

AROUND THE PARISH

December 15, 2019

St. Alban's seeks to be a welcoming, Christ-centered community,
committed to sharing Christ's love, empowering people to grow spiritually,
deepening our relationship with Christ and living out our faith in the community and the world.

COMING EVENTS

- 12/16 7:00pm, Boy Scouts, PH
12/17 6:30pm, Girl Scouts, PH
12/18 7:00pm, "Blue Christmas Service"
12/23 7:00pm, Boy Scouts, PH
12/24 5:00pm, Christmas Eve Carols
5:30pm, Christmas Eve Eucharist
12/25 10:00am, Christmas Day Eucharist
12//29 10:30am – Lessons & Carols
(ONE SERVICE)

PLANNING AHEAD

- 1/9 6:30-9:30am Girl Scout Training, PH
1/11 9:30-12:30pm Girl Scouts Training, PH
1/14 6:30pm, Vestry, PH
1/15 6:00pm, Evening Prayer
6:30pm, Soup Supper, PH
1/26 9:30am, ONE SERVICE
Refreshments/ANNUAL MEETING



ADVENT PRAYER

Lord Jesus

Master of both the Light and the darkness,
send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for
Christmas.

We who have so much to do seek quiet
spaces to hear your voice each day.

We who are anxious over many things look
forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways long
for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of
your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness,
yet seeking the light.

To you we say, "Come, Lord Jesus!"



By Father Greg Peters

I despise making wreaths: to begin with.
There can be no doubt whatever about that.

Every year, Sarah's school has a wreath mak-
ing event. It lasts for weeks; maybe longer;
maybe it's eternal; it is infernal. It's one of
those "not required" requirements of
parenthood at Sarah's school.

Each grade has a night. Kids are dropped off
in their classrooms to eat mediocre pizza and
junk food and watch adorable holiday movies.
The parents produce "holiday wreaths" to sell at
school events and the farmers' market raising
funds for the PTSA events and school outings.

It's for good causes, it builds community
among the parents, it promotes the school in the
community. I get all that. I like all that. I sup-
port all that. Regardless, I despise wreath mak-
ing. This must be distinctly understood, or
nothing wonderful can come of the story I am
going to relate to you.

I am a klutz when it comes to putting it all
together. I pinch my fingers when I crimp the
wires. Stuff falls out when I pick up and move
my abominations, I mean my abominable crea-
tions. The colors and the textures clash. What-
ever I come up with, no matter how patiently I
work, is always the most "Charlie Brown Tree"
of all wreaths. They look like a Jackson
Pollack painting, but devoid any of the skill.
They do not sell; even my Mother, no matter
the cause, no matter the benefit to her beloved
granddaughter, would not buy them.

I envy the skill my fellow wreathmakers pos-
sess. Everyone – and I mean everyone – else is
having a gay ol' time, their wreaths are bal-
anced, composed, whimsical, symmetrical,
delights to the eyes. It's the most grouchiest,
Grinchiest, and Scroogiest time of my year.

This year, as I settled in, loins girded, my glum on, no warmth of Christmas Cheer in my heart or in my belly (it is a school event after all) into the work area bounces my friend Mary Ellen carrying bags of greens and flowers and berries from home. She says hello to all the people she knows, which for gregarious her is just about everyone. She exudes the joy and delight of making wreaths.

Lastly, she sees me, goes out of her way to come over and greet me. "I met with a pastor last week for work, and I have been thinking of you ever since."

We had not seen each other for several months.

"Mary Ellen, I hate making these things. I'm lousy at it. Can I help you? I'd be glad to gather stuff for you."

"What could be better. My husband couldn't come this year and he always helps. I love this and look forward to it every year!" For the next two hours, we caught up on work and family and children's activities, habits, and challenges.

It was the last night of wreath making, so pickin's was slim. "No holly!" was her first directive. I asked about length, and her other requirements. I still found myself gravitating toward the usual oddball greens; Mary Ellen, graciously, managed to find places for some of them, gently rejecting most, though.

In the end, we made three beautiful wreaths. Even I recognized that they were pretty. No pinched fingers – we were careful. No gaps or bows necessary to cover them up. Symmetry. Balance. Full. Complimentary Colors and Textures.

When we were finished, we went back to the storage area to look over our work. But two of the wreaths were gone – already sold! To our fellow wreathiers! We laughed and high fived and cheered.

Isn't it amazing how often being in the company of a friend, an enthusiastic and competent friend, can change a joyless exercise into a creative, productive, lifegiving experience. Maybe part of the definition of friend is "bringer of joy." When Jesus began referring to his

disciples as friends, he changed – forever – the meaning of Emanuel, God is with us.

I wish you such transformational joy this Advent. I wish you such a friend. I wish you such a precious gift. I know, no matter what the circumstances, God is with us - Emanuel



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Please join us for a special holiday service on December 18 at 7:00pm designed for those for whom the holidays might be difficult. If you have undergone a difficult loss, transition, or life change (and honestly, who hasn't), we invite you to a special time of music and worship



WINTER'S RETURN
CHRISTMAS CONCERT RESULTS

Thank you to everyone who helped with Monday, December 1, Winter's Return Christmas Concert.

We were able to donate \$1,429 to Chase Lake Elementary's Safety Net Program, plus 74 food items. We had 106 attend the concert.

In addition, with the advertising and publicity in www.myedmondsnews.com, The Beacon, Herald, and the Edmonds Theater, we were able to publicize the Safety Net Program and St. Alban's. We are donating \$100 to the Boy Scouts in thanks for their assistance with parking.

Thanks to everyone for making this event possible and the St. Alban's Endowment Fund for underwriting this event. Thanks also to everyone who attended, and invited guests.



COOKIE SHARING EVENT

Do you like to bake cookies? Do you like to eat cookies? St. Alban's is having a **Cookie Sharing Event on Sunday, December 23**, during both coffee hours. If you would like to bake or contribute cookies, please bring them on December 23 to share during coffee. Baggies will be provided for you to take a few cookies home. Remaining cookies will be used on Christmas Eve.

REPORTS – ANNUAL MEETING

Those who are ministry leaders are requested to submit their annual report to the church office by January 15, 2020, for inclusion at the annual meeting on January 26, 2020.



INVITATION TO 2020 VESTRY CANDIDATES & CONVENTION DELEGATES

In the December 1, 2019, ATP, Senior Warden Dan Mullene overviewed the process at St. Alban's for selecting three new Vestry members and two Convention Delegates at the January 26, 2020, Annual Meeting. The nominating committee consisting of Vestry members Pat Chandler, Kären Ford, Maureen Forsythe, and Martha Philippoff has met and organized a pro-

cess for informing the congregation and encouraging and supporting interested candidates.

A critical part of the process is both personal and congregational prayer for discernment. The following scripture invites us to consider God's call to service:

"And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, here am I, send me"

Isaiah 6:8

Please contact a member of the nominating committee if you are interested in serving as a Vestry member or Convention delegate, or if you would like to suggest a parishioner that we could contact. We are hoping to add new parishioners or formerly active parishioners to the 2020 Vestry. The committee members are available to answer questions and/or provide encouragement. Further information will be provided to interested candidates.



IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

There is still time for you to contribute to the flowers to decorate our church for Jesus' birth. Altar Guild depends on your donations to provide flower decorations for Christmas and all services. Your contributions can be in thanksgiving, in memory or a celebration. For inclusion in the Christmas bulletins, your dedication needs to be in by Monday, December 17.

The **2020 Flower Chart** has been posted in the Parish Hall, and many dates are available beginning in January. Please print your name by a specific date, and you will be contacted by Sharon Joy, St. Monica's Flower Chair. Two persons may sign up for a date.



CHRISTMAS COOKIES **THAT HONOR ST. NICHOLAS**

By Dan Mullene

If you were in church on Sunday, December 8, you may remember that in his sermon, Fr. Greg Peters talked about his December family tradition of making a special cookie in honor of St. Nicholas. I found this to be interesting (I also admit to being something of a “cookie monster”) and thought I would share a brief story about them.

According to Wikipedia, the cookies, called speculaas or speculoos, or is a type of spiced, shortcrust biscuit, traditionally baked for consumption on or just before St Nicholas Day in Northern Europe. Speculaas are often thin, very crunchy, caramelized, slightly browned and, most significantly, have some image or figure (often from the traditional stories about St. Nicholas) stamped on the front side before baking; the back is flat.

Speculaas dough uses as a leavening agent cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, cardamom, and white pepper; these were common in the 1600–1700’s due to the Dutch East Indies spice trade. Family recipes may also include small amounts of other spices like anise, etc.

The dough is stored in a cool place overnight to give the spices time to permeate the dough and add extra flavor.

There are several interpretations for the origins of the name speculaas. It may derive from Latin speculum, which means mirror and refers to the fact that the images are cut as a mirrored bas-relief into a wooden stamp, which is then used to decorate speculaas. Another, less likely, word origin refers to the Latin word speculator which, among other meanings, could refer to a bishop or St Nicholas “he who sees everything.”

No matter what you call them or where you buy them (pretty much year-round at Trader Joe’s and now available at Sprouts Farmer’s Market and other locations), they are a tasty treat, and a reminder of the story of St. Nicholas and the Christmas season.

And I bet that if you ask Fr. Greg nicely, he just may share his family recipe with you!

ALTAR GUILD’S FLOWER DILEMNA

Dusty’s Floral in Edmonds shut its doors and went out of business on November 30 of this year. St. Alban’s had been doing business with Dusty’s for over 30 years. The owners were Episcopalians and subsidized St. Alban’s over the years with only occasional and nominal price increases and by providing free delivery of plants and flowers to the church on special occasions.

We are now faced with finding a new place to get our flowers, today’s prices, businesses that decline to bill us monthly but require payment up front and no free delivery. We continue to work with these issues, but reality is that flowers will cost more starting December 1 of this year.

The cost of Sunday flowers will be \$50, plus tax for two vases. This is the best price that we were able to obtain. In an effort to reduce the increased cost, Altar Guild has agreed to pay the tax on weekly flowers during 2020. Altar Guild will not be able to do this into 2021.

Altar Guild is also faced with the decision of what to do about flowers when no one signs up to contribute. While we have some monies, provided us through donations, to help with these occasions, they are limited and will not last for long.

MEET YOUR VESTRY

Carrie Cone has been a member of St. Alban’s for 34 years, serving as a frequent volunteer, on Vestry and various committees. She currently serves on Vestry as the People’s Warden and is a member of both Finance and Outreach Ministries. Carrie attends our 10:30am service.

Carrie was born in Seattle, and The San Juan Islands and Bellingham are her favorite places in Washington. Aside from Canada, England was the last foreign country she has visited.

The best part of being on Vestry for Carrie is “being able to take my turn in providing leadership for my church family and my best effort at discerning where the Spirit is calling us to go in this fleeting era as we strive to follow God’s direction.”

St. Francis and St. Alban are Carrie’s favorite saints. Her favorite scripture passages are 1 Corinthians 13 (*If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal*) and Romans 8 (*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering...*)

Gardening and reading are Carrie’s favorite hobbies. Favorite authors are Madeleine L’Engle, Alice Walker and Debbie Macomber. Regarding food, medium rare duck is her favorite.

St. Alban’s is grateful to Carrie for her faithfulness and service!



RECENT OUTREACH SUMMARY

Following is a summary of St. Alban’s recent outreach efforts:

Mission to Seafarers: We donated a total of 534 items for the Mission to Seafarers’ Ditty Bag Project including 140 disposable razors, 102 dental flosses, 50 toothbrushes, 24 toothpastes, 63 bars of soap and 32 shampoos.

Food Bank: In addition to the many food items that have been donated, we are distrib-

uting \$500 to each of the food banks we support in Edmonds, Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace in December.

Chase Lake: We have donated \$925 in gift cards for Chase Lake families and \$1,429 to the Safety Net Program, in addition to 74 food items.

Many thanks to everyone for our continued generosity!

2020 DONATION ENVELOPES

Weekly donation envelopes for 2020 can be picked up in the Parish Hall starting Sunday, December 15.

If you requested donation envelopes on your 2020 Pledge Card, a set of donation envelopes has been assigned to you. If you did not request a set, but wish to have 2020 envelopes, please sign your name on the sheet provided, and they will be placed in the plastic box on the Parish Hall shelf.

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER LABYRINTH WALK

Church of the Redeemer, 6210 N.E. 181st Street, Kenmore, invites St. Alban’s to join them for their Labyrinth Walk each second Tuesday. The walk begins at 7:00pm. Our 12 Apostles indoor Labyrinth was designed by Dan Niven. The theme for January is a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr., and a reminder of our Anglican heritage of being involved in social action and justice issues.

2020 EPISCOPAL CALENDAR

Copies of the 2020 Episcopal Church Year Guide will be available in the Parish Hall on Sunday, December 22. This calendar includes lectionaries and liturgical notes.

The cost of the Kalendar is \$3.00. Please place your money in the envelope provided.

PLEDGE STATUS

If you want to know where you are with contributions towards your pledge before the end of the year, please call the Church Office on 425-778-0371, and a special report can be sent to you.

2019 IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER

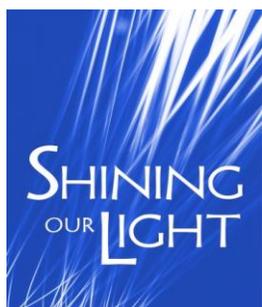
Have you taken your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) yet for 2019?

by Maryellen Young

If you are 70 ½ or older, you can make a contribution to St. Alban's from your Traditional IRA simply by instructing the plan administrator to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). When I did one for the Capital Campaign, my Financial Institution made the check out to St. Alban's and mailed it in care of me. You are allowed to transfer up to \$100,000 a year to the charities of your choice.

Your gift will be made out to St. Alban's and will not be reported as taxable income and will count toward your minimal distribution requirements for 2019. Please note, this contribution needs to come from a Traditional IRA. Any questions, check with your tax advisor.

O God you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS

December 15 – Advent 3

Because of this week's Collect, some call Advent 3 "stir-up" Sunday. As stewards, how do we seek to be stirred-up so we may faithfully respond to God's will for us in this journey of life we travel? What are the tools we use so we might be fashioned into the bread and nourishment God wants not only for us, but for us to share with others?

December 22 – Advent 4

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." If we truly believe these words, as Mary witnessed she did (though the best and the worst), how are our love of God and response to His commission to us reflected in our daily lives and interactions with others – not just at this "official" season of giving, but all year through?

December 25 – Christmas

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth to those whom he favors." And we are among the favored ones. He has showered us with blessings too many to count – and now at Christmas time, we remember the glorious gift of his Son. In how many ways can we offer thanks and gratitude for this awesome gift?

December 29 – First Sunday After Christmas

"The light shines in the darkness, and the dark has not overcome it." Think about the hymn "Christ is the World's True Light" (Hymn 542) Now read Hymn 490, "I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light." In this season of short days and long nights, how can we be intentional about being a light of love and caring to those around us, some whom we know, and others who may be strangers? Let your light shine!

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

For a link to the weekly readings, click
<http://www.lectionarypage.net>

December 15 – Advent 3

Isaiah 35:1-10, Psalm 146:4-9

James 5:7-10, Mathew 11:2-11

8:00 Lector: Martha Philipoff

EM: Sharon Joy

10:30 Lector: Shirley Clark

EM: Reilly Mannery

December 22 – Advent 4

Isaiah 7:10-16, Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Roman 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25

8:00 Lector: Gretchen Munsey

EM: Shannon Duggan

10:30 Lector: Herman Siqueland

EM: Connie Forsberg

December 24 – Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-14, [15-20]

5:00 Lector: Susie Nichols

EM: Jim Gilman

December 25 – Christmas

Isaiah 62:6-12, Psalm 97

Titus 3:4-7, Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

10:00 Lector: Susie Nichols

EM: Mary Fowler

December 29 – 1 Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Psalm 147

Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7, John 1:1-18

8:00 Lector: Sharon Joy

EM: Jim Gilman

10:30 Lector: Cindy Goergen

EM: Mary Fowler

Acolyte: Emily Goergen

