falls Church Episcopal, Falls Church), **Samantha Scheff** (Grace, Alexandria).



Choir Notes



April 3 *Lord, for Thy Tender Mercy's Sake*, attributed to the English composer Richard Farrant (c1525/30-1580), was originally scheduled for March 20. As noted in last month's Choir Notes, Farrant's early life is a bit of a mystery. His name first appears in 1552, in a list of Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal. In 1564 he became organist and choirmaster at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Among his duties was the annual presentation of a play before the Queen, which led to the formation of a boys' theatrical company, the Children of Windsor. In 1576 he founded the Blackfriars Theater, which produced well-regarded children's plays and provided him a comfortable income. Some scholars credit this anthem to John Hilton (c1560-1608) or Thomas Tallis (c1505-1585). Recordkeeping in 16th century England was not yet a fine art.

April 10 On Palm Sunday we will be singing *Hosanna to the Son of David*, by the great German Renaissance composer Michael Praetorius (1571-1621). The original German text is Martin Luther's translation of Matthew 21:9. Most of Praetorius's musical output is sacred music in the Lutheran tradition. His one surviving secular composition, *Terpsichore*--a set of 300+ instrumental dances, many of them attractive arrangements of tunes borrowed from other countries--is rhythmically captivating. This Sunday's anthem has been arranged by Robert Field, about whom I could find no information. The A.S.C.A.P. after his name on our music score and the 1964 publication date suggest he is/was an American active in the mid-20th century.

April 14 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was born in Salzburg to a musical family that recognized his musical genius at an early age. His father, Leopold, directed his musical training and exposed him to the musical culture of Vienna and many other Western European cities. In June 1791, six months before his death, Wolfgang took time out from work on his opera, *The Magic Flute*, to compose the short, beautiful motet, *Ave verum corpus* ("Hail, the True Body [of Christ]"), our anthem for Maundy Thursday.

April 15 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 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, when he became the organist at her convent. On Good Friday we will be singing Victoria's composition, *O vos omnes* (O All Ye Who Pass By), the text of which is from Lamentations 1:12.

April 17 Our Easter anthem will be *They Have Taken Away My Lord*, by Sir John Stainer (1840-1901), the text of which is from John 11:13,15-16 and 1 Cor. 15:55,57. As reported in our Choir Notes for January 2022, Stainer was organist at St. Paul's Cathedral in London (1872-88) and thereafter a professor at Oxford. From 1882 to 1888 he was also Inspector of Music in Schools and Colleges and helped raise standards in musical education nationwide. Stainer's musical research was instrumental in reviving interest in Medieval and Renaissance music. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1888.

April 24 The choir will be taking its traditional post-Easter break.

-Clarence Zuvekas



Burying the Alleluia circa 2011. Do you recognize any of these cute little kids? The Leersnyder girls, the Cheek girls, the Wulff girls, Kendall Huheey, Sam Jillson, Trevor Hershner(?), Harrison Gerdens and more.



A Prayer to Consider the Lilies

Praise You for this day, and Your purpose for it. This is the day You have made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. You are sovereign, God. We are not. You know what tomorrow will bring. We do not. You go before us and behind us. You are our Creator, Sustainer, and Provider. You are Healer and You are Peace.

Father, we are living through historically tumultuous times. May we put our confidence, our trust, in You. For You do not change, shift, or leave us. You are steady, firm, and calm. Compassionate and just. You know the best path for us. In the fallen world full of sin we live in, we will have trouble. There will be hard times. There is a very real evil in this world. But Jesus overcame the world.

Christ, You defeated death. When we gaze upon the lilies, the tulips, and the first green hints of growth this

Spring, let us remember Your providence, Oh, God. As we prepare to celebrate Easter, may the sacrifice Christ made for us on the cross give us the courage we need to carry our own daily burdens. Your yoke is light, but easy was never guaranteed. Crosses are uncomfortable. As the bulbs of annual flowers sit steady and sturdy under the ground until You say it's time to bloom, so will we sit sturdy, steady, and patient in our faith as we lean into You until You say it's time to bloom again. And amidst the dark worry that threatens to blanket the brightness, we will shine in the midst of it, knowing Spring is coming.

In Jesus' powerful name we pray, Amen.

-Meg Bucher, Author

Virginia (Ginny) Peters: A Life Well Lived

Longtime parishioner **Ginny Peters** died on March 27. Before aging made her too frail, Ginny was a very active member of St. Alban's. Ginny was a beautiful writer. She authored two books, several professional papers, worked on the church newsletter and wrote Parish Profiles articles for The Word which highlighted the interesting lives of our members for many years. Ginny started the Intercessory Prayer Group at St. Alban's.

Ginny participated in the first St. Alban's mission trip to Our Little Roses (OLR) in Honduras when she was likely in her early 80's, around 2001. She and a group of women on the trip were the first at St. Alban's to sponsor a girl from OLR, making annual contributions from the time Martita was 5 years old until she was grown. Martita is now a successful teacher.

Ginny herself was a teacher at the elementary, high school and college levels locally. She loved the arts, history, literature and archeology, serving on the Fairfax County History Commission as its archeological authority and participating in numerous archeological excavations over the course of many years.

Ginny was 103 years old.

A memorial service will be held for Ginny on April 11 at 11:00 am at St. Alban's.

Please keep Ginny's family in prayer.

*Receive, O Lord, your servant **Ginny**
into the arms of your mercy,
into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company
of the saints in light.
May her soul, and the souls
of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*



*Ginny Peters sitting next to Moira Skinner on Christmas Eve, 2018.
Ginny was known for her jaunty berets!*

Samaritan Ministry Next Step Breakfast was a Success!



Over fifteen St. Alban's parishioners participated in our in-person "Watch Party" at the parish hall, and numerous others watched from home as they joined nine other parishes, which hosted five in-person watch parties in the tri-state region. Samaritan Ministry estimates that between 500-600 people watched this year's Breakfast on March 19. During the breakfast, we heard moving testimonials from former Samaritan Ministry participants and volunteers about how Samaritan Ministry made a difference in their lives.

Charles Hopkins spoke about how some bad decisions resulted in him serving more than forty years in prison and how his Samaritan Ministry caseworker helped him to develop social skills that would help him transfer to the workforce, worked with him to highlight his strengths, and prepared him for job interviews. Charles Hopkins is now working on a podcast that identifies and addresses the re-entry challenges faced by those who were formerly incarcerated.

In addition to Charles Hopkins, long-time volunteer Karen Neal spoke about her work with Samaritan Ministry. She provided a moving account of her work with Samaritan Ministry and how this work impacted her. Karen Neal spoke about how Samaritan Ministry caseworkers guide participants through the next steps. She recalled seeing a participant jump up and down after learning she had received a job offer.

St. Alban's was one of the founding partners of Samaritan Ministry. This year, the Next Step Breakfast raised over \$190,000 in gifts and pledges. For those who are interested in giving their time or financial support to Samaritan Ministry, please see their website: <https://samaritanministry.org/2020/05/15/partnership>.

-Kristina Potts



Help brighten others' lives and reduce isolation as a volunteer.

Would you like to be a grocery shopper, a medical appointment driver, or social visitor (in-person or virtually)? Are you organized and efficient with household tasks? Volunteer Solutions volunteers provide meaningful support to improve the lives of older adults, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers in Fairfax County. If you prefer group settings, senior centers have various needs for activity leaders, instructors, entertainers and assistants. Skilled volunteers are needed in these areas and more: fitness, dance, arts & crafts, language instruction, English as a Second Language (ESL), American Sign Language (ASL) and music.

Go to bit.ly/FXVS VOL or email VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov, or call 703-324-5406 to learn more. For bilingual needs go to bit.ly/bilingualVS.

-Tanya Erway, Volunteer Solutions Recruitment Coordinator Division of Adult and Aging Services, Fairfax County.

The Rev. Bruce Gray, former rector of St. Alban's, died March 17. Fr. Gray was rector of St. Alban's from 1987-1994. A funeral at St. John's Episcopal Church, Richmond is being planned.

Please keep Fr. Gray's family in your prayers.

*Receive, O Lord, your servant Bruce into the arms of your mercy,
into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company of the saints in light.
May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*

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**Next Edition: May 2022
Articles/photos welcome!**

**Submit by April 15 to
bhallman1@cox.net**

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Poe Braddock Schools Food Distribution Program March 23

With our newly received grant for this mission area, we are able to now provide not only fruits and vegetables, eggs and cheese, but also dry beans, rice and masa corn flour. So, we now are providing two full bags of nutritious foods twice a month to 35 families in need whose children attend Poe and Braddock schools.

We had a big crew on March 23. Shown here are **Patricia Smith, Debbie Rosse, Melinda Patterson, Sally and Ray Hanlein, Jo and Larry Hodgin, Nell Dillard and Fran Walinsky**. Not shown: **Carlos Guzman** (a huge help!)



Poe Feeding Program March 17 and 29 Feeding Hungry Kids After School



Many people make our feeding mission at Poe Middle School a success including the food purchasers, the cooks, the food transporters and the servers.

Shown to left is the March 17 serving team: **Sheila Massey, Remy Jurenas, Fran Walinsky, Jo Hodgin and Carolyn Foley**; not shown **Larry Hodgin**.

Shown to the right and below are the members of the March 29 team: **Carolyn Foley, Remy Jurenas, Nancy Calvert and Debbe Hughes**. **Fred Chatelain** helped with food transport.



Fairmont Gardens Food Distribution to Needy Families on March 17

Nell Dillard and Debbie Rosse helped distribute food to needy families at Fairmont Gardens on March 17.

Picture right: **Nell and Debbie**



All these parishioners (and many others) are helping to feed the needy, in keeping with Fr. Jeff's article, "Reasons," 7. We take seriously Jesus' command to love our neighbor. (page 1).



Best Display: Sherrie Kohler



Spiciest: Cole Lieberthal

Best Veggie and
Best Overall: Kevin Holland



Best Brownies: Barbara Cook



Best Cornbread: Melinda Patterson



Chili Cook Off March 19

Brownies and Cornbread too!

The votes are in!
Congratulations to the winners.

Best Veggie and Best Overall:
Kevin Holland

Spiciest: **Cole Lieberthal**

Most Creative: **Carleton Jillson**

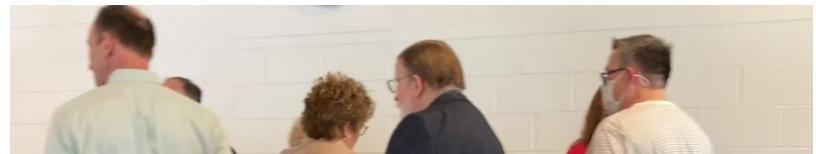
Best Display: **Sherrie Kohler**

Best Cornbread: **Melinda Patterson**

Best Brownies: **Barbara Cook**



Most Creative: **Carleton Jillson**



Poe Braddock Schools Food Distribution Program March 9



A large workforce turned out for our March 9 food packing event for 35 Poe and Braddock school families in need. We had 13 workers packing the food! Even though we increased our food give-away from one to two bags per family (70 bags!), we made quick work of the packing task with so many hands helping.

With the new grant we were just awarded from Fairfax County, we are now able to give additional foods in addition to the fresh produce, eggs and cheese we've been providing in the past year. The grant award should allow us to continue the program through late summer.



Photos: Top photo: loading cars with groceries. Middle photos: Wendy Cleland-Hamnett packing and Ron Vogel preparing bags. Bottom photo: Our crew on March 9: Front: Fr. Paul, Bennett Dillard, Nell Dillard, Larry Hodgin. Back: Wendy Cleland-Hamnett, Deacon Theresa, Jo Hodgin, Ron Vogel, Patricia Smith, Sally Hanlein, Linda Cummings and Ray Hanlein. Not shown, Barbara Hallman



**2022 Youth Mission Experience**

June 26 - July 1, 2022

From Bishop Susan Goff:

In the wilderness, Jesus fasted.
 In the wilderness, Jesus hungered
 for forty days.
 Like his ancestors before him
 who were in the wilderness
 for forty years
 hungry and thirsty
 ornery and contrary
 Jesus hungered.

Those ancestors were hangry, too.
 They said they'd rather go back to Egypt
 where at least they had something to eat.
 "Oh, the fish, the melons, the leeks,
 the onions, the cucumbers and the garlic"
 (as if those flavors could take away
 the bitter taste of slavery).
 And God did not give up on them.
 God gave them a new feast of manna and quails
 and water from the rock.

Unlike his contrarian ancestors,
 Jesus was alone in the wilderness.
 Hungry. Exhausted. And alone.
 (Was he hangry, too?)
 Of course he wanted to turn a stone into bread.
 Just one little stone into one small loaf.
 What would be the harm?
 Who would have to know?

Alone, with no one there to witness his hunger
 and no one there to relieve it
 he was tempted.
 And he said no. He said no.
 So he stayed hungry.
 And weak. Vulnerable. Exhausted –

Until he walked out of the wilderness
 and someone gave him a loaf of bread.
 Until he walked out of the wilderness
 and back into community with people.
 Were there friends waiting
 at the edge of the wilderness,
 bread and figs in their hands?
 Did strangers notice his condition
 and share their own lunch?
 Did he knock on the nearest door
 and ask for food?
 The story doesn't say. So I imagine.
 And in every imagining, the bread Jesus finally eats
 is given to him by a person,
 by an ornery, contrary, compassionate,
 broken, beautiful person.

The same Jesus who longed to gather ornery, broken, beautiful people
 as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings
 depended on those vulnerable chicks to care for him
 when he left the wilderness.
 when he travelled from town to town
 with no purse and no extra pair of sandals
 when he pre-planned his final meal with his friends
 when in death as in life he had no where to lay his head.
 He depended on community.

Who are the people who wait for you at the edge of the wilderness?
 Who are the people to whom you give bread and water
 when they are in the wilderness?
 Who are the people you long to gather into Jesus' arms,
 or into your own?
 Who are the people you wish would hold you tight?
 When you are hungry and hangry and vulnerable,
 who are your friends?
 Whose friend are you?

God give us the grace, the hope,
 the courage, the strength
 to depend on other people
 just as Jesus did.
 God feed us with the bread of community.

Raleigh Youth Mission, Raleigh, NC -
 Registration begins soon - More info:
[https://www.youthmissionco.org/
raleigh-youth-mission.html](https://www.youthmissionco.org/raleigh-youth-mission.html)

Talk to Fr. Paul for more information:
pmoberly@stalbansva.org

Youth Meetings*Upcoming Gatherings:**Apr 17 | May 15 | June 12*

We will talk about life, pray together,
 and play some stupid games.

Lunch provided by a special surprise chef...be
 there to find out whom!

All 6th through 12th graders are welcome.
 Talk to **Fr. Paul** for more information.

Help Ukrainian Refugees

Episcopal Relief and Development, in partnership with Action by Churches Together Alliance, is providing cash, blankets, hygiene supplies and other desperately needed assistance to families fleeing the war in Ukraine. Donations can be made to support these efforts on the [Episcopal Relief and Development website](#).

Events in Lent

Sunday Mornings in Lent |
9:20 - 10:00 am April 3

Episcopal 101 | Room 11 and on Zoom

Monday Evenings in Lent |
7:00 - 8:00 pm April 4, 11
Bible Study on the Apocrypha |
 presented by **Br. Luis | on Zoom**

Wednesdays in Lent 7:00 - 8:00 pm
April 6 The Bible in the Movies |
 presented by **Fr. Jeff | Parish Hall**

Wednesdays in Lent 6:00-6:45 pm
Rite of Reconciliation (Confession)

| Clergy | Downstairs chapel 6:00-6:45 pm

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



Holy Week

Palm Sunday | April 10

Liturgy of the Palms and Palm Procession | Both Services

Holy Wednesday| April 13

Office of Tenebrae | 7:00 pm

Maundy Thursday | April 14

Maundy Thursday Liturgy and Foot washing | 7:00 pm

Good Friday | April 15

Good Friday Liturgy, Veneration of the Cross, and
Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified | 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm

Holy Saturday | April 16

The Great Vigil of Easter with Baptism | 7:30 pm

Easter Sunday | April 17

Easter Liturgy | Both Services



Annual Parish Clean-Up Day Saturday April 2 8:00 am to Noon

Please join the Building and Grounds Committee for an hour or two to help spruce up the yard and building.
Bring your gloves and clippers. Light breakfast foods and juice/coffee/water will be provided.