

SCHENECTADY

At St. George's, a reminder of Easter season

Stations of the Cross take place every Saturday throughout Lent

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Members Alice Polumbo, left, and Meg Hughes, both of Guilderland, sing during the Stations of the Cross at St. George's Episcopal Church, on North Ferry Street in Schenectady, on Saturday morning. See a photo gallery at dailygazette.com.

A small but dedicated group of Christian faithful turned out at St. George's Episcopal Church Saturday morning for a reminder of the reason for the Easter season.



ERICA MILLER/GAZETTE PHOTOGRAPHER
 Paintings by a St. George's parishioner
 represent different Stations of the Cross.

David Kennison, retired senior warden of the historic church in the Stockade, led a procession around the Stations of the Cross, as he does each Saturday morning during Lent at 10:30 a.m.

Though the schedules vary, the Stations of the Cross is a common ceremony at Roman Catholic, Episcopal and other

churches in the weeks leading up to Easter, which this year will fall on March 27.

The ceremony involves a procession past 14 paintings — or “stations” — that are hung on the church wall and depict the events of Good Friday, from the moment when Jesus Christ was condemned to death until his body was removed from the crucifixion cross.

The oil-on-wood-panel paintings are new. They were done by Niskayuna artist Gerri Moore, a member of the congregation, and mounted last fall.

The paintings themselves, however, aren't the point, though they show such anguishing moments as when Jesus fell three times while carrying the cross up to the site of his crucifixion.

Because St. George's is between rectors, Kennison led the ceremony, which involved spiritual readings, song and prayer.

“We come for the reflection and contemplation,” said Meg Hughes of Guilderland, one of two parishioners to attend on Saturday. “It's not about the beautiful pictures, it's what they depict.”

While the audiences are sometimes larger, Kennison said a small number is more conducive to contemplation and prayer.

Congregation member Alice Polumbo of Guilderland accidentally came across the ceremony

last Saturday, while doing other work for church. “It’s a very meaningful part of Lent, so I came back this week,” she said after the ceremony.

Kennison said the ceremony has been moved between weeknights and Saturdays over the years in hope of boosting attendance. He expects the number of people attending to rise as Easter approaches. The ceremonies are open to anyone.

St. George’s, on North Ferry Street, is the oldest church building in the city, having been erected in 1735. It currently has about 150 members, but it struggles with attendance — as Kennison said all inner city churches do.