



# THE GEORGIAN REPORT



Volume 14 Number 3

St. George's Episcopal Church Schenectady NY

September 2022

## CORPUS CHRISTI

Corpus Christi is “The Solemnity of The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.” This very special day at our 10AM Mass on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup> was celebrated with all the pomp and ceremony Georgians have come to expect. Mother Lisa Schoomaker was the Sacramental Banner bearer; the Canopy was manned by Paul Smigelski, Rich Unger, Greg Thomas and Jim Wingate; and thurifers Chris Henry and Kevin Decker made sure to cense continuously while The Very Reverend Marshall J. Vang, our guest celebrant and preacher, held the Sacrament (which had been placed in the Monstrance) and walked beneath the canopy through the church. This was followed by the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, a period of silence, then Fr. Vang removed the Sacrament from the Monstrance, and returned it to the Tabernacle.

A big “thank you,” also, to MC David Kennison and Acolytes Anne Kennison and JJ Moran for taking part in this important church celebration.

*lynn paska*



# SUMMER OUTREACH



Banner draped across fence alerting neighborhood children that breakfast and lunch is served at this location.



Entrance to Wallingford Park, pavilion in the background is the site of lunch service.

After a 2020 and 2021 COVID related hiatus, St George's renewed its participation in Schenectady Inner City Ministry's summer lunch program at Wallingford Park, 5<sup>th</sup> and Congress Streets during the week of August 15 to August 19<sup>th</sup>. Those helping to compose and distribute "grab and go" breakfast and lunches were Ann Duff, David and Anne Kennison, Tarik Wareh, Sharon and Jerry Trant, Carol Gaige, Bob Lemmerman, and Ralph and Alice Pumbo.

*alice pumbo*

## RANDOM ACTS OF HORTICULTURE



Gloria Kishton and Suzy Unger of Garden Ministry have contributed generously of time and treasure to keep the face of St. George's campus attractive this summer.



The marked lack of weeds in the brickwork alongside Ferry Street is a direct result of Suzy's diligent applications of Borax. Yes, you read that right. The time-honored laundry aid is also a safe and natural weed deterrent. After tweezing out every blessed blade of grass growing up through the bricks, she sprinkled the area with Borax and watered it in. Smart and effective!



The portal to our choirmaster's residence is flanked with colorful potted flowers this year, thanks to Suzy and Gloria. They purchased and planted the begonias and New Guinea impatiens, and Brian Taylor has successfully kept them alive through recent hot dry spells.

Those stunning orange-yellow flowers in front of the church's historical plaque are nasturtiums. Gloria started them from seed and contributed them as a grace note for parishioners and Stockade visitors alike to enjoy.

Thank you, ladies, and please keep up the good work!

*meg hughes*





## SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

Being a volunteer is not for the faint of heart. Ask Chris Henry. He stands head-and-shoulders above the best. Take St. George's, for example. He's worked on more ministries, projects, work days and committees than he can remember. He served 4 full Vestry terms...the remaining term of a retiring Junior Warden and 2 full terms plus an extended period during a rector interim as Senior Warden. Hospitality Committee Chair for many years, he was dubbed "the Feast Master" by a previous rector, and was part of the infamous Organ Committee (with Andrew Krystopolski and Kevin Grace) raising over \$40K for digitizing St. George's Mighty Moeller Organ.

His most rewarding accomplishment as Senior Warden: installation of Stations of the Cross, a series of 12 paintings beautifully done by our artist-in-residence Gerri Moore. "This project was planned for decades but never finalized. The interior of St. George's has a particular style, designed for aesthetics and function. Our stations are not just pictures on the wall, they have a specific use, both identifiable and accessible. Gerri wanted them framed. She and I came up with the design. I brought in a professional, my father, a retired contractor who specializes in finished carpentry, for the framing."



Managing The College Store and Canal Side Convenience Store for the Faculty Student Association for SUNY's Schenectady County Community College for 16 years, Chris sits on the Alumni Advisory Board (class of '92), and has been involved with search committees for college positions and fundraising efforts for the SUNY Schenectady Foundation. Also community minded, his biggest involvement is Schenectady Rotary....Club President for one term and countless fundraising efforts.

Born in Ellis Hospital, with exception of a few adolescent years living in Albany and Colonie, he is a bonafide Schenectadian. His love affair with St. George's began in the mid-80's, going to Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve with high school friends. "The liturgy and music were truly spectacular," he reminisces, "So were the after parties." Those experiences, plus his first apartment on Front Street, cemented his relationship with St. George's as his parish home.

In the early 2000's, Chris purchased a two-family house (circa 1900) in the Stockade. Between family pieces inherited, antiques purchased, and restoration of original features (moldings, paneled doors, tin ceilings, etc.), his home is his hobby. Oh, yes, there is another great love: black labs. "They're big, lovable, loyal, protective, gentle babies," he gushed. Bailey, his first, was a friend's dog who became his. Then Harvey, who succumbed to Lymphoma after two years together. Jameson has been with him for almost six years. Each has been/is referred to as his "spoiled children."

As to a new rector, Chris said, "WE are not looking, WE are searching to find the next person that Almighty God has already chosen." He finished with, "It's easy to say *I think, I want, I feel*....but we should do more listening to those who are answering 'the call'."

*lynn paska*

# REMEMBERING FR. RICHARD LEHMANN



It is with a heavy heart that I write this article....remembering an Episcopal Priest who was admired by all who knew him. Father Richard Lehmann left us much too soon, but his legacy lives on!

Whether Fr. Richard was on the Altar or at Coffee Hour, he was honest; he was caring; he was the real deal. When he focused on YOU, he focused on YOU....his eyes or his mind didn't wander....they stayed connected with YOU.

He was a gentleman through and through, a devoted family man with a loving wife Chris, daughter Katie, son Andrew, granddaughters Sofia and River, and the new love of his life, great grandson Alfie. Also, his dog Adie.

Fr. Richard Lehmann was the consummate Episcopal Priest. There was nothing devious, or phony, or misleading about him. What you saw is what you got, and that was a love of God and People that could not be denied.

He was the three G's: good, gracious, genuine. He spoke to you from the mind and from the heart. His sermons were original and hand-written....no more than 5 pages, or 12-minutes....he knew how to get his message across without boring you with a 25-minute speech. When he spoke, you listened; you absorbed; you trusted.

Fr. Richard loved St. George's and our Rite I liturgy. He connected with each and every one of us in his own way. Being "politically correct" didn't matter to him....he enjoyed the congregation of St. George's and they, in turn, enjoyed him. Mutual respect was evident every Sunday he was with us. Georgians clamored for a few minutes of his undivided attention, and he never let them down.

Tributes kept pouring in for Fr. Richard long after we celebrated his life with a special mass on July 31<sup>st</sup>. For example, Alice Pumbo reflected on a private moment with him on St. George's Day, "It was just small talk but I will remember fondly having that conversation. He was a good, kind, sweet man who embraced his calling with dedication and was a very good friend to St. George's. We are all better for having known him."

If there's any consolation, God must have needed him more in heaven than we mortals do on earth. Fr. Richard....we love you, we miss you, we will never forget you.

*lynn paska*



## IN MEMORIAM

Homer Kerr

*Rest in Peace*

1921-2022



## ACKNOWLEDGING GUEST CLERGY



**Dean Marshall Vang (L)** was the 16th rector at St. George's (1987-1998.) Retired from active ministry, he has taken on duties of both supply and interim priests for the Diocese.

**Father Jonathan Paul Beck (R)** the son of a pastor, is on-staff as Vicar at the Cathedral of All Saints, where he was ordained to the priesthood this past June 12th.



### MARIAN REMEMBRANCE



A beautiful sight: the lovely Marian remembrance, displayed during Mass on Sunday, August 14th to recognize the Vigil of the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary. Artistically arranged by Chris Henry, who showed us another facet of his creative side.

### A BOOK CLUB HAND-OFF

St. George's has had an active book club since 2013, with Meg Hughes at the helm for most of that time. Starting this fall, Pattie Wareh will take over the leadership role. Meg isn't quitting the club, but figured it was time for some new insights. She will work with Pattie on a successful transition.



**HOSPITALITY:** Sandee Hughes reports that after-Mass Coffee Hour is back in the Great Hall. She also reminds Georgians that sign-up sheets are available for those who wish to volunteer to bring "goodies" for munching with their coffee, tea or juice.



# STOCKADE ART SHOW 2022



Corn chowder! Chili! This wonderful place must be St. George's Café, again the most relaxing part of the Stockade Art Show. Brian Taylor, chair of the café, was blessed with the most perfect, sunny day on Sept. 10 that sent every crew member searching for their hats and sunglasses, wishing for shade.

The earliest helpers, Louisa Carr, Jon Ewbank, Jon Pearson, Paul Smigelski, Jim Wingate, and Barb Wengrovius, arranged the eating tables with colorful tablecloths and set up the cooking/serving area with crockpots and eating utensils. As the old grills mysteriously

disappeared since last year, David Kennison obtained a new one from Debbie Rickson, who serendipitously had an extra in her garage. David and Rich Unger picked it up. Paul Smigelski had the honor of cooking the first hotdog on the new grill. Even though there were scant customers in the early hours, Louisa Carr, Jon Ewbank, and Alice and Ralph Pumbo were ready to serve them food. Carol Gaike was the morning cashier. Suzy Unger, who was in charge of the mums orders, sold the few extras that were on hand and with Meredith Ewbank distributed pre-orders.

During the afternoon, Mother Lisa Schoonmaker took over grilling duties while Jerry and Sharon Trant, Joyce Cockerham, and Meg Hughes served food and Gerri Moore tended the cash box. Corn chowder and both chilis ran out before the end of the afternoon. Throughout the day David Kennison and Joan Pearson greeted a constant stream of visitors inside the church, which sparkled from the efforts of our new cleaner, Fred Ledger. Brian Taylor, Jeff Wengrovius, and Joan Pearson played the organ every hour starting at 10:00. For the first time clean-up actually started at 3:00, with the combined efforts of Jon Pearson, Jerry and Sharon Trant, Tarik Wareh, Jeff and Barb Wengrovius, Tommy Sarcocchio, and Bob Moran. By 4:00 only trampled grass remained where the café had been.

Not everything about the day was perfect. Buying a new grill cut into the profits of this year's café. Plus, there were fewer artists lining the streets than there were years ago, and less foot traffic/hungry people due to competition from the Italian Fest and the Greek Festival. That doesn't change the fact that 300+ people stepped into the church, and some even asked about our services. This is still the easiest outreach we can do, just being there,

*joan pearson*









## St. Francis of Assisi

*St. Francis – wasn't he the saint who liked animals? Pet blessings, right? Yes and yes, and much more. It seems fitting that at this writing, a few days prior to the Feast Day of St. Francis, we should remind ourselves of just who St. Francis really was.*

The patron saint of Italy, Francis of Assisi was a poor little man who astounded and inspired the Church by taking the gospel literally—not in a narrow fundamentalist sense, but by actually following all that Jesus said and did, joyfully, without limit, and without a sense of self-importance.

Francis, the son of a prosperous merchant of Assisi, was born in 1182. His early youth was spent in harmless revelry and fruitless attempts to win military glory. Serious illness brought the young Francis to see the emptiness of his frolicking life. Prayer - lengthy and difficult - led him to a self-emptying like that of Christ, climaxed by embracing a leper he met on the road. It symbolized his complete obedience to what he had heard in prayer: *"Francis! Everything you have loved and desired in the flesh it is your duty to despise and hate, if you wish to know my will. And when you have begun this, all that now seems sweet and lovely to you will become intolerable and bitter, but all that you used to avoid will turn itself to great sweetness and exceeding joy."*



St. Francis, artist unknown

From the cross in the chapel of San Damiano, Christ told him, *"Francis, go out and build up my house, for it is nearly falling down."* Francis became the totally poor and humble workman and decided to embrace a life devoted to poverty. He gave up all his possessions, piling his clothes before his earthly father, who was demanding restitution for Francis' "gifts" to the poor - so that he would be totally free to say, *"Our Father in heaven."* He was considered to be a religious fanatic, begging from door to door when he could not get money for his work, evoking sadness or disgust in the hearts of his former friends, ridicule from the unthinking.

But people began to realize that this man was actually trying to be Christian. Francis was poor only that he might be Christ-like. He recognized creation as another manifestation of the beauty of God. He really believed what Jesus said:

*"Announce the kingdom! Possess no gold or silver or copper in your purses, no traveling bag, no sandals, no staff"* [Luke 9:1-3]. Despite his father's intense opposition, Francis totally renounced all material values, and devoted himself to serve the poor. In 1210 Pope Innocent III confirmed the simple Rule for the Order of Friars Minor, a name Francis chose to emphasize his desire to be numbered among the "least" of God's servants. The order grew rapidly all over Europe. But by 1221 Francis had lost control of it, since his ideal of strict and absolute poverty, both for the individual friars and for the order as a whole, was found to be too difficult to maintain. His last years were spent in much suffering of body and spirit, but his unconquerable joy never failed.



St. Francis preaches to the birds outside of Bevagna, 1260-1280

During the last years of his relatively short life, he died at 44, Francis was half blind and seriously ill. Not long before his death, during a retreat on Mount La Verna, Francis received, on September 14, Holy Cross Day, the marks of the Lord's wounds, the stigmata, in his own hands and feet and side. Pope Gregory IX, canonized Francis in 1228, and began the erection of the great basilica in Assisi where Francis is buried. On his deathbed, Francis said over and over again *"Be praised, O Lord, for our Sister Death."* He sang Psalm 141, and at the end asked his superior's permission to have his clothes removed when the last hour came in order that he could expire lying naked on the earth, in imitation of his Lord.

Of all the saints, Francis is the most popular and admired, but probably the least imitated; few have attained to his total identification with the poverty and suffering of Christ. Francis left few writings; but, of these, his spirit of joyous faith comes through most truly in the *"Canticle of the Sun"* which he composed at Clare's convent of St. Damian's. The hymnal version begins: *Most High, omnipotent, good Lord, To thee be ceaseless praise outpoured, And blessing without measure. Let creatures all give thanks to thee And serve in great humility.*

*With great affection, david*





# PHOTO ALBUM



Meredith and Jonathan Ewbank, married by a Justice of the Peace ten years ago, renewed their wedding vows at St. George's on Saturday, June 11th at a very special 4 o'clock Mass with the Very Reverend Fr. Leander S. Harding officiating.



Louisa Carr's parents (Steve and Ginger) were in town for Sunday Mass on July 24<sup>th</sup>. They posed afterwards for a family picture, with Louisa's husband Paul Smigelski and son James.



Kevin Decker hosted a small dinner party at his home with the Very Reverend Marshall J. Vang on Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, to celebrate the Feasts of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. John the Baptist.



It's nice to see Gene DeLong in the congregation on Sundays, along with his chauffeur/daughter Susan.



Chris Henry poses with his mother, Lea Crow, who has been attending St. George's on a regular basis this summer.



James H. Lazenby, Organist/Choir Director during the Fr. Darwin Kirby years, was guest of our current Organist/Choir Director, Brian Taylor, on August 7<sup>th</sup>. He sat at the organ "for old times sake."



8 Georgians attended the Requiem Mass for the late Queen Elizabeth II on Monday, September 19th at the Cathedral: Chelsea, Jerry & Sharon Trant, Brian J. Taylor, Meredith & Jonathan Ewbank, and Anne & David Kennison.

## - SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

Today, I'd like to catch you up on a number of items that are ongoing at St. George's.



### **Our Rector Search**

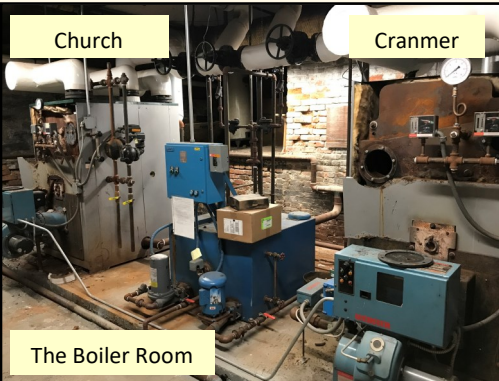
We have completed the necessary documents, forms, ministry profiles and ads and submitted them to the diocese. The diocesan Transition Minister has approved our submittals and has posted it on the Episcopal Church web site for clergy transitions. Some clergy have responded with interest about our position, but we are not allowed to know how many have inquired or who they are until the diocese has pre-cleared them with background checks and interviews. Those inquirers that pass the checks will have their information forwarded to us. We have no input into the procedure for checking and interviewing clergy who have inquired. When we are made aware of candidates that have made it through the initial screening, we will review and assess their submittal documents and schedule an interview. Phone interviews first, then on-line video interviews as necessary. This step of the process is scheduled to last up to 3 months, at which time we'll narrow the field to a handful of candidates that seem to be the best fit for St. George's, who will be invited for a personal visit. As you can see, this is a long process, full of rules, but be assured that you will be kept informed as things progress.

### **Our Financial Audit**

You'll remember that we had planned a financial audit to be done prior to the arrival of our next rector. Such independent audits are recommended to be done each year by the canons of the Church but St George's hasn't had one in a number of years. Our Vestry Audit Committee and Treasurer are in frequent contact with the selected audit firm, submitting requested data and answering questions. The on-site phase of the audit will be conducted in October and we expect the audit will be completed by year's end. Periodic audits are normal and good business practice and help an organization improve their procedures and processes. It also is reassuring to a new rector that everything is in proper order at his/her arrival. We expect no problems but hope for some targeted suggestions on how we can continue to do things better.

### **Our Boilers**

Sadly, another of our 5 heating boilers has bit the dust. Worse yet, this boiler heats the church. This boiler is located in the basement of Cranmer House, and is 1 of 2 identical boilers there – 1 for the church and



1 for Cranmer. It is 25 years old, almost 1 million BTUs and more than several tons of cast iron. It appears to have failed from years of internal water leakage and ensuing corrosion that was not obvious from external inspections. Its twin, the boiler that heats Cranmer, is also showing its age but it looks like it is repairable to give us a few more years of service. The good news is that the Cranmer boiler can be connected to heat the church by turning a few huge valves, but a single boiler cannot handle the



heating needs of the church and Cranmer simultaneously. The bad news is that the cost of a new boiler may well exceed \$75,000, with delivery time of up to 4 months. That puts delivery at the end of January. Clearly, we need to improve that and we need to figure out how to pay for it all. The Vestry is grappling with all this. With winter coming, this is a fast-moving effort and the situation changes every few days. As things progress, we will keep you informed through our normal weekly email updates.

### **Our Cleaners**

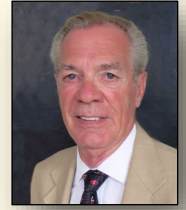
A bright spot in life is our new church cleaners, Helping Hands Cleaning, a wife and husband team of Debbie Rickson and Fred Ledger. They are dynamos, cleaning every square inch of the church, Cranmer offices, and the Great Hall. You can immediately see the difference when you enter the church as the floors shine, the windowsills are devoid of dead flies, the pews are clean, the windows are clear and much, much more. All 7 bathrooms on the campus are scrubbed and sanitized each week. The Great Hall work is ongoing but Fred is going through it meticulously. After the first pass through all of our frequently-used facilities, things will settle down to weekly maintenance work. What a difference! Both visitors and a new rector will love to see that we are taking care of our historic and venerable church.

*With great affection, david kennison*



## - JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

Fingers crossed, it has been a quiet summer in terms of repair and maintenance issues. The Asset Management committee (composed of myself, Rich Unger and Sean Albert) has completed surveys of the church building, St. George's House and the Rectory, and will do surveys of Cranmer House and the Great Hall. The dual purposes of the surveys are (1) to identify that work that needs to be addressed prior to the arrival of a new Rector, and (2) to develop short- and long-term systematic processes to identify, provide for and fund the corrective and preventive maintenance of our major assets.



Routine repair issues to be addressed immediately include fixing the choir room commode, replacing the St. George's House water heater and the Rectory garage door opener, and correcting minor issues with the church and Cranmer House boilers.

Corrective and preventative maintenance issues to be completed this fall include repairing and painting the Rectory façade and the front doors of the church, and actions required to repair radiator leak water damage and deteriorated window frames on St. George's house.

*respectfully submitted, jon ewbank*

## - MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT -

As we always do in November we will again remember and give thanks for the saints and souls who have gone before us, having made a witness to their faith through their lives.

Our All Saints Mass will be on All Saints Day itself, Tuesday, November 1st, at 7:00 p.m. The choir will sing a choral setting of the mass, Missa Sancti Stephani (St. Stephen Mass) by English composer John Ireland (1879-1962). It is a short but lovely setting of the ordinary that will be sung a cappella by the choir. A dinner will precede this Mass.

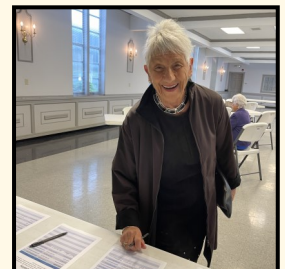


Our All Souls Mass will be delayed to Sunday morning, November 13th, at 10:00 a.m. The choir will chant the Requiem to Plainsong on this day.

Also, our Christmas Eve Mass will be at a different time this year. Pre-service carols by the choir will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Mass will begin at 8:00 p.m.

*peace, dr. brian j. taylor*

## - START-UP SUNDAY -



It's been called Back to Church Sunday and this year, Start-Up Sunday, but whatever it was/is called, Ministry Sign-up 2022 was a huge success! It was a chance for Georgians to offer their time and talent to the sheets of paper meticulously collated by David Kennison, and they did themselves proud. Between light refreshments and heavy-duty socializing, they stood in line and signed their names to those ministries that interested them, and we're glad to see many names added to the various sheets on the display table in the Great Hall.

*lynn paska*



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Sandra Hughes  
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Jeffrey Wengrovius, *Treasurer*

*Administrative Assistant*  
*Financial Secretary*  
Robert McCloskey

*Directory of Music Ministry*  
Brian Taylor

## BLOODY MOHAWK AND UPCOMING FIELD TRIP



Members of the church's book club are learning some local history from *Bloody Mohawk* and will discuss the book on October 16. One of the more colorful historical figures it describes is Sir William Johnson, a British emissary instrumental in establishing St. George's Church. On October 9, interested Georgians will travel to Johnstown after Sunday services to tour Sir Johnson's 18<sup>th</sup> century residence. Meg Hughes is organizing the jaunt. Please see her if you'd like to know more.

*meg hughes*