

SANCTUARY

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

Calendar

Holy Eucharist, Sundays, 10:30 a.m. (Eucharistic prayer will be Form B). Sept. 6: Fr. Burl Salmon will take the service in Fr. John's absence. Sept. 20: Morning Prayer led by Natasha Clay.

SafeHouse Sunday, Sept. 13

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. starting Sept. 13

Bible Study, Monday noon starting Sept. 21

September 14, Holy Cross Day

September 21, St. Matthew Apostle & Evangelist

September 29, St. Michael & All Angels

September Birthdays

David Hagins, Sept. 1
Charles Duke, Sept. 2
Joel Seymour, Sept. 15
Bob Slocumbe, Sept. 28

Prayer List

Aylith, Barbara, Betty & Richard, Diane, Dolores, Henry, Hermione, Herschel, Jimmy, Judy, Kathleen, Katie, Lorie, Malachi, Matthew, Michael, Robyn, Wil, and others in our hearts.

Rector's Reflection



It's that time of year again. Time for our education programs to begin. We will begin Sunday School on Sunday September 13 at 9:30. Bible Study will begin on September 21 at noon.

Our Sunday School program will be a study of the Epistle of James. I'll be using a book by the Rev. April Love-Fordham: *James in the Suburbs: A Disorderly Parable of the Epistle of*

James. You don't need the book, but it's really good. You will need to read the Epistle of James, but it's only five chapters.

The book has the framework of a Bible Study group. You might see someone you know in the people in the group. Everyone is invited to come and see what James has to say to us in the twenty-first century. You'll have fun and be surprised.

Our Monday noon Bible Study will concentrate on the book of Acts. I'll be using *Conversations with Scripture: The Acts of the Apostles* by the Rev. Chuck Robinson, canon to our presiding bishop. Acts is an account of what happened after the Gospels. Its placement after the four Gospels and before the Epistles makes it a bridge between the two. It's a history, but a great deal more. It's a lively story of the spread of Christianity in the first century.

I'm looking forward to spending time with you in Sunday School and Bible Study. We're going to have a good year.

Fr. John+

Blessing of Bookcase

After the Eucharist on August 2, members left their pews and filed back to the vestry room for a brief dedication of the new bookcase donated by Marilyn Slocumbe and her family in memory of Jeffrey Allen Barker, son of Anne Jaudon.

The bookcase was left empty until after the dedication. The next week, however, Andrea Martin transferred the church library books onto the new shelves, putting the books in alphabetical order within the categories of fiction and nonfiction. She is reserving two shelves for newly added books and one for returns. The bookcase is large enough that we still have quite a bit of room for our library to grow.

On the shelves for new books right now are eight Jack Reacher novels by Lee Child, six novels in the Left Behind series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, and seven Donna Leone mysteries about Commissario Guido Brunetti of the Venice police force. There are also some old favorites to be revisited: *Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*, T. H. White's *Once and Future King*, and three of James Herriot's books about the life of a Yorkshire vet. *Absolution by Murder* by Peter Tremayne rounds out the fiction; it is a mystery in his Sister Fidelma series. The new nonfiction is all in the field of religion: *Alone with God* and *How to Get the Most from God's Word* by John MacArthur Jr., *Mother Teresa: Inspirational Journal* by Gremlyn Bradley-Waddell, *The Modern Use of the Bible* by Harry Emerson Fosdick, *In His Steps* by Charles M. Sheldon, *Grieving* by James R. White, and *Knowing the Bible* by Raymond C. Knox.

Chamber Voices for Charleston

Drew Whitlow, Marilyn Slocumbe's grandson, is a music major at Furman University and hopes some day to be a choir director at the college level. This summer he formed a choir with friends he had attended school with at Savannah Arts Academy, and on August 11 they put on a benefit concert for families of the victims of the Charleston church shooting. The concert, which took place at Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church in Savannah and attracted three hundred attendees, featured English Renaissance-era music from the 1500s: William Byrd's *Mass for Four Voices* and motets by Thomas Tallis and Thomas Weelkes. To help the audience connect with the Latin lyrics, pastors from local Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic churches read an English translation before each piece of music and also gave reflections on how the pieces relate to the Charleston tragedy and to modern life in general.



The ensemble in rehearsal.

From the August 10 Vestry Minutes

Fr. John presented the rector's report. He noted Sunday school will resume on September 13; he will attend clergy conference September 28-30; he will be on vacation September 6 and September 20. He agreed to ask Fr. Burl Salmon to act as supply priest one of those Sundays.

Fr. John reported on several of his activities: joining a men's prayer group that meets at First Methodist, jointly planning a cantata and Lessons & Carols service with First Methodist and First Baptist, and visiting nursing homes. He reported that Fr. Herschel Atkinson will have eye surgery soon.

Fr. John also reported the following General Convention items: prayer book revision will begin again; the national church will address the problem of clergy for small parishes.

Under old business, Steve Jenkins reported that Jeff Moon will move Marcia's memorial bench to the agreed-upon site by October 1.

Bids for bat removal were discussed. Motion was made and seconded to accept the low bid of \$125 to build a barrier and see if this takes care of the problem. Vestry approved the motion unanimously.

The bid for rewiring was discussed. Charles Duke agreed to meet with Jason Brady and Tony's Electric Services and report back to the rest of the vestry.

After discussion, motion was made and seconded to buy topsoil [for the former playground area] through Osborn Farms and hire someone to spread it and plant centipede grass seed. Vestry approved the motion unanimously.

Motion was made and seconded to accept the \$558 quote from Jason Brady to repair the sacristy ceiling. Vestry approved the motion unanimously.

Under new business, motion was made and seconded to pledge \$7,205 to the Diocese of Atlanta. Vestry approved the motion unanimously.

Fr. John said a letter stating the St. Alban's vestry supports Natasha Clay in the discernment process is needed for her to proceed. Motion was made and seconded. Vestry approved the motion unanimously.

The vestry agreed to a parish potluck lunch on August 30 (a fifth Sunday). A signup sheet will be circulated. Fr. John will contact [Canon to the Ordinary] Alicia Schuster Weltner to find out whether the diocese has any names and addresses of Episcopalians in surrounding counties where there is no parish; we could use the fifth-Sunday potlucks as a way to reach out to them.

The vestry decided not to meet in September because the priest will be out of town on the second Monday.

Robyn Keeler, vestry secretary

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

Mary Randall, Verger

Vestry

Steve Jenkins, Sr. Warden

Charles Duke, Jr. Warden

Suzanne Moore

Allen Nicas

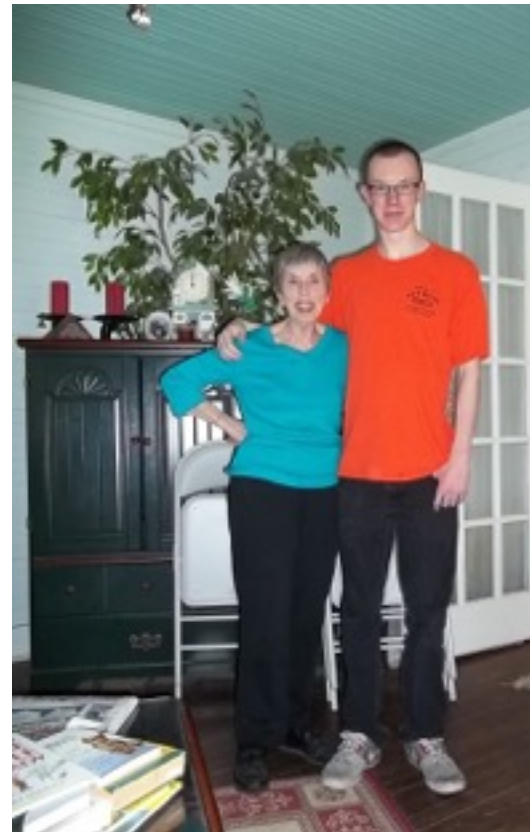
Debra Romine

Nancy Seymour

Robyn Keeler, vestry
secretary

Charles Romine,
treasurer

Photo Album

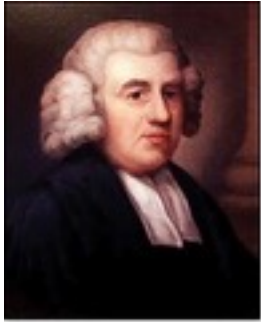


*Mary Randall with her
grandson William. He is
now nineteen and in
college in California.
The photo was taken two
years ago, so he may be
taller now. As far as I
know, Mary has
remained the same
height.*



*Yes, Fr.
John and
Robyn did
go zip-
lining with
grand-
children
Danielle
and
Phillip.
Will they
do it
again,
though?*

John Newton and Amazing Grace



*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind but now I see.*

Born in 1725, John Newton was nurtured by a Christian mother who taught him the Bible at an early age, but she died of tuberculosis when Newton was seven. At the age of eleven he went on his first of six sea voyages with his father, a merchant navy captain. Newton lost a job in a merchant's office because of "unsettled behavior and impatience of restraint." Press-ganged aboard the H.M.S. *Harwich* in 1744, he rebelled against the discipline of the Royal Navy and deserted, but was caught, put in irons, and flogged. Eventually discharged to a slaver ship, he remained arrogant and insubordinate. "I sinned with a high hand," he later wrote, "and I made it my study to tempt and seduce others."

In 1747, he was transferred to the *Greyhound*, a Liverpool ship, and on its homeward journey, the ship was overtaken by an enormous storm. The next day, in great peril, he cried to the Lord. He later wrote, "That tenth of March is a day much remembered by me; and I have never suffered it to pass unnoticed since the year 1748—the Lord came from on high and delivered me out of deep waters."

Although his conversion began that day, he continued to serve on slave ships for some time before increasing disgust with the slave trade led him to renounce that occupation and become an outspoken critic of slavery. He went on to become an Anglican minister, serving a parish at Olney in Buckinghamshire for two decades, and the writer of many hymns, including *Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken* and *Amazing Grace*, perhaps the most famous hymn of them all. His title for it was not *Amazing Grace*, though, but *Faith's Review and Expectation*. It is based in Newton's study of 1 Chronicles 17:16-17: "King David . . . said: 'Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? And yet . . . You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come, and have regarded me according to the rank of a man of high degree. . . .'"

One verse that Newton added near the end of *Amazing Grace* is absent from the Episcopal hymnbook and nearly forgotten:

*The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun forbear to shine
But God, Who called me here below, shall be forever mine.*

SafeHouse Letter

As the summer season in Georgia is slowly coming to an end, we await the cool refreshing breeze of fall. This is typically the same feeling we have at SafeHouse Ministries because of the struggle that the summer season brings. In our last "appeal" letter, we sent out a request for funds. We were desperate; operating day to day and only by the grace of God. You heard our cry, as did God, and responded so appropriately. SafeHouse is not struggling at the end of the summer but heading into fall with anticipation of what is to come. We are so very thankful for your donations and for your desire to help fund this ministry.

This fall will mark the 20th year that SafeHouse Ministries has operated in this community. We have reached countless amounts of individuals, as well as families, and most importantly have ministered to them as best as we could. Our food bank is open five days a week, all year long, and we often give out everything in our supply. We have housed people every single day this year. Our capacity is almost always full. We feel blessed to be able to be a light in this community and hope to continue helping others for many years to come.

As I write this letter I am reminded of a young woman that came to SafeHouse just this week. She came into the office, as most people do, requesting food for the month. However, the food ministry at SafeHouse exists to help people in their most desperate time of need. This young lady was looking for someone with a compassionate heart, to listen to her in the midst of her brokenness and to offer more than just a couple bags of food. She reached out about being wounded physically, but her spiritual wounds were apparent as well. SafeHouse provided an open door for her. We were there not only for her temporary fulfillment of needing groceries, but we were also able to minister to her in many other ways as well. This is why we choose to help others. She is one example of what most of our everyday clients are like. We are trained to help others and always available to minister to people by sharing the love of Christ.

Our passion at SafeHouse is reaching the community by lending a helping hand. One of our largest forms of outreach is our food pantry. Because of the economic crisis and rising unemployment rates we are seeing a record number of people needing assistance just to keep their families fed. Between April 6 and May 28 of this year, we received \$4,925 in response to our appeal for helping to continue to fund our food bank. So far this year we have fed 1,147 families through this ministry. In just the beginning of the month of August we have already fed 164 families. We have enough funds to possibly make about 16 more trips to the food bank. We are so grateful for the outpour of help we have received and we pray that everyone that contributes to this ministry will be blessed. If you would like to continue to support the food pantry at SafeHouse Ministries, we are in dire need of canned foods.

As I mentioned earlier, we are about to reach a milestone at SafeHouse Ministries, our 20th year! We praise God for His direction and guidance thus far. It is very difficult to raise funds for domestic violence and homelessness in such a small community; however, we know that the need is great. With that being said, our largest fundraiser of the year is just around the corner. The SafeHouse 20th Annual Walk-A-Thon will be held on Saturday, November 7, 2015. We have some exciting news coming up for the walk. If you would like to volunteer to help, please let us know by contacting Sue Beitzel at the main office, 706.213.7657. We hope to have our biggest turnout yet, with the most funds raised. Won't you help us help others?

Sue Beitzel, SafeHouse Ministries Director