**January 2019**

Epiphany

St. ALBAN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Celebrating and Sharing God's Love

# The Almanac

St. ALBAN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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**Visit us on the web**
**www.st-albans-church.org**

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## From the Rector's Pen - Validity of New Year's Resolutions

I have always been a fan of writing down new years resolutions, not for how consistently I keep them, but because it gives me another reason to make improvements in my life. I am making several New Years Resolutions this year, and I hope I have the discipline and resolve to follow through on at least one or two of them.

My hope and prayer is that together we can make New Years Resolutions for our church. I have high hopes that this will be a year of growth, spiritually and numerically. I would like to see a more intentional approach toward outreach and evangelism. I would like to see a unified approach to teaching, Bible study, fellowship, and continued emphasis on preventive maintenance on the building and grounds of St. Alban's.

I am reminded of the apostle Paul's encouragement to the Churches in Galatia to "walk in step with the Spirit". (Galatians 5:16) And, in Ephesians, Paul tells the churches to "pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." (Ephesians 6:18) The writer of Jude tells the church members to "build themselves up in their most holy faith and to pray in the Spirit". (Jude 20)

The terminology of walking in step with the Spirit or praying in the Spirit can have several different meanings. It can mean "by means of," "with the help of," "in the sphere of," and "in connection to." Praying in the Spirit does not refer to the words we are saying. Rather, it refers to how we are praying. Praying in the Spirit is praying according to the Spirit's leading. It is praying for things the Spirit leads us to pray for. Romans 8:26 tells us, "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."

If we put God first in our lives and our future goals in *step with the Spirit*, and *with the help of* and in *connection of things to come*, it makes this process of goal-centered resolutions a win-win for the church. What excites me is that if we work at shared goals, and if we do it in a good liturgical fashion, we will be *doing the work of the people,* and that is the definition of *liturgy.*

That doesn't mean we will always get it right, and it does mean that we will need to tweak our progress systematically. I'm looking forward to our vestry retreat in February, so we can begin in earnest to expect great things for St. Alban's in 2019.

Happy New Year!

**Father Dave**

# St Alban's Leadership

## Staff

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Brad Cook ~ Communication Director

Victoria Mayor ~ Social Media Director

Penny Park~ Prayer Chain Leader

Judy Brown—Treasurer

Betty Johnsen—Altar Guild, Refugee Food Pantry

## Wardens & Vestry

Mike Park ~ Sr. Warden

Carly Montagne ~ Jr. Warden

Victoria Mayor ~ Secretary

Sharon Laraene ~ Vestry Member

Mary Zori ~ Vestry Member

David Ellis ~ Vestry Member

Hsa Blu Moo ~ Vestry Member

Judy Setford ~ Vestry Member

Nawal Yousif ~ Vestry Member

Judy Brown— Vestry Member

Betty Johnsen—Vestry Member

Worship & Learn With Us:
Sunday 9:30 am
Worship Service
with Holy Eucharist & Sunday School

Tuesday Bilingual Mass with Eucharist is at 8:30 am on 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, all are welcome!

## Presiding Bishop Michael Curry Christmas Message 2018

In the Third Chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus says at one point, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

For years, I've often thought that that passage only referred to Jesus giving his life as a sacrifice on the cross. And to be sure, that is part of what it means. But some years ago I was reading a commentary by Raymond Brown, on the Gospel of John, and Professor Brown said that that passage not only speaks of Jesus willingly giving his life on the cross, but it actually speaks of Christmas, of God giving his very self, his very son to the world, not for anything God could get out of it, but for the good and the welfare and the well-being of the world. Of us.

Someone once said, in a Christmas poem, "Love came down at Christmas." That's what love is. To give, and not to count the cost. To give, not for what one can get, but for what the other can receive. That's what love is. God so loved the world, that he gave.

I realized recently how powerful that passage really is, when I saw an old poster from 1938. A poster produced by the Episcopal Church at that time, to encourage Episcopalians and other Christians, and other people of faith and good will, to do whatever they could to help Jewish refugees fleeing tyranny in Europe. To help people from all over Europe seeking refuge in America, this land of freedom. The poster depicts Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus. They're fleeing persecution in Palestine, as Matthew's Gospel says. And the poster depicting Mary, Joseph, and Jesus says in the tag line, "In the name of these refugees, help all refugees."

God so loved the world, that he gave, even to the point of risking his own son. And in the name of those refugees, in the name of that Jesus, help all refugees, all people who suffer, anyone who's alone, everyone who is in need. That's what love does.

Love came down at Christmas, because God so loved the world, that he gave.

*In those days, a decree went out from the Emperor Augustus, that all the world should be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem because he was a descendent from the House of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged, and who was expecting a child. While they were there, she gave birth to her first-born son, and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.*

*Meanwhile, in that region, there were shepherds, living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then the angel of the Lord stood above them. And the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were terrified. The angel said unto them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people. To you is born this day, in the City of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign. You will find the child wrapped in bands of cloth, lying in a manger."*

*And suddenly, there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to all people on earth."*

Have a blessed Christmas. Have a merry Christmas. Have a joyful Christmas.

God love you, God bless you, and may God hold us all in those almighty hands of love.



## FROM THE TREASURER'S VAULT

### *Treasurer's Report – November 30, 2018*

**GENERAL FUND**

- Checking Balance as of October 31, 2018: - $3,685.33

- TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSES:

  Offerings: $ 7,247.01
  Other Income: $15,767.65
  TOTAL Income: $23,014.66

TOTAL Expenses $16,218.77

- Checking Balance as of November 30, 2018: $1,792.44

- Average attendance for 4 Sundays in November = 60

***November Weekly Offering***

- November 4, 2018
  - Attendance: 40
  - Pledge: $525.00
  - Plate: $119.00
- November 11, 2018
  - Attendance: 65
  - Pledge: $4,631.00
  - Plate: $ 75.01
- November 18, 2018
  - Attendance: 44
  - Pledge: $640.00
  - Plate: $ 92.00
- November 25, 2018
  - Attendance: 49 & 40 Welcome Church
  - Pledge: $1,145.00
  - Plate: $ 20.00

Episcopal Diocese *of* San Diego
FEARLESS LOVE

**Give me your tired, your persecuted**

***A call to assist Central American refugees***

We encourage our fellow Episcopalians to work locally to provide shelter, legal aid, material support, and advocacy for asylum seekers. One way to help is to donate to organizations such as Al Otro Lado, https://alotrolado.org/take-action/donate/ which connects immigrants with medical and legal services.

Also, San Diego Rapid Response Network, http://www.rapidresponsesd.org/ which provides temporary shelter and travel assistance to asylum seekers.

Let's work together to create a more compassionate immigration system and to alleviate the suffering of our neighbors.

The Episcopal Public Policy Network of California

# January 2019

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 **The Holy Name of our Lord** ***New Years Day*** | 2 6:15 to 7:30 PM Potluck and video discussion and Compline | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 Worship 9:30 **Epiphany** | 7 | 8 | 9 6:15 to 7:30 PM Potluck and video discussion and Compline | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 Worship 9:30 Baptism of our Lord ***Vestry Meeting*** | 14 | 15 **MASS 8:30am** Followed by Food Pantry Ministry 10am | 16 6:15 to 7:30 PM Potluck and video discussion and Compline | 17 | 18 *Confession of St Peter* | 19 |
| 20 Worship 9:30 | 21 ***Martin Luther King Jr. Day*** | 22 | 23 6:15 to 7:30 PM Potluck and video discussion and Compline | 24 | 25 *Conversion of St Paul* | 26 |
| 27 Worship 9:30 **Annual Church Meeting** ***Welcome Church 3pm*** | 28 | 29 | 30 | *31* | | |
| | | | | | | |



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In November, Archbishop Thabo, the Primate of Southern Africa, took advantage of the new airport to fly to St Helena with the Bishop of Matlosane, Stephen Diseko, Dean of the province; the Bishop of Pretoria, Allan Kannemeyer; and the Archbishop's Chaplain, Mcebisi Pinyana; for the consecration of Dale Bowers.

The service, at St Paul's Cathedral in St Helena, was broadcast live on Saint FM, the island's radio station. An ecumenical lunch to welcome the delegation and honour the new bishop was hosted by the local Catholic Church. Bishop Dale is only the second of 16 bishops from the Diocese to be born in the island.

Writing in the monthly newsletter of the Diocese of Cape Town, Archbishop Thabo said: "Please pray for [Bishop Dale], for his, wife, Penny, his family and for the people and clergy of the diocese".

## A Christmas Prayer
## (A prayer by Henri Nouwen, from The Road to Daybreak)

O Lord, how hard it is to accept your way. You come to me as a small, powerless child born away from home. You live for me as a stranger in your own land. You die for me as a criminal outside the walls of the city, rejected by your own people, misunderstood by your friends, and feeling abandoned by your God.

As I prepare to celebrate your birth, I am trying to feel loved, accepted, and at home in this world, and I am trying to overcome the feelings of alienation and separation which continue to assail me. But I wonder now if my deep sense of homelessness does not bring me closer to you than my occasional feelings of belonging. Where do I truly celebrate your birth: in a cozy home or in an unfamiliar house, among welcoming friends or among unknown strangers, with feelings of well-being or with feelings of loneliness?

I do not have to run away from those experiences that are closest to yours. Just as you do not belong to this world, so I do not belong to this world. Every time I feel this way I have an occasion to be grateful and to embrace you better and taste more fully your joy and peace.

Come, Lord Jesus, and be with me where I feel poorest. I trust that this is the place where you will find your manger and bring your light. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Amen.

## New Bishop of St Helena is the first to be consecrated on the remote South Atlantic island

The new Bishop of St Helena, Dale Bowers, is consecrated by Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, Bishop Steve Diseko, and Bishop Allan Kannemeyer.
**Photo Credit: Anglican Church of Southern Africa**

Bishop Dale Bowers, the new Bishop of St Helena, has become the first to be consecrated on the remote island in the South Atlantic. The island has played an important part in the history of Anglicanism in the area now covered by the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. It is the first part of the province to experience Anglican ministry; and is home to the oldest surviving Anglican church in the Southern Hemisphere. But its remoteness meant that a visit to the island required a weeks-long sea voyage – until an airport on the island opened in 2016.
The first Anglican chaplain to St Helena, a British Overseas Territory, was appointed in 1671. St James' Church in island's main settlement, Jamestown, is the oldest surviving Anglican church in the Southern Hemisphere. The Diocese, which includes a parish on Ascension Island, is the fourth oldest in the province of Southern Africa, after Cape Town, Grahamstown and Natal. It celebrated its 150th anniversary in June 2009.

The island is one of the remotest islands in the world, located more than 1,200 miles (2,000 kilometres) from the nearest landmass. It was the place of exile and death of Napoleon Bonaparte. The last visit by a metropolitan archbishop was more than 30 years ago and, Archbishop of Cape Town Thabo Makgoba said, "has received less attention from the province than other dioceses."

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## Round Up Time... Deacon's Random Thoughts

What great Christmas services. All of the pageantry of the Episcopal Church and all of the warming words that so many of us have grownup on. Just think about a world without music and a church without pageantry. I feel so lucky to have been raised in the church with these familiar words of comfort.

Each New Year brings new challenges and new rewards. This next year the Gospel readings will be from Luke. Through scriptural memories, Luke roots salvation in old, longstanding hopes. The infancy narratives (Luke 1-2) underscore God's ongoing faithfulness. Luke's depiction of Jesus as a prophet reiterates the ancient prophets' criticisms and amplifies their dreams of justice and renewal. Post-Easter references to the scriptures' fulfillment suggest that we learn about the Gospel's vision of peace, security, and belonging by scrutinizing promises made in the Old Testament. Luke refuses to let readers be cynical about trusting in God's commitment to accomplishing what God has pledged to do. According to Luke, Jesus' insights are familiar; he reasserts longstanding Jewish wisdom.

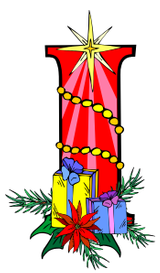
In January the sermons will be about old Jewish wisdom and Luke's personal views of Jesus. Luke wants everyone to know that, "This is not the time to be dismayed, this is parable time." This is what Jesus' ministry in Luke trained you for. A parable has many layers often referred to as skinning an onion, layer after layer. A parable lets one be influenced by the Holy Spirit, opening the mind and heart to many ways of looking at the world.

We will hear in Luke the assurances of both judgment and mercy; Luke emphasizes an urgent need to recognize the arrival of salvation.

So as we start a new year I look forward to the comforting words of our liturgy.

Happy New Year! *Deacon Phil*

# *Sunday School News*
*By Caroline Mahon-Hurd*

## *THE PAGEANT!!*
*12/16/2018*

## *THE PAGEANT CONTINUES!*
*12/16/2018*