

Annual Ministry Report (September 2023)

St. Alban's Chapel, Baton Rouge

For ninety-four 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. LSU students are now enjoying a full return to a normal campus experience following the pandemic. 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 of seven Campus Ministry Interns. Since 2007, forty student interns have served St. Alban's Chapel. These undergraduates 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 long-running "Lunch with C. S. Lewis" ministry has resumed and begun to grow again. We also helped to organize and fund a trip to Tennessee for our junior and senior high youth groups, the first trip of its kind.

Sunday worship attendance has returned to pre-pandemic levels. We have resumed 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 grown with the addition of our new Director of Family Ministry, Anne Craven. 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, \$90,000 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*