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January 2018

the newsletter of St. Alban's Anglican Parish

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## Rector's Message for the New Year 2018

As we begin the new year A.D. 2018, we have much to be thankful for and, yet, as always, so much to do. In the year last past, the comfortable Gospel of Christ has been taught and preached, the Sacraments administered, and we have enjoyed the fellowship of our parish family at our picnics, socials, work days and Thanksgiving dinner. We have reached out to the needy and hungry through our food bank, and have offered programs beneficial to the community around us.

To be sure, we will "press on the Kingdom" in these ways in the coming year. However, what about parish growth? How will we bring others to share in the riches we have here at St. Alban's? I will try to address this in my Rector's notes each month and in our work together this upcoming year, and this month I'd like to talk about the core or church growth.

Periodically, we offer Mass intentions for the growth of our parish in two ways: size and sancti-

ty. The latter drives the former. If we do not grow in sanctity, if we do not grow in grace, we will not grow in numbers. It is that simple. The underlying truth behind growth in sanctity is the constant need to grow in love, and this is the theme of this month's message.

The Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of love. It reveals to us that God is love, and His love to us. As love itself, it binds in oneness the Ever-Blessed Trinity in an eternal jubilation of joyous existence. His love overflows in the mystery of creation. It reflects His nature and attributes. It advances, as we have seen at Christmas and Epiphany, to its perfection in the Incarnation. It is there that God joins it to Himself by the union of the divine and human nature of Christ in the Word.

Love flows from its Incarnate source in the person of the Holy Spirit, who fills the Church and transforms it into a likeness of Christ. It makes the Church, the Bride of God. The Church in its completed fullness has been seen from all eternity, and been predestined in its means of justification, and the completeness



of its numbers, and the elevation of its sanctified life.

God is light, and the light is life, and that life is love. Our life is as nothing worth unless transfigured by the active presence of the loving God in us. His love is a redeeming and justifying and sanctifying love. His love is a purifying, illuminating, transfiguring love. His love is a divine love, a penetrating, triumphant love. It is a love beyond our measuring; permanent, inexhaustible, because it is the very love which is God Himself.

God's love surrounds us by its providence. It pleads with us by His Spirit, invites us by its compassion, embraces us in its mercy, re-creates us by its grace. As we have heard during Advent, it makes us partakes of the divine nature, fills us with the spirit of adopted sons, perfects us in the fullness of God, by His indwelling. It leads us on to the eternal reign of God Incarnate.

Our love for God, as the product of His grace, is a living principle of action in us and in our parish work. For us as Christians the dominant motive of action in us is the love of God. If we are a loving people, God's love into a habit. In turn, habit, when formed, becomes kingly and rules the soul.

It arms itself with the holy resolve to do all things for the love of God, that it may be less unworthy of His love. It never ceases to sweep the house diligently by self-examination, and to search for the lost coin. As the love of God grows in us, it grows, like the love in God, out of itself. So it is that a heart filled with love it desires to work for others. It hears the cry of humanity lying in darkness.

Sometimes we feel the weakness of the Church, wounded and stricken by the world. At times, we may be able to do but a little, but we must never wrap the talent in a napkin and bury it. In every corner of society there is work to be done. The principle of the Incarnation, which God "brought down as at this time from heaven" to save us,

must be our example. Why should we ever let our human fears conquer us, when it is the omnipotent word of the Master that bids us "Come"?

We are living in days when the great battle between Christ and his foes is underway. Let us not be like the children of Ephraim, who, being harnessed and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. There is no cause for which a man can live so worthy of efforts as the cause of Christ. Nothing is so worth knowing as the will of God in our regard. Nothing so worth doing as obedience to His will. Let us be up and be doing, and going forward showing forth the love of Christ to family, friends and to all we encounter.

As love grows as the ruling principle within us, it fills our whole nature. The soul, being emptied of self-love, attains to a heavenly calm and assured peace. As we become one with God, God puts Himself at our disposal, for our wills are His. Secured in the love of God, the soul passes safely through the purifying desolation which may beset it. Even here God fills it with the sweetness and light of joy and transformation, and becomes the life of its life and the soul of its soul.

So we grow in sanctity, and so we will grow in those seeking the love we have found and show forth.

Blessings for a happy, healthy and wonderful new year, filled with Christ's love!

Canon Nalls

Christmastide 2018

## Twelfth Night Party

### Twelfth Night-January 5<sup>th</sup>

There will be a Twelfth Night gathering on Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the parish hall. Join as we gather as a parish family to mark the end of Christmas and the beginning of Epiphany in a traditionally English way. In addition to fellowship, conversation and, perhaps, a little singing, we will have light hors d'oeuvres and desserts.

## Epiphany Service and House Blessings

There will be a Mass of the Epiphany (Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles) at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup> following Morning Prayer (sung) at 8:00 a.m.

Epiphany tide is also the season for house blessings. If you wish a blessing for your home, please contact the rector at [stalbandsrector@outlook.com](mailto:stalbandsrector@outlook.com) to schedule a visit.

## A Farewell to Fr. Grant and Family

Fr. Mark Grant and his lovely family will be leaving us for a new work for Christ in the coming year. Please join us for a reception during coffee hour following the 11:00 a.m. Mass on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> to see them off and to wish them well.

## Sunday School

Sunday school for children will continue at the 9:30 a.m. hour on Sundays. In addition, Fr. Ayres will be available for catechism instruction by mutual arrangement.

## Adult Studies

### Wednesday Study

The Wednesday Bible study continues with our exegesis of II Samuel. We will continue into the spring with studies of the oft-overlooked historical books, following with I and II Kings.

### Sunday Study-New: The Apostles Creed

Beginning on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, we will begin a study of the Apostle's Creed. The Apostles Creed has come to be regarded as an excellent summary of the Christian faith. It is fundamental and common to most people who call themselves Christians. It was because of this that the creeds developed in public occasions throughout the church. They were used at Baptisms when the church gathered to affirm the communal belief. The Latin word "credo" means "I believe" and it is from this word that we have obtained the word creed. A

creed is a statement which contains a summary of our basic beliefs.

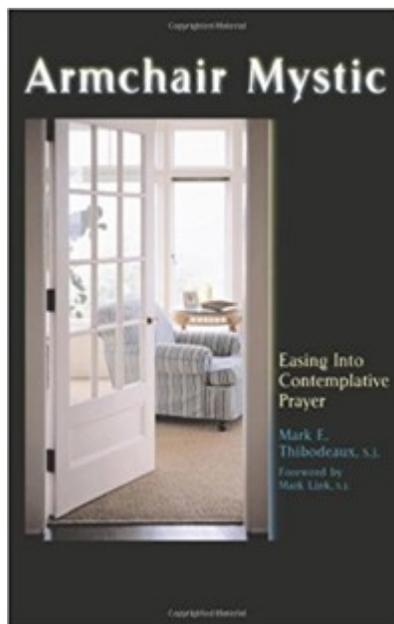
Over the next few weeks, as we approach Lent, we will consider how the Apostles Creed came into being. We will also consider how the creed can be helpful to us and what place creeds in general should have in our private and liturgical worship.

Please bring a Bible and note taking material.

## Men's Breakfast

We would like to begin a men's breakfast the fourth Saturday of each month. These will be informal gatherings to share food and take on a topic of the day. Please send an expression of interest to Canon Nalls at [stalbandsrector@outlook.com](mailto:stalbandsrector@outlook.com) and indicate whether you prefer to have these at the parish or off-site. Aunt Sara's on Brook Road has offered to make available a nice space just off the main dining area for us if we wish.

## Recommended Reading



*The Armchair Mystic: Easing Into Contemplative Prayer*

by Fr. Mark Thibodeaux, S.J.

(April 1, 2001)

(ISBN-10:

0867164301

ISBN-13: 978-

0867164305)

As discussed in our adult study on December 31st, this is a very user-friendly book blends theory and practice, as it takes the reader through the first steps of contemplative prayer. *Armchair Mystic* begins with the necessary details of time and place to pray, then

to pray, then presents the maturation of the prayer life in four stages: Talking at God, Talking to God, Listening to God and Being With God. Each chapter begins with an orientation and ends with a concluding summary. Step-by-step exercises throughout the book provide concrete examples of how to use the concepts discussed.

*Armchair Mystic* will prove invaluable to those of you are new to contemplative prayer, or who wish to deepen your experience of it. I have read many books on prayer and, several years ago, authored one. This book contains many of the things I wish I had said in my own writing. This is by far the best! It gets at the heart of what prayer is really about—a right relationship with God and being with God in prayer.

**Quote of the Month**



“And we, too, being called by His will to Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

— Clement of Rome, *The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians*

**Treasurer’s Report-  
December 2017**



The Vestry is thankful for faithful giving. Final results for 2017 reflects significant legacy gift receipts, contributions well above pledge, restricted donations to Building Reserve and Debt retirement, and also pre-payments on 2018 pledged giving. In total, balances reflect giving at \$30,498 above budget.

General Offerings year-to-date exceed budget by \$11,588, of which \$4,000 is designated as 2018 pledge pre-payments. Restricted gifts of \$2,600 for mortgage principal pre-payments were received, bringing 2017 advances on debt retirement to \$3,250. Restricted gifts also increased Building Fund Reserves by \$775 and Food Bank by \$660. Income for Building Use remains well below budget.

Year to date administrative expenses were \$632 below budget. DMAS assessment increases at mid-year, an insurance Pre-Pay of \$1,543 and utilities comprise \$3,809 of the \$6,114 above-budget expense condition at year end. Vestry approved actions and certain lesser accounts also contributed to the over budget condition. The restricted Building Fund Reserve incurred no expenses in December.

As of end year, cash-on-hand is \$43,946 of which \$4,000 is advanced 2018 pledges, \$7,152 is restricted (Includes Building Fund Reserve of \$5,374, Food Bank of \$1,599, and Outreach of \$164). The mortgage balance is \$52,750.

**St. Alban’s Vestry for 2018**

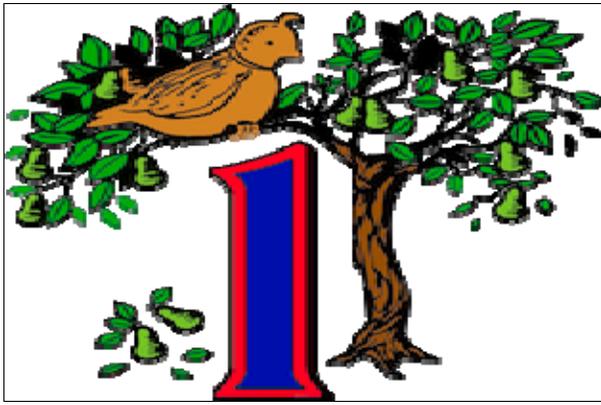


The 2018 Vestry of St. Alban’s were elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 3, 2017. Those vestrymen who are currently serving include (above l. to r.) Ed Darby, Senior Warden, John Bugg, Junior Warden, and June Alleyne. Newly elected to Vestry are Terry (Teresa) Smelley and Gail Hekman for 3 years, and Jeff Barlow for one year to complete Bev Bouse’s term.

Appointed Parish Officers are Eunice Green. Clerk of the Vestry, John Hekman, Treasurer. The president of the Vestry is Canon Nalls.



## The 12 Days of Christmas



The 12 Days of Christmas are now most famous as a song about someone receiving lots of presents from their 'true love'. However, to get to the song there had to be the days to start with!

The 12 Days of Christmas start on Christmas Day and last until the evening of the 5th January - also known as Twelfth Night. The 12 Days have been celebrated in Europe since before the middle ages and were a time of celebration.

The 12 Days each traditionally celebrate a feast day for a saint and/or have different celebrations:

- Day 1 (25th December): Christmas Day - celebrating the Birth of Jesus
- Day 2 (26th December also known as Boxing Day): St Stephen's Day. He was the first Christian martyr (someone who dies for their faith). It's also the day when the Christmas Carol 'Good King Wenceslas' takes place.
- Day 3 (27th December): St John the Apostle (One of Jesus's Disciples and friends)
- Day 4 (28th December): The Feast of the Holy Innocents - when people remember the baby boys which King Herod killed when he was trying to find and kill the Baby Jesus.
- Day 5 (29th December): St Thomas Becket. He was Archbishop of Canterbury in the 12th century and was murdered on 29th December 1170 for challenging the King's authority over the Church.
- Day 6 (30th December): St Egwin of Worcester.
- Day 7 (31st December): New Year's Eve

(known as Hogmanay in Scotland). Pope Sylvester I is traditionally celebrated on this day. He was one of the earliest popes (in the 4th Century). In many central and eastern European countries (including Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland and Slovenia) New Year's Eve is still sometimes called 'Silvester'. In the UK, New Year's Eve was a traditional day for 'games' and sporting competitions. Archery was a very popular sport and during the middle ages it was the law that it had to be practiced by all men between ages 17-60 on Sunday after Church! This was so the King had lots of very good archers ready in case he need to go to war!

- Day 8 (1st January): 1st January - Mary, the Mother of Jesus
- Day 9 (2nd January): St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen, two important 4th century Christians.
- Day 10 (3rd January): Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. This remembers when Jesus was officially 'named' in the Jewish Temple. It's celebrated by different churches on a wide number of different dates!
- Day 11 (4th January): St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American saint, who lived in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the past it also celebrated the feast of Saint Simon Stylites (who lived on a small platform on the top of a pillar for 37 years!).
- Day 12 (5th January also known as Epiphany Eve): St. John Neumann who was the first Bishop in America, lived in the 19th century.

## Twelfth Night

Twelfth Night was a big time of celebration with people holding large parties. During these parties, often the roles in society were reversed with the servants being served by the rich people. This dated back to medieval and Tudor times when Twelfth Night marked the end of 'winter' which had started on 31st October with All Hallows Eve (Halloween).

At the start of Twelfth Night the Twelfth Night

cake was eaten. This was a rich cake made with eggs and butter, fruit, nuts and spices. The modern Italian Panettone is the cake we currently have that's most like the old Twelfth Night cake.

A dried pea or bean was cooked in the cake. Whoever found it was the Lord (or Lady) of Misrule for the night. The Lord of Misrule led the celebrations and was dressed like a King (or Queen). This tradition goes back to the Roman celebrations of Saturnalia. In later times, from about the Georgian period onwards, to make the Twelfth Night 'gentile', two tokens were put in the cake (one for a man and one for a woman) and whoever found them became the 'King' and 'Queen' of the Twelfth Night party.

In English Cathedrals, during the middle ages, there was the custom of the 'Boy Bishop' where a boy from the Cathedral or monastery school was elected as a Bishop on 6th December (St Nicholas's Day) and had the authority of a Bishop (except to perform Mass) until 28th December. King Henry VIII banned the practice in 1542 although it came back briefly under Mary I in 1552 but Elizabeth I finally stopped it during her reign.

During Twelfth Night it was traditional for different types of pipes to be played, especially bagpipes. Lots of games were played including ones with eggs. These included tossing an egg between two people moving further apart during each throw - drop it and you lose; and passing an egg around on spoons. Another popular game was 'snapdragon' where you picked raisins or other dried fruit out of a tray of flaming brandy!

The first Monday after the Christmas feast has finished was known as 'Plough Monday' as this was when farming work would all begin again!

In many parts of the UK, people also went Wassailing on Twelfth Night.

Twelfth Night is also known as Epiphany Eve. In many countries it's traditional to put the figures of the Wise Men/Three Kings into the Nativity Scene on Epiphany Eve ready to celebrate Epiphany on the 6th January.

It's also traditional to take your Christmas decorations down following Twelfth Night.

Twelfth Night is also the name of a famous play written by William Shakespeare. It's thought it was written in 1601/1602 and was first per-

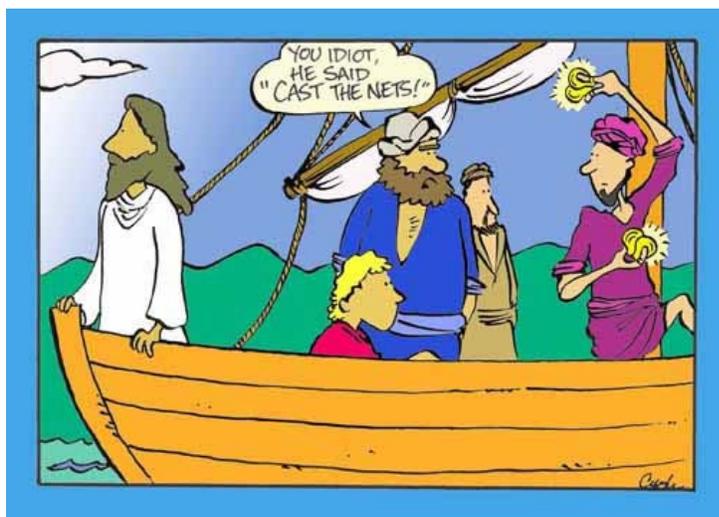
formed at Candlemas in 1602, although it wasn't published until 1623.



Wassailing\* apple trees on Twelfth Night in Maplehurst, West Sussex,

\*The orchard-visiting wassail refers to the ancient custom of visiting orchards in cider-producing regions of England, reciting incantations and singing to the trees to promote a good harvest for the coming year.

\*\*Wassail is a beverage of hot mulled cider, drunk traditionally as an integral part of wassailing, a Medieval Christmastide English drinking ritual intended to ensure a good cider apple harvest the following year.



# January 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 7 EPIPHANY ! Eucharist at 8:30 Adult Ed at 9:30 Mass 11:00 Evensong 6 pm  14 EPIPHANY !i MP at 8:30 Adult ed at 9:30 Mass 11:00 Evensong 6 pm  21 EPIPHANY !ii Eucharist at 8:30 Adult ed at 9:30 Mass 11:00 Evensong 6 pm  28 SEPTUAGESIMA MP at 8:30 Adult ed at 9:30 Mass 11:00 Evensong 6 pm	1 CIRCUMCISM OF CHRIST  8 Morning Prayer 8am  15 Morning Prayer 8am  22 Morning Prayer 8am  29 Morning Prayer 8am	2  9 Morning Prayer 8am  16 Morning Prayer 8am  23 Morning Prayer 8am  30 Morning Prayer 8am	3 Bible Study Noon-Holy Eucharist and Healing Service  10 Morning Prayer 8am Bible Study Noon-Holy Eucharist and Healing Service  17 Morning Prayer 8am Bible Study Noon-Holy Eucharist and Healing Service  24 Morning Prayer 8am Bible Study Noon-Holy Eucharist and Healing Service  31 Morning Prayer 8am Bible Study Noon-Holy Eucharist and Healing Service	4  11 Morning Prayer 8am  18 Morning Prayer 8am  25 CONVERSION OF S.PAUL Morning Prayer 8am	5 <b>TWELFTH NIGHT</b> Morning Prayer 8am 6 :30pm Twelfth Night Party  12 Morning Prayer 8am  19 Morning Prayer 8am  26 Morning Prayer 8am	 6 Morning Prayer 8am Mass of the Epiphany 9am  13 Morning Prayer 8am  20 Morning Prayer 8am  27 Morning Prayer 8am Men's Breakfast

THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST, COMMEMORATED ON JANUARY 1ST

AND WHEN EIGHT DAYS were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

— Luke 2:21



Worship



## January Birthdays

- John Hekman on the 14th
- Thomas Darby on the 17th
- Kathryn Farmer on the 19th
- Bill Nash on the 19th
- Laura Nalls on the 22nd
- Holli Brinton on the 26th
- George Lampley on the 29th

## Hospitality Assignments

- The following groups are assigned for coffee hours.
- Jan 7- Altar Guild/Ladies
  - Jan 14- Ushers/Lay readers
  - Jan 21- Parish/Vestry
  - Jan 28- Men's Club/Choir

St. Alban's is a traditional Anglican parish located Richmond, Virginia. St. Alban's is committed to Christianity as a way of life. Faithfulness to the ancient faith, reverence in worship, love for God and each other and holiness in life are the hallmarks of the parish. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to become a part of our growing parish family! We will embrace you, pray for you, and encourage you as we strive together to attain the kingdom of heaven.

### BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH SUNDAY

Every Sunday is "Bring a Friend to Church" Sunday. Let's each try to remember to invite our friends to share our parish's life in Christ.



## Worship Schedule



- Sundays

Sunday 8:30am - 9:30am Holy Eucharist (1st and 3rd, 5th)-Morning Prayer (2nd and 4th)

Sunday 9:30am - 10:30pm Adult Study and Sunday School

Sunday 11:00 am-12 Noon Holy Eucharist (music)

Sunday 6:00pm - 7:00pm Choral Evensong

- Wednesdays

Wednesday 12:00 Noon-12:45 Holy Eucharist and Healing Service

- Daily

Monday-Saturday 8:00am-8:25am Matins (Chanted Morning Prayer)

- Holy Days

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Rector's blog: <https://thecathedralclose.org/>

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## St. Alban's Anglican Parish

4006 Hermitage Road  
Richmond, Virginia 23227

Phone: 804-262-6100

Fax: 804-262-6171

E-mail: [stalbansacc@gmail.com](mailto:stalbansacc@gmail.com)

WEBSITE: <http://www.stalbansacc.org/>

