

SANCTUARY

Newsletter of St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Elberton, Georgia

Calendar

Holy Eucharist, Sundays,
10:30 a.m. SafeHouse Sunday
Dec. 14

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
(except Dec. 21 and 28)

Bible Study, Mondays at noon
(except Dec. 22 and 29)

Dec. 23, Decoration of Church,
10 a.m.

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Service,
6 p.m.

Dec. 25, Christmas Day
Service, 9:30 a.m.

December Birthdays

Zachary Moore, 11; Martin
Barclay, 23; Carole Coggins,
24; Natasha Clay, 25

Prayer List

B. J., Ben, Betty & Richard,
Beth, Christa, Dave, Jack, Larry
& Diane, Laurie, Lorie, Paula,
Suzanne, William, and others in
our hearts. *Prayers for the
departed:* William H. "Bill"
Dotson, Nov. 24 (Arlene
Whitlow's brother-in-law)

Rector's Reflection



In 1979 the Episcopal Church adopted a new Book of Common Prayer (BCP). One of the theological shifts of the new BCP was to restore the theme of expectation to the season of Advent. An outward sign of this is the use of blue as our liturgical color for the season. The shade of blue we use is known as Sarum blue. *Sarum* is the Roman name for Salisbury, and much of our liturgy can be traced back to the Sarum rite used in England from the seventh century up to today.

I think that during this time of expectation we should take time out from our busy lives and reflect on what we are remembering and what we are expecting. We're remembering the story of the birth of Jesus, the events that led up to the major event that changed the world. If we reflect on these events we can put ourselves into them through our liturgy and music. During this season we also expect Jesus to come again—maybe not at this season or this time, but we expect that it will happen and we look forward to it, just as those in the first century looked forward to the incarnation.

We're in blue this season to expect, to remember, and to hope.

Fr. John Keeler +

MERRY CHRISTMAS

to one and all!

Diocesan Council 2014



On November 7 and 8 the 108th Annual Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta met at the Marietta Conference Center. Fr. John Keeler and Fr. Herschel Atkinson were clerical delegates, and Steve Jenkins and Nancy Seymour were lay delegates from St. Alban's. They had their picture taken with Bishop of Atlanta the Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright, helped take care of church business, and danced (at least Herschel did) with Suzie Whitmore, wife of the Assistant Bishop of Atlanta, the Rt. Rev. Keith Whitmore, at the dinner dance on Friday evening. Yes, she always wears a hat.

Fr. John, in talking to the congregation on Sunday November 9, said there was a lot of talk about "purpose" at the Council. He asked us all to think about "purpose," both individual purpose and the purpose of St. Alban's. For some of Bishop Wright's remarks to the Council on the subject, see p. 3. Also, small booklets from the Diocese, *Draw the Circle Wider: Toward Discernment of Our Purpose*, are available at the church for those who are interested.

From Bishop Wright's Sermon

Delivered at the 108th Annual Council Worship, Nov. 7, 2014

Today the church pauses to remember Willibrord, archbishop of Utrecht. . . . According to his biographer, "In his thirty-third year the fervor of his faith had reached such an intensity that he considered it of little value to labour at his own sanctification unless he could preach the Gospel to others and bring some benefit to them." This is really an amazing thing because he was a child of a hermit, and he was raised in an abbey. The original gated community. But Willibrord had an epiphany. He began to understand that the church must be a community that befriends the world and not simply a community of friends. Where did Willibrord get this notion? Maybe it was over in the book of Acts. There we hear the risen Christ say, "When the promise is fulfilled, when the power comes, leave Jerusalem and go to Judea, Samaria and all the world."

. . . Out in the harvest is where we belong. That is the church of Jesus' imagination and of Willibrord's experience. "The harvest is plentiful," Jesus said. "So, pray for laborers." Pray and then go.

What does the harvest look like in Middle and North Georgia? I'm glad you asked. The Diocese of Atlanta is 75 and a half counties in Middle and North Georgia. Of those 75 counties, 28 of them have no Episcopal Church presence whatsoever. And yet, those 28 counties are among the poorest in Georgia and in the country. The harvest is plentiful.

There are 66 colleges, universities and technical schools within our diocesan boundaries with more than 300,000 young people in attendance. The harvest is plentiful.

There are literally thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines in our midst suffering with the moral and mental injuries that come with being at war. And they have families, too. Still more harvest.

There are the men, women and teenagers in our correctional facilities that Jesus said we are to visit. There are the rural and urban poor with no health care that we are to heal, says Jesus. And Georgia remains one of the worst states in the country to be a child.

And then there our Hispanic brothers and sisters who walk around on quiet tippy-toes, who rear our children, manicure our yards, pick, prepare and serve us our food, and yet have not really been embraced by all of us. *La mies es much*. (The harvest is plentiful.)

I remember some years ago, Bishop Mdimi Mhogolo came to visit us from Central Tanganyika. . . . He was our preacher that year for the annual clergy renewal of vows. . . . All I remember of his sermon was the question he asked us that day: "What is the Diocese of Atlanta believing for?" He assumed that as a diocese, all our congregations had a common purpose. And that we were living out that purpose in specific ways in our worshiping communities. . . .

(continued on p. 4)

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The Rev. John Keeler,
Rector

The Rev. Herschel
Atkinson,
Rector Emeritus

Carole Coggins,
Altar Guild Chair
Suzanne Moore,

Organist

Mary Randall, Verger

Vestry

Steve Jenkins, Sr. Warden

Charles Duke, Jr. Warden

Natasha Clay

Carole Oglesby

Debra Romine

Nancy Seymour

Robyn Keeler, vestry
secretary

Charles Romine,
treasurer

Bishop's Sermon (cont'd)

Purpose brings energy, clarity, innovation and partnerships. It is an orienting anchor and helps us to hold steady in the face of resistance. Clear purpose brings measurability for course correction and changes the conversation from success and failure to experimentation and learning. Ultimately, purpose is fire! . . .

At this 108th Annual Council, we could do as the Psalmist encourages: We could sing to the Lord and to each other a new song. We could sing a new song to Middle and North Georgia of the good news of God's glory and his wonders among all the peoples. We could ascribe to the Lord the honor due God's Name. . . .

It is not only that we might pledge to work differently today. But it is that we might pledge to *be* different today. To give ourselves away. To be like Willibrord, winning the world for Christ. Or to be like Christ himself betting everything on the trustworthiness of God. Either way, and by all means, our work in the Diocese of Atlanta continues to be: "Christ for the world we sing, the world to Christ we bring, with loving Zeal; the poor, and them that mourn, the faint and overborne, sin-sick and sorrow-worn, whom Christ doth heal." AMEN

Farewell to 2014

As you wrap up 2014, here are a few church-related items for your to-do list.

Remember to get your pledges for 2015 in to Charles Romine as soon as possible (the vestry needs to know what money will be available as they make up the 2015 budget). St. Alban's 2014 financial report is on p. 4 for you to inspect.

If you want to donate to the church Christmas flower fund this year in someone's memory or honor, give the money to Carole Coggins by Dec. 21. There is a sign-up sheet at the back of the church.

If you want to make charitable donations before the end of the year, remember that Episcopal Relief and Development is doubling monetary gifts it receives before December 31. Any money you send them will have double the impact. You can give online (www.episcopalrelief.org), by phone (1-855-312-4325), or by U.S. mail (P.O. Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116).

To help our community, Fr. John and Suzanne Moore have two pre-Christmas projects for us. See p. 6 for details on those.

2014 Financial Statement for St. Alban's

Balance Sheet 2014	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
INCOME											
Contributions	3,464.00	3,774.00	4,214.78	3,884.80	4,394.76	5,530.00	3,236.01	4,460.00	2,246.00	3,707.00	2,183.00
Request					5,000.00			5,000.00		5,000.00	
Reserves					9,394.75	8,530.00	3,236.01	9,460.00	2,246.00	8,707.00	
INCOME TOTALS	3,464.00	3,774.00	4,214.78	3,884.80	9,394.75	8,530.00	3,236.01	9,460.00	2,246.00	8,707.00	
EXPENSES											
Altar Expense					30.00	86.00					
Altar Furnish		270.84			113.00	80.80		80.90		161.80	
Building Expenses	39.00	200.00	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00	39.00
Chamber of Commerce			69.00								
Church Insurance		656.65			632.16			737.16			632.15
Corporation Registration			30.00								
Council Expenses											
Diocesan Pledge	596.00	596.00	596.00	596.00	596.00	596.00	696.00	900.00		596.00	696.00
Lam	125.00	241.25	125.00	125.00	696.00	250.00	326.00	596.00		125.00	696.00
Office Supplies	164.90	209.66	281.45	661.90	106.10	206.63	93.80	107.96		126.00	126.00
Outreach	100.00	100.00	250.00	100.00	720.00	100.00	150.00	500.00		234.00	100.00
City Taxes SS										908.69	26.00
Postage/Box Fee				64.00		48.00	98.00				46.33
Rector Expense	226.00	226.00	226.00	226.00	226.00	226.00	226.00	226.00		226.00	226.00
Rector Housing Allowance		200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00		200.00	200.00
Rector's Carl. Ed			170.00								
Rector's Gifts				1,246.24			1,246.24				1,246.24
Rector's Pension Fund			210.00								
Rector's Rotary Dues		80.00	130.00		511.67	262.26	316.16	359.64		210.00	150.00
Supply Priest/Organist	676.94	833.22	673.39	611.67	267.04	262.26	316.16	359.64		210.00	150.00
Utilities			130.00		267.04	262.26	316.16	359.64		210.00	150.00
Rector	2,153.00	2,306.00	2,306.00	2,306.00	2,306.00	2,306.00	2,306.00	2,306.00		2,306.00	2,306.00
Secretary	350.00	360.00	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00	350.00		350.00	350.00
Organist	150.00	120.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00		150.00	150.00
Secton	150.00	160.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00		150.00	150.00
Website Expense		50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00		50.00	50.00
EXPENSE TOTALS	4,619.84	5,766.62	5,981.74	6,668.71	6,654.29	6,107.79	6,264.20	6,079.35	6,128.20	6,238.73	5,182.93
FUND BALANCES											
MEMORIAL FUND	24,896.00	24,985.68	25,121.34	28,160.34	28,122.62	10,264.10	10,264.67	8,764.67	8,766.02	6,940.02	
MERRILL LYNCH G/F	221,077.68	224,919.60	228,356.74	228,823.13	226,281.48	226,038.23	220,848.42	218,924.01	216,416.19	211,007.62	
RESTRICTED FUND	17,262.80	17,373.79	17,426.25	17,662.83		17,366.62	17,331.89	17,376.74	17,301.09	17,308.03	
DIOCESSE COMMON FUND	27,660.46	29,812.09	30,261.23			31,373.26			30,611.79		
DISCRETIONARY FUND	720.88	720.88	720.88	820.88	820.88	820.88	820.88	820.88	820.88	820.88	
CHURCH PENSION FUND			27,072.00	28,917.24							
Checking Balance	19,892.67	6,845.32	5,149.47	3,045.36	6,436.82	6,733.03	2,653.84	5,974.49	2,646.79	4,684.66	

Local Giving Opportunities

With winter approaching, Fr. John has arranged an immediate opportunity for St. Alban's to partner with Rotary Club, Elberton First Baptist Church, and Elberton First Methodist Church in a ministry to furnish coats to needy children in Elbert County. The school system will serve as a source of information about children in need of outerware. Those interested in helping with this can either donate money or ask for a coat size needed and provide a coat in that size.

A second pre-Christmas project is also in the works. Since long-time member Betty Edmonds has been a resident at Nancy Hart Nursing Home for a while and her husband Richard is temporarily there, Suzanne Moore has been talking with the Nancy Hart administration about the possibility of St. Alban's members doing something for Betty and Richard (and possibly other residents also) for Christmas. Here is her communication to the congregation on the subject:

"Calling all St. Alban's Angels. Need your help to make Christmas more blessed and special for two residents at Nancy Hart Nursing Center as well as our own parish member Betty Edmonds. Requests include radio for male patient and jogging pants and tee shirts, size extra large, for female. Toiletries are always needed, and more details will be forthcoming regarding any other special requests they may have. Checks will be graciously accepted or items may be brought to church and deposited in a special box which will be provided for donations. Thanking one and all for your blessings which will brighten Christmas for some special persons who need our help."



(Left) Nancy and Joel Seymour with the Rev. Fr. Bernard Been. On their recent trip to the Turks and Caicos Islands they attended the Church of St. Monica Anglican/Episcopal on Providenciales.

