

Annual Ministry Report (September 2022)

St. Alban's Chapel, Baton Rouge

For ninety-three years, St. Alban's Chapel has served a place of refuge, hospitality, and worship for the wider LSU community. St. Alban's was the first Episcopal Chapel in the United States to be built on the campus of a state university. After two and a half years of disruptions due to the pandemic, LSU students are now enjoying a full return to a normal campus experience. They are back in force, and with a new energy. Most of our LSU students now attend *recharge!* (Sunday evenings at 6:00), a repackaged, expanded service of Compline begun during the pandemic. The service is led by students and features familiar music by a talented quartet, candlelight, intentional spaces of silence, and prayerful reflection on the scriptures. It is casual, unhurried and lasts about 30 minutes. The service is always followed by a homecooked, free dinner provided by members of the congregation.

Much of our direct ministry to students continues to be done by our fabulous team Campus Ministry Interns. Since 2007, thirty-three student interns have served St. Alban's Chapel. Currently, we currently employ five fabulous undergraduates who meet weekly with the chaplain for discipleship. Students here are involved in all aspects of church life including the Advisory, Finance, and Stewardship Committees. Our number of fully-engaged students has risen since the start of the fall semester but is still short of where we were before the pandemic. Involving young men is especially difficult, a pattern in campus ministries across the country. Until March 2019, our "Lunch with C. S. Lewis" ministry was our primary outreach to this campus of some 45,000 students. We hope to resume that lunch in the new year.

Our Sunday worship attendance has returned to pre-pandemic levels. Some people have not returned. But we have gained more newcomers since the start of the pandemic. This fall, we were able to resume worship with our choir made up of students from the LSU School of Music. The addition of our Media Ministry has enabled us to continue to stream all our services online. Our Sunday offerings for our many families with children and teens has resumed and grown with the addition of our new Director of Family Ministry, Anne Craven. In May, we concluded our Legacy Campaign to restore our fine pipe organ and to repair and maintain the sanctuary and student center. That effort raised over \$700,000. With all the Legacy Campaign projects now complete, \$150,000 remains for future building maintenance. We still host four weekly AA groups that each continued to meet through the pandemic. That active recovery community is a major factor in the general underlying health of St. Alban's Chapel.

St. Alban's Chapel is a mission-driven, multi-generational ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. We strive to provide refuge, hospitality, and worship in the Anglican tradition to the students, faculty, staff, and wider community of Louisiana State University. We joyfully proclaim God's unrelenting grace to each of us at our point of greatest need. The ministry that we share here is the fruit that grows quite naturally from our personal experience of that grace. St. Alban's Chapel is a multi-generational church that is shaped by the conviction that none of us ever move beyond the need to hear that basic message of God's one-way love for us in Jesus Christ.

How does the ministry of St. Alban's Chapel "shape our future"? For current LSU students, many of whom will populate and help to lead your churches in the near future, St. Alban's Chapel ensures that they can find an easily accessible, lively, faith-building church home during the years when many form their life-long vocations and relationships. This ministry also gives the congregations of the diocese the opportunity to help shape the spiritual lives of the next generation of leaders in the church and beyond. We continue to be grateful to the whole diocese for your faithful financial and prayer support. Thank you for appreciating the importance of the church maintaining a vital presence on the campus of this major state university!

The Rev. Drew Rollins, *chaplain*