



CORRECTED
DEC. 11, 2015

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

December 2015

Dear People of Saint Alban's,

By the time you read this Aaron and the children and I will have begun our six week family leave from the parish. My deepest appreciation to our Vestry for approving the leave and to our Bishop for making this financially possible for the congregation. This will differ from my sabbatical in that we will still be present for worship (Miriam and Jonah would be less than happy if they missed the Christmas Pageant!) but we will have the unique opportunity to enjoy and participate in worship during Advent and Christmas without me planning or being in charge of it all. Additionally, we will have some time to rest and just enjoy baby Michael. Our Priest Associate, the Rev. Nancy Streufert will preside at worship during this time and is taking on a few administrative tasks and pastoral responsibilities as well. I trust this will be a great learning and growing time in her priestly formation. I will resume my duties again on **Tuesday, January 5**—the eve of Epiphany.

When I return it will be time as a congregation to renew our mutual relationship. In the 7 ½ + plus years of my tenure we have together ac-

complished much of what was articulated and hoped for when I first came. There is a shift occurring in the congregation as one generation is passing the torch of leadership to another. It is time to ask, what is the next chapter in our life together? I do not want to pre-empt the conversation or discernment but I do want to identify two areas that are of interest to me. The first is the incorporation of newcomers and the second is the deepening of our faith practices. But first, some background. A couple new to the congregation recently remarked to me that they found St. Alban's about 5 times more welcoming than any other of the 17 or so congregations in Humboldt County they visited in their first year here. In a conversation on behalf of the Diocese with the consulting firm *Canticle Communications* I was asked, what are the opportunities for the congregation to be visible/present to the larger community that we participate or would like to participate in? I mentioned Pastels on the Plaza, the Pride Parade and Festival, Ashes on the Plaza, walking the neighborhood to invite people to events, Halloween trick or treating, Blessing the Bicycles and so on. My interviewer was impressed, noting that this was a lot even for congregations that really value being visible. In other words we

(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.

Vestry Highlights—November

The meeting convened at 6:05 p.m. in the Church Library.

Bible Study was deferred for Vestry member check-in and prayer.

Consent Calendar items (October 2015 Vestry minutes and a Rector's Report) were approved by an affirmative vote.

Treasurer Dan Scofield presented a quarterly financial update and reviewed the current monthly financial report for the Vestry.

Sr. Warden Dona Moxon reported on the status of the security alarm system installation.

In preparation for development of the 2016 budget, the Vestry reviewed its current financial goals, savings goals, and support for 2016 ministries that might be new budget line items.

Mother Sara led a discussion focusing on a roadmap for Parish and Vestry activities during her family leave scheduled between Nov. 24, 2015 and Jan. 5, 2016. Vestry activities will include development of a slate of candidates for Vestry service beginning in early 2016, identifying a candidate for the Vestry Clerk position, budget preparation, and annual meeting plans.

The Annual Meeting date was approved and set for Sunday, January 31, 2016.

A Letter of Agreement with Mother Nancy Streufert for services and coverage during Mother Sara's leave was reviewed and approved.

A discussion regarding the resolution put forth at convention allowing for a change in Vestry size was held. Following this discussion, a motion was approved to change the size of St.

YOUR VESTRY

Mary Bockover mary.bockover@humboldt.edu	822-9123
Wally Cooper dawcooper@gmail.com	822-4716
Zack Curtis awazzuk@att.net	839-1536
George Inotowok George.inotowok@gmail.com	510 575-2512
Barbara Moore bmoore55@sbcglobal.net	826-1727
Dona Moxon, Sr. Warden dmmoxon@gmail.com	822-4999
Michele Olsen dodesbooks@gmail.com	826-1044
Jenni Simpson, Junior Warden jenben1970@yahoo.com	499-0110
Vacancy (to be filled at Annual Meeting)	
Dan Scofield, Treasurer d_m_Scofield@yahoo.com	822-9123

Vestry Highlights Continued

Alban's Vestry from 9 to 7 members. A By-Law amendment will be presented to the Parish at the Annual Meeting enacting the change.

The meeting adjourned to Compline, led by Zack Curtis, at 8:09 pm.

Health Ministry at St. Alban's

Emily Arents, RN, Parish Nurse

Ending and renewal – it seems to be what's happening in so many ways. Particular to Health Ministries is the ending of one ministry and the renewal of another, all happening right now. During the 10:30 service on November 15th, Mtr. Sara honored the ending of our Tuesday evening Healing Service and a final service was celebrated on November 17th. We have gathered nearly all those evenings for close to 14 years to pray for those hurting in this parish and on this planet, and now the season of this ministry is over. My hope is that this ending will make room for a new beginning and expression of healing petitions.

What's renewing, after skipping a year, is our offering of a Blue Christmas service. We hold this lovely and quiet service during one of the most celebratory seasons of the year to honor the many folks who are living or struggling with considerable loss, whether that of a job, friendship or marriage, or more painfully the death of a family member, dear friend or spouse. We will hold this service Sunday, December 19th at 4pm.

At the same time the church year ends and renews with Advent, and soon 2015 will end and we'll celebrate the beginning of 2016. May we all share in a Blessed Christmas and a joyful, healthy New Year!

Emily Arents, RN, Parish Nurse

(Rector's Letter continued from page 1)

have developed practices of welcoming others and being visible and present with the larger community. The next question is what happens when people begin to come for a period of time? There is a large body of research that indicates that if newcomers have not made six significant connections in the first six months they will not stay. In other words, relationship is key. And so the question for us is, are we willing to invest in a relationship with those who come? Not just welcome them, but build a relationship with them? Are we willing to extend that energy and pay more attention to the stranger than those we already know?

The other area of interest is practices of faith formation. Nancy and I will be interviewing members of the congregation in the coming months (see her article on page 5) to evaluate how well our current offerings serve the faith development of the congregation. I suspect that there is a relationship between the areas of incorporation and faith formation. The hunger to meet with a consistent small group of fellow Christians to share faith and our lives is common to those new to the congregation and those who have been here a long time alike.

Advent blessings,
Sara+

There are two corrections to the December 2015 Newsletter. The final paragraph was left out of Nancy's+ article on Christian Formation (on the back of this sheet) & the Forum Schedule has been updated

St. Alban's Spiritual Forum

December Schedule 2015 – Revised December 11, 2015

These sessions will consist of a 30 minute lecture on DVD followed by 30 minutes of discussion concerning the lecture

December 13, 2015 The History of Christian Theology – Part 28: From Puritans to Revivalists
w/ Philip Cary

December 20, 2015 The History of Christian Theology – Part 28: Perfection, Holiness, and Pentacostalism
w/ Philip Cary

December 27, 2015 The History of Christian Theology – Part 29: Deism and Liberal Protestantism
w/ Philip Cary

Wish List 2015

Don't forget to include St. Alban's on your Christmas list. Consider one of the items listed below.

Adult Formation

Portable White Board (\$170+)

Facility – General

A 48" or 36" dry mop (\$30+)

Worship

Refinishing the wooden pews

Refinishing the wooden altar

Mechanism to lower and raise the hanging cross above the Altar

Stations of the Cross (catalog \$1,000 and up)

Damp-chaser for the piano (\$150)

New paschal candle (\$30)

Welcome

Sign on Samoa Blvd. (\$250)

Youth and children

New bibles for Sunday School (10 @ \$15 apiece)

Office

Rolls of 100 stamps (\$46+)

Three Hole Punch

Cases of paper for the office (\$41.99 for a case of 8.5x11 and \$57.99 for a case of 8.5x14)

Pledge Reminder

If you have not yet done so, please consider making a pledge to St. Alban's for 2016. If you need a pledge card they are available in the Narthex (entry way) or you may call the office at (707) 822-4102 and one will be mailed to you.

From the Priest Associate – Rev. Nancy Streufert

In our baptismal covenant, Christians ing and fellowship, in the breaking of together as a church community is obvi- But to grow in Christ (discipleship a.k.a. commitment beyond Sunday worship. events over the years to help guide pa- is time to take a fresh look at our offerings and how they are working (or not working) for you and whether we should go in some new directions. To that end, beginning in Advent, Mother Sara and I are introducing a “listening tour” throughout December and January about adult Christian formation. We plan to make personal connections with parishioners either singly or in small groups at times and places convenient for you to discuss discipleship at St. Alban's. We will report back to the congregation, possibly at the annual meeting, and make our discipleship plan going forward using a thematic approach with the baptismal covenant as our foundation.



promise to “continue in the apostles’ teach- bread, and in the prayers.” Our worship to- ously a central part of how we live our faith. Christian formation) requires intention and St. Alban's has offered various practices and rishioners in their Christian formation. But it

Please be thinking about the following questions in the coming weeks. Feel free to talk to either of us (Sara+ in January when she returns from family leave) after church, by phone, or email with your thoughts. Also, you will have an opportunity to meet with us in small groups during this time. Look for sign-up sheets next week.

1. What are the practices that sustain and deepen your faith as a Christian?

2. Besides worship, what Christian formation events and studies that St. Alban's has offered (listed below) have you participated in? Why or why did you not participate in them?

- Anglican spiritual practices workshop (2009)
- Evangelism workshop with Canon Britt (2010)
- Sojourners: preparation for baptism and confirmation/reaffirmation (bi-annually)
- Newcomers sessions for inquirers
- Lenten book study (2015): *People of the Way* (Zscheile)
- Sunday Forum (between services)
- Deacon in the Details (2015)
- Bible Study (Monday evenings)
- Book Group (Monday evenings)
- Bishop's Bible Challenge (2013, 2014, 2015)
- Wisdom Group
- Others??

This paragraph, #4, was accidentally left out of the November 30, 2015 issue of the St. Alban's Tidings

3. What do you long for in your own spiritual practices?

4. Are there other aspects of our common life that deepen your faith? What are they?

Holden Evening Prayer and Soup Supper for Advent



Please join us **Thursdays** in Advent (December 3, 10 and 17) at 5:30 p.m. for Holden Evening Prayer—a simple sung setting of vespers in the sanctuary—followed by a meal of soup and bread and a simplified Eucharist in the Parish Hall. Experience some joy and spirit as part of your Advent preparations. All are welcome. There is a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall to help with bread and soup.

Advent Offering Episcopal Community Services

Bishop Beisner has designated the third Sunday in Advent as Episcopal Community Services (ECS) Sunday. ECS has supported the work of ministering to the sick, the homeless, the hungry and the poor in the Diocese of Northern California for over 30 years. We hope you will consider giving generously to the work of Episcopal Community Services on **December 13**. Please bring your offering to worship on December 14 (checks noted with "ECS" in the memo) or mail it to: Episcopal Community Services, P.O. Box 162242, Sacramento, CA 95816.

Blue Christmas Service For Those Who Find Sorrow in the Holiday Season

For those who find sadness during the midst of the holiday season, St. Alban's Episcopal Church invites them to its Blue Christmas Service on Saturday, December 19th at 4 p.m.

Thanksgiving is past and the leftovers are probably finished or frozen – and now we're in the midst of the Holiday Season. For most, it's a time for putting up decorations, baking goodies, writing cards, shopping for gifts – all the preparations for the most joyous time of the year. And yet there are many among us for whom this time of year is a struggle. These folks don't feel there's much to be happy-merry-jolly about. Perhaps a job has been lost, a difficult health problem is being faced, a marriage or friendship has ended, a family has been uprooted and moved to an unfamiliar place. Or, most painful of all, a child, a sibling or parent, a dear friend or beloved spouse has died... It doesn't matter how recent any of these events are, the sorrow remains. To acknowledge this grief in the middle of all the holiday festivities St. Alban's again offers a Blue Christmas Service. The worship service, which includes communion, provides a quiet, honoring place for those whose hearts are heavy and a way to offer loss and sadness to God, while asking for God's peace and healing.

Congratulations Pam!

Pam Gossard, our field education student, met with the Standing Committee and Commission on Ministry at their September meeting and was approved for ordination as a Deacon. The ordination is scheduled for next summer at Trinity Cathedral, Sacramento after Bishop Beisner returns from his sabbatical.



The Story of Jesus

Chapter 4

By: Andrew Curtis
Rachel Curtis
Ian Curtis
Emily Nalley



Funds for a Van

As many of you know, parishioner Michelle Bucher was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in December of 2013. Those who know her, know that Michelle is a fighter. Nonetheless the disease has progressed to the point that her walking is impacted as well as the use of her hands. The family is hoping to purchase a van that can be adapted for her scooter and wheelchair. To raise funds toward the purchase of a van the family has established an account through the website GoFundMe. If you wish to help Michelle and Steve toward their goal please visit:

<https://www.gofundme.com/zkqy7k> . Many thanks.



Saint Alban's Church

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www.stalbansarcata.org

«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.	Bob Webb

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 (Not meeting)	1st Monday, Parish Hall	6:00 p.m. Potluck	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.	Dona Moxon
Worship Committee	1st Saturday, Library, every other month	10:00 a.m.	Mtr. Sara Potter

