

**St. Alban's Episcopal Church**

333 S Drexel Ave  
Bexley, OH 43209



Dear St. Alban's,

Greetings and Christmas blessings to you and your loved ones!

On December 5<sup>th</sup> I returned from short term medical leave. It was a time of healing and growth, but I am grateful to be back in the church (Presently, I am carrying out church duties from home, while recovering from COVID)

While it is never easy to step away from a well-loved ministry or job, I was reminded that **we do not serve others well if we are not practicing proper selfcare.**

Churches are one of the few places in our communities that can support one another in all facets of this care. Our congregation has supported and cared for me, and it is my hope that we can continue to do this for our fellow parishioners, staff and friends by supporting one another in setting appropriate boundaries, asking for assistance when necessary, and supporting each other in prayer.

I recently met with our bishop's staff, wardens and vestry and we discussed not only my expectations and desires for my ministry as your priest, but how we might model healthy boundaries and expectations for *everyone* in our church.

**We have unique but equally important roles in the Church.**

As a priest, my role is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as a pastor and leader of the people, serve as minister of Word and Sacrament. As the priest at St. Alban's I will also represent our parish and the Church at large in the larger community through outward facing ministries of our congregation **alongside other members of our parish.** I will also serve God by providing instruction in the faith and reminding our church's ministries and committees of our unique expression of God's mission.

The ministry of the laity (nonordained) in the Church is equal in status, importance, and uniqueness. The laity, according to their gifts, are to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church. In other words, every member's gifts, invitation and welcome to newcomers and strangers, service and leadership are crucial to the health and wellbeing of our congregation. We are all in this together!

**Boundaries and time of rest is important for healthy congregations and their people.**

Sabbath rest is important and necessary for us. God created us to live balanced lives of worship, work, rest, recreation, learning etc. Please consider how you are finding and implementing this balance in your own life and family. Saying yes to God's call is important, but so is saying "no" to opportunities that are not God's desire. This is a matter of discernment and should be done

prayerfully. When necessary, I and many others at St. Alban's, would love to help you with discernment.

I recognize that I was neglecting a healthy work life balance and thus was also neglecting proper selfcare. I will be making the following changes to my personal schedule and procedures:

- Following my return from COVID quarantine, I will be switching my sabbath days to Monday and Saturday to allow myself rest and reflection following Sunday worship and formation.
- I strive to answer emails and communications within 24 hours, but I will not be checking parish communications on days off or after 6 PM each evening, on sabbath or during my vacation time. The exception of course to this is pastoral emergencies.
- I want to be able to provide care and a ministry of presence in difficult circumstances. In these instances, you may call my cell phone. 614-364-1120. Please know that the previous phone number 330-831-4815 was changed and reassigned. Please update your contact listing for me.
- I will discern ministry opportunities and commitments by taking into consideration my schedule, my gifts, our parish mission and the mission of the Church at large, and whether said commitment is best suited for laity or clergy.

Finally, thank you all for your prayers and support. I am so grateful to be your rector and I look forward to seeing how we can continue to work together to serve and love God, one another and our neighbors.

In Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. J. Devin Rodgers".

Fr. J. Devin Rodgers

