

Herald

St. Alban's Mission:
"Christ-Centered, Radically Embracing People and Creation"

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
OF SAINT ALBAN'S PARISH, SALISBURY, MARYLAND



Merry Christmas

**December's gifts — custom,
ceremony, celebration,
consecration — come to us
wrapped up, not in tissue
and ribbons, but in
cherished memories."**

From Simple Abundance
Sarah Ban Breathnach



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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4:
Holy Eucharist Rite I Service, 9:30am

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11 :
Holy Eucharist Rite II Service, 9:30am

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18:
Holy Eucharist Rite I Service, 9:30am

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24:
Christmas Eve at Faith, 4:00pm
Christmas Eve Service at St. Alban's 10:30pm

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25:
Christmas Day Service, 9:30am

SUNDAY JANUARY 1:
Lessons and Carols Service at Faith, 11:00am

St. Alban's: Christ-Centered, Radically Embracing People and Creation



This is our identity as a parish, which we articulated with these words. We endeavor to follow Christ in welcoming "all sorts and conditions of [humanity]." We offer baptism and eucharist to all, and the pastoral offices of reconciliation, ministry to the sick, and Christian burial to those who ask. We do not discriminate with regard to gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation or identity, or mental capacity. With regard to marriage, our policy is to meet all couples desiring a Christian wedding. The legal requirements, both civil and church, must be met. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender. However, the clergy may decline to officiate for other reasons.

BLUE CHRISTMAS

For those who are lonely, grieving or at a loss during this season.

Sunday, Dec. 18th 3:00pm - 'Walking the Labyrinth - Blue Christmas' together
Led by Rector Margaret Brack, St. Alban's Outdoor Labyrinth, Salisbury, MD
[Guide for 'Walking the Labyrinth-Blue Christmas' available in church office after Dec. 9th.]

Monday, Dec. 19th 6:30pm
Blue Christmas Remembrance Service with Eucharist
Led by Rector Margaret Brack, St. Alban's Church Salisbury, MD



A Message from Rev. Margaret +



Dear St. Alban's Family & Friends,

As we prepare to enter into this Christmas Season, let us focus our thoughts with one of the Collects we use on Christmas Eve:

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Let us ask ourselves some questions during this gift-giving time:

- What does giving a gift to someone mean to you?
- How can you demonstrate your gratitude for someone's gift to you?

Now let's ask ourselves some questions in terms of living our lives as Christians:

- How can you demonstrate your gratitude for God's love for you?
- Do we consider those who are without when we are Christmas shopping? Should we perhaps pass by the more extravagant gift to allow us to purchase one for the person intended, and then give to those in need with the difference saved?

Imagine how you would celebrate Christmas if you didn't have the money or space to decorate, shop and eat a lavish meal. What would you do? What is important? I will tell you that when I stopped working to go to seminary for three years and didn't have the funds to continue celebrating Christmas for three years as we used to do before things changed! No more piling up gifts under the Christmas tree. In fact, there were no gifts under the tree which was now a 2ft one. We found that having family Zoom time was all we needed on Christmas Day. My husband and I even took the time to make a card to give to each other that had a drawing on it and that was the gift! We began seeing how taking the time to call our friends, writing to them and sharing photos was more fulfilling than sending them a package. It's hard now to go back to giving more than one gift to each other or to our children [*This does not apply to our granddaughter Penelope Madeline though!*] -since we have experienced the depth of giving of ourselves to each other. This is also how we give the gift of Christmastide to all we meet. The love of Christ which we celebrate beginning with the Nativity is the gift we share when we say hello, or hold a door for someone, or even just smiling at them from your heart.

“May you be blessed bountifully this Christmas in your hearts with Christ's love!!”

*In the Blessing of Christ's Birth,
The Rev. Margaret Brack, Rector*

Senior Warden's Corner

Jim Cockey - December 2022



It has been a privilege to serve as Senior Warden for 2022. I am especially grateful to Arlene White. I learned so much from watching her in action as a vestry member, and then as my mentor for the past year. I look forward to assisting the new Vestry leadership like Arlene supported me.

It was a pleasure working with the dedicated members of the vestry over the last three years. I have also become more aware of the many members of the church whose faithful, often unnoticed ministries keep our church functioning.

I am also deeply grateful for the work of Dee Rinehart and all the search committee members in successfully completing their mission in calling our wonderful new rector.

It has been a pleasure working with Karen Price and the Faith Lutheran leadership team.

For several years our greatest success was that we endured. Now with Mother Margaret on board, I think we will flourish.



Photos by: Kim OGrady

Pictures from last Sunday's potluck lunch with Faith Lutheran.

St. Alban's Potluck

Photos by: Kim O'Grady Article by: Arlene White

Our Pre-Thanksgiving International Pot Luck Dinner was a great success! 30+ people gathered in the parish hall on November 19 for fun, fellowship and fantastic food! We had two tables filled with entrees, salads and sides – some from around the world like chicken enchiladas, coq au vin, chicken fajitas and much, much more. And if that wasn't enough, we had many scrumptious dessert offerings as well.

We gave thanks for many things too:

- We lifted our glasses in remembrance of Juanita Isaacs who would have turned 100 that day!
- We remembered Barbara Filippelli with great fondness, using table decorations that she used many times before.
- We were able to meet, greet and welcome the Rev. Margaret Brack and her husband Jim. They enjoyed the food and the opportunity to meet and talk with many parishioners.
- We took some time to make Christmas labels for gift bags that had been donated to the Salisbury Middle School Christmas shopping bazaar. Katherine West got many colorful and creative labels that will brighten the holiday season of the families of SMS students.



Margaret intro story

An introduction to the Rev. Margaret Brack

By Jeremy Cox

It wasn't until nearly an hour into my interview with the Rev. Margaret Brack, our new rector at St. Alban's, that I finally got around to asking if she had a favorite line from the Bible. "Impossible question perhaps" is actually how I prefaced my request. But there was no hesitation on her end: "Well, I actually do," Brack responded. "And it's, 'Be still and know that I am God.'"

Don't worry. I promise to share her explanation for choosing Psalm 46:10. But it's worth reflecting a bit on those words and their relationship with the person who just spoke them.

Whether you're reading Brack's resumé or having a conversation with her, "stillness" is not a word that comes to mind.

Her professional biography depicts someone who tirelessly pursues her goals. Her background includes singing opera on professional stages; providing liturgical training to Roman Catholic churches across the country; becoming an ordained Episcopal priest; mastering the cello; raising four children with her husband, Jim; being an early advocate for marriage equality, serving as a music coordinator for large parishes; singing the National Anthem before professional sporting events; and co-leading an Episcopal environmental organization in Maryland.

Oh, and she's working on her doctor of ministry right now (virtually) at the Pacific School of Religion based in Berkeley, California.

Brack radiates energy. You know how people talk when you get them going on a topic they're passionate about? That's how it is all the time with our new reverend. She can hold forth with a depth and breadth of knowledge on virtually any given topic.

So, I have the honor of introducing her to our congregation with this space. My words can do little more than offer a distillation of first impressions. A more productive use, I think, would be to hear directly from her. So, what follows are some questions I asked her (bolded script) and her responses (italics), edited for space and clarity.



What drew you to St. Alban's? *I say the Holy Spirit. St. Alban's checked all the boxes. Care about creation care is major. There is an active lay ministry; the model you have for the vestry is a dream model. Of course, I have the major background in music and the degrees that back that up. So, of course, music's important. And your commitment to providing a space for Alcoholics Anonymous was another box that got checked.*

What would you say to people who have drifted from the church services during this time of Covid and not having a rector? *What I would say is that the church gives you something that fills up a hole or a vacancy that's in you. And it's not your fault in some ways to be drawn away, because Sunday mornings are filled with everything. But what you have to see is that Sunday service is a family feeling; it's something that draws you in, so that when you're actually there, online or in person, you feel part of something. And that's what we're hurting for. Also, we have many things that come in front of us, whatever it is, it could be a problem with your jobs, or families or something. And it's your faith that you can call to. That's what you do with Jesus, with God – that you can say, please help me.*

Continued on pg. 7

So when you come here, obviously, you get two for the price of one -- Faith Lutheran and St. Alban's in our shared ministry. Can you talk about what that means to you and your journey to be able to minister to do two different denominations like that?

Where I was a priest-in-charge at St. Thomas' Parish in Hancock, Maryland, I was also the pastor for a Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania over the last year and a half. Oh, and then I also was licensed to serve in West Virginia. And so I helped a congregation out there whose priest had become extremely ill, and he couldn't make the steps anymore. So, what was happening I believe, is that I was getting the layout to be able to do that.

So, you were at three different churches at the same time, more or less. Right, and I handled all of their items. That's why I'm saying that I understand what it's like.

What are you looking forward most to doing?
I love the idea that with the lay ministry, we can be a great collaborative. I've always worked that way.

And some people maybe see it as a weakness, or they say, they don't want to be trained to feel strong enough to be able to do their part. Most places have just the assigned roles of the wardens and maybe somebody to do something, a secretary, etc. The other thing, which is so funny, is that I like to do my sermons amongst the people. At my last church, they did not like that. They wanted to print the sermon, and they wanted it delivered up on the pulpit. When I saw on there that you want to have a sermon among the people, I was like, "Oh my goodness. Oh, my goodness. Is that beautiful?"

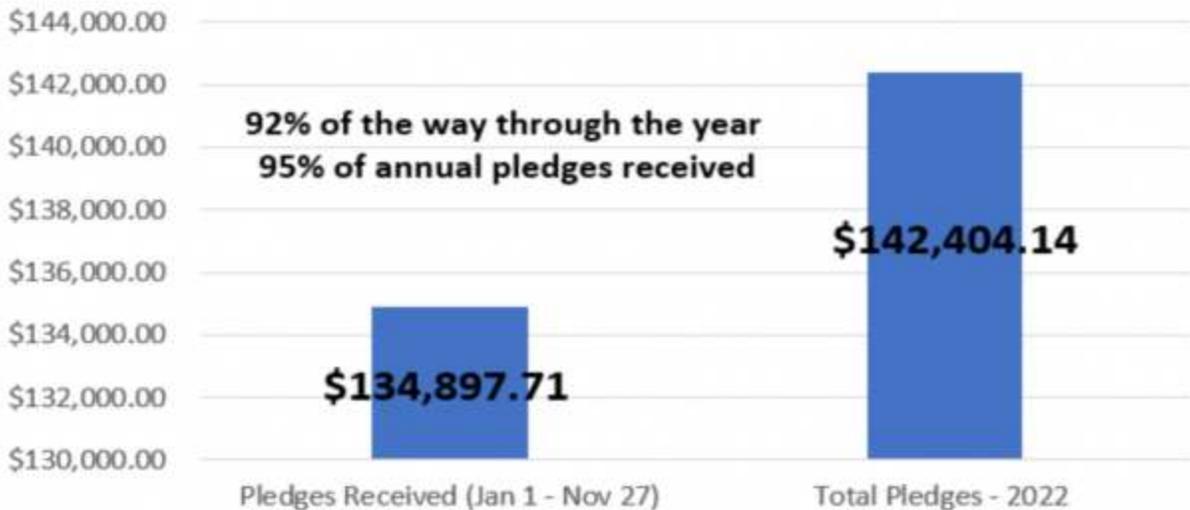
Impossible question perhaps -- do you have a favorite piece of scripture? *Well I actually do and it's "Be still and know that I am God." I used to do it in an all-day workshop, and we work on that whole phrase. If you just take that, you can just take one word off at a time and get a new lesson. So you're saying, "Be still and know that I am God." "Be still know that I am." "Be still and know that I." "Be still and know." "Be still and --" and you can fill that all off. And there's "Be still." And there's just "Be." God created you. Be.*

MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

By: Shelly Madsen, Pledge Secretary



2022 Pledge Information
 January 1 - November 27



\$24,810.89 received year-to-date in plate income.



Thank you Rev. Laura Dorsey for serving as our Supply Priest and the wonderful care you provided for the St. Alban's Congregation.

Photos by: Pat Layton



Update from Care of Neighbor

By: Mary Doak

Small Milky Way bars were delivered to 13 new teachers at WiHi with a card saying "Your passion for teaching is out of this world." with St. Alban's Episcopal Church and our logo. Wicomico High School is our Faith Partner. IMAGE ATTACHED

We are now cooking a hot meal monthly to go along with the sandwiches we have been making for the Joseph House. In November, we provided chicken vegetable soup, sandwiches, cookies and drinks for 40 clients of the Joseph House.

We had a food drive for the men's shelter sponsored by Hearts and Hands Ending Homelessness. The food drive was during the month of November to help stock the kitchen at the shelter. If you would like to help at the shelter, please click here for more information

We have put together a team to make dinner for the men's shelter one evening a month from Dec-March. Dinner will be made in our kitchen and delivered to the shelter, as there is no room at the shelter to cook. They have volunteers to serve the food but can still use volunteers to talk to clients or greeters.

We were asked to donate men's and women's gently used coats to H.O.P.E. There were boxes in the parish hall for coats during the month of November. To read more about H.O.P.E., click here.

You responded, as always, with an outpouring of generosity to all of these Care of Neighbor actions. Thank you!

If you are interested in being a part of the Care of Neighbor initiatives or have any questions, please contact Mary Doak at marydoak@gmail.com





American Kidney Fund

By: Leighann Bunting

This year, Trystian was invited as an Honored Guest to The Hope Affair put on by the American Kidney Fund, "AKF". The night was amazing. Trystian and his mom Leighann had a great time and enjoyed many treats and a wonderful dinner. During the show part of the night, many videos were played that included snippets of Trystian to advocate for Kidney disease, and requests for donations. AKF works on behalf of the 37 million Americans living with kidney disease, and the millions more at risk. Trystian has been blessed many times from the AKF, with a program called Camp All Starts. In Camp All Stars, children get to play games, learn new skills, as well as a chance to meet and talk to other children fighting with Kidney diseases. If you would like to donate to the American Kidney fund, you can do so here in Trystian's name by using the QR code or visit [kidneyfund.org](https://www.kidneyfund.org). For every dollar donated, 97 cents goes directly to patients and programs.



All Saints Day Celebration

Photos By: Cristina Machin

All Saints Day Celebration, Nov. 6th; The service and lighting of the candles led by The Rev. Alisha King, and display by Mike Mathers (Worship Liaison for Vestry). Photos: leaflets that had all the episcopal Saints were posted every where, lighting candles in memory of those who have passed away, and photo display by the columbarium with pictures of love ones who are no longer with us. Thank you Rev. Alisha and Mike Mathers for this beautiful service.





Advent Calendar Activities and Ideas

Create your own personalized Advent calendar of the things you would like to do each day.



You could simply make a list numbered 1-25 or use a calendar format. ENJOY!!!

- Decorate your bedroom door for Christmas.
- Host a kid's cookie swap.
- Read a Christmas book.
- Create a Christmas shirt.
- Shop for a new Christmas ornament.
- Visit a sick or elderly friend.
- Make paper snowflakes.
- Attend a local Christmas activity or party.
- Make hot chocolate.
- Attend a Christmas parade.
- Do a Christmas word search.
- Build a gingerbread house from graham crackers.
- Watch *Charlie Brown's Christmas*.
- Create Christmas cards.
- Collect canned goods for charity.
- Create a paper chain for the Christmas tree.
- Go on a hunt for mistletoe.
- Learn about the real Saint Nicholas.
- Make a Christmas wreath with a paper plate.
- Sip hot apple cider.
- Make jingling jewelry.
- Attend a Christmas play or concert.
- Plan random acts of kindness.
- Go buy a new toy for charity.
- Make a Christmas wreath from greens.
- Take Christmas pictures.
- Play a family board game.
- Create a homemade gift for a teacher.
- Sprinkle the yard with reindeer food (dry oatmeal).
- Go Christmas shopping with your family.
- Have an indoor snowball fight (with styrofoam or paperballs).
- Make s'mores.
- Visit Santa at the Mall.
- Make presents for a pet.
- Make homemade Christmas ornaments to give and to keep.
- Go sledding.
- Wrap presents.
- Make Christmas pancakes (with cookie cutters and sprinkles).
- Play in the snow.
- Clean up old toys to donate to charity.
- Go caroling.
- Make cookies and deliver them to service providers (firemen, police, EMT, postal workers, etc.)
- Build a snowman (from styrofoam or snow).
- Look outside for items to make a winter centerpiece.
- Make a birdfeeder.
- Read the Christmas Story from the Bible.
- Make homemade dog treats for an animal shelter.
- Host a Christmas tea party.
- Camp out in the living room
- Mail Christmas cards.
- Dress up for dinner.
- Make homeless blessing bags.
- Sew a handmade Christmas gift together.
- Play a Christmas Matching Game.
- String cranberries or popcorn for a Christmas tree garland.
- Write a letter to Santa.
- Go ice skating.
- Host a Christmas Scavenger Hunt.
- Make popcorn balls.
- Dance to Christmas music.
- Bake a birthday cake for Jesus.
- Watch *The Polar Express* in your pajamas.
- Attend a special church service.
- Bake Christmas cookies.
- Color a Christmas coloring page.
- Host a kid's cookie swap.
- Make a Christmas craft.
- Decorate your bed with Christmas lights.
- Write and illustrate a Christmas book.
- Have a red and green dinner.
- Visit a live nativity.
- Have breakfast with Santa.
- Take a drive to look at Christmas lights.
- Make a Christmas tree tic-tac-toe game.
- Act out the Christmas story.

Adapted from information from
www.meetpenny.com

Welcome Rev. Margaret Brack

Pictures by: Sam Hotton and Jeremy Cox, Michelle Ben, Cristina Machin.

Photos from November 20, 2022.

Our first Sunday led by The Rev. Margaret Brack and our 2022 Annual Meeting.

This Sunday was Margaret's first Sunday as our rector and also the end of year C in the Christian calendar.

Pictures of Alisha- last day of having our wonderful deacon Alisha King.

Lynne Peverley from the Children's Home Foundation <https://www.childrenshomefoundation.org/> - encouraging participation from St. Alban's and explaining all the projects that they help with.

Photos of Rev. Margaret during service.

Pictures of the choir- Margaret and Jim are part of the choir

Photo of Jim, Margaret and Steve during the Annual Meeting







Ben's Red Swings cleanup photos 2022

Photos by: Pat Layton and Charlie Cox



Greetings Florida! Cindy and Don Hartigan are living with their daughter in Jacksonville, FL. "We are enjoying the grandkids, joined the YMCA here and working with a realtor to find a home. Please say "Hi" to everyone at St. Albans and have a wonderful Advent Season.

St. Alban's and Community News

FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

Busy December!

Dec 4th, 9:30 am -Chili, bread and cookie sale by Shelly Madsen- Come and get it (no pre-orders). To benefit the Maryland Food Bank.

Dec. 11th, 4pm- Caroling! Please sign up (breeze way sign-up sheet) or let us know if you have a request for a homebound parishioner. Nancy Link will be coordinating the groups and music. We will meet St. Alban's to be split into groups so we can sing joyfully to all of those who will enjoy some cheer this season.

Dec. 17th- Come and celebrate Suz's ordination to the Sacred Order of Deacons! Katherine West will be coordinating the reception following the service- let her know if you can help.

Dec. 21st- 4:30pm – **Greening of the church** – Help decorate our church to celebrate Jesus' birth!

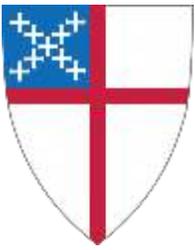
Adopt-A-Grandparent program brings joys to seniors

What do you love most about the holiday season? Brightly-wrapped gifts under a festive tree? Spending time with family and dear friends? Gathering around a table for a holiday feast? For many seniors, the holidays are a lonely time. Friends have passed on, family has moved far away. Ongoing financial struggles may mean there is barely enough money to buy food, much less anything special to mark the holiday.

Enter MAC's 2022 Adopt-A-Grandparent program, ready to bring joy to area seniors this holiday. Here's how it works: MAC provides a first name last initial and a small wish list. Community supporters are invited to contact MAC and "adopt" a senior from the list to buy gifts for. Gifts should be wrapped or put in a holiday bag and delivered to MAC. We will make sure the clients receive their gift in time for the holidays. In addition, general suggested gift items include: Personal care items – shampoo, toothpaste, mouthwash, shaving cream, Essential items – paper towels, toilet paper, tissues, hand sanitizer, hand soap, disposable masks. Nonperishable staples – tuna, soup, pasta, small serving canned vegetables, or canned stew or spaghetti, etc, Basic clothing – men's or women's pajamas, sweaters and socks, all sizes; socks, in addition to Depends-type adult underwear Little extras – word puzzle books, stationary, stamps, envelopes, magazines, gloves and scarves Gift cards – Walmart, Food Lion, Rite Aid, Walgreens, Apple Drug, Boscov's, (for groceries prescriptions and essentials), or Dairy Queen, Hobby Lobby or Michaels, Dunkin Donuts for that little something special. Also welcome are Amazon gift cards that can be used to buy special needs items online.



Would you like to remember a local senior this holiday? To participate in the Adopt-A-Grandparent program, call Valerie Wagner 410-742-0505, Ext. 112, or email her at vwagner@macinc.org



St. Alban's
Episcopal Church
Herald Newsletter

P.O. Box 1511
Salisbury, MD 21802

Winters chill is in the air... but some trees are still green! What's going on here? Join Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake and the Wicomico Environmental Trust for a special exploration of coniferous trees, their benefits to the environment, different ways coniferous trees can be identified, and the science behind what makes some stay green! We'll walk the conifer-clad trails of

Winterplace Park as we sip hot cocoa and learn! As our walk concludes, we'll hear a reflection from Reverend John Wright on the concept of "evergreen".

We'll meet in the main parking lot and gather underneath the flag pole before starting off on our walk. We expect to be walking for around an hour and a half, with frequent pauses to examine trees and our broader surroundings. Please bring your own mug or heat-protected travel cup for hot cocoa and dress for the weather!

Where: Winterplace Park
6737 Blue Ribbon Rd, Salisbury, MD
Contact: Mollie Rudow
mollie@interfaithchesapeake.org

Cocoa, Conifers, and Creation Care

Let's walk the trails of Winterplace Park to take in the sights and sounds of the frozen season! We'll sip hot cocoa while discussing coniferous trees, learning about why some stay green all winter and their benefits to the environment, followed by a reflection on the concept of being "evergreen" by Reverend John Wright.

January 8th,
2022 at 2:00 PM
at Winterplace
Park in Salisbury,
MD

Wicomico
Environmental
Trust
Clean Water
Smart Growth

Interfaith
Partners for the
CHESAPEAKE