Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew

A CAMPAIGN for the FUTURE
Fall 2019/Winter 2020
It's an immense privilege to be in a community based on love...to be with others looking for the sacred and carrying it out together to the world. This seems to happen in our gathering round an altar, but it could be a meeting in the hall or on the street, or just a simple introduction, when slowly, or in a flash, there is a sharing, a recognition and the embers of kinship glow. There is an awakening between people, a sense of ancient knowing. One of the most beautiful gifts in the world is the gift of encouragement to know God's love and to respond in word and song and thanksgiving.

– John O'Donohue

from *Eternal Echoes: Celtic Reflections on Our Yearning to Belong*
At St. Alban’s, we celebrate.
Indeed, celebration is at the heart of our identity. We celebrate…

• Every child, as a child of God.
• Families of all sorts, through their growth and challenges.
• Newcomers, with warm welcomes and outstretched hands.
• The myriad gifts we each possess, using them to serve God’s world from Maine to Haiti.
• The beauty of our campus and our world, wherein we experience God’s presence.
• The future, by planning for our children, next generations, our community, and St. Alban’s itself.

In all things, we celebrate at the altar of God’s love. In all aspects of our worship, grounded in our rich Episcopal tradition, we gather with beauty, gratitude, heartfelt care, and joyful music.

Our spirit of celebration nourishes God’s world. It is a vital, hopeful gift to a world in need, a gift that we must sustain for others and ourselves, into the future.

As a community of faith, we are called.
We are called to be God’s partners: to love, in response to God’s love; to heal the world using our energies, creativity, and joy; to sustain and enhance what our predecessors have built; to plan well for the next leaders and for smooth transitions of clergy and staff.

Together, we are answering the call.

Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew

*Enrich* our joyful worship and music.
*Enhance* our worship space.
*Nourish* God’s world for those in need.
*Plan* for a secure and abundant future.

We invite you to help amplify God’s Grace!

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- Enhance our worship space.
- Nourish God’s world for those in need.
- Plan for a secure and abundant future.
Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew is a capital campaign that reaffirms our commitment to God, one another, and this church. Itself an expression of generosity and gratitude, this shared effort is designed to bring us closer to the One who makes all things new.

A truly collective, congregation-wide effort, Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew has four chords, which, in harmony with each other, will create a symphony to delight the senses, hearts, minds, and souls of our St. Alban’s community. The campaign will raise funds to:

1. **Enrich our joyful worship and music.**
   
   We have an urgent need to replace our organ, which has been diligently nursed along by our organists for years, while it has gradually deteriorated to the point of being beyond reasonable repair. Our dedicated Organ Committee has worked for more than a year to explore all options (including repair). Based on their visits to organ experts and builders around the country, we have selected a gifted pipe organ builder to design and build a new instrument that will specifically be tuned for our acoustics and space.

   A fine new pipe organ will nourish an integral part of our ministry – the singing offered by our choir and congregation and the uplifting instrumental music that beautifies our services.

2. **Enhance our worship space.**
   
   The exciting prospect of a new organ creates the opportunity, as well as the necessity, to fine tune our worship space. Worship is central to all we do. Our thoughtful, open-minded Worship Space Committee has answered the call to consider how we might refresh our worship space in the chancel and altar areas to improve flow, safety, simplicity, and beauty. Harmonized with the placement and design of the new organ, the enhancement of our worship space will honor and celebrate our tradition of fine materials, stained glass, furnishings, and needlework.

   Enhanced worship space will nourish us all, as we come together for prayer, celebration, and service.
Nourish God’s world for those in need.

As Christians, we are called to transform love into action; we at St. Alban’s do this through our community-serving ministries in Maine and Haiti. But the privilege we have, amid a world of need, gives us the opportunity to do more to help, heal, and serve our fellow beings. We have explored the ways in which our congregation can best serve God’s children, near and far. We now hope to develop partnerships that further support and strengthen St. Luc’s School in Trou du Nord, Haiti, as well as to expand our support for local, vitally needed, ministries including St. Elizabeth’s Essentials Pantry, Long Creek, Family Promise and Preble Street Resource Center.

As we renew our commitment to these communities, we will better nourish, both literally and spiritually, many children of God who lack even the basics for living.

Plan for a secure and abundant future.

As a community of faith, we at St. Alban’s continue a parish legacy of responsible stewardship – of ecologically caring for our lovely buildings and grounds, and for the people who serve here so all can benefit. Campaign funds will allow us to continue this stewardship. First, they will replenish our vitally important Fund for Major Improvements, so that we can: repair or replace the roof over Bonoff Hall, add a lift to the rectory for disabled guests or rectors, and address facility enhancements that the Vestry prioritizes. We also envision using funds to support the new Music Director’s integration, assist with the cost of initiating new programs such as a children’s music ministry, facilitate smooth transitions that will inevitably occur, and afford us flexibility in funding other clergy such as associate and interim pastors.

Funds will thus ease transitions of our clergy and staff and nourish our physical environment for programs and worship.

These intentions spring from a foundation of joy. Crafted together by many members of the St. Alban’s community, they express our shared desire to sustain the St. Alban’s we know and love, to further beautify our worship, and to deepen the loving care we offer to God’s children. The Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew campaign calls us to share our resources and, in so doing, to affirm our faith and our service to God – as individuals and as a community of Spirit.
What is a capital campaign?

Capital campaigns build and strengthen communities. Designed to generate money for critical projects and needs, they bring people together in cohesive, discrete, fundraising efforts. Campaigns focus new resources on amazing and important efforts that lie beyond the capacity of annual budgets. They are a time-honored mechanism for enabling organizations, including churches, to realize their visions. They call us to make financial gifts for tomorrow from a part of our heart that dreams and looks forward, the part that wonders what new thing God might do – if we step up together, as partners.

You may be wondering ...
Does St. Alban’s have experience with capital campaigns?

Yes! Over our 100-year history, capital campaigns have helped the congregation’s prior generations celebrate all that we do. It is now our generation’s turn to step forward.

The Episcopal Church Foundation recommends that a healthy parish plan a campaign every five to ten years. They have evaluated the impact and found that parishes that engage in capital campaigns do not stagnate, but instead they grow and thrive.

This has been true at St. Alban’s. The parish’s first major campaign in the early 1950s, called Building Christ’s Presence, constructed the church in which we worship today. The result of that amazing work and collective generosity was a distinctive worship space and a renovation of the 1916 rectory, both well loved for the ensuing 70 years. They too began with a spirit of celebration!

More recent St. Alban’s campaigns were similarly inspiring. An audacious commitment in the 1990s resulted in re-organization of the campus, including construction of Bonoff Hall and all of our classrooms, offices, and facilities. These remain fresh and bright and are used every day. Our One Foundation Campaign, launched fearlessly at the time of a significant national recession, created and built up the St. Alban’s Endowment, a $1 million invested fund that provides annual revenues to our operating budget and security for the future. And most recently, in 2008, a less formal campaign-type effort created what has become our beloved Memorial Garden and Columbarium, a place of comfort, prayer, beauty, and celebration.

How did the idea for Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew get started?

Christians have known for millennia that sometimes a surprise challenge contains a call to discern a way forward. A dilemma in one corner of the Christian community may reveal an opportunity for a creative response that builds the whole community.

That’s exactly how we got here.

In our case, our dilemma was that St. Alban’s pipe organ, an often expensively repaired and quirky instrument, was no longer sustainable for a reasonable cost. Our dear Music Director at the time, Dr. Jim Strand, requested a detailed analysis by a very reputable organ team; the report was grim.

As often happens here, ready donors jumped up to help plan a new organ. But before we plunged into action, our Rector, Wardens, and Treasurer all agreed, “let’s pause and broaden the question on the table.”
Is Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew related to the Enriching our Worship gatherings?

Yes! In 2018, the Vestry launched a parish-wide project called Enriching Our Worship (EOW) and recruited the finest leaders in the Episcopal Church to guide us. Our intention was to look at not just our old organ, but at all the features of our three distinctive worship services. We were fortunate to be joined by the remarkable Ellen Johnston and Bill Roberts of the Virginia Theological Center on Liturgy and Music. Open to the entire parish and choirs, and well attended, EOW workshops and subcommittees identified three areas of focus: the organ, children’s worship and music opportunities, and rejuvenation of the 9:30 a.m. service, as well as enrichment of our 8 a.m. and Celtic Eventide services.

What did the Vestry do with the outcomes of Enriching Our Worship?

In April 2019, the Vestry unanimously passed a resolution, a part of which reads:

**Capital Campaign Planning**

The Officers and Rector are requested to recruit and convene a Capital Campaign Planning Committee to prepare a plan to seek parish–wide contributions to meet multiple parish goals, which cannot be met in our annual budgets, including, but not limited to these “buckets” of hopes:

- The Enriching Our Worship proposals to nourish our worship space, instruments, and musical practices, including for children.
- The Vestry’s dream to nourish our campus and replenish the Fund for Major Improvements.
- The creation of a new fund to nourish ministry, bridging gaps in roles and times of transition.
- The creation of a new fund for Nourishing God’s World by our outreach and mission.

With unanimity and enthusiasm, the Vestry sees that now is the time to not only focus on replacing our organ and enriching our worship, with all its distinctive character and beauty, but also to focus on our long-term needs.
Did the Vestry consider timing?

Yes! Our Rector, Tim Boggs took a lead in examining potential reasons both for and against a current launch. He has outlined eight reasons why this is indeed an excellent time to engage in a targeted, energizing, capital campaign. His view is that…

1. **We have an enormous opportunity to refresh our 9:30 a.m. service**, even as we sustain and promote both the 8 a.m. and Celtic Eventide services. Our worship and celebration are the core of all we do and hence deserve nourishing. If we do this, we will continue to grow. The time is now.

2. **We have already set the energies in motion.** The 2018-2019 EOW experience is a rare phenomenon in church life. For a full year, dedicated people thought and prayed and laughed together and then created a faithful roadmap. Likewise, the reports of the Organ Committee and the Worship Space Planning Committee reflect a unique, spirited engagement, informed by experts, other parishes, and our own deep learning. What these committees discovered about the potential for St. Alban’s has never before been expressed more clearly or by more dedicated groups. Let’s celebrate this momentum!

3. **We have a new Music Director who is exceptionally capable of enriching our growth.** Our dedicated Music Director, Joel Pierce is already adding life and energy to our sacred music offerings, and now is the time to build on this opportunity.

4. **The parish has real, immediate, tangible needs** – not only to replace our beloved creaky organ, but also to recharge the Fund for Major Improvements.

5. **This is good timing for a capital campaign in the arc of my rectorship.** I don’t generally worry about how things will be when I retire, as God will keep up his good work here without me, for sure! But as I approach my 70th birthday, I feel compelled to plan for a successful transition to a new rector when I retire. My financial arrangement with the parish will require some adjustment when a new rector comes, and a capital campaign now could help prepare for this need. Moreover, with the needs described, it makes sense to wage a campaign while I am here to lead it; a new rector will not immediately enjoy the same leadership capacity.

6. **We are fortunate to have many generous parishioners who have expressed an interest in major giving to protect St. Alban’s future.** We are immensely grateful to these individuals and we are, therefore, likely to succeed!

7. **Many people, including those who might make significant gifts, are planning their legacies.** At St. Alban’s many in the aging generation have been consistently committed and generous to the church. Now is the time to ask for such legacy gifts and for them to model generosity for the next generation.

8. **The United States economy is still strong with many investments enjoying substantial gains.** Great times for the economy are great times for charitable giving, as people are able to celebrate their abundance.
Does a gift to the capital campaign replace my annual pledge?

No. Our annual pledges fund the parish’s operating budget. They are absolutely essential, to keep our doors open, lights on, and salaries paid. Year in, year out, generations of St. Alban’s members have faithfully given to meet all of our needs. These funds have been managed with extraordinary deftness, expenses matched carefully to income, and a reserved fund established for shortages. Our monthly detailed reports to the parish are published on our website and are a model for other parishes for their clarity and accuracy. Campaign gifts will fill an entirely separate “bucket,” allowing for growth that our operating budget cannot support.

How can I be involved?

Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew will touch our whole community, thus we hope you will join in, bringing your energy, creativity, imagination and gifts. We suggest that you…

Pray. Our campaign starts in wonder and prayer. Ask God how you can help sustain and grow the good, generative work of St. Alban’s.

Be curious. Actively seek to learn more, so that you deeply understand and embrace the hopes of this campaign. We welcome your questions, your presence at briefings, and your engagement in conversation as we share the vision for St. Alban’s future with our whole congregation.

Give. Look into your heart to find your own commitment to Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew. To whatever extent you have been blessed with the capacity to give, make a choice that expresses your generosity and reflects the value you place on our joyful community of worship.

This campaign, a path we walk together into our vibrant future, will come alive only with the personal engagement of us all. And as we enjoy the vision realized, we will celebrate every gift, many times over. Pray. Learn. Give. It’s our turn.
We are called to summon our generous spirits, with creativity and sacrifice, to be God’s partners in healing a world in great need of love. We are called to preserve and build upon the legacy of prior generations, with prudent investment and caring attention, and with an eye to warmly welcoming design. We are called to be good planners, looking ahead so that the next leaders of this parish will have resources for smooth transitions of clergy and professional staff. We are called to join Christ in “making all things new,” as we carefully create refreshed worship space that offers gracious access for all, the mystery of the sacraments, and joyful fellowship in song and prayer.

Friends, it is our generation’s turn to step up boldly, but wisely, to meet these goals. In this we give breathing space to what is newly emerging. We celebrate it with a deep understanding that in a tradition-centered church, such as ours, if the new is borne of the hopes of God, that which is old is never compromised.

What we are doing in Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew is audacious. We are wondering what new thing God is doing in our midst. And yet, it is also a campaign grounded by humility, understanding, and prayer, a campaign that has evolved out of careful discernment, inspired leadership, and prudent planning.

It is my sincere hope that you will join me, and many others at this good church, in generous giving to Celebrate St. Alban’s Anew. This is our chance, together, to realize our collective hopes and create a joyous future.

With gratitude,

[Signature]

The Rev. Tim Boggs
Grant, we beseech you, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, and the hymns we have sung with our common voice, may through your Grace, be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruits of good living, to the honor of your people and the praise of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A prayer for after our common worship
From the Book of Common Prayer