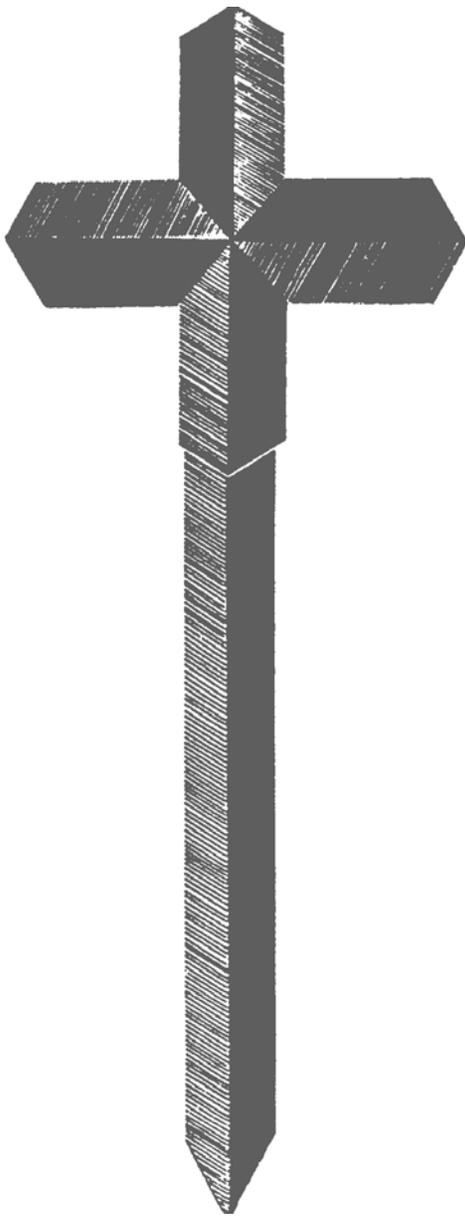
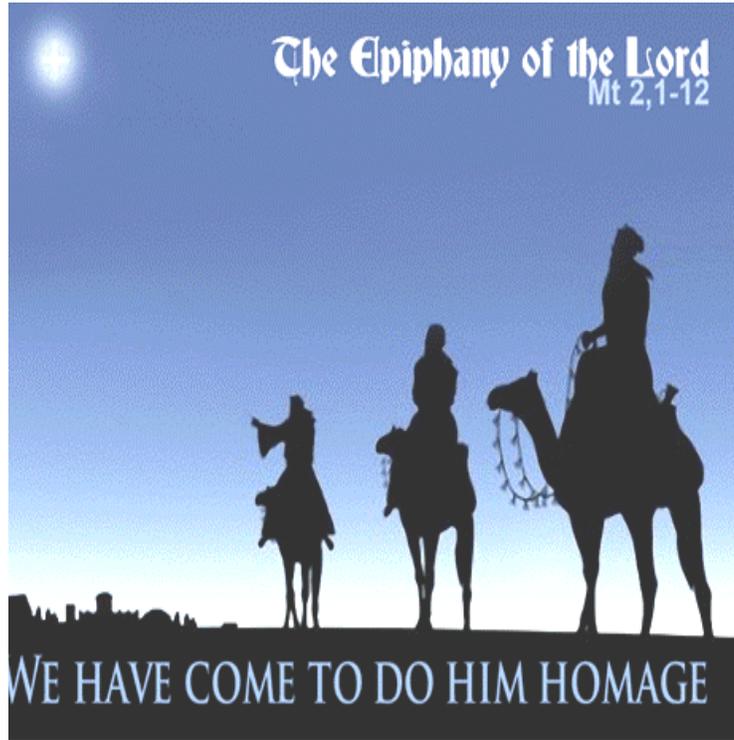


The Cross & the Sword

The monthly newsletter of Saint Alban's Parish
Family

Vol. XXXVI No. 1

January 2018



Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. (Ephesians 1: 3,4)

"Happy birthday to me, happy birthday to me, happy birthday dear me...happy birthday to me." January is filled with many wonderful Church feast days.

January starts off with the Feast of the Holy Name on January 1st. We celebrate the deep meaning of the naming of Jesus. Less than a week later on January 6th we celebrate the Epiphany of Our Lord, which is celebrating the ways God makes Godself known to all of us. There is also the feast days for the Confession of Saint Peter on January 18th and the Conversion of Saint Paul on January 25th. For me there is another big holiday in January. It is my birthday on January 7th. For those who are curious I will be 47 years old. Yes I know that some of you have socks older than that, and that to others this sounds ancient. Age is always perspective. Although some years I get excited about my birthday, I never quite get as excited as my daughters who not only celebrate their birthday, but their entire birth month. Now I am not particularly excited about my birthday this year, and I am not writing about it because I am sad that my birthday always gets lost after the holidays (sniff, sniff.) No, I decided to write about my birthday because looking back over 10 years of January cross and sword articles I almost always write about one of the feast days or about New Year's resolutions and how they can affect our spiritual lives. So I am not particularly a big birthday guy (in fact one year I forgot it was my birthday until about 7 p.m. when my mom called.) No, I am just running out of material.



God wants us to know His Plan

• Ephesians 1:3-4 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

Although there are a few very important things I want to say about birthdays, and since each of us will have a birthday at some time this year, I thought I would reflect on that. Birthdays remind us of a few important things. First, they remind us that there was a time when we were not. Think about that. That essence of who you are, your soul, did not exist for much of History. Where did it come from? God Created us. God gave us the Breath of Life. This is rather important because we should remember always that we are a gift from God back to God. Second, birthdays remind us that time keeps marching on. As they often say in sports and other walks of life, father time always wins. People often say, "I am getting old." We are all getting older. It's the way things work. However, we should not see this as a curse, but as a gift. All of us are moving through this wonderful gift called life, and we should celebrate the time we have. More importantly, we can celebrate that life will end, not with death, but with love and the beginning of new life, New Life in Jesus Christ Our Lord.

So no matter when your birthday is this year, celebrate it. Celebrate not only how special you are, but celebrate the blessings God gives us knowing that God chose us before we were ever on the minds of anyone else. And don't forget to make a wish when you blow out however many candles you get to blow out this 2018.

God bless,
Dan +

BLESSINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR



May you get a clean bill of health from your dentist, your cardiologist, your gastro-ethologist, your urologist, your proctologist, your podiatrist, your psychiatrist, your plumber and the I.R.S. May your hair, your teeth, your face-lift, your abs and your stocks not fall; and may your blood pressure, your triglycerides, your cholesterol, your white blood count and your mortgage interest not rise. May New Year's Eve find you seated around the table, together with your beloved family and cherished friends. May you find the food better, the environment quieter, the cost much cheaper, and the pleasure much more fulfilling than anything else you might ordinarily do that night. May what you see in the mirror delight you, and what others see in you delight them. May someone love you enough to forgive your faults, be blind to your blemishes, and tell the world about your virtues. May the telemarketers wait to make their sales calls until you finish dinner, may the commercials on TV not be louder than the program you have been watching, and may your check book and your budget balance - and include generous amounts for charity. May you remember to say "I love you" at least once a day to your spouse, your child, your parent, your siblings; but not to your secretary, your nurse, your masseuse, your hairdresser or your tennis instructor. And may we live in a world at peace and with the awareness of God's love in every sunset, every flower's unfolding petals, every baby's smile, every lover's kiss, and every wonderful, astonishing, miraculous beat of our heart May your love, dedication and support continue for St. Alban's throughout 2018 and beyond. **HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!! Rick Spice**

The following poem by theologian and writer, Howard Thurman (1900 - 1981), seems particularly appropriate for the month of January. Thurman was Dean of Rankin Chapel and Professor of Theology at Howard University and Dean of Marsh Chapel at Boston University. This selection is from his book, *The Mood of Christmas*.

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS
When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
 To find the lost,
 To heal the broken,
 To feed the hungry.

To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

Submitted by Sandy Richie

JUST FOR FUN There once was a strongman at a circus sideshow who demonstrated his power before large audiences every night. Toward the end of one performance, he squeezed the juice from a lemon between his hands. He said to the onlookers, "I will offer \$200 to anyone here who can squeeze another drop from this lemon. A thin older lady hobbled up the stage. She picked up the lemon and clamped it between her two frail, boney hands. She squeezes. And out came a teaspoon of lemon juice. The strongman was amazed. He paid the woman \$200 but privately asked her, "What is the secret of your strength?" "Practice," the woman answered. "I have been treasurer of my church for forty two years!"

Remember St. Alban's through 2018.....Rick Spice

January Activities

BIBLE STUDY GROUPS



Bible Study & Fellowship Group meets at **7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 18** at the home of Jack Rademaker.

The Women's Bible Study and Fellowship group meet every 2nd and 4th Thursday afternoon from 2-4 p.m.. On January 11th we will begin the study and discussion on the Book of Revelation.

Wednesday Bible Group meets on **Wednesday mornings at 10:30** Holy Communion is celebrated at noon. This month we look at the lessons for the Sunday's in Epiphany. All are welcome.



Men's Bible Study meets at **10:00 a.m.** on **Saturdays** in the Parish Hall. This group looks at the lessons for the following Sunday.

Daughters of the King meet at **10:00 a.m.** on **Tuesday, January 16.**



LUNCH BUNCH: The Lunch Bunch will meet at Casa Grande Mexican Grill, 6035 Stellhorn Road, at 11:30 AM on Tuesday, January 16, 2018. Following lunch, they will gather at Marilyn McClure's home for dessert and tentatively decide where to go each month in 2018. We encourage anyone who is free to join us, and we especially invite new people to come. A poster is on the bulletin board in the narthex for indicating your attendance. For any questions, please see Anita Grams or call her at 449-9682.

Youth Group meets at **noon** on **Sunday January 14.**



Heart and Hands group meets at **10:00 a.m. on Fridays.**

Sunday, January 7, 11:30

Taking Down the Greens

Followed by chili lunch Please sign up if you plan to attend



UPCOMING EVENT: Save the date **January 13th, 2018** for Trivia Night and dessert auction. Proceeds will benefit The Shepherd's House. There is more information to follow.



OUR CHRISTIAN ROOTS IN ENGLAND **January 21st at 6:30 PM.** Please come and join us as we continue our journey learning

about our Christian Roots in England. As many of you know, the youth group is undertaking a pilgrimage to London next summer. They invite you to explore with them as all are transformed learning our common heritage. **The forum is every third Sunday at 6:30 pm.** This month we will explore more about Canterbury Cathedral and the martyrdom of Archbishop Thomas Becket. So come and join us!

Sunday, January 28 at 10:00



This meeting represents an opportunity for the parish family to review the previous year and to look ahead with our rector to the year 2018 and beyond.

There will be only one service that Sunday at 9:00



Please e-mail your annual reports to the office by Friday, January 6.

Souper Bowl Sunday - February 4, 2018



Please help us transform Super Bowl Sunday into SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY. Soup is a fast moving item in our Food Bank during the winter months. Help us keep the soup shelf filled by making a special effort to bring a can or two (or three or four) to church on February 4th. Last year we easily met our goal of 100 cans. Let's set a goal of 110 this year.

FLOWER FUND IN 2018... Every year we point out that the new calendar to sign up to sponsor flowers in memory of someone or in thanksgiving is on the wall. This year that calendar is already up, and we encourage you to sign up for a specific Sunday you want to celebrate the life of a loved one or give thanks to God for some person or gift. The cost this year once again will be \$35. Further, the office is committed to remembering your memorials and celebrations in the prayers of the people. **In addition to this, we also want to encourage donations by anybody who wants to give to the flower fund, even if you don't have a specific occasion to celebrate. You don't even need to pick a specific Sunday, just donate. Your gift will help offset the cost of Sunday's when no one commemorates anything specific.** So remember you can donate any amount of money at any time to the flower fund to help beautify our worship every week.



HELP US REPLENISH THE MAJOR IMPROVEMENT FUND... Another special way to give to Saint Albans is to specifically donate funds to the major Improvement fund. The major Improvement fund is used for large projects that are not in the operating budget. For example, recently we installed a sump pump system on the south side of the building to help with flooding issues. This was made possible by a generous donation given to the major Improvement fund. The cost of the sump pump system was a little more than the gift given, so we want to encourage others to join with this generous individual and help replenish our major Improvement fund. Thanks for all the many ways you give to God's Church.

The deadline for the February issue of *The Cross and the Sword* is **Thursday, January 18**

Vestry Stewardship

Operating Fund

Operating income for Nov	\$11,569.73	Operating income for 2017	\$132,320.70
Operating expense for Nov	12,796.60	Operating expense for 2017	147,624.52
		Transfers	130.00
Net loss for November	\$1,226.87	Net loss for 2017	(\$15,173.82)

Vestry Highlights

At the regular meeting of the Vestry on December 19, It was moved to:

- a. Authorize up to \$2,000.00 to be taken out of the memorial fund and funds not to exceed \$10,000.00 transferred from the Endowment fund to bring the 2017 aggregate deficit down to \$5,000.00.
- b. To re-issue a contract to the Kyrou Music Studio for 2018 as presented.
- c. Accept the proposal for Building, property, and liability Insurance and workers comp insurance from the Church Insurance Company of Vermont, coverages as presented. Total annual premium for 2018 is \$3,775.00, and workers comp premium is \$459.00.
- d. Donate \$300.00 to Madina Village School in Sierra Leone, and to donate \$300.00 to Hope for Jesus, in Honduras, to donate \$200.00 to the Associated Churches, and to donate \$150.00 to Shepherd's House for bus passes.

It was noted:

- a. That no service would be held on January 6th for the Feast of the Epiphany and that a Chili lunch and taking down of the greens would occur on Sunday January 7th.
- b. Trivia Night will take place at 7pm Saturday January 13th with desserts.
- c. That parishioners would be urged to donate to the Flower Fund even if they do not sponsor a specific Sunday for flowers.
- d. That parishioners would be encouraged to give to the major Improvement fund.
- e. That the Nominating Commission is now meeting and in process.

No Membership changes:

Food Bank

In November we served 29 families 95 individuals and 1425 meals served.



January Birthdays

7 Rev. Dan Layden	18 George Shamp
8 Nevada Jones	20 Gloria Guindon
10 Rob Frede	20 Jordan Trendelman
12 Brianna Steinbrunner	22 Donald Irvine
14 Vickie Faux	22 Caitlyn Townsend
16 Deb Kerr	23 Judith Palmer
16 Debbie Grosjean	23 Brock Peters
18 Chris Sanxter	25 Todd Townsend
	27 Les Stath



If your birthday or anniversary has not been listed, please notify Debbie at 485-8022, so that we may add your date to our records.

Ed Brackmann
Peggy Brandes
Christina Connelly
Dick and Bonnie
Camp
John Diver
Dick Donnelly
Denise Frede
Tammy Gillig
Carolyn Grate
Gloria Guindon
Shirley Johnson
Tricia Jones



Frances Krauskopf
Don Mefford
Carol Newell
Gene Pettibone
Dick Ritchie
Larry Sanxter
Cindy Spice
Rick Spice
Pat & Les Stath
Bill & Carolyn Townsend
Jim Trueblood
Carlen Trujillo
Paul Wiseheart

For those unable to worship with us: Ed Brackmann, John Diver, Frances Krauskopf, Tom Kurtz, Gene Pettibone, Jim Trueblood, and Paul Wiseheart.

ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Sunday Services

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Sunday School (Sept-May)

Wednesday

10:30 a.m. Bible Study
12:00 noon Holy Eucharist

Vestry

Cindy Spice	Senior Warden
John Lorenzen	Junior Warden
Dave Krocker	Property
Mary Ann Krocker	Fellowship
Pat Stath	Worship
Josh Miller	Finance
Jordan Trendelman	Membership
George Shamp	Stewardship
Phil Mayer	Outreach
Elaine Fazzaro	Christian Formation

Christina Connelly Communication Director
Marilyn McClure Care Connection

Church Staff

Rector	The Rev. Daniel K. Layden
Office Administrator	Debbie Grosjean
Organist	Michelle Kyrrou

Office Hours

9:00 - 1:00

Monday through Friday

Office phone	485-8022
Fr. Layden's cell phone	579-5555