

The Albanac

FEBRUARY 2014

Go forth in the Light of Christ! Candlemas at St. Alban's



For millions, it was Super Bowl Sunday. For many, it was Ground Hog Day. And for the faithful around the world, it was The Feast of the Presentation, The Feast of the Presentation and Candlemass.

Forty days after Christmas we mark the presentation of Christ at the temple. Mary and Joseph take the infant Jesus to the temple to fulfill the Law of Moses which required that 40 days after the birth of a male child the mother presents herself in the temple for ritual purification (80 days after the birth of a female child). Additionally, the Law requires that every first born child is dedicated to the Lord and an offering of two turtle doves or pigeons is made. Mary and Joseph go to do these things that all faithful Jewish parents do. But when they arrive something completely unique occurs. They are met by Simeon and Anna, two very old people who each have devoted themselves to prayer and represent the longing and waiting of Israel for the Messiah. When Simeon sees the child he

recognizes and proclaims Jesus as The Light of the Nations and the glory of Israel. He also tells Mary that her own heart will be pierced as her child sees the rise and fall of nations. Mary and Joseph are amazed at all that is said about Jesus.

We observed a modified version of a traditional Candlemass procession. The tradition of the Church is to gather candles from home and church and have them blessed. These candles then are used throughout the year for worship in the church and prayer in the home. The people carry the candles out with them as a sign of carrying the Light of Christ into the world.

We gathered near the Baptismal font and doors of the church and were given candles in square glass holders. Each holder was decorated with a gold cross. The candles were lighted and we joined together in a litany of prayer. We then sang "We are marching in the Light of God" as we processed to the altar where we placed the candles all around the figures of the holy family. They remained there through the conclusion of the service when each household took one home to place in a place where it would be seen each day by all who live in the house to be reminded that we are called to bear the Light of Christ into the world that is in such need.

When we were planning this ritual we wondered how it would be received. That question was answered when not only did everyone participate in the litany and procession but following the service every one of the glass holders and candles were taken home. That is an indication that it rang true in our hearts and held meaning. And so, a new tradition is born. February 2nd only falls on a Sunday every 7 years or so but St. Alban's will now be one of the places where the transferred feast will be marked annually on the Sunday closest to this early journey of Mary, Joseph and Jesus to the temple.

Lord, you now have set your servant free to go in peace as you have promised. For mine eyes have seen the Savior whom you have prepared for all the world to see. A Light to enlighten the nations and the glory of your people Israel.



Parents Night Out supports Heifer International

Heifer International is a organization that enables people, both domestically and internationally, to gain self-sufficiency by providing them with livestock, seeds and education. What started in the 1940's with a few chickens has grown into a community transforming agent of change. A number of our parishioners are familiar with Heifer and participate in the tradition of 'giving' everything from honey bees to water buffalo to each other for Christmas through Heifer to extend the true gift of giving in the name of Christ who is the gift of life.

At Parents Night Out (PNO) on Friday, January 31st the children learned about Heifer International and then rolled, decorated and baked sugar cookies in the shape of chicks. They then sold these cookies at church to raise money to sponsor a flock of chicks through Heifer. The goal was \$20 which is the cost of a flock. Thanks to the hard work of the children and the generous support of the parish \$78 was realized and so 4 flocks will be sponsored!



PNO meets the last Friday of the month in the Youth Center and we end with watching a movie in the rectory. Children of the parish up to 5th grade and encouraged to participate and youth in 6th grade and up are encouraged to serve as youth helpers. One additional adult is needed each month in order for us to offer this evening out in support of our parents who are in the midst of the joys and challenges of raising children in the Light of Christ. Please speak with Reverend Kathryn to get involved. Special thanks to Audrey Souders, Nicholas King and Grace Nazare who have help already volunteered. If you have already raised your children you know the gift that an evening out can be. Please consider being part of 'paying it forward' and spreading the joy.

Next PNO is **Friday, February 28th from 6 to 9 PM**. Sign-up by emailing or calling the parish office.



VESTRY RETREAT

On Saturday, February 1st the Vestry gathered at Cindy and Dave Ludwig's home for a half-day retreat. The Reverend Cooper Conway, known to those members who were at St. Alban's during the interim between rectors in 2008/09, was our facilitator. The day included prayer, fellowship, our annual Mutual Ministry Review, and goal setting for the next year and beyond. Cooper had the wonderful



convergence of knowing St. Alban's very well and yet having been away from the community for four years.

We opened with bible study around the scriptures for the next day – the Presentation of Jesus in the temple. We listened to the scripture read multiple times – each time listening to the words with a different focus. Individual words stood out, ideas compelled us in ministry and thoughts helped to clarify our goals for the future. We then shared successes and attempts over the past year or so as a way of celebrating and challenging and unifying ourselves as the leader of the parish. You will hear more of the particulars of the goals we have set for the coming year in coming meetings but the three main areas are:

1. Deepening our understanding of the role of St. Alban's in a changing secular society. What do we need to pay attention to and adjust to thrive in ministry in a world that is increasingly moving away from gathering for Sunday morning worship but increasingly in need of the connections available in the gathered community.
2. Sharing the good news of the church and preschool: Marketing and publicity in the fast-paced digital age. How do we increase our footprint in the community and how do we maximize the printed and social media avenues available.
3. Addressing the daunting mortgage. St. Alban's holds a mortgage that is in excess of three-quarters of a million dollars. The annual debt service from the 2004 expansion is in excess of \$65,000. We are investigating resources through the bank, diocese, congregation as well as looking toward other alternatives. This debt will play a large role in the financial picture of the church for the next 30 to 40 years. How do we turn this challenge into a blessing?



We firmly believe that God has provided us with the gifts and resources needed to do the ministry we are called to undertake. This is dependent on each and every one of us responding "I will with God's help" to getting involved in being part of the solution. Yet God was present then and is present now and "We will with God's help".

In Christ,
Kathryn+

Being a Eucharistic Minister



Eucharistic Ministers assist the clergy in the distribution of the Sacrament and at St. Alban's they also lead the Prayers of the People. They and other members of the Worship Committee: lectors, ushers, greeters, altar guild, and choir contribute to making the celebration a meaningful experience for the parish each Sunday, and on special occasions.

All adult members of St. Alban's and teens who have been confirmed, are encouraged to join in this ministry. Eucharistic ministers may choose to sit in the congregation during the service without vesting, and assist on the altar after the offering. Arrangements can be made for family members to serve together on the same day.

If you are interested in being trained for service in this ministry, please speak with me or a member of the clergy.

Jeanne Sylvester, Vestry Liaison Worship Committee

Meet the Interim Choir Director Olga Koutcherova



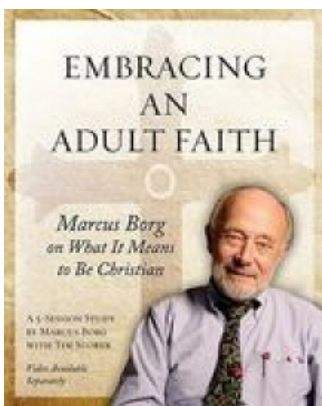
St. Alban's is pleased to have Olga here with us leading the choir and offering her musical talents and leadership to our worship service. She will be with us at least through the Easter season.

She was born in St. Petersburg, Russia to a family of musicians. Her degrees are in three types of musical education: instrumental, vocal teaching and choral conducting. She is the founder of the choral ensemble Eterna Muziko. For ten years the chorus under her direction performed extensively in Europe and USA.

Olga is a gifted and highly experienced musical mentor. She has assisted and developed multiple Music Directors, choir conductors, cantors and solo singers.

She is married, has a daughter and two granddaughters. Olga loves nature and animals. She has two dogs and a cat. Her hobbies are tennis, Nordic skiing, and bicycling. She enjoys traveling, photography and making movies for her family and friends.

Olga warmly invites you to join the choir or to perform an instrumental solo. She loves helping people be their "best" and inspires their efforts and performance. Please join her in offering St. Alban's an uplifting spiritual musical experience each week.



LENTEN STUDY 2014 EMBRACING AN ADULT FAITH With Marcus Borg

Five Sundays, March 2nd, 16th, 23rd, 30th, and April 6th
(You do not need to be able to attend all sessions to participate)

11:45 to 12:45 with soup and bread

Child Care will be provided

Please sign-up in the narthex so we have a workbook for you

What It Means to Be Christian

Embracing an Adult Faith is part of the EMBRACING education series produced by Moorehouse Education Resources, a Division of Episcopal Church Publishing.

It is an exciting and engaging five-session adult formation resource for those seeking a richer understanding of issues in contemporary Christian practice and theology: Who

is Jesus? Who is God? What is salvation? How do we practice our faith? How do we live in community?"

The series is designed to be used in this way: We watch and listen to bestselling author and theologian, Marcus Borg, stimulate a thoughtful and heartfelt conversation among a small group of participants, captured on a DVD. We then take off from there, delving more deeply into each session's theme. As group members we become teachers for one another as we discuss and share together in an adult learning setting.

Ruth Ann Collins, Adult Formation Officer for The Episcopal Church had this to say about the program: What a refreshing and long overdue resource. Finally an adult formation resource which respects the subject matter, the teacher and the learner! This resource is a must for anyone who is committed to bringing transformative faith formation experiences to adults and congregations.

Marcus Borg is Canon Theologian at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Protland, Oregon. Internationally known in both academic and church circles as a biblical and Jesus scholar, he was Hundere Chair of Religion and Culture in the Philosophy Department at Oregon State University until his retirement in 2007. He is the author of nineteen books, including Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time, The God We Never Knew, Reading the bible Again for the Frist time, and the Heart of Christianity. His newest book is: Conversations with Scripture.

This is just one topic in the **EMBRACING** series. If we find this meaningful we will use more going forward. Others in the series include: **Embracing Emergent Christianity** with **Phyllis Tickle** and **Embracing the Prophets and Confronting the Pharoahs** with **Walter Brueggeman**.

MINISTRY NEWS

WARDENS CORNER

WHAT IS IT THAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE ST ALBANS A BETTER CHURCH ?

The vestry retreat was held over the weekend at the Ludwig home and we would like to thank Dave and Cindy for the use of their home for the day.

The vestry spent the day in discussing how we did as a church over the last year. We also worked on the goals we want to tackle in the new year.

There are three goals we thought would be the ones we need to look at. We need to work on our spirituality, marketing and the \$700,000.00 mortgage. To help with these goals, the vestry will need everyone's help and support in the fund raisers and to help with spreading the word about St. Albans.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

If you are handy around your home you can come and help out around God's house! During the year, we need to replace bulbs, fix church pews and work with Dagi Murphy on lowering our energy bills. If you would like to help out let Don LaCass know and he will get you up to speed.

Thanks,
Don LaCass



SPREAD THE WORD!

St. Alban's Pre-School has started registration for the 2014-2015 school year. Tuition will be held at the 2011 rates. Registration packets are available for our 2 year old, 3 year old, 4 year old and Transitional Kindergarten.

Pledging parishioners receive a 15% tuition discount.

To receive information for your family or friends call Miss Teresa at 201-337-5928.

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Upcoming Events

Spectrum for Living - The residents from Spectrum for Living had such a great time in October that they've asked if they can come back! We are tentatively planning on having a Saint Patrick' Day lunch and celebration for them on **March 9**. Please contact Paula Hoffman, Michele Capeci or Don LaCass if you are interesting in helping out.

Bowling Sunday – Family Bowling is tentatively scheduled after church on **Sunday, March 23rd** . Further details and sign ups to follow.



Relay for Life - Relay for Life is a life-changing event that gives everyone a chance to celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against the disease and this year will be held this year on **Friday, May 30**, at Ramapo High School. Our last team, the Saints of St. Alban's, participated in 2012 with 45 members and finished second in fund raising amounts. It's always a very moving but also a fun-filled night. We always have many participants but we need a new team captain this year. Please contact Don LaCass or Paula Hoffman if you are interested.

Paula Hoffman



Youth Upcoming Events:

February 7th - St John's Safe Haven - 5:00 St John's Ramsey

Both the Jr & Sr Youth Groups will be hosting a dinner for the Helping Hands Program for homeless adults - We will providing company, conversation, dinner, breakfast and a bag lunch!

February 10th - Tri Parish Youth Council Mtg - 7:30 St John's Ramsey - All representatives expected to attend.

February 15th - BAKING for Valentine's Day Youth Group Bake Sale - 2:00

Thank you to the Greenberg's from St John's in opening their home for us to bake our items to be sold during coffee hour on Sunday the 16th!

February 16th - Valentine's Day Bake Sale to support 2014 Mission Trip

This will be at each individual church's coffee hour.

February 16th - Junior Youth Meeting 4:00-6:00 St John's Ramsey

February 23rd - Senior Youth Meeting 4:00-6:00 St John's Ramsey

March 1st - Senior Group Lock In - Trinity Church

5:00 Saturday night thru church service at Trinity Sunday morning

We will be spending time together sharing fun, food and fellowship throughout the night.

Thanks to all who donated to our collection for the Center for Food Action during the "Soup"er Bowl Sunday!

Due to the snow, we needed to reschedule both our "Soup"er Bowl pick-up and tour of the Center for Food Action as well as our Tri Parish Council Meeting - both are rescheduled for next Monday the 10th.



St John's creative collection

Youth Fish and Chip Dinner

To support the Youth Mission Trip

Saturday, March 15th at St. Alban's





richaa0057s fotosearch.com

Tickets and information to follow. Please contact Megan Kendall for further information.

**THANK
YOU**

- ❖ To Colleen Habick for helping with the Epiphany Open House at the Rectory.
- ❖ To Nicholas King and Grace Nazare for helping with PNO and the baking for the Heifer Project.

- ❖ To Dagi Murphy, John Murphy and Don LaCass for getting us going with the energy efficiency work.
- ❖ To all the members of the Vestry and heads of ministries for preparing reports for the Annual Meeting.
- ❖ To Don LaCass, John Murphy and Barbara Harriman for attending the Diocesan Convention with Kathryn and bringing back valuable information for the Parish.
- ❖ To Sandy Dugan for sorting and putting away all of the Christmas pageant costumes
- ❖ To the Vestry and Wardens for hosting the Annual Meeting potluck luncheon.
- ❖ To Leigh Lydecker and Don LaCass for their ongoing help with handy man jobs.
- ❖ For our faithful Sunday School teachers

FEBRUARY MILESTONES

Birthdays: 3rd Mercedes Chimento, 5th Suzanne Zadoyko, 7th Ed Bristol,
13th Linda Nazare, 14th Sierra Mohamed, 17th Bob Wurster, 20th Cheri McCusker, 22nd Jean LaCass, 24th Megan Kendall & 26th Diane Rees.



Anniversaries: 14th Tammy & Christopher Giametta, 22nd Trish & Ken Beck and the 27th Louise & Bruce Gillard.



BIBLE READINGS

Sunday, February 2
Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 24:7-10
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

Sunday, February 16
Sirach 15:15-20
Psalm 119:1-8
1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Matthew 5:21-37

Sunday, February 9
Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)
Psalm 112:1-9 (10)
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)
Matthew 5:13-20

Sunday, February 23
Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18
Psalm 119:33-40
1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23
Matthew 5:38-48

Prayers of the People - February



Our thanksgivings and intercessions:

We continue to pray for all who are affected by war, hunger and other calamities and ask for God's grace upon those who work for peace and restoration.

We give thanks for all the blessings of life. We pray for our companions in Paterson.

We pray for those who are unemployed and under-employed.

We pray for those who are ill: especially Brendan, Colton, Patty, Minerva "Minnie", Judy, Mercedes, Chris, Cassidy, Frank, Mary, Brenda, Carol, Goren, Eddie, Nathan, Margaret, Randa, Nancy, Terry & Midge.

We pray for those who have died. May their souls, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

The Work of Christmas

When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins.

To find the lost.
To heal the broken.
To feed the hungry.
To release the prisoner.
To teach the nations.
To bring Christ to all.

To make music in the heart.

By Howard Thurman, submitted by Deacon Harriman

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

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The Most Rev. Katharine J. Schori, *Presiding Bishop*
The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith, *Bishop, Newark Diocese*
The Rev. Kathryn L. King, *Rector*
The Rev. Barbara Harriman, *Deacon*
Cathie Studwell, *Seminarian*
Megan Kendall, *Youth Missioner*
Olga Koulcherova, *Choir Director*
Christine Halloran, *Parish Administrator*
Nell Burger, *Bookkeeper*

Don La Cass, *Warden*
Pam Hellenen, *Clerk* Kathy Miles, *Treasurer*

Vestry: Carol Guzzo, Paula Hoffman,
Jeanne Sylvester, Linda Banach, Sandy Dugan and Cindy Ludwig

St. Alban's Pre-School

Teresa Ercan, *Pre-School Director*

Teachers:

Cathy Connolly, Cathy Mazzola,
Christy Macagne, Rosa Mignogni, Beth Schall, Freida Scillieri, Jill Zuidema

"Welcoming All To Share God's Love"