



2024

ST. ALBAN'S PARISH PROFILE

3625 Chapel Road, Newtown Square Pa 19073



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WHO WE ARE

Love, acceptance, and inclusivity are woven into the very fabric of worship, fellowship, and ministry at St. Alban's. This one-hundred-year-old Christ centered church began as a satellite ministry established through the sheer determination of parishioners and area clergy. Over the last century, we have grown into a true home for our parishioners and a key member of the Newtown Square community. St. Alban's is committed to maintaining the intimacy of a smaller church while also unconditionally loving and accepting all people that find God's path to us. We trust that, together with our new rector, we will fulfill the vision God has for us. Our community encourages reflection and self-examination so that we all can better serve God. "All are welcome here" is not a platitude, but rather a commitment embraced by all - we are committed to the truth that God loves everyone, no exceptions.



The wholeheartedness of the “all are welcome here” commitment is clearly displayed by the enthusiasm and compassion of our members. St. Alban’s members, worship services, and outreach programs embody a welcoming spirit and the space to breathe, engage, and be oneself. We pray and serve enthusiastically, unite when there is a challenge, and share our individual and collective joy and blessings. St. Alban’s does not isolate itself from the outside world. Rather, it prioritizes service to the spiritual and physical well-being of others. While the parish maintains a broadly apolitical posture, prayers for all of our brothers and sisters - regardless of religious tradition, who they love, gender identity, ethnicity, or social strata - are incorporated in our worship and leadership.

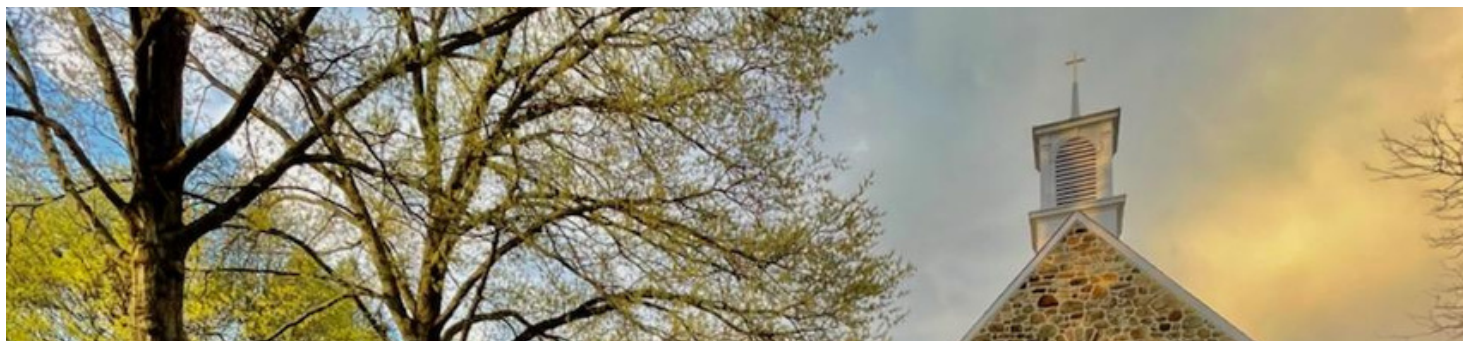
We acknowledge, like many other small parishes, that we have our differing viewpoints. For example, all our parishioners recognize the importance of growing our church, but we have contrasting ideas of how it can be achieved. We are always in need of more volunteers to enable succession planning in key ministries. We also know there is space for us to learn how to be better Christians. We are confident that, with God’s help and the guidance of our new rector, we will be able overcome any obstacle and move forward into a bright future.



HOPES FOR OUR PARISH

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."

- Jeremiah 29:11



The rapid development of the Newtown Square area affords St. Alban's a unique opportunity for growth. Parishioners have overwhelmingly asked that our new rector provide leadership in developing a vision for parish expansion, while understanding the tension between our family-oriented small parish and our desire and need for new ideas and change.

To support our joint effort to move St. Alban's forward, we expect our new rector will...

...deliver thoughtful and inspiring sermons that promote engagement in our continuing effort to be the voice, heart, hands, and feet of Jesus Christ.

...expand the membership and diversity of our parish by building on St. Alban's practice of being a community of love, warmly welcoming visitors and providing a framework to heal the divisiveness of the world.

...care for the St. Alban's community, both as a whole and for each individual member, offering compassionate pastoral care to old and young alike.

...attract and welcome young families into the parish by actively supporting Sunday school and childcare, including children in our worship services, and developing fellowship activities for young adults.

...lead worship services that respect the Episcopal tradition and ensure exposure of the community to the broad wealth of prayers, liturgy, and music created in the service of God, acknowledging our love of traditional music while occasionally incorporating music from other sources.

...develop opportunities for adult formation to better connect our parishioners with their faith, as well as offering an opportunity to increase our visibility in the community by offering programs that are open to the public.

...recognize the importance of year-round stewardship to support our ministries and maintain our campus, and encourage more members to contribute their time, talent, and treasure to our parish.

...evaluate our current service ministries and programs and determine, with the parish, if any need to be enhanced or refocused, understanding that fellowship in serving is the key to making our shared growth vision a reality.

The success of the rector requires a joint commitment from both the rector and the parish, grounded in unconditional love. Those considering the role of future rector should know that the St. Alban's community will provide the space to be authentic and "seen," applaud successes, seek first to understand when there are missteps, and always err on the side of openness and trust.

RECTOR PROFILE

*"Do not lord it over those who are in your charge,
but be examples to the flock."*

- 1 Peter 5:3

We seek a rector who embodies St. Alban's welcoming and open spirit, caring for not just our parish community but also for those around us - particularly our neighbors who are less fortunate. Our rector should understand that adaptation to change is a stepping stone towards growth, and work to maintain a sense of stability and build consensus through that process towards our shared future. The ideal rector ought to instill confidence as a spiritual leader while exhibiting humility and a willingness to be vulnerable. Our parish is multigenerational, and our rector must be able to relate to and learn from all members of our community. Indeed, intellectual curiosity and a desire for ongoing learning is an ideal quality. Effective management, communication, and administrative leadership are essential, especially through this transitional period. St. Alban's is a place where all children of God are loved, regardless of background, and that spirit should be at the core of our new rector's philosophy. In short, we are looking for a rector who inspires engagement and leads with heart.

WORSHIP

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

- Romans 12:1



At St. Alban's, our worship embraces the solemnity and tradition of our rich liturgy without rigid adherence to form over function, providing a relaxed and informal space for us to joyfully worship Christ as a community. We hold two Eucharist services each Sunday, so those with preferences for worship in small or large groups are accommodated - an intimate spoken service at 8 a.m., and a service with organ and choir at 10 a.m. that is also livestreamed. There is additionally a small midweek Eucharist on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. We are a broad church, committed to liturgy inclusive of sacraments and utilizing the rites as set forth in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Most services are conducted using Rite II, and we incorporate the increased formality and ceremony of Rite I for major church holidays and commemorations. We aim for our liturgy to be accessible and welcoming to all who worship here, regardless if it is their first time with us or their thousandth. Although not a formal component of our worship service, Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall after the 10 a.m. service is a cornerstone of St. Alban's fellowship and an opportunity to spend time with friends both old and new.

MUSIC



Psalm 98:4

Music is an important part of our worship experience here at St. Alban's. Our music director and organist is Art Kalemkarian, who has been playing organ and leading choirs for many years. Our choir currently consists of eight members - four volunteers from our congregation and four staff vocalists.

Our choir enhances worship every Sunday at our 10 a.m. service from September through May. Each service features an organ prelude and postlude, accompaniment during hymns and liturgy, and a sung doxology. Throughout the liturgical year, our choir prepares an anthem for each service and additional repertoire for holy days. In addition to singing at all services during Advent, the choir performs a special Lessons & Carols service which includes Christmas hymns as well as seasonally appropriate classical selections. During the season of Easter, the choir actively participates in Holy Week and Easter Sunday. Although the choir as a whole does not perform every Sunday during the summer, individual musicians offer voice and organ anthem solos. Additionally, our staff soloists and organist provide music for events in our parish community such as weddings and funerals.

The musical selections at St. Alban's reflect a deep love of the classic Anglican tradition while allowing room for modern influence. Most of our hymns are taken from the 1982 Episcopal Hymnal, and anthems range from early music to more contemporary pieces. As we move forward through this transition, we are open to exploring a greater variety of music. The goal of our music ministry is to help our congregation feel the love of God as only music can allow.

HOW WE LEARN AND GROW

*“An intelligent mind acquires knowledge,
and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.”*

- Proverbs 18:15



We believe Christian education is a lifelong process. It is as fundamental for children beginning their journey of faith as it is for adults who strive to grow and deepen their relationship with Christ.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FORMATION



Sunday school takes place during the 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist service, with children joining their parents in the Sanctuary to share communion. At this time, we offer one class for our nursery and pre-K children and another for kindergarten through 5th grade students. We hope to develop youth programming as our 5th graders move up to middle school and additional families with youth join the parish.

We strive to make Sunday school a warm and inviting place that kids want to attend each week. An environment of fun and learning offers age-appropriate activities where children learn Bible stories and explore how these lessons apply to their own lives. Activities include prayer, class discussions, projects, and engagement through different art forms such as music, theater, and process art. Our children are encouraged to ask questions, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of their faith. It is important to us to create a church community that loves and supports children. This connection is essential to help foster faith, love, and compassion in our children and creates a strong sense of belonging and connection to our church family.

ADULT FORMATION

An adult forum is offered weekly between our two Sunday services. Led by our interim rector, parishioners examine the Gospel lectionary and how it can be better understood and applied to daily life. Each meeting begins with a discussion of the personal impact of the previous week's reading, followed by an exploration of the Gospel that will be read that Sunday.

An early morning adult Bible study takes place weekly via Zoom. This is currently a lay-directed class that chooses and studies individual books of the Bible. A cornerstone of our adult formation is an annual Lenten series. It begins with a simple supper of soup and bread prepared by a rotating cast of volunteers. These classes are a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, discussion, and spiritual growth, and are well attended by both St. Alban's members and the wider community. The material changes each year, reviewing such diverse topics as the Stations of the Cross or the biblical themes running through Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*.



HOW WE SERVE

*"For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment,
'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "*
- Galatians 5:14

St. Alban's parishioners work hard to support those in need. We focus our support and gifts on partner organizations with which we have long-standing relationships. St. James School in Philadelphia provides fourth through eighth grade education at no cost to an underserved community. As part of a network of local Episcopal churches, St. Alban's collects food weekly and helps with its distribution at St. James's Saturday Welcome Table. Our participation in the Welcome Table allows us to meet those we serve as well as like-minded parishioners from other churches in the diocese. We also contribute to St. James's Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas gift collections.

We regularly collect and deliver food and related items to St. Mary's Food Cupboard, a project of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Chester, Pennsylvania. St. Mary's operates regularly eleven months of the year and serves fresh food to those in need every week. Our gifts to St. Mary's are augmented by special collections, such as toiletries and clothing.

We have operated an on-site Thrift Shop at St. Alban's since 1990. The Thrift Shop receives donations of clothing and household goods and resells or donates those items to our neighbors in need in Newtown Square. The Thrift Shop pays a nominal rent to the church and gives the remaining proceeds to charity. In 2023, the Thrift Shop distributed clothes and housewares to six organizations and almost \$10,000 to nine charities.



St. Alban's also provides sanctuary space for Sunday afternoon services held by Yaerim Korean Presbyterian Church and provides space at no cost to our local Alcoholics Anonymous chapter. In our basement, we also host the St. Alban's Railroad, a large HO-scale model train display. This unique ministry started as a men's group in 1990, and now includes members both young and old and is open to the public several times a year. On Friday afternoons in the summer, our parking lot becomes the Newtown Square Farmer's Market, where local vendors gather to sell their products and produce to our community. St. Alban's donates vendor space, parking, and staff to help this important community event. We hand out olive wood crosses to virtually everyone that attends, and we have gained several new members from farmer's market attendees. We also are a major participant in the Newtown Square Christmas Tree Lighting, with our parishioners distributing candles and our choir leading the festive caroling.



OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

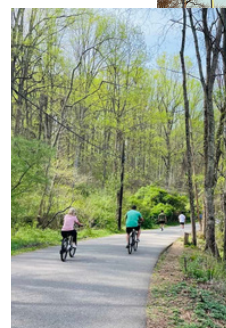
Newtown Square, Delaware County, Pennsylvania

St. Alban's is located in the western suburbs of Philadelphia, nestled in the town center of Newtown Square. Our charming, quaint church fits in well with the neighborhood. We are conveniently located and walkable to shopping, public transportation, hotels, restaurants, and plenty of fresh brewed coffee. The immediate neighborhood in Newtown Square has a rich history. A few significant historic landmarks are the Newtown Square Friends Meeting House, the 1860 Bartram Bridge (the last covered bridge in Delaware County), the 1842 Hood Octagonal School, and the 1742 Square Tavern. St. Alban's 100-year-old presence fits right in.

A short drive away is the 2,600-acre Ridley Creek State Park, which features miles of hiking and biking trails, fishing, horseback riding, and a working Colonial-era farm. Valley Forge National Park is only ten miles away, and Center City Philadelphia, with all its world-class culture and history, is a fourteen-mile drive down West Chester Pike. Our proximity to I-95 gives access to the best way to travel to Philadelphia International Airport, Washington D.C., and New York City. The Philadelphia sports stadiums are also easy to get to with many drivable options. We cheer on our home teams for every season - Eagles, Phillies, Sixers, Flyers, and Union!

We're surrounded by trusted health providers, including the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Main Line Health and the Penn, Temple, and Jefferson teaching hospitals in Philadelphia. Doctor's offices are walkable from the church in the Main Line Health building in Ellis Preserve. Marple Newtown Public Schools and many private schools are here to educate our children. Episcopal Academy, a renowned private school for both boys and girls pre-K through 12 th grade, is only six minutes from the church. For higher education, Delaware County Community College, Villanova University, Haverford College, Bryn Mawr College, UPenn, Drexel, Temple, and many more are a short drive away.

These are exciting times here in Newtown Square! The Village at Ellis Preserve, slated to be completed by the spring of 2024, is a planned mixed-use community and will enhance the desirability to live here. As our neighborhood continues to grow, we will be there to welcome new members with open arms, big hearts, and lots of love.



OUR HISTORY

"When Dr. McBee became rector of St. David's Church, Radnor, in 1922, Mr. Francis Wood, then accounting warden and vestryman of St. David's, asked him to do two things - commence a Sunday School at St. David's Church, and begin a mission church at Newtown Square. On Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock, on September 17, 1922, a small group, perhaps fifteen or twenty, gathered in the Fire House [across the street from the present location] for the first Episcopal service at Newtown Square. Dr. McBee conducted the service."

- Alice Grimm's History of St. Alban's Church

Thus was our faith community in Newtown Square established 101 years ago.

St. Alban's has had five rectors, beginning with its former Vicar, William Powell, who was installed as Rector in 1954 when St. Alban's was recognized as a parish of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. He was succeeded by the Rev. Richard Herschel in 1959, who left in 1978 to serve a parish in the UK. The Rev. Winston W. Welty served from 1978 until his retirement in 2001. The Rev. Welty was followed by the Rev. Hentzi Elek who served until 2014. In 2017 the Rev. Canon Matthew Dayton-Welch became Rector and served until taking a new position in New York City in early 2023. These five rectors, along with strong lay leadership and engaged parishioners, have been faithful in their commitment to emulate Jesus Christ in loving and serving our brothers and sisters in need.

Steady growth in the Parish is reflected in the following enhancements to our buildings and campus, demonstrating parishioners' diligence in maintaining the property:

1951 - The present sanctuary was completed on 5 acres of purchased land.

1956 - The Rectory was built.

1962 - The Education Building, now known as the Parish Hall, was completed.

1971 - The Sacristy, administrative offices, lounge, and kitchen were added.

1977 - The Garden Columbarium was constructed.

1990 - New administrative offices, space for church school and youth programs, and the Thrift Shop were added.

2005 - Our present organ was built.

2020 - Outdoor worship and fellowship spaces added.

2022 - Wi-fi and streaming infrastructure were installed.

PARISH DEMOGRAPHICS

Services at St. Alban's are attended by all ages, however a significant portion of regular weekly parishioners are older. Over the past several years, some younger couples have also begun attending our church. Parishioners are predominantly white, reflecting the makeup of the surrounding area, but we have a long-term goal of fostering diversity in our congregation.



There are also several members of the LGBTQ community in our parish and our leadership, reflecting our desire for St. Alban's to be a place where all voices are heard.



Our members also come from a wide variety of professions, socioeconomic situations, and backgrounds. There are cradle Episcopalians, those that were received from other denominations, and people called to Christ directly through our church. Together, we have a variety of perspectives and insights that, with God's help, will guide our parish into the future.

PARISH STAFF

St. Alban's Vestry is led by the Rector's and Accounting Wardens, currently Laurie Bragg and Karen Pohlmann. The Vestry provides both direction and individual effort in planning St. Alban's future. We have a full-time, experienced administrator, Kelly Bretz, in addition to a part-time staff of a Sunday school director, sexton, bookkeeper, and janitor. The Property Committee meets regularly and has been diligent in addressing maintenance and upgrades to our facilities and campus.



2023 VESTRY MEMBERS

FINANCIAL HEALTH AND STEWARDSHIP

St. Alban's Vestry approved a budget for 2023 with planned expenses of more than \$440,000:

Ministries (primarily music, education, outreach)	\$53,552
Diocesan contribution	\$18,367
Staff salaries and office expenses	\$290,354
Utilities, insurance, and property expenses	<u>\$82,294</u>
	\$444,567

The 2023 budget was funded from the following sources:

Pledges	\$327,199
Other offerings	\$11,400
Parish groups (including the Thrift Shop)	\$13,150
Other income and one-time grants	\$15,800
Building rentals	\$36,379
Prior year surplus	<u>\$40,639</u>
	\$444,567

Fifty-three pledges provided most of our revenue (74%), with the 10 largest pledges constituting nearly half the pledge revenue. The distribution of pledges reflects St. Alban's demographics: predominately older but with enough small donors to imagine that more and larger pledges may be forthcoming. Building and parking lot rentals are the next largest source of revenue. Note that about 10% of 2023 revenue is 2022's surplus, reflecting the Vestry's decision to fund ministries that support parish growth and property maintenance.

Our centennial celebration year featured a successful capital campaign for which \$83,000 was raised. The capital campaign funded a new roof for the administrative offices, a new HVAC system and roof for the Thrift Shop, campus-wide Wi-Fi and streaming, updated air conditioning for the Parish Hall, a new carillon, and various repairs and improvements.

St. Alban's maintains fund balances equal to about a year's expenses.

BUILDINGS, CAMPUS, AND FACILITIES

St. Alban's campus encompasses approximately five acres adjacent to the junction of Pennsylvania Routes 3 and 252 - Newtown Square's primary commercial intersection. The property was deeded to the diocese in the 1980's but is maintained by the parish.

The Sanctuary, constructed in 1950, has capacity for 125 attendees. The altar area was renovated and handicapped access added to the sanctuary in 1990. The undercroft is used by groups we host and as a gathering place for small parish meetings. St. Alban's original altar was relocated to the undercroft in 1990 which allows that space to also be used as a chapel.



The Parish Hall was added in 1962, and a 1990 addition featured a large wing dedicated to administrative services, childcare, Sunday school, youth programs, and substantial space for the Thrift Shop. The Parish Hall is used for our after-service Coffee Hour, fellowship opportunities, and for large meetings and an occasional private party. The basement of the addition is occupied by St. Alban's Railroad, an active ministry of the church.



The campus includes two parking lots, one close to the Parish Hall and the other adjacent to the Sanctuary. We rent parking space to local commercial businesses during the week, and the parking lots and lawns have been ideal for hosting the Newtown Square Farmer's Market.





The Rectory is a charming three-bedroom fieldstone home located only 100 feet from the Sanctuary, with a detached two-car garage and fenced-in yard. It has been lovingly maintained and recently updated, including a modern HVAC system and remodeled kitchen.



Behind the Sanctuary is the Columbarium, where parishioners' ashes are interred. The Columbarium is laid out parallel to and visible from the Sanctuary, and because the Columbarium has an altar, All Saints Day and Easter Vigil services have traditionally been held there.

St. Alban's rents office space to several non-profit organizations and counseling businesses. There is substantial potential for creative use for underused space, particularly for the Parish Hall.

CONTACT

We invite interested candidates who feel called to apply to contact:

The Rev. Canon Jane Gober

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