



## CALENDAR NEWS SPECIAL ISSUE

Welcome to our first go at a brief parish-life newsletter! One of the pieces of this year's Goal – Communications – is something that gets month-to-month and “what's happening now” kind of information out. We'll still be doing email ‘blasts’ and telephone calls for things that come to us with a short timeline.

We will be pulling this together every month. Another parish publication is on the drawing board, using a name some will now from the past: The Albanac. We hope to have a variety of items carried there, from original poems, writing, photos and other visual art.

## COVID UPDATE

Nov 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 - Provincial faith leaders met today in a phone conference call with Premier John Horgan, the Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health and Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry. In this phone call we learned that new Provincial Health Orders will be announced at a press briefing, with written orders to follow later.

**Churches and other houses of worship will be required to suspend indoor, in-person worship for 28 days beginning Thursday evening Nov 19<sup>th</sup>.**

## THE SEASON OF THE INCARNATION – ADVENT, CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY

Advent begins on November 29<sup>th</sup> this year. Advent Candles will come into the Church and the Sunday liturgy will reflect that we are in a new season. The colour for Advent is a deep blue, replacing the purple used until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The reason was that the mood of Advent is one of anticipation rather than the mood associated with Lent of reflection and penitence.

The Church is out of step with the world we live in during this season as we know too well. Christmas is over by 8 pm on December 25<sup>th</sup>, and sometimes we see Valentine's candy in the store before January 1<sup>st</sup>!



Keeping Church time can allow for personal and family reflections and experiences that draw us closer to the heart of the Mystery we celebrate with Christ's birth.

40 days of Advent for Advent Calendars, attention to others (what our cards and presents are about), maybe even a Jesse tree. Not to mention baking!

Christmas Eve moves us from anticipation to celebration: Christ has come! Christ is here! Christ is coming! From 25 December until 6 January is the short season of Christmas. "Joy to the world!" There are customs all around the year for holding on to our Christmas joy during these Twelve Days. It is a challenge for us in North America, but parents and grandparents can find ways to explore the tension of holding on to Christmas with our children even when everyone else has moved on. With this being the end of the tax year, families could find special groups they want to give an annual gift of support to, organizations that care for the poor, youth-at-risk, habitat, animals --- There are so many to choose from. We can draw a thread from Gd's gift to us of the Christ child to the gifts we receive at Christmas to the gifts of the Wise men when they come to Bethlehem (January 6). "Good King Wenceslaus went out on the Feast of Stephen ..."

Epiphany brings the 12 days to a close with the celebration of the coming of the Wise Men – foreigners drawn to Gd's light and welcoming the child, Jesus, seeing Gd's light in him for all the world. The days after Epiphany carry us on to Lent. for the last 50 years or so our attention has been on how Jesus and Gd's love is revealed among us, "Arise! Shine! The light has come!" "This Little Light of Mine" carries the theme.  
LINE

Together these three brief seasons are also known as The Season of the Incarnation, starting each new year with the good news that Christ is among us, an invisible Mystery.

## **WITH GRATITUDE**

Whether we call it "following Jesus," "discipleship" or "stewardship," the words point to the same thing: one way we give our love to the Creator is by following the *Jesus Way*. Jesus calls us to a radical reorientation of life, from making care of self and family our priority to caring for others first, expanding our definition of "family" to include all people, indeed, all creation. Fortunately, most of us are called to live this out locally. St. Alban's is that local place.

In gratitude for the gift of life, and for the care of our Creator in many ways, we offer back for Gd's use what The Holy One has given to us – our Selves, with time and talent and financial support, all year 'round.

On **All Saints', November 1<sup>st</sup>**, we collected our Commitment cards at our Sunday liturgies. In a "non-restricted" year we would celebrate with a meal after the second service. The year of our Lord 2020 challenges us to exercise our imagination - Let's see what happens! Our commitment to the parish for the year ahead is worth celebrating!

**If you would like to be part of the Stewardship planning team please contact Paula! (Both short term and longer tasks to choose from.**

## **NOVEMBER REPORT FROM OUR TREASURER:**

The CTF did not do very well in the past month, but while St. Alban's is in a deficit position of, (\$ 4941.97) for the month, and our YTD loss of, (\$ 17,904.00) is ½ of what we projected for this point in the year! Sandy feels that we are still holding our own and we can be positive and thankful. (Remember, the financial report is always for the month just past.) Do not hesitate to call Sandy Scherban for more information.

---

## **PARISH COMMUNICATIONS:**

### **A CRAZY QUILT**

At our Parish Vestry last February we made the goal of our attention this year the ways information is communicated around the parish and ask, 'what's missing?' *Communication* includes hearing the service, and what goes on our website and on Facebook. We thought that by the third quarter we would begin to examine on-line broadcasting.

Well COVID 19 turned that one upside down! In March and April we were involved in an immersion experience of on-line broadcasting. Many of us found our days filled with Zoom or Skype meetings – conferences on the internet if you're not familiar with the language. This led us to review of our sound system and the hearing assist system. We began to look beyond using personal smartphones to acquiring our own film and sound equipment. We don't see them, but several members of the parish have been meeting to do just these things: Larry Scherban, Gary Christie and Tash Yamada. Stephanie Christie has put together a Diocesan Grant request seeking funding of some of this work. **(Breaking News: we received \$4500 which gets us started!)**

Larry has spent time reviewing our website and bringing a new face to it, and with the grant monies (if we get them) we will be looking at a major update of the website as well.

One of the missing pieces of the puzzle has been a parish newsletter. Larry has published a few short newsletters these past years to bring the "Raising the Roof" campaign to our attention. We need something more regular, with information pertinent to the season. Nothing too artsy – just news about what's going on, updates and opportunity to encourage us in our living and

learning as members of St. Alban's, and pilgrims with Christ Jesus.

And then there's . . . Celebration! We have a lot of gifted and talented folks here at St. Alban's. So we've been talking about a new ALBANAC – a kind of parish 'journal' that may come out a few times a year – as many as six even – including photography, poetry, essays ... you offer it and we'll give it due consideration!

The pieces of Communication for St. Alban's:

- Sunday leaflet
- Broadcasts of our services
- Hearing Accessibility in the Church
- Monthly News
- Seasonal ALBANAC
- Facebook
- Our Website
- Email & email "blasts"
- Telephone calls

We won't get all the pieces up and running in 2020, but we sure hope to see more than just a few take shape in front of us.

---

Love your Gd, Love your Neighbour,  
Love yourself:

### **WINTER-TIME AND SABBATH**

Since the days of gas lights, the hours living have been changed, especially in urban communities. People work now according to the hours on the clock and not the hours of sunlight or warmth. We live in an artificial time, and yet our bodies, our calendar and our social celebrations all remain on the seasonal times that follow the passage of the sun. Technology has magnified this life-style that is disengaged from the earth's cycles.

In Richmond and around the lower Mainland we have the gift of the Agricultural Reserve. The plowing, sowing, harvesting and over-wintering of the fields is a visible sign of the changing seasons.

We may work “9-5” lives – and isn’t that a misnomer? – but at least we have these around us as reminders.

**Sabbath is a call – a commandment from Gd – and it is a gift. Gd gave the Sabbath to us as a day of rest.** Deep in our origins, perhaps even in our cells, we know that we need time for rest. Rest heals the body and the mind. The kind of reflective habits we might undertake during Sabbath time – journaling or letter writing for example - help us gain perspective on the many things that push for our attention day to day.

**Sabbath is a time of remembering we are not workers who take time off, but people to whom both work and leisure are gifts.**

Our lives also follow a cycle of sowing, growing, bearing fruit and harvest. There are times during our life when we have ‘forced rest’ due to illness or accident, loss of job and other unexpected breaks. This year the COVID pandemic has brought a whole new experience of unexpected breaks and loss. There are all kinds of ‘little deaths’ in our lives as well as opportunities for Sabbath. **Sabbath teaches us that our life is about Being, not Doing, and helps us to reorient when we get out of balance.**

We need real Sabbath in our lives, and not just an hour here or there. The frenzy of living will work against us, sometimes even family work against us. **Yet it is in the time of Sabbath that we reconnect with the Holy, replenish our bodies, rest our minds, and cherish our companions. Sabbath is a gift.**

## **TWO OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION**

“Sabbath, Rest and Resurrection.” Paula will offer some thoughts about the Sabbath and the part that Sabbath plays in our lives, offering time for reflection and renewal so that we live daily in light of the resurrection. Video on St. Albans Facebook. Date TBD

“Sabbath Time: Resting Time.” This will be a ZOOM based event during which our thoughts about winter, resting, Sabbath and being between-times will be the ‘container’ within which we will think about ‘end of life’ issues. Perhaps you are taking care of someone coming closer to their last years, or perhaps you want to pay attention to your own ‘journey’s end.’

## **ROOF UPDATE**

We are reaching the amount of monies needed to cover the cost of the lower roof replacement “over the kitchen and lounge, thanks to a \$5k anonymous donation towards the roof campaign, and a few other generous donations! The replacement is not of an urgent nature for the time being, but will need replacement sometime in 2021.

**Thank you to everyone that has helped with the funding for the hall roof replacement and the lower roof replacement!!!**

## **FROM THE VICAR**

The changes of 2020 have seemed to ‘come out of the blue.’ We might have expected technological and scientific changes and advancements, but not the things that the COVID pandemic has brought. We’ve learned how to live-stream our worship so that those with access to computers can join us from the safety of their homes. We’ve changed the way in which our food ministries are carried out so that they could continue as the essential services, and we have even added new programs to care for others during this time. We’ve seen new volunteers join the teams even with the demands of social distancing and masks. Each of us has had to make choices about the elements of church-life that we cannot do together at this time.

And now in November 2020 I must share with you another change coming in early 2021. My 65<sup>th</sup> birthday comes in January, and I will be retiring from ordained ministry. My last day at St. Alban’s will be Sunday, January 31.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

St. Alban's will move into the next stage with the faithful leadership of our Wardens and Parish Council, the encouragement and support of the Regional Dean, Paul Woerhle and Archdeacon Louie Engnan, and the guidance of Archbishop Melissa.

My retirement and the change of pastor here means that the Wardens, Synod Delegates and Synod Delegate Alternates elected at the next parish Vestry will become the future group that works with Diocesan leaders to make choices for St. Alban's including the next ordained leader. This is an important time to consider joining Parish Council in one of these positions.

When I am asked what I would like to do between now and then, my answer is that I would like to leave a functioning Stewardship Group – **which is about how we live, including using our financial treasure**, -- as well as have volunteers ready to continue the seasonal newsletter Jennifer and I have just gotten started, "CalendarNews." There is time to organize and train: please let me know if you have an interest in either of these opportunities

I have been blessed in my time with you who are 'most excellent' companions on the journey.

Faithfully yours,

 Paula

The pandemic restrictions will mean many of the things we enjoy in the months of November and December will be approached in different ways. We are just beginning to look at what that means.

**Kyumin and the Choir are planning an 'on-line Caroling Event in place of our "Caroling in the City."**

**Sunday December 6th @ 4pm**

**November 29 – January 6**

**ADVENT begins Nov. 29**

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent Nov 29<sup>th</sup> – Online service  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Dec 6<sup>th</sup> – Online service  
**Online Caroling Event Dec 6<sup>th</sup> @ 4pm - Online**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent Dec 13<sup>th</sup> – Online- service  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of **ADVENT** –Dec 20<sup>th</sup> - TBD  
**Dec 20<sup>th</sup>** with Carols at 10:15 am service.  
If we are open again!

**CHRISTMAS EVE (Thursday) services –TBD**

5:00 & 7:00 PM **RSVP's** will be required for these services. Please call or email Jennifer to reserve your seat!

**CHRISTMAS DAY (Friday) 10 am service - TBD**

**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS - Dec 27<sup>th</sup> -TBD**

**EPIPHANY - Sunday January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 - TBD**