



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



Volume 14 Number 2

St. George's Episcopal Church Schenectady NY

June 2022

ST. GEORGE'S DAY



Bagpipes on the lawn mean St. George's Day! Banners in the sun, drummers, pipes, kilts, Tartans, and the St. Andrews's Society melded together on May 1 for a splendid Patronal Festival. Fr. Lehmann welcomed the St. Andrew's Society and the Schenectady Pipe Band at the West Doors and they marched around the church as we sang "With gladness we commemorate St George..."

David Kennison read the names of the founders and rectors of St. George's Church, a long list as our church is pre-Colonial. Fr. Lehmann, in his sermon,

reminded us that the St. George we know is a hybrid of fact and fiction. He lived in the third century in the near East, never in England, never associated with a dragon. He was martyred in 303 AD during the reign of Diocletian, beheaded after various tortures failed to kill him. In 1222 his was included as a lesser feast day in the church calendar. Themes of heroism are central to the story of the king's daughter and the dragon that developed around him. His legend still resonates because there are always dragons to slay, always pagans to convert.

It was a perfect day to march around the Stockade, and to attract startled residents who emerged to see and video our procession. At the end we gathered at the West Door for Blessing and Dismissal before settling into the Great Hall for a fine brunch. The menu for St. George's Day was prepared by



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Barb Wengrovius and Meg Hughes. A spiral ham, egg bake casseroles, and homemade biscuits were served with Kevin Decker's Coronation Chicken. Parishioners added fruit, salads, and desserts. The delicious food was enjoyed by many guests and parishioners. Clean-up efforts were led by Lisa Schoonmaker, Barb and Jeff Wengrovius, and many other helping hands.

Thank-you to the St. Andrew's Society for their part in our Patronal Festival.

Joan Pearson and Sandee Hughes



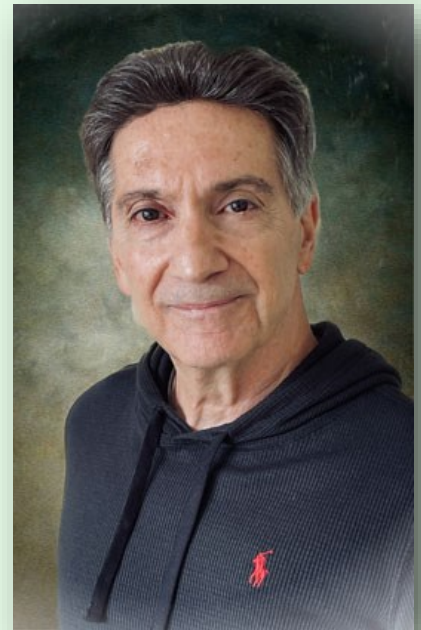


SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

Leave it to Ralph Polumbo to boldly go where few men have ever gone before: St. George's Altar Guild! That's right, he's invaded the female-based ministry by volunteering his time and talent to polishing, ironing, and doing all those very necessary jobs that heretofore were sexist in nature. Admitting that he volunteered to "add a little bit of diversity" to the aforementioned women-only ministry, it's a traditional role he hopes he has a part in changing.

Ralph served one Vestry term and decided that rather than being a church leader, he would help out in other ways in the background. But he's visible as a Counter, Greeter, member of the Internal Audit Committee, and "works" on events like our Café during the Stockade Art Show.

Retired in 2015 from Albany International, a company with headquarters in Albany, he says a prayer every day because he's so happy in retirement. His final position for the last five years on the job was President of the Albany Engineered Composites (AEC) division, based in New Hampshire. Although he and wife Alice spent endless hours traveling from his little apartment on Hampton Beach to their home in Guilderland, location was an enjoyable "perk." Prior to that, he was Chief Administrative Office for the Corporation....responsible for Procurement, IT, HR, and Acquisition Integrations.



In 47 years of marriage, this has been the longest amount of time they've spent in any house in any location. They joined St. George's as soon as they moved from Minnesota in 2006. Interesting to note that in past churches, he enjoyed relationships more with the priests but at St. George's, Ralph feels more connected to parishioners, which he considers "a close knit parish family." And while the congregation is a good draw, he says it's our church, well maintained, with real historical presence, that's hard not to like and admire.

"St. George's has a strong sense of history. If you visit here, you appreciate a beautiful church with the congregation doing a great job of maintaining it." Ralph advocates for Rite I, but realizes it's not for everyone. "Folks interested in a Mass that fits our church attend St. George's for the formal appreciation and scripture."

Ralph and Alice have two adult married sons, five grandchildren, two granddogs and two grandcats. Outside of family time, Ralph is a golfer which, he says, is "a balance of mind, spirit and body." Other interests include squash, tai chi and kayaking, all of which have a nice exercise or Zen quality to it; and smoking big hunks of fish and meat. Another passion is Spanish. Since retiring, he's been taking weekly lessons on the Internet with a teacher from Mexico, and has reached the A-2 level (meaning he easily converses in the language.)

Even with extensive retirement interests, Ralph still finds time for volunteering at St. George's deserving a round of applause, especially from the ladies of the Altar Guild.

lynn paska

ANNUNCIATION CELEBRATION



The Annunciation is the Christian celebration of the announcement by the angel Gabriel to Mary that she would conceive and bear a son through a virgin birth and become the mother of Jesus, the Christian Messiah and Son of God. The name Jesus means “YHWH is Salvation.”

Fr. Thomas Pettigrew, rector of Church of the Holy Cross in Warrensburg, helped St. George’s celebrate this day this year with a Mass on Friday, March 25th at 12-Noon. He also blessed the gift of a set of Vestments to St. George’s as commissioned by parishioner Kevin Decker. It was a very special gift as the Vestments are in Marian Blue, which is the correct color for all Marian Holy Days, the Annunciation as well as Advent.

Following the formal Mass, our Music Director Brian Taylor hosted a light luncheon at his home in St. George’s House with Roasted Red Pepper Bisque, a Salad prepared by Suzy Unger, and Dessert (fruit, whipped cream and cake) provided by Anne Kennison. Because Brian had a previous commitment, he could not stay around for clean-up afterwards....but he did come home to clean “digs” thanks to Rich Unger, Bob Paska, Anne and David Kennison. Lynn Paska was the “cat whisperer” who made sure that Sable and Lily did not escape the open front door.

lynn paska



SPRING OUTREACH

There are a dozen dozens, then there are baker's dozens, and then there are St George's dozens! In an effort to support St Joseph's Place, St George's talented bakers were asked to contribute a dozen brownies with the hope of accumulating a baker's dozen to contribute. In the tradition of Georgian generosity 256 brownies, just over 21 dozen were baked, individually wrapped and delivered to St Joseph's Place on Monday, May 23rd. They were received by a slightly overwhelmed, incredulous and very grateful staff.

St Joseph's Place, 837 Albany Street, is located across the parking lot from the SiCM food pantry. Desirous of a Catholic presence in the community, St Joseph's Place was established about 7 years ago by the late Father Michael Hogan. It is operated by the sisters of St Joseph with help from SiCM. As noted in the photograph, St Joseph's Place, a ministry of St Joseph's Parish, is a place of hospitality, refreshment, prayer and conversation. Along with the communal area where customarily 20 plus guests are welcomed each day, there is an office, kitchen and a chapel.



Sister Ann Christie and facilities manager



Brownies ready to be delivered.

St George's continues to enthusiastically support the SiCM food pantry. To date, currently 1,048 pounds of non-perishable items have been donated. This includes 230 soup related products collected during our Lenten souper douter focus.

SiCM will once again be operating summer lunch in 2022. Although the program's format isn't clear at this time, St George's, nevertheless has committed to fulfilling a one-week assignment, Monday, August 15th through Friday, August 19th at Wallingford Park, 5th and Congress Streets. It is the location at which St George's has helped in previous years. Please consider volunteering during this week.

alice pumbo



IN MEMORIAM

Joseph P. Perretta

1946 – 2022

"Rest in Peace"

EASTER 2022

How was your Lent? Did you give up candy or wine? Attend Wednesday morning Bible study with Tarek Wareh? Make more time for daily prayer? On Ash Wednesday Fr. Lehmann explained that the ashes he administered are a sign of mortality, of penitence, a fresh start, a spiritual beginning. Lent would be a time for us to grow spiritually, to learn about ourselves and our relationship with God. As humans we are incomplete without God.

Palm Sunday began in the Great Hall with the distribution of palms followed by our procession into the church, re-enacting Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. We read the Passion, the brutality of Jesus' betrayal, trial, and crucifixion. Fr. Lehmann explained that Jesus was fulfilling the words of the Prophet Zechariah, entering a politically charged situation that could lead only to his death. Jesus was chosen by God to be the Passover lamb for all of us.

Maundy Thursday might be my favorite service of Holy Week. Fr. Lehmann said this night is when Jesus' Passover meal became the Last Supper, when he broke traditional norms to teach the future leaders of the church what they would have to be. The master became the servant by washing his disciples' feet, as Fr. Lehmann washed ours. As mass drew to a close everything darkened: the choir removed their surplices, the Blessed Sacrament was taken to the Altar of Repose, the lights dimmed, and servers stripped the high altar to the chant of Psalm 22. The only lights remaining were candles in the Lady Chapel for the watchers, who took one-hour shifts until midnight.

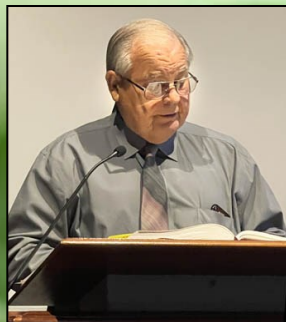
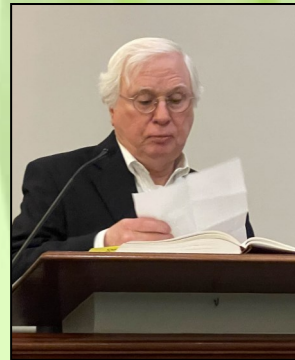
Good Friday was stark, a time of grief, with no lights, no candles, a plain altar, no organ, black robes. We again relived the Passion. This solemn service included collects, veneration of the cross, and strictly a cappella music.

The Great Vigil of Easter on Saturday night is the oldest service in the prayer book. It begins by re-kindling the new fire – lit inside this year due to the weather. We passed the light throughout the darkened church and up into the choir loft until the points of flame illuminated the space, and then David Kennison sang the Exsultet and we heard the Great Readings, followed by the renewal of Baptismal Vows, Litany of the Saints, and the Holy Eucharist. Fr. Lehmann noted that the Great Vigil used to last all night and include baptisms, for which candidates would have prepared for three years. This holy eucharist would have been their first, as previously the un-baptized would have departed from services before the eucharist was administered. We renewed our baptismal vows to accept newness of life and new beginnings. After mass we gathered for a reception in the Great Hall.

Easter Day celebrated Christ's Resurrection from death, with blossoms from St. George's Memorial Garden bringing spring to the altar (thanks to Kevin Decker). In his sermon, Fr. Lehmann emphasized that all Christianity is based on Christ's resurrection from death. The resurrection brings us God's forgiveness, it gives our lives a new meaning and purpose as we are called to fix the world to the extent that we are able, and it enfolds us in God's mercy. And all of that is good.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

joan pearson



Diocesan Convention 2022

After two years of virtual conventions, the Diocese of Albany's (DoA) 154th convention was back to a familiar in-person format, which was warmly welcomed by all. This year the convention was held at a new venue – Silver Bay YWCA Conference Center at Lake George. Everyone agreed that this was a step up in quality of the facilities and in quality of the meals. It is no mean feat to keep a couple hundred people happy so kudos to the DoA staff for pulling that off.

The format of the affair was unchanged, with a long Business Meeting that extended over parts of 3 days, combined with various workshops, presentations and daily worship with lots of praise music. Your appointed delegates (David Kennison, Anne Kennison, Bob Paska) assembled on the first day, June 3, and settled in for the affair. There were 61 parishes (out of 112 total in the diocese) and 74 canonically resident clergy members participating.



Address from the Standing Committee Normally, this would be an address from the bishop on the state of the diocese. Since the DoA is currently in a search process for the next bishop, the address was delivered by Mtr Katherine Alonge-Coons, President of the Standing Committee. Mtr. Coons praised the contributions of our Assisting Bishop Michael Smith and Bp. Carol Gallagher, both of who are working to promote healing within the DoA and ensure that the DoA complies with the directives of General Convention Resolution 2018-B012, which concerns implementation of policies and procedures that allow same-sex marriage. This was met with great applause. The bishop search process was reviewed, noting that this is a complex process and that a new bishop is not expected to be called until late in 2023. Mtr Coons praised newly ordained clergy and those who seek to enter the diocese. She also noted that the DoA has paid their full TEC assessment last year and expects to do that again in 2022. This was made possible by the federal government's pandemic stimulus of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Dean Harding of the Cathedral of All Saints also gave a report on the status of the cathedral operations and their ongoing Capital Campaign.

Fr. Neil Longe, Secretary of the DoA Board of Trustees gave a report on the financial health of Christ the King Spiritual Life Center. In short, the situation is dire. In 20 years of operation, they have never had a balanced budget, losing money each year. Their annual expenses are about \$1.2M/year, close to that of the entire diocese. They have cashed in over \$3M of endowment, the Albany Diocesan Investment Trust has paid over \$500K to complete construction projects, the Covid Paycheck Protection Program has given \$200K and still the bleeding continues. They need at least \$500K/year ongoing to maintain in operation. There are many discussions about whether it is possible to stay afloat or will the SLC need to shut down. The only other income they can tap is from the parishes' annual assessment payments to the diocese.

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. These diocesan canons are not enforceable as they are in direct conflict with the national canons and the resolution B012 of the 2018 General Convention that allows same sex marriage. However, they have been retained by the DoA as a position statement. At this convention, Resolutions #7 & #8 were proposed to remove the restrictive language and bring the DoA canons into alignment with the national canons. There were many attempts to block these resolutions and parliamentary tactics to do so, including one motion to summarily adjourn the meeting. Those failed, but it was passed that the vote be taken by orders, not by plurality. This means lay delegates and clergy delegates vote separately and instead of each lay delegate getting an individual vote, they all get one combined vote. This dilutes the power of the laity to 1/3 of what it was. This tactic worked and the motion to change these canons failed by virtue of it failing in the clergy order, even though it passed in the lay order. Notwithstanding the vote result, these resolutions were highly contentious and had much spirited debate. They will be raised again at next year's convention.

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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. Our Brian Taylor was elected to a 3-year term on the Great Chapter of the Cathedral.

Other resolutions were mostly perfunctory, as follows:

1. Increase the recommended clergy stipend schedule by 7.0%. PASSED A schedule of normative 2023 salaries for parishes of different sizes was provided.
2. Use the Reduced Standard Assessment Formula for 2023 parish assessments. PASSED By this formula, St. George's 2022 assessment is \$40,872 and for 2023 it is \$37,058.
3. Approve the proposed 2023 Diocese of Albany Operations Budget. The 2023 budget is \$1,686,818, down from \$1,608,595 in 2022. PASSED 72% of this (\$1,212,907) comes from parish assessments.
4. Courtesy resolutions to thank diocesan and convention staff. PASSED

Other gleanings of note:

- The 2021 operating budget for Christ the King Spiritual Life Center is \$1,278,400 (a deficit of \$10,549).
- The 2022 Diocesan Payments & Commitments (support to The Episcopal Church) is \$174,130 (10.8% of income). The expected support level is 15%, paid by more than 90% of dioceses.

And so ended the 154th diocesan convention. We are full of anticipation for next year's convention.

david kennison

- TREASURER'S REPORT -

With 5 plus months of our 2022 behind us, I am happy to report that our income and expenses are on budget for the year. On the income side, both our pledge giving and endowment interest income are in line with our budget plan. We have not taken any principal monies from our endowment year to date!! The expense side is a little more "dicey". We are saving money due to not having to pay the salary and benefits for a Rector. HOWEVER, these savings have been eroded by very high utility costs. Our gas expenses to heat our 5 building during this past winter season were huge – way beyond our budget expectations. On the good news side, we have had no major unexpected infrastructure costs – keep your fingers crossed. Thus, our expenses are on budget.



In summary, our finances are in a relatively good condition. THANK YOU to all parishioners for your generous giving. I also want to thank our extended finance team, Jon Pearson and Bob McCloskey, for their strong support. We never stop trying to "Slay the Dragon". I assure you that every penny of our church's expenses is scrutinized with the goal to save.

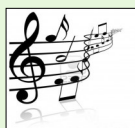
dr. jeffrey wengrovius

- MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT -

The 2021-2022 choir season was certainly better than the 2020-2021 choir season which was non-existent. We had a couple bumps along the way. We had a one-month pause in January and we had to cancel our last Evensong of the season in May because of Covid. Still, we were able to maintain the praise of God in our Sunday morning services throughout the season. The choir will take their summer break beginning June 26th and will return on September 11th. I am deeply grateful to all the singers who faithfully came to rehearsals and services throughout the season.



dr. brian j. taylor



ON MOTHER'S DAY— our St. Cecilia Choir had the pleasure of a very special guest: Louisa Carr's father, Steve, singing with us again this year....while her mother, Ginger, sat proudly in one of the pews.

- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

I'd like to continue the discussions from our recent parish meeting about the rector search. When we started this process last October, it took a while to settle down and look forward to the future. The first step in a rector search is to meet with the Diocesan Transition Minister, Mtr Elizabeth Papazoglakis and that couldn't happen until we had held our Annual Meeting on January 23 so we'd know who the elected Vestry members were. So we had to wait until then, which proved to be a good thing in retrospect.



The meeting with Mtr Elizabeth helped the Vestry examine who today's St. George's really is and what we want to be. Your Parish Survey responses did the same thing and were extremely helpful. Our recent parish meeting was equally brilliant as your comments helped us to fine-tune our Parish Profile and our survey data. As I promised, the final Parish Profile and the Transition Timeline are now both posted on the St. George's website at this link: <http://www.stgeorgesschenectady.com/about/transition-searching-for-a-new-rector/>. As we proceed, additional documents will be posted there, both for the congregation and for interested clergy.

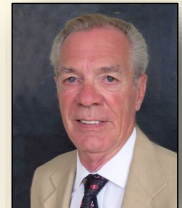
What's next? We take all this data and compile it into a set of documents that will be posted on the website of The Episcopal Church's Office for Transition Ministry. These documents describe - in more detail and in narrative paragraphs - who St. George's is, where we want to go and what we want in a rector, along with all the critical details of salary, housing, benefits, etc. These documents are what is seen by prospective clergy candidates and it is crucial that they are accurate, not overblown, yet compelling to a candidate. Once these are posted, the normal time to allow for responses is 8-12 weeks. That puts us into early October before we have a full set of candidates that we will examine and select which ones go forward in the search process.

Could all this go faster? Yes, especially if God's chosen candidate comes from within the Diocese of Albany. That would eliminate a number of background checks and long travel to a candidate's current parish. However, our current timeline, assuming a non-diocesan candidate, projects a new rector arrives in June 2023. The Vestry is not taking a summer vacation, I assure you. I will keep you apprised as we proceed.

With great affection, david kennison

- JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

The good news – nothing else has broken to my knowledge. The bad news – the following items remain on the “to do” list:



- Hallway retiling – project on hold pending funding.
- Repainting of the sanctuary ceiling.
- Estimates on parking lot renovation.
- Repairs to the rear door of Cranmer House.
- Replacing office air conditioners.
- Repairing rectory garage door opener.
- Correcting light fixture/switch issues in Rectory downstairs bathroom and 2nd floor bedroom.
- Establishment of Routine Maintenance of Boiler Systems
- Repair of leaks in Brian's Apartment – Bathroom and Bedroom
- Reestablish key control over all property locks.
- Repair Replace storm window in Brian's apartment. (Awaiting estimate)
- Identify/Obtain estimates on roof leaks in Sexton's Apartment
- Repair/refurbish Rector

respectfully submitted, jon ewbank

PHOTO ALBUM



Fr. Thomas Pettigrew was our guest celebrant for our Ascension Day Mass at 7PM....which included the baptism of baby Tucker Devi Ceci. After the Christening, Fr. Tom walked the baby around the church and introduced him to parishioners.



Meg Hughes and Debbie Lambeth pose in front of an updated Bulletin Board outside of the Great Hall.



The Archives Committee, headed by Sean Albert, have been busy sorting through and eliminating outdated boxes of materials. Thanks to Debbie Lambert and Bob Paska (pictured with Sean) and Mother Lisa Schoonmaker (not pictured) for all their help in tidying and shredding.



Another Georgian workday....as parishioners (L-R) Sean Albert, Jon Pearson, Bob Paska, David Kennison, Paul Smigelski, and chairwoman Meg Hughes dismantled The Yellow Submarine (float) that had been used in several parades in past years, and has been slowly disintegrating before our eyes in our parking lot!



Mother Lisa Schoonmaker and James Smigelski shared a birthday cake, provided by James' mother Louisa Carr, after a Sunday Mass.



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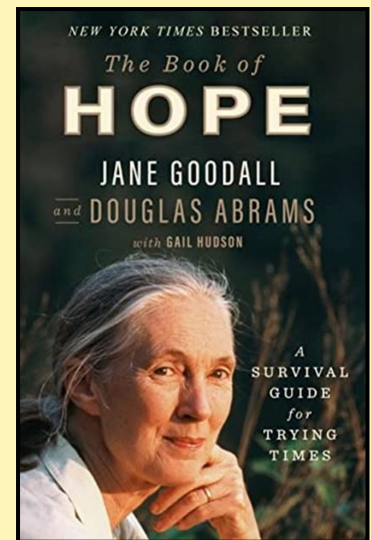


A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR TRYING TIMES

Remember Jane Goodall? As a young woman, she taught the world to respect the animal kingdom. This extraordinary woman is still working diligently at the age of 88 to teach us about making our world a better place.

Read her latest book and join with your fellow Georgians at the book club meeting after church on July 17 to compare notes. The discussion will be led by Joyce Cockerham, who selected the read.

meg hughes



Mother Lisa Schoonmaker was on her way to St. George's for Mass on Sunday, May 8th intending to just be a participant in the congregation. She was called into duty at the last minute as guest celebrant and preacher when our regular supply priest, Father Richard Lehmann, was suddenly taken ill.

GOODBYE & GOOD LUCK....to Debbie Lambeth who will be spending her summers in Lake George, NY (as usual) and her winters in Sarasota, FL (not as usual) as she sold her home in the Stockade Area and is looking forward to this new chapter in her life....and, to Stella Schultz, who is relocating to Fayetteville, NY to live closer to her daughter. We will miss these two long-time Georgians and friends, and hope they come back to visit.