



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

September 2017

Dear People of St. Alban's,

Knowing God in the Silence

The word of the Lord said to Elijah, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:11-13)

As many of you know, we introduced early in July a two-month period of intentional silence after the sermon in our Sunday worship. This initiative came out of the College for Congregational Development (CCD) held in June at the Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg. The CCD team sent by St. Alban's for the six-day conference consisted of five of us: Mother Sara, Mother Nancy, Elena Byrd, Garrett Purchio, and Cindy Woods. Each parish team at the conference was tasked with two projects of their choice for the coming year to explore some of the tools we learned for increasing meaningful participation and vitality in our common life together as a church.

Out of several possibilities, our CCD team decided on introducing silence into our community worship as our first project based on the desires expressed over the years by some in our congregation. The primary goal of our project to add silence and stillness after the sermon is to increase our capacity to listen for God in the context of our otherwise very wordy corporate worship. A related practical goal is to help increase the congregation's experience with silence so that when it is called for at



Continued on page 4

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.

August Vestry Highlights

Present: Mary Bockover, Diana Cooper, Shirley Curtis, the Rev. Sara Potter, Tina Rousselot, and Bob Webb.

Fee policies for weddings and funerals need to be updated from their last review six years ago to reflect current costs, especially for personnel. Mary Bockover and Shirley Curtis will gather the information on updated cost estimates and present it to the Vestry for the September meeting.

In his work around the church this month, the Jr. Warden has encountered remains from past projects, many from work done years ago, and reminded the Vestry that it needs to ensure that all contractors and parishioners have a plan for removing unused materials and waste from the church grounds when projects are completed.

In light of recent trips to Haiti and plans to reevaluate the Street Meals program, the Vestry decided to conduct a review of St. Alban's outreach programs and priorities. It will begin by reviewing study material for the book *Toxic Charity* to determine how it might be used as a basis for a parish-wide discussion of the congregation's outreach goals.

Blessing of the students, teachers and their backpacks!

On **Sunday, September 10** we will bless students and their backpacks as they begin this new school year and recognize teachers within the congregation for their invaluable service to the community. See you there!

YOUR VESTRY

Shirley Curtis, Senior Warden 839-1536
awazzuk@att.net

Bob Webb, Junior Warden 826-9127
spider.man@suddenlink.net

Mary Bockover 822-9123
Mary.bockover@humboldt.edu

Diana Cooper 822-4716
dawcooper@gmail.com

Leah Lu 826-2985
leahpattesonlu@gmail.com

Tina Rousselot 822-6619
tinaupnorth@suddenlink.net

Vacancy

Liz Finney, Clerk 845-4498
finneyliz@gmail.com

Dan Scofield, Treasurer 822-9123
d_m_Scofield@yahoo.com

Get the Diocesan e-News

It's easy to join our mailing list!

Just send your email address by text message:

Text
EDNC
to **22828** to get started.



Message and data rates may apply.

You can also subscribe on the diocesan website, www.norcalepiscopal.org, by clicking on the button under CONNECT WITH US, and providing with your name and email.

Health Ministry at St. Alban's

By Emily Arents, RN, Parish Nurse

Hello everyone! I hope you all had a good summer and maybe that you were able to carve out some time for doing what feeds you. I realize that at this time of year we're all gearing back up as the academic year gets underway and are also realizing that the end of the year isn't really all that far in the future. Often that signals a clarion call to book ourselves solid to get everything possible squeezed onto the To Do list to accomplish all our goals for the year. I'd like to offer another thought – another way of looking at that To Do list to make it achievable as well as fulfilling. Moderation is once again the key here.

I just read an article about “brain freeze.” You know, when you eat ice cream too fast, so fast that you give yourself a headache? Overloading your schedule can cause another sort of brain freeze – stress that clouds your thinking and distorts your emotions. And we know where that can lead! So I'm cautioning us all to once again look at our lives and plans through the lens of balance and moderation, both of which can help lead us to a deeper and more complete sense of accomplishment.



Altar flowers for Sunday Worship



Thank you to everyone who provided feedback over the summer to Marlene Hover and myself regarding the altar flowers for Sunday worship. You may recall that we lost the services of our previous florist right after Easter. We began using *Safeaway* as our florist and have decided we will continue to use them for the foreseeable future. There are three things you need to know:

- The cost for a single bouquet of flowers is \$30. For Christmas and Easter and other special occasions we will have two flower arrangements and the cost will be \$54.
- You are welcome to provide your own flowers and do your own arrangement. Contact Marlene at 822-3847 if you are interested in this option.

The church will not provide flowers on Sundays when no one is signed up.

Please check the sign in the parish hall for availability. Contact Marlene to sign up for an open Sunday: 822-3847.

And finally, many thanks to Marlene for her years of service in this ministry!

Sara+

Priest Associate's Letter *(Continued from page 1)*

other times, e.g. during the prayers of the people, the intercessors and congregation will be more comfortable with it.

Fr. Thomas Keating, a Cistercian monk and founder of the Centering Prayer Movement writes this about silence in his seminal book, *Open Mind, Open Heart*:

“When we say, ‘Let us pray,’ we mean, ‘Let us enter into a relationship with God,’ or ‘Let us deepen the relationship we have with God.’ The root of prayer is interior silence. We may think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words, but this is only one of its forms. Contemplative prayer is the opening of mind and heart, body and emotions – our whole being – to God, the ultimate Mystery, beyond words, thoughts and emotions.”

The rubrics (instruction) of our Holy Eucharist service from the Book of Common Prayer suggests in several places that *silence may be kept*. How do we use this time of silence? “You can reflect on the reading or sermon you have just heard, but most of all, try to still your mind and listen. For us to hear God speak, we must be quiet and listen. This often involves silence and waiting.” (metanoia.org)

Our CCD project report is due in November, and during the fall our team will be evaluating whether Sunday worship is a good context in which to explore community silence or if it needs to be in another setting. Not only will you have access to the report, but we will continue to involve you in further discussions on the spiritual practice of silence in worship. Your feedback is important to us, and we appreciate the thoughtful input we are receiving. Keep it coming! For those who were not in worship on Sunday, August 27 feedback forms are available at the Church office and need to be received by Sunday, September 10.

“Be still, and know that I am God!” (Psalm 46:10)

Calling St. Alban's Young Artists to Participate in Pastels on the Plaza Saturday, October 7 at 8:30 a.m.

Families with children, mark your calendar for **Saturday, October 7** so that your child can participate in creating a beautiful pastel sidewalk piece for St. Alban's. Please arrive by **8:30 a.m.** For further details please contact Tina Rousselot.

Annually Northcoast Children's Services partners with local businesses and artists to transform the sidewalks of the Arcata Plaza into a colorful art gallery. Proceeds from this event help fund its Preschool and Family Services that extend to over 1,000 children and families in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties annually.

Spiritual Forum for September

The Spiritual Forum is held between 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. in the Library

A lively and spirited discussion of religion, philosophy, literature, history, and personal faith

This video/discussion series is based on the Book of Revelation and the 24-part Great Courses lecture program called "The Apocalypse: Controversies and Meaning in Western History." Bob Webb or Mother Nancy will facilitate each session that will begin with a 30-minute video lecture from the list below by New Testament scholar Craig Koester followed by discussion. An expert on the Book of Revelation, Professor Koester has developed the video series that studies how people have construed the meaning of Revelation in such different ways, and offers a way of reading it that is socially engaged and profoundly hopeful. You need not attend every session to learn about Revelation.

Sunday, Sept. 3	Apocalypse Controversies and Meaning: The Apocalypse and Spiritual Life
Sunday, Sept. 10	Apocalypse Controversies and Meaning: The Key to the Meaning of History
Sunday, Sept. 17	Apocalypse Controversies and Meaning: Apocalyptic Fervor in the Late Middle Ages
Sunday, Sept. 24	Apocalypse Controversies and Meaning: Luther, Radicals, and Roman Catholics
Sunday, Oct. 1	Apocalypse Controversies and Meaning: Revelation Takes Musical Form

Altar Guild Transition

At the end of June, after six and a half years of incredible service, Brenda Wood stepped down from her position as the Altar Guild director. In July Carolyn Hunt hosted a lunch at her home to celebrate Brenda's leadership and in mid-August Brenda was thanked during Sunday worship. Brenda passed the reins to a team of three altar guild members: Michele Olsen (who is doing the scheduling), Evaonne Hendricks (who is doing the ordering) and Ann McClary (who will help me plan for Advent/ Christmas and Holy Week/Easter and other major feasts). We will revisit this arrangement next summer to see how well it is working. Please be patient with the team and the whole guild as they live into this new way of organizing themselves. And if you haven't yet, please thank Brenda for her incredible work when next you see her!



Yarn Donations Needed

Alice Hackett is in need of yarn so that she can continue her ministry of knitting hats for the homeless. Yarn can be left in the Church office. Thank you Alice for doing this ministry.

Mosaic near completion

Have you seen it? The new labyrinth mosaic in the Memorial Garden is almost finished! Many thanks to Robin Hodson for her vision and steadfastness in bringing this project to completion. It needs a few finishing touches and then on a Sunday soon we will properly bless the mosaic. Thank you Robin (and Patrick, and Ralph and Jeremy)!



Cooks for the Night Shelter

A longstanding ministry of Saint Alban's is to cook for the Arcata Night Shelter located on Boyd Road in Arcata on the first and third Monday of each month (and the fifth when there is one). **Please note that the Night Shelter is at full capacity with 20 residents.** The sign-up sheet is in the Parish Hall. The next available date is October 2.

There are a couple of other possibilities for would be cooks.

If you are running low on time to cook the meal you can deliver groceries to the Night Shelter for the residents to cook.

Parishioner Alice Hackett cooked for the Night Shelter for many years. Though she is no longer able to cook she is willing to buy the groceries for someone else to cook. If you would like to speak with Alice about her generous offer please call her at 822-2867.

Street Meals on Hiatus

By Bill Strider

Last spring Bishop Beisner recommended a book called *Toxic Charity* by Robert Lupton for Lenten reading. Robert Lupton has worked with the poor in inner-city Atlanta for decades, and in this book he shares some of the insights that he has gleaned. He writes: "When people offer selfless support to the powerless, it seems so Christian. There is no thought of repayment, no ulterior motives, and no strings attached, but unselfish investment should always calculate the cost, consider the outcome, and always be a partnership."

In the past, measuring the success of our Street Meals ministry has been evaluated in terms of the number of lunches distributed. Calculating the cost was analyzed in terms of volunteer hours and monies spent. The problem with these metrics is that they are seen through the lens our activity without considering the outcomes for the people we serve. Lupton goes on: "Most service projects weaken those being served, erode their work ethic, and deepen dependence. What would keep service programs from fostering unhealthy dependence and becoming another entitlement program? Developing a dependence-free zone and restoring damaged dignity. Initiatives must reinforce self-sufficiency if those served are to become agents of lasting and positive change. To the extent that the recipients are encouraged to participate in the systems intended to serve them, their self-worth is enhanced. Made in the image of God, we are created with intrinsic worth. Anything that erodes the rightful sense of self-respect diminishes that image."

In the light of these ideas, with Mother Sara's support, our Street Meals ministry is taking a time out to consider these issues in order to discern a path forward. In the weeks and months ahead there will be conversations about this among the congregation and the Vestry. Perhaps in the end the consensus will be to continue the ministry without any modifications. Perhaps it will be decided that some tweaks to our ministry will be appropriate in keeping with sensitivity towards outcomes. Perhaps our vision of engagement with the marginalized in our community will venture into a new direction that doesn't involve food.

May the Holy Spirit guide our way forward.

Blessing of the Animals and Chili Cook-off Sunday, October 8, 4 p.m.

Invite your friends, grab your pets and join us at this year's Blessing of the Animals. This year we will be spicing things up with a chili cook-off open to anyone in the parish. So if you have a special chili recipe put it up against others at St. Alban's. If you are interested in cooking let Cindy Wood or Garrett Purchio know.

This one hour service begins outdoors with the chili cook-off, then a light meal of chili (of course) after which pets will be blessed.



Saint Alban's Church

1675 Chester Avenue
Arcata, California 95521
(707) 822-4102
www.stalbansarcata.org

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

Mark Your Calendar
Friday, November 10
Talent Show @ 6:30 p.m.

Meetings, Clubs, and Other Regularly Scheduled

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.	Mtr. Nancy Streufert

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) 7:00 p.m. Discussion	Betty Price
Craft Group	3rd Monday, Parish Hall	3:00-5:00 p.m.	Evaonne Hendricks
Vestry	3rd Sunday, Library	12:30-2:30 p.m.	Shirley Curtis
Wisdom Group	3rd Wednesday, Parish Hall	11:30-1:00 p.m.	
Worship Committee	1st Saturday, Library, every other month	10:00 a.m.	Mtr. Sara Potter