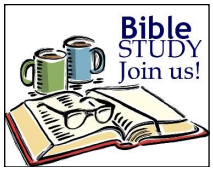
St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Syracuse, New York
November News & Inspiration

Sunday Morning in Person and on Zoom



8:30 a.m. **Bible Study**
Both In Person and on Zoom
* Zoom Code and Password
835 9000 0245 and 562087

9:30 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

10:30 a.m. **November 5: All Saints' Sunday Brunch**
Coffee Hour

Tuesday Morning on Zoom

10:00 a.m. **Morning Prayer**
* Zoom Code and Password:
849 7442 6644 and 031228

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Study: In Person at Emmanuel and on Zoom (Repeated the following Sunday)

2:00 p.m. **Bible Study**
* Zoom Code and Password
840 0349 8213 and 586548

Thanksgiving Eve Service
Wednesday, November 22
5:30 p.m.

Mother Julie's Sermon on October 28/29: Two Greatest Commandments

Note: As we ponder the month of November, with its All Saints' Day and Thanksgiving celebrations, may we meditate on the blessings and love showered upon us by God, and the love shown by the saints, especially those in our lives who have been an inspiration to us.

In order to test Jesus a lawyer asked him, "Which law, which commandment, is the greatest?" Not only were there 613 laws - 248 thou shalls and 365 thou shall nots - but some of them seemed to conflict with one another. Another way to phrase the lawyer's question is to ask, "What law is most important to God?", after all, God gave all 613 of them.

Although it's meant to be test, even a trap, Jesus gives a serious answer: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the lay and the prophets. In 28 words Jesus has explained the meaning of life, the reason for which God created us.

All the other commandments must be interpreted by these first two great commandments, that is, interpreted through the lens of love. Thou shalt not murder. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not covet. - these are straight forward. How to keep the sabbath? - not so easy to understand. For example, Jesus healed on the sabbath because he interpreted sabbath law through the lens of the second great commandment. He taught that God gave the sabbath to us as a gift. The workweek wasn't 7 days; it was 6 days, for everyone, wives, kids, slaves and animals included. Jesus argued that if you would rescue your donkey if it fell into a pit on the sabbath, why wouldn't you tend to the need for healing of a person who was worshipping God with you?

There are 3 Greek words for love: agape, philio (friendship), and eros. The word used here is agape. Agape is a holy love, a love that puts another's needs first, the love Jesus showed us.

I decided to look at the other times Matthew used the word agape in his Gospel.

- Twice, at Jesus' baptism and at his transfiguration, a voice from the cloud proclaims Jesus as my "agaped/beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased". Once Matthew used it in a quote from Isaiah with similar wording that he applied to Jesus.
- Jesus also told his disciples that the lack of agape will be a sign of the end of the age.

I expected to find it used about Jesus' love for us or the love we are to have for one another, but surprisingly didn't.

- Only other references are in the Sermon on the Mount: Jesus tells us that we cannot serve two masters. We will have agape for one only. We can't serve God and $.

- In the other reference Jesus instructs us to agape your enemy and pray for those who persecute you. I almost wish I hadn't looked up the word. Love our enemy, Jesus? Love our enemy with the same love that God the Father has for God the Son? How in the world are we supposed to do this?

Can you imagine telling the people of Israel to love the Hamas fighters who killed 1400 people and took over 200 hostage? or, asking the civilians in Gaza to love the Israelis that fired the rockets that killed their families?

Can you imagine telling the people of Lewiston, Maine to love Robert Card, who just killed 18 innocent people, shooting up a children's bowling league?

Why does God ask us to do this?

And then I consider God's response to us when we were enemies of God because sin had so thoroughly infected and infiltrated humanity that there was no hope for us to save ourselves. God sent Jesus, the beloved Son, to do what we cannot do. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that all who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

God showed agape love to us when we were enemies who stood condemned before him. The response God desires from us in thanksgiving for Jesus' sacrifice of his life on the cross is the two greatest commandments. It's that obvious and that difficult to do, because by linking these two together Jesus has made it crystal clear that loving God includes loving one another, even if they are our enemy. We need to hear again Jesus' words from the cross, "Father forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing."

When a Palestinian teacher in NYC was asked by a student which side she was on, Israel's or Palestine's, she gave an answer that pointed a way forward. She said, "I am on humanity's side." In sending Jesus, God chose to be on humanity's side.

Jesus walked a mile in our shoes. We can strive to do the same for our enemy?
Jesus turned no one away. We can strive to do the same?
Jesus went to the cross, rather than violently resisting his enemies. Can we do the same?

I'd like to close with the words of the Collect of the Day which I read at the beginning of the service: Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command. Make us love what you command. **Amen.**

At Emmanuel on November 18 from 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Following a Rule of Life

Since last All Saints' Day a total of ten people from both St. Alban's and Emmanuel have followed a Rule of Life. The purpose of the Rule is to live out our faith more intentionally and in a way that holds us accountable to the others in the Rule. We each had a small group of 2-3 people to check in with monthly to see how it's going, to cheer each other on, and to provide encouragement for the area we find the hardest to do. Then once a month we all met via Zoom. The goal isn't perfection! The goal is to develop holy habits, which we all have done. For one person it's saying Compline from the Prayer Book at the end of the each day. Several people have found that using the St. Clare Mission website has been a rich tool for saying Morning, Noon, or Evening Prayer. Others have reached out in love to others more intentionally.

Some of us are continuing on for a second year because we find the encouragement and accountability helpful. If you think that this is something you would like to commit to for a year, or if you have any questions, please speak with Mother Julie.

Here's our Rule of Life:
1) Daily prayer
2) Reading the Bible and other books relevant to living out the faith (your choice)
3) Daily act of love
4) Physical work or exercise 2-3 times a week (gardening and vacuuming count!)

St. Alban's Reaches Out

Now through November 30: Mission of Miracles

After many years the diocesan Mission of Miracles to El Salvador will make its final trip this winter. Through this mission volunteer medical professionals and Spanish speakers from the diocese have brought medical and dental treatment to hundreds of people. They are requesting the following items, which will be collected on December 2 at "Celebrate Dio CNY" at Grace, Utica.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
Individually wrapped single, soft toothbrushes
Toothpaste (larger tubes preferred, please)
Dental floss
Muscle rub (like Bengay)
Anti-fungal cream
Reader glasses, 2.00 or stronger
Gently used braces for wrists, ankles, knees, elbows
Canes

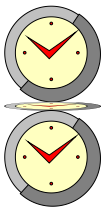
Thanksgiving through Christmas: Giving Tree

The Giving Tree will be set up at the back of the church to receive winter items for refugees helped through InterFaith Works' Center for New Americans. We are collecting for all sizes and ages.

<u>On the Tree</u>
Hats
Scarves
Gloves & Mittens

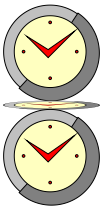
<u>Under the Tree</u>
Gently used Coats
Gently used Boots

News For Our Church Family

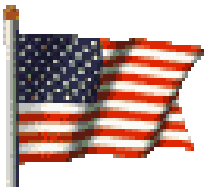


**** Daylight Savings Update ****

Don't forget to "FALL BACK" one hour at 1:00 a.m. on November 5th!



We remember our veterans…



Tyler Nuss	**Ryan Perry**	**Ben Watson**
Amy Donahue	**William Houck, Jr.**	**Jim Kowalczyk**
David Leader	**Matthew Leader**	**Rob Lombardo**
Adam Profitt	**Denis (Skip) Visco**	**Dorothy White**
Hamilton White	**Andrew Wickenden**	**Joshua Watson**

Thank You for Your Service!

SERVICE OF HEALING

Second Thursday is November 9

6:00 p.m. Dinner ($7)
7:00 p.m. Healing & Holy Eucharist
Service is also on Zoom

Altar Guild

Meets Tuesday,
November 14

Pledge Sunday is November 19

On November 7 the Wardens' letter and pledge form will be mailed out to the parish. Mother Julie will bless them at the Eucharist on Nov. 19.

Diocesan Event on Saturday, December 2

Originally the diocese had planned to hold a revival with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry at OCC. Due to his continuing recovery from surgery to remove his adrenal gland and a benign mass, Bishop DeDe and those working on the event have decided to pivot. On December 2 we will "Celebrate Dio CNY" at Grace Church in Utica. We don't know yet if the Presiding Bishop can join us, either in person or electronically. In the meantime, mark your calendars for the celebration!

A Temporary Fix and a Longer Term Plan for the Handicapped Parking Area

Many of us have had to dodge either mud or a large puddle trying to get from Scott Avenue to the sidewalk in front of the ramp. By using stone pavers from the old memorial garden, and filling the gaps with stone dust, Steve Pekich has given us a temporary fix to this problem. Thank you Steve!

Rob Lombardo has been working on a longer term solution to address not only the above, but also the issue of people riding on the passenger side being unable to get out of their cars in our handicap parking when there is a snowbank or too much mud. Rob's idea is to have them disembark directly onto the sidewalk. The City of Syracuse requires a project engineer for this kind of work, so Rob is working with Hunter Springs, the company that redid our memorial garden. Our local councilman has responded favorably to the idea, but warned Rob that city government moves slowly. If the City Council, et al., approve the design submitted by Hunter Springs we will send the project out to bid and hope to have the work done in the spring. We have a rough estimate of $7000. Many thanks to Rob for all the work he's already put into this project and to Steve for assisting him!

Altar Flower and Sanctuary Candle Memorials

With the cost of altar flowers rising from $30 to $40, and now $60, the cost has become prohibitive. The members of the Altar Guild have decided to use four seasonal arrangements of silk flowers to adorn the altar in the absence of fresh flowers. Many thanks to those who have donated these four arrangements over several years, and to Bobbi Lombardo for her leadership.

You may still order flowers for a Sunday service. We haven't been told yet what the price will be in 2024. If you desire fresh flowers one solution is to share them with someone else. For example, Gelene Lewis and Mother Julie are sharing the cost on All Saints' Sunday.

Another way to remember loved ones or to give thanks for blessings received is to provide a sanctuary candle memorial - the red candle on the wall to the left of the altar. The candle burns for 7 days and is always lit when Jesus is present through the consecrated wafers and wine in the ambry. We are raising the cost from $5 to $10 in 2024 to cover fully the cost and to provide for those weeks when there is no candle given.

The Original Thanksgiving Proclamation -160 years ago

President Lincoln invited "fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving." This would eventually become the modern Thanksgiving holiday.

October 3, 1863
By the President of the United States of America - A Proclamation.

The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union.

Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things.

They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty-eighth.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln

William H. Seward,
Secretary of State

St. Alban's Leader's

Rector: The Rev. Julie E. Calhoun-Bryant

Wardens
Senior: Gelene Lewis
Junior: Mary "Kiki" White
Emerita: Margo Kowalczyk

Vestry Members
David Houston
Bobbi Lombardo
Steve Pekich
Art Pichette
Gina Odell
Fred Wilson

Kate Bell, Vestry Clerk

Parish Secretary
Lisa Wojtaszek

Organist
Cynthia Bromka-Skafidas

Treasurer
Kathleen Eckermann

Financial Secretary
Fred Wilson

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
Music: Jan Bookhout

November Birthdays

12 Allen Ditch
13 Andrew White
29 Kathleen Eckermann
30 Bobbi Lombardo

Vestry meets Tuesday, November 21st at 6:30 p.m.

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

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(315) 446-3490

Website: stalbansyracuse.org

Facebook: stalbanschurchsyr

Secretary's Office Hours:
Tuesday and Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 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.