

# SANCTUARY

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

## Calendar

Sundays, Dec. 4 and 18, Holy Eucharist, 10:30 a.m. (Eucharistic Prayer Form A). Dec. 11, Morning Prayer. See below for Dec. 25.

Decoration of church, Dec. 23, 10 a.m. Christmas Eve service (Eucharistic Prayer Form B), 6:30 p.m. Christmas Day Eucharist, 9 a.m.

Dec. 9, deadline for collection of canned and dried food and toiletries for Salvation Army White Christmas. Sunday, Dec. 11, SafeHouse Sunday, canned goods especially needed.

Sunday, Dec. 4, 9:30 a.m., Sunday School. No Sunday School after Dec. 4 until the New Year.

Mondays, noon, Dec. 5 and 12, Bible Study. No Bible Study after Dec. 12 until the New Year.

Annual Parish Meeting, Jan. 29, following Eucharist and lunch.

## December Birthdays

Dec. 5, Holman Haley (100th) and Sara Haley (90th)

Dec. 24, Carole Coggins

Dec. 25, Natasha Clay

## Prayer List

Amy, Anna, Belle, Betty & Richard, Bill, Cindy, David, Diane, Dolores, Don, Elijah, Fred, Jimmie, Millie, Ozzie, Rebecca, Tonia, William, and others in our hearts.

## Rector's Reflection



Entering the Advent season each year, we're invited to reflect on the year that has passed and the year that is before us.

It's more than just a "taking stock," though. That's a good thing to do on the first of January. What we're called to do during the Advent season is to look at, to reflect on, and to evaluate our lives

in light of our relation to God and our relationship with each other. How have we grown? How have we shrunk? How have we stayed the same?

It's not an easy task. If we choose to do it, we'll have to go into the wilderness for a while like Jesus and John the Baptist. We'll have to do more than just stand on the edge and look in; we'll have to pack a lunch and plan to spend the day, or even longer. We have to be in the darkness for a time so that the light can be fully appreciated when it returns to us on Christmas.

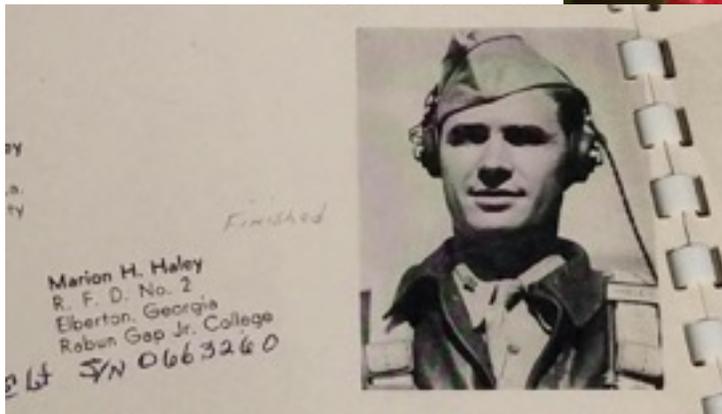
A good way to do this is to look at the promises we made and we make again in our Baptismal Covenant (BCP pp. 304 and 305). Have you been faithful? Have you fallen short? Will you try harder this year?

It's the season for reflection and new resolve.

Blessings, *Fr. John Keeler+*

## Milestone Birthdays

On Dec. 5, Holman Haley will turn 100 years old and his wife Sara will turn 90. On Nov. 26, their family and friends honored them in advance with a birthday party at Magnolia Estates. A field representative from U.S. Rep. Doug Collins's office, Bill Kokolay, attended and presented a proclamation in recognition of Mr. Haley's service in the Army Air Corps in World War II; an active duty member of the Air Force presented him with a flag that has flown over the U.S. Capitol.



Another St. Alban's member, Dolores Jefferson (see photo on right), celebrated her 90th birthday on Oct. 20.



## Stewardship Campaign

Forms to be filled out for the 2017 Stewardship Campaign are available now at the back of the church. They have also been mailed to members. Please do make a pledge for 2017; in drawing up a budget for the coming year, it is very helpful to the treasurer and to the vestry to know how much income the church can count on for the coming year.

## *Advent and Christmas*

We started the Advent season on Sunday, November 27. On that day the color for vestments and hangings changed from green to blue, and we began collecting for the Salvation Army White Christmas. They need canned and dry food for families in Elbert County as well as toiletries for prisoners in Elbert and surrounding counties. A box has been placed at the back of the church for the items given, and they will be delivered to the Salvation Army on December 9. Volunteers are also needed to help sort the food on December 10 and to help distribute the boxes on December 17. If you would like to take part in this hands-on ministry, notify Linda Remlinger or Donna Christian at 706-283-1804.

It should be noted that the Salvation Army collection is in addition to the usual second-Sunday collection for SafeHouse, which also is helping families in Elbert County over the holidays (see the SafeHouse Christmas letter on page 6 for details). Fr. John says they are especially in need of canned goods this month.

There is a sign-up sheet at the back of the church so that those who wish to donate toward Christmas flowers may sign up and state their dedications. Money should be turned in to Carole Coggins.

Carole Coggins, St. Alban's Altar Guild Chair, has set 10 a.m. December 23 as the time to decorate the church for Christmas services. Please turn out if you can to help. It does not take long to do, and it is a pleasure to see our church, which always looks lovely, be decked out to welcome the Christ Child.

The Christmas Eve service will take place at 6:30 p.m., and a short spoken Eucharist is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Christmas Day.

## *Annual Parish Meeting 2017*

The annual parish meeting has been set for January 29, 2017, following the Eucharist and a catered lunch. The rector, the treasurer, and the wardens will give their yearly reports; and three members will be elected to the vestry. Right now there are only four vestry members, rather than the usual six, because of two resignations, and Steve Jenkins will be rotating off the vestry in January. Therefore, we will need to elect two vestry members to serve three-year terms and one vestry member to serve a one-year term. Qualifications to be a vestry member include the following: (1) to be over eighteen years of age; (2) to be a member of the Episcopal Church and of St. Alban's; (3) to be a regular attendee of services at St. Alban's; and (4) to be a regular financial contributor to St. Alban's.

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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  
Charles Duke, Sexton

Vestry

Steve Jenkins, Sr. Warden

Marilyn Slocumbe,  
Jr. Warden

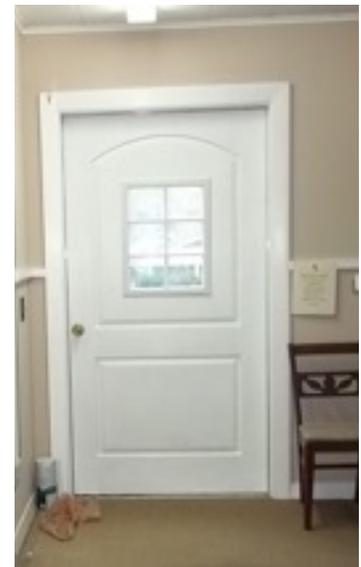
Louise Martin, sec.  
Suzanne Moore

Robyn Keeler and Anne  
Jaudon, co-treasurers

## Photo Time



The new side door of the church, which Charles Duke recently installed, has now been painted white by Tammy Elliott's son Michael. A talent for painting seems to run in the family. Tammy did a wonderful job painting the walls upstairs and down a few years ago. You can see her work on the walls surrounding the door.



After nearly nine years as assistant bishop of Atlanta, Bishop Keith Whitmore will be leaving the position at the end of 2016. He and his wife Suzie (she of the delightful hats) will be returning to Wisconsin to be near family. We will miss their visits.

## *From the Vestry Minutes of November 14, 2016*

During the rector's report, Fr. John said that Bishop Wimberly is scheduled to visit St. Alban's on June 11 and that Bishop Whitmore is retiring to be with family in Wisconsin. Bishop Wright has approved Fr. John's staying at St. Alban's a year beyond his retirement.

Under Business, Steve Jenkins made a motion, seconded by Suzanne Moore, to approve a \$250 corporate donation by St. Alban's to the SafeHouse Walkathon; it was unanimously passed. Individuals in the church also gave \$245 in support of Charles Duke, who represented St. Alban's at the Walkathon.

There are currently only four members on the vestry due to two resignations. Steve Jenkins will be going off the vestry in January 2017, and there was brief discussion whether we should vote for three new members at the January annual meeting to bring the number of vestry members up to the usual number of six or whether we should change the number of vestry members to five and vote for two new members in January. Steve Jenkins moved that the number of vestry members remain at six, Marilyn Slocumbe seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous vote.

Fr. John reported that he received a letter from the Salvation Army requesting donations to their White Christmas program. Donations should be turned in to them by December 9. After brief discussion, Steve Jenkins moved that the first Sunday in December (December 4) be designated a day for St. Alban's members to bring in items for the Salvation Army White Christmas. This would be in addition to our usual second-Sunday donations to SafeHouse. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Moore and approved by unanimous vote.

Marilyn Slocumbe asked if we could resurrect the effort to get a microphone for Fr. John. He said he would be fine with using one but does not know where to get one. Marilyn will check on sources.

A new computer will be bought for the church soon. Steve Jenkins and Marilyn Slocumbe are making donations toward that project.

Fr. John passed around a contract he has drawn up for next year to cover arrangements between himself and the church. The amount he will be paid is the same salary and benefits he has been receiving, but the church will not have to make contributions to his retirement fund, which will amount to a saving to the church of around \$4,000.

*Louise Martin, Vestry Secretary*

## SafeHouse Letter

The holiday season has arrived and with it comes all of the hustle and bustle of last-minute shopping, family dinners, church parties and community events. As we approach the end of the year at SafeHouse, all I can think about are those in need. We have been trying to bring more awareness to SafeHouse and joining in as many community activities as possible. The next event is the annual Elberton Christmas Parade. The theme this year is "Home for the Holidays." My first thought was that many people will not have a home for the holidays. And then God reminded me SafeHouse is a home for those in need. To "us" (those who do not need somewhere to stay) we think of SafeHouse as a homeless shelter. To someone who is truly homeless and has no bed, no food, no heat, utilities, and no Christmas tree, SafeHouse quickly becomes a home for the holidays. We are thankful that God has placed us in this community, "for such a time as this." I am honored to be a small part in helping those in need this holiday season.

SafeHouse has been serving this community for twenty-one years! All glory goes to God. . . . With God, we have made it twenty-one years, and we know that the best is yet to come! We are thankful for our most recent fundraiser, the 21st Annual SafeHouse Walk-a-Thon. This year we had thirty-nine corporate sponsors and close to seventy walkers. This is our biggest turnout ever! We do not have a grand total on monies raised yet, but we are quickly approaching our goal of 15k. Thank you to all of our sponsors and supporters. Without your help in this ministry, we would not be able to reach the amount of families that are in need every year. We service people constantly with shelter and food. Not one day goes by that we are not helping someone, most likely someone whom you know, to make it through his/her day. . . .

During Christmas, SafeHouse Ministries is always contacted by families that are in need. We ask that if you feel led to support families with meals at Christmastime or gifts, please let us know as soon as possible. We already have several families that we will be "adopting" for the holidays. Just last week I had an elderly gentleman in my office who is raising his great-grandchildren. It saddens me to see so many elderlies in need. We will be helping all we can this holiday season, and we will need your support to do so. Since our inception, SafeHouse has helped over 40,000 people. The services we have offered include shelter (housing), food, clothes, furniture, counseling, prescriptions, household items, referral services, and holiday assistance. It is never too late to lend a helping hand. Contact our office at 706-213-7657 or message us on our Facebook page if you would like to help us during this holiday season. . . .

We pray that you and your families will have a blessed Christmas and the joy of Christ will fill your hearts with love and peace. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Sue Beitzel, Director*