



THE GEORGIAN REPORT

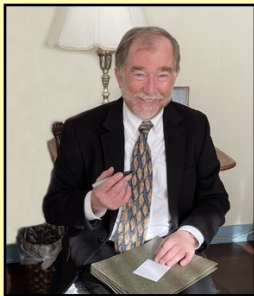
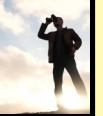


Volume 14 Number 1

St. George's Episcopal Church Schenectady NY

March 2022

LET THE SEARCH BEGIN!



Officially launching our rector search process, St. George's Vestry met for 2 and ½ hours with Mother Elizabeth Papazoglakis, Transition Officer of the Diocese of Albany, on Mass after Sunday, January 30th, in the Shaw Lounge. Mother Elizabeth encouraged our participation and said, "There are no dumb questions." She ended the meeting with two words of caution, "Be transparent." In-between was an in-depth overview and detailed discussion as we followed her 36-page double folder (some pages single sided, others back-to-back) and garnered a wealth of information on the do's and don't's of the job before us. We left the meeting with our heads spinning but grateful for the insight Mother Elizabeth posed to each and every one of us for the months ahead.

lynn paska

WINTER OUTREACH

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING



Georgians were on hand Saturday, December 11th at the Eastern Parkway Price Chopper “ringing the bell” for the Salvation Army’s Christmas campaign. If you stopped by you could see Jamie Taft, Rich Unger, Bob & Lynn Paska, Jean Greenspan, David & Anne Kennison, Jon Pearson, and Ralph & Alice Pumbo throughout the day. Collectively, they raised \$395.65!

alice pumbo



SICM FOOD PANTRY



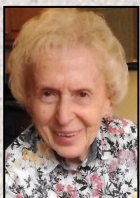
Winter outreach activity at St George’s focused primarily on helping keep the SiCM food pantry stocked. To date, 555 pounds of non-perishable and personal care items have been delivered to the food pantry located at 839 Albany Street in Schenectady.

As a component of Lenten devotions, Georgians are encouraged to add soup products to their regular food donations. Souper Douper as this bonus food request is named was introduced in 2020 but was abruptly curtailed with the onset of COVID. It is hoped this year, St George’s will reach a minimal total of 400 various soup items donated by Easter. We’re off to a good start! Pre-Lent, 110 soup varieties have already been collected.

St George’s is seeking additional ways in which to support those in need within our community. If you have an idea, please speak with a vestry member or Ralph/Alice Pumbo.

alice pumbo

IN MEMORIAM



Judith Foster Smith

1934 – 2022

Connelly “Connie” Bruner-Todt

1963 – 2021

“Rest in Peace”

You are missed by your church family





SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

"The Episcopal church has always been a part of my life," said Louisa Carr, who cannot imagine not being involved in an Episcopal Mass and its music. Growing up in Evanston, Illinois (outside of Chicago), Louisa attended St. Matthew's where she was enrolled in Christian Education and a choir member in both the kids and adults choirs. Her parents were parishioners, choir members, both served on the Vestry, and her father's church resume also included Senior Warden and Treasurer. When Louisa moved to Schenectady ten years ago, she rented an apartment in the Stockade Area next to our Rectory, met her new neighbors Maggie and Fr. Paul Blanch, and started attending St. George's. Although growing up with Rite II, she's adjusted to worshipping with Rite I.

Louisa immediately joined the Cecilia Choir and her lovely soprano voice continues to lend beauty to our music on Sundays and is often cantor at a special evening Mass. In the past, Louisa volunteered to head various collection ministries, including one for kindergarteners and another for the Christmas "Things of My Very Own." She also served one full term on Vestry, not running for a second term as she was pregnant and didn't think it was fair to juggle motherhood with a church commitment. Her husband Paul Smigelski, a chemist at GE whom she met on her first day of work as a chemical engineer there, assumed her second term and was subsequently elected to his own Vestry terms.



Today Louisa, with her Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Washington in Seattle, is Product Manager in the Process Science Department at Regeneron Pharmaceuticals. Working at home during the pandemic, she is now back in the office 4 days a week and continues working from home once a week. Although this allows her more family time with husband, 5-year old James, and stepsons Matthew and Ryan who live alternate weeks with them, she feels younger employees miss out on job exposure and socializing with co-workers when not in the office.

While St. George's music program is important to Louisa, she also appreciates her church community. She would like to see more age diversity in our parish. "Today's children don't interact with older people. They're in their own little bubble," she offered, adding that the future of religion hinges on the next generation. "So few children are raised in the church these days. We need to build a Sunday School at St. George's. We have to demonstrate how Jesus is important to us through Outreach."

In her leisure time, Louisa reads as much as she can, especially novels and British literature. She also enjoys gardening and exercising. Topping her list of activities, though: volunteering her talent to the music program at St. George's. Thank you, Louisa!

lynn paska

GUEST CELEBRANTS



(L-R) December 24th, January 16th - **The Rev. Fr. Peter Schofield**, Christ Church, Schenectady. December 25th – **The Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Papazoglakis**, St. George's, Clifton Park. January 6th, Epiphany – **The Rev. Fr. Thomas J. Pettigrew**, Church of the Holy Cross, Warrensburg. February 2nd Candlemas – **The Rev. Fr. Dale Van Wormer, Jr.**, St. Matthew's, Unadilla/St. Paul's, Sidney.



St. George's will be seeing a lot of **The Rev. Fr. Richard B. Lehmann** as he was Guest Celebrant on January 2nd, 9th, 23rd, 30th and celebrated Mass with us every Sunday in February, March, and is scheduled into April (including Lent, Easter) and beyond.

THE HOST WITH THE MOST

A big "thank you" to Music Director, Brian Taylor, for graciously opening his home on campus to host St. George's guest celebrants, Fr. Tom Pettigrew and Fr. Dale Van Wormer, after our Epiphany and Candlemas evening mass(s). A light reception was offered as parishioners enjoyed getting acquainted with our visiting clergy.

lynn paska



Meet 'n Greet with Fr. Tom Pettigrew



Getting to Know: Fr. Dale Van Wormer

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2022



The Annual Parish Meeting of St. George's Church was held on Sunday, January 23rd directly after Mass. Due to the pandemic, parishioners were given "food for thought" in church instead of at a foodfest reception in the Great Hall.

As he so eloquently phrased it, Senior Warden David Kennison opened this year's meeting with, "We are the church with 300 years of history within these walls...." Then the Reverend Richard Lehmann gave the opening prayer, followed by the appointment of Meg Hughes as Clerk; David Kennison's State of the Parish Report in which he

paid a solemn tribute to current and former Georgians we lost throughout the year; and Treasurer Jeff Wengrovius' Financial Report. Election Results as tabulated by Recording Clerk Meg Hughes were announced: David Kennison, who just completed a partial term as Senior Warden, was unanimously elected to his first official term; and incumbents Lynn Paska, Paul Smigelski and Rich Unger were all reelected for a 2nd Vestry term.

After brief questions and suggestions from parishioners, a closing Blessing was administered by Fr. Richard.

lynn paska

CHRISTMAS 2021



Wasn't it uplifting to sing and worship, hang greenery, light candles, build the crèches? As Christmas approached, we Georgians chose to celebrate and banish the darkness of 2021 with joy for Jesus' birth, because sleeping-in would be a victory for despair. Advent began with hope and ended with bright celebrations of pent-up joy as we re-connected in our faith community.

Greening the church on Dec. 19 was injury-free through hours of tippy candelabras, novice wreathmakers, and intrepid crèche constructors, all under the direction of Kevin Decker. The lovely wreaths hanging on the pulpit, lectern, and choir loft were not purchased but assembled by a team who had no prior experience before their lesson from Kevin: Meg Hughes, Barb Wengrovius, Debbie Lambeth, Gloria Kishton, Jean Greenspan, and Jamie Taft.

There were two crèche construction teams, one inside and one out. The inside team were Grant and Colton Jaquith, Paul Smigelski with sons Matthew and Ryan, and Louisa Carr. Outside were Jon Pearson, Rich Unger, Sean Albert, John Ewbank, and Bob Lemmerman. The outside crèche needed much TLC but the result was, in Kevin's words, "a wonderful statement of faith to the neighborhood." We are fortunate to display these two beautiful manger scenes.

The work was all captured pictorially by Photography by Paska. Diversion was provided by baby Silas, his mom Shannon Hughes-Hartz and grandmom Sandee Hughes.

Inside, Chris Henry, Suzy Unger, Jean Greenspan, and Sandee Hughes wrestled with the trees on either side of the main altar, draping them lavishly with silver and lights. Nancy Angus, Ann

Kennison, Jean Greenspan, Joyce Cockerham, Joan Pearson, and Colton Jaquith gingerly balanced candelabras alongside the pews. Jamie Taft and Suzy and Rich Unger arranged candles and greenery in the windows. Sue Hartz had plenty of loose straw, etc. to clean up with her broom, and everyone tucked into a tasty restorative lunch after their work.

Christmas Eve Mass began at 8:30 with Music and Carols offered by the St. Cecelia Choir, organists Joan Pearson, Dr. Jeffrey Wengrovius, and Dr. Brian J. Taylor, and sung by the congregation. The Rev'd. Peter Schofield celebrated High Mass starting at 9:00, leading the procession to the crèche as everyone sang "*O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant...*"

Fr. Schofield's sermon explained that we need the good news at Christmas to counteract Covid, threats of war, drugs, inflation. God has a plan to save the world, not destroy it, a plan that started with Jesus' birth. His birth was a pivotal event in world history. Shepherds, who were not highly regarded, were first to get news of Jesus' birth from the angels. This transformed their lives. If Christmas is not what we want, then we should look at our priorities and focus on the birth of Jesus, not on what we want for ourselves.

The tender singing of *Silent Night* was no less beautiful for the congregation lacking hand-held candles. Mass ended with *Joy to the World* and a happy exit to the festive reception in the Great Hall.

Epiphany could not escape Covid and thus Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany took place without a choir, but with the preaching of Fr. Thomas Pettigrew. Now that Balthasar, Melchior, and Caspar have arrived we can all hope for a *Blessed 2022!*

joan pearson







PANCAKE BREAKFAST



St. George's usual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper (on hiatus since COVID) was replaced by a Pancake Breakfast after Mass on February 27th. Featuring REAL ORGANIC MAPLE SYRUP as donated by senior warden David Kennison, made-from-scratch pancakes, sausages, quiche, fruit, pastries, juice, coffee and tea....it was a celebration of our Restored Coffee Hour, newly sanitized kitchen, and relaxation of strict COVID protocols. Organized by Meg Hughes and Barb Wengrovius, Georgians were treated to a feast to end all feasts. Mother Lisa Schoonmaker, Nancy Angus and Hospitality chairperson Sandee Hughes cooked and served pancakes to the dining area and helped clean up after sated parishioners departed. Thanks to Sean Albert, David Kennison, Anne Kennison and everyone who joined in to help clean up after a very successful repast. *lynn paska*



WHEN ST. GEORGE'S NEEDS WORKERS, IT'S GEORGIANS TO THE RESCUE!!!!



One snowy Wednesday morning after Christmas, December 29th to be exact, the Our Father Cleaning Service (chairwoman Meg Hughes, Barb/Jeff Wengrovius, Debbie Lambeth, Sandee Hughes, Lynn/Bob Paska, Jon Ewbank, and David Kennison) met in the Great Hall to identify jobs needed to be tackled....and tackled them with gusto! Laden with pails, cleaning supplies, sponges, masks, gloves and muscle, they dove right in and got to workthe first of many scheduled work days.

They filled up the dumpster with old memories and made way for new ones. Boxes of “stuff” were sorted and categorized. Decisions! Decisions! Do we keep ‘em, trash ‘em, or stash ‘em for a rummage sale? Bob and Sandee were commended for scouring the crusty, dusty, rusty kitchen stove and oven.

The un-greening or de-greening of the church took place on the afternoon of Friday, January 14th....thanks to Meg Hughes, Anne/David Kennison, Debbie Lambeth, Bob Paska and Kevin Decker. Christmas trees and pew torches were dismantled as were both indoor and outdoor creches. The Advent Wreath was disassembled, carpets vacuumed, pews dusted, and kneelers straightened out instead of scattered hither, thither and yon.

Wednesday, February 2nd Great Hall clean-up again? Yep....it was Barb/Jeff Wengrovius, Debbie Lambeth, David Kennison, Bob Paska and Meg Hughes....a hardy crew that mopped (among other things) until they dropped.

Monday, February 21ststeady improvements upstairs in the classrooms and storage areas. Mounds of useless clutter removed. The work crew consisted of Meg Hughes (of course! A chairwoman’s job is never done!) and Sandee Hughes, Barb/Jeff Wengrovius (inspiring leaders and brains of the operation), Debbie Lambeth, Jon Ewbank, Rich Unger, David Kennison, with kudos to Bob Paska, assisted by Mother Lisa Schoonmaker, for Herculean deep-cleaning of the kitchen floor. Bob “worked like a dog,” remarked David Kennison, “The kitchen floor hasn’t looked this good in years.”



Our pride in St. George’s church and campus never shown brighter than these Work Days as Georgians didn’t mind getting down ‘n dirty to un-neglect the neglected.

lynn paska



- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

Today, I'd like to briefly review with you the major initiatives planned for 2022. It is always difficult to take a long look forward amidst the pressures of the daily round, but as I mentioned in the State of the Parish address at the Annual Meeting, there are three initiatives that command our attention:



1. Find a Rector What is a church without a rector? As the people of St George's have proven time and again, a church can live, maybe even thrive a bit, without a rector for a while. Supply clergy can be secured, Mass is offered and parish life continues. But to grow, to be a vital church that proclaims the gospels and is a blessing to the world, we need a rector. A rector search process in the Diocese of Albany typically takes 18-24 months.

We started down that road on January 30th with a meeting with Mtr Elizabeth Papazoglakis, the Diocesan Transition Minister, with a look inwards, examining what qualities and skills we want in a rector. That exercise will be repeated again with all of you via a Parish Survey and meeting. The survey is now being generated by Sandee Hughes and Jeff Wengrovius and will be approved by the Vestry before going out to all of you in April. Your responses to this survey will form the foundation of our search efforts.

The next step will be to distill your input into documents that present St George's to the world. This includes descriptions of how we see ourselves at St. George's, what we want to become as a parish and what qualities and strengths we want in a rector. This gets posted on the Episcopal Church website and Ministry Transition site. Candidates can respond from inside the Albany diocese, from other dioceses or other countries. At the same time, we are preparing a Parish Profile document (by Lynn & Bob Paska) that has fewer words and more photos to give candidates a richer feel for what our church and our life is like at St. George's.

There's lots more after this, but this gives you a feel for what's going on right now. The Vestry is now meeting twice a month – 1 for normal Vestry business and 1 for Search activities. This continues until a rector is called.

2. Financial Audit No one can remember the last time we had an independent, professional audit of our finances. The canons of the Church and the diocese require an annual audit, or at least every few years. Clearly, we are behind and any candidate for rector will want to know that we have been good stewards of our money. The Vestry has approved the formation of a 3-person audit committee - 2 from the congregation and 1 from the Vestry– that will oversee this audit. Jon Pearson has agreed to head this committee. The committee will generate a statement of work, seek out auditor candidates, interview them and make a recommendation to the Vestry. Once contracted, the auditor will work with our Treasurer and Financial Secretary to examine the necessary records and reports to provide a supportable and independent assessment of our condition. We think everything will be just fine; after all, the Vestry examines the finances and the Treasurer's report every month. But we need an independent look at things. Hopefully, the auditor will be able to make valuable suggestions about how we can improve our accounting procedures and processes and we will be the better for it.

3. Building Assessment No one can argue that our buildings are too much for the current size of our congregation, especially a post-Covid congregation. All buildings take money to maintain, ably demonstrated by our Treasurer's Annual Meeting report. To address this, the Vestry has approved the formation of a 3-person Building Assessment committee, headed by Jr. Warden Jon Ewbank. This committee is charged with 2 tasks: (1a) determine the immediate repair needs and costs of each building, (1b) estimate the future repair needs and costs of each building 2,5,10 years down the road. The next task is (2a) determine the current utilization of each building, (2b) estimate the future utilization of each building 2,5,10 years down the road, assuming that a new rector can, together with the congregation, grow St. George's. With this report, the Vestry will meet it head-on, and make firm plans for what to do and when to do it.

It is going to be a very busy 2022!

with great affection, david

- JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

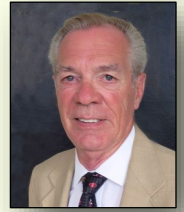
The bad news is that like my report for the last issue of the Georgian, not much has been accomplished in reducing the list of outstanding maintenance items. The good news is that nothing major has had to be added to that list.

The Sextons apartment on the third floor of St. George's House is now vacant (finally!) with only one or two major items having been identified, both having to do with possible roof leaks. Everything else is cosmetic, and we can address those over time. Likewise, the Rectory is also now vacant, and likewise has no major issues. But the timeline for cleanup and repairs is a little more sensitive as we need to have it ready for a new Rector (hopefully sooner rather than later).

Our Senior Warden has tasked me with a maintenance plan for our physical plant which will identify all current and potential issues in terms of one year, five year, ten year and long term corrective and preventative maintenance. Rich Unger has agreed to assist me with this project, and we are looking for a non-Vestry person to join us. Please let me know if you would be that third man in the fire!

By the next issue, I will have a plan and target date for us to address the Rectory needs. Plan on a workday in May or June.

respectfully submitted, jon ewbank



- MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT -

The choir is preparing a Choral Evensong service for Eastertide on Sunday afternoon, May 15th at 5:00 p.m. This special service will feature the Evening Canticles (Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis) by John Blow (1649-1708) who served as organist at Westminster Abbey in the late 17th century. The anthem will be Sing Ye to the Lord by Edward Bairstow (1874-1946) who served as organist at York Minster from 1913 until his death.

This service will also highlight the work of the Schenectady YWCA. A representative of this organization will give a brief address about its work during the service, and half of the offering received this night will be given to the YWCA.



Music is no longer confined to Sundays. Our two new weekday services on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. and Fridays at noon incorporate some chanting in this service. These services are a Liturgy of the Word at present until a new Rector is called at which time we hope they will become Masses. A Bible

Study follows the Wednesday service in St. George's House. Tarik Wareh is leading a study of 1st Peter. All are invited to join this study.

dr. brian j. taylor



HOSPITALITY

COFFEE HOUR IS BACK! Please join us for coffee and some light refreshment after Mass on Sunday mornings. Sign up sheets are available if you would like to help by providing food items.

sandee hughes



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Paul Smigelski
Richard Unger
Jeffrey Wengrovius, *Treasurer*

Administrative Assistant
Financial Secretary
Robert McCloskey

Directory of Music Ministry
Brian Taylor



**GEORGIAN READERS TACKLE
A VARIETY OF STYLES**

Novels, biographies, nonfiction: The members of All on the Same Page have explored the range. On March 20, a “cozy mystery” by Richard Osman, *The Thursday Murder Club* was up for discussion. It was recommended by Sandee Hughes.

Here’s the schedule for the remainder of the year:

May 15—*Harlem Shuffle* by Colson Whitehead

This historical fiction tale offers a dramatic, insightful look at life in 1960s Harlem. Suzy Unger selected the book.

July 17—*The Book of Hope: A Guide to Survival in Trying Times* by Jane Goodall and Douglas Abrams

Dr. Goodall is more than an expert on chimpanzees. Read this series of interviews to glean some inspiration and wisdom about the earth and its inhabitants. Joyce Cockerham recommended it.

September 18—*Bloody Mohawk* by Richard Burleton

This one hits close to home! What do you really know about the French and Indian War? Hint: A lot of it took place in the Mohawk Valley, and it wasn’t pretty. Rich Unger suggested the title.

November 20—*The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni

The club will close out the year with this heartwarming tale about surviving and thriving in spite of a challenging childhood. Thanks to Debbie Lambeth for choosing the book.

Book discussions are open to any interested church member. Check in with Meg Hughes if you have questions.

meg hughes