

News from Saint Alban's Episcopal Church

1675 Chester Avenue, Arcata, CA 95521,

707-822-4102

The Rev. W. Douglas Thompson, Interim Pastor
FAX 707-822-4182
stalban@tidepool.com

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

PLEASE REMEMBER, OUR SUMMER SCHEDULE BEGINS IN JULY AND LASTS THROUGH AUGUST. THERE WILL BE ONE SERVICE ON SUNDAY MORNING, AT 9:00 A.M. THERE WILL BE NO SPIRITUAL FORUM DURING THE SUMMER, BUT THERE WILL BE SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR THE YOUNGER CHILDREN. THIS SCHEDULE BEGINS ON SUNDAY, JULY 1 AND LASTS THROUGH SUNDAY, AUGUST 26. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES BETWEEN NOW AND THE TIME IT ACTUALLY BEGINS

My next bit of news is not really news for most of you, but does bear repeating, I believe. I am re-retiring on December 31, 2007. That is also the date of Nellie's retirement from the Humboldt Senior Resource Center. What a coincidence! Before I retired the first time, in August of 2006, several months in advance I asked her if she minded if I retired at that time. Her response was, "would you mind if I didn't retire then?" Now, it just seems to be the right thing to do for both of us. I believe that my retirement will enhance the Search Process of St. Alban's Parish. There are things that each of us wants to do, places to go, people we would like to see again. Please keep us in your prayers over the next few months, as you all will be in ours. At the last Clergy Conference, in February, in a private conversation with Bishop Beisner, he asked me what I would like to do after my time at St. Alban's was finished. I replied that I would like to be retired once again.

As of the Feast of Pentecost, we ended the Season of Easter and have entered what used to be called the Sundays after Trinity, and is now called the Sundays after Pentecost, and is also called the Sundays in Ordinary Time. For the rest of the Church Year, until Advent, the liturgical color is green, the color most prevalent in creation, reminding us that God is present in our lives, even in the most ordinary of circumstances. It is this Divine Presence that makes what we do and what we say extraordinary.

Thanks to all of you for the wonderful Easter Season that we celebrated this year. Remember that each Sunday is a "little Easter," celebrating Our Lord's Resurrection each time we gather as his family and as a community to worship. May we know his real presence right here in our midst.

Peace and love,

Fr. Doug

Mtr. Susan Asks: Wafers or Bread?

Some of you may have wondered why some parish or priests use wafers, and some use bread. There are, of course, practical reasons to use wafers; they can be purchased and so no one has to bake them, and they can be used to reserve the sacrament. And they are easier to ingest.

But, beyond the practicality, there are important liturgical and political aspects to this topic. To be brief, ordinary leavened bread was used up until about the 9th century. The people brought gifts of bread and wine from their homes for the Eucharist; often the bread was a small round loaf. But beginning in the ninth century, the Church in the West, centralized in Rome, was steadily moving toward more and

more clerical control of the sacraments. The laity were unworthy. The people's gifts were not used in the Mass; increasingly the elements were prepared by monks or clerics.

As the otherworldliness of the Eucharist was emphasized, using bread that was different from ordinary table fare became appropriate. Thus at the turning of the first millennium, ordinary table bread gave way to "hosts." These were also reminiscent of the unleavened bread employed in Jewish temple sacrifices. A decline in communication by the laity had begun after about the 4th century, and by around the 10th century most communicated only once a year. This was partly due to their fear of receiving communion "unworthily," that is, without having confessed their sins. The host became smaller and smaller as the number of communicants declined. Baskets disappeared and instead small patens became common. The vessels for the consecrated elements came to be considered more precious than the worshipping community itself.

Thus most people attended a mass in a language they could no longer understand (Latin) or even see (the priest was behind tall screens). Bells were needed to signal important moments in the liturgy, and the host was held high, so that people could gaze at it. This gazing was termed the "fruit of the Mass," and it was believed that if a person did see the elevated host, they would not die suddenly that day or go blind. Seeing the elevated host was sufficient.

A loaf of bread differs from the host in two important ways. First, the priest breaks the single loaf and offers it to the people, as our Lord did when he instituted the sacrament. Having individual wafers for everyone does not convey the unity of the sacrament. Jesus was incarnate, in a real human body. And he is really present in the consecrated bread we share. The inward reality of the bread is the body of Christ; the bread itself is profoundly physical. The wafers, in comparison by

their extreme delicacy,
might be thought of as otherworldly, almost "spiritual" food, and
thus might indicate that,
contrary to the Incarnation, spirit is somehow separate from the body.

But there is no right or wrong here - our incarnate Lord is the inward reality in the Eucharist, whether we use wafers or a loaf of bread. As Richard Giles, the author of Always Open, puts it so strikingly: "The great thing to remember about a sacrament is this: that God always turns up, even if we are late or don't turn up at all."

In Christ

Mtr. Susan

Facts from History: Saint Alban

On Sunday, June 17, 2007, we will observe the Feast Day of St. Alban. The story of St. Alban will be told during the service. Here are a few background facts from the Wikipedia:

. St Alban was born (date unknown) and lived at some time during the 3rd century in the Roman city of Verulamium, which was the 3rd largest city in Roman Britain. It was sited to the southwest of the modern city of St. Albans in Hertfordshire.

. St. Alban died June 22, 209 (or c. 251 or 305 - the date is disputed) by execution.
(thus his Feast Day is June 22)

· St. Alban is venerated by both the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion.

· There is a major shrine at the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St. Alban (built in 1308) (see <http://www.stalbanscathedral.org.uk/index1/htm> for pictures of the shrine and "The Story of St. Alban")

Since early times, people have journeyed to the church and shrine to remember Alban and all that he stands for. They come to pray for peace and healing and to seek God.

The Alban Prayer

Almighty God, We thank you for this place built to your glory and in memory of Alban, our first martyr: Following his example in the fellowship of the saints, may we worship and adore the true and living God, and be faithful witnesses to the Christ, who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

Jr. Warden's Report

(Which was submitted in a very timely manner! Thank you!)

Into the fifth month of this position, and all is well. Thank you Pat Ford for leaving our church in such a fine condition.

In these few months I have not found the congregation to be shy about what needs to be done. Hopefully, between John and I, we have taken care of your needs. Please continue to keep us informed.

I ask you to keep the Vestry in your prayers, and continue to volunteer when asked - it's one of St. Alban's greatest assets.

Bill Hover

Campus & Young Adult Ministry

St. Alban's nurtures a small but meaningful young adult group. The group meets regularly on Thursday nights for soup and conversation in Deacon Fred Moore's home. Earlier this spring, right after Easter, we visited Redwoods Monastery in Southern Humboldt. Time spent meditating, dialoguing, and eating in silence with the Cistercian Sisters was a highlight of the season. Other opportunities for moral development have included Sunday morning's Spiritual Forum and preparation of meals for the Arcata Night Shelter.

HSU finals are finished! While we will not be meeting during the summer months, Thursday soup dinners will resume in fall (late August). Thank you for supporting campus and young adult ministries at St. Alban's.

Shannon McColl,

Campus Ministry Intern

Health Ministry at St. Alban's

First of all, I've just read over some of last year's Health Ministry newsletters and notice I need to remind everyone -

- The First Aid Kit is not in the kitchen as stated in last year's letter.
- It is in the office, below the bulletin board.

Also, please let me know if you use something that needs replacing . I can't check it often enough, and would appreciate your help.

Happy Summer to everyone! Remember the Aussie saying:

- SLIP on a T-shirt
- SLAP on a hat
- SLOP on sunscreen - often!

Now you're ready to go outside - even on a foggy/hazy day, and enjoy God's lovely creation!

Blessings,

Emily Arents, RN, Parish Nurse

Senior Warden's Report

As we head into the summer, the Vestry has been focused on the calling process for our new Rector. The members of the Profile Committee are finishing their work and we'll soon be sending the Parish Profile to Bishop Beisner for his approval. The profile

Committee spent many months of hard work putting together a document that I truly think reflects our Parish. Nancy Dye Leer, Alice Hackett, Carolyn Hunt, Maureen Johannsen, Mac McClary, Robert Webb, Brenda Wood, Serena Zelezny, Pat Ford, and Colleen Rodes - thank you for all your excellent work!

Following the Bishop's approval of our Parish profile, the Vestry will select an Applicant Review Committee to screen applicants. Members of this committee will need to be able to give considerable time to the task of the group and travel to visit candidates in their home parishes. If you want to be on the AR Committee, or if you have questions about it, please let us know.

The Vestry met with Roger Cutler, our Calling Process Facilitator, on May 24th (some of us believe it was May 23rd). Roger reminded us that we are not "hiring a minister who will do ministry in our name." We may be tempted to use only our own preferences and prejudices to select a new Rector, but the Church requires a more spiritual approach. Somewhere out there, God has called upon someone to lead us in worship and accomplish God's purpose for us. Our task is to find that person. Exciting, isn't it?

Dan Scofield, Senior Warden

OUTREACH NEWS

Arcata night shelter

temporarily closed

Sadly, the Arcata Night Shelter had to close during the first week of May because of problems with the septic system. It is hoped that grant monies will

ll be obtained to pay for the necessary repairs. When it re-opens, St. Alban's will once again help by providing meals for the residents 2-3 times per month.

Cooks Still Needed

Cooks are still needed for the Arcata Endeavor for June, and for the rest of the summer!

One more person is needed to prepare a salad (for 25 people) for June 20, 2007.

* Please sign up on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

* Questions? Need help delivering food? Need directions? Please call Brenda Wood (476-9221) or Debbie Eiers (498-8889).

Many thanks to everyone who cooked for the Arcata Endeavor and the Arcata night shelter in May: Betty Price, Merry Schellinger, Connie Webb & Brenda Wood.

From the Other Side of the Mountain

Upon several requests, my pen has finally touched paper to compose my first article for St. Alban's newsletter. For a month I have debated what my first article should be about. I have finally settled that it shall serve the purpose of an introduction.

Who am I? What a question that is. We all consider that one at times. Some of us have even had to write essays on that topic in school. I will keep it simple here.

I am the woman who, as those at the 10:30 service know, teaches in Hoopa and drives over the mountain twice a month to attend an Episcopal service. A few others at St. Alban's know me as the writer and novelist of the space fantasy, The Conrad Chronicles: Revolt.

Before I moved to Salyer, I lived in Yreka and attended St. Marks. There I was known as the only congregation member between the ages of 13 and 50, and an Episcopal expert since I had relocated from Sacramento where I spent my Sundays at Trinity Cathedral. That was all the people at St. Mark's needed to know in order to put me to work. It didn't matter that I had been a Christian for barely five years and an Episcopalian for less than four of those. Within four months I was on the Vestry, running a class on C.S. Lewis, followed by a Lenten writing class, reading the Prayers of the People, and acting as Lector two to three Sundays a month. Soon my poetry was being printed in the St. Mark's Remarks and I was being trained as an acolyte. Then I moved out here. I often wonder what task I would have been delegated if I had remained.

I loved it though. My journey at St. Mark's enriched my spiritual life and helped me grow as an Episcopalian. I miss it.

Now I am in the middle of the woods, facing an hour drive to the nearest Episcopal church. The distance and unpredictable weather make it hard for me to be as active as I

would like, so my gift to St. Alban's shall be one of the things I
do best:written words.

Love and blessings,

Heather Hobson