The Cross &
the Sword

The monthly newsletter of Saint Alban’s Parish Family

Vol. XXXVI No. 6       June 2020

Nothing Can Separate Us from
The love of God

Romans 8:38-39
I want to shine the spotlight on our entire Saint Alban’s family. During this very difficult time it has been a real struggle to not be able to worship with all of you every Sunday. Things have really changed over the last few months and we have started to take on a “new normal”, getting up on Sunday and watching services live on the Diocesan YouTube channel is one example of that. Something else that is new is that every week I’m on a zoom call with the other leaders in the Diocese and we discuss the current situation along with different ideas to help everyone continue to stay connected to their individual congregations. I have heard about some wonderful things that have been happening and of course about some tough situations as well. We have several churches that have been struggling to pay their day to day bills because their congregations have been unable to keep financially supporting them. Many of their members have been effected themselves due to all of the different businesses that have to temporally had to close and furlough their people. I would like all of you to know that yes, our pledging is down but only a little bit and it does help that some of our expenses are down as well. As of the end of April we are still running in the black, which I can personally tell you is a huge accomplishment and not something that all of the churches in our Diocese are able to say. So I want to thank all of you for continuing to give what you are able to keep things going at Saint Alban’s. I feel confident that will all of your support we will be able to stay ahead of the game and continue to meet all of our financial responsibilities. Of course, I also understand that things may change in the future for some of you and you may not be able to keep up with your pledge. If that happens then we will deal with that then but for now, thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the support.

Please keep in mind that if any of you are in need of anything or just want to talk then don’t hesitate to contact myself or any other member of the vestry. We are all in this together and we have proved time and time again that we are a united in our love for Jesus Christ.

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand."  Isaiah 41:10

Cindy Spice
Senior Warden
Pastoral Plan - COVID-19 (May 13, 2020)
EDNIN Pastoral Plan for
Regathering for In-person Worship

“Glory to God whose power, working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.” — Ephesians 3:20,21

May 11, 2020

Dear Sisters, Brothers, Siblings,

We know our world, our lives, and our church have changed drastically since the emergence of COVID-19. The past few weeks have been filled with sorrows and blessings, challenges and opportunities, losses and celebrations. There is much to grieve and to celebrate. I am reminded of the words of a song that is a source of hope and solace for me and many others.

“If you pass through raging waters in the sea, you shall not drown. If you walk amid the burning flames, you shall not be harmed. If you stand before the power of hell and death is at your side, Know that I am with you through it all. Be not afraid. I go before you always. Come follow Me, and I will give you rest.” — Footnote1 by Bob Dufford © Oregon Catholic Press

As you may have heard, Governor Holcomb this afternoon sketched out a five-phase roadmap that he hopes will return our state to pre-pandemic levels of openness and activity by July 4. Under this plan, communities of faith can return to worship in their buildings beginning on May 8.
In granting this permission, however, the governor made it clear that he would prefer that churches continue to worship online, or outdoors, rather than in person, and he expressly asked Hoosiers over 65 remain at home. We appreciate both the governor’s commitment to freedom of religious expression and his candid admission that gathering to worship in person still poses risks to people of faith and those with whom they come in contact.

We remain committed to doing everything we can to slow the spread of the pandemic. For that reason, we will not be reopening our church buildings for in-person worship this month. The restrictions that Bishop Baskerville-Burrows announced on March 24 and that Bishop Sparks announced on March 26 remain in effect, and we urge that you continue to observe them.

Like so many of you, we are eager to return safely to our church buildings and look forward to celebrating the Eucharist with the people of our diocese. But we must do so with the utmost care, or else we put the lives of vulnerable people at risk. To help guide us in this endeavor, we will release a detailed plan next week explaining the conditions and sketching out a possible timeline for a return to our church buildings. The plan will require some serious thinking on the part of each congregation about the ways a return to in-person worship might best be achieved, and we urge you to begin giving this some thought immediately.

In his recent Word to the Church, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry wrote: “As our seasons of life in the COVID-19 world continue to turn,
we are called to continue to be creative, to risk, to love. We are called to ask, What would unselfish, sacrificial love do?"

We believe unselfish, sacrificial love requires abstaining a while longer from worshipping in person. We invite you to embrace this discipline as a way to express your care for the most vulnerable among us. You are in our prayers, and we will be in touch again soon.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrow  
XI Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis

The Rt. Rev. Douglas E. Sparks  
VIII Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Indiana

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Dear Family of St. Alban’s,

It is easy in times such as this to focus on the challenges that we have been facing in light of the Covid 19 pandemic. News about the virus dominates all our news and social media. If we are not careful we might just miss the abundant grace and blessings that go along with times like this that challenge us as a society. God has gifted us in this time of quarantine and social distancing with a hunger and tangible desire to come together once again as a faith community. I’m not saying that we didn’t look forward to seeing each other on Sundays, but looking forward to and longing for are two different feelings. God in his grace is eliminating the complacency and routine that we all can unfortunately find ourselves falling prey to, and replaced it with prayerful intention as we anticipate the next chance we will have to come together as a faith community.
Sadly though, we still have no indication of when we will be opening the doors at St. Alban’s. The Diocese has begun to distribute guidelines and protocols of how we will be slowly resuming services but a start date is still not in place. The Vestry has been considering ways we can better serve our parish community through digital content but as far as a full blown church service, there is still more uncertainty that answers. The one thing we all know is that the prospect of coming together and seeing everyone again is something we are all looking forward to immensely.

It was in the spirit of coming together one and all that the Vestry voted unanimously that once services resume at St. Alban’s we would be switching to one service time. A consolidated service is something that we have talked about quite a lot for over a year now and it is something that is inevitable in our partnership with Grace. We felt that while we have all been experiencing such a break from our routines that it would only make the transition more difficult to return to two services for a few weeks then change again so soon. As a result, St. Alban’s will begin holding services at 11:00 am going forward whenever we get the ok to begin gathering as a congregation again. As a society once this pandemic has subsided there will be no returning to the way things were. Things will not be getting back to normal, there will be a new normal, and what it holds for us is still unknown. What we do know is that on that first Sunday when St. Alban’s comes together face to face as a family once again it will be a cause for a great celebration and opportunity to praise God for the desire for fellowship that has been stirred inside our hearts.

Peace and Blessings

Jordan Trendelman
Junior Warden

WORSHIP COMMISSION

“Under Construction” might be one way to describe our worship services over the next few months. The diocese is attempting to provide reasonable guidance for our resumption of in-person worship in the midst of a volatile situation. Some restrictions on sheltering in place have been lifted, but it is
too soon to arrive at conclusions about how safe this will be. St. Alban’s vestry is working on how best to adapt diocesan guidance to our particular situation. Please stay tuned, stay in touch with each other by phone or social media, and follow the daily and weekly services from the diocese on Facebook or You-tube as you are able. Above all be faithful in your personal devotions and prayer. The Church is not a building – it is God’s people in relationship with Him and with each other. There is no virus (or anything else) that can shut down that relationship. See Romans 8:38-39.

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STEWARDSHIP

At just over $9,500 our donations in April are so fantastic in this environment! I commend everyone for keeping up their donations. We are such a great community and I hope that you can continue to reach out to others and stay connected. I encourage you to mail in your donations or signup for tithe.ly but if you are being financially impacted by the fallout of the current crises then please do not concern yourself with your donation commitment.

I want to again thank Cindy Spice, Debbie Grosjean and Kenny White in particular for keeping the church running every day until we get back together. Stay safe!

David Birchfield

HAPPY FATHER’S DAY…Don’t forget that June 21st is Father’s day. Whether your dad is still with us or with the Lord, say a special prayer for him. May God bless all Father’s and their most sacred vocation in life!

At this time we are unable to have a celebration as planned for June Williams. She passed March 12, 2020. Cindy has been in touch with her family and as soon as everything is settled she will share it with everyone.

The deadline for the July issue of The Cross and the Sword is Thursday, June 1

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Vestry Stewardship

Operating Fund

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<th>April</th>
<th>2020</th>
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<td>Operating income for</td>
<td>$9,586.12</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>Net gain for April</td>
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Vestry Highlights

At the meeting of the Vestry on May 19, the below items were discussed:

a. planning what worship will look like when we are back in the building
b. still Editing the “Meet Saint Alban's” video
c. scheduled to get heat turned off and air turned on, either 5/26 or 5/27
d. $925 to repair the other boiler – waiting to schedule
e. Change the service hours on the board outside when church opens
f. Communication about reopening the building: looking into the guidelines and restrictions
g. New Printer: will be looked into
and Anniversaries
10 Larry & Christine Sanxter
21 David & Laura Birchfield


Military: Kaylee Collins, Sean Collins, Matthew Michael

Rose Trueblood has moved. Her new address is:
11114 Westwind Dr, Fort Wayne, IN  46845.
New phone # is 260-619-3922.
ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ALL CHURCH SERVICES HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED FOR EVERYONE'S SAFETY

Vestry
Cindy Spice                       Senior Warden
Jordan Trendelman                Junior Warden
Kenny White                      Property
Laura Michael                    Fellowship
Elaine Fazzaro                   Worship
Jordan Trendelman                Membership
David Birchfield                 Stewardship
Marilyn Rafter                   Financial
John Lorenzen                    Outreach
Megan Spice-Frede                Christian Foundation
Judy Wall                        Care Connection
Christina Connelly – Communications Director

Church Staff
Office Administrator            Debbie Grosjean

Office Hours
9:00 - 1:00
Monday through Friday

Office phone               485-8022