

St. ALBAN'S
 EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 490 Farragut Circle
 El Cajon, CA 92020
 Phone: 619-444-8212
 Fax: 619-444-1561
 E-mail: stalbanschurch@stalbanschurch.info



Celebrating and Sharing God's Love

December 2011



The Almanac

Inside this issue:

A Message from the Pastor's	2
Senior Warden's Corner	3
Treasurer's Report	4
Mark Your Calendar	8
Alternative Christmas	11
Just for Fun	14





A Message from the Pastor's Study

OK, I'll confess, I've been beaten down and now I get my Christmas dishes out the day after Thanksgiving. In my defense, however, I keep them in my difficult to access under the counter hide away – the same place I keep my turkey plate and gravy boat. I've learned that if I don't get them out I'll never hear the end of the question, "When are we going to use the Christmas plates?" So out they come. So far, that's been my only concession to the full court press by the secular world to enter fully into the "holiday season" the second the turkey is put into the refrigerator. Don't miss those sales, don't miss those sure to be sold out "gotta have it" gifts. Hurry, hurry, hurry!

Advent is a season of joyful expectation of waiting and wondering and longing. This isn't easy because we live in a culture that tells us that we should be able to have anything we want as soon as we want it. Experience tells us, however, that this isn't always so. We know that waiting will always be part of our lives in some form or other. Gertrude Nelson, a local writer and speaker, writes in her book *To Dance With God*, "Waiting...can be made a work of art, and the season of Advent invites us to underscore and understand with a new patience that very...state of being, waiting....Brewing, baking, simmering, fomenting...are the symbolic states of being which belong in a life of value, necessary to transformation."

We can look at the month of December in two ways. Either as a "holiday season" that requires us to get our wallets primed and cars revved or as a time of preparation of our hearts and minds and souls for the advent or coming of the King. During the season of Advent, the Church reminds us that if we do it right, we won't be running at full tilt toward a one day gift giving, food gorging frenzy...waking up the next morning with nothing more than buyers remorse over an oversized credit card bill and a warm cup of alkaseltzer to relieve our indigestion. If we "do" Advent, the way we are meant to, we will find ourselves prepared to once more enter into a life long love affair with the one who gave everything for us. The Church leads us into the great feast of Christmas not in a rush, but in a steady march.

In our home, we will move slowly and intentionally toward a celebration of Christmas. The perpetual Advent Calendar will be unearthed. We'll have fresh greens and candles for the Advent wreath, and I've picked up a book of reflections to read each day. I encourage you to seriously engage yourself in ways that will slow down the pace of this time of year, to help you focus on relishing each step you take as you walk with other Christians on the road to Bethlehem. To remind yourself that this journey you are on is not one that ends at the manger, but continues forward into new life in Christ.

Mo. Lark +

St Alban's Leadership

Staff

Mo. Lark Diaz~ Interim Rector
949-633-8893
larkdiaz@aol.com

Cora Osgood~ Assistant to Rector/Secretary
619-444-8212 ext 2
cnosgood@stalbanschurch.info

Renee Brown~ Choir Director/ Organist

Dawn Beisigl~ Nursery Director

Judy Brown~ Treasurer

Penny Park~ Bookkeeper

Joy Knight~ Refugee Ministry Coordinator

Wardens & Vestry

Dick Walter~ Sr. Warden

Jack Pape~ Jr. Warden

Karen Garcia~ Clerk

Larry Burns~ Vestry Member

Lisa Hilliker~ Vestry Member

Joy Knight~ Vestry Member

Mike Lawrence~ Vestry Member

Rena Lewis~ Vestry Member

Kathi Mills~ Vestry Member

Penny Park ~ Vestry Member

Connie Zimmerman~ Vestry Member

Worship & Learn With Us:

Sunday 9:30 am-Holy Eucharist & Sunday School

Wednesday 6:15 pm-Celtic Eucharist



Just for Fun...

Inherit the Mirth by Cuyler Black



from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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God's kids say the funniest things...

A little boy came home and announced, "I learned all about the very first Christmas in Sunday school today! There wasn't a Santa Claus way back then, so these three skinny guys on camels had to deliver all the toys. And Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer with his nose so bright wasn't there yet, so they had to have this big spotlight in the sky to find their way around." —via Peter Dring, Land O Lakes, WI



"At Mass, I always say a word or two to the small children and then ask them a question, a sometimes risky undertaking. On the fourth Sunday of Advent, I asked the children to name the wonderful celebration we were preparing for.

"The congregation howled with laughter when a little girl shouted out 'Hanukkah!' (Our music director is Jewish, but no relation to the girl.)"
—Rev. Gregory Chamberlin, OSB,
Pastor, St. Benedict Cathedral

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



Senior Warden's Corner

Stewardship Campaign

St. Alban's does not measure its accomplishments by the size of its budget, but rather by what more we can do to grow in worship and spreading God's word. In sharing your financial treasure with St. Alban's you help us to grow in our all important ministries.

By now you should have received and returned your 2012 Faith Card packet. If you have not completed your 2012 Faith Card, please take time to prayerfully consider your giving decision, and regardless of your giving decision return the Faith Card to church as early as possible, in one of the four following ways:

1. Place it in the offering plate during Sunday Worship.
2. Mail it in using the pre-stamped envelope provided in your stewardship packet.
3. Drop it off at the church office during regular business hours, Tuesday-Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
4. Drop it off in the church mailbox.

Remember, no person can tell another how much they should give. That is between you and God. Our goal was to have received all the Faith Cards by the first week of November which will allow us to prepare our planning for 2012.

Should we have failed to get your packet to you, we are sorry. Please call the office and we will see that you get it soon.

Thank you and God bless.



From the Treasurer's Vault

- Plate income is above our projected income. As of October 31, 2011, we've received \$12,194.58
- Pledge income is below projected but we do have pre-paid pledges in the total year to date income which is averaged in. As of October 31, 2011, we've received \$70,200.30 of the \$87,422.40 we budgeted.
- I try and send Pledge statements every couple of months. Please review to make sure you have been properly credited with all your donations. If you notice any discrepancies, please let me know right away so I can correct the records.
- Capital Campaign –
 - * We have raised \$41,577 as of November 6, 2011 since we began the campaign. People are continuing to pay on their 1, 2 or 3 year commitment. If you haven't already done so, you can begin your payments at any time.
 - * We replaced the roofs which was our biggest cash outlay last year
 - * With the previously saved money, as of October 31, 2011 we have a total of \$5,930.46 in the account for the capital improvements
- Due to the Extended Supply Clergy Priest, we have saved money for pension, health-care & SECA which has allowed us to save money for the calling process of a new priest.
- As of November 13, 2011, we received 29 pledge cards for a total of \$58,580. This number is considerably less than last year's numbers of 46 pledges for \$86,822.40.
 - * Last year we passed a budget with an anticipated deficit of around \$32,000. We could be in serious financial difficulty if our pledge income does not increase.
 - * We already rely heavily on Headstart, Iglesia & Rectory income to make ends meet.

The Nutcracker a holiday tradition

Bring the holiday tradition to your family. California Ballet is offering a 25% discount on tickets to Episcopalian Congregants this year. Discounted ticket prices are \$60, \$45, \$38, and \$30.



Wednesday Dec. 21, evening performance, is Episcopal Night. Join other members of the San Diego Diocese as we watch this holiday classic live.

Performances are Sat. Dec. 17, Wed. Dec. 21, Thurs. Dec. 22, Fri Dec. 23 at 2:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. And Sun. Dec. 18 at 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

For more information go to www.californiaballet.org. To purchase tickets call 858-56-6741 or go to www.sandiegotheatres.org/eventstickets. Discount code is **EPISCOPALIAN**.

See you at the theatre.

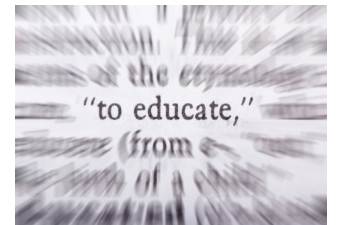
Episcopal Word of the Month

Each month an Episcopal term will be defined. If you have a word you would like defined in an upcoming Almanac please e-mail Cora at cnosgood@stalbanschurch.info.

This month's term is Advent.

Advent- From the Latin: Adventus: "Coming." Advent is the first season of the Church year. Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas day. The color of Advent is traditionally purple, marking the preparational aspects of the season. In Advent we prepare for our Lord's coming in three ways: at Christmas; for his coming into our hearts; and for his coming again at the end of time.

From an out-of-print book by Howard Harper, entitled the Episcopalian's Dictionary (Seabury Press, 1974).



St. Alban's Alternative Christmas Gift Sponsorship

Your Name: _____

My donation of _____ goes to sponsor the rebuilding of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Haiti program and is a gift in honor of _____.

(Please fill out a separate form for each recipient.)

I would like the Certificate sent to me:

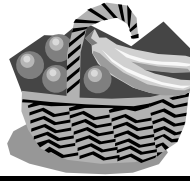
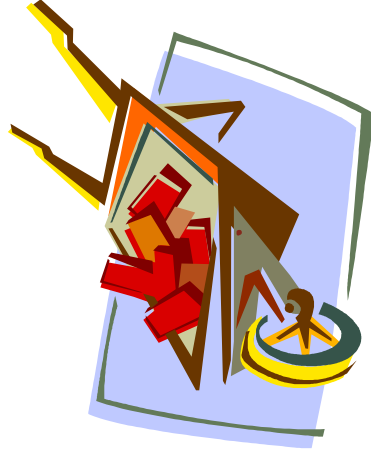
_____ via email My email : _____

_____ via snail mail My address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

_____ I will pick it up from the Church office by December 15th (Office hours are Tues-Fri, 9am-1pm)

Please return to the St. Alban's Church office/offering plate or mail to: 490 Farragut Circle, El Cajon CA 92020



From the Refugee Ministry Basket

Christmas Food Baskets for Refugee and Preschool Families

Once again, this season we'll be collecting contributions for food baskets for Headstart and the Refugee Ministry. If you would like to contribute, please designate your check to St. Alban's with the caption "Christmas Baskets" by December 11. We'll also be taking a collection at the end of the December 11 service. Baskets will be given out around December 15. Thank you for your generosity! Please see Sharon Hathaway, Betty Johnsen or Joy Knight if you have questions.



Refugee Ministry Donation for December Toilet Paper



Christmas Worship Services

**Family Christmas Eve with Pageant
Saturday, December 24, 2011– 4:00 p.m.**

Come with your families as our children bring the Christmas Story to life. And participate in the telling of the story by joining in song.

Christmas Carols

Saturday, December 24, 2011-6:30 p.m.

Silent Night, Holy Night. Come celebrate the birth of our Savior through song. Accompanied by our organist, Renee Brown, we will sing the old favorite Christmas Carols.

Christmas Eve Service

Saturday, December 24, 2011– 7:00 p.m.

Join in song, worship, and communion as we prepare ourselves for the celebration of Jesus's birth.



Christmas Morning Worship

Sunday, December 25, 2011-9:30 a.m.

Alternative Christmas Gifts 2011

*“Men anpil chay pa lou”
(Many hands Lighten the load)*



The Diocese of Haiti is one of the largest (and poorest) dioceses of the Episcopal Church. The Diocese of Haiti is home to nearly 100,000 members, 97 churches, and over 200 Episcopal schools. The earthquake of January 12, 2010 destroyed 70% of the Episcopal church buildings.

In times of trouble, people turn to the church. Within days of the earthquake, people flocked to parishes and Episcopal schools for food, water, and a safe place to stay.

While there is government money and NGO aid available to help rebuild housing, clinics, and schools, but only we can rebuild the Episcopal Church. Rebuilding the Church in Haiti begins with rebuilding Holy Trinity Cathedral.

In a country with a per capita income of \$480, the Haitian people provide sweat equity to this project, in some cases literally clearing the rubble by hand. And now you can help.

Our goal as a congregation is to send \$10 for each Episcopalian in worship on an average Sunday morning. At St. Alban's that is roughly 80 people! This money will be used to purchase bricks to help restore the Episcopal Church in Haiti.

If you would like to give a Christmas Certificate from St. Alban's in honor of a loved one this year by donating to the Rebuild our Church in Haiti program for, please fill out the form on the back and return it to the church no later than December 16th. Any amount is welcome. You will receive a Certificate in your loved one's honor which can be given as an alternative Christmas gift. Please make checks out to St. Alban's with "Alternative Christmas" in the note. Additional forms are available in the Church foyer.

Certificates will be mailed by December 16th.



A Letter From Kenya

Hi Joy Dear,

I have been anxious to receive the pictures. I was worried of the delay and thought they were misplaced. They are with us at last. They all look wonderful. They carry a lasting memory of the visit to the kids homes. Your visit to Kenya and especially the time we spent with you and the kids will be remembered forever.mo

One person who missed it all was Felistas. Although she received her gifts, she feels sorry that she had to be in school.

She is now sitting her final national exams and we pray she does well to be admitted into the university.

My usual trips to see the kids were interrupted by my sickness after your departure. Thank God for Jacobs family and Agnes who are great supporters.

Now am well and able to make journeys to each family. I build them up with the Word of God which is rich in my heart. I cannot therefore thank you enough for the gift of the Holy Bible. I use it daily. I am now reading the letter of Paul to the Romans.

The God of the Bible made us know one another. He makes you a voice of the Kenya Kids to the Christians at St. Alban's. Through their sacrifice to support them, they have made a difference in their lives. They look beautiful, healthy and smiles all the way.

God will repay you all for your goodness and love. It is only He who gives the enablement and you have chosen to be his hands extended.

I received the Diocesan Newsletter with the Kids article. We appreciated reading it. I need to send more news about us for future articles. May God help us.

My family is doing fine with the Lord. Catherine is responding well to the chemo so far and we trust God for complete healing. Remembering us in prayers is the greatest gift to us and we are thankful. We also pray for you and the church. Our God in heaven is faithful and wonderful.

Much love always, Hannah



Is God calling you to serve???

Within the next few months your vestry will be seeking candidates to fill upcoming vacancies on St. Alban's vestry. What is the vestry and what do they do? Please read on:

About the Vestry

ORIGINS

Originally the word referred to the room where the priest put on his vestments, at which time local laity met with him to discuss the affairs of the parish. Over time the name of the room came to signify the group of men who governed a parish because it was where they met. While the vestry meeting location has changed, the name has remained the same.

Role of the Vestry

The vestry of an Episcopal church has three primary responsibilities. The first two are managerial: to take care of the parish finances and the parish buildings. The third is to choose individuals to fill various positions of leadership and representation: the choice of a rector and the selection of others as the diocesan canons may stipulate. The vestry also serves as an advisory council to the rector who by church law is the parish's chief liturgical and pastoral officer.

Membership

The vestry consists of lay members, in good standing, of the parish who are elected by the congregation at the annual meeting. St. Alban' vestry consists of no fewer than nine nor more than thirteen members who each serve a three year term. The officers of the vestry are the Rector, the Senior Warden, who is appointed by the Rector, and the Junior Warden, who is elected by the vestry from the vestry.

Meetings

Our vestry meets one evening a month, at a time and day selected by the vestry, to review and approve normal monthly operational expenses of the church, receive reports from the various committees, plan and approve capital improvement projects, and attend to the concerns of the parish. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are open to members of the congregation.

How are vestry members selected?

Before the annual meeting, the vestry forms a committee to nominate a slate of candidates to replace those vestry members whose term is scheduled to expire. With the approval of the vestry, the nominations are presented to the congregation at the annual parish meeting which is normally held in January. When the nominations are presented, the congregation is offered the opportunity to nominate candidates from the floor. When the slate is closed, the congregation votes for the candidates of their choice and the candidates receiving the highest number of votes are elected to fill the vestry vacancies.

Please give this service your prayerful thought and I am available anytime to answer any questions you may have.619-277-9705

Dick Walter, Senior Warden

December 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	2	3
4 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> Worship 9:30 am	5 Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	6 Refugee Ministry 10:30 am	7 Eucharist 6:15 pm	8 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	9	10
11 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> Worship 9:30 am Christmas Cookie Exchange	12 Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	13	14 ECW 11 am- Marechiaro's in Flynn Springs Eucharist 6:15 pm Vestry 6:45 pm	15 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	16	17
18 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> Worship 9:30 am	19 Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	20 Refugee Ministry 10:30 am	21 <i>St. Thomas, Apostle</i> Eucharist 6:15 pm	22 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	23	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> <i>Homeless Meal in the Park 3 pm</i>
25 <i>Christmas Day</i> Worship 9:30 am	26 <i>St. Stephen</i> Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	27 Office Closed	28 <i>Holy Innocents</i> Eucharist 6:15 pm	29 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	30	31 <i>Eve of the Holy Name</i>

January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>New Year's Day</i> <i>Worship 9:30 am</i>	2 Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	3 Refugee Ministry 10:30 am	4 Eucharist 6:15 pm	5 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	6	7
8 Worship 9:30 am	9 Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	10	11 Eucharist 6:15 pm	12 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	13	14
15 Worship 9:30 am	16 <i>Martin Luther King Day</i> Office Closed	17 Refugee Ministry 10:30 am	18 Eucharist 6:15 pm	19 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	20	21
22 Worship 9:30 am	23 Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	24	25 Eucharist 6:15 pm	26 Sewing Sisters 10 am Choir 7:15 pm	27	28 Homeless Meal in the Park 3 p.m.
29 Worship 9:30 am	30 Refugee Tutoring 3 pm	31				