

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

Oakland & Franklin Lakes

First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2020

WEEKEND UPDATE



FIRST SUNDAY

OF

Advent



STEWARDSHIP

The Vestry has designed a Stewardship program for this fall that will include personal stories, slides shows of parish life especially during the pandemic, and updates on all that we continue to do in ministry even while we are separated from one another physically. It is a critical time for each of us to prayerfully consider how we can financially support the ongoing ministry of our parish family as we respond to the call of Christ to be his heart, hands, and presence in the world.

To view the video on Stewardship, click on the link below.

<http://www.stalbansflow.org/photos.php>



Just a reminder to please continue to send in your pledges either by mailing them into the church office or through our online giving on our website at <http://www.stalbansflow.org/> Your support is greatly appreciated!

Your pledge contributions and monetary donations for these special outreach efforts can be made electronically through our website at <http://stalbansflow.org/index.php> or by mailing a check to the parish office. Please note in the memo that your donation is for outreach. Thank you!

**VERY IMPORTANT ALL PARISH TOWN HALL
MEETING
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29th
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SERVICE**

Friends, we have very important information to discuss together and big decisions that we will be facing in the near future. A member of the Bishop's staff will join us in the latest developments of the land sale and the challenges we continue to address financially. This is a critical time for us as a parish. We need every household in the parish to be represented. It is essential that we demonstrate the strength and commitment of this parish family to our on-going life and ministry as we meet with Diocesan leadership.

Please be sure to join us for worship – but even if you are not able to be on-line for the service be sure to sign-on either on Zoom or call in for this important meeting.

Please see details for joining the meeting in the attachment sent with Sunday's Bulletin.

Your Vestry, Finance Committee, and Clergy

**Linda Nazare
Ken Hancock
Don LaCass**

**Dean Mohamed
Rich Chimento
Gary Nazare**

**Alison Sanna
Cheri McCusker
Dave Ludwig**

Adult Resources for Keeping Watch during Advent



Watch, Pray, Wait, Anticipate, Prepare ... These are all words that are central to keeping a holy and intentional Advent. Each year we are challenged to keep Christ and our Christian faith at the center of our lives in an increasingly busy and noisy world. That is no less true as we continue to live in this time of physical distancing and practicing love by practicing safety. This annual challenge will be augmented this year when we are unable to gather together for our beloved parish traditions that draw us back each Sunday. We will be keeping those traditions in new ways.

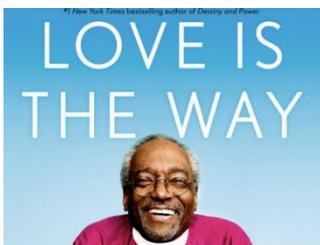
I invite and encourage you to keep an intentional Advent by faithfully joining our in-person and on-line worship. This continues to be a source of life-affirming connection with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Please also make use of the devotional and personal retreat materials that have been prepared for you. It is my prayer that you will make the time to daily place yourself in the path of the Holy Spirit and listen for words in your heart to remind you that you are beloved and it is for you that God came to us as Immanuel - God with us.

And finally, I am providing some links and information about other opportunities that are available to us. These are a variety of on-line book study / discussion groups, worship, and carol sings.

The bidding prayer for the Festival of Lessons and Carols from The Book of Common Prayer begins with these words: *Beloved in Christ, in this Christmastide, let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. Let us read and mark in holy Scripture the tale of the living purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this holy Child.*

Make an intentional choice to deepen your walk into the mystery that is Immanuel who came that we would know life, and know it with abundance.

In the waiting that is the mark of this time, *Kathryn+*



Love Is the Way: An Advent Book Discussion Based on Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's book *Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times*, this is a three-week offering from All Saints' Episcopal Church, Hoboken and will meet via Zoom. All are welcome to join in the sessions offered on three Sunday evenings (November 29, December 6, and December 13) from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. To register and receive the Zoom link go to the Diocese of Newark website <https://dioceseofnewark.org/community-events>. This is a free program and open to all.

The Community of Saint John Baptist Did you know that the Episcopal Church has nuns and that the convent of Saint John Baptist is located in Mendham, NJ? Well, it's all true! We were blessed to have two of the sisters join us a couple years ago to share with us the work of one of their overseas missions with an orphanage in Cameron.

I encourage you to visit their website and explore the numerous on-line opportunities they are offering on Zoom to support all of us in spiritual practice throughout the year. Here are some opportunities coming

up in this season. Please visit: <https://www.csjb.org/events.html> for more information and sign-in information and links.



Centering Prayer Every Thursday from 8:15 to 8:15 on Zoom

This prayer group has been meeting for many years. Guests are welcome and can gather on Zoom. To join for an evening please email sister Monica at srmc@csjb.org

Centering Prayer is a method of meditation that places a strong emphasis on interior silence and is described as prayer that is centered entirely on the presence of God. If you have a longing in your heart for silence and stillness, if you have wondered how to listen for the presence of God, then this might be something for you to consider giving a try.



Thirty- minute Prayer Service Do you find yourself drawn to pray for yourself, family, neighbors, our church, and the world? Do you experience it more difficult to pray alone than when joined with others? Then this might be just the opportunity for you. The Community of St. John Baptist invites you via Zoom to meet for prayer for comfort and

strength during these difficult times. We welcome you on the third Friday of each month. The next gathering is on Dec 18th at 10:30 AM. Please email Oblate Pat McKenzie at mckenziepat@gmail.com for the Zoom information. * *An Oblate is a lay (non-ordained) person who is associated with a religious order.*



CONCERT AT THE CONVENT - THE ADELPHI CHAMBER ORCHESTRA A FUNDRAISER FOR OUR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

November 22, 2020 from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM on YouTube

Does music calm your soul and enable you to slow down? Does music speak to the deepest part of you? If so then this might be a Advent opportunity calling for you.

The Adelphi Orchestra is a professional, non-profit orchestra performing symphonic, chamber, operatic and dance concerts. It is northern New Jersey's longest continuously performing orchestra and a member of the New Jersey cultural community for 67 years. At this concert they will perform Mozart and Dvork Quartets for Strings. If you would like to register please email concerts@csjb.org



Two Great Cathedrals St. John the Divine in New York and The National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. each offer a range of opportunities for on-line participation in worship, studies, and seasonal traditions. I encourage you to visit <https://www.stjohndivine.org/> and <https://cathedral.org/> to browse the opportunities to join in everything from Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, on-line book studies, and a wonderful array of special music

concerts that are often preceded by conversations with the artists. There are concerts both weeknights and weekends by world class musicians. These cathedrals are a treasure trove of opportunities to bring sacred sounds into your life as a contrast to the din of the world swirling around us. Places like these do things on a scale that is out of reach for 99% of faith communities. Check them out and treat your soul to the beauty and majesty of all they long to share.

Hope you enjoy these. If you have favorites I would love to hear about them! KLK+

CHILDREN, TEEN, & INTERGENERATIONAL / FAMILY OPPORTUNITIES



Please join in these opportunities for keeping Advent with your families. There are opportunities for all ages. We hope that you will find within these offerings support, fellowship, and meaningful fun as we together keep watch and prepare for the birth of Christ. INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TOO!! ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

Preschool to early Elementary: Sacred Stories and Bedtime Prayers Join Reverend Kathryn and your St. Alban's friends at 6:45 on Thursdays in Advent (December 3, 10, and 17) for a 15-20 minute time of stories and bedtime prayers. Zoom links will be sent out ahead of time. I will also pre-record some bedtime stories that you can access on our Facebook page whenever you would like to use them.

Pageant Preparations and Pre-Recording performances I am looking for youth who are interested in pre-recording musical performances and readings here in the church for use in the many services throughout Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. Dates and times to be arranged with individuals.

Faithful Families Intergenerational Advent Events We will join together on-line to some things that will brighten your holiday celebrations and may be used as gifts. A list of supplies is included in the description.

- ✚ **November 29th The First Sunday of Advent: Exploring the Advent Options** Please join Reverend Kathryn at 5 PM to open up and take a look at all the supplies and activities that were included in your family Advent To-Go-Bag. We will go over what they are and answer any questions about how to use them. We will also talk about how we will be creating the pageant this year and how everyone can be part of offering special music and art to share. We will end by lighting the Advent wreath.
- ✚ **December 6th The Second Sunday of Advent: Making Fruit Pomanders** Pomanders are fruits embedded with dried cloves that give off a wonderful seasonal smell. *Each person will need: An orange or apple, lots of whole cloves, about 3 feet or ribbon or yard for hanging, and either a push pin or toothpick for making holes in the fruit.* We will stay on Zoom right after church.
- ✚ **December 13th The Third Sunday of Advent: Making Luminarias** We will share the scriptures that teach us of Jesus as the Light of the World and then make luminaria as a way to share that light. Included in your Advent bags were white bags for making luminaria. *In addition to the bags you will need: scissors, crayons / markers / water colors, sand or cat litter for the bot tom of the bag, and a light for inside the bag. You can use a real tea light in a cup or a mini-flashlight of some kind. Battery tea lights really are not bright enough to make the bags shine.* We will stay on Zoom right after church.
- ✚ **December 20 The Forth Sunday of Advent: Making Holly Cookies** We will learn the tradition of the use of holly in our Christmas celebrations and then make holly cookies to enjoy! *You will need: 10 oz. bag of marshmallows (either large or mini), a 5 cups or corn flakes, 3 tablespoons of butter or margarine, green food coloring, cinnamon red hots, tin foil, and adult help!* We will stay on Zoom right after church.

TEEN and YOUNG COLLEGE GATHERING Come to church on Tuesday, December 8th at 5:30 for pizza and hanging out in the church under the light of the tree and with your church friends. We will spend about 45 minutes to catch up with each other and just reconnect a bit. Please wear a mask. We will keep social distance. We will keep the gathering to 45 minutes in accordance with Diocesan guidelines. Text me at 201-321-2431 so I know how much pizza to get! Kathryn+

CROSS ROADS ON LINE! The [Bold Transformational Faith \(BTF\) initiative](#), a faith formation program led by Cross Roads and their ministry partner Luther Crest Bible Camp in Minnesota, is kicking off Advent with a special virtual event on Sunday, November 29: [Campfires and Carols!](#) We'll sing some of our favorite Christmas and Advent songs, dance, pray, and hear a message about the birth of Jesus! Find this worship on the Cross Roads Facebook page at 7:30 PM on November 29th. All Are welcome!

WE NEED YOU TO HELP MAKE ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, & EPIPHANY JOYOUS!

We, of course, want to be together in church for our faith and parish traditions during this holy season. Unfortunately, the reality is that many things still need to be on-line. The Worship planners and IT folks are all working together to offer meaningful, creative, and interactive worship and celebrations. Now we need all of you to do your part and get involved. Here are some opportunities:



❖ **SHARE MUSIC OR POETRY:** Do you play an instrument, sing, have a favorite poem or verse? We want you to record yourself / family performing your favorite faith seasonal song (traditional carol or contemporary selection) so it can be included in our services. If you need help deciding on something speak with me. I can guide you to selecting something you know and also provide ideas. If you have PS and elementary aged kiddos I have some simple Christmas songs set to nursery rhymes that would be easy to teach and learn!

❖ **SHARE A PHOTO:** Please share photos of your decorations ... creche', tree, mantel, or outdoors. Send us a digital image from your family Christmas card, of you involved in a favorite family tradition, or using the resources provided in this To-Go bag. We are going to create a slide show of the season!

❖ **SHARE A PHOTO OF YOUR ART:** We would love to include images of art work or seasonal crafts that you have made.



❖ **SERVE AS A READER:** We will be prerecording a Christmas Eve service and need readers. You can come to church by yourself and we will record you here or you can do the reading at home and send us the recording for inclusion.

❖ **PARTICIPATE IN THE VIRTUAL PAGEANT:** We are coordinating a virtual pageant which will be part of our worship on Advent IV, December 20, and then posted for on-demand viewing. Parts of each scene will be filmed at home and compiled into a full pageant with readings, carols, solos, and costumed players. Please contact the parish office so we know you are interested!

Please send your photo submissions to stalbansofl@optimum.net and put **CHRISTMAS SLIDE SHOW** in the subject. If you are willing to record a video please let me know and I will get you a link for submission. All submissions are due **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16th** to allow for editing and inclusion. I hope everyone will participate!



Kathryn+



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Announcements

PLEASE RETURN YOUR PLEDGE CARDS

All members and households are asked to please return your 2021 Pledge cards to the office by Sunday, December 6th so that we can make the necessary decisions and plans for the coming year. It is especially important that we all make our commitments known. Every pledge is critical and every member is needed to continue our vital ministries into the future. Pledge packets were delivered to homes on November 22nd. Please review all the information carefully, watch the beautiful video that was prepared, be reminded of all that this family of faith is about, and make a prayerful response. We are called to sacrificial giving to offer of ourselves as Christ poured himself out for us. Thank you for who you are and all that you offer to uphold and support our common life.

Advent / Christmas To Go Bags-

You should have all received the home delivery of our Advent / Christmas To Go Bags at your homes last Sunday. In addition to the fresh baked pumpkin muffins they are filled with resources to enrich your Advent journey. The items in the bags were specifically selected for each household. Also please note the opportunities for on-line gatherings for adults and children both through St. Alban's and with the larger church family in the Diocese and nationally.

We are anticipating more adjustments in the numbers for in-person worship for the remainder of Advent. We will keep you updated weekly and are making plans accordingly to continue to offer the full range of opportunities though more will likely be moved to on-line events. Please stay tuned and stay safe.

Adopt-A-Family

Thank you to Maria Palmer for coordinating our participation in the gift distribution with St. Paul's CDC in Paterson and thank you to the many parish and school families who are participating.

We are now accepting volunteers / sponsors for local Oakland families through Dogwood School as part of our ongoing relationship with those most in need. If you are willing to sponsor a child please be in touch with the parish office. Kathryn is coordinating with the school nurse, Barbara Verga, to get names and lists. That information will be available this week and wrapped gifts are due back to the church by Sunday, December 20th for distribution on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 22 and 23rd. This year is more challenging because we need an additional level of permissions to deliver non-contact directly to the homes of those we are serving. We are also looking for 2 -3 volunteers to help with deliveries all in Oakland.

Help bring joy this season

Buy your gifts at smile.amazon.com
or with AmazonSmile ON in the app
and Amazon donates
amazonsmile



PLEASE USE AMAZON SMILE FOR ALL OF YOUR AMAZON PURCHASES

Make a difference this holiday. Shop for gifts at smile.amazon.com/ch/04-3802711 to generate donations for Rector Wardens Vestrymen of St Albans Episcopal Church in OfI and check out our [AmazonSmile Charity Lists](#) to donate items we need most.