



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



Volume 13 Number 4

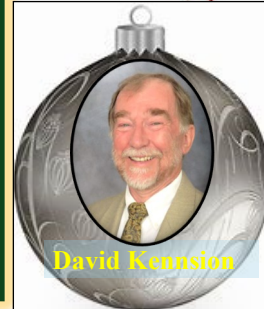
St. George's Episcopal Church Schenectady NY

December 2021



Joan Pearson

**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO
OUR ST. GEORGE'S FAMILY
FROM THIRTEEN FULL
YEARS OF THE GEORGIAN
REPORT'S STAFF AND
REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS**



David Kennison



Sandee Hughes



Alice Polumbo



Jeff Wengrovius



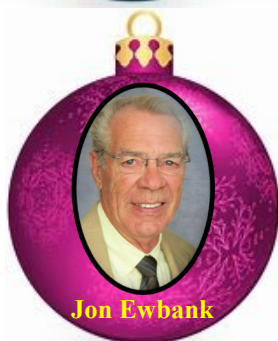
Brian Taylor



Lynn Paska



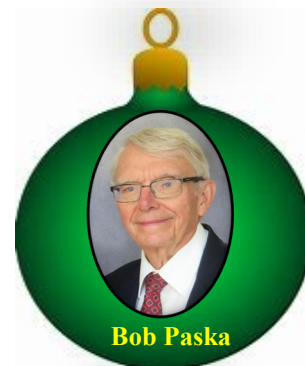
Jim Wingate



Jon Ewbank



Meg Hughes



Bob Paska



BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Senior Warden David Kennison and Music Director Brian Taylor presided over this year's Blessing of the Animals at St. George's on Sunday, October 10th. This event, honors St. Francis of Assisi (an Italian deacon and monk) who possessed a great love of animals, plus a profound appreciation of the beauty of God's world.

Area pets and their families gathered at the west doors of St. George's at 3PM for a brief pet-inspired service of prayer and a blessing. Many returnees and several newbies: Peter (a rabbit) with his human, Crystal. Bo Jack, a rescue Akita, and L'il Man, a Jack Russell mix, with their "mom" Tina; all live in the Stockade area. Hope, a Papillon, with his owner, Mary, came from Scotia. Rich Unger, a Georgian, brought his Golden Doodle, Cody, who wouldn't keep quiet! Three guinea pigs (Sylvia, Harriet and Charlotte) with the Wajda family. (NOTE: one of the three refused to leave the comfort of her cage.) Jessica and her Rottweiler, Missy. And, Corduroy, a Cairn Terrier, with his humans, Ann and David, who attend every year.

"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, eternal King, for making every creature that lives in earth and sea and sky."

lynn paska





SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

If versatility is the key to being an outstanding volunteer, that suits Barbara Wengrovius to a "t". A Georgian since 1981, she became involved in various ministries....including Sunday school, gardens, hospitality, and "...whatever was needed."

Teaching Sunday school for 30 years, she relinquished her role in 2019. "There comes a time when we need a change," she said. "I was tired, but I was grateful for all the volunteers, especially Sandee Hughes who was an integral part of it." Adding that the kids were fun, Barb believed they needed to feel like part of the church community. "I wanted families to know their kids were important. Sunday school wasn't just a place to keep them upstairs, to keep them quiet and engaged....it was about *their* church life." And, she quipped, "It kept me out of trouble, too." A former Vestry member who fulfilled two terms, Barb likes interaction with parishioners but prefers being a "worker bee" instead of the responsibility of a leadership role. Because of Chris Henry, she became involved in Hospitality....and still is an important part of this ministry under chairperson Sandee Hughes.

"I do whatever is needed whenever it's needed," she offered. For many years, she headed the former annual Christmas Tea fundraiser. Since gardening is a personal interest, Barb works tirelessly on the gardens at St. George's. "It wasn't officially a ministry until three years ago when Meg Hughes took it on. There's growth in the gardens, and we have a good group working together. We take on a space that needs attention." Barb also likes crafting, walking her dog (Wilson), photography, and reading. As if she isn't busy enough, Barb has worked part-time for over a dozen years as head cashier in the book store at SUNY Schenectady. Married since 1977 to Jeff, our current Treasurer at St. George's, they have two grown children: Erin, who lives in Croton-on-the-Hudson with her husband Alex, and Sam, who is temporarily living back home with them in Scotia. Their 2nd home on Nantucket is a rental where they vacation with family and friends several times a year. Barb is not a beach person "...but everyone else is, and we have fun playing games at night." The Wengrovius' also have a timeshare in Hawaii where they indulge in a yearly get-away. What does she like best about St. George's? "The whole package deal....a very caring community, the liturgy, the music." What does she like least about St. George's? "When politics gets involved. I believe in tolerance and acceptance." What changes would she like to see? "More involvement and Sunday school growth."

Barb calls herself "a scary person, a dull person." But she knows her worth: she likes to meet new people, and is always there to help anyone in need...as is evident by her years of volunteering in so many ways as a Georgian.



lynn paska



Book Club Resumes January 16

Members of St. George's book club, "**All on the Same Page**," will convene in the Shaw Lounge after church on Sunday, January 16, to discuss *This Is Happiness* by Niall Williams. It is a novel set in rural Ireland circa 1960. See Meg Hughes if you have inquiries about the club or the book.

GUEST CELEBRANTS



(L-R) October 10th - **THE REV. JOHN WENGROVIUS**, (retired) Diocese of Colorado; Canon of the Church of Southern Malawi, an honor given for 3 years service in Africa. *October 17th* – **THE VERY REV. DR. THOMAS PAPAZOGLAKIS**, St. George's, Clifton Park NY. *October 24th, November 21st, December 12th* - **THE REV. PETER SCHOFIELD**, Christ Church, Schenectady NY. *November 14th* - **THE RT. REV. MICHAEL G. SMITH** (retired bishop) Diocese of North Dakota for 15 years; presently Assisting Bishop of the Diocese of Albany, NY; Dallas, TX and Navajoland.

The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Papazoglakis of St. George's, Clifton Park and Transition Minister of the Diocese of Albany, was our very special guest at Sunday Mass and Coffee Hour on November 14th.



GARDEN MINISTRY WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Freezing temperatures spell the end to twice-weekly work sessions for the volunteer gardeners who tend the church's many perennial beds.

Many thanks to all who devoted their time and talents to the effort this year, especially new recruits, Gloria Kishton and Joyce Cockerham.

Meetings will resume in the spring.



meg hughes

ALL SAINTS /ALL SOULS



All Saints' Day had a different look this year as our worship was a service of morning prayer, complete with academic hoods worn by Officiant David Kennison and Christopher Henry and the choir. We sang our favorite hymns of the day, "I Sing a Song of the Saints of God" and "For All the Saints," which leave the best echoes in our heads. The anthem was "The Souls of the Righteous" by Geraint Lewis, with lovely, haunting harmonies. Dr. Brian Taylor gave the homily, exploring how saints are like us.

For the Requiem Mass of All Souls' Day St. George's welcomed The Rev. Fr. Dale Van Wormer, Jr. of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Unadilla and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Sydney. This was a chanted Requiem, ancient and beautiful, creating a solemn tone for the Necrology, when congregants lit candles as names of the dead were spoken. Fr. Van Wormer began his sermon by saying that saints in the presence of God continue to pray for us, therefore All Souls' Day is for all of us. We pray for the dead because we hold them in our love, and so they can grow in love and service to God; this is because the final judgement has not yet come. We can be confident that our Lord hears our prayers.

To emphasize the importance of praying for the dead the congregation ended the service by processing into the graveyard, where Fr. Van Wormer spoke the Absolution of the Dead, we recited prayers, he censed and sprinkled the plots with holy water, and ended with these familiar words:

May these souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in Peace. Amen.

As we stood together I thought especially of the twin babies buried there. It felt right to bring Peace and Remembrance to the churchyard. Afterward we enjoyed refreshments and fellowship in St. George's House and had an opportunity to meet Fr. Van Wormer.

joan pearson

WEISENBURN - MARION WEDDING



Halloween is Nathaniel Weisenburn's favorite holiday, so when he and his bride, Angela Marion, chose October 30th for their wedding day, they dressed in costume instead of the traditional gown and tux. Angela, carrying baby Piper (who had been baptized at St. George's), walked down the aisle at 3 o'clock in the afternoon to an intimate gathering of family and close friends...and to Music Director/organist Brian Taylor playing his rendition of "Phantom of the Opera." The Reverend Richard B. Lehmann officiated, with David Kennison as his Master of Ceremonies. Before beginning his Homily, Fr. Lehman addressed the small gathering with, "I'm going to talk to the bride and groom, the rest of you can listen."

"We know love when we show love" – Fr. Lehmann.

"Love never ends" – 1 Corinthians 13

lynn paska

BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY

September 17th was officially “back to church Sunday” which was held immediately following our 10 o’clock mass. It was a time of socializing, food, and the opportunity to sign up as a volunteer for our various ministries. Amid a PowerPoint presentation, various parishioners spoke briefly of their involvement:

Anne Kennison – Acolytes
Sande Hughes – Hospitality, Sacristan
Joan Pearson – Assisted Living Ministry
Jim Wingate – Pastoral Care
Lynn Paska – Communications
Tarik Warch – Weekly Shapenotes Singing
Meg Hughes – Garden Ministry, Book Club
Jon Pearson – Scheduling:
(counters, greeters, lectors)

Note #1 – Sean Albert and Bob Paska missed the presentation as they were busy fulfilling their obligation as the day’s counters.

Note #2 – Jim Wingate, who cited Ann Duff as his visitations partner, asked parishioners to donate any new cards to help offset expenses.

Note #3 – Meg Hughes presented Jim Wingate with an “official garden ministry sweatshirt” for his participating in the current activities.

Note #4 – Brian Taylor, Jon and Meredith Ewbank were commended for set-up and break-down of the food.

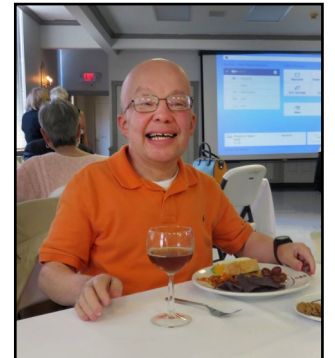
Note #5 – Brian was also commended for his chairing this year’s St. George’s Café at the Stockade Art Show.

Note #6 – Gene DeLong was commended for his volunteering to paint the Great Hall patio doors, a project that turned out to be more than a day or two.

Sign-up sheets were provided for those wishing to utilize their talents to our various ministries.

Note #7 – if you neglected to sign up for any of the ministries, it’s not too late! Your expertise is always welcome.

lynn paska





The Diocese of Albany's (DoA) 153rd convention was again a virtual affair. If some of us complained a bit too vigorously in the past about having to go to convention, with all its happy-clappy Camp-of-the-Woods shtick, those prayers were answered with this second consecutive remote gathering. No overnight stays in a chilly cabin with a lumpy mattress, no camp food and no endless programmed activities. Nope, just the facts ma'am. Do the business and it's over.



Your appointed delegates (David Kennison, Anne Kennison, Bob Paska) assembled on October 23 at 8AM in the parish office and settled in for a long day of Zoom. Notwithstanding balky video, on-line voting, technical glitches and the rest - the diocese's 2021 business got done. There were 55 parishes (out of 112 total in the diocese) and 108 clergy members participating.

Address from the Standing Committee Normally, this would be an address from the bishop on the state of the diocese. Since we currently do not have a seated bishop following Bp. Love Love's February 2021 resignation, this address was given by Fr. Scott Garno, President of the Standing Committee. Fr. Garno praised the strength and expanse of the DoA and praised newly ordained clergy and those who seek to enter the diocese. He said the DoA has a sizeable amount of surplus cash and will pay their full assessment to the Episcopal Church (TEC), thereby restoring eligibility for TEC grants to parishes. The diocesan financial health was strongly supported by the federal government's pandemic stimulus of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

The convention agenda contained 7 submitted resolutions for consideration. Two of those proposed modifying the current diocesan canons to remove the prohibition that defines marriage as only between 1 man and 1 woman. Those canons also prohibit clergy from participating in same-sex marriages and prohibit use of church buildings for same. This is the issue over which Bp. Love resigned. The DoA is the only diocese in the Episcopal Church that prohibits same-sex marriage, making them in violation of Resolution B012 of the 2016 General Convention. These DoA canons are considered unenforceable since they directly conflict with TEC canons, but they are retained by the DoA to make a position statement. And so, these convention resolutions would have been highly contentious, likely with much spirited debate. Early on, a clergy member made a procedural motion to block any resolution that proposed changing church canons during a virtual meeting, requiring such changes to be done only at an in-person meeting. The presenting reason was that virtual meetings stifled debate, but this was a sly way of blocking these resolutions from even being discussed. This motion passed by a significant margin, thereby delaying consideration of these motions to a 2022 in-person convention.

Voting and Convention Resolutions Various offices were voted to fill from nominations, seldom contested. Those offices are: (1) The Great Cathedral Chapter, (2) Convention Representative to Diocesan Council, (3) Trustees of the Diocese, (4) The Disciplinary Board, (5) The Standing Committee.

Resolutions were mostly perfunctory, as follows:

Increase the recommended clergy stipend schedule by 5.0%. PASSED A schedule of normative 2022 salaries for parishes of different sizes was provided.

Use the Reduced Standard Assessment Formula for 2022 parish assessments. PASSED By this formula, St. George's 2022 assessment is \$40,871, up from \$11,383 in 2021.

Approve the proposed 2021 Diocese of Albany Operations Budget. The 2022 budget is \$1,477,425, down from \$1,590,544 in 2021. PASSED 81% of this (\$1,195,992) comes from parish assessments.

Courtesy resolutions to thank diocesan and convention staff and Christ the King staff. PASSED

Other gleanings of note:

The 2021 operating budget for Christ the King Spiritual Life Center is \$1,135,473 (a deficit of \$128K).

The 2021 Diocesan Payments & Commitments (support to The Episcopal Church) is \$143,703 (9.5% of income). The expected support level is 15%, paid by more than 90% of dioceses.

And so ended the 153rd diocesan convention. Next year, we hope for a return to an in-person convention.



THANKSGIVING CHORAL EVENSONG

Now Thank We All Our God” joyfully began and ended beautiful Choral Evensong on November 14, as a prelude by J.S. Bach and again as the familiar hymn. Thanksgiving was the theme as Georgians gave thanks for God’s protection through another difficult pandemic year. Officiant David Kennison and Thurifer Christopher Henry, robed and hooded, escorted the St. Cecelia Choir into the sanctuary to the hymn, “Come, Ye Thankful People, Come.”

Dr. Brian Taylor chose Richard Ayleward’s classic responses as the choral framework for the service. The choir also sang Everett Titcomb’s *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*, the familiar words and interweaving voices alternating with scripture lessons from Joel and Thessalonians read by Meredith Ewbank.

Thomas Schofield, Director of Food Pantry, Schenectady Inner City Ministries, gave the address. He spoke about the support the food pantry receives, about their efforts to be more accessible, how they deliver throughout Schenectady County and work with school districts, and his hope that someday in the future Schenectady will thrive. His presence was a reminder that many in our community are in great need. 50% of the offering from Evensong was given to the SICM Food Pantry to aid with their work.

The anthem, “Thou Visitest the Earth” by Maurice Green, began with a solo by John Ewbank. It put to music one glorious statement from the Psalms: *Thou visitest the earth, and blessest it; thou makest it very plenteous. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy clouds drop fatness.*

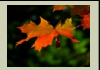


Thomas Schofield
SICM

Dr. Taylor offered Jean Langlais’ “Te Deum” as the powerful musical conclusion to this uplifting service. “We Praise Thee, O God ...” and we thank you for our many blessings.

joan pearson

FALL OUTREACH



As the months have progressed in 2021, Georgians have faithfully and generously supported SICM food pantry “little red wagon” collections. To date, 1,427 pounds of food and personal care items have been turned over to the SICM food pantry, 839 Albany Street Schenectady. During

November 14th afternoon Evensong, SICM food pantry director, Tom Schofield, gave a brief address about the pantry’s community impact and his own meaningful involvement within the food pantry’s programs.

50% of the collection gathered at the Evensong service was designated for the SICM food pantry, it yielded a \$274 donation.

alice polumbo

NEW WEEKDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

St. George’s weekday schedule starts the 2nd week of January (9AM, Wednesday the 12th and 12 Noon, Friday the 14th.) It will be a Liturgy of the Word in some form although in the future will probably become Masses. Also, chanted Compline on the 2nd Thursday of the month beginning January 13th. We encourage all who can take time for worship and prayer in the middle of the week. Also, two special Masses: Thursday, January 6th, 7PM – Solemn Choral Mass for the Epiphany; and Wednesday, February 2nd, 7PM – Candlemas Procession and Solemn Choral Mass for the Presentation.

dr. brian taylor

IN MEMORIAM

Julia Burgess

1929 – 2021

“Rest in Peace”



- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

"Fast away the old year passes, hail the new, ye lords and lasses..." Just as this well-known *"Deck the Halls"* carol, our liturgical calendar year has come to an end and with it, a new door opens and we begin a new year. "Advent" – from the Latin *adventus* – the word means *coming, arrival*. Advent celebrates not only the physical arrival of the Christ child in Bethlehem but also Jesus' promised Second Coming. This promise is fulfilled at Christmas when Jesus Christ broke through our sin and darkness and according to St. John became the light *"which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"*. Yes, in the darkest season of the year, there is light and there is hope for new birth. Advent is a time to reflect on the Incarnation of our Lord and a time to prepare ourselves, not only for Christmas mirth, but also for our own spiritual journey. We pray, we reflect on the biblical story of the Gospels, and in our own quiet way, we get ready for Christ's second coming. It is a tough assignment, what with all the pressures of the world upon us at Christmas time. Advent and Christmas is a new beginning - a time for love, for hope and for joy.



This year, I am particularly grateful for Advent. With the tumult of 2021 nearly behind us, I need Advent's peace. I need to reflect and I need the hope and joy that will soon be upon us. Our beloved church of St George has been through so much. Some of it was good and some of it was not, but none of it was simple and none of it was easy. In a time of uncertainty we have much to be thankful for. Those thanks begin and end with our faith, the blessings of Almighty God, which didn't always feel like a blessing at some moments. But as we reflect on the year past, we know that we truly are blessed and we know that God is watching and guiding our hands and our hearts. Between the bookends of our faith, we give thanks for each other – our parish family who laughs, dances and cries with us. We give thanks for our beautiful and historic church and our beautiful liturgy and for the clergy who support us.

Even now, I am nowhere near ready for Christmas with its merriment, bright lights and festivities. I still need a bit more time to examine, unpack and reconcile what we collectively have endured this year. I need to assess where I am and where we are as a family.

A wise priest once said, "every year is a new year, every day is a new day, every hour is a new hour". So my beloved friends, *"let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light"*, let us *"put on the Lord Jesus Christ"* [Romans 13:12, 14]. Let us stand firm in our faith.

with great affection, david

- JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

Unfortunately, not much has been accomplished in whittling down the list of outstanding maintenance items since the last Georgian Report, as my focus has been on the issues of the Rector and the former Sextons (not to mention that we are currently out of funds to address routine maintenance needs). A major problem was dramatically brought to our attention when water infiltrated an electrical conduit, causing a short which blew out a transformer, leaving the sanctuary in the dark. Luckily, the necessary repairs/replacements were effected quickly, and the costs were covered by our insurance.



Meredith and I enjoyed a bountiful and long overdue Thanksgiving with our Missouri family and friends. We hope yours was equally enjoyable.

respectfully submitted, jon ewbank

- TREASURER'S REPORT -

This December Georgian Journal is an excellent time to look back on our Church's finances in 2021 and to also look forward to 2022. First, let's focus on 2021.

We have a lot to be thankful for in this year. Our pledge giving will surpass our budget by a significant amount!! Most importantly, we will balance out the year in a good financial condition. This is TOTALLY due to your continued generosity.



However, we faced some very significant unexpected expenses in 2021. We suffered the loss of the boiler to the Great Hall that resulted in having to take \$43,000 from our endowment principal to replace this equipment. This is the first time in many years that we have taken principle from our endowment. We also suffered large bills to repair plumbing problems in the Great Hall. Most recently, we experienced a significant electrical issue in our Church. Luckily, these losses were covered by our insurance policy with Church Mutual. The result was a huge improvement to the electrical infrastructure to our Church with minimal cost to our budget. I'd like to be optimistic to say that the worst of these issues are behind us. HOWEVER, we have an aging group of buildings that will continue to present us with problems going forward.

Looking forward to 2022, we are diligently preparing a budget for the coming year. This has been made a bit more difficult by the resignation of Father Matt. I will make a personal appeal to all parishioners to continue giving. Our numbers are getting smaller, thus, we need to rely on everyone to pledge as much as you are able. I am confident that we will thrive through this next phase of our Church's ministry. My plea to everyone is to keep St. George's in your prayers. Reach out to all members to give comfort in our time of transition. Stay loyal. Our Church has survived for hundreds of years. NOW is as important as ever to show our LOVE and DEVOTION to each other and our Church.

Finally, I would like to give thanks to the unseen heroes of the financial side of St. George's Church. These include Bob McCloskey who tirelessly works to our benefit and to Jon Pearson who continues to support our treasury. Of course I always welcome comments and suggestions.

blessing, dr. jeff wengrovius

- MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT -

MUSIC ABOUNDS FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

December 19th is the Fourth Sunday of Advent. For our 10AM service we will celebrate Morning Prayer and an abbreviated Advent Lessons & Carols. Both choir and congregation will sing Advent hymns and carols as we prepare for the coming of Our Lord.

On Christmas Eve there will be a Solemn Choral Mass at 9PM preceded by a Carols Service at 8:30PM. Choir and congregation will sing carols as we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The choir will sing a Plainsong version of the Ordinary, the Missa de Angelis during Mass, and one of the anthems will be Verbum Caro by Anthony St. Pierre, a former boy chorister at St. George's, now an active professional musician, teacher and composer in Toronto.



The Festival of the Incarnation continues on Christmas morning with a Solemn Mass at 11AM and more of the traditional carols and hymns. Finally, on Sunday, December 26th, we will offer a Festival of Lessons and Carols at our 10AM service....all carols and hymns to be sung by the congregation.

We look forward to once again celebrating the Joy of Christmas at St. George's.

peace, dr. brian j. taylor



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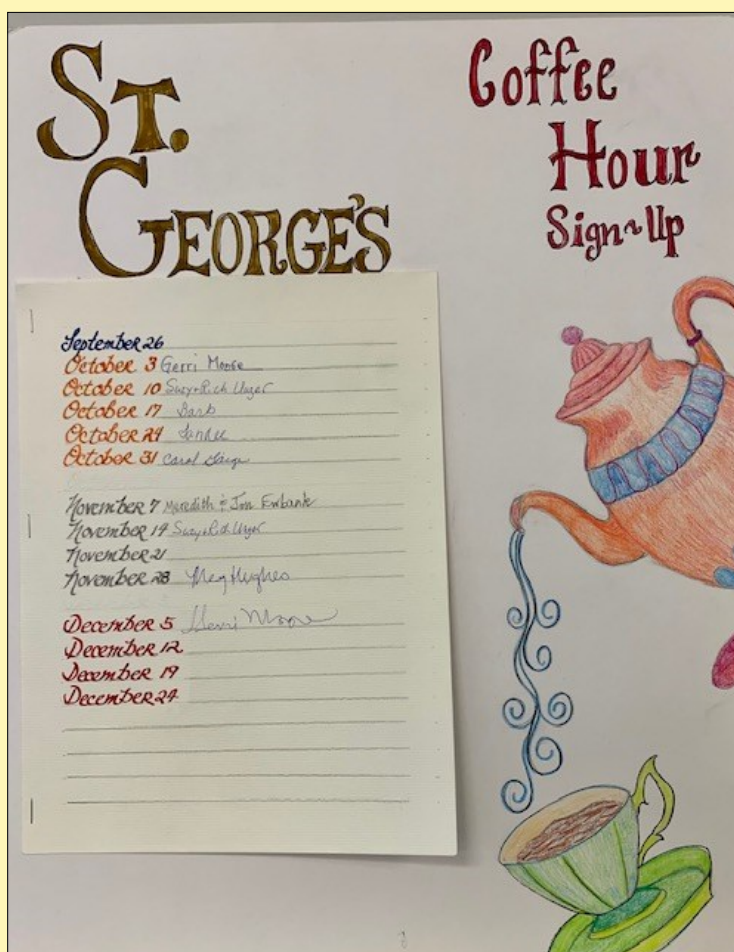
The Vestry

David Kennison, *Sr. Warden*
Jonathan Ewbank, *Jr. Warden*
Sean Albert
Carol Gaige
Margaret Hughes, *Clerk*
Sandra Hughes
Deborah Lambeth
Marilyn (Lynn) Paska
Paul Smigelski
Richard Unger
Jeffrey Wengrovius, *Treasurer*

Administrative Assistant
Financial Secretary
Robert McCloskey

Directory of Music Ministry
Brian Taylor

SIGN UP TO PROVIDE FOOD FOR COFFEE HOUR AFTER SUNDAY MASS.



As you can see by the sign-up sheet, good dates are still available.

Don't be shy! Show off your culinary expertise with some lovin' from your oven. Or, make it easy on yourself and pick up something sweet from a nearby bakery.

Or, select a fruit, cheese or veggie platter from your favorite supermarket.