



St. Alban's Episcopal Church
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September 8, 2020

Dear Friends,

The upcoming Sunday Gospel is about forgiveness. Peter asks Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times." (Matthew 18:21-22) We know that this must have been an issue under discussion in Matthew's community since Peter's question mentions "a member of the church." There was no church before Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection! Although no details are given, it's clear that Matthew is doing what the church does today, applying Jesus' teachings to a current situation.

No doubt Peter believes he is being generous when he sets the limit of forgiveness at seven times instead of once or twice. Jesus' answer, however, means that there is never a limit on how many times we forgive. All will sin and fall short more times than we can count over a lifetime. We will hurt people and need to be forgiven, and we will be hurt and, hopefully, be asked for our forgiveness. So let's talk about forgiveness. First, forgiveness doesn't mean saying that the sin never happened. The consequences of sin are real and to say otherwise is wrong. Forgiveness means acknowledging the pain and its consequences and relinquishing the need to hurt back or get even. When you tell someone that you forgive them you are letting go the bad feelings instead of holding on to them. You are ridding yourself of the black spot on your heart.

Second, if a person sins against you many times you are not obligated to remain in relationship with them. Jesus doesn't ask us to suffer through physical or emotional abuse over and over again. There are times when the right thing to do is to end things and move on so healing can begin. Which leads me to the third point, forgiveness can take time, especially when you have been deeply hurt. As long as you're actively working on it you are okay with God. If you don't know where to start try praying for the person every day. Praying for someone over time changes you - not them!

Finally, forgiveness is not optional. In the Lord's Prayer we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, [just] as we forgive those who trespass against us." God takes sin and the need for forgiveness so very seriously that he sent his only beloved Son to deal with the powers of sin and evil and death. If we seek to be forgiven, we must learn to forgive.

God bless you,
Mother Julie+

New Zoom Codes for Sunday Mornings!

Sunday Morning Schedule

- 8:30 a.m. Bible Study in the Fellowship Room and also on Zoom
- 9:30 a.m. In-person Holy Eucharist (no singing or exchanging the peace)
- 10:30 a.m. Zoom service led from my office

Zoom Code/Password for Bible Study at 8:30 a.m. - 835 9000 0245 & 562087

Zoom Code/Password for Worship at 10:30 a.m. - 826 9515 6305 & 446765

Use your telephone for Zoom on Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Dial 1-646-558-8656

When prompted Enter **826 9515 6305#**

When prompted Enter **#**

When prompted Enter **446765#**

That will put you in Zoom's waiting room and I will let you in.

Georgene Klim's Memorial Service on Zoom

Friday, September 11 at 11:00 a.m.

Zoom Code/Password: 875 4018 8124 & 909839

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

Zoom Code: 868 3084 1089/Password: 114552

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Thursday Rector's Class: Matters of Faith at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom

Zoom code: 858 6751 9278/Password: 211036

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Saturday Book Study at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom

Zoom code: 831 3301 5530 & 209651