



# THE GEORGIAN REPORT



St. George's Church Schenectady, NY

September 2017

## MASS ON THE GRASS



Approximately 48 people braved the elements (60-degree temperatures, soggy ground due to relentless rains) and nonetheless enjoyed St. George's *Mass on the Grass* on Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at 9AM. The unexpected happened at the beginning when the incense outside triggered our alarm system, and the fire department came roaring down Ferry Street, stopping in front of our west doors, making sure that all was well, and filing a progress report. But the Mass went on as scheduled, our choir sang beautifully after their summer vacation, and parishioners then walked over to the Great Hall for coffee and conversation.

*lynn paska*



# OUTREACH

We served lunch for one week at 5<sup>th</sup> & Congress Streets, home of Wallingford Park (August 14-18) during SICM's Summer Lunch Program. Those who participated were: Suzy Unger, Dot Dever, JJ and Bob Moran, Diane Reed, Ralph and Alice Pumbo, Joan and Jon Pearson, Cora and Tarik Wareh, Fr. Matt, April and Helen Stromberg.

Louisa Carr is coordinating our back-to-school supplies. There is a basket at the back of church for donations.

Colton Jaquith was St. George's placement in SICM's summer intern program. He spoke positively about his experience as a Steinmetz camp counselor. Colton invited his father, Grant Jaquith, U.S. Attorney with the U.S. Attorney's Office, to be guest speaker at an open dialogue session with the youths. He was met with great enthusiasm and many thought-provoking questions.

Our Assisted Living Ministry (ALM) has returned to its regular schedule of services at our four locations after taking the month of June off. It is going well, both in terms of Georgian participation and the consistency of our "congregations" at our locations.

*alice pumbo*

## ST. GEORGE'S FUNDRAISER



Fun and Fund-raising at Canvas, Corks & Forks in Schenectady on Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> starting at 7PM to benefit St. George's. The assignment was to create a picture of our beloved church that would be suitable for hanging. A good time was had by those budding Georgian artists as they painted, sipped and supped their way to a new hobby or career. And several of the paintings were put up for sale at the Stockade Art Show, with two of the paintings proudly displaying SOLD signs.

*lynn paska*



# SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

Give April Stromberg a lot of credit: she's working HARD to resuscitate our Christian Education/Sunday School Program. One way is by making herself visible in the community. But most important is by her love of teaching, especially religious instruction to children.

Sunday School at St. George's starts at 10:15 and ends at 10:45; children (between ages 3 and 9) participate with adults in the beginning of the Mass, go to Christian Ed in the Great Hall then return to church before communion. In the Episcopal Church, there are four readings (according to the Lectionary) appointed for each Sunday. April coordinates with Fr. Matt and teaches one of the four readings to the children. "Some passages are too adult," she explained, which is why at times she must pick a different reading than the passage discussed in the homily. She uses The Jesus Storybook Bible whenever possible, but also pulls from a variety of resources to make the appointed scripture accessible to young people. There's always a craft pertinent to the story, and a connection to what was learned.



As a new mom in town last year, April wanted Helen and Isaac to meet other children their age....and she wanted to meet other moms and dads. Being friendly and outgoing, she spoke with parents like herself at playgrounds, the library, etc., and felt that St. George's would be a good meeting place. With the eventual help of other mom-friends, she organized the Schenectady Moms' Groups (approximately 50 signed up so far at <https://www.meetup.com/Schenectady-Families-Meetup/>). Playdates and parties were scheduled such as a December 31 New Year's "countdown until noon," a St. Patrick's Day Party, and craft time for Mother's Day gifts. This has helped her to publicize church events such as a Christmas Eve Pageant at 4 o'clock Mass, a Valentine's tea for moms with crafts for children, and an Easter Egg Hunt on our campus. Her efforts have resulted in children and families feeling welcome at St. George's.

April did not become a Christian until high school but when she did, it was *wholeheartedly*. Although she FEELS like an Episcopalian, her Christianity began in a Moravian church (one of the oldest Protestant church in the world), and morphed into campus ministry in college where she developed a love of teaching religion. A middle school teacher (history and Spanish) for many years, her goal at St. George's is to educate small children in worship and what the Mass is all about. "Church is place where they're seen, known, loved and welcomed. Where they can grow and be instructed in the gospel."

Applying teaching skills to Christian Education, April - who has Sunday School support from Allyson Thiessen and Barb Wengrovius - ended with a passionate, "I want children to be surrounded by people who love the Lord. It made a huge difference in my life, and I want to instill that in them." Parents of children of all ages are encouraged to join April Stromberg's Sunday School classes at St. George's.

*lynn paska*

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Our rector was one of twelve speakers at the Sesquicentennial Service of Christ Church, Schenectady on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 10AM. He made the comparison that (professionally) Christ Church/St. George's and (personally) Fr. Brad Jones/Fr. Matt Stromberg are like "the odd couple." Then he brought the house/church down with his parting remark: "I'll let you decide which is which, but remember, I'm the one wearing the surplice with lace."

## FROM THE RECTOR'S STUDY....



We live in an era absolutely saturated with advertisements. It seems like everyone wants a piece of our time and money. In the church office, we get calls every day from people wanting to sell us something or asking our support for their project or organization. Many of them are fine organizations. Sometimes they have great deals. That fact is, however, that our resources are limited. We couldn't possibly contribute money and time to all of them.

I think there is a difference between a sincere invitation and a sales pitch. Why should we invite others to church? If it is just about growing our attendance and contributions, we will never be effective. We will just be one more sales pitch, one more demand on their time and resources.

Sharing our faith should be about loving care and expansive joy not solicitation. There is a difference between a door to door piano salesman and someone who inspires others with their passion for music. Inviting others to church should be more like the latter. Reaching out to others is about connecting with what we truly love about our faith and what motivates us.

What do you love about Saint George's? Why is coming to worship important to you? More fundamentally, what does God mean to you? What is it about Christ that makes you want to follow him? What can following Christ as a member of St. George's do for your neighbor? Take some time to think these questions over and then pray about who God might be leading you to reach out to. Remember, this is more than just a sales pitch, it is sharing your heart with someone you care about. Think about how they will be enriched in sharing what we have. Think of how we will be enriched in sharing what they have.

Jesus invites us to have a relationship with him, to be his disciples, and rest in his love. He says, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

If we have found joy in Christ, if we have found rest for our souls, what more natural thing is there to do than to invite those whom we love to do the same? When Saint Andrew met the Lord, "the first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon (Peter) and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ)." It was Andrew who introduced Peter to Jesus. Peter was called by Jesus the rock upon which he would build his church. How could the church ever have stood unless men like Andrew shared their faith? How much poorer would Peter's life have been if Andrew never reached out to him?

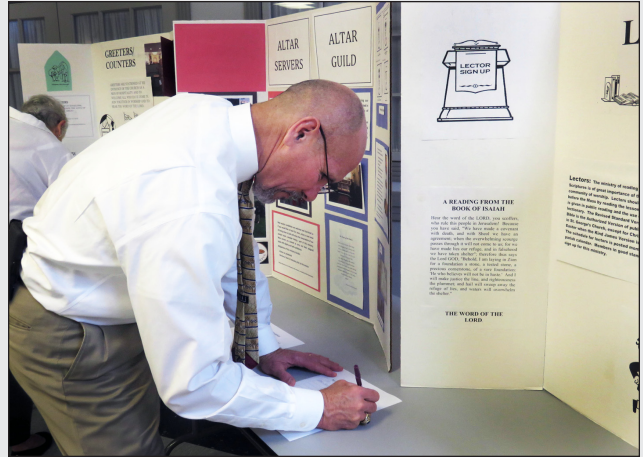
This month our stewardship campaign begins at St. George's. Stewardship is about so much more than collecting money to keep the lights on. Stewardship is about what we do with what God has given us. Yes, that includes our money but it also includes our time and our gifts. It is our whole response to the grace of God in Christ. What will you do with the truth God has shared with you? Will you speak that truth to the powerful? Will you share it with those who are searching? Will you hide your light under a bushel or place it on a stand for all to see?

Our congregation has been blessed with a beautiful, historic, church building and an amazing property. We should share it with others. We should spread our wealth around. More than that, we have been blessed with an extraordinary rich faith and the miraculous presence of God in the word and sacraments. These are meant to be shared with the world, placed on a stand, and not hidden under a bushel. God wants to bless your neighbors, family, and friends with all of these things. He has given us the responsibility of reaching out to them and inviting them.

I invite you to take an inventory of how God has blessed you through St. George's in the past. Consider all the things that have made St. Georges such a great parish. I invite you also to imagine the possibilities of the future. Who do you see there with us?

*grace and peace, fr. matthew stromberg+*

# START UP SUNDAY



Start-Up Sunday is a big day in the life of St. George's, and an opportunity for all Georgians to volunteer for ongoing ministries that interest them throughout the year.

It always includes a potluck in the Great Hall as Episcopalians....especially parishioners from St. George's....*l-o-v-e* to share their culinary expertise, and eat!

This year, we had a very special guest: Fr. John Wengrovius from Colorado....yes, Jeff's brother....who gave a stewardship talk during our Rite I Mass at its new 10 o'clock worship time.

This is an exciting season for Georgians to add their time, talent and treasure to the growth of St. George's. You can sign up to be an Acolyte, Lector, Greeter, Counter, Altar Guild, Sunday School, Outreach, Assisted Living Ministry, Choir, A/V Room, Hospitality, Communications, Book Club, Bible Study, Theology on Tap, Foyers Dinners, and a myriad of other volunteer options.

It's the beginning of the end of 2017 and the start of a bright 2018 with all that a new year has to offer parishioners.

P.S. It's never too late to add your name to a ministry.

P.P.S. And, it's never too late to increase your yearly pledge.

*lynn paska*

# ART SHOW 2017



St. George's during the Stockade Art Show on September 9<sup>th</sup> was the place for friendly faces, great music and good food. Judith Smith, Dot Dever and Susannah Sherwood greeted visitors to the church, who often chatted with Fr. Matt or David Kennison. For the Organ Festival, Andrew Krystopolski scheduled local recitalists: Jeff Wengrovius starting at 10:30, then Edee Silva, Justan Foster, Brian Hoffman, Joan Pearson, and himself. With Judith and Dot handing out programs for each 1/2 hour recital, more people sat down to enjoy the music instead of just looking and leaving. Judith estimated that more than 600 visitors came through the church.

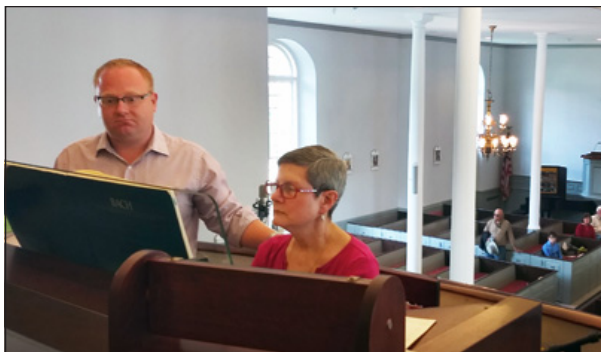


Many hands made St. George's Cafe a success, with Kevin Grace preparing chowder, chili, lists, and diagrams; Sandee Hughes, Barb Wengrovius and Marilyn Warner baking cornbread and brownies; through Jon Pearson, Gene DeLong and Tarik Wareh grilling and deep frying; to Barb Wengrovius and Jane Moran cleaning the pots and the kitchen. The absence of Jim Wingate and Kevin due to travel meant servers Greg Thomas, Judy DeLong, Patty Wareh and Alice Polumbo had to be patient with my single set of legs (though JJ Moran arrived to do the heavy lifting.) Joan Bessarab and Marilyn Warner again took care of money and used Faiz and Cora Wareh for whatever errands they could do. Suzy Unger, Susannah Sherwood and Jamie Taft handed out mums. At the end Chris Henry, Ralph Polumbo, Bob Moran, Meg Hughes and Anne Kennison helped Jon, Jeff, Greg and Tarik move everything off the lawn and into the Great Hall. Throughout the day our new sextons, Jeremy and Sondra Kravetz, pitched in as needed and loved the whole atmosphere of their first Art Show.



We had porta potties in the parking lot (finally.) We were the gathering place for everyone who attended the Art Show. We had fabulous music and a place to sit down in a relaxed atmosphere. Art Show Day is always a time of smiles and a day for St. George's to shine. The Cafe plus the sale of mums made about \$1,900. A thousand thanks to all those who contributed time, talent, supplies or money to this lovely day.

*joan pearson*



## BOOK CLUB

What are you reading? If you have read some interesting books, and think you might enjoy discussing them with fellow Georgians, consider joining “All On the Same Page.” It’s a low-pressure book club that meets every other month after Mass.

If you haven’t read much of anything lately, then you *really* need to join the book club! Some members read constantly and others only pick up a few books a year. Either way, attending book club meetings is a great way to socialize, rekindle an interest in reading, and learn about a range of literature.

As one devoted member recently noted, “I have read titles that I never would have entertained reading....and I have gained insights that I’d have otherwise missed. I’ve also enjoyed the fellowship and the shared passion for reading.”

At the last meeting, held September 24<sup>th</sup> following 10AM Mass in the Library of the Great Hall, members discussed *The Underground Railroad* by Colin Whitehead. Keep an eye on the Sunday bulletins to learn about other selections throughout the year. Questions about “All On the Same Page” may be directed to Meg Hughes, Sandee Hughes, or Alice Pumbo. meg hughes

## CORPUS CHRISTI



Georgians celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi during Mass on Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. This is a joyful time of the gift of the Lord’s Real Presence - his true Body and Blood - in the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist.

**The Role of the Laity** *Concluding our exploration of the ministry of the Church we examine the role of the laity - those not ordained as bishops, priests or deacons. If the role of bishops is as chief priest and diocesan pastor, and the role of priests is as a pastor to the people and the role of deacons is one of servanthood, then what is the role of the laity? We examine this ministry and lay persons' interrelationships with bishops and the clergy and how they are all required to build and grow God's church.*



**Ministry of the Laity** From the Catechism - *"The ministry of lay persons is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church."*

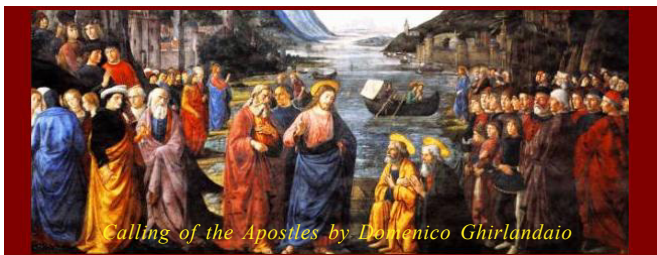
Laity derives from the Greek *laos* "the people", meaning the people of God. All baptized Christians *"are the people of God, the church, a royal priesthood, a holy nation"* [1 Pt 2:9-10]. All baptized persons are members of the Body of Christ, the Church, but with different functions and ministries [Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:12]. All Christian ministries and vocations represent specific ways of living out our baptismal covenant (BCP, pp. 304-305).

The Church would not exist without lay persons. Bishops and clergy alone have no purpose without a flock to lead and people to do God's work in the world. That is why the catechism lists the ministers of the church as lay persons, bishops, priests and deacons – in that order. Roles overlap, but the laity have a distinct and separate role from the clergy in fulfilling the mission of the Church.

Unfortunately, a clerical focus can cause a view that ordained clergy are the only real ministers of the church and laity are somehow called to a Christian mediocrity, divided between the sacred and the secular. Increasing appreciation of lay ministry has accompanied a renewed emphasis on the significance of baptism, and a growing understanding that the various ministries of the church can support and uphold one another. The ministries and orders of the church are to be complementary - not mutually exclusive. The BCP encourages the participation of all orders of ministry in the worship of the church.

**The Origin of the Laity's Ministry** All baptized persons are expected to minister in Christ's name. The priesthood of the laity is by virtue of Holy Baptism (recall the congregation's pledge at baptism *"We receive you into the house of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood."*) The laity, as a part of the Mystical Body of Christ, are called to intercede with one another and to worship God the Father. The source of this worship is at Holy Eucharist, when the laity join with the priest as he consecrates the bread and the wine to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ the High Priest, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians [4:11-12] said that *"...his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..."* We are all called to build up and edify of the body of Christ.

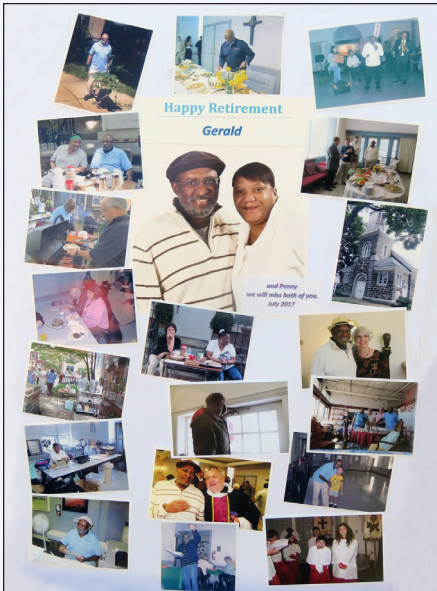


Jesus called the apostles to enlist and train others in order to carry out the mission of the Church. As Jesus called the twelve together, he taught them and later sent out seventy others to accomplish the mission. As Christians we are all called to this ministry or priesthood – not just clergy. Each of us has a responsibility to proclaim the Good News and reach out to others in love. The work of ministry is more than just

preaching. Ministry includes praying, teaching, giving, helping. When members are equipped for the work of ministry, they touch the lives of lost people outside the Church in a meaningful way. Every Christians is a witness and through their witness, the lost are brought to Christ. The laity leads the work of evangelism.

**The Laity Today** The ministry of the laity is "to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church". Much of the ministry of the laity takes place outside the church. It is through their continuous participation in secular life that the laity accomplishes its mission. Churches today are much different than they were several decades ago. Those of us caught up in that change may bemoan it, but change never stops, nor should it. We must embrace it and be a part it. If we truly love the Church, our parish and our God, we have a solemn obligation through our baptismal vows to stay in the game. david kennison

# GERALD'S RETIREMENT PARTY



Parting is *NOT* “sweet sorrow” ....it’s devastating! When our beloved sexton Gerald Cooper decided to retire after twelve years at St. George’s, it was a blow to a parish that loved him and considered Gerald and Penny an integral part of our congregation. But Georgians banded together with a retirement party to end all retirement parties on Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup>! A cookout in the backyard of the rectory included *standard* hot dogs, hamburgers, salads and *not-so-standard* steamed clams, mac ‘n cheese, and several unusual shrimp-based dishes. Food, conversation and camaraderie flowed like water (of which there was plenty to drink....including plain, carbonated and flavored.) Desserts, cards, gifts and unlimited hugs went around as Gerald promised to “keep in touch” from his Louisiana destination.

*lynn paska*





## - TREASURER'S REPORT -

A brief update of St. George's finances as we enter the final third of 2017.

Pledge income was running about 9% under budget at \$62,193 through the end of July. Our endowment income was about 17% over budget at \$69,337 (still expected to be on budget by year-end.) Overall, our income through July was 6% over budget at \$150,338.

On the expense side, we have saved a substantial amount of money by not having an Administrative Assistant since the end of April. We do, however, hope to hire someone soon to fill this position, so the savings will not continue. Another area of savings for the future is for our sexton. Gerald retired in July. We have hired two people - Sondra Kravetz and her son Jeremiah - to replace Gerald. We anticipate savings because, unlike Gerald who worked full time, Sondra and Jeremy will be part-time employees who will not receive health insurance or be included in the pension plan.

Overall expenses through July were \$150,743 (very close to our income for the same period.) I would love to see us continue running a minimal deficit, but we do need to hire an Administrative Assistant, and the heat bills will come back shortly so we will see our deficit expand as we move toward year-end.

*jon pearson*

## PICNIC AT CAMP PEARSON



Jon and Joan Pearson welcomed Georgians from infant to adult at their Adirondack camp on July 22<sup>nd</sup> for a no-worries-allowed day. We feasted on chips and salads, hot dogs and hamburgers, delicious cakes and cookies, and of course watermelon. The lake, naturally, was most entertaining with tubing and boating for Colton, Matt and Ryan, ducks and pebbles for Helen and Isaac. Everyone able swam to the raft and then ate some more. Gene and Judy DeLong, Joan Bessarab, Ann Duff, Jim Wingate, Carol Rothenberg and Jamie Taft visited while Louisa Carr and Paul Smiegelski passed young James to eager sets of arms. Chris Henry, Grant Jaquith, Rich Unger, and the Strombergs enjoyed a day without emergencies. It wasn't easy to keep still for our picture!! Look for photos on the St. George's website.

*joan pearson*



## - VISITATIONS -

### *SEE SOMETHING - SAY SOMETHING*

Given events like the recent tragedy in Barcelona, we are continually reminded if you see something - say something. We are asked to be vigilant because one never knows when something we report could make an important difference. This request for your help is nothing new for members of St. George's parish as for nearly 20 years our priests and members of the Pastoral Care Committee have been asking for you to do a similar thing on the local level. Please, I am in no way trying to equate what we have been here with the dangers we face in today's world but in both instances you can make a difference.

In as many ways as we can, we have asked for your help in identifying people who could benefit from visits by your Rector or members of the Pastoral Care Committee. While our Rector and committee members are always trying to be aware of those who need our services, there are many more eyes and ears in the congregation that may know things we do not.

We respond when we get notice from the hospital or a family member calls informing us that a parishioner is admitted. However, with privacy rules hospitals often are not allowed to call us and family members can be overwhelmed caring to their loved one and thus forget to call. Or they just assume that we already know. When someone is absent from church and we do not know why, we do follow up with a phone call, but it may be two or three weeks before we call. Often we learn that someone needs a visit from a friend or neighbor. If you think someone should be visited but don't know if they are already on our list of visitations, ASK. Never hesitate to bring someone to our attention. Call the church office, call or talk to Fr. Matt, call or talk to me or Joan Bessarab. In essence - *SAY SOMETHING*.

Our mission is to serve those who cannot be at church. We want those we visit to be reminded that they are still part of St. George's Parish Family. We want them to know that others care about them as individuals worthy of our time and effort. We want them to receive the Blessed Sacrament of Communion. And, yes, we check on their well being and can notify family if conditions seem to be deteriorating.

But we can do none of this if we are not aware of the need. Do not assume we know. Say something because you never know when your suggestion or information, while it may not save the world, will make a world of difference in the quality of someone's life.

*jim wingate*

## GUEST SOLOIST



Soprano Carolina Medina, who recently completed her freshman year as a vocal performing major at The Crane School of Music, was guest soloist at our 9AM Mass on Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup>. Our music director Andrew Krystopolski also accompanied Miss Medina afterwards at a special coffee hour as

she performed arias and art songs from Spain, Italy, Germany and England.





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## FIRST HOLY COMMUNION



Gavin, Carter and Clancy Dibble, who participated in the Feast of Corpus Christi, on Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, received their First Holy Communion and were welcomed into the St. George's family.

## GUEST CLERGY



Dynamic speaker Deacon Howard Smith (Christ Church, Schenectady) gets his points across at St. George's.



**A REMINDER:** Our Sunday 9AM Mass is videotaped by Rick Forshaw. It is then telecast Sundays at 4:30PM, Thursdays at 10AM and Fridays at 2PM on SACC-16 TV as well as Sundays at 2PM on Channel 18, Albany and Guilderland.