

## Sharing God's Love in Our Community Through Prayer, Study and Action

**St. Ann's Episcopal Church in Afton, NY**  
(Member of the Chenango District)

### *The Parish News*

[www.stannsaftonny.org](http://www.stannsaftonny.org)

The Newsletter of St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Afton, NY

**Clergy: The Reverend Fr. David A. Hanselman Cell: 761-4601 Office: 656-9502**

If you desire Father David to visit you or give you a call, please contact him at one of the numbers above.

**In an emergency and Fr. David cannot be reached, please contact one of the wardens.**

**Wardens: Dan Vail: 607-240-9264 Tracey Tallmadge: 607-343-1301**



Greetings! I pray this message finds you doing well.

February at St Ann's and Zion continues an experiment in alternating in-person and online worship (online on days that would be Morning Prayer, in person on regular Communion Sundays). It can be a little confusing but it is a wonderful attempt to maintain the online group we formed during the lock downs while also celebrating Communion in person (and also seeing if it helps with the winter heating bills). As

soon as February is over, however, we'll be going back to our usual in person services (if Covid allows (which at this time it seems it will, thankfully)) – Ash Wednesday is March 2<sup>nd</sup> this year. We'll provide more details as that day comes closer. The last couple weeks I've been mentioning books I've been reading. Once again, I highly recommend Lisa Bowens "African American Readings of Paul". Aside from the despicable ways the slaveholders used Scripture to endorse their inexcusable treatment of black folks, the witness of faith that the African American writings provide is incredibly inspiring. To my mind, they rival any of the letters we find in the New Testament.

Speaking of books I'm reading, in the past I've mentioned that part of my daily readings includes Joan Chittister's "The Rule of Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century". As many times as I've read through it in the last few years, recently one particular passage really spoke to me, so I'd like to quote it at some length:

"The last chapter of the Rule leaves us with a reading list for future spiritual development: the Bible, the Mothers and Fathers of the Church and their commentaries on Scripture, and the classic contributions of other writers on the monastic life. But Benedict does not believe that the simple reading or study of spiritual literature is sufficient. He tells us to keep this Rule, its values, its concepts, its insights. It is not what we read, he implies; it is what we become that counts. Every major religious tradition, in fact, has called for a change of heart, a change of life rather than for simply an analysis of its literature. The Hasidim, for instance, tell the story of the disciple who said to the teacher, "Teacher, I have gone completely through the Torah. What must I do now?"

"And the teacher said, "Oh, my friend, the question is not, Have you gone through the Torah? The question is, Has the Torah gone through you?"

"Even at the end of his Rule, Benedict does not promise that we will be perfect for having lived it. What Benedict does promise is that we will be disposed to the will of God, attuned to the presence of God, committed to the search for God, and just beginning to understand the power of God in our lives. Why? Because Benedictine simplicity gentles us into the arms of God. Benedictine community supports us on the way to God. Benedictine balance makes a wholesome journey possible. Monastic prayer, rooted in Scripture, lights the way. It is a way of life, a spirituality that makes the humdrum holy and the daily the stuff of high happiness. It is a way of living that leads us to pursue life to its fullest." I can only add that what Chittister says about Benedict, and what Benedict says about the way of life in monasteries based on his rule, does not require us to join a monastery. We can live the life Benedict describes without joining a monastery. We cannot, however, live that life without being a part of some Christian community.

As much as I focus and encourage the study of Scripture, it's also crucially important that in learning more and more about Scripture (and, indeed, all the ways in which God has spoken through people of faith through the centuries), we also allow Scripture to continually support and shape us into truly caring people of God. May we continually be open and receptive to God's manifold revelations of love. Amen.

**FEBRUARY SERVICE SCHEDULE \ SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO SERVE**

If you are not currently receiving email Zoom invites, then please send your email address and you will be added to the parish listing. [Bottom415@aol.com](mailto:Bottom415@aol.com), Yes, the "zoom" service is different, but change is what life is all about.

During the months of January and February, Zoom services will take place on Morning Prayer Sundays. Holy Eucharist Sundays will take place in the church. At this time, MASKS ARE REQUIRED for in church services. If you forget your mask, extras are available at the back of the church. In the case of severe weather conditions, phone contact will be made if a service is cancelled.

**Service Schedule**

Date	Service	OT Reader	Epistle Reader	CS	EM	Acolytes
Feb 6	HC	T.Tallmadge				T.Tallmadge
Feb 13	MP	ZOOM 9am				
Feb 20	HC	J.Rettberg				B.Vail
Feb 27	MP	ZOOM 9am				
Mar 2	Ash Wednesday	7PM In Church and ZOOM				
Mar 6	HC	D. Weiber				B.Vail

**Morning Prayer Leaders****/Food Pantry****ZOOM ONLY****Lectionary (Year B)**

		Old Testament	Psalm	New Testament	Gospel
Feb 6		Isaiah 6:1-8, [9-13]	Psalm 138	1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Luke 5:1-11
Feb 13		Jeremiah 17:5-10	Psalm 1	1 Corinthians 15:12-20	Luke 6:17-26
Feb 20		Genesis 45:3-11, 15	Psalm 37:1-12, 41-42	1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50	Luke 6:27-38
Feb 27		Exodus 34:29-35	Psalm 99	2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2	Luke 9:28-36, [37-43a]
Mar 2	Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	Psalm 103 or 103:8-14	2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
Mar 6		Deuteronomy 26:1-11	Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16	Romans 10:8b-13	Luke 4:1-13



Altar Duty for the month of **February** is Tracey Tallmadge 607-343-1301 If you are giving flowers in memory of a loved one, please notify Betty Vail 639-1201, no later than the Thursday before the designated Sunday

**BEGINNING** in March, St. Ann's will resume In-Church services at 9:15a.m. every Sunday. On March 2nd, there will be an Ash Wednesday service at 7p.m. with disposition of Ashes. Father David will conduct Holy Communion.

St. Ann's Prayer List for *February 2022*

It has been suggested that the names of individuals on the parish prayer list be included in the newsletter. A current listing follows. The names listed are not necessarily members of the parish and may include individuals or other requests for which we have been asked to pray. The clergy persons of the Chenango District are included. Please remember these individuals in your personal prayers. *"We are trying to be sure that our prayer list is as updated as possible and don't want to remove someone that should be on it."* Send or give any additions or changes to Tom Vail, 639-1201. Please note long term names will be left on the list indefinitely, short term names for two/three months unless updated.

SHORT TERM

Raevin  
Eileen  
Anne  
Pat  
Melrose  
Ralph George



Please keep in your prayers our shut-ins –  
Pete and Carol Vail  
Joyce Whitney  
Marion Diehl  
Grace Affuso  
Bonnie MacPherson

LONG TERM

Fr. David Hanselman  
Fr. Steven White  
Deacon Kay  
Pastor Becky  
Fr. Geoff Doolittle  
Very Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan-Probe  
Bishop Michael Curry  
The Revs Ralph & Liz Groskoph  
Emmanuel Church  
Epiphany Church  
Zion Church  
St. Paul's Church  
St. Andrew's Church  
St. Matthews Church  
St. Peter's Church  
Carol Cindy  
Peter David  
Joyce Jason  
Mya Dakota  
Bonnie Hailey  
Richard Joan  
Nate Bobbi  
Marion Thurston  
Fred Terra  
Bill Barbara  
Tyler

The General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Divinity School. The Learning Communities Initiative of the Diocese. The following prayer is from the Evening Prayer service in the Book of Common Prayer: *Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous: and all for your love's sake. Amen.*

*Birthdays*  
*2/2 Tom Vail*  
*2/7 Marion Diehl*  
*2/18 Carol Tarvin*



*Anniversaries*

Please let me know if I am missing a Birthday or Anniversary. Call 607-343-1301 or email: [cttallmadg@aol.com](mailto:cttallmadg@aol.com)



## CHURCH

## TERMS

**ASH WEDNESDAY** – The name is taken from the custom of putting ashes on the forehead on this first day of Lent. The date depends on the date of Easter, before which it is the forty-sixth day.



January 16,2022

Our outreach for January was sent to "A Room to Heal" an organization in the Binghamton area that helps children that are ill by remodeling their bedrooms to deal with their illness more efficiently.



### *Comforting Others*

He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

#### 2 Corinthians 1:4 HCSB

The world can be a difficult and dangerous place, a place where our friends and family members often face challenges that test their courage and dampen their spirits.

But each day provides countless opportunities to encourage our loved ones, to assist the needy, and to comfort the brokenhearted. When we do these things, we spread seeds of hope and happiness—and that's precisely what we should do.

Today, when you encounter someone who needs a helping hand or a comforting word, be generous with both. You possess the power to make the world a better place one person—and one hug—at a time. When you use that power wisely, you make your own corner of the world a kinder, gentler, happier place.

Individuals soften their own troubles by generously  
solacing those of others.

### The Pandemic's Potential as an Impetus for Religious Revival

The Rev'd Richard R. Losch, St. James Church, Livingston, Alabama

Yogi Berra said, "It ain't over til it's over." So, it is with the coronavirus crisis. It isn't over yet, and from all we can tell it will never really be over, because things will never return to the way they were before it began. It is the same with any major event in human history. Be it good or bad, any event important enough to grab the world's attention will leave a permanent mark on society and civilization. This raises an important question: do we really want to go back to what we were, or do we want to learn from our experiences and move forward with new knowledge and new skills? In the TV series, "I, Claudius" a retired actor complains, "The theater is not what it was," to which a Greek orator replies, "No, and I will tell you something else. It never was what it was." When we look back on the "good old days" we tend to remember only the good things, many of which have been lost and are now exaggerated. We forget about or minimize the bad things, many of which may still be with us. As we move out of the coronavirus crisis, we want to see the economy rebound, jobs restored, and businesses reopened. This crisis has brought out the worst in some, who have exploited it for power or personal gain; yet it has brought out the best in far more people. We have seen countless examples of generosity, compassion, and self-sacrifice that are an inspiration to many.

One thing I do not want to return to is the increasing religious apathy and moral indifference of the recent past. Before the crisis began, there were some stirrings of a religious revival in America - not a Bible-thumping, hymn-singing revival, but a true renewal of faith that comes from a thirst for the dignity of tradition, and the recognition of the need for God's help in a chaotic and divided world. The crisis has hastened and strengthened that awakening, and if it continues to grow then things will indeed not be the same when the crisis has passed. They will be much, much better. Sociologists, even nonbelieving ones, affirm that one of the most important foundations of a moral and stable society is religious belief.

Pray for a renewal of faith in our country and in the world. It is not just a dream; it is a clear and reasonable hope, if only we will work for it.

"Don't educate your children to be rich. Educate them to be happy so when they grow up, they will know the value of things, not the price." George Goldtrap

"When anger enters the mind, wisdom departs." Thomas A'Kempis

The ability to speak several languages is a valuable asset, but the ability to keep your mouth shut in any language is priceless. *Anonymous*

The greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our dispositions, not our circumstances. We carry the seeds of the one or the other about with us in our minds wherever we go. *Martha Washington*



### Can Christianity Survive?

An aggressive and outspoken segment of modern society is doing everything in its power to destroy Christianity. The first wave is to push it out of the public forum, and the next will undoubtedly be a movement to suppress it altogether. The question is often asked today as to whether Christianity (or religion itself) can survive this onslaught. The answer is simple: Yes!! Through history the Church has faced enemies who have sought to destroy it, and all they have ever accomplished is to strengthen it. Times are changing and the days of easy and socially acceptable Christianity may be on their way out, but the Faith will persist. As Bishop Fulton J. Sheen observed many years ago, we are watching the end of Christendom, but not the end of Christianity. Christianity is that Faith deposited once and for all time with the Apostles. It was given to us by God, and it is for all people. As the rabbi Gamaliel observed two thousand years ago, "if it is of God, it cannot be stopped, and if it is not, there is no need to fight it because it will die by itself." (Acts 5:33) Christendom, on the other hand, was that long period when most Americans and Europeans claimed to be Christian, and the Church was a central focus of daily life. Christmas and Easter, despite their secular overtones, were acknowledged to be the celebrations of the birth and resurrection of Christ and public prayer was commonplace and expected.

The era of Christendom is disappearing, and it may be just as well. It was too easy to claim to be a Christian. As a result, we tended to take the faith for granted. People went to church on Sunday because it was what one did on a Sunday morning. Everyone expected it of them. The churches were full, but I wonder how many people, even some clergy, really understood what was going on there. There is a difference between going to church and worshipping God. One is a matter of routine, and the other is a conscious spiritual activity. All too often the twain does not meet.

Perhaps now that Christendom is dying, we can get on with the business of Christianity. When we consider that the Church's mission is to bring us to everlasting life, we have to realize that this is serious business. The work of the Church is not to sponsor soup kitchens and promote social justice. These are signs of faith, not its purpose. The work of the Church is to save souls. This requires prayer, an understanding of what the Church teaches, and a willingness to put those teachings into practice. To live up to those expectations requires discipline and a conscious attention to one's spiritual life. It takes very little effort to be a part of Christendom, but to be a Christian is hard work. It's good work, though, and the pay is extraordinary!

*The Rev. Richard R. Losch, St. James', Livingston, Alabama*

The Pharisee Gamaliel, speaking about the early apostles, gives wise advice that works in any age. It reverberates in tandem with Martin Luther King's often-quoted line that the "arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." It is based on a conviction that God is somehow at work in the world; that in some deep sense the world is held in being by love, and that love overcomes fear and death. This conviction is not based on wishful thinking but on experience, and it is especially valuable when it appears that the tide is going the other way, as it often seems to be doing in our own day.

(From Forward Day by Day, June 2013)

## The Final Word

**Accomplishments:** Ecclesiastes 12:13 – *“Here is my final conclusion: Fear God and obey his commands, for this is the duty of every person.....”*

“He’s missing the forest for the trees” is a well-known saying that a person can get so caught up in the details at hand that he misses the main point. Most of us fall into this trap when it comes to planning our daily life. What is our purpose here on earth? To honor and obey God, working diligently to follow the principles set forth in his Word. But what do we do instead? We focus on the details at hand—climbing the corporate ladder; accumulating material things; running children to every conceivable sporting event; participating in this or that committee. We’ve lost the big picture. Take a hard look at your to-do list. Is there anything on it that is going to develop your relationship with God? Is there something on it that might not be pleasing to him? What can you cross off and exchange for something real and lasting significance? NLT - GEZ

**St. Ann’s Episcopal Church**  
**P. O. Box 22**  
**Afton, New York 13730**

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 COMMUNITY THROUGH PRAYER, STUDY  
 AND ACTION

**Clergy:** The Rev. David A. Hanselman  
 Worship Service: Sunday 9:15 am

Address Label Here

