

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

June 2023

From Fr. Bill... *"For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest. A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to tear down and a time to build up. A time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones. A time to embrace and a time to turn away. A time to search and a time to quit searching. A time to keep and a time to throw away. A time to tear and a time to mend. A time to be quiet and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace." Ecclesiastes 3:1-8*

I have always loved this passage from Ecclesiastes. It is so "churchy," which is why it is so appealing to my church-nerd heart. "For everything there is a season." Seasons – this is something I can relate to, and which is probably why I have found my "forever call" in the life of the Church.

As I am sure I have said in the past, the church doesn't follow a regular calendar. The church arranges its time by seasons: Advent, Christmas, Epiphanytide (Epiphany plus the season after the Epiphany), Lent, Eastertide (50 days), ending with Pentecost. When these seasons begin all depends upon the two seasons celebrating Christ: Advent and Easter.

Our longest season of the year falls after Pentecost and ends at Advent, and it is called (drumroll please) the "Season after Pentecost!" Some traditions also call it "Ordinary Time" in that it follows a way of counting ("ordinal") or keeping track of the days. Whatever you call it, however, the Season after Pentecost (SAP) is, if anything, far from ordinary.

While Advent and Easter focus on the arrival and resurrection of Christ into our world, SAP focuses on both the teachings of Jesus and the working of the Spirit in the world. The SAP is when we as the Church –



the One Body that is Christ – live out her vocation, her mission, in the midst of our everyday lives.

One way we do this is by coming to Church for worship. We also need to do this work at home, which is why we are offering our 2023 Summer Faith Formation Bingo! You may play along either as a family or individually. And it is not hard. There are nine Bingo squares, each with a different task for you to take on at home – adopt one of the fruits of the Spirit, memorize one piece of Scripture, meet up with someone you haven't seen for a while, volunteer at the Windsor-Severance Food Pantry or our Community Gleaning Garden. As you complete a task, sign your name on

the corresponding sheet in the Parish Hall. It is a fun way to further your faith, live more intentionally, and develop a habit of living out God's mission in the world. You can even participate as you go on vacation.

For everything there is a season and a time for everything under the heavens. This SAP (or as other people call it, summertime) does not have to be ordinary. In fact, when viewed as a gift from God to God's people, it can be extraordinary! However you decide to fill your SAP, I do hope that you will find some time to play Bingo along with us and gather back here at St. Alban's for worship and fellowship!

Sometimes our pets surprise us with intelligence and abilities that are almost like ours. Several studies have shown that dogs have a vocabulary of up to 250 words, and problem-solving skills similar to a three-year-old child. My daughters' cats are also excellent at training their masters on when they would like to eat. When I interact with our pets, I see how they react to what we are doing and I often wonder what they are thinking.

Albert, our families' recent rescue dog, is just now getting used to us after five short months. We just took him on a long weekend to meet my family and visit Meeker. I was busy planning what we would need for our jaunt: a dog kennel, bowls for his water and food, our bags, clothes for events, checking lodging reservations, etc. He was getting anxious, following me from room to room because my behavior wasn't what he was accustomed to. He is a big dog, and was trying desperately to figure out what was going on by being directly underfoot.

After loading up an extremely excited dog into the truck, a nice short five-hour drive cured him of his expectations. Albert was already sick of the trip. Then we checked into our space, and set up for our weekend while we let him explore a bit. We made sure he had food and water, and then we introduced him to everyone that had gathered. Albert was so in the moment and so excited to meet everyone. It hit me then: we had

planned everything and knew what was going to happen, but our very intelligent rescue had to follow us along, not really understanding what was happening until he was there — in that moment.

Isn't that a lot like us and God? God has this ineffable plan that we really don't know anything about, much less understand. Proverbs 16:9 says that the heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps. I have found that much more often than not, when I follow the path like I am supposed to, everything just falls into place.

I remember talking one evening to a great servant, a woman who worked with Cursillo. She said she was called to help that ministry, but to do so, she would have to give up her old life completely. She had to trust that God would take care of her — and she did. When last I spoke with her, she was still trusting, and He was still taking care. For me, she is the embodiment of letting go and letting God.

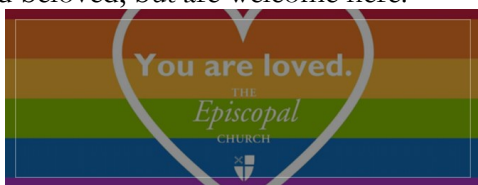
“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11).

I believe that God puts us where we need to be, with what we need, when we need to be there. How many times has something happened in your life where you could look back and see God's hand in the events leading up to where you were?



St. Alban's Celebrates Pride

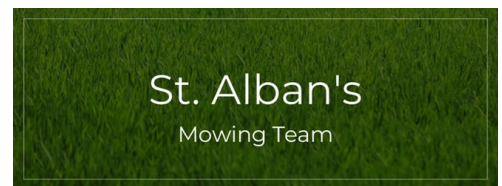
The people of the Episcopal Church in Colorado are committed to the full welcome and inclusion of LGBTQIA siblings in our Church. St. Alban's is one of many welcoming and affirming churches all over Colorado. Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, we invite you to join us! Know that here at St. Alban's, you are not only loved and beloved, but are welcome here!

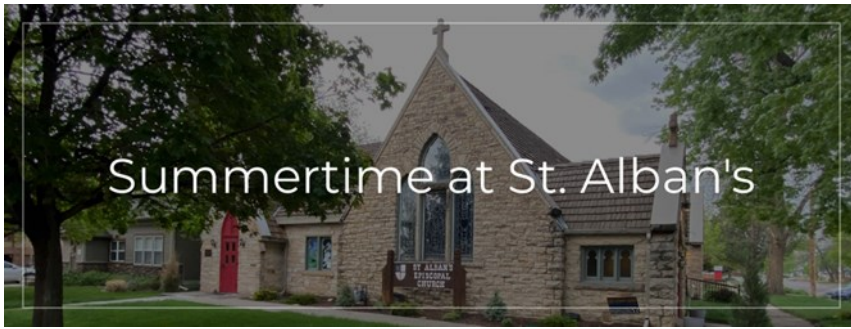


June Mowing Schedule

Thanks to St. Alban's mowing team for keeping our grounds beautiful! The following people are scheduled to mow

in June: June 4–10, Kari and Marcus Seay; June 11–17, Tim Cumings; June 18–24 Ryne VanMaanen. Please put grass clippings in garbage bags instead of dumping them loose in the trash can. This helps keep the trash cans from mixing with other trash and smelling due to summer heat. If you need to swap schedules, please contact Chuck Mason at 303-961-1243. Mower, gas, trash bags, and blower are all located in the shed.





Summertime at St. Alban's

This Season after Pentecost, we at St. Alban's will lean into new, and return to some familiar, liturgical styles:

1. Return to the altar rail. On June 4, we returned to receiving communion at the altar rail. During the offertory, when the elements are brought forward, the ushers will place a bar and kneeler pad across the steps that lead to the chancel (the area where the altar is located). When communion is offered, the ushers will direct you row-by-row to come forward to the altar rail where you kneel or stand to receive communion.

2. Continuing with intinction. We will continue with intincting the bread in the wine. If you wish to receive intinction, please hold the wafer for the chalice minister who will intinct for you. Please know that if you do not wish to have the wine, it is our tradition that

you are fully communed by receiving just the host.

3. Children's Sunday School (Godly Play) will be on summer break. Our Children's Sunday School (Godly Play) will be on summer break, resuming again in September. However, we will be opening up a children's play area in the Parish Hall during our church services. A live-feed

of our service will be broadcast on the television in the Parish Hall, and our ushers will come and get you for communion.

4. Choir will be on summer break. St. Alban's choir will take its summer break during July and August. We will continue to have music at our 10 a.m. service, including congregational singing, and some special music offerings throughout the summer months.

5. Outdoor worship returns. The last Sunday of each month (June 25, July 30, and August 27), we will return to outdoor worship. Services will be held in our rear yard at 7:30 a.m. (spoken service) and 10 a.m. (with congregational singing). Bring your lawn chairs or blankets; however, chairs will be available if you forget. We will conclude our outdoor worship at our **Mass on the Grass service on Sunday, September 17 at 10 a.m.**

Community Pantry Update

Our Free Pantry continues to get lots of use. We do not stock canned goods when the temperature is over 87 degrees. Our focus for the summer will be produce from our Community Garden (the garden beds look spectacular), and the staples that we rely on the congregation to donate. We appreciate your continued support!

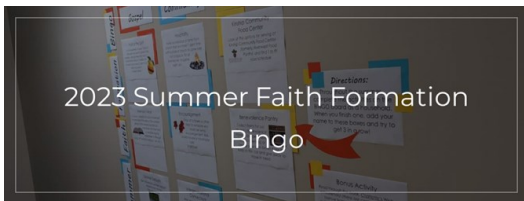
Pantry Staples List: fruit cups, canned meat, individual size peanut butter, Nutri-Grain bars, individual oatmeal packets, granola bars, Cup o' Noodles, ramen, single serve mac and cheese, rice, dry beans, noodles, shampoo, bath soap.

Windsor-Severance Food Pantry (WSFP) Update
The WSFP supports an average of 75 households each month. If you would like to donate, the following items

are at the top of the list: jelly or jam, small bags of flour, canned or powdered milk, canned or boxed potatoes, shampoo, toothpaste.

Make donations at Faith Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. to noon, place items in the basket in St. Alban's Parish Hall, or drop in the donation bin in the foyer at the Clearview Library.

If you live within the Weld-RE4 school district boundary and are in need of food, stop by the WSFP at Faith Church, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. to noon.



2023 Summer Faith Formation Bingo

This Summer, St. Alban's is offering its 2023 Summer Faith Formation Bingo — an intergenerational summertime activity. All parishioners are invited to pick up a Bingo card that lists various activities to enhance one's spiritual formation, community engagement, and missional work. Complete the tasks on the card and add your name to the associated card in the Parish Hall. Try to get three

in a row (BINGO)! You also are invited to pick up the book, *Charlotte's Web*, that we will read throughout the summer. Books are available at Words of Windsor. In September, we will gather together for popcorn and snacks as we watch the movie, *Charlotte's Web*, together

Community Gleaning Garden Update

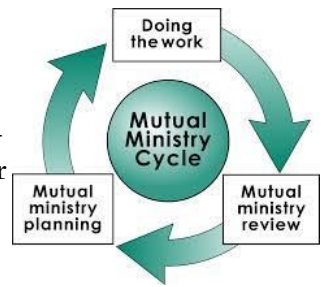


Steady progress is being made on the Community Gleaning Garden as weather permits. The cedar stump is grinded underground to make the section flat and useable. A French drain was installed along the length of the garden area. The final front section will be completed as soon as the ground dries. The garden containers are 95 percent built, arranged to fit in the different sections, and are being filled to ready for planting.

Mutual Ministries

meets the third Saturday of every month to discuss how each ministry is doing, plans for the future, and to identify any needs.

(Hint: outreach, grounds committee, block party committee, and children's religious education committee could all use some help). The meetings are open to anyone and minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. If you are interested in being more active in the mission of the church, come to a meeting and see where you would like to gift your talent.



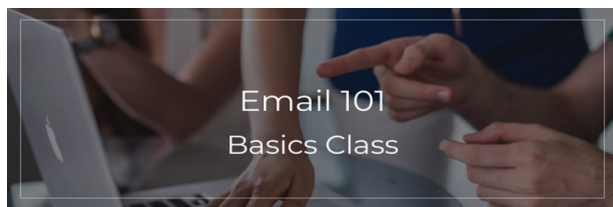
Dinner for 8(ish)

Dinner for 8 introductory meeting in May was a blast. We had 19 people sign up to kick-start our monthly dinners. The dinners are billed as small group potlucks to build fellowship, which sounds dry and boring, but they are so much more. They are a way to connect with people and really get to know them. Breaking bread with someone helps tear down perceived barriers. Conversations are usually not religious or political, but sharing conversation and personal stories helps build bridges with people you might not otherwise have taken time to get to know.



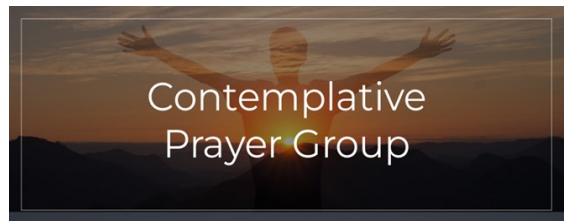
I've learned about trips to Nepal, the best way to grow tomatoes, where to get really good bread, tips on weaving, and some great personal stories from these dinners.

There is a FAQ sheet on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall, or contact me (Kim Roberts-Mitchell, kim-bobmitch@gmail.com) if you have questions. If interested, I would encourage you to sign up one month to attend a dinner. You might find, as I did, some unexpected friendships.



Do you have questions about creating or opening an email? Do you have questions about saving/storing emails? Do you have difficulty determining a spam email? Do you have questions about how to unsubscribe from an unwanted or unknown email account? If so, we have help for you. Join Chuck Mason and Tavish Roberts-Mitchell **Sunday, June 11 at 9 a.m.** in the Parish Hall for an Email Basics Class. Materials will be provided. No need to bring anything other than an inquiring mind.

Contemplative prayer is prayer without words, without images, thoughts, worries, or plans. Without words we seek the deepest center of our consciousness where God awaits us. Throughout our prayer time and to the best of our growing ability, we remain in God's presence, in silence, lovingly abiding, growing in our awareness of God's love for us.



From 10–11 a.m. on the first and third Saturdays of the month, St. Alban's Contemplative Prayer Group will meet throughout the summer months of June, July, and August for a time of contemplative prayer. This is open to all. Come and dwell with God.

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