

The Sword

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" - Ephesians 6:17

St. Alban's Episcopal Church

April 2024

From Fr. Bill..... *"When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you'." John 20:19 (NRSV)*

"Peace be with you." I love these words from Jesus. When I read these words they always seem to bring comfort to me in times of trouble, times of fear, times of anxiety, times when life or the future seems very uncertain. "Peace be with you." Words Jesus said to the disciples who were locked away that first day of the week after Jesus had been arrested, crucified, and died.

I often wondered what they thought, what they felt, when they first laid eyes on him. Were they afraid, thinking he was a ghost? Were they confused? Were they overwhelmed with joy? Or did his appearing and words spoken bring peace to their hearts – that peace that only God can give – that peace which passes all understanding.

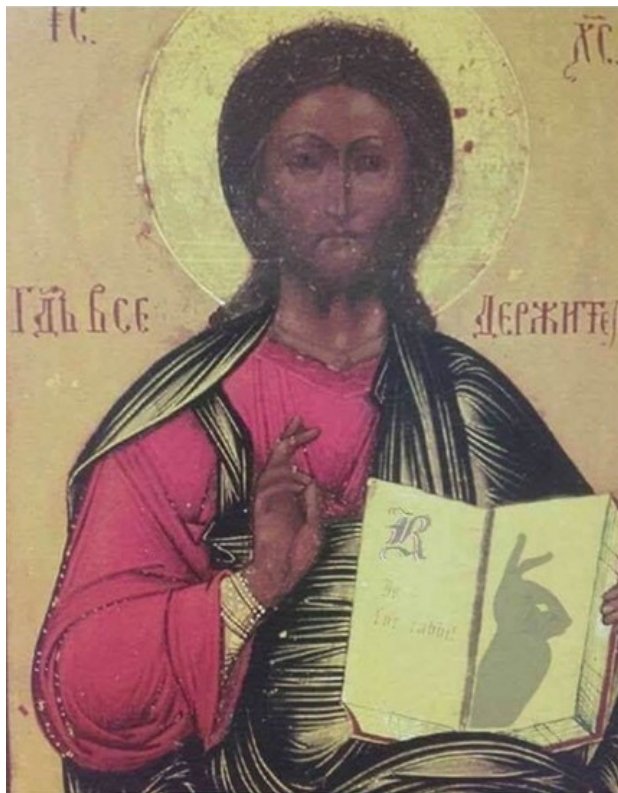
For me? I believe I would have likely experienced all those same emotions, all those same feelings, if I were one of those disciples locked away in fear. In fact, looking back over my life, I have experienced those emotions, those feelings – from fear, anxiety, uncertainty. But I also know that when I began to pray, to understand the love that God has for me, for us, the love shown to us by Jesus in his life, death, and resurrection, I also have come to be comforted, and to truly know peace – a peace that makes no sense and that I have given up try-

ing to explain long ago.

This is what Easter is to me: a feeling of love, a feeling of comfort, a feeling of peace that I just cannot explain. It is a feeling that only comes with resurrection, and specifically, the true resurrection – the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ – whose rising from the dead defeated death once and for all. Death no longer has dominion over us. A resurrection we celebrate with songs, shouts, bells!

In the Church, the season of Easter lasts a total of 50 days, ending with Pentecost. But beloved, it should last even longer than that. For we are an Easter people – people of the resurrection – people who know that the words, "Peace be with you," comes with the knowledge that a life in Christ means that death is not the final answer. And that brings us peace. As Easter people, we are called to go out into the world as a people forgiven and renewed, and spread the news of Christ's love, spread Christ's message of peace, be a sower of Christ's good news to a world that so desperately needs God's love, God's peace.

We are Easter people. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! And for this we shout, Hallelujah!



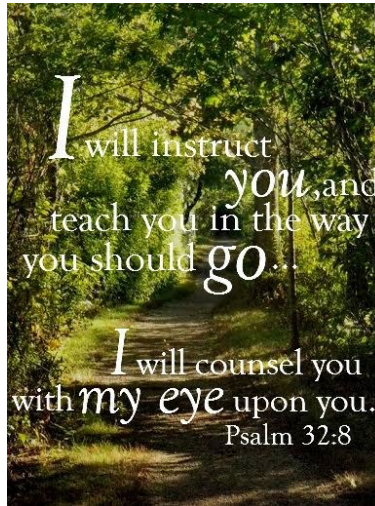
Father Bill loves giving sermons. We've all noticed how much. So much so, that if he can get somebody else to give a sermon, he will. In his time here at St. Alban's, I've heard from more guest preachers than I ever thought I would. We've had people from our own congregation step up. We've met some of Father Bill's friends from the diocese, from his previous church, even from the Front Range Region. Like he says, sometimes we need to hear God's word from somebody else.

On a side note, to all you parents, how many times did you tell your kids to do something, or give them life advice and they just didn't hear you or pay attention? Then, out of the blue, they come and tell you they learned something life changing from someone else, which just so happened to be what you talked to them about yesterday?

Another good priest I know once told a story about getting divine direction from unexpected places. He talked about going to a large dinner party, with lots of friends and lots of people, but feeling kind of left out. He wasn't enjoying the social gathering, so he found a quiet corner to, well, to hide in. He had a drink in his hand and he found a window bench and just sat there watching everyone else. Classic wallflower.

Out of the crowd comes a small child. She looks at him and sits next to him. In the manner of small children with a thousand run-on sentences, she said, and I

paraphrase greatly here: "I like having all the people at my house and everyone looks like they are having fun, but I don't really like all the talking cause none of it is really interesting to me, but then I saw you sitting all by yourself and I thought it might be good to be quiet and look at everyone and then I thought it might be lonely so I decided to sit next to you and you seem really interesting and really kind of lonely and that's why I'm here, so why are you just sitting here?" The priest digested the many words, thought, and said, "I think I needed to step back and see what was going on before I go back out there and start talking to everyone again." She responded with, "Huh, okay. I don't understand, but I think when you get up and go out




there you'll be okay anyway. Love you, bye!" She jumped down and disappeared into the party.

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you" (Psalms 32: 8).

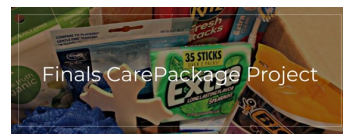
The priest slowly realized that he had been struggling for a bit and that he needed to hear those words. He suddenly figured out that God was talking to him through that small child.

I pray that I can learn to listen to God's word, because it may be coming from the most unlikely of places. Oh, also, love you! Bye!



St. Alban's Swag
For Sale

It's time to order your St Alban's swag: t-shirts/polo shirts/crew necked sweatshirts/hoodies. Fill out the form found in the Parish Hall and give the form and payment to Kym Roberts-Mitchell. Colors: black, red, yellow, forest green, navy blue, light blue, and white. T-shirt, single pocket, crew neck: S–XL, \$20; add \$2 per size for 2XL–5XL (i.e., 5XL would be \$28). Polo shirt: S–XL, \$30; add \$3 per size 2XL–4XL (4XL would be \$39). Sweatshirt, crew neck: \$30, S–XL; add 3\$ per size 2XL–4XL. Hoodie sweatshirt: \$40, S–XL; add \$3 per size 2XL–4XL. We need at least 12 folks in order to place an order for swag! Proceeds go to support St. Alban's mission and ministry.



Finals Care Package Project

We will assemble care packages for our middle/high and college students who face finals this year. We know of four college students and two in middle/high school. Between now and Sunday, April 14, please bring one or more of the following items for the care packages: fuzzy socks, pack of tissues, homemade cookies, microwavable popcorn, hot chocolate packets, ramen, pens, noisemakers, sanitizing wipes, instant coffee, Emergen-C, playing cards, squishy toys, fidget poppers, chapstick, stress balls, and pop tarts. Shipping costs are covered by the Diocese. Let Fr. Bill know of anyone who needs a care package.

April brings the start of the growing season in our community garden. Thanks to a lot of work by volunteers last month, we are nearly ready to start prepping



the beds and even planting a few vegetables. The enclosed — and hopefully squirrel-proof area — will need to be filled with soil before it can be used, so please watch the weekly newsletter and announcements on Realm for our work days, planting dates, and help needed for the growing season.

The warmer weather also brings us the opportunity to begin stocking the little pantry with canned goods. Please do not donate items that are over a year beyond their “best-by” dates. Most canned items are considered safe to consume for at least a year beyond their best-by date, but they may not be at their peak in terms of texture or color. For more information please see <https://www.foodbankrockies.org/blog/okay-eat-expired-canned-food/> and follow the guideline that if

you wouldn’t eat it yourself, then donating it is also not a good idea.

Canned items most in demand appear to be canned protein such as tuna, chicken, or Spam. Canned fruit is always a favorite, but canned beans, corn, and spinach tend to sit on the shelves a long time before they are taken. Especially appreciated are add-water types of food such as soup, or ready to eat items like SpaghettiOs and ravioli. Our window for offering canned goods is pretty short since once temperatures approach the upper 80s we cannot risk putting cans in the pantry.

Also, a reminder that we do not offer baby food of any type. Please donate baby items to Mary’s Cradle at Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church.

Thank you for blessing our community with your generosity.



Come Support The Windsor Severance Food Pantry

Empty Bowls is an international project to fight hunger, personalized by artists and art organizations on a community level. The money raised is donated to soup kitchens, food banks, and other organizations fighting hunger locally. The Windsor Severance Food Pantry's (WSFP) inaugural Empty Bowls event is April 19 at the Windsong Event Center (our presenting sponsor). Serving as emcee of the WSFP's Empty Bowls will be artist and author Mark Ludy, with live music by Destination Unknown. April 19 will be an amazing night to come together as a community to recognize and support our neighbors



facing food insecurity.

St. Alban's has purchased two tables and has tickets for 16 folks to attend the event. If you are interested in attending, please let Fr. Bill know.

All ticket holders will enjoy selecting a handcrafted bowl donated by local artists as well as student artists from Windsor High School and Severance High School. You'll choose soups and more from local restaurants, along with dessert from

Baskin-Robbins, breads, and salad. A cash bar is also available to enjoy.

Spring Clean Up Day Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who came out to help with our annual spring clean-up day! Many hands made our Church even more beautiful to celebrate Holy Week and Easter.



Blessing of the Palms

