



# THE GEORGIAN REPORT



*St. George's Church Schenectady, NY*

June 2014

## ST. GEORGE'S DAY



**Sunday, May 19th.....**a concelebrated Sung High Mass at the combined 9AM service.....a Procession in church and around the Stockade Area....St. Andrew's Society Banners....the Schenectady Pipe Band....clergy, acolytes, choir and parishioners....a farewell to Fr. Delos Wampler who has moved to Saratoga.....ending with a delicious Georgian potluck feast of epic portions.

# SCHENECTADY HERITAGE FOUNDATION AWARD



(L-R) Christopher Henry, Richard Forshaw, David Kennison, Fr. Paul Blanch, Mayor Gary McCarthy, Gloria Kishton..

Mayor Gary McCarthy stepped up to the podium at Schenectady City Hall at 3:30PM on May 22nd to announce a tornado warning and issue instructions in case it hit. After a stunned silence, the 80 + people gathered on the 2nd floor of the Rotunda shrugged off this “doom ‘n gloom” announcement to applaud seven recipients of this year’s Schenectady Heritage Foundation award. Fr. Paul Blanch accepted on behalf of St. George’s Church..

Representing St. George’s at the ceremony: Rick Forshaw, Rosemary Pannone, David Kennison, Chris Henry, Christine & Keith Nelson, and Bob & Lynn Paska. In his acceptance, Fr. Paul acknowledged project manager David Kennison, project architect Ron Petito, and Dave Knox from Advanced Construction & Steeplejacks of Red Hook.

Gloria Kishton, president, explained that SHF encourages, promotes and recognizes historic preservation in Schenectady County and congratulated those winners on their restoration of homes, sidewalks, gates, and St. George’s steeple.

*lynn paska*

## YOUTH NEWS

For the 5th consecutive year, Colton Jacquith shaved his head for St. Baldrick’s Children’s



Cancer Appeal and raised over \$2,500 toward pediatric cancer research.

## ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

A tie: congratulations to the winners of the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Sam Whiteman and Liam Weakley. Because it was a rainy day, the young Georgians’ activity was held in the church instead of on the church grounds.





# OUTREACH

**SICM Internship:** Congratulations to Erin Thiessen, our SICM Summer Intern! Erin is looking forward to working with inner city children, inspiring them to make good choices in their lives. With work experience as a cashier at Target, she has taken 5 years of Spanish including a college level course in the subject, is an Honor-roll student at Schenectady High School and treasurer of the Peer Mediation Club. Erin applied to the SICM program as she is seeking to become a more well-rounded person.

SICM interns work in any of the programs, including Food, Summer Lunch, Summer Day Camp, Home Furnishings, or help with overall administration. Interns work up to 240 hours, participate in group meetings, and write two reflective pieces at the conclusion of their experience.

**SICM Lunch Program:** It takes a village to feed children....and that includes Georgians! This summer, sign on for a day or two of serving lunches at Wallingford Park (August 11-15.) SICM serves lunches in parks and on various church lawns during the summer to children and youth from infancy through age 18. In 2013, they served over 53,500 meals to hungry kids! In Schenectady, 80% of children now qualify for free or reduced rate lunches when school is in session, and too many of them would not have regular meals during the summer break. Come, help our children, one lunch at a time.

**Thank you, Georgians....to all who generously donated toiletries for the people served through Bethesda House.** A record number of 44 bags were assembled/delivered as our Lenten project.

**Good Samaritan Ministry:** Since the beginning of 2014, St. George's Good Samaritan Ministry has provided 8 meals, 2 rides, and two days of emergency house cleaning. Twelve church members were involved in these efforts, serving 4 individuals. The program is available to parishioners in need and can be called upon through the weekly volunteer listed in the church bulletin. Good Samaritan volunteers find comfort and fellowship from extending a helping hand to fellow parishioners. The core of volunteers has always stepped in when called, often implementing other helpful measures for the person in need.

**"All on the Same Page" Book Club:** Members recommend summer reading: *Alice Poloumbo - The Engagements*, by J. Courtney Sullivan. *Sandee*

*Hughes - The Rosie Project*, by Graeme Simsion. *Maggie Blanch - The Irresistible Blueberry Bakeshop and Cafe*, by Mary Simses. *Pauline Holmes - A Tale for the Time Being*, by Ruth Ozeki.. *Meg Hughes - The Last Runaway*, by Tracy Chevalier. *Dawn Tonneau - The Thirteenth Tale*, by Diane Setterfield. *Wendy Madelone - The Rent Collector*, by Camron Wright. *Nancy Angus - The Husband's Secret*, by Liane Moriarity. As a favorite pick of our book club-read books for the past year, members suggest *Breakfast with Buddha*, by Roland Merullo.

dawn tonneau

## CHOIR NOTES



(L-R) Dawn Tonneau, Louisa Carr, Izzy Whitehead, Diane Reed, Joan Pearson, Paul Nooney, Art DeLuke, Bob Moran, Rembert Herbert, Sue Hartz, Jeff Wengrovius. Andrew Krystopolski is on the keyboard.

On Sunday, March 2nd, aka "Choir Outreach Sunday"....choir members (above) sang for residents at Kingsway Manor. Prior to that performance, they also sang for residents of Wynwood on Upper Union Street.

The Organ Refurbishment Fundraiser sponsored a Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner on March 16th from 4-6PM. It was "eat in" or "take out", and many took advantage of the latter. Approximately 50 tickets were sold for this tasty event at a profit of \$750.

Members of our St. Cecelia Choir sang in the "Hallelujah Chorus" at First Reformed Church on Friday, May 30th.

## ***THE RECTOR WRITES ..... about Fresh Expressions of being Church***

It is almost a cliché to say that church is not a building, it is people. But when we think of church as people, we often still have the meeting within a church building mainly in mind. As Winston Churchill said, 'First we build our buildings, and then our buildings build us.'

For many people, church is what happens on Sunday morning. Centuries of church practice have made it difficult to imagine church as anything other than a weekly worship gathering. We 'go to church' because we think of church as a meeting. In various places around the world today we are witnessing some very exciting fresh expressions of Church, and these fresh expressions are beginning to challenge the old way of thinking.

We now see community as being at the heart of church life, and many Christians have an understanding of community that is much bigger than a weekly worship event.

Community is built through personal encounters all through the week - individuals eating together, going to a film with each other, or just hanging out with one another online or in real life. People don't 'go to church'; they are church throughout the week through their relationships. The Australian writer, Michael Frost, asks his book (Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture, Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006, p276): "Why can't we think of churching together as a web of relationships? Why are we obsessed with the singular event rather than seeking the rhythm of a community churching together"?

Secondly, church is more than worship. Many Christians have been taught that 'Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.' They have been told that worship is the ultimate means of glorifying God and should be at the center of church life. So much of our church life revolves around worship that other things, like fellowship and mission, take second place (or are almost totally ignored). But this huge emphasis on worship is not always born out in the life of Jesus. Certainly, Jesus spent time in corporate worship and in solitary prayer. But what the Gospel writers stress even more are his public ministry, and his death and resurrection. Presumably it was his entire ministry, and not just his worship, that 'pleased' his Father (Matthew 17.5).

Likewise, The Acts of the Apostles puts the emphasis on the mission of the early church, not its worship. In the wonderful summary of believers' life together, corporate worship is definitely included, but alongside much else such as eating together, meeting daily and sharing possessions (Acts 2.42-47). In Romans 12.1 Paul equates worship with a sacrificial life, not with a worship service. Have many churches elevated corporate worship to too high a position? So how can we find fresh expressions of Church that people can feel are true expressions of what they might call proper church? Church is what happens when people gather round Jesus Christ and I believe at least four things can be expected to happen:

Growth UPward towards God;

Growth INward in fellowship;

Growth OUTward in mission;

Growth in the sense of being part OF the whole body of Christ.

I ask the question can these fresh expressions of Church help Christians expand their vision of church.

Instead of church being like a dysfunctional table with one leg longer than the rest, can we re-imagine church growing in a much more balanced way, with all four dimensions receiving equal attention? What would have to change in our church for this to be true?

Fresh expressions is not about a harsh form of religious imperialism – 'We'll invade your culture and make you Christians!' Therefore mission is much more than an invitation too. Many conventional churches have a 'you come to us' approach to evangelism. The invitation is to join church as members currently like it. But what about a real and relevant fresh expression of church?

Many new forms of Church still have a 'we'll come to you' attitude. They seek to serve other people and, if they want, encourage church to emerge among them. Mission is much more than an invitation to 'what we like'. So, how can we find fresh expressions at St George's that resist parachuting a set model of church on to people new and old. Instead of a preconceived notion of church, maybe we could start with a desire to



express church in the culture of the group and its actual location – this could be really fun and exciting I think here in the Stockade, a neighborhood so rich in diversity. Any Church is shaped by its context, rather than by: ‘This is how we’ve always done it’. One-size-fits-all - must surely give way to creative diversity. Responding to a culture means respecting people’s decision whether or not to journey into the Christian faith. Surely it’s about putting other people first, and being sensitive to their spiritual values, offering them a chance to encounter Jesus Christ if they wish, but respecting their right to take a different spiritual path. In the light of our ongoing grappling with our Parish Survey, I hope that we can meditate on these fresh expression ideas.

*Your friend and priest,*

*Fr Paul*

## PARISH FORUM



A Parish Survey was distributed at the Annual Parish Meeting in January that all Georgians were asked to fill out at their leisure as a gauge of where we - as a church - are: past, present and future. It was an interesting “meeting of the minds” as those who filled out the survey (some 39 parishioners) and those who attended the subsequent Parish Forums (participants varied from 65-80) wrote and spoke eloquently, provocatively and thoughtfully about the questions posed. There was no sugar-coating, no “right” or “wrong” answers, just an honest individual evaluation of where we were, where we are, and where we’re going as a church.

Several Parish Forums have been held since the initial one in March. Each has been productive and the dialogue informative, as Georgians came together as a family and a community to assess St. George’s from various aspects including: our priest, the sermons, the liturgy style, the music, the friend-



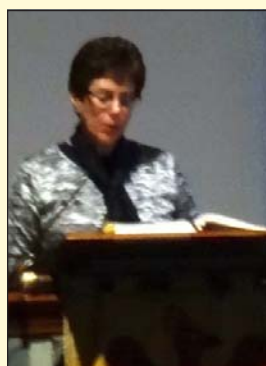
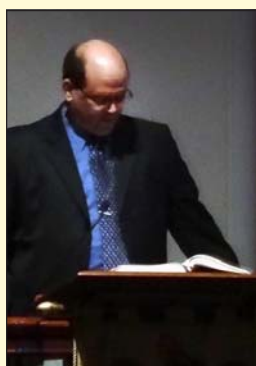
ship and fellowship (including LGBT friendly), and the outreach.

It’s still not too late to secure your own Parish Survey, fill it out, and return it to the Parish office. It’s amazing what you can learn from such a simple exercise....about you, your church, and the direction you mutually want to take in this incredible St. George’s journey.

*lynn paska*



# HOLY WEEK 2014



Ash Wednesday to Easter, Lent was time for spiritual reflection and growth nurtured by discussions of *Les Miserables*, with its themes of love and sacrifice.

Palm Sunday, warm and sunny, began Holy Week with palm crosses, drums and handbells in a singing procession from the Great Hall through the sanctuary. On Wednesday evening of Holy Week the

darkening church echoed with *tenebrae*, a beautiful, meditative service of chanted Psalms. During Maundy Thursday Mass Fr. Paul recreated Jesus' humility by washing the feet of twelve people, as Jesus did. Stripping the altar, keeping watch, attending Good Friday Mass, all prepared us for rekindling the Holy Fire and celebrating Jesus' resurrection with bells and singing and a traditional

Georgian feast after the Great Paschal Vigil. Easter Day echoed with the music of trumpets (thanks to Steve Weisse and Joel Servant), a thundering organ and hearty Alleluias. In his Easter sermon Fr. Paul explained that risen Jesus replaced earthly Jesus for the disciples. In the same way, new things challenge us to change, to not cling to the past; we have a God of surprises.

Andrew Krystopolski showcased several groupings of singers through Holy Week. Palm Sunday's anthems featured women of the St. Cecelia Choir (sopranos Dawn Tonneau, Izzy Whitehead, Julie Decker, Louisa Carr; altos Andrea David, Diane Reed, Joan Pearson.) At Maundy Thursday Mass the St. George's Men's Ensemble (Jeff Wengrovius, Sue Hartz, Andrew Krystopolski, Bob Paska, Bob Moran, Don Ingram) sang the New York State premiere of the Missa de Angelis by contemporary Italian composer Simone Stella. During Tenebrae and Good Friday Mass the Schola Cantorum (Julie Decker, Louisa Carr, Chris Kielb, Joan Pearson, Andrew Krystopolski, Jeff Wengrovius, Bob Moran, Paul Nooney) provided unadorned a capella voices. The full St. Cecelia Choir (including Rembert Herbert) for the first time celebrated at both Masses on Easter Day. Let us all make a joyful noise unto the Lord! Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

*joan pearson*





# AUSTRALIAN BISHOP VISITS ST. GEORGE'S

A week with Bishop Peter Danaher from Australia is like a week *with* sunshine as he came to St. George's armed with books, papers and snippets of information on Church growth, being a healthy Church, and how we consolidate our life together. Approximately 40 parishioners attended the Bishop's 1st open address on Wednesday, June 4th in the Shaw Lounge. After introducing himself and giving a power point presentation, there was a Q&A session. Individual surveys were filled out and returned for collation and use later in the week. On Thursday, June 5th members of the Vestry had a working dinner with Bishop Peter in the Great Hall which expounded on a church theme of "do a few things and do them well," a general theme of "what do you bring to worship today," and a leadership theme of "the vestry as a role model." Discussions included not being afraid of change while preserving what we have, recognizing our specials gifts as a parish, and where do we see ourselves in five years? Ten years? Recommended reading: The Healthy Church Handbook (author Robert Warren) and Re-Pitching the Tent (author Richard Giles.) Saturday, June 7th was another parish-wide meeting at 10AM followed by a social afternoon at the Rectory. The Aussie Bishop's official visit ended with a combined 10AM Mass on Sunday, June 8th and a thought-provoking sermon.



*Your Vestry at Work (L-R) Jon Pearson, Karen Perka, Louisa Carr, Mike Thiessen, Bishop Peter Danaher, Grant Jaquith, Fr. Paul Blanch, Chris Henry, Dawn Tonneau, Rick Forshaw, Bob Paska. Missing from picture: Jeff Wengrovius, Jane Moran.*

*lynn paska*



# ORGAN REFURBISHMENT



For three years, and at a cost of just under \$43,000, the Organ Refurbishment has been “a work in progress.” Fund-raising was a community effort, with several generous individual donors supplementing our “kitty.”

Kerner & Merchant Pipe Organ Builders (East Syracuse) started the work in May. The organ console and various pipes were removed from the choir loft over a 3-day period. The console was disassembled in place and the frame was lowered over the balcony. It is scheduled to be returned the 2nd week in July.

The major portion will be including a computer system, aka brains, of the organ with a Matters Computer System. The new console will have 100 levels of memory so that I, Joan Pearson, Jeff Wengrovius and Don Ingram will have their own storage space for sound combinations that suit our particular repertoire - helpful on days like the Stockade Art Show when multiple organists use the instrument. The new system will have a “playback feature” allowing organists to record themselves and play it back while listening to nuances out in the room. The console will have brand new keyboards, pistons and stops to correspond with the new “direct electric action.” New lighting will be added to the music desk. Pedal board will incorporate new fluorescent bulbs. A “Trumpet en Chemade” will be added to each division of the organ. In addition to the console work, the Choir Mixture pipes will be re-pitched an octave lower; an unwanted 2’ overtone in the Great division eliminated; 16’ Contrabass and 16’ subbass in the pedal division will be revoiced to support the upper work of the organ.

The events committee has a weekend of celebration planned. September 19th - Organ Recital at 7:30PM with Mark Laubach, . FREE reception to follow. September 20th - 10AM Organ Master Class with Mr. Laubach, sponsored by the Eastern NY Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Saturday evening, 6PM, Gala Dinner at The Stockade Inn. September 21st - “Back to Church Sunday,” 10AM Mass, bless and re-dedication of the Organ with festive coffee hour to follow. Sunday, 4PM, “The Postlude Recital” with organist Simone Stella of Florence Italy.

*andrew krystopolski*

## - WARDEN REPORT -



### 1st prize Float: the plane from Fantasy Island.

The Spirit of St. Louis was turned into a tropical island plane. Again, for all involved there were many hours of decoration on this float, making it into a water plane from Fantasy Island. The crew included (Chris Henry as Mr. Roarke and Liam Weakley as Tattoo), Samantha Whiteman, Chloe Tonneau and friends, Ava Weakley and Trevor Weakley were accompanied by Grandma Karen Forshaw, Sunday Whiteman, Jennafer Thiessen, with Andrew and William. Thanks to Ben & Dawn Tonneau for carrying the St. George's banner. Thanks to Jason Benoit for helping with the sound system, redesign and painting. Whether you were there or not, the crew of St. George's was out to win! Many thanks to those who helped in the making or painting of the float/plane again this year.



- We are getting prices for the painting and refinishing of the floor in the organ loft while the organ is being refurbished offsite.
- We have scheduled the removal of the dead tree in front of the church.

*rick forshaw*



# SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

"It's important to be a volunteer," Sunday Whiteman answered when asked why she volunteers at St. George's. "It's not just about going to Mass on Sunday, but becoming more involved," she added. Sunday is on the Altar Guild roster and does Visitations with Fr. Paul. In the community, she has volunteered at Ellis Hospital....visiting patients, and, when needed, transporting them to Radiology.

Samantha Whiteman follows in her mother's footsteps by volunteering at St. George's, too. She was a soprano in the St. Nicholas Children's Choir "...because it was a way to express myself, by singing to God." Currently serving as an Acolyte she has also been trained as a Crucifer. Sam enjoys both although she said that being an Acolyte is more challenging to her.

Sunday and Sam support most church functions, whether it's an Italian night event or a potluck after church. No matter how cold or rainy the weather, they've marched with our award-winning floats in the Gazette's holiday parade and recently in the NiskaDay Parade. Sunday always willing to "pitch in" when clean-up is needed in the kitchen. Georgians for almost five years, they are familiar faces around our campus. We've watched with pride as Sam matured from a young girl to a young adult, taking her church responsibilities willingly and seriously.

With deep regret and affection, we say "goodbye" to Sunday and Sam as they move from



the Great Northeast to the Pacific Coast. With family in San Diego, it was time. Sunday said she will miss St. George's "....a lot" and the fall season in New York State with its beautiful fall foliage. An 8th grader at Central Park International Magnet School, Sam is looking forward to the warmer weather in California, being near the ocean, and she's excited to be starting high school in the fall.

We will miss Sunday and Sam's enthusiasm, and hope they will stay in touch with their Georgian family in Schenectady.

*lynn paska*

## EPISCOPAL EDUCATION

(Sabbatical)

Due to the wealth of news, photos and parish activity in this issue of The Georgian Report, our faithful Episcopal Education columnist has graciously agreed to skip this issue. The popular EE column returns in September.

In the meantime, we'd like to solicit ideas for future EE columns from you. Do you have a question that has been nagging at you that you would like us to address? How about a suggestion for a column that you think would be of general interest to everyone? Ideas should be related to the Episcopal Church, history, liturgy or another appropriate topic. Your ideas could be specific to St. George's but should be of general interest for our congregation. If you're not sure, submit your thoughts anyway, give it a try and we'll see what happens. So dig down and send your suggestions to the editor. Chip in and make Episcopal Education your column.



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## **- VISITATIONS -**

One aspect of the Pastoral Care Ministry that tries to touch every member of the parish family is our Card Ministry. Every Sunday we all see the list of birthdays and anniversaries for the coming weeks, and everyone on that list gets a card commemorating that important day. But is that all there is and when did we start doing this?

The Card Ministry developed almost accidentally. Many years ago when a new priest came to St. George's, there were some who were resistant to him and the changes taking place. A few were so upset that they refused to let the priest or any member of Pastoral Care into their homes for a visit. Even phone calls were rejected, but the committee still wanted to maintain some type of relationship with these individuals. We decided that although these disenchanted members had a right to refuse to allow us to visit, the US mail still came everyday. So, we began to send cards on significant dates - birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, Easter and any other opportunity for communication. By the Grace of God our efforts bore fruit. At first the committee received thank you notes for the cards but, more importantly, several of these individuals and families returned to regular church attendance.

As our experience with visitations increased, we noticed that we rarely saw cards in the homes and nursing facilities. So we added these folks to our list. Eventually we realized that everyone likes to feel recognized, so we transitioned to the current practice of sending cards to every member of our Parish on their birthday and/or anniversary.

At present there are three members of the committee that send cards. In addition to birthdays and anniversaries, we send sympathy, thinking of you, get well, and other special event cards. Each month 20-25 cards are sent and when you add in the cards for Easter and Christmas, the total approaches 500.

We are grateful to Donna Vrooman who provides us with the dates and addresses that make our process easier. We are also thankful to parish members who from time to time give us their extra cards. And while it is not why we do it, it is nice to hear a quick "thank you for the card." It is gratifying to know our efforts make a difference.

*jim wingate*