

# The Sword

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" - Ephesians 6:17

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

October 2023

**From Fr. Bill...** *"There are three things I've learned never to discuss with people: religion, politics, and the Great Pumpkin."* Linus Van Pelt.

Despite the summer-like weather, we are finally in the autumnal season also known as "fall." I admit that I am very happy about it. It's not that I don't like summer, I do, but fall just happens to be my most favorite season. I love the changing of the leaf colors, the cooler nights, crisp mornings, soups and stews, candy corn (no judging), etc. I really can't think of anything that I don't like about fall, with the exception, perhaps, of pumpkin spice anything. Just ask me and I'll tell you about my love of fall.

I often find it curious how easy it is to talk about the things we like. Is there a movie you like? You tell it to your friends. Been to a new restaurant that you like? You tell your family. Is there an event that you are interested in going to? You share it on Facebook. Has God, Jesus, or the Spirit been moving in your life? – crickets – nothing. How many social media, Facebook, or Instagram posts are about St. Alban's or any of its myriad ministries? How often are we like Linus Van Pelt of Peanuts fame who said, "There are three things I've learned never to discuss with people: religion, politics, and the Great Pumpkin."

I admit it is easier to share a picture of a really good meal on our Facebook page, yet when it comes to our life in the church, or about God, Jesus, or the Spirit, we tend to clam up or shut down. I liken this to the dreaded Episcopal fear I have come to call "evangelophobia" – a deep-seated fear of sharing the Good News with people outside of our church circles. We would rather

let our works speak for our faith, looking to the oft-misquoted St. Francis (who never, ever said "by the way"): "Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary, use words." Yet, I truly believe that this world needs to hear the Good News of God in our lives.

Jesus' ministry wasn't defined by his works, but by his words – his sharing the Good News of God with the people. This was his main ministry tool: sharing the good news with the oppressed, the marginalized, the sick, the imprisoned. St. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, wrote, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). Our call to follow Christ is a call to share Christ's words of God's love, God's grace, God's forgiveness, with everyone we meet, just as we would share our love of the fall (or spring, or winter, or summer).

There are so many good things happening at St. Alban's – our Red

Door Lunches, our Free Community Pantry, our Contemplative Prayer, our Community Garden, our blessing of God's animals. I hope you share these blessings with your friends, neighbors, or even strangers on the street.

"Be not afraid" proclaimed the angels. "Peace be with you," said the risen Christ. This fall, let us take a deep breath, face our evangelophobia, and go out into the world, sharing our own stories of how God is working in our lives, in our church, and in our world. Happy fall everyone!

Other people: "I never want  
summer to end!"  
Me:



We are in the middle of our Thanksgiving Funding Drive. In about three weeks we will receive numbers of families from each of the elementary schools in Weld RE-4, giving us a good idea of how much impact we can make for those families. Last year we helped 76



## Thanksgiving Donations Needed

families through a total of \$4,400, although we were budgeted at \$3,000. We were

quite generous last year since each family received at least a \$50 gift card, and families with more than five members received an additional \$10 for each additional family member. We not only provided cards for the families of children in RE-4, we also took referrals from members of the parish.

Given the increased demand on our Community Pantry, the Windsor-Severance Food Pantry, and the Weld Food Bank (some months double the number from last year), and our latest news from RE-4, we anticipate that our numbers are going to grow by quite a bit; we might see as many as 150 families this year. Our current goal is \$5,000 and we are aware that it might not be adequate to serve all the families who need help. The Outreach Commission will determine how we can stretch our funds to meet the demand. All the requests will be met, our question is how much help we will be able to provide.

Many of you prefer to wait until the end of the fund-

raising to donate, which is understandable, but if you can donate before the end of October, it would make it much easier for the Outreach Commission to determine how to handle the need and avoid going quite so far over budget. Bright orange donation envelopes are available in the narthex and on the windowsills of the church. Donations also can be made via Realm. On the giving page, use the drop-down menu to find the "Thanksgiving Gift Cards" fund. Even a few dollars a week will help us.



We are now able to stock canned goods in the Community Pantry, and will do so until we have a hard freeze. Most needed items include ready-to-eat items such as spaghetti, chili, and ravioli; just-add-water items like soup; and canned fruit and protein items such as tuna, chicken, and peanut butter. When possible, please try to include items that have pull-tabs. As we move into fall, we also see an increase in the need for dry items like rice, beans, and pasta.

Until frost, the community garden will continue to produce fresh vegetables and herbs. Please feel free to pick whatever you can use, and please remember to donate excess items from your garden. Your donations are a great blessing to those who don't have gardens and can't always afford fresh vegetables and fruit.

As always, thank you for blessing our community in so many ways.

**Sip, Swap and Shop For a Cause**  
WORDS OF WINDSOR

Stepping Stones of Windsor

**Tuesday, October 10, 6pm**  
at Words of Windsor  
631 Birch Street, Unit B, Windsor

Providing utility and rent assistance to help RE-4 residents remain safely in their homes

20% of the day's sales go to Stepping Stones

Learn more about how you can help

6-8pm book swap, fun, and door prizes



### Halloween at St. Alban's

St. Alban's Fundraising Team invites you to two fun Halloween events happening this month. On Saturday, October 21 from 5:30 to 9 p.m. folks are invited to a Spook House and

hot dog meal at the home of Lucy Thames, 1979 Blossom Grove Court, Windsor, 80550. Tickets are \$5 for the Spook House and \$5 for a hot dog meal. On Sunday, October 28 from 3 to 6 p.m., folks are invited to St. Alban's Halloween Party in the Parish Hall. Come in costume and invite your friends. All proceeds go to St. Alban's.

### All Hallows Eve: Tuesday, October 31

Join Fr. Bill as we welcome trick-or-treaters and their families at St. Alban's this All Hallows Eve from 6 to 8 p.m. Dress up and help us pass out candy, cider, and toys to all the trick and treaters and their families.

Everybody has heard the jokes that involve three different people, like a Scot, a Brit, and an Irishman, or a Muslim, a Catholic and a Jew, that coincidentally end up in the same place, like a bar, or church, or those pearly gates. Then, coincidentally, something improbable happens in this place, such as an insect dying in each person’s beer at the exact same time, or St. Peter asks a random question or some other silly made-up event that never happens, with these three people that are never together – coincidentally. Then we hear how these three very different people react to this coincidence. Often, the joke is funny. The description of the mechanics of the joke? Not so much.

Coincidences being on my mind, I decided to do a little research on the word. I came across an extremely well written and horribly dry history on the word. The paper was written in 1880 by H.E. Shepherd who found that modern Latin didn’t really use it until the 1600s, and it wasn’t used mathematically, but rather morally. As in when people decide to do things together, they decide coincidentally. We tend to think of coincidence as an improbable statistic, like watching in amazement as a golden retriever somehow catches a frisbee at the same time a goose hit it in the air.

There are other texts on the word, with Greek definitions being in line with the Romans starting 2,000 years

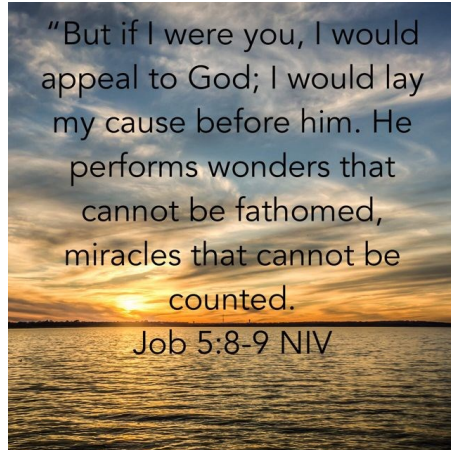
ago and it also was used for morals and human decisions rather than statistical observation. But interestingly, Hebrew does not have a word for coincidence. The Hebrews didn’t think that way. The Hebrew logic is that everything “is a happening of God.” If something is a happening of God, then there can be no coincidence.

I am associated with some people who don’t agree with me on religion, but I still love them. If I am asked why I believe, I say it starts with not believing in coincidence. When I stopped believing in random luck, I started to see all of the little ways God is working in my life.

“But if I were you, I would appeal to God: I would lay my cause before Him. He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted” (Job 5: 8-9).

I used the power of the Google to search the Bible to find how many times coincidence appeared. It appears just once. It was found in a parable Jesus told about a man who was robbed on a road, left wounded and in distress, and how a priest just happened to travel by the man and did not help. Then, of course, a Levite had to pass by, see the beaten man and not offer aid. Finally, coincidentally, a Samaritan found the victim and took care of him.

It was a miracle, a happening of God, that that Samaritan came by at the right time. Are you looking for God’s happenings all around you?



**Fall Cleanup**  
Saturday, October 21 @ 9:00 AM

Fall is upon us, and it is time to ready our grounds and gardens for the winter. Please join us Saturday, October 21 at 9 a.m. for our Fall Cleanup Day as we harvest the remaining of our vegetables, clean the garden beds, rake leaves, move plants, and trim bushes and trees. Please bring your rakes, clippers, shovels, and gloves. We will provide the coffee and donuts.

**Feast of All Saints**  
November 1 @ 7:00 PM

Please join us Wednesday, November 1 at 7 p.m. for a beautiful service as we celebrate the Feast of All Saints. Our service will consist of Holden Evening Prayer – a sung service offered by St. Alban’s choir. We also will include a reading of the necrology, the names of all those in our parish who have died in the past year, or all those beloved by members of our parish who have died. If you have lost someone in the past 12 months and would like to have them included in this most sacred ritual of remembrance, please send the names to either Diana VanderLeest or Fr. Bill.

## All Things Bright and Beautiful ————— by Henrietta O’Neill

1982 Episcopal Hymnal 405 or Worship and Rejoice Hymnal 30

In the mid-1800s, Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander, wife of the Anglican bishop of Ireland, undertook teaching a group of children the meaning of the Apostles’ Creed. She found traditional teaching methods were ineffective, so she put her writing skills to work and wrote a series of hymns based on various phrases of the Apostles’ Creed. The line in the refrain of the hymn, “all creatures great and small,” was based on the phrase in the creed: “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.”

In 1848, she published the hymn in a volume called *Hymns for Little Children*, which was popular during her lifetime. A woman noted for generosity, she donated the proceeds of the sales of her hymnbook to a school for the deaf.

We are going to be using Enriching our Worship, Eucharistic Prayer 2 for the next two months during our Sunday 10 a.m. worship service, which focuses on the creation story of how the “Lord God Made us All.”



This liturgy reminds me of a children’s book that tells the story of a cricket who does not want to be a cricket. He admires the appearance and abilities of other animals and wishes that he could be more like them. This question came to my mind: Are we so different from the cricket?

It is a strong tendency for us to compare ourselves to others, but when was the last time we considered that the Lord God made us? He made each of us just the way we are. He knit us together in our mother’s wombs, weaving together in the secret place a perfect combination of traits and talents.

God made the world and everything in it. I feel God is delighted with the details that make us who we are. So let us examine our abilities as we are not called to be what we are not, but we are called to make the most of what we are.

Reading the verses of this hymn may help each of us to focus on the beautiful world we live in.

### St Alban T-shirts/Sweatshirts for sale

It’s time to order your St Alban T-shirts/polo shirts/crew necked sweatshirts/hoodies. Please fill out the order form found in the Parish Hall by Oct. 16 and give the form and payment to Kym Roberts-Mitchell.

Colors: black, red, yellow, forest green, navy blue, light blue, and white.

T-shirt, single pocket, crew neck: S–XL, \$20; , add \$2 per size for 2XL–5XL (i.e., 5XL would be \$28).

Polo shirt: S–XL, \$30; add \$3 per size 2XL–4XL (4XL would be \$39).

Sweat shirt, crew neck: \$30, S–XL; add 3\$ per size 2XL–4XL.

Hoodie sweatshirt: \$40, S–XL; add \$3 per size 2XL–4XL.



### Congratulations to our New Confirmand

Congratulations to Ryan Wooley who was confirmed in the Episcopal faith on October 1 by the Right Reverend Kym Lucas at her triennial visitation to St. Alban’s. Ryan attends our 7:30 a.m. service and we are glad to welcome him into the faith!



Animals received blessings by the Bishop on Oct. 1.