



The Albanac

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

February 2024



Sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism

Holy Baptism

January 7 was an exciting Sunday for St. Alban's! On this Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, when we remember Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, we had a baptism at each service. At the 8:30 AM service, Charlie Montague was baptized, and at the 11:00 AM service, Peyton Bryan was baptized. Many Episcopalians are accustomed to baptizing infants and young children. But the historic model for baptism is the baptism of adults, something implicitly recognized in the 1979 prayerbook when "Adults and Older Children" was listed first in the service of Holy Baptism. Infant baptism has a place in our tradition, with its emphasis on God's grace and our adoption into the family of God. But adult baptism draws our attention to other aspects of baptism: to repentance, cleansing from sin, and our continuing formation as disciples of Jesus. We are so grateful for both Charlie and Peyton sharing their baptisms with us and inspiring us to remember our own baptisms and calling.

The Baptism of Charlie Montague



Tommy Skinner, sponsor, Nancy & Charlie Montague and Rev. Elisabeth

The Baptism of Peyton Bryan



Pictured L-R —Adam & Peyton, Briggs, acolyte, Rev. Elisabeth, celebrant, and Harvey Smith, lay worship leader



Charlie & Nancy Montague



Adam & Peyton Bryan

Bishop Brian Seage Visits St. Alban's

On January 14, Bishop Brian Seage made his last pastoral visit to St. Alban's, confirming five people and receiving three. The Bishop met with those to be confirmed or received to talk about the role of the bishop and answer questions. Those confirmed included: Adam Bryan, Peyton Bryan, Andrew Cooper, Charlie Montague and Canada Stewart. Those received included: Sara Gaul, Nancy Montague, and Ramona Pace.

After the service, the ECW sponsored a reception for the Bishop and newly confirmed. We feasted on fried chicken, pulled pork, and potluck offerings. The church also presented Bishop Seage with a signed print of the Wyatt Waters watercolor of the church, as a token of our appreciation for his ministry to the Diocese of Mississippi.



*Front row L-R—Sara Gaul, Canada Stewart, Nancy Montague, Ramona Pace
Back row L-R—Adam & Peyton Bryan, Bishop Seage, Charlie Montague,
Andrew Cooper & Rev. Elisabeth Malphurs*



Rev. Elisabeth, Andrew, Buck and Henry Cooper with Bishop Seage



Parish Hall Reception for Bishop Seage

Celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany

~The Light of Jesus Shines in the Darkness ~



On Saturday, January 6th, St. Alban's hosted a multi-church gathering to celebrate the *Feast of the Epiphany*. Joining in the celebration were members of three Episcopal churches in Vicksburg—*Holy Trinity*, *Christ Church* and *St. Mary's Church*.

The celebrations began with an *Epiphany Eucharist* followed by a *Chili Potluck Dinner* in the Parish House and ending on the church grounds with a bonfire, traditionally known as the *Burning of the Greens*. The centuries-old tradition is symbolic of "Christ being the Light of the World."



Church Members Gather for Annual Parish Meeting

On Sunday, January 28th, members of St. Alban's Church gathered in the nave for the 2024 Parish Meeting. Rev. Elisabeth provided each member with a hand-out of the agenda that contained detailed reports from the rector, the junior & senior wardens and other numerous committees.

The meeting was conducted by Rev. Elisabeth, presiding officer, and assisted by Carolyn Burton, vestry clerk. One of the most important items of the meeting was the election of a new senior warden and two new vestry members. Sharon Hanks was elected to serve as new senior warden (2-year term) and Judy Morrissey & Judy Gavin to serve (3-year term) on the vestry. Special thanks were extended to Penny Freund, outgoing senior warden and Clarissa Horner and Kristi Hall, outgoing vestry members, for their service.

During the meeting, Easy Biedenharn spoke on the importance of planning a financial foundation for future generations. Also, Rev. Elisabeth presented outgoing senior warden, Penny Freund, with a framed Wyatt Watters print of St. Alban's Church.



(L-R) Penny Freund, outgoing senior warden; Rev. Elisabeth, rector; Sharon Hanks, new senior warden; Judy Morrissey, new vestry member; and Jeff Artman, junior warden. Judy Gavin, new vestry member, not pictured



Rev. Elisabeth surprised outgoing senior warden, Penny Freund, with a beautiful framed print of St. Alban's by Wyatt Waters, famous Mississippi watercolor artist. The painting was in appreciation for her many contributions to St. Alban's. Penny's acceptance speech was memorable—heartwarming and hilarious. Well done Penny!



Elisabeth's Epistle

What makes a church vital? This is the month when my mind often turns to this question, as I compile statistics for our annual parochial report. Is vitality measured by the number of people who attend church every Sunday? Is it measured by the amount of money we collected last year? Maybe it's measured in the number of baptisms? These are all numbers we report on a yearly basis, and don't get me wrong, they are important. But most years, they aren't particularly impressive. We are, after all, a small church. There's nothing wrong with being small. There are plenty of small churches brimming with vitality, the kind of places that make a difference in their communities.

So if it's not those surface statistics, maybe vitality is measured in other ways. Perhaps it's measured in the number of people who were affected by the ministry of this church over the course of the year: the people who were consoled during a funeral, or the people who were in a desperate place financially and turned to us for help, or the people who stopped and rested on our beautiful grounds and were strengthened for their journey. Or maybe, to really understand vitality, we'd have to look at the lives and actions of our members. How closely are we following Jesus and how is that reflected in our daily lives? This gets harder to measure, but perhaps brings us closer to figuring out what makes for a vital church.

I know that I feel vitality here at St. Alban's. I feel it whenever we meet together for worship, worship that is joyful and participatory, not perfect by any stretch, but eager to praise God. I feel it in our educational programs, in the holiness of helping each other delve deeper into the mystery of faith. I feel it in the exuberance of children who want to acolyte, who want to get closer and closer to the sacred. I feel it in the tenderness shown to those who are going through transitions, whether illness or the death of a loved one. We may be a small church, but I believe we are a healthy and vital church. We are vital as long as we are connected to the branch that is Jesus Christ, and as long as we continue to pursue his work of loving God and neighbor. I would love to know what you think makes St. Alban's vital and how we can continue our important ministry to our community.

In Memory

Dalton E. Thames

July 22, 1940—January 9, 2024



*“... I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me,
though he were dead, yet shall he live...”*

John 11:25

Start Your Lent Right with a Mini-Retreat

On Saturday, February 17, we will be offering a "mini-retreat" at the church from 10:00 AM-1:00 PM, with lunch provided. This retreat is for all ages, children to adults, and will focus on deepening your Lent with a variety of creative prayer practices. We'll have the labyrinth set up, as well as other stations for engaging prayer through our minds, bodies, and hearts. RSVP not required, but it would help for planning. Please let Elisabeth or Carolyn Burton know if you can join us.

"Prayer enlarges the heart until it is capable of containing
God's gift of himself." - Mother Theresa

Lord, Teach Us to Pray: Lenten Supper Series

Wednesdays, Feb. 21-March 20

6:00-7:30 PM

at St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Bovina

Simple soup supper provided

Prayers of the People

For all those sick or in need:

Alicia	Conner	Kenya	Nita
Allan & Joan Family	David	Kuchman Family	Norma
Allen K.	Frances	Lee	Preston
Barbi	Fritz	Leesha	Roger
Braddock Family	Jackson	Libby	Rose
Caroline	James	Lucas	Steve
Cecil	Jane	Lynn	Teresa H.
Charlene	Jim	Mark H.	Theresa K.
Charlie & family	John	Mark J.	Vallye
Clarence	Kathy	Mike & Nancy	

For the departed: Eudora Brzezinski, Tarver Braddock, Martha Leese, Dalton Thames & Mildred Harris.

Liturgical Schedule

SUNDAY SERVICES

	February 4	February 11	February 18	February 25
Rite I	10:00 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM	8:30 AM
Lay Worship Leader		Tommy Skinner	Ann Tompkins	Tommy Skinner
Lector		Ann Tompkins	Sharon Cummins	Beth Sojourner
Rite II	Morning Prayer	11:00 AM	11:00 AM	11:00 AM
Lay Worship Leader	David Pruett	Richard Price	Harvey Smith	Carolyn Burton
Greeters/ Ushers	Penny Freund	Betty Rushing	Penny Freund	Betty Rushing
		Betsy Selby	Jeff Artman	Betsy Selby
Lector		Susan Price	Betsy Selby	Dawn Rickard
Prayers of the People		Carolyn Burton	Buck Cooper	Harvey Smith
Chalice Bearer		Susan Price	Carolyn Burton	Dawn Rickard
A/V System		Harvey Smith	Buck Cooper	Harvey Smith

WEDNESDAY SERVICES

Service - 6:00 PM	February 7	February 14	February 21	February 28
Lay Worship Leader	Harvey Smith	Tommy Skinner	Lenten Arts	Lenten Arts



*Rebecca Drake, Rev. Elisabeth, Judy Morrissey,
Richard Price, Betty Rushing and Beth Guynes*