



St. Alban's Episcopal Church

A R C A T A , C A
 T H E R E V . S A R A L . P O T T E R , R E C T O R

Dear People of Saint Alban's,

Silence. Quiet. Meditation. These are words that keep surfacing in the "listening tour," the hunger that keeps being expressed as Nancy and I speak with groups and individuals in the congregation about their spiritual yearning. This comes as no surprise given the noisiness of our culture and the information overload that many of us experience. Interestingly, several individuals expressed the desire for quiet, contemplative practice *in the company of others*. Spiritual practices that are primarily solitary in nature can become more deeply rooted when they are practiced, at least occasionally, in community. That may be because when we strike out to begin a new practice on our own we soon find our initial enthusiasm meets up against the demands of daily life and old habits reassert themselves or, if we falter in our practice, we may wrongly conclude that we have failed and throw in the figurative towel. But practice in community supports our spiritual disciplines, even ones that are primarily solitary, with accountability and encouragement. While the particulars remain to be seen, I am excited by the Spirit's movement amongst us calling us to the simple task (?!) of listening and experiencing the presence of God.

In this season of "taking on" or "giving up" to create space for the presence of God let me make two observations. Spiritual disciplines are paradoxical in that the moment we set out on a new commitment for ourselves we have at the same time committed to failure. Whether we are talking about praying Morning Prayer every morning, running 25 miles a week, treating a co-worker better, speaking to one's children in a more respectful, calm manner—whatever it might be—we will fail. But knowledge of our anticipated failure is not an excuse for not making the commitment in the first place. Spiritual disciplines help to increase our capacity for the fruits of the Spirit—generosity, compassion, patience and so on. If I work toward running a marathon it is not because I will hereafter run a marathon everyday but a 15 mile run will come more easily than it used to—my capacity has been expanded. Part of the maturing of faith comes as we move from trying on various spiritual disciplines to regularly working our life around them to the disciplines becoming what shapes everything else we do.



(Continued on page 3)

Saint Alban's is a community of disciples growing into the full maturity of Christ. Our mission as a community worshipping in the Episcopal tradition is to be devoted to God through prayer, study and action; faithful in welcoming the stranger and serving the needs of our parish and beyond.

February Vestry Highlights

Monday, February 17, 2016

Meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.

Teaching:

Group reading and discussion of the St. Alban's Vision & Mission Statement

Approval of Consent Calendar Items:

- Reviewed parameters for future Vestry meetings.
- Removed the January 20, 2016 and January 27, 2016 Vestry Minutes from the consent calendar.
- Approved the Annual Meeting Minutes.
- Approved the Rector's Report.

Discussion:

- Treasurer's Report:
 - Discussed description of line items and account types.
 - Clergy Stipend increased due to amount owed from 2015.
 - Outreach expenses larger than had been
- Parochial Report: Motion to remove line 15 for further review seconded and approved.
- Review of Annual Meeting:
- Preparation for Vestry retreat on February 27, 2016
- Alarm System update: First round of training completed. Further training will occur Sunday February 21st and February 28th. Activation anticipated on March 1, 2016.
- Scheduling:
 - Congregational Leadership Conference date has been postponed.
 - Bishop's biannual parish visit is Sunday, March 6th.

YOUR VESTRY

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Dan Scofield, Treasurer 822-9123
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- Humboldt Educare Pre-School has withdrawn their interest due to re-stroom requirements.

Action Items:

- Parochial Report Approved.
- Wally Cooper was elected to be Junior Warden.
- Completed Vestry Officer forms.

Compline was led by Jenni Simpson.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

(Rector's Letter continued from page 1)

And joy comes when they are no longer things we "do" like chores but we wake up expecting them and feel something is amiss when they are absent from our lives.

A final note on the listening tour. We expect to bring the listening tour to an end during the Easter season and will report more to you as we approach Pentecost. We are deeply grateful for those who have sought us out for conversation and for the various groups of the congregation that afforded us some of their regularly scheduled meeting time. On **Sunday, April 3 & 10** there will be time for those who have not yet spoken with us to share in the listening tour at 9:15 a.m.

Blessings,
Sara+

Health Ministry at St. Alban's

Emily Arents, RN, Parish Nurse

On Saturday, March 12th, a trainer from the Red Cross came to St. Alban's to prepare 12 people to perform CPR/First Aid. This class was made possible thanks to Diana Cooper's grant-writing abilities and was generously funded by the Arcata Foundation because we stated a desire to train members of our community. Seven Arcata residents participated along with five St. Alban's parishioners. We were trained to perform CPR and to use AEDs – Automated External Defibrillators - on adults, children and infants as well as to recognize symptoms of heart attacks, strokes, heat and cold related conditions. We also learned how to apply bandaging to various skin injuries and how to create and apply slings for injured arms/shoulders. It was a long and busy day, but now St. Albaners Wally Cooper, Casper Earle, George Inotowok, Cindy Woods and I are certified to perform all those safety actions. We will need to re-certify every two years. Finally, special thanks to Cindy Woods who provided some of the food to keep our stamina up and to Casper Earle who willingly helped with clean up!

Safe Church Training—Save the Date!

Please save the date for our deanery wide Safe Church training for all those who work with our children and youth (or aspire to!) on **Saturday, April 30** from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Alban's. The training will be led by Anne Clarke the Director of Lifelong Christian Formation for the Diocese of Northern California. The training needs to be renewed every five years. Look for registration materials in the next week. Talk to Mtr. Sara for more information.

Special Offerings for 2016

Thank you to everyone who gave to our offerings for mission so far in 2016. You are a generous people!

Food for the Poor	\$1,217.25
Haiti Trip (from the Pancake Supper (after expenses) and individual donations)	\$504.71
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	\$583
Good Friday Offering for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East	\$724

St. Alban's Spiritual Forum April Schedule 2016

April 3, 2016	Listening Tour Wrap-up with the Rev. Sara Potter and the Rev. Nancy Streufert
April 10, 2016	Listening Tour Wrap-up: Final Offer with the Rev. Sara Potter
April 17, 2016	The Anglican Communion Part 1: What s it, how does it work ? with the Rev. Nancy Streufert
April 24, 2016	The Anglican Communion Part 2: What s it, how does it work ? with the Rev. Sara Potter

March Vestry Highlights

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Meeting was called to order at 6:13 p.m.

The following Consent Calendar items were approved:

- March 16th Vestry minutes.
- February Treasurer's report.
- Rector's report

Discussion Items:

- The Junior Warden reported he has expedited bids for fixing the front door. He has received one bid and awaiting a second for repairing the deck railing on the south side of the church.
- Scheduling:
 - The work day is now scheduled for May 14th.
 - MMR date is yet to be decided.
 - The safe church training is scheduled for April 30th.
 - Redwood Monastery retreat is tentatively planned for October 14th--16th.
- The Junior Warden led a walkthrough of the facility noting the following concerns:
 - Insufficient railing height in the choir loft.
 - Hand rail on steps up to the choir loft consists of two unaligned sections, has no balusters, and only one newel.
 - Deck railing will not provide sufficient resistance to sideways force. Balusters are loose and some missing. Deck, which serves as a major emergency exit passage is not ADA compliant.

Compline was led by Robin.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Haiti Pilgrimage

Dear St. Alban's Church Family,

Many of you know that I am going to Haiti on behalf of our church. It's a special, exploratory project to evaluate new ways for our congregation to be more actively and consistently engaged with the ministry of the Episcopal Church in Haiti. I initiated this mission project out of my own desire to participate with the work of the Diocese of Haiti. They are doing such wonderful work on behalf of the desperately poor. The Vestry approved this project in the fall. We have tried to build our delegation with more members but, unfortunately, no one was able to join me on this trip.

I will be traveling with two Episcopal priests from the Diocese and members of their congregations to the conference titled, "Haitian Connection." This conference is a follow-up to the nationwide efforts to rebuild Holy Trinity Cathedral after the devastating earthquake in 2010. As you know, St. Alban's did a lot toward this project. Now I go to build on that rebuilding work.

I have had a heart's desire to support programs actively working for the poor in Haiti. This is why I am putting so much effort into going to this conference. I want to know more about the many ways I can team up with those dedicated to helping the poor. But I have a larger desire for this project. I want to find specific avenues for St. Alban's desire to do outreach ministry in Haiti. After several discussions with Sara and others in our church, we have developed a focus for my trip.

First, we want to find a parish we can work with over the years. We want specific people, projects and programs we can support. We want to know them and for them to know us. They are in charge of this desired collaboration. We want to support them in what they are doing. I have no idea what that might look like. For instance, they may working in a health clinic, a housing program, a school of some sort, an agricultural project or an organization that empowers women to develop their own businesses. When we know more about their ministries, we can find more ways to work with them.

From my experience what works best for both groups, is to build a sustaining relationship. It's the people that matter more than the programs. Working with the people in the parish is more important than sending them money. We want to develop a collaborative and cooperative relationship. In this manner - and this is important to me - we will learn a lot.

Second, we want to engage some Haitian artists to do some work for us. Nancy, our priest associate, and Sara want to see if we can commission an artist to create art pieces to express the fourteen Stations of the Cross. I love this idea. I have emailed a program that works with about 50 Haitian artists. We hope this might develop into something that would grace our religious life. This project might develop into something truly collaborative. I hope so. *Continued on Page 6*

Haiti Pilgrimage *(continued from Page 5)*

Beyond those two goals we want to find ways to support social justice programs for women and children. We're not sure how that would happen but it is a priority for us. Perhaps you can think of other areas of ministry in Haiti that we could get involved with.

Lastly, I think the only way we can meet these goals is to go back to Haiti to build those relationships. I want several people to go together with me next time. I want to have this program as something we all do together.

Tim Doty

Witness

(Editor's note: The following witness was shared by Shawn Thompson during Sunday services on December 6, 2015.)

As a child I was baptized and attended Catholic services at Newman Centers, near a college campuses in Southern California and Montana. I was surrounded by idealistic college students, as well as activist clergy, and from a young age I was exposed to various social justice activities including efforts to protest nuclear weapons, wars in Latin America, and the draft.

During elementary school, my family joined a more formal church, with an organized Sunday school, and confirmation classes. And when I was 11 years old we moved to Wisconsin, and attended services in a conservative Polish Catholic parish. Additionally I was enrolled in their Catholic school for one long torturous year. This negative experience of having a church community that did not focus on children's programming, and felt punishing, excluding, and judgmental led to my increasing apathy around attending services and I became a teenager.

In high school we moved again, this time to Arcata, CA. Our family attended services periodically at the Newman Center here, but I didn't feel a connection to a community or congregation. When I left for college, and started my life as an adult, I continued to periodically seek out possibilities for attending services, but never found a spiritual home.

As the years passed, I thought that finding the right partner and settling into our own family life routines should satisfy whatever emptiness or discontent I felt. Yet as my marriage ended, and the compounding factors of this life transition felt unbearable, I looked back to my childhood and to the type of community I wanted to be apart of, and the values I wanted to instill in my then 3 year old son. Returning to a Catholic Church did not feel in line with my values, and additionally I knew that I, along with a long list of "others", I would now be judged due to my divorce.

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Witness (continued from page 6)

I looked in the paper one week for a church, which seemed child friendly and St. Alban's was the first church I attended. What initially sold me on St. Alban's was meeting Mother Sara.

After feeling for so many years that services, sermons, and priests had been irrelevant to my daily life, here was a woman who was the head of the church, around my age, and with young children.

As Jack and I have grown to become part of the St. Alban's community over the years, both of us have formed new friendships and connections. As I made connections with other women in the congregation I was able to put my own difficulties into perspective and realize that all of us face difficult choices and transitions. And my son has been given a set of consistent and loving values, and a community that models these values, when other areas of his life feel unpredictable and chaotic.

As I give thanks for the blessings I have been given these past few years, including the opportunity to complete a master's degree, and settle into a new home with my son, I would like to thank everyone that is a part of the St. Alban's community and for their loving support and guidance.

Book Club News

St. Alban's Book Group meets the first Monday of each month from 6 – 8 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Join us for a potluck dinner during the first hour, followed by a discussion of the book of the month.

- May 2 *Between Heaven and Mirth – Why Joy, Humor and Laughter are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life* (James Martin, SJ)
- June 6 *When Breath Becomes Air* (Palu Kalanithi)
- July 3 *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala – Jesus and the First Woman Apostle* (Karen L. King)

Help Michelle get affordable Health Insurance

California offers an affordable health insurance for working disabled. The qualifying job I have chosen is recycler. There is no minimum monthly income requirement; you just have to show an effort to earn an income. We would greatly appreciate your assistance by placing any CRV (California Redemption Value) containers in the receptacle outside the kitchen. Steve and I will come by once a month to collect any donations and take them to the recycling center. This program is part of Medi-Cal and will cut my insurance premium between 60 and 70 percent, and will pay my Medicare premiums once I am eligible for Medicare. If you want to read more about this program, Google 250% Working Disabled Program. We thank you for any contributions you are able to make.

With sincere thanks,
Michelle, Steve and Vito.



Saint Alban's Church

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«Title»«First»«Last»
«Address»
«Post Office Box»
«City», «State» «Zip/Postal Code»



Meetings, Clubs, and Other Regularly Scheduled Events

Weekly Gatherings

<u>Group</u>	<u>Day and Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Choir Rehearsal	Sunday, Sanctuary	12:15 p.m.	Nan Voss-Herlihy
Spiritual Forum	Sunday, Library	9:15 a.m.	

Monthly Gatherings

<u>Group</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Bible Study	2nd and 4th Mondays, Library	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Bob Webb
Book Group	1st Monday, Parish Hall	6:00-8:00 p.m. (Potluck at 6)	Fred Moore
Craft Group	3rd Monday, Parish Hall	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Betty Price
Vestry	3rd Wednesday, Library	6:00-8:00 p.m.	Bob Webb
Worship Committee	1st Saturday, Library, every other month	10:00 a.m.	Mtr. Sara Potter