

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
Syracuse, New York

December
2011

Rector:

The Rev. Julie E.
Calhoun-Bryant

Wardens:

Mary (Kiki) White
Bobbi Lombardo
Sue Grosso
(Warden Emeritus)

Vestry:

Dick Askeland
Andrew Augustine
Beth Beehner
Pat Greenow
Bob Maynard
Denis (Skip) Visco

Vestry Clerk:

Kate Bell

Organist-Choir:

Phoebe
Swope-Askeland

Parish Secretary:

Arthur Friedel, III

Treasurer:

Kathleen Eckermann

Financial Secretary
& Webmaster:

David Gregg

Property Chair:

Lee Eckles

Fellowship Chair:

Bobbi Lombardo

Finance: Allen Ditch

Outreach Chair:

Sharon Wilson

Sunday Schedule: December 4, 11 and 18

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, traditional language
9:00 a.m. Dec. 4: First Sunday Coffee Hour
Dec. 11+18: Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, with Music & Choir
11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour on Dec. 4, Luncheon on Dec. 11,
Christmas Party on Dec. 18

Christmas Eve

Saturday at 8:00 p.m. - Festive Eucharist, with Choir

Christmas Day

Sunday at 10:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist & Carols

New Years Day

Sunday at 10:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist & Carols

December Dates of Note

Saturday, December 3 is Kids Night Out

From 5:00-8:00 p.m. kids in grades K-8 are invited to come for games, crafts, and more. Guest art teacher at 5:30 p.m. Dinner included. Only \$5 per kid.

Sunday, December 11 is the Youth Fund-Raising Luncheon

April 20-22, 2012 our Youth Group members and parent drivers are going to The Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City for the Nightwatch program. Saturday during the day there will be time for sight-seeing. This's the first of two fund-raisers. The trip costs \$140 per person.

Please come and support our youth.

Dec. 13 at Noon: Daytime Fellowship Christmas Lunch

Everyone is welcome to join us for this annual favorite! Enjoy a delicious ham dinner and dessert. If you wish to participate in the gift exchange bring a wrapped gift in the \$4-7 range.

Sunday, December 18 is the Parish Christmas Party

The Fellowship Work Group is hosting the fun after the 10:30 a.m. service. Luscious cookies/desserts. Kids crafts and games too. Come join in the festivities!

Mother Julie's Schedule (subject to change)

Week of:

Nov. 27: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday night

Dec. 4: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday

Dec. 11: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday

Dec. 18: Sunday, Home Communion, Vestry

Dec. 25: Christmas morning service, Tuesday

St. Alban's Church

1308 Meadowbrook Drive

Syracuse, NY 13224-1718

(315) 446-3490

www.stalban.us

Office hours: Tues.-Friday

9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Rector's email: rector@stalban.us

Organist's email: phoebe@stalban.us

Office email:

stalbans@juno.com

Meetings	Early January B-Days!	December Birthdays!
<u>December 21</u> Wardens at 6:00 p.m. Vestry at 7:00 p.m.	3 Nancy Vogt 5 Lorraine Merrick Jimmy Grosso 6 Shirley North 8 Meg Houston	8 Wendy Wickenden 9 Brian Calhoun-Bryant 11 Chris Calhoun-Bryant 14 Peter Volmes 15 David Leader 19 Louis Bashaw 21 George Stanley, Jr. 25 Jesus Christ 28 Art Pichette, Sr. 29 Frank Grosso 31 Bob Maynard
<u>Parish Budget</u> Income: October - \$7,589 Expenses: October - \$11,784 Deficit to Date: \$15,212 (projected: -\$21,505) 2011 pledges are up to date. We've received 34 pledges so far for 2012, for a total of \$70,067.		

Christmas Preparations

Decorate the Church on Friday, December 23 at 9:00 a.m.

Altar Guild members and friends are needed to prepare the church to celebrate Christ's birth.

Neighborhood Association Luminaries - Christmas Eve at 3:00 p.m.

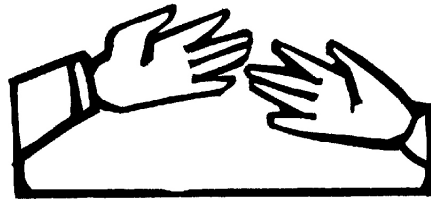
This year luminaries will be placed up Scott Avenue and around the church.

Help is needed to set them up from 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Parish Office Closing

The parish office will be closed on Friday, December 23.

Outreach Ministries



Kids Night Out Continues on December 3

Kids Night Out is the program we began offering last year for youth from the neighborhood and parish. It's held on the first Saturday of the month, November to March, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. All kids in grades K-8 are invited. Last month 9 children from the neighborhood attended, along with 3 from the parish.

Volunteers are needed to assist the core leadership team in running the program. Core team members include Kate Bell, Mother Julie, Sue Grosso, Sharon Houck and Kiki White. Let us know if you have a skill or hobby to share with the kids; that would be wonderful! Examples of special guests last year included Dottie White's plantings and Kate Bell's origami. If you know someone whom we could approach to share a craft or hobby please let us know. Healthy snack providers also are needed. Please sign up to help!

62 Marine Holiday Care Packages were mailed out by Sue and Jimmy Grosso. Thank you everyone for your donations!

Giving Tree: The Giving Tree will be up in the Fellowship Room from Nov. 20 through Dec.11 to collect items for the families served by New Salem Baptist Ministries Food Pantry. Needed are canned fruits and vegetables, and books for children and teens. Take a tag from the tree or bring in the items listed by Sunday, December 11. Lorraine Merrick coordinates. Thank you to Gail Saunders for making the 40 tags.

Refugee Resettlement: Imagine coming from a hot climate and stepping off the plane into a Syracuse winter. Brrrr. Needed are machine washable, new and gently used:

Blankets, Comforters and Baby Blankets
Coats for People of All Ages
Hats, Mittens/Gloves and Scarves

Pat Greenow coordinates.

Van Duyn Needs Sunday Volunteers for Worship Service

The Rev. Deacon Jane Luck, Chaplain at Van Duyn Home and Hospital, needs help transporting wheelchair residents to and from the Sunday afternoon worship service. Volunteers are needed from 1:00-3:00 p.m. for the 1:45 p.m. service. One church provides 2-6 volunteers for a given Sunday. If you can help on January 8 please let Mother Julie know ASAP so she can tell Deacon Luck that St. Alban's will help.

A Letter to the Editor
November 18 in The Post-Standard



Stained glass needs to be lit

I must confess, I have one of the most amazing views in Syracuse - St. Alban's on Meadowbrook Drive. This stone-wrapped, magnificent structure around the towering trees, the running brook, the newly crafted birdhouses, the flowering intersections, is a true treasure. Added to this treasure is the fabulous stained glass wall - when it is lit.

For over 17 years I have looked out my front window in hopes that it will be lit. I can't be the only neighbor who admires its beauty, especially all those who walk in front of it, across from it, passing by it.

Please try to keep a spiritual candle behind the beauty of this city treasure, for it is truly a spectacular view.

Pat Mosley, Syracuse

(Rector's Note: The following Sunday Rob Lombardo turned the floodlights on.)

Rector's Roses Go To

- Phoebe Swope-Askeland and Choir Members Dick Askeland, Kate Bell, Sarah Bennett, Corinna DiGianfilippo, Allen Ditch, Meg Houston, Bob Maynard, Pauline Stanley, Nancy Vogt and Evan Wichman for outstanding performances at the Community Thanksgiving Service.
- Andrew Augustine for coordinating the reception that followed the service.
- Brian Calhoun-Bryant and the youth who assisted him in loading brush from the back yard into Rob Lombardo's trailer, and to Rob for carting it away.
- Allen Ditch and Beth Beehner for conducting the 2010 audit, and to Kathleen Eckermann for clear and complete records that made the audit straight forward.
- Ham and Andy White for organizing the assembly of the Marine Care Packages and for going out between services to purchase items to fill the 62 bags equally.
- Bobbi Lombardo & the Fellowship Group for the yummy All Saints' Day lunch.
- Andrew Augustine and Pat Greenow for serving as our delegates to Diocesan Convention on Nov. 18-19 and to Meg Houston for serving as our youth delegate.
- November Kids Night Out volunteers Kate Bell, Sue Grosso, Sharon Houck, Bobbi Lombardo, and Kiki, Ham and Andy White.
- And last, but not least(!), to those who offered one of the 34 pledge cards received by Nov. 20.

Priestly Ponderings

Last night (Nov. 21) I went to one of the most remarkable meetings I have ever attended in my 22 years as a priest. Something I thought would never happen happened. Clergy leaders of all faiths with congregations in Nottingham High School (NHS) neighborhoods were invited by principal David Maynard (Marge's son) to "bring God back into the school" by engaging in "missionary work" on campus. The invitation comes with the caveat that clergy leaders must not be there to recruit members for their own congregations. I suspect that it was due to the short notice that only 6 Christian clergy from 5 churches showed up, but those of us who were there were both floored and excited by the invitation to bring God into a public high school.

David Maynard became principal on July 1, 2011. He has 3 years to turn the school around or New York State decides Nottingham's fate. It is not a job many coveted. NHS is rated deficient in graduation rates of three groups:

- 1) English Language - for 21% of students, English is not their first language. Less than 32% of these students graduate.
- 2) Special Education - these students make up 22% of the student body. They all must be classified as Regents students. There are no non-Regents options on campus, such as pre-GED classes. Vocational programs in the district are almost non-existent. This means the special education students have to achieve a grade of 65 on at least 5 Regents exams in order to graduate.
- 3) African-American males have a graduation rate of 32%.

Some Positives

- 1) One-third of the student body take college level courses at NHS. Of these students 39% go on to a four year college. Others go on to two year colleges. This group is mixed race.
- 2) The Parent-Teacher-Student Organization is very active. This is unusual at the high school level.
- 3) All students are placed in one of three academies when they enter 9th grade. One academy is supported by SU, one by RIT and one by ESF and OCC. Students can ask to change to another academy after their first year.

Some Challenges

- 1) NHS has a four year graduation rate of 51%.
- 2) 50% of ninth graders enter NHS 2-4 years behind in reading levels. The remedial courses they must take to address this deficiency do not count toward high school graduation requirements. Hence, from the start it is unlikely that they will finish in 4 years. (The new superintendent is focusing on what is happening at the lower grade levels that leads to the lack of reading skills.)
- 3) The percentage of students who reach "mastery" level on Regents exams is in the low teens. Mastery requires a grade of 85 or above and such students are considered college ready. Perhaps this is because NHS's teaching standards are too low.
- 4) There are a number of older students short of the needed credits to graduate. Many drop out.

5) 72% of students receive free breakfast and lunch.

So, what are clergy, of all faiths, asked to do? Three things:

- 1) Attend the Leadership Summit in January and join one of the sub-committees formed at the event.
- 2) Come and visit students from our congregations who attend NHS at lunchtime as a way of being visible to the student body.
- 3) Ask our congregations what they can do to make NHS a more inviting place to go to school.

Clergy can:

- 1) Come into the school any time they wish. David wants students to see models of successful adults, which includes their appearance (no sagging pants or over-exposed skin).
- 2) Ask for a room to meet with students over lunch.
- 3) Dream up ideas to work together with NHS students that will help them reach a “higher plane.”
- 4) Help meet needs identified by the administration. (I asked Asst. Principal Bell to let me know of students with urgent needs, especially as Christmas approaches, that St. Alban’s can help meet.)

Here’s the serendipity moment: at the Sunday morning Bible Study the day before (Nov. 20) we were looking at the parables about faithful and unfaithful religious people in Matthew 23-25. One person remarked on an HBO special she had seen about the Holocaust and reported how survivors often raised the question, “Where was God during the Holocaust?” I asked the class a different question: “Where was the Church?” The Holocaust might have been minimized, if not prevented, if Christian leaders and people rose up against the slaughter of the Jewish people. Then I was inspired to ask, “Given that 1 out of 5 black males between the ages of 16 and 34 will be incarcerated, will the generation after us ask, ‘Where was the Church? Why didn’t they rise up and act?’” As a result of this conversation the Bible Study class decided to invite an administrator from NHS to come and speak to the class in December about what the needs are and how they can help. They want to take this on as a Bible Study class project. We can’t change the world, but we can make a difference in the lives of one or two students and their families.

After the Bible Study I presided at the 10:30 a.m service, attended coffee hour, and then went to my office to plow through whatever Art had left on my desk while I was at Diocesan Convention. In the pile of mail was the invitation to the meeting I have just described. Perhaps this is why the Spirit moved me to formalize my hours from half to two-thirds time, and why the Vestry agreed unanimously that this needed to be done. St. Alban’s has missionary work to do. Stay tuned.

Blessings,
Mother Julie+