



# The Albanac

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
5930 Warriors Trail, Bovina, Mississippi  
[www.stalbansbovina.org](http://www.stalbansbovina.org)

**April 2020**



**St. Alban's Episcopal Church**  
*Live Streaming Morning Prayer on Facebook*  
*During the Coronavirus Pandemic 2020*

## Virtual Church Services Attract Viewers

By Rebecca Blackwell Drake

In early March, St. Alban's Church was closed to the public due to the coronavirus that is sweeping the nation. Bishop Brian Seage sent an official notifications to the diocese requesting the closure of all services, meetings and events until further notice. Sadly, St. Alban's had to cancel three of the five Lenten Arts Concerts due to the widespread virus.

To keep church members connected, Rev. Elisabeth is using her ingenuity by live



Rev. Elisabeth live streaming Morning Prayer on Facebook

streaming *Morning Prayer* on St. Alban's Facebook page. She live streamed the first daily service on March 18 from her office in the rectory. Then, on Sunday, March 22, she live streamed the first Sabbath service from the nave of the church. Assisting Rev. Elisabeth were: Rev. Deacon Josie William, Theo Williams, lay reader, Buck Cooper, lay reader, and Lance Stewart, music. For those watching the online services at home, it is definitely the next best thing to being there.

Participation in the virtual services has been terrific. Not only are St. Alban's communicants 'tuning in' but also former church members and friends from out of state, including: Georgia, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Ohio, Arizona Kansas and Wyoming.

The virtual service will never replace those held in St. Alban's beautiful nave. However, the concept is now becoming popular with those who are unable to attend church—whether for illness, being in a nursing home facility or, in this case, a temporary closing of the church to prevent a widespread virus.

Join Our Virtual Services

<https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>

Daily at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

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## “These are Special Times”

By Richard Price, Senior Warden



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# ONLINE WORSHIP

## St. Alban's Responds to COVID-19

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I retired in 2010 from a career in environmental research with the Corps of Engineers. During that time, we had a saying that seemed to cover change that is always occurring in any organization. When a new commander would take over, or delays in receipt of funding or the latest plan from a director to “save the world” would be presented, we would say “these are special times”. Although this was usually a tongue in cheek expression, it would satisfy most as an adequate explanation of whatever was about to change. Although the current situation with the COVID 19 is much more serious, I would say this is a really special time.

When crises or tragedies struck in the past, we have always been able to go to the church and pray. When JFK was assassinated, there was a service at St Alban's to pray for the country. During the Vietnam War, first Gulf War, and all the military conflicts, there were prayers each Sunday at church for the military and those affected. When the AIDS epidemic began, there were prayers during the services for those affected. In times of crises, we have always been able to go to the church and pray with our church family, but not now. Communal services have been suspended at least till Easter, and possibly beyond.

In the meantime, we are all still joined together by our common love of God and our church family. As we continue our common services on the internet, let us also continue to pray for our church family as well as our community, country and the world. I agree, as so many have said, that we'll all get through this together. This reminds me of the scripture that says “when two or three are gathered in my name, I'll be in the midst of them”. So, for now, we gather electronically through text, talking on the phone, meeting on the internet, and praying for each other, the church and the world. These are special times and I look forward to the resumption of communal services and normal social contact.



## “New Space and Splendid Renovations”

By Shane Lauritzen, Junior Warden

It feels like we were just getting to know our brand-new space and splendid renovations and now it may be months before we get to enjoy again. Though we haven't been attending services at our beautiful church, repairs and maintenance have continued. Below are a few updates to what's happened recently, some of which you may have already noticed.

Starting with the most substantial work, Pearl River Glass Studio is conducting repair and enhancement work on the stained-glass windows and frames. Serious leaks had caused rot issues, which could have led to structural collapse. The



John Hicks & Bob Hudson,  
Pearl River Glass Studios



St. Alban's window restored

contractor will remove some of the stained-glass panels for refurbishment back at their studio. This also will enable the window frame repairs. The windows will also be reinforced, a clear protective panel will be installed along with vents, which will help with moisture build up.

The organ cleaning was also quite an undertaking and hadn't been done in decades. The disassembly for the cleaning required most of the back of the chapel as each piece had to be carefully removed and laid out for the process.

The notes sounded quite lovely during the live streamed service last Sunday, and we are looking forward to experiencing the full effect in person in the hopefully not too distant future.

Last, but not least, TNT security installed an extensive fire alarm system throughout the buildings (you may have noticed, but perhaps not as the detectors were installed in discrete locations). Though, part of the previous addition had a small alarm system before the renovation, the chapel and parish hall did not. There is now a complete fire alarm system, with a backup power supply so it will be functional during power outages.



David Finch repairing the organ



Susan Finch cleaning organ pipes

Keeping on top of preventative maintenance and expediting substantial repairs before they grow into something worse must be prioritized. Through our Capital Campaign we decided to invest heavily in our church, but so much of what we can do to keep it up, can be done by volunteering your time. As soon as practicable, we will have a workday, like the one that was planned for March 29th to tackle projects and maintenance.

In the interim, we may still need some volunteers to help. If you are interested in helping generally or have specific project in mind that can be done with minimal people without violating social distancing, please contact Shane Lauritzen.



## “Coping with the New Norm”

By Dawn Rickard

In these difficult times, it is easy to become discouraged and fearful. Sometimes, we may slip into moments during which we have trouble feeling thankful for all God has given us. In spite of the stress and fear, let us remember that He created this world and gave us the strength and spirit to find ways to be creative and keep our minds occupied with activities that can help keep us uplifted.

I spoke with some members of our church family to find out how they’ve been spending their time while practicing “social distancing” in positive ways.

Margie Scott told me she has been performing some spring-cleaning. With the help of her daughter and son-in-law, she is getting her closets and drawers cleaned out and organized. She said she’s overseeing Beth by designating which things to keep. She also enjoys getting outside when she can. Margie is definitely looking forward to getting back to church when the current crisis has ended. She misses her church family and enjoys being at the services on Sunday mornings.

Sylvia Anderson has been enjoying time with her daughter and granddaughter. Fortunately, she lives close to them, so can walk over and visit or have them come to her house. She also took some time to go to another property near the river that she owns. She enjoyed sitting outside in view of the river while meditating and praying. Sylvia enjoys reading and is considering getting a Kindle device so she can do on-line reading. Many libraries are now closed, so she can’t visit them as usual. A Kindle would give her access to a large variety of books. She enjoys mysteries, such as J.D. Robb, Nora Roberts, Charlaine Harris, as well as other mystery authors.

While chatting with Sylvia, I shared some of my favorite mystery authors. Stephen White, Nevada Barr, J.A. Jance and Dean Koontz are some authors I believe mystery-lovers would enjoy.

Shane and Reagan Lauritzen have been able to work from home, which enables them to oversee the home-schooling of their children. Reagan explained that it took a little while to get the children accustomed to their new routine, but they have been adjusting to it. They start the day by going outside when the weather permits, then the girls go to work on their storybooks when they’ve returned inside. Reagan told me about one of her friends who has developed a novel way to entertain and educate the children. Her friend dresses up as storybook princesses and reads to the children on-line, then has conversations with them afterward, answering questions or just chatting with them. The children have an opportunity to talk to a “real” princess and stay thoroughly engaged for a half-hour or so, giving the adults time to make work-related calls or accomplish other tasks. The website is: <http://www.adashofmagicevents.com>.

If any of you have any other suggestions for our members, such as favorite authors, activities to keep away the cabin-fever, or ideas to keep children of all ages from feeling frustrated, please let me know and I'll update this in next month's Albanac. Remember, when you get discouraged during this time, you can always turn to scripture. On that note, I'll end with the comforting words of Psalm 46:10. "Be still and know that I am God."

## A Note to St. Alban's Children & Parents

By Betsy Selby, Children's Ministry Director

As the days and weeks go by without seeing you, I keep thinking of what I should have done to be better prepared for this time apart. That sounds silly I suppose, since we had no way of knowing we would be facing this pandemic and all the consequences of it. Still, I wish I had, at the very least, sent home with each of you a copy of the book we use most during our time together on Sundays, the *Jesus Calling Bible Storybook* by Sarah Young. If each family had one, we would be able to read the same stories even when we're not together.

So that's one thing I'll be bringing to your house this week, along with page assignments! You'll need a parent to help you with the stories, and you'll have to share with brothers or sisters, but we can all read and talk about the same pages and pictures. And if you want to talk to me or ask me a question, your parents can call or text me, and we'll have a conversation about it. How does that sound?!?

I am also getting together materials for you about Holy Week, which begins on Palm Sunday and includes the days until we get almost to Easter morning. Rev. Elisabeth is REALLY good at finding activities that children like, and she's shown me some, and I've even found some all by myself! So I'll bring those things when I bring your books.

I miss each of you very, very, very much and can hardly wait to see and hug you when we can be at church together again. Until then, remember that God loves you; Jesus loves you; April, Ashley and I love and miss you!

## Rev. Elisabeth's Epistle

“Why can't we just have communion at home since you're a priest?” One of my children asked this question at dinner the other night. We had been talking about Bishop Seage's decision to suspend public worship services at least through Easter due to concerns about the coronavirus and how this would change how we worshiped at St. Alban's. And so the question made sense—why not have Eucharist at home? This is not uncommon in other traditions; I have participated in home masses in which a Catholic priest celebrated the sacrament of Eucharist in a private home. And yet, my response to my son was immediate: “No, we won't celebrate the Eucharist again until we can do it together as a church.”

My son was doing what a lot of us are trying to do right now--trying to figure out how we can have just a little bit of our “normal” church rituals in completely unusual circumstances. I've heard a lot of other proposals along these lines. Why not have drive-through communion? Why not have very small groups gathered together for Eucharist? All of these suggestions come from a sincere longing for that grace that we receive when we gather for Eucharist. Eucharist is, after all, central to our identity as Episcopalians. And yet, as important as the sacrament itself is, how we celebrate it is just as important.

I am more aware than ever since my ordination in January that I do not celebrate the Eucharist alone. We celebrate the Eucharist together as the body of Christ. I need you; I need the community gathered around, participating, in order for us to celebrate the Eucharist. And, on the other hand, just because we are not celebrating the Eucharist, doesn't make us any less the body of Christ, or any less able to receive the grace that God pours out to us through other means. So, we will continue with Morning Prayer and Liturgy of the Word (the part of the service of Holy Eucharist that happens before Communion) until we are able to gather again together. We will feed on Holy Scripture. We will nourish ourselves on God's Word.

Professor James Farwell from Virginia Theological Seminary has written about what this time in which we are fasting from the Eucharist might mean for us spiritually: “Might we embrace our Eucharistic desire, during this period under quarantine when we cannot gather, as a motivation for our prayer, an incitement of our longing for God? Might this opportunity to cultivate our longing for God be a gain that emerges from the loss of the Sacrament for a time? Might we sit with that longing, meet God in that longing?”

I know how difficult it is not to be able to gather in person and not to be able to share the bread and cup. I miss each of you. I am waiting with longing for that day when we are able to keep the feast together once more.



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## Josie's Journal

### *Our Little House in the Country*

Greetings from our little house in the country. Since social distancing has started, I have counted my blessings: food, clothing, shelter, and internet. I have been catching up on things I said I would do when I retired, summer came or had free time. Now that I have all this time, I have no excuse.

I have tried to establish a routine: read, laundry, unpack and put items away. (We moved March 14, 2019 from our home of 39 years to our new home in the country). I still have boxes to unpack.

I have finished reading *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and started on the next book in the series: *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. I am keeping up with my *Lent Madness* each day. So far my choice has been eliminated five times. I can hardly wait for the Final Four which starts Monday, March 30.

Theo and I watched the opera *Turandot* on PBS. In addition, we watch daily morning prayer on the internet and Sunday services from links around the United States.

I have written and mailed 80 cards to parishioners and made 20 phone calls. I am brainstorming what I will put in my next letter to them.

For exercise I walk the 0.7 mile to and from our mailbox daily. I feel the cool breeze, hear the birds sing, the chirping of the frogs, and see the brilliantly colored butterflies as they flutter around.

Our Tuesday night Bible study met online using Zoom with nine people participating. That shows that our community loves each other and enjoys being together for fellowship.

I am truly blessed. I don't watch the news. I practice social distancing, washing my hands and leave everything else up to God. I remember this favorite hymn from childhood—*He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*.

Christ's Peace

Josie

## April Birthdays

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 Tammy Kitchens  | 18 Maggie McCarthy    |
| 7 Ruth Green      | 23 John Thomas Monti  |
| 8 Dawn Rickard    | 27 Ford Biedenharn    |
| 10 Hayden Guynes  | Sarah Jane Selby      |
| Chad Touns        | 29 Liz Curtis         |
| 12 Payton Fulgham | Frank W. Skinner, Jr. |
| 14 Laurie Reece   | 30 Allison Nieto      |

## April Anniversaries

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 16 Jim & Linda Dooley   | 18 Gene & Wanda Warren |
| Charles & Lisa Langford |                        |

## Prayers for the People

### *For those Sick or in Need:*

- |                           |                     |                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Andy Katzenmeyer          | Dalton Glatt        | Linda Dooley    |
| Ann & Jimmy Jones         | Dan & Mary Carleton | Linda McCool    |
| Ava Ahner                 | David Wright        | Mark Herrington |
| Barbara Ramsay            | Diane Bailey        | Mary Ann Wright |
| Beau Tucker               | Don Whittenberg     | Mary Ruth Jones |
| Bertha Kolb               | Eugene Quarles      | Nancy Whitten   |
| Betty Biedenharn          | Glenda Ferguson     | Nita Tassin     |
| Billie Abraham            | Jackie Pyles        | Norma Jones     |
| Bobbie Carlisle           | Jackson Monti       | Peggy Bowie     |
| Brandi Tony               | Jeff Colvin         | Peter Meyers    |
| Charley Chesnutt          | Jennifer Harper     | Rachelle Ferris |
| Charlie Brantley & Family | Jimmy Bingham       | Sara Wilkerson  |
| Charlie Lutz              | Joan Leese          | Sarah Rickard   |
| Cooper Jamison            | Joy Brabston        | Scott           |
| Cynthia Strawn            | Lee Davis Thames    | Sheila Rosser   |
|                           |                     | Steve Webster   |

*For the Departed:* Riley Smith, Joe Werling

## Holy Week Plans

Holy Week and Easter will happen, whether we are ready for them or not, whether it feels like Easter or not. The Paschal mystery, that Christ has died and risen, cannot be contained by a day or a week or a season. Our Holy Week plans continue to develop, but here's what you can look forward to:

- As long as we are able to bring a small group to the church, we will continue to offer a service on Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM over Facebook Live ([facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/](https://facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/)), including Palm Sunday (April 5th) and Easter Sunday (April 12th)
- Thank you to Rev. Josie and Theo Williams, Ed Shelnut, and James Anderson, who recorded the Passion narrative according to St. Matthew. We are working to make this available by Palm Sunday for you to listen to throughout Holy Week.
- We will have a booklet of prayers and readings available for use at home during Holy Week. The booklet will be emailed out but can also be mailed if you let the church office know that you would like a hard copy.
- Rev. Josie and Rev. Elisabeth will be recording the Stations of the Cross and presenting it online for you to listen to during Holy Week.
- We will observe Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, but details are still being planned. Please watch your email!
- For the Easter Vigil on Saturday, April 11, you are encouraged to watch the online services offered by either St. Andrew's Cathedral or the National Cathedral.
- Keep your eyes on the cross! The cross at the outdoor chapel will be draped throughout Holy Week and will be our focal point as we approach Easter...watch for how it changes! We will post pictures on Facebook, or you are invited to drive by the church or come take a walk on the grounds.