St. Alban’s Mission Statement - "Together we exist to love and serve both God and our neighbor, inviting all to share in the joy of Christ’s healing love."

From the Rector –
This January, we have a number of particular and special days.

On January 1, Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Name. This used to be called the Feast of the Circumcision. Maybe that title was a little too bodily for blushing and squeamish Anglicans. I don't know. But they changed it to Holy Name. It's a feast that points to the Incarnation of the Savior (that's what the name Jesus means—Savior) among God's covenant people.

Then, on January 8, we will celebrate the Epiphany. The Epiphany is January 6, but sometimes churches can observe the feast on the following Sunday. The Epiphany is a bit surprising for some people, because this is the day we hear the story of the Three Kings or Magi, coming from the East and giving gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the child Jesus. The Epiphany is a celebration even older than Christmas! And it's the original feast of the Incarnation, of God becoming human and living among us as Jesus.

Thank you to Susan Miller and her cast and crew for performing the medieval mystery play about the Three Kings’ visit! The play will take the place of the Gospel reading and sermon at both 8am and 10:30am services on Sunday, January 8.

Now why would we bother with these dates and feasts and calendar things so much? Isn't that a bit fussy? And why do we bother with Advent, before Christmas and don't put up Christmas decorations in early December? Isn't it all a bit stuffy and academic and kind of a drag to tell Christians they have to celebrate seasons they're maybe not that excited about? Or hear Bible stories at seemingly weird times? Like the Three Kings in January instead of when we're wanting to sing carols about them in early December?

Believe it or not, the Church calendar with its feast and seasons is not a Great Big No to Christians trying to enjoy themselves. Our seasons and feast days have been with us for millennia precisely because they help us enter into the mysteries and basics of the faith. As one woman said in our catechesis group, Foundations for Christian Life, all these feasts and seasons actually turn our time, our days our weeks into something that has connection with God. And even if we do things at some different times than some other people around us, that turns our different calendar and celebrations into a form of witness to the world.

You’re invited to enjoy the particularity, the peculiarity, the counter-cultural energy. Because in so doing, we get that much closer to the same God Who has come so close to us in this world, in our own time, in the Incarnation of God, Jesus Himself.

Peace,
William+
Event Lineup for January: (Including but not limited to; if you have an event, PLEASE send information or announcements to this address, as well as to the church office!)

January 1  The Holy Name of Jesus
8:00  Holy Eucharist
10:30 Holy Eucharist
1:00  Ukranian Orthodox Service

January 8  The Epiphany
8:00  Holy Eucharist & Mystery Play for Epiphany
9:15-10:10 Morning Bible Group – Review of Acts chapters 1-14 and discussion
10:15  Children’s Chapel before the start of Sunday School
10:30 Holy Eucharist & Mystery Play for Epiphany
<also starting up /resuming in January: Confirmation preparation and Foundations for Christian Life. Check the website for details..>

January 14 :  Saturday, 4pm, Rice Patrol, Franciscan Chapel.. Volunteer some of your time to help feed the homeless, true “hands on” service!

January 15  AGM Reports to be available.
1:00  Ukranian Orthodox Service

January 21:  Saturday, 4pm, Rice Patrol, Franciscan Chapel

January 22  St. Alban’s Annual General Meeting  after the 10:30 service
Please - pick up a copy of the reports, read, and attend… it’s your church, please help us with your thoughts and votes, become informed, and keep our leadership in tune with YOUR cohort!

Note: Have you picked up a pledge card? Available on the Pledge tree! Fill yours out, and help our Treasurer have information for the budget for 2017 for the AGM..

And outside of St. Alban’s, for women only -
January 27-29, 2017 ! St. Alban’s not the only one with a 60th anniversary! The Christian Women’s Conference also celebrates it’s 60th in 2017, @ Amagi Sanso conference center, Izu peninsula.
Still time to SIGN UP! https://woconjapan.wordpress.com/about-3/registration-2009/
For general enquiries, contact Teresa at info@woconjapan.org
For phone enquiries, contact Nancy at 080 4678 7241
For enquiries about registration, contact Betsy at reg@woconjapan.org
For enquiries about payment, contact Esther at treas@woconjapan.org
See the website for information, or the bulletin board in the hall for pamphlets. Aid for those in financial need is available depending on circumstances.

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St. Alban’s Regular Opportunities to Pray, Study, Worship –
Sundays -
7:30 am – Morning Prayer
8:00 am – Eucharist, Sunday
9:15am – Bible Study, pondering the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter by Chapter, Sunday mornings
10:15am – Children’s Chapel!
10:30 am – Eucharist (with music), Sunday School (and crèche, aka, infant care is also available!)
--- followed by coffee hour...
Weekdays –
7:30 am – Morning Prayer, Sunday through Thursday
12:30 pm – Eucharist, Wednesday
6:30 pm – Evening Prayer, Sunday through Thursday
7:00 pm – Rosary Prayer Group, Monday
--- Contact the Church Office or the Rector for information on additional opportunities

St. Alban’s Opportunities to help “at home” –
Weekly coffee hour: set-up, clean-up, other work: contact Jenni Simmons
Newsletter – Contributions needed!
Property maintenance committee, recruiting now!
Reading – a great way to participate in the service – Contact the Rector!

St. Alban’s Opportunities to help “in the world” –
“Rice Patrol” in the Franciscan Chapel, 2nd and 3rd Saturdays, from 4:15pm

== AVAILABLE NOW –
Rector’s Blog – Online, via the “Extras” tab on http://www.saintalbans.jp
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Email (church): stalbans@saintalbans.jp
Email (Rector): bulson.tko@gmail.com
Website: http://www.saintalbans.jp
St. Alban’s is also on Facebook, for thoughtful articles and events.