

## February 2012

### Rector:

The Rev. Julie E.  
Calhoun-Bryant

### Wardens:

Bobbi Lombardo  
Marge Maynard  
Mary (Kiki) White  
(Warden Emeritus)

### Vestry:

Dick Askeland  
Andrew Augustine  
Kate Bell  
Pat Greenow  
Sue Grosso  
Bob Maynard

### Vestry Clerk:

Sharon Wilson

### Organist-Choir:

Phoebe  
Swope-Askeland

### Parish Secretary:

Arthur Friedel, III

### Treasurer:

Kathleen Eckermann

### Financial Secretary & Webmaster:

David Gregg

### Fellowship:

Bobbi Lombardo

### Finance:

Allen Ditch

### Outreach Chair:

Sharon Wilson

### Property:

Lee Eckles

## St. Alban's Episcopal Church Syracuse, New York

### Sunday Schedule

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, traditional language  
9:00 a.m. Feb. 5: First Sunday Coffee Hour  
Feb. 12, 19, 26: Bible Study  
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, with Music & Choir  
11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour (Mardi Gras on Feb. 19)

### Annual Meeting Elections

Marge Maynard, Warden, 2 Year Term  
Kate Bell, Vestry, 3 Year Term  
Sue Grosso, Vestry, 3 Year Term  
Congratulations!

### February Dates of Note

#### Valentine's Day at Noon - Daytime Fellowship Lunch

Everyone is invited to join us at the Olive Garden. Unlimited soup, salad and breadsticks are only \$7. Guests always are welcome. Call Art with your reservation. Next up: St. Pat's Party on 3/16

#### February 19 - Mardi Gras at 11:30 a.m.

Join us for this annual favorite of good food, gooey desserts & music by Mimi Osmun and St. Alban's All Stars. Pinata for the kids! Guests welcome!

#### February 21 - Youth Group

Youth and their friends are invited to meet at the church at 3 p.m. to go bowling. Afterward we'll come back to church for pancakes.

#### February 21 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Pauline Stanley will serve them up hot from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

#### February 22 - Ash Wednesday

Holy Eucharist, with the imposition of ashes, will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

#### February 26 - Sunday Afternoon at the Movies

At 12:15 p.m. the movie The King's Speech will be shown on the new 32" flat screen TV in the Fellowship Room. The movie's rated PG-13. Microwave popcorn & soda provided.

Mother Julie's Schedule

Week of:

Feb. 5: Sunday, Tuesday-Thursday  
 Feb. 12: Sunday, Tuesday-Thursday  
 Feb. 19: Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Vacation Day  
 Feb. 26: Sunday, Tuesday-Thursday

Rector's email: [rector@stalban.us](mailto:rector@stalban.us)  
 Organist's email: [choirorganic@gmail.com](mailto:choirorganic@gmail.com)

St. Alban's Church  
 1308 Meadowbrook Drive  
 Syracuse, NY 13224-1718  
 (315) 446-3490  
[www.stalban.us](http://www.stalban.us)

Office hours: Tues.-Friday  
 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Office email:  
[stalbans@juno.com](mailto:stalbans@juno.com)

Meetings	Looking Ahead	Happy Birthday!
<p><u>February 2 at 5:45 p.m.</u>                      Worship Work Group</p> <p><u>February 15</u>                      Wardens, 6:00 p.m.                      Vestry, 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>The Rt. Rev. Gladstone B. Adams III will be present with us on Sunday, April 15.</p>	<p>February</p> <p>3 Maryann Tripp                      4 Renie Norton                      Brittany Beehner                      10 Marge Maynard                      13 Beverly Hays                      Joanne Sherman                      15 Nicholas Lombardo                      28 Austin Beehner                      Andrew Lombardo</p>
<p><u>Parish Budget</u>                      2011 Projected Deficit: \$25,806.08                      2011 Actual Deficit: \$14,693.98                      Final Quarterly Check from CIF2: \$1957.16                      First Quarterly Check from UIF: \$3695.15</p>		

February 5: Healing and Holy Eucharist at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

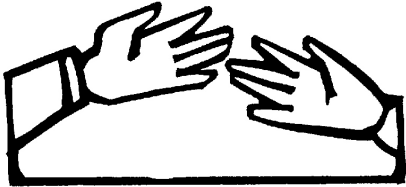
St. Alban's Scout Sunday is February 12

At the 10:30 a.m. service our Scouts will serve as acolytes, readers and ushers. Scouts of all ages are invited to come in uniform. The Scouts and their parents are hosting the coffee hour following the service.

Thursdays Evenings in Lent, Beginning March 1

Join us from 6:00-7:20 p.m. for dinner, followed by a Lenten study. Pairs of volunteers are needed to prepare a simple meal (pasta and salad, chili and cornbread, soup and salad, etc.) for 20 people. Dinner costs \$3 a person to reimburse our cooks for their groceries. Don't let the cost keep you away! Speak with Mother Julie for confidential assistance.

Note: Choir practice begins at 7:30 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m. in March!



## Outreach Ministries

### 1) Kids Night Out Continues on February 4 and March 3

Many thanks to January Kids Night Out volunteers Kate Bell, Sue Grosso, Sharon Houck, Fred and Sharon Wilson, Kiki White and Brian Calhoun-Bryant.

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 2 from the parish. Kids from a new family came in both November and December.

Volunteers are needed to assist the core leadership team in running the program. The core team members are Kate Bell, Mother Julie, Sue Grosso, Sharon Houck and Kiki White. Healthy snack and juice providers also are needed.

2) Interreligious Food Consortium: The first 3 Sundays in February food donations will be given to the IFC. Items can be left in the baskets at the back of the church.

3) Refugee Resettlement continues to need machine washable, new or gently used:

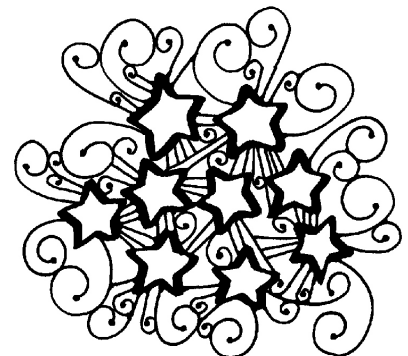
- + Blankets, Comforters and Baby Blankets
- + Coats, Hats, Mittens, Gloves & Scarves for all ages
- + New bed pillows (pressing need)

Pat Greenow coordinates this ministry. Donations can be left in the box in the ramp door vestibule by the coat closets.

4) Lenten 500: From Ash Wednesday (Feb. 22) to Easter (April 8) we will collect 500 items of food for New Salem Baptist Ministries Food Pantry on Syracuse's south side.

Many, Many Thanks  
to  
Out-going Senior Warden Kiki White  
and  
Out-going Vestry Members  
  
Beth Beehner and Skip Visco

Your presence, hard work, and faithful service  
will be missed by the continuing members of the Vestry.



## Rector's Annual Address

It's time to create a new story for St. Alban's. The old story is weighing us down and sinking us. We need to stop thinking of ourselves as a ship taking on water, but still afloat. The more we remain focused on survival, the more energy we will put into bailing the water out of the boat instead of making preparations for the next leg of the journey. The image of the luxury cruise liner that's been in the news, on its side and half-submerged in the Mediterranean Sea, is an unsettling one. What I find particularly horrifying about the tragedy are the reports of the passengers who did not survive found wearing life jackets and assembled at designated emergency stations. These passengers did exactly as they were told. They put on their life vests and went to their stations. Yet still they perished.

For four decades now this has been the story of mainline churches in America. The ship is sinking, and we're told that we are going under unless we stop being who we are and embrace the fast-paced, breakneck speed, 24/7, consumer-driven, technological culture that has left mainline churches irrelevant and soon to be extinct. I don't believe this. I don't believe that God is asking us to jump ship and frantically row a lifeboat in the desperate hope that one of the shiny, new luxury liners will spot us and allow us on board. I propose, instead, that we design our own new ship, bringing on board all the people of St. Alban's, along with our faithfulness, our generous hearts, our love of Prayer Book and Bible, our sacramental worship, and yes, our love of gathering over food. God is calling us to write a new story, one focused on Jesus, and promises to accompany and guide us each step of the way.

We need a new story because our current story mingles fear with faith as we face the realities of an aging congregation and the financial losses of the Great Recession. Every week the hardest moment I face is 10:29 a.m. on Sunday morning, when the choir and ushers are still in the back of the church and there are only 6-8 people sitting in the pews. It's hard not to be discouraged by the sight. Even though I know that by the time of the Gospel more people will fill the pews, I fret over the impression so many empty pews leaves on a punctual visitor. There are several things that play into the reality of 10:29 a.m. on Sunday morning. First, it's a long-standing habit, and long-standing habits are hard to break. Second, often people are in the building, but haven't yet made their way into the church. The most important reason, though, is that the way the service begins just doesn't work for us. So, what if a new story for St. Alban's created a new beginning for the 10:30 a.m. worship service - one that engages and energizes us, and builds on the strong community here. In this new story we keep the Holy Eucharist, the people, The Book of Common Prayer, but we edit out or transform the parts that sap our energy instead of freeing our spirits to soar.

\_\_\_\_\_ Here's a question for you. What if we no longer had the expectation of silence before the 10:30 a.m. service? What if we made a place for silence during the service instead? When Jesus gave us the sacrament of Holy Communion He did it in the context of the holiday meal celebrating Passover. Have you ever been invited to a holiday meal where everyone was expected to enter the house in silence? I haven't. As guests we anticipate that our hosts will greet us at the door, take our coat, and lead us into a room decorated for the occasion, where appetizers tempt us as the host takes our drink orders. What if we gave ourselves permission to greet one another before the 10:30 a.m. in the church? Possibilities for new life abound.

Here's another question for you. What if we gave ourselves permission to get up and quietly move around during parts of the service? What if there was a prayer station people could visit during the Prayers of the People if they had an urgent need? What if someone was there waiting to pray with them?

What if a table were set up with colored pencils and paper for adults and kids who learn and absorb new ideas through ways other than sitting still in a pew and listening to me speak for 20 minutes?

The new story for St. Alban's must be written wearing our "God-colored glasses." I've been on antibiotics and prednisone for sinus and ear infections these past two weeks. One recent morning the alarm went off and I stumbled out of bed, wondering how I was going to get through the day. Fortunately, I remembered to put on my God-colored glasses and asked myself, "What are Jesus and I going to do today?!" Instantly I was tapped into life-giving energy. I had changed the story of my day by looking to Jesus, knowing that my strength is not my own, but His. By intentionally looking to Jesus, St. Alban's can change its story.

The story of American culture has radically changed in the last 40 years. Perhaps the most important change for the Church is the embrace of personal freedom, combined with multiculturalism. The church of the 1950's existed in a closed culture where the vast majority of Americans were Christian, and the expectation was that everyone would be in church on Sunday morning. It was safe to assume that everyone knew the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. If you mentioned the "Prodigal Son" or the "Good Samaritan" in conversation you didn't have to explain the reference; everyone knew the stories from Sunday School. On Sunday stores were closed and grocery stores in New York State couldn't sell alcohol before noon. American values were mainline Protestant Christian values. Authority came from the Bible and the Church. In 1950, if a young adult was asked what they based their moral decisions on the answer would refer to the Bible, or the Ten Commandments or the teachings of Jesus. In 2012, when young adults are asked what they base their moral decisions on you'll often hear, "I just do what feels right."

American society has changed from the closed culture of the 1950's into a world that needs to be negotiated. No longer is there a generally agreed upon source of authority. Each person must choose whether to follow an outside authority, or simply be guided by what feels best. If a visitor walks into a church today it's because they've made a conscious choice to do so from among a dizzying, multi-cultural array of choices. I grew up in a world with fewer and simpler options. There weren't all the options and choices and information at the touch of key that we have today. You drank coffee or Sanka. Television dials went up to channel 13. You were Protestant, Catholic or Jewish. Advanced technology was colored television and a push button phone. You got your news from the local newspaper, one of the three network nightly broadcasts, and maybe Time or Newsweek magazine. Life wasn't lived 24/7. This world no longer exists. It's time to change our story. The Good News of Jesus Christ needs to be told clearly and compellingly enough to reach an audience in today's world.

When's the last time you walked into a McDonald's? From the outside a McDonald's restaurant seems much the same as it always has. Not so on the inside. For a long time their innovations were meant to attract kids, figuring that if the kids had a good time the mothers would bring them back. The strategy worked, and for a long time things like Happy Meals and indoor play places brought the kids in droves. Then when ball pits were deemed unsanitary and terrible stories started circulating among moms, out they went, replaced by tunnels and slides, flat screen TV's playing Disney movies, and computer games. Then there was a shift in the culture. As a society we started to become more conscious of nutrition. McDonald's responded by giving a choice of apple dippers instead of fries in their Happy Meals, but it wasn't enough. Spurred on by the health movement, mothers didn't want to eat Big Macs anymore. McDonald's started to lose market share. So what did they do? They started serving entrée salads. Recently, many have added small coffee bars in their restaurants. Now a mom can have a Southwest Salad with baked chicken and a café mochalatta for lunch with a friend, while their children play in the

Playplace.

The question begs to be asked, “When’s the last time you walked into an unfamiliar mainline church in your neck of the woods? From the outside it probably seemed much the same as it always has? How about on the inside? It’s time to change the story.

So, back to St. Alban’s. This is your captain speaking. I am not planning to lead you into a brave, new world of flashy programs. I am not going to ask you to turn yourself inside out for the sake of our survival. I am not going to write a new script and expect you to follow it. I want you to write it with me. Through Scripture, prayer, study and deep conversation I want us to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit as we outline our next chapter and learn how to tell St. Alban’s story in a new way, with new understandings of ourselves and of our purpose as servants of Jesus Christ. To us has been given the Word of Life. We possess the greatest story ever told. It’s time to learn how to tell it to the world.

Last year the Vestry had two goals: to nurture and equip the people of St. Alban’s and to become a presence in the neighborhood. In the reports in the Annual Meeting Report booklet you will see the many ways in which these twin foci have been accomplished. We’ve already started re-writing our story. However, what good is a story that no one hears? How do we enter the marketplace and begin to tell the epic tale of love, forgiveness and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, as experienced at St. Alban’s?

Step one was becoming a presence in the neighborhood. Steps two and three involve an on-line presence and discerning how we are called to become involved with efforts to help the 50% of students of Nottingham High School who fail to graduate in 4 years. Both steps begin now. Outside of Sunday morning, the majority of my time in the month of February will be spent developing a Face Book page for St. Alban’s that will be launched by March 1. On Sunday, March 4 the Gospel reading and my sermon will be streamed live for the first time, with opportunities for people who have visited our Face Book page to comment. It also will include a “Daily Inspiration,” which I will do 3 days a week. The other 4 days of the week will be covered by members of the congregation. The inspiration could be a favorite prayer, a verse of a hymn, a comment on something in the news, a poem, or an observation. We will need to purchase a lap top computer, a digital camera to upload pictures onto our page, and a web cam or similar technology to post the Gospel and sermon. I’m new at all this, but I’m teachable. The Vestry’s decision to increase my time from one-half to two-thirds makes this possible. Together, we begin a new story.

Initial steps have been taken with regard to Nottingham High School as well. In November the Sunday morning Bible Study members decided to mentor an African American male student in danger of not graduating. The next day I attended an interfaith clergy meeting with principal David Maynard and several administrators. I’m told a follow-up meeting is planned. In December NHS Community Liaison Gregg Jones met with members of the Sunday morning Bible Study and Vestry; next Sunday at 9:00 a.m. we hope to meet the student whom the Sunday morning bible Study group will mentor. Finally, earlier this month Marge Maynard (David’s mom), Ham White and I attended a Leadership Summit at the school. Teachers, students, parents, refugee workers and community members were in attendance.

Today and tomorrow I need:

1. Your intentional, daily prayer for discernment of God’s will for St. Alban’s.
2. Your feedback. When we adjourn to the Fellowship Room you will see four table groupings: one for youth, one for adults who worship at 8:00 a.m. and two for adults who worship at 10:30 a.m. For

discussion purposes I ask you to take a seat in your designated area.

3. 7 people to study Martha Grace Reese's series Unbinding the Gospel with me, and on completion lead a group of their own.

4. 8 people to write a "Daily Inspiration" for our new Face Book page once every other week.

It's time to put on our "God-colored glasses," intentionally look to Jesus, and both create a new story for St. Alban's and learn how and where to tell it.

In Christ's Name,  
Mother Julie+

MEN ONLY  
Vernacular Photographs of Male Affection  
from the Collection of William Knodel  
Curated by Nancy Keefe Rhodes

Since the 1970's St. Alban's member William Knodel has collected vernacular images of male affection during his travels to the West Coast, Canada, and Europe, scouring second-hand shops, old photo sales and used book stores. His collection now runs into the hundreds, dating from the mid-19th century and featuring couples and socializing groups from every race and social class.

The photographs were laid out and selected in St. Alban's undercroft, so a few of us got a preview. The warmth and tenderness of some pictures, the unguarded intimacy of others, the stiff formality of yet others, makes this a wonderful collection. I really enjoyed it. - Mother Julie+ (Note to parents: there is one nude photo among the large collection.)

When: February 4 - March 17

Where: ArtRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Avenue at N. Crouse

Hours: Wed-Fri from 2-7 p.m. and Sat 12-4 p.m.

Artist's Reception: Saturday, February 11 from 7-9 p.m.