



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



St. George's Church Schenectady, NY

September 2018

PARISH MEETING SEPTEMBER 16TH

Call it “Back to Church Sunday,” or “Fall Launch,” or “Ministry Fair”....but call it an enjoyable way to socialize in The Great Hall after church on a steamy Sunday. A light lunch. Fr. Matt's PowerPoint presentation. Church leaders talking about their various ministries: Alice Pumbo, Tarik Wareh, Chris Henry, Ralph Pumbo, Meg Hughes, Nancy Angus, Sandee Hughes, Pattie Wareh, Jim Wingate, April Stromberg, Jeff Wengrovius and Bob Paska. Ministries looking for volunteers: Christian Education, Assisted Living Ministry, ShapeNotes, Choir, Acolytes/Altar Servers, Outreach, Lectors/Greeters/Counters, Book Club, Altar Guild, Hospitality, Audio/Video and Communications, Grounds and Gardening, Pastoral Care, Vestry, and Newsletter/Website. There are a diversity of ministries to choose from....and a wealth of talent in our congregation.

Sign-up sheets for the various ministries were available in the back of the room; tickets were sold for the upcoming Caribbean Night fundraiser on October 13th; and everyone had a good time at this annual occasion of getting together, breaking bread, schmoozing, and....volunteering..

A big “thank you” to every Georgian who helped make this Parish Meeting a huge success!

lynn paska



OUTREACH

THE SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM WEEK

St. George's again assisted SICM in its annual summer lunch program helping out the week of August 13th-17th at Wallingford Park, 5th and Congress Streets. (Not pictured: Meg Hughes and Diane Reed who helped serve on Monday and Tuesday, respectively.)

SICM's summer lunch is a USDA sponsored program. In 2018 over 40,000 nutritionally balanced lunches were served to Schenectady County children. Volunteers are encouraged to interact with those attending by reading, playing games and other activities.

alice pumbo



Wed. - Alice Pumbo, Dot Dever and supervisor Skye pause for lunch service.



Mon. - Judy DeLong took part in the program.



Thurs. - Suzy Unger & friend Tina Caruso prepare lunches for waiting children.



Tues. - Ralph Pumbo & Fr. Matt helped out.



Fri. - April, Helen & Issac Stromberg, volunteers, pose after a spirited game of What Time Is It, Mr. Fox?

SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

Allyson Thiessen is a busy mom, holds down a full-time job, and finds time in her hectic schedule to volunteer at St. George's, primarily in our nursery, Sunday school and youth ministries. She also encourages her family to volunteer.

Jonah Jr. (8) attends Sunday school and participates in "fun" things, like the annual Easter Egg Hunt. He serves as "boat boy" periodically and is learning more altar duties as he gets older. Anna (16) is a reliable acolyte and assists in other ministries. "Anna drives that process herself. I want her to be who she is," said Allyson proudly, as she makes sure that Anna is at church when she's on the acolyte schedule. Eldest daughter Laurel (23) helps out sporadically, too.

A Quaker at heart, Allyson grew up in Albany at a Southern Baptist Church. She started attending St. George's eight years ago after the birth of Jonah who was born with RSV (a respiratory virus) and was on a respirator. Her mother-in-law Rosemary Pannone asked Fr. Paul to baptize Jonah in the hospital....the entire congregation prayed for Jonah....and Allyson truly believes this intervention saved his life. And she became a Georgian!

She particularly enjoys working with youth programs. "Some kids have such joy and enthusiasm, and April (Stromberg) is so gentle, so genuine with them. It's a pleasure watching them blossom under her guidance," Allyson offered. "I believe a congregation cannot be vital without families, children and vibrant children's programs, which is why I support April in every way I can. She is such a blessing to us."

Allyson also likes the community spirit at St. George's. "Our congregation is nonjudgmental without losing its Christian focus. They're so giving and strong; they focus on love and acceptance as exploration in an appropriate religious education."

A former high school English teacher, Allyson is a Data Base Administrator for the homeless community in Albany at Cares Inc. It's a demanding job, one that includes travel, but she manages to be in the pew at St. George's at least 2-3 times a month.

On downtime (yes, she does find a few spare minutes for herself!) Allyson likes reading, kayaking, hiking and camping. Her dad is teaching her how to make repairs on the 105-year old house purchased by Allyson and her husband Jonah, like repairing the steps on the front porch. As health care proxy for her elderly aunt and her mom, Allyson is making sure their needs are met. "They spent their lives caring for others, now it's my turn to care for them. I enjoy my time with them."

Allyson Thiessen is never too busy for family, church and children. It's not always easy to squeeze volunteering into the mix, she does it with heart....soul....spirit....and, most importantly, *love*.

lynn paska



IN MEMORIAM

Martha B. Smith
1925 - 2018

"Rest in Peace"

You are missed by your Church family.

FROM THE RECTOR'S STUDY....



This July the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church gathered in Austin, Texas. The General Convention is the governing body of our church which meets every three years. It includes the House of Deputies (elected representatives from each diocese) and the House of Bishops.

At this gathering a number of important decisions were made. Of particular importance was a proposed revision of the Book of Common Prayer. Some Episcopalians feel a revised Prayer Book, with more expansive, gender inclusive language, is necessary. Because the Book of Common Prayer is at the very heart of our worship and life together, such a change would have wide ranging implications for Episcopalians everywhere. The proposed revision was met with reluctance by the House of Bishops. A decision made to, “memorialize the 1979 Book of Common Prayer as a Prayer Book of the church preserving the psalter, liturgies, The Lambeth Quadrilateral, Historic Documents, and Trinitarian formularies ensuring its continued use” (Resolution AD68.)

Additionally, a resolution was passed (DO78) which allows for, optional, alternative, versions of the Rite II Eucharistic Prayers in the 1978 Prayer book to be used until the next comprehensive revision of the Book of Common Prayer. While in some respects cautiously sympathetic to the idea of expansive language in our worship, I am not inclined to use any of these optional alternatives at St. George's.

One reason, among many, why there has been a push for Prayer Book revision is to ensure that marriage rites, inclusive of same-sex couples, will be available for use in every diocese of the Episcopal Church. The last General Convention made such rites available for provisional use at the discretion of the Bishop of each Diocese.

At the July General Convention a resolution, “Marriage Rites for the Whole Church” (8012), was passed which stipulates that these provisional Rites be made available even in dioceses, such as our own, in which the Bishop holds a more traditional theology of marriage. In situations such as our own, the resolution states, “The bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority (or ecclesiastical supervision) shall invite, as necessary, another bishop of this Church to provide pastoral support to the couple, the Member of the Clergy involved and the congregation or worshipping community in order to fulfill the intention of this resolution that all couples have convenient and reasonable local congregational access to these rites” (8012.) It also upholds Canon 1.18.7 which says, “It shall be within the discretion of any member of the Clergy of this Church to decline to solemnize or bless any marriage.”

Our Bishop opposed the passing of 8012 on the grounds that it, “....attempts to severely limit the bishop's role and ministry as chief pastor, priest and teacher of all the people and parishes entrusted to his or her care regarding the sacrament of marriage.” It also violates what he understands to be the clear teaching of Holy Scripture and what the Christian church has always taught about the nature of marriage. He is taking time to reflect on how the resolution will be implemented in the Diocese of Albany.

On September 6th, a meeting of the clergy of our diocese was held at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center. We had the opportunity share our thoughts, feelings, and recommendations with the Bishop. I am not at liberty to discuss what others said, but I can tell you that my own recommendation is that, despite his clear and stated disagreement, he will comply with the resolution. Failure to do so could lead to serious consequences for our diocese. Before the resolution goes into effect on December 2nd, the first Sunday in Advent, the Bishop will release a pastoral letter. Please pray for discernment for our Bishop, that he will make the right decision.

grace and peace, fr. matthew stromberg +

RECTORY PICNIC 2018

Nothing says Independence Day like a big picnic, just like our celebration at the Rectory on July 3rd. Grilled meats, salads, chips and dips, sweet brownies, strawberry shortcake and other delights keep us eating until the sun set.

The hot, steamy evening was not an issue for all the children who chased from one end of the yard to the other, led by Helen and Isaac. What fun to watch them play! Those coolers of drinks were a popular stop.

This year the casino didn't give a show on the 3rd so our only fireworks were fireflies, but no matter. Good food, great conversations, new connections were all around. And lots of tired youngsters! Thank you, Fr. Matt and April, for hosting a wonderful party.

joan pearson



ART SHOW 2018



Showers of blessings fell on the September 8th Art Show this year, as so many pitched in to make the mums sale, recitals, open church, and cafe a success. Jim Wingate generously donated hotdogs, hamburgers, soda and water. Bob McCloskey and Joan Pearson shopped early so that Chef Dave could make his killer corn chowder, meat chili and vegetarian chili. The night before the Art Show, Barb Wengrovius, Sandee Hughes, Marilyn Warner, Joan Pearson, and Audrey Pagan baked cornbread and brownies while Chef Dave prepped the chilis and chowder. Early Saturday, Rich Unger, Steve Hartz, Jon Pearson, Jeff Wengrovius, and JJ Moran set up the front lawn with grills, serving tables and eating tables. In the kitchen, Sue Hartz, Joan, Marilyn, and Chef Dave focused on the food. Once the final canopies, tablecloths and supplies were in place, St. George's al fresco Cafe was ready.

During the day, Tarik Wareh, Steve Hartz, Rich Unger and Jon Pearson shared grilling duty. Alice Pumbo, Betsy Dumas, Suzy Unger and Gerri Moore took orders and served food while Marilyn Warner and Charles Dumas took money. Rick Forshaw had kitchen duty during the busiest hours of 11:00-2:00. Audrey Pagan managed the running and supplying, always with a smile.



Fr. Matt with Gene and Judy DeLong greeted visitors to the church. Cora Wareh sold ornaments for the Heifer Fund at the main door, raising enough money to buy chicks for a farmer!

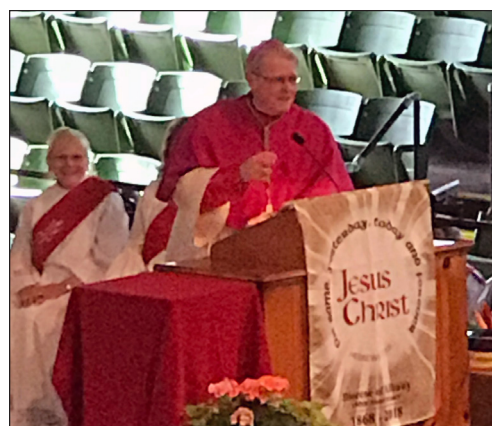
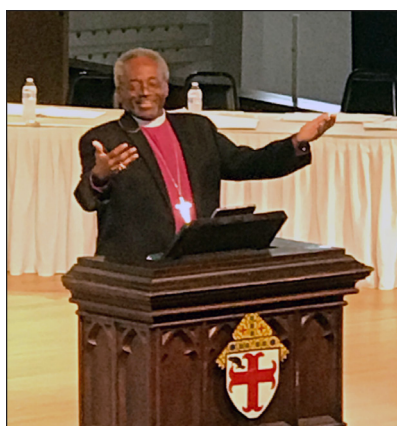
Brandon Dumas organized music in the church, starting at 10:30 with Joan Pearson, then Jeff Wengrovius at 11:30, Daniel White on piano at 12:30, and Brandon at 1:30. By the time the cafe ran out of chowder and burgers, Gene DeLong was ready to clean up. Bob Moran joined in, and soon a contingent cleared everything off the lawn. The kitchen cleanup ensued, and we looked back on the day: everyone had a good time. The wonderful porta-johns arrived. There were no forks (!) but it was ok. We can order more mums next year. More corn chowder! Several customers were disappointed when they arrived after the last of it was served!

Our success relies on donations -- of food, money for supplies, and time to do all the jobs that add up to a smooth day. Nothing can compare to this art show, the joyful street atmosphere and the relaxed way people gather at our cafe and listen to the music in our church, which is different from the other festivals going on. A huge *thank you* to everyone who contributed to this day of smiles.

joan pearson



DIOCESAN CONVENTION



Suzanne Hartz, Richard Unger, Jeffrey Wengrovius, Jonathan Pearson and Robert Paska, along with Fr. Matthew Stromberg, attended the 150th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany at Camp-of-the-Woods in Speculator NY, June 8-10. Our own Bishop William H. Love presided over the annual event with an impressive list of guest speakers that included the Most Reverend Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, and The Most Reverend Edward Scharfenberger, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. It was a weekend of informative workshops and age-appropriate activities, good food, and the opportunity to share time with fellow Episcopalians.

Once again, our Georgians were overnight guests at the Pearson's Camp on Lake Pleasant, a "pleasant" time for camaraderie and reflections from the Convention.

lynn paska

SUMMER FOYERS

Foyers....a group of parishioners who enjoy dinner at each other's homes. The host provides the meal and attendees bring a dish to pass: appetizer, salad, dessert....or, wine.

Chairman Jeff Wengrovius assigns participants into groups of 6-8, with a "captain" hosting the first dinner and making sure others take their turn. Not everyone has the facility for hosting at-home dinners. They could plan something in the Great Hall, or at a restaurant, but it's not mandatory as the primary goal of Foyers is "fellowship" with NO stipulations. Hosts are also encouraged to invite guests (parishioners, family, friends.) While impossible to accept every invitation, Fr. Matt and his family are always included.



This summer, Group #1, headed by Bob and Lynn Paska, started with a poolside bbq on June 17th (see picture) with Ralph and Alice Pumbo, and Jim, Gerri and Jimmy Moore. The Forshaws were also invited (note: Karen brought a salad big enough to feed an army! She and Rick ate leftover salad for several days.) The 2nd dinner was at Jim and Gerri Moore's on July 21st, with their son John "catering" and grilling a delicious meal of salmon, cod, crab cakes and asparagus. The 3rd dinner, with guests Meg Hughes and Lisa Freedman, was at the Pumbo's on September 7th. The bar was set pretty high for Ralph and Alice to host a spectacular meal, and they exceeded the challenge: shrimp with cocktail sauce, Cajun crab dip, filet mignon "on the grill," lobster mac 'n cheese, beets, and 'blue wine' for those with adventurous taste buds.

When the next round of Foyers gets underway, make sure you sign up for this friendly gourmet group.

lynn paska

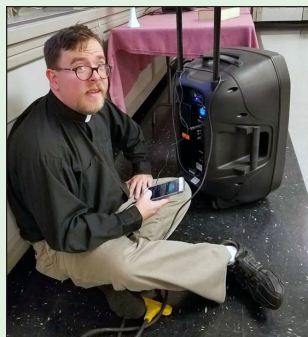
CHILDREN'S ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

New this year: a Summer Enrichment Program for children (August 21-23) from 6-8PM, headed by April Stromberg. Approximately 20 youth enrolled, all with an existing connection to St. George's (regular, new or frequent attendees.) April provided the nightly dinner: salad bar, pasta bar, taco bar.

"Yes! Show up, help out, and love like Jesus" was the curriculum with passages related to the calling of Peter, Andrew, James and John; Martha and Mary; and the Feeding of the 5,000. After dinner, participants broke up into groups....Fr. Matt worked with ages 8-15 while April took charge of those 7 and under. This was followed by activities related to the Bible stories through games; art, music and theatre; and science.

A great week that promoted a feeling of education and fellowship within our youth and their parents.

april stromberg



SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT



As the Rector's Warden, I have been meeting with Fr. Matt every week. We brainstorm ideas for fund-raising, fellowship, adult education, and growing the church (to name just a few topics.) We have some new members and a busy schedule for the Fall which included Back to Church Sunday/Fall Launch/Ministry Fair and our upcoming Caribbean Night.

Please introduce a friend, neighbor or relative to St. George's.
And, remember, I always welcome any ideas!

suzanne hartz

TREASURER & STEWARDSHIP REPORT



I am happy to report that St. George's finances are on budget for 2018 and are in relatively good condition. We kicked off our annual Stewardship campaign on Sunday, September 16th with Back to Church Sunday/Fall Launch/Ministry Fair to make our "time and talent" commitments. As you know, St. George's relies on our many volunteers as the heart and soul of our parish. Spending time with each other serving in our ministries to the glory of God is a key foundation to our church. Fr. Matt, the Wardens, Vestry and I ask each of you to think and pray about how to participate generously with your "time and talent."

As the new treasurer, I have been focused on how to save as much money as possible. We have formed an informal team that I call the "Dragon Slayers." The team members are Fr. Matt, Sue Hartz, Rich Unger, Bob McClosky, and myself. We have systemically reviewed all of our expenses looking for opportunities to save money. So far, we have reduced our annual spending by over \$12,000 with more to come. We have lowered our bills in several key areas, including the copier and paper (\$2,500), health insurance (\$6000), auto-payment of bills (\$200), payroll processing (\$1,200), consolidation of the admin and financial secretary staff positions (\$1,000), phone (\$360), trash (\$540), sexton supplies (\$300), and snow removal (\$1000.) These savings come with no loss of services. In addition, our church has seen a significant increase in the rent of our buildings to outside groups. This rent has grown to almost \$10,000 in the last few years. Kudos go to the "Dragon Slayers" for helping to balance our budget.

Although we are saving as much money as we can, our expenses are still high due to our many buildings. We are still projected to have a budget deficit for 2018 that may necessitate taking some money out of our endowment principal. HOWEVER, with a modest increase in giving, we CAN finish the year in the black. Please help us. In conclusion, THANK YOU for your giving, in all forms!!

blessings, jeff

GOOD NEWS - GOOD LUCK: Andrew Krystopolski has been named Director of Music at the Miami Shores Community Church (United Church of Christ.) Andrew said of his new appointment, "It will be a different way of worshipping from St. George's, but I think it will be a refreshing change for me."



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ALM GOES DIGITAL

In June, members of St. George's Assisted Living Ministry met to review the ministry's status. All aspects of our worship were touched upon with the idea of making improvements in identified areas and keeping our services fresh for all.

One nagging issue has been the difficulty many worshippers have in manipulating paper service booklets to keep pace with the service. The idea of transforming our service to PowerPoint and presenting it digitally was discussed. Fr. Matt didn't think it would be difficult to create PowerPoint service slides, and, in reaching out to our locations, there was enthusiastic encouragement and a generous offer to share technology on-site.

When ALM services began in July the digital age arrived with great success at The Schenectady Center and Kingsway Community. The electronic version was received well by all with everyone acknowledging the improvement to congregant participation. Fr. Matt and Brandon Dumas have coordinated to incorporate the words to our hymns in the program and Fr. Matt keeps the slides varied such as they are relevant to the month's worship topics. An all-around upgrade and success for those attending St. George's ALM services!

alice polumbo



Fr. Matt preparing to begin worship at The Schenectady Center.



Examples of a service slide: a hymn, "Come thou fount of every blessing."



Brandon Dumas proving music while advancing the service slides.

BOOK CLUB

St. George's book club, "All on the Same Page," will meet after Mass on November 11th to discuss *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. It is an engaging tale that explores themes of justice, imprisonment, optimism, and finding one's purpose.

Count Alexander Rostov is the gentleman in question. He is a Russian aristocrat caught in the crosshairs of the Russian revolution and sentenced to house arrest within a luxury hotel. His crime is that he has never worked a day in his life.

While confined in a barren attic room, the Count forestalls despair by immersing himself in the day-to-

day workings of the formerly glorious Metropol hotel. He makes many close friends and finds himself involved with a beautiful woman and her young daughter, Sofia.

As Sofia matures, she relies heavily on the paternal guidance and protection of The Count. But what sort of future can these cultural castoffs expect to enjoy in a country torn by turmoil and strife? Read the book and find out!

Debbie Lambeth selected this book and encourages all interested Georgians to read it and join in the discussion on November 11th. She and **Meg Hughes** welcome any inquiries about the book or the club.

meg hughes



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Brandon Dumas
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Sexton

Caribbean Dinner

St. George's Church
Fundraiser

**Saturday
October 13, 2018**

6pm to 8pm • Live Steel Drum & Music Sponsor PARAGON JEWELER
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30 N. Ferry Street • Stockade • Sch'dy NY
Advance Tickets: \$25 per person

PARAGON JEWELER
Music Sponsor

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A REMINDER: Our Sunday 10AM Mass is videotaped by Rick Forshaw. It is then telecast Sundays at 2PM on Channel 18, Albany and Guilderland.