

# SANCTUARY

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

## Calendar

Holy Eucharist, Dec. 6, 13, & 20, 10:30 a.m. (Eucharistic prayer will be Form A during Advent, Form B for Christmas and Epiphany)

Morning Prayer, Dec. 27, 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., vestry room, through Dec. 13, then a break until Jan. 3

Bible Study, Monday noon, vestry room, through Dec. 14, then a break until Jan. 4

No vestry meeting in December

Dec. 6, Lessons and Carols, First Methodist Church, 6 p.m.

Dec. 23, Greening of the Church, 10 a.m.

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve service, 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 25, Christmas Day service, spoken Eucharist, 9:30 a.m.

Jan. 10, after Eucharist, annual church meeting and election of two vestry members to replace Charles Duke and Nancy Seymour

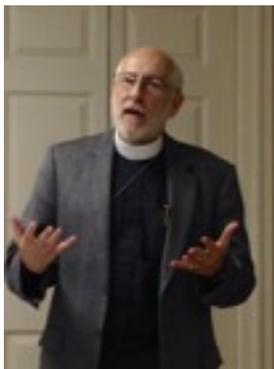
## December Birthdays

Carole Coggins, 24; Natasha Clay, 25

## Prayer List

Ann, Ben, Betty & Richard, Brian, Debra, Dolores, Jackie, Jaxon, Pat, Patricia, and others in our hearts.

## Rector's Reflection



I said in my sermon on the First Sunday in Advent that a theme for the season is thankfulness.

Advent is a season of quiet preparation for the birth of Christ. It is a time to reflect on the promises God made to the people of Israel and to the entire world that a messiah, a savior, would come to restore the

world to a relationship with God.

We read in the Old Testament lessons during the Advent Season about the promises God made and kept in the incarnation. We reflect on these promises each Sunday as we prepare for the birth of Christ.

We are thankful for the promise kept during this time in our church year. We are also thankful that even though we prepare and wait, God is still there with us, waiting with us and not abandoning us as we go through our daily lives.

Many of you said you were thankful for your families, your church, your health, your faith—all indicating that God is indeed with us as we go through this season together.

Fr. John+

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

## 2015 Annual Diocesan Convention

On November 13 and 14, the annual council of the Diocese of Atlanta was held at the Infinite Energy Center in Gwinnett County. Fr. John Keeler and Fr. Herschel Atkinson attended along with the lay delegates from St. Alban's, Steve Jenkins and Suzanne Moore.

The council approved a diocesan statement of purpose: "We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus as we worship joyfully, serve compassionately, and grow spiritually."

Another resolution passed deals with health care for the working poor: "Resolved: We resolve that the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta form a task force whose purpose is to advocate, monitor and help the Governor of the State of Georgia and the Georgia General Assembly to enact legislation accepting federal funding in order to expand Medicaid for all eligible Georgia citizens."

A third resolution passed deals with dismantling racism: "Resolved that every worshiping community in the Diocese of Atlanta take seriously the sin of racism; and be it further resolved, that we strongly encourage every clergy and lay leader in our diocese to attend an anti-racism training as required in accordance with Resolution B049 passed by General Convention 2000; and be it further resolved that each worshiping community, particularly over the next year, actively engage in dialogue, education, and/or action to address racial inequality; and be it further resolved that each worshiping community report their activity to the Beloved Community: Commission on Dismantling Racism no later than October 1, 2016."

Also passed was a resolution on the Endowment Fund of Episcopal Charities: "Resolved, The Episcopal Charities Foundation, as envisioned by The Rt. Rev. Bennett J. Sims, the 6th Bishop of Atlanta, was established as an entity of The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta in 1982 by the 75th Annual Council of The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta to serve the poor and oppressed throughout the Diocese, and the current Diocesan Council wishes to reaffirm the legacy that has existed through the work of Episcopal Charities Foundation for the last 33 years and to provide for future growth in service to the poor and oppressed throughout the Diocese; and be it further resolved that

"A. The purpose of Episcopal Charities Foundation (the Foundation) shall continue to be to serve the poor and oppressed throughout The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta (the Diocese) in a manner determined by the Board of Directors of the Foundation (the Board) with approval of the Bishop of Atlanta (the Bishop).

"B. The Endowment of Episcopal Charities Foundation shall be named 'The Rt. Rev. Bennett J. Sims Endowment of Episcopal Charities Foundation' (the Endowment). (cont'd on p. 6)

## *From the Minutes for the Nov. 10 Vestry Meeting*

Fr. John introduced Marjorie Jenkins Moon, who came to ask the vestry to reconsider the decision to relocate Marcia Jenkins's memorial bench. Ms. Moon stated the current placement of the bench is meaningful to the Jenkins children and asked that it be allowed to remain where it is. She also stated that the ground will need to be prepared at the spot to which the vestry had voted to move the bench. She left after making her appeal.

Charles Romine presented the treasurer's report for October. He noted the following comparisons with the same time period in 2014: through October 2015, income to date is \$37,187; through October 2014, income to date was \$38,899; through October 2015 (excluding the kitchen remodeling), expenses to date total \$65,286; through October 2014, expenses totaled \$59,652. To date, \$15,000 has had to be drawn from reserves to meet operating expenses.

The junior warden, Mr. Duke, stated he had planted sixty daffodil bulbs in a flower bed out front.

Fr. John presented the rector's report. (1) He gave vestry members copies of an interview with new Presiding Bishop Curry. (2) He noted that resolutions before annual council November 13-14 include one to restructure Episcopal Charities such that grants will be given not to organizations like SafeHouse but to parishes that are active in their own charitable ministries or are partnering with a charitable organization. If it passes as presented, St. Alban's may want to consider how to partner with SafeHouse to make Episcopal Charities support possible. (3) Fr. John informed the vestry that Natasha Clay was turned down in the discernment process by the Commission on Ministry. He received a form letter which did not include an explanation of the decision. (4) He noted that readers are still needed for the Lessons and Carols service to be held with First Methodist in December. (5) He commended the work of Natasha Clay, Andrea Martin, and Louise Martin in maintaining St. Alban's online presence. (6) St. Alban's will need to pay [web.com](http://web.com) for the domain name [stalbans-elberton.org](http://stalbans-elberton.org) and for hosting the site. The fee is about \$142.50 for a year to be able to upload pictures and other data, plus \$15.99 for site security; Mr. Romine said he will check on discounts if we pay for more than one year at a time. The vestry voted to pay for up to three years if that means a better rate. (7) Fr. John requested approval of a \$250 corporate sponsorship of the SafeHouse Walkathon; the vestry approved this unanimously.

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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

Suzanne Moore

Allen Nicas

Debra Romine

Nancy Seymour

Robyn Keeler, vestry  
secretary

Charles Romine,  
treasurer

## *Vestry Minutes (cont'd)*

Under old business, quotes for the sexton's job and a suggestion that the vestry get a quote from another individual (Angie Dunn) were presented. Mr. Duke agreed to contact Angie Dunn, and Ms. Seymour agreed to ask Mary Randall to help construct a written list of tasks a sexton needs to complete.

Also under old business, Fr. John said he will contact Jason Brady to look at the sacristy ceiling again to make sure a patch job is enough. The vestry approved sending the \$750 Tony's Electric quote for rewiring to the Hawes family, who had expressed interest in donating toward updating the wiring. Under new business, Fr. John presented Suzanne Moore's suggestion that the vestry consider an organized ministry to shut-ins, who are becoming a larger portion of the congregation. The vestry agreed Fr. John should ask Ms. Moore to look at ways this could be accomplished.

Fr. John asked if the vestry would like to participate for a second year in the Rotary Club's project of buying winter coats for needy children. The vestry agreed to contribute \$200 as a parish; Fr. John will also announce the project during Sunday services and by email so individual members may participate.

Ms. Moore has reported to Fr. John that a church organ repair is needed. She has made arrangements for a repairman to come look at the organ on Friday the 13th; Allen Nicas has agreed to meet him and will contact Mr. Romine when the cost of repairs is known.

Fr. John stated that a vote needed to be taken on Marjorie Moon's appeal. A motion was made and seconded to request again that Jeff Moon move the bench to the spot under the trees that had been previously approved by the vestry. The vote was three in favor with one abstention. Fr. John requested that Mr. Duke coordinate with Mr. Moon about the moving of the bench; Mr. Duke agreed.

*Robyn Keeler, vestry secretary*

## *Church of Presidents*

Recently Joel and Nancy Seymour joined their longtime friend, Annie Hunt Burriss, at her church, St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., before having brunch at the Hay-Adams Hotel. Some thirty-eight years ago, Annie's and Nancy's families attended Jimmy Carter's inauguration and stayed at the Hay-Adams Hotel.



St. John's Episcopal Church, located across Lafayette Square from the White House, is known as the Church of Presidents. Beginning with James Madison, every president has attended St. John's at least once. Madison established the tradition of a President's pew, selecting pew 28 for his use; following renovations, the pew was renumbered 58 and then 54. This pew has remained reserved for the president's use when he is in attendance.

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln came often to St. John's, where he would sit in a rear pew (see photo bottom right). The plaque visible on the wall reads: "The Lincoln Pew. During the Civil War President Abraham Lincoln attended evening services at St. John's and sat in this pew. He was always alone. The President would arrive quietly and leave before the service ended to walk back to the White House."



## 2015 Diocesan Convention (cont'd)

"C. The Board of the Foundation shall be organized in a way recommended by the Board with the approval of the Bishop so that its members are from a mix of lay and ordained persons throughout the Diocese. The Board shall be governed by the Canons of the Diocese, the Resolution set forth herein and Bylaws of the Foundation established by the Board with the approval of The Bishop.

"D. It is expected that optimum use will be made of volunteer personnel and ministers for the work of the Foundation; however, the Foundation may use limited funds approved in advance by the Board and The Bishop for compensation to a Director and support staff, fundraising, marketing, and other necessary administrative costs to carry out its ministries and purpose.

"E. Funds used for ministries and other purposes of the Foundation are to be raised from solicitations of parishes, individuals, businesses and foundations; events; Endowment distributions; planned gifts and bequests; and other sources. Any restricted gifts received will be used in accordance with the stated restrictions.

"F. Grants and payments for ministries are to be distributed in such a way as to represent careful attention to the poor and oppressed in all parts of the Diocese."



*Two photos from the convention taken by Bill Monk and posted to the diocesan website. Do you recognize anyone?*



## New Donation: Scenes from the Holy Land

Bo and Mary Minor Brown recently donated to St. Alban's a set of five scenes from the Holy Land: Nazareth; Jerusalem, site of the Crucifixion in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives; Jerusalem, the Damascus Gate; and Jerusalem, the Temple Mount with the Dome of the Rock. The scenes are from an art book Mary Minor bought while on a trip to Jerusalem. Before presenting them to the church, she had them matted and framed. They have been hung on two walls of the vestry room, and all members and visitors are invited to view them there.