

SANCTUARY

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

December Calendar

Sundays, Holy Eucharist, 10:30 a.m. (Eucharistic Prayer Form A for Advent). On Sunday December 24, there will be a Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m. as well as the usual Sunday morning service.

Sundays, 9:30 a.m., Sunday school (discussing current events). No Sunday School after December 17 until January 7

Sunday, December 10, SafeHouse Sunday

Saturday, December 23, Decoration of church for Christmas, 10 a.m.

No vestry meeting in December

Mondays, noon, Bible study (studying Exodus). No Bible study after December 11 until January 8

December Birthdays

Dec. 23, Marty Barclay

Dec. 24, Carole Coggins

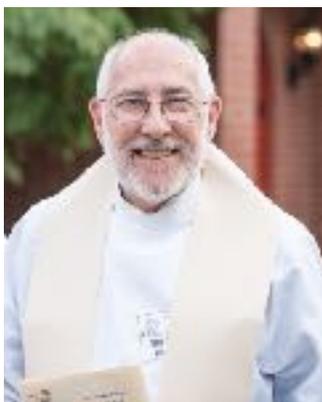
Dec. 25, Natasha Clay

Prayer List

Betty and Richard, Carole O., Cathy, Dennis, Elijah, Jackie, James, Jason, Holman, Mary, Mary S., Ray and Dolores, and others in our hearts.

Prayers for the Departed: Janet Despard and others in our hearts

Rector's Reflection



We're entering the Advent season of our church year. It's a short season, only four Sundays long, where we prepare for the birth of Jesus. The Advent readings from the lectionary talk about a longing for a messiah, a savior, for God. They talk about waiting for a time when there will be peace and justice and all things will be made right.

We watch, we wait for the birth of Jesus, but we don't always do it patiently or quietly. We get very busy during the season. If anything, we tend to hurry it along. We count the shopping days until Christmas. We plan and cram as many events and activities into the time as we can.

Maybe this is the year to slow down, to consider what we might be longing for, to consider what we are waiting for, what the coming of Jesus into the world really means to us and for us. This year, for this season, we should slow down, let the readings and the season speak to us, let the season help us answer these questions: What are we waiting for exactly? What does what we're waiting for mean for our lives now and in the year ahead of us? What should we do? If we slow down and listen quietly to the Advent readings and the hymns we sing, we might hear the answers to these questions.

Blessings, Fr. John Keeler+

From the November 19 Vestry Minutes

Charles Duke gave the senior warden's report. He will contact Chris' Tree Service to remove the tree limbs that are touching the roof.*

Fr. John Keeler gave the rector's report. He passed out the letter of agreement between him and the vestry ready for the wardens' signatures. He will send it to the bishop, who has indicated that he will approve Fr. John's remaining with us another year. Fr. John reported there will be a service on December 10 at 2 p.m. at St. Alban's for Janet Despard, who died recently.

Under old business, Fr. John said that slow progress is being made on forming an Elbert County ministerial association.

Under new business, a vital part of the office copier has broken. Since it is an old machine that we bought when Jim Shumard was rector and parts are no longer available from the maker, Anne moved that we buy a new copier; Natasha seconded the motion.

There will be no December vestry meeting. The annual church meeting was scheduled for January 21 after Eucharist; there will be a catered lunch. The main business will be the election of new vestry members.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Louise Martin, Vestry secretary

*Between the October and November vestry meetings, the vestry voted to accept the \$200 quote from Chris' Tree Service to remove the tree limbs. In a second email vote they agreed that St. Alban's should be a corporate sponsor for the November 2017 SafeHouse Walkathon (as it has been in past years) at a cost of \$275.

**Suzanne Moore and Natasha Clay will be going off vestry although Natasha, since she has only served one year to fill out a term, will be eligible for re-election.

Fr. John gets a book signed by Kathryn Smith, who wore period dress to speak to the Rotary Club about her book, *The Gatekeeper*, about Missy LeHand, FDR's de facto chief of staff.



Diocesan Council 2017



The 2017 Diocesan Council met on November 10 and 11 at the First Baptist Church in Gainesville. It was hosted by the Northeast Georgia Convocation (our convocation). Attendees from St. Alban's were priests Fr. John Keeler and Fr. Herschel Atkinson, verger Natasha Clay, and delegates Tammy Clay and Louise Martin.

Council began with Holy Eucharist. The Rt. Rev. Daniel G. P. Gutierrez, bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, was guest preacher, and the Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright celebrated. Vergers, including our Natasha Clay (see photo above, front row, third from left), assisted with the Eucharist, as well as helping with the counting of votes and other general duties during business sessions.

In Council business, four resolutions were passed: R17-1 established a companion diocese relationship with the Anglican Diocese of Cape Coast, Ghana; R17-2 reunified the Episcopal Church in Cuba with the Episcopal Church; R17-3 dealt with HIV/AIDS prevention and education; and R17-4 strongly recommended that parishes and worshipping communities of the Diocese of Atlanta post the Georgia anti-trafficking poster.

Of special interest to us was the approval of the division of the Northeast Georgia Convocation into the Oconee (south of I-85, including St. Alban's) and the Georgia Mountains (north of I-85) convocations.

Fr. Atkinson received a standing ovation from Council as Bishop Wright thanked him for his many years of service as secretary of Council and announced that a scholarship at the Sewanee School of Theology is being created in his honor. *(continued on p. 4)*



Sanctuary is produced
monthly by

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The Rev. John Keeler,
Rector
The Rev. Herschel
Atkinson,
Rector Emeritus

Carole Coggins,
Altar Guild Chair
Suzanne Moore,
Organist
Natasha Clay, Verger
Charles Duke, Sexton
Andrea Martin, Parish
Secretary

Vestry
Charles Duke, Sr. Warden
Marilyn Slocumbe,
Jr. Warden
Natasha Clay
Anne Jaudon
Louise Martin, sec.
Suzanne Moore
Robyn Keeler and Anne
Jaudon, co-treasurers

Diocesan Council (cont'd)

Fr. Atkinson, in his brief response, noted that it was his forty-second time at Council and he had served twenty-eight years as secretary of Council.

For those wishing to contribute to the new scholarship, contributions made payable to The School of Theology with a notation "Herschel Atkinson Scholarship" should be sent to

Sukey Byerly

The School of Theology

335 Tennessee Ave.

Sewanee, TN 37383

Donations may also be made through the Sewanee website (theology.sewanee.edu). Be sure to complete the *In Honor of* line near the bottom of the On-Line Giving Form.

Christmas at St. Alban's

The Advent season starts on December 3, when we will switch to Eucharistic Prayer A for that season. We will again have a sign-up sheet for those who want to give toward Christmas flowers. Saturday, December 23, at 10 a.m. is the time set for decorating the church; please come and join in.

On Sunday,
December 24, in
addition to the usual
10:30 a.m. Eucharist, we
will have our traditional
Christmas Eve service at
6:30 p.m. There will be
no Christmas Day
service this year on
Monday, December 25.



