



The Albanac

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
5930 Warriors Trail, Bovina, Mississippi
www.stalbansbovina.org

February 2021



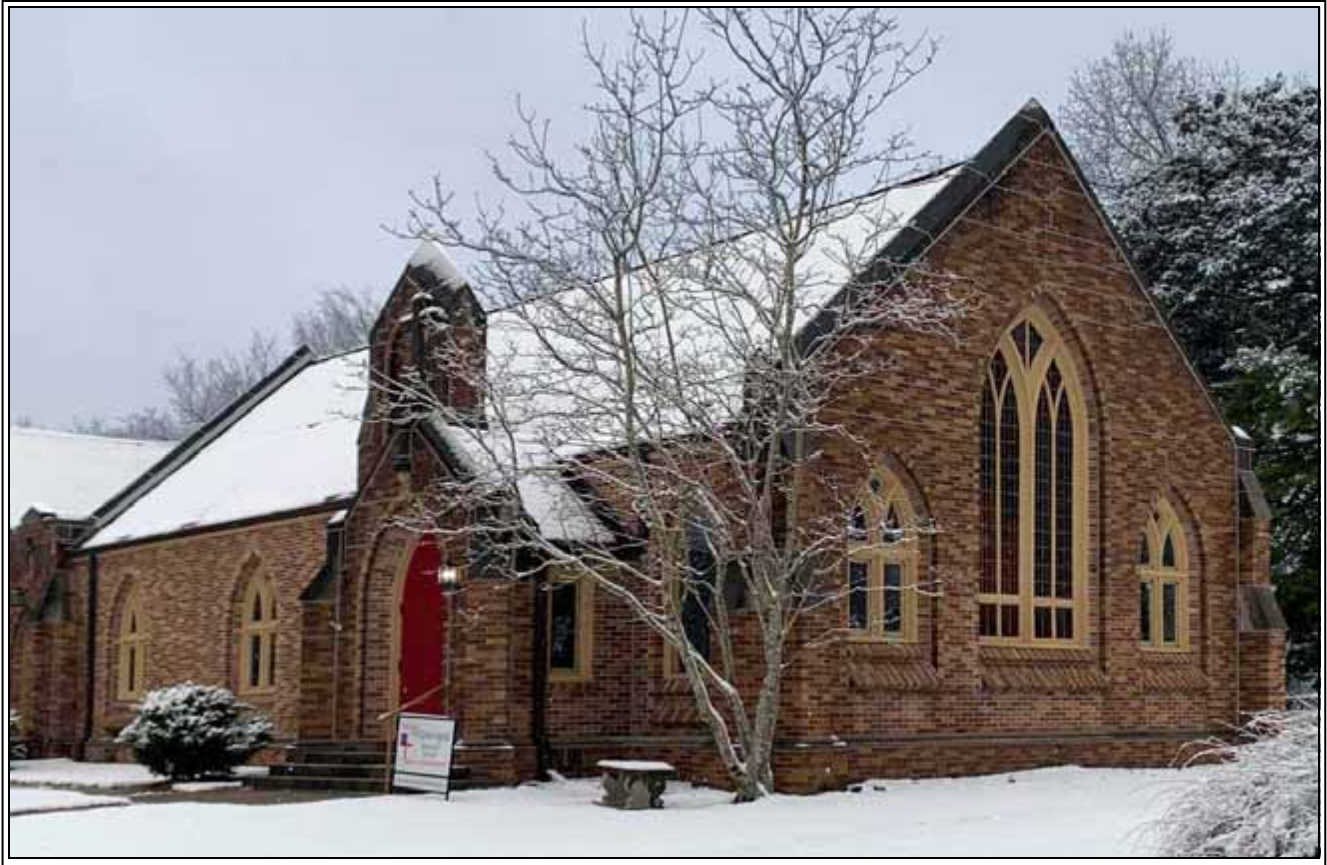
In Memory

Frank Wesley Skinner

April 29, 1940 — January 22, 2021

*Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting*

Winter Wonderland at Alban's



Burning of the Greens



Members of St. Alban's gathered on the evening of Epiphany, January 6, 2021, to mark this feast day with prayer and a burning of the greens on the front lawn. Traditionally, the burning of the greens took place on the twelfth night of Christmas, which is either January 5 or January 6 depending on whether you count Christmas Day as the first day of Christmas. Not only a convenient way to dispose of Christmas trees and greenery, the burning of the greens also symbolizes the light of Christ that has come into the world on Christmas and is now being spread to every corner of the earth. Epiphany is the season we remember that Christ came not only to the Jewish people, but to the whole world, as we remember the star of Bethlehem that guided the wise men far from their home to worship him. We also remember our own commissioning as bearers of the light of Christ, each of us charged in our baptism with shining this light far and wide.

Remembering Frank Skinner



How appropriate that we are gathered outdoors today, looking out on grounds that Frank knew from childhood. Looking out over a cemetery where generations of his family are buried. Looking at some of the places that Frank himself cared for and tended. Enjoying the great outdoors that Frank so loved. The last time I saw Frank, he and Tommy were over by one of the oldest cedar trees in the cemetery, one very close to where Frank will be buried today. They were rescuing it from a gigantic vine that had wrapped all the way around its trunk. They must have spent the better part of a day hacking at that vine. It was strenuous, thankless work, the kind of work that goes unnoticed, unless you're a cedar tree. But it's the kind of caring and generous work that Frank was known for.

Frank was quiet, reserved even, until he got to know you. We heard from Lamentations that, "It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord." Frank waited quietly, preferring in many situations to listen rather than speak. And yet his life was not silent. His life was rich, full of connections. That is clear by the number of people gathered here today. It was clear when his family sat down to make a list of honorary pallbearers and realized that they could keep writing down dozens of names, that was just how many friends Frank had. It is clear in the love he

had for his family--for his children, Amy and Stephen, for his brothers Tommy and John David, for his grandchildren, and for Sharon.

And Frank's life had a particular message, as well, a message about caring and kindness and the importance of always being willing to lend a helping hand. A message about never ceasing to grow and learn and figure out who you are and what you believe in. That's another memory that many of us will carry with us of Frank, that of an engineer who had decidedly left the church as an adult, coming back home to the church in later life. And coming back with a curious mind and heart--attending book discussions and Sunday school, engaging the life of faith in a way he had not done before.

It reminded me of T.S. Eliot's poem, *Little Gidding*, part of which reads,

*What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from.
We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

Frank knew what it was to come back to where you started and to know the place for the first time. He was on a lifelong journey to know himself and to know this place he came from, to know it, to love it, and to leave it better for his having been part of it.

T.S. Eliot's poem echoes the language in our reading from Revelation, about how God is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. God is where we start, and God is who we return home to. We may be tempted to look at today as an ending. We may be tempted to see the grave as our final destination. But Revelation and T.S. Eliot have told us that to make an end is to make a beginning. That death is the gateway to eternal life. That God is making all things new. So it is with Frank's journey, and with our relationship with him. Today we walk with him in the final steps of his earthly pilgrimage, burying him with his family, but trusting that as we do, we are returning him to God, to his creator.

The Reverend Elisabeth Malphurs
Homily for Frank Skinner
January 26, 2021

Listening in Lent

Lent is the season of 40 days beginning on Ash Wednesday that has been observed since the earliest days of the church as a time of preparation for Easter. During Lent, new converts would prepare for baptism at the Easter Vigil. Lent also became a time to focus on repentance, a time to set right those relationships in our lives that might have gone astray, through traditional practices such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

This Lent, as we continue to live in the midst of pandemic uncertainty, and as we emerge from a time of political turmoil, you are invited to join St. Alban's in a Lenten journey into the sacred practice of listening. As a community, we are going to focus this season on what our tradition teaches us about listening—listening to God, listening to ourselves, listening to creation, and listening to each other. There will be many different ways to engage, but here are some possibilities to consider:

- 1. Ash Wednesday:** We will observe Ash Wednesday on February 17 with two services, at 12:00 noon and at 6:00 pm. Weather permitting, the 12:00 noon service will be held at the outdoor chapel. The 6:00 pm service will be held in the church and also livestreamed for those watching from home. Ash Wednesday asks us to listen to deep truths about our own mortality and our need for God. (This year, ashes are available for those worshiping from home. If you would like a packet of blessed ashes to impose on yourself or your household as you watch the Ash Wednesday service, let us know by February 10.)
- 2. Lent-at-Home Bags:** Bags with Lenten devotionals, Lent Madness information and scorecards, and other resources around the theme of listening are available. You may pick one up for your household at the church or let us know if you would like one delivered to your house.
- 3. Wednesday Contemplative Eucharists:** Learn more about listening to God as we explore different kinds of contemplative prayer on Wednesday evenings during Lent, starting Wednesday, February 24 at 6:00 pm at the church (and also livestreamed on Facebook). We will explore how we can pray through silence, music, icons, with our feet, and through our imagination.
- 4. Sunday Afternoon Holy Hikes with Eucharist:** Celebrate God's creation as we listen together in nature, starting Sunday, February 21 at 4:00 pm as we meet at St. Alban's and explore the St. Alban's woods. Locations will be announced on a weekly basis throughout Lent, with a break around spring break. Walks will be geared toward all ages.

Rev. Elisabeth's Epistle

I watched our cat the other day, sitting still and quiet, focused on the refrigerator. This is not our cat's usual place--he's more of a lazy bed cat. As I cleaned up the kitchen, I was struck by how focused and attentive he was. He appeared to be listening. I tried not to think about exactly *what he was listening to* and tried to focus instead on the wonder of the listening itself. His whole body seemed to be listening, from his whiskers to his tail.

It made me realize how little time I spend in that posture of deep listening. Virtually from the moment I wake up until I lie down at night, my mind is churning. Even if I'm not talking, or even if I'm listening to someone else, my mind is humming along in the background, often getting in the way of deep listening. This time last year for Lent, I tried setting aside time each morning for meditation. I stuck with it for a couple weeks, then lost this practice completely as the world went topsy turvy during the pandemic.

But I miss it. As much as I love our prayerbook and the beautiful language we have for speaking to God, there is something about cultivating space for silence, allowing room for God to speak. This Lent, we are going to explore the art of listening. Listening undergirds our prayer life and also our relationships with others. Good listening fosters relationships and creates trust. Listening is a spiritual muscle that we can strengthen. I invite you to adopt a practice this Lent that will help you build your listening skills. Maybe you will take some time in silence each day. Maybe you will reconnect with friends or family and offer them the gift of open, nonjudgmental listening. Maybe you will discover a new way of listening for God outdoors or in the experience of a stranger. As Mister Rogers said, "Listening is where love begins."

Josie's Journal



Lent is upon us. It starts on February 17, 2021. For those of us who have been suffering from **Lent Madness** withdrawal, our time has come. The saints this year are divided into four categories:

- Hermits and Healers
- Sunday Saints
- Confusion Corner
- Mostly Modern

The goal is to learn more about the saints of the Episcopal Church. Here's to an eventful learning.

New saints that are unfamiliar to me are: Isidora the Simple, Miguel Pro, Camillus de Lellis, and Jacapone da Todi. Familiar saints are Leo the Great, Absalom Jones, Matthias and Vincent of Saragossa.

Join the Journey through Lent Madness 2021 is a poster that can be displayed and colored by adults, children, or grandchildren.

The Lent Madness Saintly Scorecard 2021 and the poster are available on the table in the Parish Hall. If you cannot make it to St. Alban's, call or text me and I will mail or deliver these to you.

I am waiting for eradication of COVID-19.

Christ's Peace,
Josie

February Birthdays

1 Charlie Brantley	19 Linda Kitchens
5 Sharon Hanks	20 Christine Nelson
6 Lucas Guynes	21 David Selby
11 Bonnie Pruett	22 Jane Hanks
14 Beth Guynes	25 Walker Biedenharn
Charles Langford	27 Barbara Torrey
18 Janice Herrington	

February Anniversaries

11 Josh & Maggie McCarthy

Prayers for the People



Amanda	Earline	Mary Jo
Ann & Jimmy	Estella	Nita
Anna	Eugene	Norma
Ashlee & Mack	Glen	Parker
Barbara	Glenda	Patsy
Betty	Jackson	Patty
Betsy	Jeff	Peter
Bill & Karen	Jerry	Ruth
Bobbie	Jim	Selby
Carol	Isabel, M.K. & Ted	Sylvia
Charlie & Family	Lee Davis	Theresa
Cooper	Lisa & Charlie	Tim
Cynthia	Marcia & David	Walker
Dan & Mary	Mark	Wanda
David	Mary Frances	

COVID-19 Weekly Events

Please call the office if you need help with Zoom

Sunday

Holy Eucharist Rite I, Parish Hall, 8:30 a.m.

Holy Eucharist Rite II, Nave, 11:00 a.m.

Livestreamed on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. (on Zoom)

Monday — Friday

Morning Prayer, 8:00 a.m.

Livestreamed on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>

Tuesday

Bibles & More, Social time starts at 6:00 p.m. Group from 6:30-8:00 p.m. (on Zoom)

Wednesday

Spiritual 12 Steps Group, 7:30-8:30 a.m. (on Zoom)

Holy Eucharist Rite II with Prayers for Healing, 6:00 pm

Livestreamed on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansBovina/>.

Thursday

Ultreya, 12:00-1:00 p.m. (on Zoom)

Event Calendar

Limited In-Person Services Resume in February

Sunday, February 7— Limited in-person attendance resumes

Liturgy of the Word, 10:00 am (on Zoom)

Annual Parish Meeting, 11:00 a.m. (on Zoom)

Sunday, February 20— First Sunday of Lent

Sunday, March 28— Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 4—Easter

Server Schedule

	Format	Lay Worship Leader	A/V Operator
Wednesday, February 3 6:00 pm	In-person/Facebook	Theo Williams	Harvey Smith
Sunday, February 7 10:00 am	In-person/Zoom	LWL - Theo Lector – Beth Guynes	
Wednesday, February 10 6:00 pm	In-person/Facebook	Tommy Skinner	Harvey Smith
Sunday, February 14 8:30 am 11:00 am	In-person In-person/Facebook	Harvey Smith LWL – Richard Price Lector – Susan Price	Jim Drake
Wednesday, February 17 Noon 6:00 pm	Outdoor Chapel In-person/Facebook	Ann Tompkins Theo Williams	Harvey Smith
Sunday, February 21 8:30 am 11:00 am	In-person In-person/Facebook	Ann Tompkins LWL – Harvey Smith Lector – Sharon Hanks	Buck Cooper
Wednesday, February 24 6:00 pm	In-person/Facebook	Tommy Williams	Harvey Smith
Sunday, February 28 8:30 am 11:00 am	In-person In-person/Facebook	Richard Price LWL – Harvey Smith Lector – Dawn Rickard	Jim Drake



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Rev. Elisabeth & Rebecca Drake