

**St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Syracuse, New York**

February News & Inspiration

**Mardi Gras Dinner
Saturday, February 14 at 6:00 p.m.**

**This is a modified potluck dinner; ham will be provided.
Please sign up to bring a side dish or dessert.**

Feeding the Hungry

Please put items in the Fellowship Room by the Fireplace

We're starting our Lenten mission a bit early. We are collecting food for the Interreligious Food Consortium. We'll be checking in with them on specific items needed, but for now stick to protein-rich foods such as canned chicken and tuna, peanut butter, and canned meals such as chili or beef stew.

Debbie Michlin and Barbara Crane have volunteered to deliver the food. Thank you!

Lent at St. Alban's

Ash Wednesday is February 18

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist at 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

**Wednesday Evening Lenten Program
at the Church and on Zoom**

February 25 and March 4, 11, 18, 25

At the Church

6:00 p.m. Sign up to attend a Simple Supper, \$5

On Zoom

Eat & Chat

6:30 p.m. Mother Julie will do a program on The Sermon on the Mount

Note: There will be no Healing Service on March 11. Instead, Mother Julie will offer the sacrament of healing at services on March 14-15.

WORSHIP TIMES

Saturday Evening

4:30 p.m.
5:00 p.m.

Coffee Hour
Holy Eucharist

* Zoom Code and Password
812 9701 3112 and 381729

Sunday Morning

9:00 a.m.

Bible Study
In Rector's Office and on Zoom

* Zoom Code and Password
825 2837 9378 and 695433



Also on Wednesday

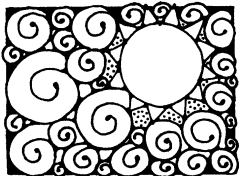
10:00 a.m.

Holy Communion
Spiritual Communion on Zoom and Facebook
(To use your phone for Zoom, dial 1-646-558-8656)

* Zoom Code and Password
826 9515 6305 and 446765

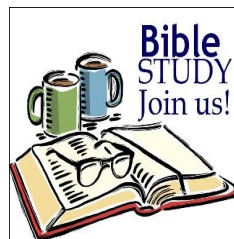
11:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour



**Tuesday: Morning
Prayer
on Zoom
at 10:00 a.m.**

Codes: 849 7442 6644
& 031228



**Wednesday
Bible Study
at 2:00 p.m.**

Fellowship Room
and on Zoom

Codes: 835 8425 9508
& 414804



Vestry

Tuesday,
February 17
at 6:30 p.m.
on Zoom.



Second Wednesday, February 11

6:00 p.m. Chinese Take Out at the Church (\$7)
Please sign up to attend.

7:00 p.m. Healing and Holy Eucharist, also on Zoom:
856 3233 5420 and 366999

Rector's Annual Address

Blessed are those who are poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Poor in Spirit - what on earth does that mean? What if it was rephrased to say, "Blessed are those who are not proud, who know their need for God? Blessed are those who live by a humble dependence on God's grace." The merger of our two parishes one year ago would not have succeeded if we were proud and did not ask for God's divine help. Even with months of preparation it would not have worked if St. Alban's people didn't welcome some of the important traditions cherished by the people of Emmanuel, not to mention the people themselves, and the Emmanuel people didn't open themselves up to new possibilities. When I proposed that the new Warden and two Vestry Members to be elected at last year's Annual Meeting come from Emmanuel's current Vestry, St. Alban's Vestry immediately said Yes! The Vestry saw the wisdom in incorporating Emmanuel's leaders into our Vestry. Sharon Chapman, Debbie Michlin, and Pamela Trendell stepped up and were warmly welcomed by the continuing members on the Vestry. Another example is the Altar Guild. Bobbi Lombardo and Barbara Crane started working together before the merger to ensure a smooth transition. St. Alban's members teamed up with Emmanuel members month by month until all were fully incorporated into this sacred work.

When it came time to decide on mission projects we listened to the people of Emmanuel about two projects that were dear to them: 24 Christmas gift bags to the residents of St. David's Court, which this year included Dottie White's pillow cases, and Giving Tree items for East Syracuse Elementary School. I haven't come across anyone from either parish who was proud, territorial, or unbending. I may have led the way, but it's all of you who made it happen. Now we are no longer Emmanuel and St. Alban's. We are all a deeper and richer St. Alban's.

Which brings me to the second beatitude: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. The people of Emmanuel suffered a very real loss and that needs to be acknowledged. I have felt it more keenly during these cold, snowy winter months when attendance has been low, and I know others share my sorrow. The added distance to drive to church has meant that we no longer see a few of our frailer friends. The new family from Tully that began attending, and whom I baptized on Easter Eve, are now attending a church on Sunday morning that's closer to home. Fear not, the Saturday evening service is not going away. Our core group will keep it going, and even in Syracuse the winter can't last forever - fingers crossed.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. I have made a point of not being seen as partisan in this first year, but I remain deeply concerned about those who are targeted by ICE, those who have had their food stamps reduced or cut, and those who have to choose between buying food and paying the heating bill this winter. I hope many of you will join me for the next NO Kings rally on the last Saturday of March. On Wednesday I had a conversation with a dear woman whom I help about once every two years. When she calls me I know I'm her last resort.

Since we last talked she has been diagnosed with breast cancer and had a rare reaction to the chemotherapy where she lost the ability to walk for a time. She was calling because she didn't have the \$409 to pay the county tax on her home. Several houses in her neighborhood have been auctioned off because people couldn't pay their taxes. If that happened to her she had no where else to go. Thanks to those of you who have made such generous contributions to my discretionary fund I was able to pay the County Tax Collector on her behalf. When I asked her if she needed food because she had mentioned that her fridge had never been bare before she declined. She told me that paying the tax bill was enough and she wanted any money the church has for food to go to children, not to her. Before we ended our phone call she said that she wanted me to know how widespread hunger is right now.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. I continue to rejoice in the generosity of the people of St. Alban's. When we collect food for the Interreligious Food Consortium the front pew overflows with donations. When we began the Community Food Cupboard in August your response was immediate and plentiful. Through that ministry we also have helped three families with winter coats and boots for their children. When one of those families lost the coats and boots we donated, along with all of their clothing, footwear, and bedding to bedbugs, I was able to get them the maximum grant of \$1000 from the diocesan Episcopal Fund for Human Need. The mom, who is quite limited, was so relieved that she and her three daughters were getting help. Last Tuesday night I delivered food to them because the mom had the flu and two of the girls had bronchitis. You should have seen the joy in their faces as they helped me unload the food from my car. They weren't going to go to bed hungry for a while. Because I've been so ill this month, and so have a number of you, I didn't have the opportunity to engage some of you in this life-giving ministry. If I can call on you please tell me. This is not my ministry, it's St. Alban's ministry.

Speaking of my health, or sometimes lack thereof, a point of clarification. Long Covid weakens your immune system, making you more vulnerable to getting infections. Once an infection like Influenza B sets in then Long Covid becomes a secondary infection and delays recovery. It doesn't happen if I am working too much. I am indebted to three people for stepping in for me when that happens: The Rev. Larry Crinnin, Kate Bell, and Steve Pekich. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your willingness to fill in for me on little notice when I'm ill.

This is my 20th(!) Annual Meeting at St. Alban's and I am so proud to be your Rector. The love of God and of one another runs deep in this congregation. Care for the hungry and the oppressed is expressed through your continued donations of both goods and money. Your generosity in pledge and non-pledge giving to St. Alban's is remarkable. For the first year in a very long time we have a balanced budget, thanks to the merger, and \$100,000 from Emmanuel was added to our long term investments. I am indebted to the sage counsel and support of our three Wardens: Gina Odell, Sharon Chapman, and Kiki White. Would you please stand. As you remain standing I ask that the members of the Vestry please stand: David Houston, Bobbi Lombardo, Debbie Michlin, Pamela Trendell, Fred Wilson, and Wendy Wickenden, who is on Zoom, Treasurer

Kathleen Eckermann, and Vestry Clerk Kate Bell. I'll also ask Property Team Leader Steve Pekich to stand. These are our leaders. Each of them has brought their gifts and talents and served St. Alban's with distinction. Thank you so very much.

In closing, let me say that 2026 looks to be a year when our worship will be joyous, our outreach will be crucial, and our love of God be demonstrated in many acts of love. May God continue to strengthen the congregation, bless and inspire the new Vestry, and keep us all safely in His sight. Amen.


**Fun Things to Celebrate
in February
(from Holidayinsights.com)**

National Bird Feeding Month
Great American Pie Month
Canned Food Month

- 1 National Freedom Day
- 2 Tater Tot Day
- 4 Thank a Mail Carrier Day
- 6 National Chopsticks Day
- 7 Wave at Your Neighbor Day
- 10 National Flannel Day
- 12 National Lost Penny Day
- 16 Do a Grouch a Favor Day
- 18 Drink Wine Day
- 20 Cherry Pie Day
- 22 Walk Your Dog Day
- 23 National Tootsie Roll Day
- 24 Tortilla Chip Day



**“Wireless communication is nothing new.
I’ve been praying for 75 years!”**



When at the store, please pick up a brick of cheese, a box of cookies, or crackers for coffee hour.
Coffee creamer is also a good idea!

**Church School
February 7 and 28
Saturdays at 5:00 p.m.**



Upper Elementary

Note From The Parish Office...

If you would like yours or a family member's birthday added to the weekly prayers on the appropriate dates please either leave a note in the "Secretary's Mail" bin on my desk or email the information to me at stalban.syr@gmail.com. Thanks - Lisa

Altar Flowers and Sanctuary Lamp

Altar Flowers: Until informed otherwise, flowers from Coleman's are \$60 for 2 vases. The new sign up sheet allows you to ask if someone wants to share the cost. There are no flowers during Lent, which runs from February 18 to April 4.

Sanctuary Lamp: The candle burns from Sunday to Sunday and is on the wall in front of the ambry on the left side of the altar. A \$10 donation is requested.

For Ash Wednesday

The Rector responds to concern that Lent is a downer



Around the parish, people reflect on this year's Lenten disciplines...



St. Alban's

Rector: The Rev. Julie E.
Calhoun-Bryant

Wardens

Senior: Sharon Chapman
Junior: Margo Kowalczyk
Emerita: Gina Odell

Vestry Members

Kate Bell
Barbara Crane
Bobbi Lombardo
Debbie Michlin
Pamela Trendell
Wendy Wickenden

Kiki White, Vestry Clerk

Parish Secretary

Lisa Wojtaszek

Organists

Cynthia Bromka-Skafidas
Erick Kroll (Saturday)

Treasurer

Kathleen Eckermann

Financial Secretary

Fred Wilson

Church School

Shelby Calhoun

Ministry Team Leaders

Communications Team

David Houston

Congregational Life Team

Kiki White

Mission Team

Bobbi Lombardo
Dottie White

Property Team

Steve Pekich

Spiritual Life Team

Mother Julie
Altar Guild: Bobbi
Lombardo



February Birthdays

1 Lois McEwan
2 Jim Kowalczyk
8 James Corp
8 Diane Geloff
15 Kevin Coulon
21 Abby Corp
22 Pamela Trendell
28 Bradley Kreischer

Giving to St. Alban's

Send us a check or to give online go to
cnyepiscopal.org/give-to-my-parish

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

1308 Meadowbrook Drive
Syracuse, NY 13224-1718
(315) 446-3490

Website: stalbansyracuse.org

Facebook: [stalbanschurchsyr](https://www.facebook.com/stalbanschurchsyr)

Secretary's Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Secretary's Email: stalbans.syr@gmail.com

Contacting Mother Julie

- Call the secretary during office hours.
- Email: julieatalban@gmail.com
- 315-416-7133 (cell)

Please don't leave urgent or time sensitive messages on the church answering machine.