



The Albanac

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
5930 Warriors Trail, Bovina, Mississippi
www.stalbansbovina.org

December 2020



Children's Outdoor Chapel Service

Children's Service



Led by the Reverend Elisabeth Malphurs, St. Alban's children and parents gathered at the outdoor chapel on November 15 for a late afternoon Children's Service to celebrate being together and to thank God for His many blessings.

In welcoming everyone, Rev. Elisabeth explained that the word "Eucharist" literally means thanksgiving and was an appropriate focus for the service, given the fact that Thanksgiving Day was then only days away.

Harris Southall volunteered to read the lesson from Chapter 8 of Deuteronomy in which Moses describes to the Israelites the bounty awaiting them in the Promised Land and reminds them to obey God's commands, practice humility, and remain thankful for all God has done for them.

Rev. Elisabeth read Luke's account of Jesus' healing of ten lepers, only one of whom returns to praise God and to thank Jesus for making him well.

The children and I talked about things for which they are thankful and then made a Chain of Thanksgivings. Both children and adults wrote on slips of paper the names of people and things that bless their lives. These slips of paper became links in a colorful chain which was draped on the altar prior to the Eucharist and later moved to the little altar in the Parish House. The group also used “A Litany of Thanksgiving” from, *The Book of Common Prayer* (pp 837) as reminders of other ways they are blessed.

Rev. Elisabeth invited the children to gather around the altar to help her celebrate the Eucharist. They raised their arms in praise and made the sign of the cross with her and then received the bread.

Following the blessing, the children ran for the play yard while adults talked and moved candles and other items from the chapel back to the church.

“O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done.” from *The Book of Common Prayer* (pp 833).

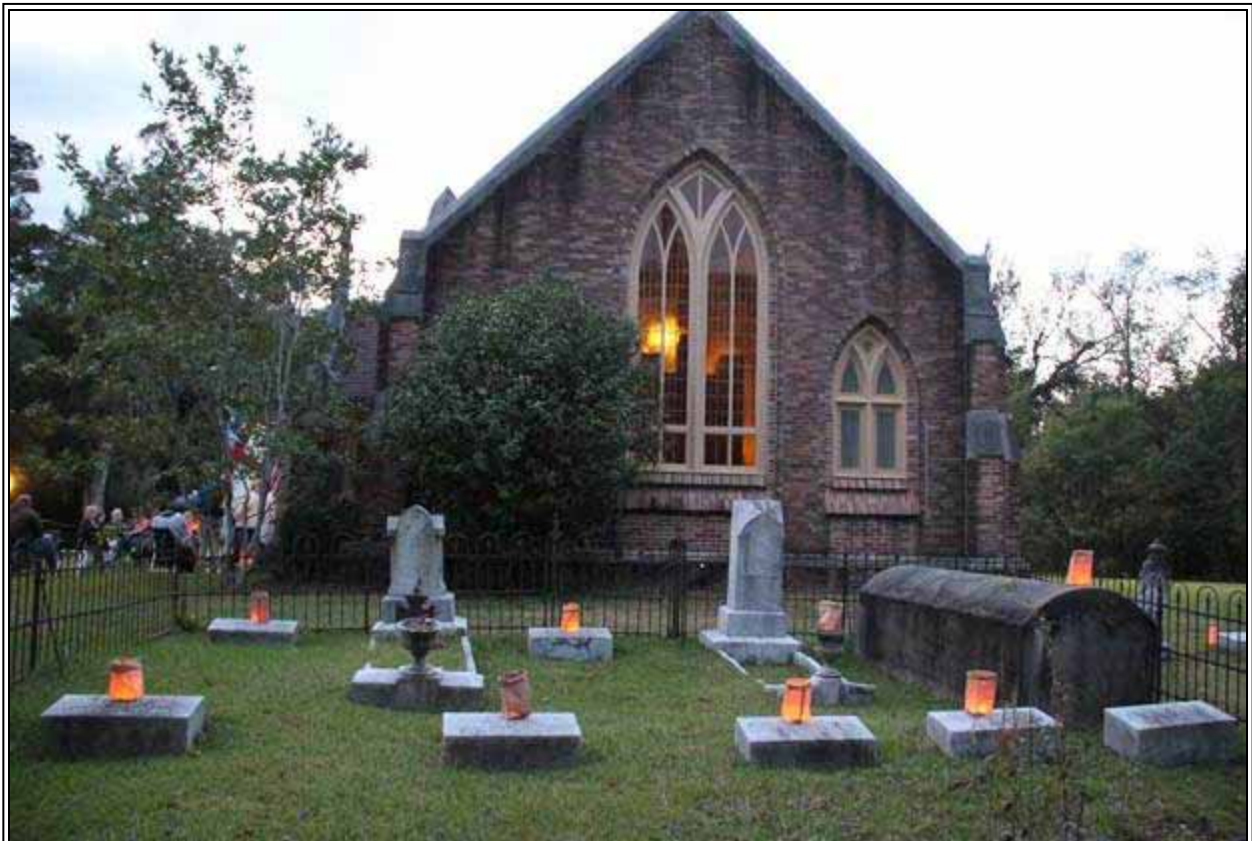
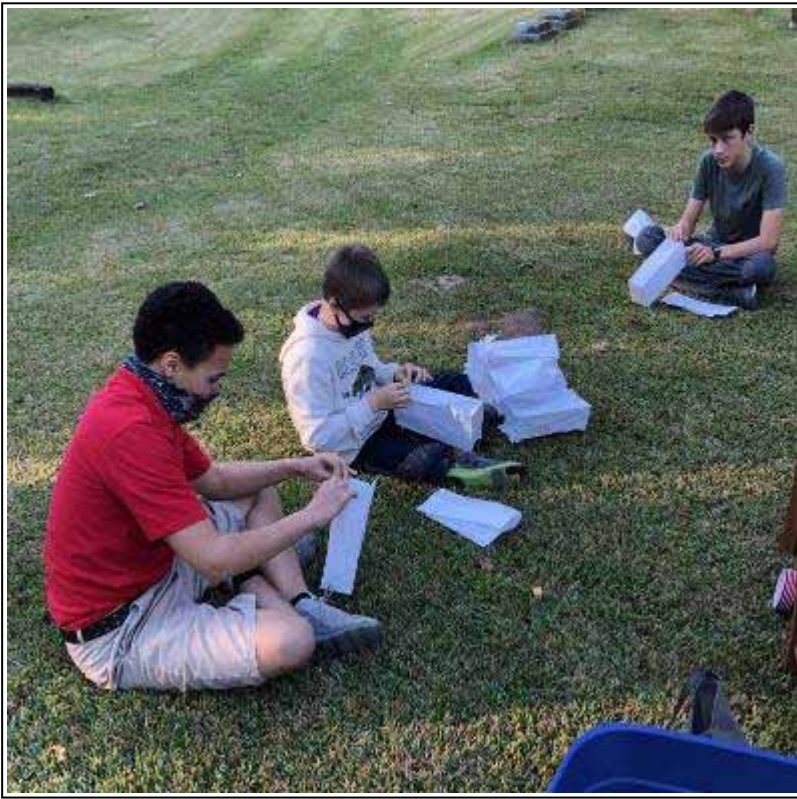
Betsy Selby



All Souls' Eve Service

On Sunday, November 1, we celebrated two feasts of the church, the Feast of All Saints in the morning, and the Feast of All Souls (commemorated on November 2) in the evening. The All Souls' Eve service was a moment to pause and remember those we love but see no longer. It included the reading of the necrology, or the list of those who are buried in the St. Alban's cemetery and other loved ones who have died. The youth group also lit luminaries at every grave in the cemetery, a beautiful sight as night fell.





Boy Scout's Workday in Outdoor Chapel

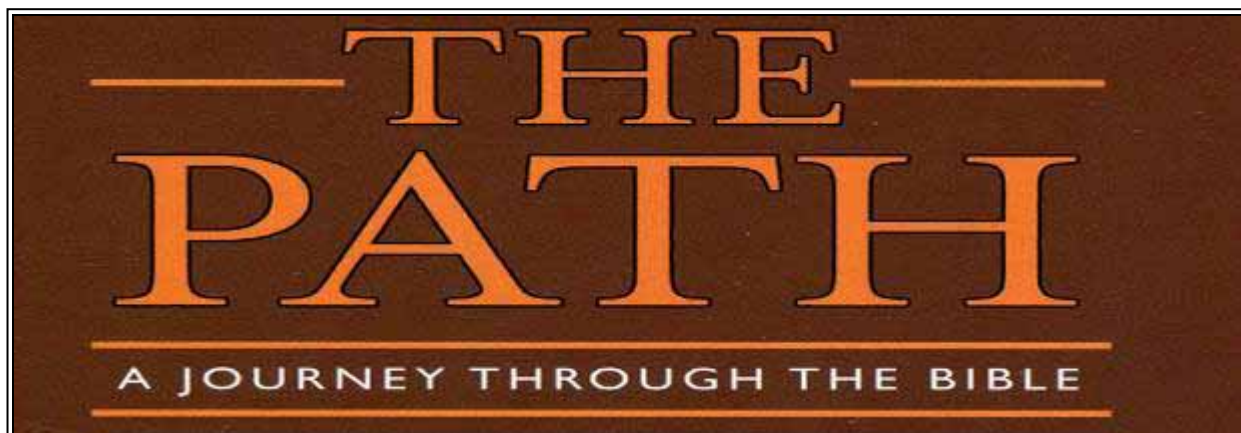
On Saturday, November 21, local boy scouts and church members gathered to make improvements to the outdoor chapel and grounds. The outdoor chapel is getting a new path steps, altar, as well as several other enhancements including pressure washing the seats and cleaning the area.



Landscaping and Road Improvements

Members of the church landscaping committee began work on clearing overgrown sections of the property along the side of the cemetery. The driveway has been fixed with improved drainage, new culvert and slag road surface.



Following *The Path*

We have been following *The Path*, our guide through the Bible, since August, making our way from the story of creation in Genesis through the calling of Abraham and Sarah, the exodus from Egypt, and the establishment of the people in the promised land. Each week, we've explored our story through sermons and small group discussions, which have taken place over Zoom and in person. We are going to pause from our journey through *The Path* for Advent and Christmas so that we can focus on this season of the church year, but we will resume *The Path* on January 3. If you are interested in joining a small group for the second half of our study, please speak with Elisabeth.

As we conclude this part of *The Path*, participants were asked to think about what they were learning. As you'll see in their comments below, *The Path* has produced some shifts in perspective, but perhaps most important has been the sense of connection it has provided during this difficult year. God's Word is alive and active, shaping us into the people of God in the year 2020 just as surely as it did centuries and millennia ago!

—Rev. Elisabeth

—Comments by Participants—

The fellowship and attention to this terrific program has provided me with a renewed energy for study and review of the scriptures. I see a much clearer path to Jesus in the selected readings and get useful and wise feedback and questions from my fellow sojourners. I believe *The Path* has made this horrible year much more tolerable and am able to celebrate God's Wonderful Word. Thanks.

—David Pruett

The Path has been a very enjoyable Bible Study. I have found the reading very informative and our discussions of the study have been so enjoyable.

—Dawn

Reading *The Path* with the congregation gives me a sense of being connected to the St. Alban's community. It is as if we are all "on the same page." I look forward to reading the weekly chapter. My perception has changed as I have gotten older—I see and read with a different lens.

—*Josie Williams*

I have attended many Bible Studies, but they have always been about the New Testament. My approach to reading through the New Testament has been through the lens of Jesus. This was an approach that I didn't think could apply to the Old Testament, in which my view of God was not favorable. In my view, the God of the Old Testament was angry and vengeful. Through *The Path Bible*, I have learned that the stories from the Old Testament can also be read through the lens of Jesus. The stories don't need to be taken literally and the Bible can be read in many ways. This approach has allowed my view of the God depicted in the Old Testament to soften.

—*Stacy Weaver*

The prophets were all called by God to pretty much teach the will of God to the people. I think the teachings of the Old Testament gave structure to the tribes.

—*Herb Jones*

The Path is easy to read and understand and provides insight into the *Bible* stories that we may never think about otherwise. Of course, David and Lance are so knowledgeable on biblical history and theology, we learn something new every time. I love that we're going straight through the Bible from beginning to the end. It helps so much with historical context. Joining the class by Zoom has been wonderful for us during the pandemic. We look forward each week to seeing the other class members and learning more about the *Bible*. It has really helped us feel connected with church when we are unable to attend in person.

I think the most unexpected thing I've learned about the Bible stories we've read so far is how many of the stories tell about God basically directing the destruction of other peoples and places by his appointed Hebrew leaders. While I feel that the stories are describing the historical reality of that region, I think the main point of many of the stories is to recount the strong faith these leaders showed when answering God's call. While we're not called to wage battles to the death conquering other lands, I think that God still calls us today to take on seemingly insurmountable odds in helping others and spreading the word.

—*Beth Guynes and Margie Scott*

Rev. Elisabeth's sermons on "The Path" can be found on the website:
[http:// www.stalbansbovina.org/the_path.htm](http://www.stalbansbovina.org/the_path.htm).

Always the Christmas Season



Advent is a time to prepare for the birth of the Jesus. We will celebrate His arrival on Christmas morning but, in the meantime, we will go through many steps of preparations just as we would for the birth of any child. I've often wished that all Christian churches would include Advent in their church calendar. To me it seems they are missing out on the wonderful feelings that the season of Advent generates.

Aside from physical preparations, we must ready our hearts for the Christ child who entered our world in human form. We can do this through full participation in the Advent season—prayers, meditation and lighting candles on the Advent wreath. If we await Jesus' birth prayerfully, asking for the wisdom to know and discern the true meaning of Advent, we may draw closer to our Savior and have a better understanding of why the Jesus came to us as an infant “wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”

I have always loved the Christmas spirit and the warm feelings that people seem to have toward one another this time of the year—wishing everyone “Merry Christmas” whether they know each other or not and, finding opportunities to share with those less fortunate. I often wonder why we can't carry the Christmas spirit of “Peace on earth, good will toward men,” in our hearts all year long.

Perhaps at St. Alban's we can start something new by carrying our feelings of Advent and Christmas forward spreading the joyful news of the birth of Jesus to everyone. That's our purpose, anyway. This could be our way of changing the world for the better.

Dawn Rickard

“Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere, go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.”

From the Senior Warden

Annual Parish Meeting

Just a reminder about the St. Alban's Annual Parish Meeting, which is scheduled for Sunday, January 10. This year you will have a choice of how you participate, either in person or online through Zoom. We will be electing a new Junior Warden to serve a 2-year term and two members to serve 3-year terms. The Nominating Committee has already drafted a slate of nominees, but we are still accepting additional nominations. Please ensure that you have permission of the person you are nominating and then submit nominations to me, Nominations Committee Chairman.

Requirements to serve as a member of the Vestry are contained in our church by-laws. Lay members of the parish in good standing who are confirmed communicants, at least 21 years old, canonically resident in the parish and entitled to suffrage at the meeting are eligible to serve on the Vestry. In good standing means, in part, that the member attends services at St. Alban's regularly (this year, that means online or in person) and gives of their time, talent, and treasure to the church. Employees of the church are not eligible to serve on Vestry. This year our Vestry has been meeting virtually by Zoom, so potential Vestry members must be willing to learn how to use Zoom.

We will also be updating our parish by laws to include virtual meeting procedures and approving reports from various committees of the church.

I would also like to mention a financial giving option that we have recently put into place. If you have stocks, bonds or securities that you would like to donate to the church, you may gift these to the St Alban's Brokerage Account that we have set up with Raymond James Financial services here in Vicksburg. Michael Southall has the details and can walk you through the process. Susan and I have done this recently and it's a great way to donate without having to pay the capital gains tax. This mechanism can also be used with Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from IRA accounts. For more information, you can contact me, Michael or Ann Tompkins.

Richard Price

Rev. Elisabeth's Epistle

I'm tired of waiting. It feels like we've been waiting since March...like we entered Lent and never quite came out of it. When the pandemic first started,

I remember thinking we just needed to hold on for a few weeks. Then weeks became months, and then it became clear that the road back to some kind of normal was going to be longer than anyone expected. Now we are entering Advent, this season of expectation and waiting, and frankly, I'm tired! I'm done with waiting!

I think these feelings of restlessness and impatience are actually very authentic Advent feelings. While we might sentimentalize Advent as being our annual watchful waiting for the birth of the Christ child, Advent is so much more. It is about remembering the joy of the incarnation. But it is also about looking forward to Christ's coming again, when God's kingdom will be fully revealed on earth. And as we hear in our Advent readings, no one knows when that will happen. So, we wait with restlessness and impatience, knowing that God is acting in God's own time, not on any schedule we can predict or control. Advent becomes a chance for us to practice hope in the midst of waiting. Hope in the midst of uncertain, restless waiting. Waiting that doesn't have a known end point.

I, for one, could use more practice in sustaining hope during this kind of waiting. Sometimes it is the smallest things that help us carry on while we wait...lighting candles in the Advent wreath, playing "O Come O Come Emmanuel," writing a card to reach out to someone else. I have been uplifted by each of you when I hear the things you are doing to stay connected with each other and the church. So, we will continue to wait--for a vaccine, for the chance to hug our loved ones again, for a full church, for potlucks and coffee hour. As we wait, let us encourage one another to "hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23).

Josie's Journal



Advent is the beginning of a new church year. It is filled with anticipation and waiting. I would like to share the traditions in our family.

We set the Advent wreath in the center of the dinner table and light one candle the first week, two for the second week, three for the third week, and four for the fourth week. We select a reading to think about and then we eat dinner and extinguish the candle at the end of the meal.

A new tradition is the Tea Advent Calendar. Each day features a different tea to try. I like tea and it is a way to relax in the anticipation of Christmas.

For 2020 I added a William Morris Calendar of toiletries. Each day is a new hand cream, body wash, bath salts or cuticle cream. I am looking forward to trying it out. Sometimes I want to jump ahead but the calendar is labeled to prevent that.

The most important part of our tradition is the daily reading from SSJE (Society of St. John the Evangelist) that is emailed to me each day.

I am filled with awe as I await the birth of the baby Jesus and the beautiful beginning of the new church year.

Peace,
Josie

Join St. Alban's for Christmas Dec. 24, 2020



5:00 PM Children's Service

All ages are welcome! This service will start outside (so dress warm!) and will incorporate movement, music, and a child-friendly sermon, as well as communion.

7:00 PM Traditional Service

A traditional Christmas service, with organ music, Christmas readings, sermon, and communion. This service will also be livestreamed on Facebook for those worshipping at home.

11:00 PM Midnight Mass

This service will be like the 7:00 pm service, with the addition of incense.

RSVP required for in-person worship at
<https://reopen.church/r/hpRZD960>

Online worship at
facebook.com/StAlbansBovina

Coming Events

CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS
SUNDAY, DEC. 6, 4:00 PM •
ST. ALBAN'S BOVINA
(OUTDOORS, WEATHER PERMITTING)



We're expecting a visit from St. Nicholas!
Join us to learn more about this bishop of the church and friend
of children. We'll also be making Christmas ornaments.

A quiet, meditative service including communion for those
experiencing grief or any kind of loss this holiday season.
All are welcome.

Longest Night

A service of light in the midst of darkness

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21
6:00 PM

December Birthdays

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Harvey Smith, Jr. | 22 Jennifer Normand |
| 4 Ella Ann Selby | 26 John Bonar |
| 7 William Horner | 28 Sara Margaret Porter |
| 9 Mary John Biedenharn | 29 Buddy Hanks |
| 11 Clarissa Walker Horner | Ann Jones |
| 12 Joan Leese | |

December Anniversaries

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 3 John & Anita Bonar | 23 Allen & Linda Kitchens |
| 14 Jerry & Kay McWilliams | 29 Rudolph & Allison Price Nieto |
| 16 Jimmy & Ann Jones | David & Mary Ann Wright |

Prayers for the People

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Amanda | Estella | Mary Frances |
| Ann & Jimmy | Eugene | Nancy |
| Anna | Glen | Nita |
| Barbara | Glenda | Norma |
| Betty | Jackie | Parker |
| Bill & Karen | Jackson | Patsy |
| Bobbie | Jim | Patty |
| Charles | Jimmy | Peter |
| Charlie & Family | Isabel, M.K. & Ted | Rachelle |
| Cooper | Latonya | Sherry |
| Cynthia | Lee Davis | Sylvia |
| Dan & Mary | Linda | Tara |
| David | Marcia & David | Theresa |
| Earline | Mark | |



COVID-19 Weekly Events

Please call the office if you need help with Zoom

Sunday*

Holy Eucharist Rite I, Parish Hall, 8:30 a.m.

Holy Eucharist Rite II, Nave, 11:00 a.m.

Livestreamed on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>

*Please RSVP for services here: <https://reopen.church/r/hpRZD960>

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. (on Zoom)

Monday — Friday

Morning Prayer, 8:00 a.m.

Livestreamed on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>

Tuesday

Bibles & More, Social time starts at 6:00 p.m. Group from 6:30-8:00 p.m. (on Zoom)

Wednesday

Spiritual 12 Steps Group, 7:30-8:30 a.m. (on Zoom)

Holy Eucharist Rite II with Prayers for Healing, 6:00 pm. Livestreamed on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>

Thursday

Ultreya, 12:00-1:00 p.m. (on Zoom)

Event Calendar

Sunday, December 6—The Feast of St. Nicolas, 6:00 pm. We are expecting a visit from St. Nicholas. Learn about this bishop and friend of children.

Sunday, December 20—Living Nativity, 5:30-6:30 pm

Monday, December 21—The Longest Night meditative service, 6:00 pm

Thursday, December 24—St. Alban's Christmas

Children's Service, 5:00 pm

Traditional Service, 7:00 pm Livestreamed on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>

Midnight Mass, 11:00 pm

Sunday, January 10—Annual Parish Meeting, following 11:00 am service.

Server Schedule

	Sunday December 6	Sunday December 13	Sunday December 20	Sunday December 27
	8:30 AM			
LWL	Harvey Smith	Tommy Skinner	Theo Williams	Ann Tompkins
OT Lector	Tommy Skinner	Penny Freund	Tommy Skinner	Penny Freund
POP	LWL	LWL	LWL	LWL
	11:00 AM			
LWL	Theo Williams	Betsy Selby	Richard Price	Harvey Smith
OT Lector	Ann Tompkins	Richard Price	Susan Price	Sharon Hanks
POP	Dawn Rickard	Sharon Hanks	Buck Cooper	Betsy Selby
	Wednesday December 2	Wednesday December 9	Wednesday December 16	Wednesday December 23
	6:00 PM			
LWL	Tommy Skinner	Theo Williams	Tommy Skinner	Theo Williams



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Clarissa Horner, Rev. Elisabeth