



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



Volume 17 Number 1

St. George's Episcopal Church Schenectady NY

March 2024

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024

Fr. Tom Pettigrew accomplished what no other rector has been able to do: downsize so that parishioners could be on their way no later than 1PM.... without losing any part of Sunday Mass, the January 21st Annual Parish Meeting that follows, or the lunch that's included.

After Opening Prayer, Fr. Tom introduced Vestry Clerk, Meg Hughes, who announced Vestry candidates (Jerry Trant, Kevin Decker, Jeff Wengrovius), then he appointed Gloria Kishton and Bob Paska as ballot counters. It was a moot point with 3 vacancies, 3 candidates, and no additional nominations from the floor. David Kennison was re-elected unopposed for a 2nd term as Senior Warden. Retiring Vestry members, Meg Hughes and Sandee Hughes (no, they're NOT related), were commended for their service.

Brief reports from Senior Warden David Kennison and Treasurer Jeffrey Wengrovius; with closing remarks by Fr. Tom highlighting his Institution as our 20th Rector on Friday, March 15th when our new Bishop, Jeremiah Williamson, will officiate. And, it was over!

The Annual Meeting brochure is chock-full of news about our various ministries. It is something to read, re-read, then volunteer.

lynn paska





Pre-Lenten Pancake Breakfast



On Sunday, February 11 parishioners sat down to a pancake and sausage Pre-Lenten breakfast. A small kitchen staff of Meg Hughes, Barb Wengrovius, Carol Gaige, Mother Lisa Schoonmaker and Sandee Hughes mixed batter, flipped and served hot pancakes to a hungry crowd. Thanks to Carol, Barb and David Kennison for pancake ingredients, sausage and real maple syrup. Clean up was made easier with the addition of Wendy Madelone, Kevin Decker, Anne Kennison and Lea Crow. I am told there was also a bit of bubbly to add to the orange juice thanks to the Ewbanks. As always ... it takes a village.

sandee hughes



St. George's Vestry 2024



Fr. Thomas J. Pettigrew
Rector



David Kennison
Senior Warden



Jonathan Ewbank
Junior Warden



Jeffrey Wengrovius
Treasurer



Kevin Decker



Carol Gaige



Gloria Kishton



Lynn Paska



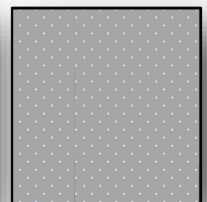
Paul Smigelski



Jerry Trant



Richard Unger



Vacant



SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

Jean Greenspan finds comfort in church and she likens it to “a pair of slippers.” Perhaps because her father was a Chaplain in the British Army and she basically lived in church throughout her formative years. Or, his travels also saw her through 17 different schools during her educational years and she prefers stability in her life.

As a Georgian, she was part of the Outreach ministry to Nursing Homes until it was disbanded because of COVID. But she's still active in Garden Club (“I love gardening. We have a compatible group and a nice time together”); Hospitality/Coffee Hour (“I'm good at washing dishes”); and is on the Sunday roster as a Greeter (her welcoming personality makes her a natural).

Gardening is one of Jean's hobbies. With a big flower garden at home, which takes a lot of time to maintain, she loves looking at her mixed wildflowers and perennials.

The Greenspans also spend a lot of time at the local library...where Jean volunteers on the English Language Learners program, helping people without good English skills...and her husband Owen teaches a Citizenship course. Jean also substitutes at the library, makes photograph books, has a big house to take care of, and is the proud grandmother to 4 grandsons ages 2-14. (Jean and Owen have two adult children, Claire and Andrew.) They spend lots of time traveling the NYS Thruway, to and from their overnight babysitting requests.

Jean and Owen lived in New York City for 16 years where he worked as a police officer. They moved here and he stayed in law enforcement as Commissioner of Criminal Justice in Albany, and she worked as a secretary at Shenendehowa School District.

What does Jean like best about St. George's? The people! Also...the music, Rite I, and Fr. Tom's shorter sermons. “The shorter sermons mean shorter services and gives us more time together at Coffee Hour,” she offered. Does Jean have any negatives? Just one: she's not a fan of all the incense.

A Georgian for 13 years, she and a group of parishioners from St. Stephen's left and joined St. George's. While most of them, for a variety of reasons, moved on, Jean has remained and is a valuable member and volunteer. She feels “very comfortable” at St. George's, and that means she's here to stay, which is good news for her Georgian friends, ministry leaders, and co-volunteers.



lynn paska

FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK.....



*Dear Georgians
and Friends*

As we continue our Lenten pilgrimage toward Easter, St George's is alive with a flurry of activity. We eagerly look forward to the visit of Bishop Jeremiah Williamson to conduct the Institution service on March 15th. Planning is underway for the many liturgies of Holy Week and Easter. We're delighted this year to welcome as our guest, the Very Reverend William Willoughby III, retired Rector of St Paul's Church, Savannah. Fr Willoughby will preach Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday. He'll preach and be the celebrant for the Easter Vigil. He'll serve as Deacon of the Mass on Easter Day when I will be the principal celebrant and preacher. We're also delighted that we'll be welcoming a number of new persons in the Body of Christ through baptism at the Easter Vigil this year.

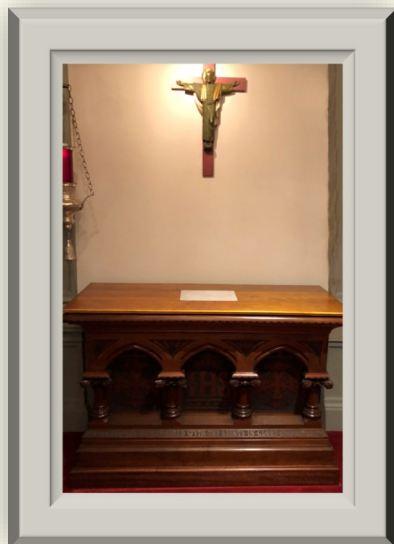
Around the church, there's been a flurry of activity as well. I'm sure the wardens will report on the many projects ongoing for the roof repair and ceiling painting. While we had hoped to get these all done before the Installation Mass, it turned out that it wasn't meant to be. Additional leaks required more work and that has delayed painting the ceiling until after St George's Day at the end of April. Our old buildings are both a blessing and a challenge, but we are grateful for what our ancestors in faith have left us, and we will continue to do our best to be good stewards of their hard work and generosity with our own hard work and generosity.

There has been a great deal of preparation for the Institution Mass and Dinner on March 15th and I would be remiss if I didn't give a hearty thanks to all those who have put in many hours organizing, sorting, cleaning, rearranging, polishing, de-waxing, and changing our mighty multitude of burnt out lightbulbs. The Nave, the sanctuary, the sacristies, the Great Hall and foyer, the Shaw Lounge, the Library, the Kitchen all have been gone through with great care to make them look wonderful in preparation for this great event!

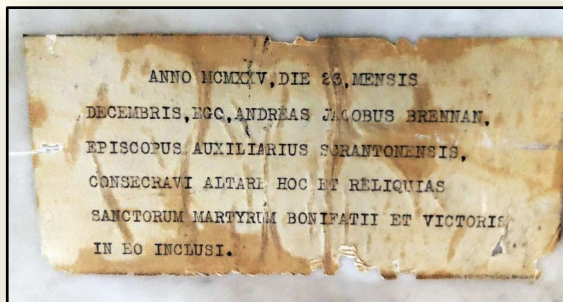
Soon, though, we'll be past the Institution service, Holy Week, and Easter, and we'll have more things to look forward to and many great adventures living out our Godward calling. I hope that you'll take the opportunity these next few weeks to find joy and companionship with your fellow Georgians in these upcoming events. The pace of our lives never seem get any slower as we are always called onward to the next thing. But that wonderful hymn "The Church's One Foundation," reminds us that "the great church victorious shall be the church at rest," and we end each Sunday Mass with the blessing, invoking the "peace which passeth all understanding." And so as we come to the close of our Lenten pilgrimage this year, I hope you'll experience in these social and spiritual offerings a foretaste of that heavenly banquet, which will be finally for us all, peace forevermore.

Faithfully in Christ,
Thomas+

ALL SOULS' CHAPEL REFURBISHMENT



Recently a small refurbishment was undertaken in the All Souls' Chapel. The altar there was once the principal altar of Saint George's Church. It was most likely installed as part of alterations to the church in 1882. It remained in place following a further extensive interior redesign of the church in 1906. Subsequently it was replaced, and the altar was given to St. Stephen's Church, then a mission of St. George's Church. Apparently, it was used for some years there and then given back once the construction of St. Stephen's Church was completed. When an expansion was done to the columbarium in the 1990s, this altar was placed in the All Souls' Chapel. Over the years the original mensa



(i.e. the top surface of the altar) had been lost and replaced by a plywood board. As this was somewhat lacking in dignity, Kevin Decker's father, Vernon-Frederic Decker crafted a new mensa made of cherry wood in memory of his parents Adan Allen and Bernice Butler Decker. Into this has been inserted an altar stone containing relics of martyrs St. Boniface and St. Victor and consecrated in 1924. St. Boniface was English and is known as the Apostle to the Germans, as England was Christianized prior to what is now Germany, he labored there, converting many until his martyrdom in 754 AD. St. Victor was according to pious belief a Roman soldier born to Christian parents who was martyred for his beliefs by the Roman army in 303 AD.

Translation: "In the year 1924, on the 23rd of the month of December, I, Andrew John Brennan, Bishop Auxiliary of Scranton, consecrate this altar. Here are reliques of martyrs S. Boniface and St. Victor inserted."

Kevin Decker



BOOK CLUB RECLAIMS READING SPACE



The only thing you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library." (Albert Einstein)

Literature is a splendid thing, and like many other pleasures, improves when shared. St. George's book club continues to thrive as a fun ministry devoted to fellowship and learning.

The club has re-appropriated the library in the Great Hall as its meeting place. The space is comfortable and offers inspiration in the form of a burgeoning collection of thought-provoking books.

Join the group in their new HQ for any of these discussions:

May 19—*The Line Becomes a River*, by Francisco Cantu, recommended by Jeff Wengrovius.

· July 21—*Cloud Cuckoo Land*, by Anthony Doerr, recommended by Louisa Carr.

· November 17—*Holmes, Marple, & Poe*, by Brian Sitts and James Patterson, recommended by Wendy Madelone.

meg hughes



CHRISTMAS HIGHLIGHTS 2023

We all cringe a bit when stores put out Christmas ornaments and decorations in August. Most of our world can wait until the sugar-high of Halloween passes before we start addressing our holiday cards. But October was when Brian Taylor began introducing Christmas Eve music and the more complicated carols to the choir. Our St. George's Advent was generally sedate until the end, when we all took part in that necessary explosion of activity, the unruly annual Greening of the Church. At some point green anarchy subsided into chaos and then into a kind of rough harmony, ultimately resolving in the beautifully decorated St. George's that greeted us on Christmas Eve.

Kevin Decker's plan could not be put into place until everyone had a job, and there were many helpers. First, in the back room he organized Meg Falco, Natasha Bassant, Arianna Bassant, Chelsea Bassant, and Aiden Bassant making wreaths, which ultimately were hung on the doors and lecterns. Kyle Carlson, Eric Bassant, Paul Smigelski, Louisa Carr, Chris Henry, Rich Unger, and Jeff Wengrovius set up the trees on either side of the altar, with Chris Henry and Sue Hartz unsnarling and stringing the lights. Gloria Kishton with Bill and Bonnie Daggett took care placing the many poinsettias. Barb Wengrovius and Meg Hughes set candles and greenery in the windows. Constructing the crèche was a group project: Meg Hughes, Sue Hartz, Sandee Hughes, Ann Duff, Louisa Carr, David Kennison, and Jean Greenspan. Assembling the candelabras is a tricky, dangerous task, as there is always a chance one's masterpiece will tip over. Bill Daggett, Joyce Cockerham, Meredith Ewbank, David Kennison, and Rich Unger carefully placed and balanced each one. There was work outside as well: Jon Ewbank and Jon Pearson surrounded the west doors with garland. Grant and Colton Jaquith were instrumental in cleaning up the bits and pieces left behind by all the greenery and materials.

At midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, we welcomed the Christ Child's birth with joyful song and preaching. The St. Cecilia Choir preceded Mass with thirty minutes of carols and hymns, also singing *O Magnum Mysterium* by Tomas Luis Victoria and "Lo, how a rose e'er blooming" by Michael Praetorius during Mass. The service began with Baby Jesus being placed in his cradle in the crèche to the words: "Alleluia. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us: And we beheld his glory, Alleluia." Then the candles were lit. In his sermon Fr. Tom said, the church is called to always proclaim afresh the good news of Jesus Christ. The theme through the years of this beautiful Christmas story is the story of God's love for us, how he came into the world to redeem us from sin and death. God came to us so our story wouldn't be one of constant fear and sorrow. After Communion we, like Christians around the world, sang "Silent Night" in our hushed candle-lit sanctuary. Following the Last Gospel and Brian's glorious postlude, *In dulci jubilo* by JS Bach, everyone was invited to the Great Hall for a festive reception.

On Saturday, Jan. 6, Epiphany Mass was celebrated at 10:00, with the traditional blessing of chalk. Blessed chalk is still available in the back of the church with which to write the traditional New Year's blessing on our homes: 20 + C + M + B + 24.

The best gift for St. George's this Christmas was celebrating with our new Rector. Welcome, Fr. Tom!

joan pearson



EPISCOPAL EDUCATION

The Ordination & Consecration of Jeremiah David Williamson

It is difficult to capture the enormity of this day in a few words. The live stream video, as beautiful as it was, could not do it justice. You really had to be there - as were almost 800 of our fellow diocesan friends - to drink deeply of the grandeur of the cathedral, the majesty of the ceremony and the significance for the diocese of Albany.



St. George's was well-represented with about 12 parishioners, the first contingent arriving well before the doors opened, ensuring a good seat. Within the hour, it was standing room only.

The service began with grand processions of laity, dignitaries, clergy, bishops and others, led by the Bishop Presiding, Right Rev Dede Duncan-Probe, Bishop of Central NY and President of Province II of the

Episcopal Church. As this service also includes an ordination rite, there was an Examination and agreement by fellow bishops. Who amongst us could forget the sight of Bishop-elect Jeremiah laying prostrate on the floor, face down before God and his fellow bishops as he prepared for his Consecration? Finally, the Bishop Presider proclaimed "Diocese of Albany, I present your new bishop," to overwhelming cheers and applause.

Bp. Williamson's wife, Jennifer, an ordained United Methodist Elder preached the sermon, relating that in their first visit to Albany, they were met with such overwhelming warmth and welcoming embrace, their uncertainty disappeared and they knew this was God's call. She said that "Jeremiah comes to it with eyes wide open." Their 9-yr old son Isaiah read the first lesson in the service and their 12-yr old son Oscar was an acolyte. Bp. Williamson's parents also had a role, presenting him with a crozier made by his father from wood from his grandparents' farm. [NB, this is not the historic crozier of Bp. Doane, the refurbishment of which was underwritten by St George's parishioners].



A Mass followed, as did a festive reception at the Fort Orange Club. Finally, our diocese had its 10th bishop!

In a letter sent later, Bp. Jeremiah wrote "God has called us to walk together, as blessed companions, guided into the vast future by the Holy Spirit. I've believed that for a while" .. and ... "I am touched by your care. I am humbled by your embrace of me, my ministry, and my family. I am strengthened by your companionship. And I am consumed by hope for the future God has in store for our diocese." Your Bishop,
+Jeremiah

Welcome, Bishop Jeremiah David Williamson!



david kennison



PHOTO ALBUM



Gloria Kishton captured a beautiful winter scene of St. George's after the first snowfall of the season.



David Kennison is here! There! Everywhere! This time, on a stepladder helping to de-green St. George's after Christmas.



On Sunday, February 4th....Faiz Wareh (son of Tarik & Pattie), a freshman at St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN was our featured organist for the opening and closing voluntaries at the 10AM Mass.



It's a bird! A plane! It's Super David....Kennison....on the roof of St. George's House. What is he doing? He's with Midstate Roofing searching for leaks. Where is his cape? On the ground, where it belongs.



Sandee Hughes and the Hospitality volunteers cleaned the cupboards and kitchen in preparation for Fr. Tom's institution.

- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

I predict that 2024 will prove to be a momentous year for St. George's.



The past two years have proven to be hugely productive – we've spent time and money, toil and sweat in carefully addressing many needs in our parish, both in our buildings and systems and in the way in which we work. Boilers have been replaced, roofs have been repaired, wiring has been redesigned and brought up to code, grounds and gardens have been beautifully maintained and improved, the rectory was refurbished and much more. Our office procedures have been strengthened, new procurement procedures installed, finances have been audited. Truly, we are taking care of God's house!

Even without a rector, we have maintained our majestic high church liturgy with Sunday Mass with the help of many diocesan clergy that answered our call for help. Each of them will always be a part of St George's. When Mass was not possible, we smoothly transitioned to choral Matins, every bit as beautiful as our Mass. We didn't miss a single Sunday. Evensongs were offered periodically as were weekday services that have now grown into weekday Masses.

Our call last summer to Fr Thomas Pettigrew has proven to have had the hand of God within it. Fr Tom has hit the deck running, has taken command and jumped wholeheartedly into the midst of every aspect of parish life – every task, every issue and every need. He has brought a fresh approach and a keen eye to St George's and we are immensely blessed to have him with us. We see new faces in the pews and are heartened at the return of old friends. Today, at the cusp of his Institution, we look forward to our long ministry together.

Now, with a new bishop, Jeremiah Williamson in place, the diocese is poised for a new beginning. We are convinced that we have a loving and supportive bishop to guide us and to pull together every parish in the diocese into a whole - doing God's work on earth, growing God's kingdom, ministering to the needy and spreading the good news of the gospels.

How could I not be optimistic? Our future is great. Work remains and a lot of it, but our hearts are filled with joy. We sing together as we work together.

With great affection, david



- MUSIC NOTES -



March 1st marked my 5th anniversary since I began serving as Organist-Choirmaster of St. George's Church. It has been a fruitful and wonderful five years here. I am grateful for everyone's support during this time.



I especially want to thank the St. Cecilia Choir, the parish choir of St. George's. This choir continues to provide the musical leadership to our Sunday Mass and other liturgies, offering anthems, the minor proper chants and leading the hymns and service music. In addition this ensemble has offered a number of choral liturgies throughout the year. Each week this group comes together on Tuesday evening to rehearse for 90 minutes and then arrives an hour before Sunday Mass for warm-up and additional rehearsal. I am honored and pleased to be working with this group.

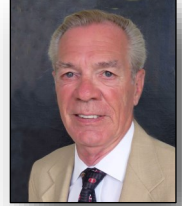
Next time you see a choir member, please thank that person for their service. We are most fortunate to have their inspirational music.

peace, dr. brian j. taylor

OUTREACH: Georgians continue to support this ministry by giving non-perishable food items to SICM and personal hygiene supplies to the YWCA emergency shelter.

- JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

So far this new year, our physical plant focus has been consumed by the need to deal with leak issues both in the Sanctuary roof and that of St. George's House. The availability of contractors and materials in January and February prevented us from being able to begin other projects. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that repairing and painting the sanctuary ceiling would have to wait until the leaks in that roof were sealed. Likewise, repairing the St. George's House roof needed to be done before we could start work on the repairs needed to the walls and ceilings in the sexton's apartment.



Finally in late February, our roofing contractor was able to acquire and apply the new roof sealing system. Both roofs have now been sealed with "Enduris 352," a silicone and polyester fabric roof repair product that, according to the manufacturer, will last 20 years.

The water damaged wall in the Great Hall first floor bathroom has been removed and repaired. Sanding, finishing and painting should be complete before the Rector's Installation.

Our boiler work is about complete, as new steam traps and new thermostats are currently being installed.

That will leave only the window repairs to St. George's House, the repairing and painting of the sanctuary ceiling, and initial repairs to the Sexton apartment still to be done under this year's planned maintenance actions.

respectfully submitted, jon ewbank

LENTEN QUIET DAY



Meredith Ewbank and Lea Crow, members of the Order of the Daughters of the King, and Wendy Madelone, offered a Lenten Quiet Day to parishioners and others in the Diocese on Saturday, March 2. Seventeen people attended the day-long journey into the Passion of Christ, guided by Brynna Carpenter-Nardone of The Cathedral of All Saints, who utilized the practices of *visio divina* and *lectio divina* as an aid to reflection and discussion. The day began with a Low Mass and ended with a Choral Evensong. A simple soup and bread lunch was provided.

meredith ewbank





St. George's Episcopal Church

30 North Ferry Street

Schenectady, New York 12305

Telephone (518) 374-3163

[email: office@stgeorgesschenectady.org](mailto:office@stgeorgesschenectady.org)

www.stgeorgesschenectady.org

Editor: Lynn Paska

Layout: Bob Paska

Contributors:

- Jon Ewbank
- Meredith Ewbank
- Meg Hughes
- Sandee Hughes
- David Kennison
- Gloria Kishton
- Wendy Madelone
- Joan Pearson
- Jon Pearson
- Fr. Thomas Pettigrew
- Paul Smigelski
- Brian Taylor

The Vestry

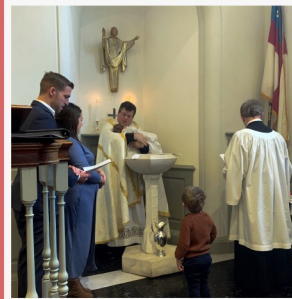
- David Kennison, *Sr. Warden*
- Jonathan Ewbank, *Jr. Warden*
- Sean Albert
- Kevin Decker
- Carol Gaige
- Gloria Kishton
- Marilyn (Lynn) Paska
- Paul Smigelski
- Jerry Trant
- Richard Unger
- Jeffrey Wengrovius, *Treasurer*

Rector

Fr. Thomas J. Pettigrew

Director Music Ministry

Brian Taylor



BAPTISM

There's nothing as beautiful as the baptism of a baby....as evident with the baptism of baby Sasha Hartz during Sunday Mass on December 31st, 2023 with Fr. Tom doing the baptismal honors. Her parents Scott and Shannon (Hughes) Hartz and older brother Silas looked on proudly, while her maternal grandparents (Peter and Sandee Hughes) and paternal grandparents (Steve and Sue Hartz) beamed from the pews. After the official ceremony, Fr. Tom walked baby Sasha around the church so parishioners could get a closer look at their newest Georgian.