

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

The word

July August 2025 Vol. 25 Issue 6

From the Rector

I wrote about my upcoming sabbatical in last month's newsletter, but I wanted to give you a few more details so that you know what to expect in the next couple of months. Friday, August 15, will mark the start of my sabbatical and I will be out of the area for most of the following three months.

Fr. Paul will be available for pastoral care and will be the clergy presence in my absence. As always, you can contact clergy for pastoral care issues via email to info@stalbansva.org or pmoberly@stalbansva.org. During office hours (9:00 am-1:00 pm, Monday through Friday) you can call **Lauren**, our new administrative assistant, in the parish office at 703-256-2966. After hours you can call our emergency pastoral care number, 571-383-6096.

Know that you are in the capable hands of your Vestry and Wardens. As Senior Warden, **Margaret Pendley** will be responsible for the "secular" side of parish business, and **Pam Matthes**, your Junior Warden, will continue her fantastic work of ensuring our physical plant doesn't collapse or fall apart.

As is typical with a sabbatical, I will not be in contact with St. Alban's during my time away. In the unlikely event that something extraordinary happens, Fr. Paul and Margaret will be able to get in contact with me (and while I can't define what an "extraordinary" event might be, we'll know it's extraordinary when it happens.) 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. I am deeply grateful for this time of sabbatical. Thank you.

-Fr. Jeff



Fr. Jeff with his loyal sidekick Clark.

From the Junior Warden

Relocation of Our Beloved Cross in the Nave:

On June 15, we noticed that there was a board above the altar that was pulling away from the ceiling. This particular board held one of the bolts that held our cross on its chains. On June 18, we had construction experts confirm our suspicions — that indeed the bolt was mounted on the corner of that particular board which was causing torque. For safety reasons, we had to relocate our beloved Cross in the Nave by mounting it securely on the back wall behind the altar.

As of June 23, our cross is now safely relocated on the wall behind the altar. We are doubly blessed because once we all saw the chains were extremely rusted and weakened, we are fortunate that our cross did not break free from their chains before now. We were also able to refurbish the cross with a new coat of paint and to make repairs to Christ's figure. For this, we are all very grateful to have been able to correct this impending problem before it became an unfortunate surprise.

-Pam Matthes, Jr. Warden



From the Associate Rector

O God of peace, who hast taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of thy Spirit lift us, we pray thee, to thy presence, where we may be still and know that thou art God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Prayer for Quiet Confidence, p. 832, 1979 BCP.)

As I take my leave for a few weeks, both for rest as well as refreshment, my heart is full of gratitude—for the people of Saint Alban's, for joy you bring to my life and for the privilege it is to serve as your Associate Rector. I'm still humbled to think that I get to be a priest every day; in August, it'll be my eighth anniversary at Saint Alban's, and in September, eight years since my ordination as a priest. It's been a wonderful journey so far!

Saint Alban's allows me, like **Fr. Jeff**, to take a sabbatical once every five to seven years. It's an opportunity I never honestly expected to have in my lifetime, and so I'm very grateful to have a little bit of extra time to rest and recharge, particularly with Fr. Jeff being on his own sabbatical from August through November this year. My calendar this year didn't allow me the full time to take three months at once – so, Fr. Jeff has allowed me to break it up, and take part of it this year, with another six weeks next year.

The very word “sabbatical” springs from the root of Sabbath—a time set apart for rest, reflection and renewal. In ancient times, fields were left fallow every seventh year, so that they might recover their strength and yield a bountiful harvest in the years to come. Similarly, clergy take sabbaticals not as vacations, but as intentional seasons of spiritual and vocational growth.

I am deeply grateful to our vestry and to each of you for your encouragement and support as I prepare to enter this sacred time away. My hope is to return to you replenished in mind, body, and spirit—ready to serve again as your joyful priest. I'll be spending some time at Nashotah House Theological Seminary in Nashotah, Wisconsin. It's long been a center of Anglo-Catholic spirituality and witness within the Episcopal Church. It's the oldest institution of higher learning in the state. The campus maintains a Benedictine spirituality and rhythm of prayer on campus – every day begins with Mass, and days end with Evensong. I'm looking forward to being part of the prayer life on campus as much as I am eagerly anticipating the coursework.

I'll be participating in a liturgy intensive called “Practical Liturgics for the Parish Priest.” I'm looking forward to brushing up on my skills and learning new things. I look forward to learning not just the “how” but the “why” of our ceremonial forms, and to discovering new ways to make our worship more beautiful, more meaningful and more accessible. Though the focus of this sabbatical is the art of worship, I am equally eager to reflect on the pastoral dimensions of ministry—how we as priests and as a parish can better care for one another, walk together through times of sorrow and joy and build up the body of Christ in love.

I ask for your prayers as I set out on this journey—not only for safe travel and fruitful learning, but that my heart might be open to the new things God wishes to teach me. My hope is that this sabbatical will bear fruit not only in my own life, but in the life of our whole church—that together, we may worship with deeper joy, serve with greater compassion and bear witness more fully to the wideness of God's love and mercy, in Annandale and beyond.

I'll report back fully during a forum hour in September. I'll return August 4. See you next month! -Fr. Paul



From the Music Minister and Organist

As many of you know, in the summers of 2022 and 2023 I was accepted to compete in an international organ competition in Alkmaar, in the Netherlands. In both cycles, I was the only American admitted; and both times, I made it to the semifinals. I applied again this year (via an audition tape, evaluated anonymously) and was, unfortunately, not accepted a third time. (I confess that I take some consolation in the fact that no other American was admitted). I was disappointed, since it was the last time I could participate before I “age out” of eligibility, and because I know the organs well from my many visits over the years. I think I could have made a good showing.

I was, however, admitted to a different competition, which takes place every three years in Innsbruck, Austria. It is called the Paul Hofhaimer Competition, named for one of the most famous and important organists of his age (1459-1537). Hofhaimer spent a good portion of his career in Innsbruck and later came to serve the Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I as court organist there. In fact, the second and final rounds take place in chapels attached to the imperial palace (the first round takes place in a beautiful rococo abbey church).

The competition has been held continuously since 1969 and has always been all but exclusively focused on “early music” (i.e., music of the Baroque and earlier eras). Except for one (very strange) twentieth-century Modernist piece, J. S. Bach is actually the *latest* composer represented in the competition repertoire. The list of composers includes Frescobaldi, Froberger, Buxtehude, Byrd and, of course, Hofhaimer. The organs date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (with a brief detour to a modern organ from 2008 on the second day of the first round). The Ebert organ in the final round, from the mid-sixteenth century, is among the most important in the world.

As I have gotten to know the competition repertoire (seventeen pieces!), I realize that the competition organizers were thoughtful in their selections; the pieces are in conversation with one another in interesting ways. Innsbruck is the state capital of Tyrol, in the west of the country, sandwiched between Germany in the north and Italy in the south. Geographically and culturally, Tyrol sits where German- and Italian-speaking cultures intersect (along with a few other minority Romance languages). The repertoire list reflects these overlapping influences. A capriccio by Frescobaldi (Italian) is played in the same round as a fantasia by Froberger (German); the latter was the former’s student in Rome. Froberger may also have taught Kerll, whose toccata is featured in the second round, along with a toccata by (again) Frescobaldi. The repertoire was clearly chosen to test competitors on our knowledge and understanding of this history.

An American has never won the Hofhaimer Competition, and only one has ever placed. We are at a structural disadvantage because, while our country has many beautiful organs, we simply don’t have ready access to the kinds of instruments found in Innsbruck. (Unsurprisingly, Italian organists tend to do well in this competition). At the same time, having made it to the semifinals twice in Alkmaar, I think I have grown to become a credible competitor, and I am confident I will acquit myself well, whatever the outcome. And, after all, we have an American pope now, so it would appear that anything is possible.

Over the summer, after the 10:30 am service I will periodically offer brief organ recitals in the loft to give these pieces a whirl. I’ll also speak briefly about some of the historical and cultural context that makes this music especially interesting. In the same way that art and music from other countries can seem strange and alien to us, the centuries between us and these composers make their music sound almost other-worldly. Keep me in your prayers as I embark on this long and strange journey.

-In Christ, Adam Detzner

Choristers Camp is on July 27 to August 1, from 9:00 am to noon each day.

**Please spread the word to possible interested families
who would like free choral lessons in a fun environment.**

Summer 2025 Organ Mini-Recitals by Organist Adam Detzner

Sundays at noon – each recital is about half an hour.

Schedule on back page.

Warden's Pen

"Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. -- The more things change, the more they stay the same."

One of our fellow parishioners is cleaning out her house, and she came across a LOT of issues of The Word. She gave me some to look over, and I was amazed at how the articles from 'bygone days' echo what we're living with right now. Take a look:

"The church is facing some unexpected expenses.... Recently we had an inspection by the fire marshal, and he subsequently sent us a letter informing us that most of our doors do not meet fire code... This unplanned expense has been quite a blow to our finances...." The Warden's Pen, June 2010, **Martha Kelley**.

"YOU SCREAM, I SCREAM, WE ALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM!" August 27, 2006.

"St. Alban's Muldoon Memorial Concert will continue its tradition of offering an outstanding schedule of free Sunday evening concerts during the 2007-2008 season." August 2007, **Barbara Cook**.

"Post-Hurricane Katrina Youth Group Mission Trip: "Yesterday was spent working hard at the home of an elderly brother and sister, Ray and Jane, whose home was flooded. While some of us removed wet, moldy debris (yes, after almost two years it was still wet -- thank you, **Gail**, for the masks and the rubber gloves), the rest of us helped out with yard work. We were able to spend some time with the two residents, listening to their stories of Hurricane Katrina. The kids were once again terrific as they listened to the stories with genuine interest and compassion." August 2007, **The Rev. Jeff Shankles**.

"The Vestry also voted to purchase 100 padded folding chairs, six card tables, and six long tables for Frizzell Hall and the classrooms." (Amusing Note: The current Vestry just purchased replacement folding chairs...are we careful financial stewards or what???) The Warden's Pen. April 2008, **Steve Lusk**.

"The cold wind is blowing and St. Alban's hypothermia events for the 2009 winter are underway." February 2009, **Shawn Clune**.

"Our mission trip [to Honduras] arrived safely on August 3rd. The girls [at Our Little Roses] were very excited to see missionaries from St. Alban's." September 2009, **Bari St. Cyr**.

"The St. Alban's Intercessory Prayer Group was commissioned on September 27 (2009) to its work reaching the troubled bodies, minds, and souls of those with long-term problems. This small, little-known St. Alban's ministry was begun over 15 years ago by **Ginny Peters**, with the encouragement of **Gay Haran**, the then parish's lay pastoral assistant." October 2009, **Ann Zuvekas**.

"The kick-off in anticipation of the construction of our new lobby was held on March 30 with a gala Renovation Celebration...Although we had planned to start the Phase Two demolition and construction on April 1, there are a few minor issues still to be resolved with the permits...." April 2008, **The Rev. Grace M. O'Neill**.

So, unexpected expenses, construction delays and routine maintenance were offset by ice-cream socials, concerts, Youth Group and Honduras mission trips, hypothermia assistance and prayer. Yep, the more things change...

-Margaret Pendley, Senior Warden



Speaking of "the more things stay the same!" The dedicated handmades group has been meeting weekly for many decades to create their beautiful handmade wares to sell at the annual bazaar to benefit St. Alban's. Photo June 17.

Parish Picnic June 22

Big thanks to our wonderful Parish Life Committee for a delightful day of summer fun!





More Picnic!



Our Graduates (see June issue for others)

Emma Conkle, daughter of **Heath** and **Tammy**, graduated summa cum laude from the William & Mary and University of St Andrews Joint Degree Programme in two ceremonies on May 16 (W&M) and July 1 (StA). She earned a B.A. in English and a minor in Classical Studies.

In the fall, Emma will be attending Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism with a concentration in Health, Environment, and Science.

-Tammy Conkle



Tammy, Emma and Heath Conkle



Betty Kiconco

Betty Kiconco, daughter of **Agnes Mabangi**, graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University on May 9 with a Bachelor's degree in Health, Physical Education, and Exercise Science (HPEX). Betty is the granddaughter of **Elizabeth Maguzi**, the niece of **Brenda Nakato**, and cousin of **Chloe Achieng**

Betty will be continuing her academic journey by pursuing a Master's in Sports Leadership, a one-year program, with the goal of one day owning and operating her own sports academy.

-Agnes Mabangi

Do you have a graduate of high school, trade school or college? We'd love to hear. Please let us know and we will tell his or her story in the next edition of the Word. (September). Please submit information about your graduate and a photo to **Barbara Hallman** at Bhallman1@cox.net.

Congratulations: Nathan Harpine's and Amelia Bello's Ordinations to the Priesthood



Fr. Nathan at the ordination blessing niece Sammy at the St Alban's banner.



Fr. Jeff with Mr. (Mother) Amelia and Fr. Nathan

Fr. Nathan Harpine was ordained to the Priesthood on June 7 at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Baltimore. A big congratulations to Fr. Nathan and his parents **Cindy** and **Larry Harpine**. Fr. Nathan served as a seminarian and a deacon at St. Alban's.

Mother (Mr.) Amelia Bello was also ordained at this same service. Congratulations to Amelia. Amelia served as a seminarian at St. Alban's last year. Visit <https://bit.ly/edomlive> for a video of the service.



Our Choristers on June 8.

Books in Need of a Good Home

We are purging the library of extra books and have put them in the narthex. Please feel free to rummage through the selection and take any you would like.



Allison in Action

Allison Blanchard can be seen on almost any day up on the church hill tending to a wonderful garden of flowers she has lovingly created for all of Annandale to enjoy. Take note as you drive by and enjoy this labor of love!

Thank you Allison!



Clean Up Day May 31

Thanks to all the volunteers!
(not all shown).



Ted washing windows



Izanne and Helen weeding in the Grove



Susan, Ted and Nancy cleaning classrooms



Bill and Steve trimming the bushes



Kate, Fay, Emma and Melinda.



Christine, Sana, Allison and Jane working on the new hill garden established by Allison. Clark helping best he can. The hill garden is a beautiful sight for passersby on Little River Turnpike.



Meet Rick Weinberg

This month **Nancy Calvert** introduces us to parishioner **Rick Weinberg**

Where did you grow up; schools attended? I grew up in Northern Virginia and graduated from TC Williams High School. After obtaining an associate's degree in accounting from NOVA, I attended Benjamin Franklin University in Washington DC.

What brought you to the Annandale area? I first moved to Annandale after graduating from high school and met **Karen** in Psychology class at NOVA in 1974. We were married in 1976 at St. Michael Catholic church in Annandale. In 1978 we purchased our first home in Burke and in 1985 we purchased our current home in North Springfield.

Tell us about your family. **Karen** and I have two children, Richard, born in 1980 and Michael in 1985. Both were very involved in theatre and chorus throughout elementary, middle and high school. Michael was also involved in the Orchestra playing the Viola. They both have undergraduate degrees in vocal performance. My two sisters and my divorced mom spoiled me quite a bit growing up. My oldest sister met her husband at the church we attended as children, and they still attend. My other sister lives in Owings Mill, MD.

Richard converted from Catholic to Episcopalian while working at the National Cathedral. He attended divinity school at Emory University and was ordained an Episcopal priest in 2017. **Fr. Paul** served as a Deacon at Richard's Ordination. Richard currently serves as the Rector of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in DC. Richard and his partner of 10 years, Alban Zamora, adopted two young boys from Columbia almost three years ago -- Bayron (now age 16) and Christian (age 15). The boys have brought us much joy over the last two years.

Michael and his partner of 8 years Barrett Fleming live in Huntsville, Alabama with their dog Max. Michael obtained his master's degree in Choral conducting from Temple University and then a Doctorate in Choral conducting from Yale University. He teaches music at a private high school in Huntsville and teaches private students at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. He also sings with the Valley Consort, a select choral ensemble based in Huntsville.

Tell us about your career. After obtaining an associate's degree in accounting from NOVA, I then attended Benjamin Franklin University in Washington DC. I successfully completed the CPA exam in May of 1980, passing the entire exam in one sitting. In 1983, I became Controller and then as Executive Director for a national non-profit organization in Alexandria. I also began my own tax practice preparing tax returns primarily for individuals. In 2001, I began working for a full-service financial planning firm in DC as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

I have been working on transitioning towards retirement (Karen thought this would never happen). I will continue with the firm on a consulting basis beginning July 2025. I plan to spend more time with family and friends, but I will also do a little of the work that I enjoy, like preparing tax returns.

Tell us about your faith journey and what brought you to St. Alban's. Although I was raised Baptist, Karen and I raised our children Catholic. After our son, Richard, converted to Episcopalian, we began occasionally attending services with him at the National Cathedral in DC. Eventually, we began to look for an Episcopal church closer to home. A colleague of Richard's suggested St. Alban's as she used to attend St. Alban's when she lived in the area. We began attending St. Alban's in 2015 and have been attending ever since.

What makes Saint Alban's "home" for you? From the very first time we attended St. Alban's we were welcomed with open arms from everyone we met. We joined and I was confirmed into the Episcopal Church in 2016.

What mission areas have you been involved with at St. Alban's? The vestry, the Christmas Bazaar, the finance committee and assistant treasurer. In addition, Karen and I have been involved with Ministry Sunday for the last 8 years, the Adopt-a-Highway program and we serve as counters.



*The Weinbergs: Michael, Bayron, Karen, Rick, Christian, Alban and Richard.
(Richard's partner Barrett Fleming not present).*

Story continues next page

Meet Rick Weinberg continued from the previous page.



Rick and Karen Weinberg

Do you volunteer outside of the church? If so, what are your community volunteer efforts? I serve as treasurer for Music for Life, a community-based organization that provides free music lessons and mentoring to at-risk local low-income youth.

What are your hobbies, sports, travels, interests? I like to watch baseball, football and golf. I am looking forward in retirement to having more time to play golf and travel. We have traveled to many places both in Europe and the US. I would like to see Mt. Rushmore, Niagara Falls to name a couple of places we'd like to visit.

What would you say helps to feed your soul? I am grateful for my loving wife Karen, my two sons and recently adopted grandchildren. I'm especially grateful that Karen recovered from her stroke last December and has completed speech, occupational and physical therapy, is now driving and no longer needs a cane to get around!

What is a fun fact about you? Many may recall the movie *Remember the Titans* about a newly appointed African American football coach and his high school team in their first season as a racially integrated unit in 1970s Virginia. I was in the class that this movie was based on, and I knew the coaches and some of the students depicted in the movie.

-Nancy Calvert with Rick Weinberg

New Parish Office Hours

Mon - Fri: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Our Interim Administrative Assistant, **Elizabeth Cheek**, will be training our new administrative Assistant, Lauren Munroe, who comes on board on July 7. Lauren's husband, Kyle, is a seminarian and they are from Alabama.

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Next Edition: September 2025

Articles/photos welcome!

Submit by August 15 to

bhallman1@cox.net

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

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Coffee Hour

Participating in coffee hour has never been easier! Please sign up by clicking the link below to bring food, drinks or help clean up or set up at either the 8:00 am or 10:30 am service!

For 8:00 am, sign up here!

For 10:30 am, sign up here!

For more information, please contact Gail Coleman at

gv.coleman@verizon.net

Christmas Bazaar Planning Kick-off Meeting

Wednesday, July 23 7:00 pm in the parish hall.

If you would like to learn more about the Bazaar and how you can contribute, we encourage you to join us. If you are unable to attend and want more information, please reach out to **Julie Parker** and **Bethany Bower** at bazaar@stalbansva.org

Our Parish Weekend September 26-28

Please complete the online form to register! Registration deadline is **July 15**. Register by visiting <https://wearestalbans.org/shrinemont/>

Kiernan Skinner, father of **Moira Skinner**, died in May.

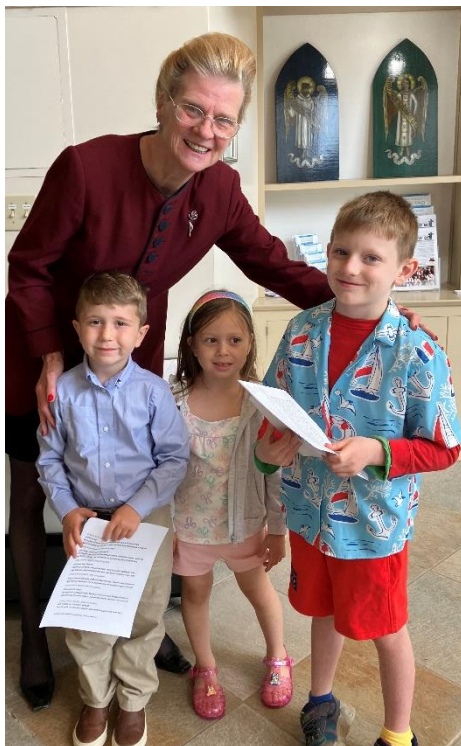
Sara Zimmerman, longtime parishioner, died on June 25 after an extended illness. Sara is the sister of parishioner **Kathryn Zimmerman**. Sara was 75 years old, just three days shy of her 76th birthday. A burial mass will be held at Saint Alban's in the coming weeks. Details will be forthcoming.

Please keep Moira and Kathryn in your prayers during this time.

Eternal rest grant unto Kiernan and Sara, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

Youth Sunday June 1

Sunday School students helped with the 10:30 am service on June 1, leading the readings and the Prayers of the People and assisting **Margaret Pendley** with ushering, bulletins and the offering collection. An end of year picnic at the playground followed! Thanks to Sunday School teachers **Sarah Traum** and **Cindy Harpine** and parent volunteers for their hard work teaching and managing end of year activities.



Margaret with little helpers Mikey, Ally and Wesley.



Charlotte doing a reading.



Fr. Jeff's children's sermon



Annie and Steven reading the lessons



Margaret with helpers Mikey, Ally, Wesley and Evie.





For **Bishop Budde's** speech at the March SM breakfast, click here: [a video](#)

How to Help—Volunteer; Contribute!

Volunteer: <https://samaritanministry.org/volunteer-opportunities/> or contact **Jo Hodgkin**, **Nancy Calvert**, or **Sy Jones** at: sjones@samaritanministry.org

- Associate Caseworker – 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. two days a week
- Front Office Coordinator (FOC) and substitute FOC 10:00 am to 2:00 pm once or twice weekly
- Garden Manager or gardener for NOVA office

Contribute: <https://samaritanministry.org/gala-2025/>

-Save the date for Samaritan Ministry's Gala 2025, Saturday, November 8, 2025, 3:00 to 6:00 pm

-Create Gift Basket for Samaritan Gala

-As always, place new, full-sized toiletries, paper towels and toilet paper in the closet in the narthex

-Jo Hodgkin (Partner Rep & Volunteer) johodgin10@gmail.com

-Nancy Calvert (Partner Rep) billandnancycalvert@verizon.net

An Update on St. George's College in Jerusalem

The college remains resilient and there are signs of hope. During the last year, the North American Committee conducted a successful capital campaign to support the staff and build financial strength for the future of the college. Thanks to the generosity of many, **we achieved our initial goal of \$1.19 million (USD)**. Furthermore, thanks to a special bequest, the college has completed significant renovations to provide accommodation for extended sabbatical stays.

To those who have given, we say Thank You! Our campaign continues through Eastertide with a goal of raising an additional \$300,000 (USD) to ensure St. George's College is on firm financial footing as it prepares to reopen. We prayerfully ask (you to consider) to donate, using this link: <https://www.saintgeorgescollegejerusalem.com/giving/>. As Archbishop Hosam writes:

"We are asking all our friends around the world to help St. George's College and to walk with us. We thank all our friends and partners who have come through the doors of the college and for those who will come so that the college will remain a beacon of life and love in Jerusalem to the ends of earth."

-Fran Walinsky

Help Support Older Adults – Volunteers Needed

Volunteer Solutions (Dept. of Family Services) is looking for volunteer Grocery Shoppers and Social Visitors to assist older adults in Annandale, Falls Church, and Alexandria. Drivers are also needed for medical appointments. Your time and compassion can make a big difference in someone's life.

To learn more, visit: bit.ly/DFS-VS.

-Tanya Erway, MSW, Fairfax County Division of Adult and Aging Services



*The "Bouquet Ministry" getting flowers ready for a June funeral reception: **Linda Cummings, Debbie Rosse and Fay Froh.***

St. Alban's Monarch Waystation

*A big belated thank you to parishioner **Ralph Hassig** who built a butterfly garden for St. Alban's in 2016 and achieved certification as a Monarch Waystation for it in 2020! Did you know? Ralph shares fascinating information about the garden and all about Monarch butterflies.*

St. Alban's has had a butterfly garden since about 2016. It was originally planted behind the bushes behind the cross in the Memorial Grove. In 2019 it was moved to a sunnier spot behind the church, near the red barn. While it accommodates any flower-loving insect, it's specially made for monarch butterflies, which are becoming rare. The orange and black monarch (no horizontal black stripe at the base of the tail, distinguishing it from the viceroy butterfly), is thought to have been named by early European settlers to America in honor of King William III, who also held the title of Prince of Orange.



*The butterfly garden in full bloom in August.
Lots of milkweed, butterfly bush and zinnias.*

The monarch is a great traveler, and also a picky eater. Actually, it's not the butterfly that is picky, but rather the monarch caterpillar, which dines only on milkweed. Our garden contains several kinds of milkweed-- the sturdy but invasive native or common milkweed, a few swamp milkweeds with their smaller leaves, perhaps one or two purple milkweeds, which struggle to grow to any size, and in the front of the garden, the orange butterfly weed, which blooms the first half of the summer. To attract butterflies from a distance, the rest of the garden is planted with zinnias, which are showy and easy to grow.

Monarchs live throughout the United States and lower Canada. During the summer breeding season, they feed on the nectar of flowering plants. The female lays very small white eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves, and when the eggs hatch into the distinctive white, black and yellow striped caterpillars, they begin to eat the milkweed leaves. After about two weeks, they curl up to form a chrysalis (cocoon), which turns into a butterfly after another two weeks. When the days grow shorter and cooler around September and October, the butterflies begin to migrate south, taking advantage of breezes to travel 50 to 100 miles a day and stopping along the way to feed on nectar. They instinctively head toward Texas, then cross the border into Mexico to reach their final destination in a wintering ground of trees about 2,000 feet above sea level in the Sierra Madre Mountains of central Mexico. Throughout the winter the forest temperature hovers a few degrees above freezing and the butterflies live in a semi-comatose state, thousands weighing down the branches of each tree. The laid-back monarchs of California simply fly down to San Diego and spend a pleasant winter there.

In the spring, monarchs begin their migration north. This generation of butterflies, which has already lived for about 6 months, dies on the return journey, but before dying it breeds where it can find milkweed, and a new generation resumes the northward journey. After three or four generations have continued the migration, each generation living two to six weeks, the monarchs are back home in the United States and Canada.



The key to a successful migration and breeding season is the milkweed plant. Milkweeds are poisonous to animals, and farmers have largely eliminated them from their fields, reducing their number by an estimated 95 percent. This is why it's important for people to host milkweed gardens, which are easy to grow. One of the organizations that promotes the growing of milkweed is Monarch Watch, which encourages people to build gardens they call Monarch Way Stations. Our butterfly garden was registered with this organization in 2020, becoming number 29177 on their list. For a nominal fee, they provided a sign which is posted next to the garden, registered to St. Alban's Episcopal Church and simply named "Butterfly Garden." In August the garden will be in full bloom behind the church, and if you look closely, you may see a green cocoon or striped caterpillar on partially eaten leaves before our monarchs pack their bags and head down to Mexico for the winter.

-Ralph Hassig

Letter from Interfaith Communities for Dialogue to our Jewish neighbors

May 29, 2025

A Message to our Jewish Friends and Neighbors

St. Alban's is a member of the local "Interfaith Communities for Dialogue" (ICD) which brings together people of diverse faiths to share and learn from each other and to build community. We have two faithful parishioners, committed to the goals of the ICD, who represent St. Alban's at ICD gatherings. This week, in response to the horrific murder of two young Israeli Embassy staffers in DC, the ICD released this letter (text of the letter is below. [The original in pdf format can be viewed here](#)):

Dear Jewish Friends and Neighbors,

We watched the news with horror on Wednesday, May 21, when we learned that two Israeli Embassy staffers, Sarah Milgrim and Yaron Lischinsky, were killed in a hate crime in our nation's capital. We reeled when we learned how young they were, that they were soon to be engaged, and that they were actively working toward building bridges between Palestinians and Israelis. This act of antisemitism—like all antisemitic acts, attitudes, and beliefs—is heinous and we condemn it in no uncertain terms.

We can only imagine the grief and fear that this latest incident has infused into the Jewish community, families, and individuals. No one should live in fear that they will become targets of hatred for participating in Jewish spaces and events.

Interfaith Communities for Dialogue is a non-profit organization that brings together people of various faiths to engage in a range of ongoing and meaningful learning and social opportunities designed to build knowledge and understanding among the diverse people in our community. We stand together in vehemently condemning this act of antisemitism and the dehumanizing rhetoric that fueled this and other acts of antisemitism.

Please accept our deepest condolences and do not hesitate to call upon us for support as you grapple with what this latest deplorable act means for your communities. We hold you in our hearts, minds, and prayers as beloved children of the Most High.

With compassion,

Interfaith Communities of Dialogue Members:

Annandale United Methodist Church	MakeSpace
Baha'is of Fairfax County East	Peace Lutheran Church
Congregation Olam Tikvah	Pozez Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia
Dar Al Hijrah Islamic Center	Ravensworth Baptist Church
Durga Temple of VA	St. Alban's Episcopal Church Annandale
John Calvin Presbyterian Church	Little River United Church of Christ
The Sikh Foundation of Virginia	

Interfaith Communities for Dialogue (ICD) Update St. Alban's continues to support the efforts of the ICD which is planning a presentation of the Neurological Basis for Prejudice this fall (available to the public).

We also are exploring how we can assist at the Annandale United Methodist Church's food bank that is held every Thursday from 3:00-7:00 pm. Information for how to volunteer for at AUMC's Mission Center can be found at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090b49aaab2aabb49-aumc#/>

If you have questions, please contact **Carolyn Foley** at: carolynfoley1@verizon.net



6800 Columbia Pike
Annandale, VA 22003

Choose-a-Hymn

Sunday, June 29 was our first "choose a hymn" Sunday for the summer! You can submit your requests by filling out the forms in the narthex and putting them in the nearby box.

Summer 2025 Organ Mini-Recitals by Organist and Music Minister Adam Detzner

Sundays at noon – each recital is about half an hour.

July 13: First Round, Part I: Frescobaldi, Froberger, and Johann Pader (17th century Austrian composer)

July 20: First Round, Part II: Buxtehude, Bach, and Heiller (20th century German composer)

July 27: Second Round: Padovano, Merulo, Frescobaldi (Italian), Peter Philips (English, Reformation-era), Kerll (German)

August 3: Final Round: Hofhaimer, Byrd, Sweelinck, Steigleder (German), Arauxo (Spanish)

See You in September! The Word is taking its break during the quieter months of summer. The next issue of the Word is the September issue, coming out at the end of August. Wishing all a very happy, restful, joyful and healthy summer.

