

SAINT GEORGE'S CHURCH



Annual Meeting & Election

January 12, 2025



30 NORTH FERRY STREET, SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK 12305

Ph. 518-374-3163 office@stgeorgesschenectady.org

The Reverend Thomas J. Pettigrew, B.A., M.Div., Rector

Mr. David Kennison & Mr. Jonathan Ewbank, Wardens

Dr. Brian J. Taylor, AAGO, Director of Music

A PRAYER FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Grant, O Lord, that thy Holy Spirit may preside over us now in all our concerns and deliberations for the welfare of this parish. We thank thee for all the blessings of the past year, and pray that we may go together from strength to strength in the year before us. Help us all to dedicate ourselves to thee, and to be ready to make sacrifice of time and money for the extension of thy kingdom.

Guide us, we beseech thee, in the choice of our Wardens and Vestry members that they may discharge their duties faithfully.

We praise thee for those thy servants who labored and worshipped here before us, and especially for those who have departed this life since we last met together.

Grant to them ✠ eternal rest, O Lord, and let thy light perpetual shine upon them; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

Thanks be to Thee, O God, Who hast given us
minds that think
hearts that love
and hands that welcome.

Inspire us to work with Thee
that we may be responsible for Thy gifts.

We praise Thee for our homes,
our friends and our Holy Church.

Bless St. George's in this
Two Hundred and Eighty-Ninth year
and in all Her endeavors for
the propagation of the Faith
and for the salvation of souls,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and our King.
Amen.

THE AGENDA OF THE 289TH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING



- The Opening Prayer
- Appointment of Clerk
- Appointment of Tellers for the Election
- Nominations from the Floor
- Ballots Distributed
- Voting opens and remains open for one hour.

- Luncheon is Served.

Reports to the Annual Meeting:

- The Rector, Fr. Thomas Pettigrew
- Senior Warden, David Kennison
- Junior Warden, Jon Ewbank
- Financial Report, Jeffrey Wengrovius, Treasurer
- Questions and suggestions from parishioners

- Announcement of Election Results, Carol Gaige, Vestry Clerk
- The Blessing & Adjournment

The Rector's Welcome to the 289th Annual Meeting of St George's Church

Dear Georgians & Friends,

A year ago, I wrote my first annual report having been here only four full months. It's hard to believe that I've now been here a full and complete year. Sometimes, it still feels like I've just arrived; at other times it feels like September 2023 was a lifetime ago. It has been truly a wonderful year of settling in to work, meeting new people, and working together with the ministry leaders to discern our future at St. George's Church. We have had some wonderful celebrations: Easter, Christmas, and a wonderful Institution Liturgy and reception.

As I sit here, I find it hard to write a "report" for the annual meeting. That's because in the pages which follow you will find the well thought out reports of the leaders of many ministries which take go on in our parish. It's true that I've never met anyone whose favorite genre heading was "non-fiction, report." Yet, I hope you will take the time to read through these wonderful contributions. One of the great joys of being a rector is that I get to be involved in all the aspects of our parish life. I get to see and help guide the whole picture. And it's a big picture! You might not be aware of all that is going on around you in the life of the parish. I hope that these year-end "reports" will give you a little snapshot into the larger life of our parish family.

St George's has stood as a witness to the Good News of God in Jesus Christ for 289 years and (by Georget?) I know he's not close to being done with us yet! Every parish in every denomination has it's ups and downs, and I'm convinced that we are on our way up! Over the last few months, our Sunday attendance has increased and we have had a wonderful influx of new people joining us on this mission of worship and service to which God calls us. As we begin this new years, let us give thanks for all that God has done for us in this past year, and ask for the grace, courage, and strength to go forward in faith and love to be who God has called us to be and do those things which he is calling us to do!

Faithfully,

(The Rev'd) Thomas J. Pettigrew, Rector

Baptism: 6

Funerals: 4

Weddings: 1

Total Sunday Eucharists: 52

Total Sunday Attendance: 2529

Sunday Average Attendance: 49

Easter Attendance: 141

Christmas Attendance: 132

St. George's Day: 83

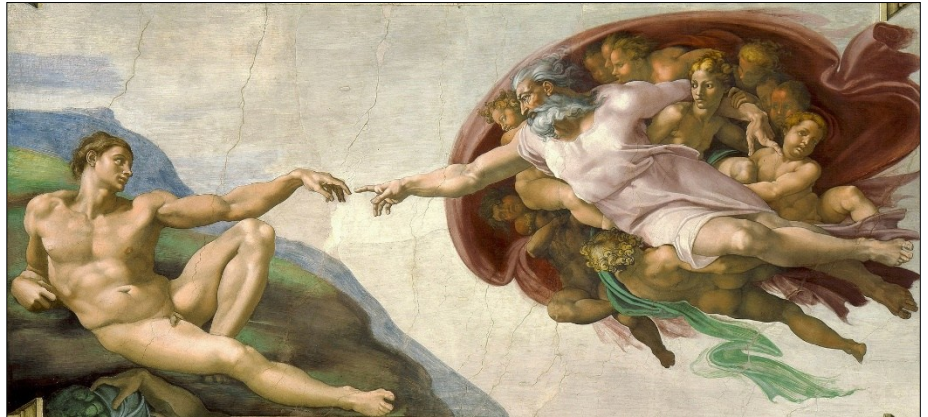
SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

David Kennison

Fulfilling Our Mission

If you've visited the Sistine Chapel in St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, you'll never forget Michelangelo's famous fresco, "Creation of Adam", c. 1512.

Placed in the center of a ceiling that is packed with so many unbelievable frescos, this work stands alone for its symbolism and beauty. Depicted as an elderly white-bearded man garbed in a swirling cloak, God's hand reaches out to a naked Adam as if imparting the spark of life from the finger of God to Man. However, their fingers are slightly separated, thought to represent Man's unattainability of divine perfection.



In this, I see the making of Man in God's own image, but also so very much more - the Genesis creation stories, the ancient prophets, Jesus' sacrificial offering of himself for our sins, the beginning of the Church.

Amazingly, Michelangelo's masterpiece was created only 250 years before St George's church building was erected – a mere blink of an eye compared to the dawn of creation. It makes me humble and it certainly makes me think. It's so easy to get caught up in the daily round that we sometimes forget what a gift has been given to us – our humanity in God's image is first. God's unwavering goodness and his unconditional grace towards us. Our responsibility to others, our love for each other and the trust - the sacred trust - that has been placed in our hands to be good stewards of St George's.

What are we to do with that sacred trust? Compared to the creation of Adam, how can we possibly hope to measure up and do God's will? The answer is in the prayer book Catechism – *"the mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ"*. Continuing, we pursue that mission *"... as we pray, worship, proclaim the Gospel and promote justice, peace and love"*.

How beautiful! Our job is to pray, worship and love. Our job is to bring people to church each week. Our job is *"to worship the Lord God with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind"* and *"to love our neighbor as ourselves"*. You'll recognize these as the Summary of the Law, said at the start of every Mass. That's it!! God takes care of the rest!

It sounds easy, but we still have to work together. As stewards of St George's, we have an historic church to maintain - leaky roofs, peeling paint, decrepit boilers and all. How can we raise the money to repair and replace, pay staff, heat the place, keep the lights on, fix the parking lot; the list goes on and on. This is what keeps the Vestry awake at night. We've made great progress in 2024, but the list has no real end. It's all part of being a steward, it's now our turn in that unbroken line of stewards that have gone before, each of whom has made an indelible mark to leave this place for us, just as we must leave it for future generations.

So, what about prayer and parish growth? This is a different kind of effort, of even greater importance. Come to Mass every week, more if possible. Pray fervently, worshiping God and giving thanks for all that he has given to you. Enjoy his grace, freely-given, and praise him constantly. Bring friends to church! Welcome visitors warmly and enthusiastically, for they are our future! Love our neighbor as ourselves. When you argue with someone, take a breath and see Jesus in their face! Pray all the time – at home, in the car, at a meal, in front of the tele-

vision, all the time!

St George's will grow. God will provide, but we have to do our part. God has given us all the gifts and everything we need to succeed, the rest is up to us.

If you're looking for a list of 2024 accomplishments, that will undoubtedly be presented in other reports. I can say that the Vestry is now exploring potential leasing of unused parts of the Great Hall. Stay tuned for updates on this. Also, the boiler that heats Cranmer House (a twin of the church boiler, replaced last year) is exhibiting the same death rattle. Be prepared for a \$82.5K campaign in the near future. This would be the 5th of 5 boilers on our campus, so fundraising could be entitled THE LAST BOILER CAMPAIGN.

I enthusiastically say that having Fr Thomas Pettigrew as our 20th Rector has been a breath of fresh air. I cannot imagine a person better suited to the people and mission of St George's. His appreciation for history, temperament, intelligence and liturgical skill are legend. God chose well and praise be, we listened!!

In almost 300 years of history within these walls - spanning parts of 4 centuries - much has happened. It has ALL been done because the people took ownership of their church. This is our time, our brief shining moment in history to make a difference. Grab it with gusto and be good stewards with joy in your heart!

Thank you for being an important part of my life and the life of St. George's.

With great affection for you all,
Respectfully submitted,
David Kennison

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Jon Ewbank

Historically, in the Church of England, one (senior) warden was named by the priest and the other (junior warden) was chosen by the congregation. The senior warden was (and is) known as the “priest's or rector's warden,” and the junior warden as the “people's warden.” In the American Episcopal Church, the primary role of the junior warden is to be responsible for the upkeep of the parish buildings and grounds. This has been my primary function as your junior warden.

As we all are aware of, and rightly proud of, St. George's is one of the oldest congregations in the diocese, with one of the largest campuses and one of the oldest Church buildings. While noteworthy in an historical context, for the junior warden, it is a property upkeep nightmare.

Property (and equipment) maintenance should be a two-pronged process – planned (or routine) maintenance (PM) and corrective (or emergency) maintenance (CM). If routine maintenance is an active process, most emergency maintenance is avoided. To simplify it, planned maintenance is cleaning out your rain gutters twice a year to prevent clogging the downspout – a relatively inexpensive and easy process. Corrective maintenance is having to replace the roof because water has backed up under it from a clogged gutter – a much more difficult and expensive prospect.

Due to the number of properties on our campus (5), and the age of those properties (the youngest being built in the 1950's), routine maintenance is a significant and costly task. As a result of dwindling pledge and other revenues over the past 20 years, a lot of routine maintenance actions have been deferred to save money. We have been and continue to be faced with paying for the corrective maintenance demands resulting from those deferrals.

Rather than give you a detailed laundry list of property upkeep and maintenance actions undertaken in 2024, I am going to simply hit the highlights. Those can be placed into three broad categories: boilers, roofs, and painting.

We started the year completing installation of the new sanctuary boiler which had been initiated in 2023. We ended the year with the discovery that the boiler servicing Cranmer House was exhibiting the same signs of imminent failure as had been observed in the Sanctuary boiler. This is not totally surprising as those two original boilers had been the same model and had been installed at the same time. We are now facing the imminent need to replace the Cranmer House boiler in the not-too-distant future, at a conservative estimated cost of \$100,000 dollars or more.

2024 also began with known leaks in the roofs of both St. George's House and the Sanctuary. These projects were anticipated to be completed and paid for by our insurance coverage. Once the sanctuary roof leak was repaired, we contracted for the repair and painting of the northern third of the sanctuary ceiling. While in the preparation phase for the painting, more leaks were discovered in the sanctuary and St. George's house roofs. In the sanctuary, the leak was above the area to be painted, which delayed the start of that project. In the St. George's House roof, the leak was around a plumbing vent pipe, and resulted in significant water damage to the ceiling and walls in the stairway to the sexton's apartment. At this point, all identified leaks to the Sanctuary and St. George's House roofs have been repaired.

The third maintenance category, painting, was alluded to above. As a result of roof leaks over the years, the sanctuary ceiling had (and still has) areas of water damage causing peeling of the paint. The repair and repainting of the first one third of the ceiling finally began in late May and was finished in August. Planning is now underway to repair and paint the remaining portions of the ceiling in 2025.

The number of other repair and upkeep projects that occurred during the year are too numerous and varied to list, as are the names of everyone who was involved in all the activities done in the area of property upkeep and maintenance. I thank you all for your involvement, hard work and financial generosity that made it possible. I look forward to working with you in continuing to return St. George's physical plant to its true beauty.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jon Ewbank

Treasurer's Report

Dr. Jeff Wengrovius 1/12/2025

2024:

\$66,000 taken from endowment principal (down from \$135,000 in 2023) to balance the budget.

Good news: We finished 2024 with about \$30,000 in St. George's bank account and have about \$36,000 of interest in our endowment available to spend when needed.

2025:

2025 budget approved by the Finance Committee and the Vestry.

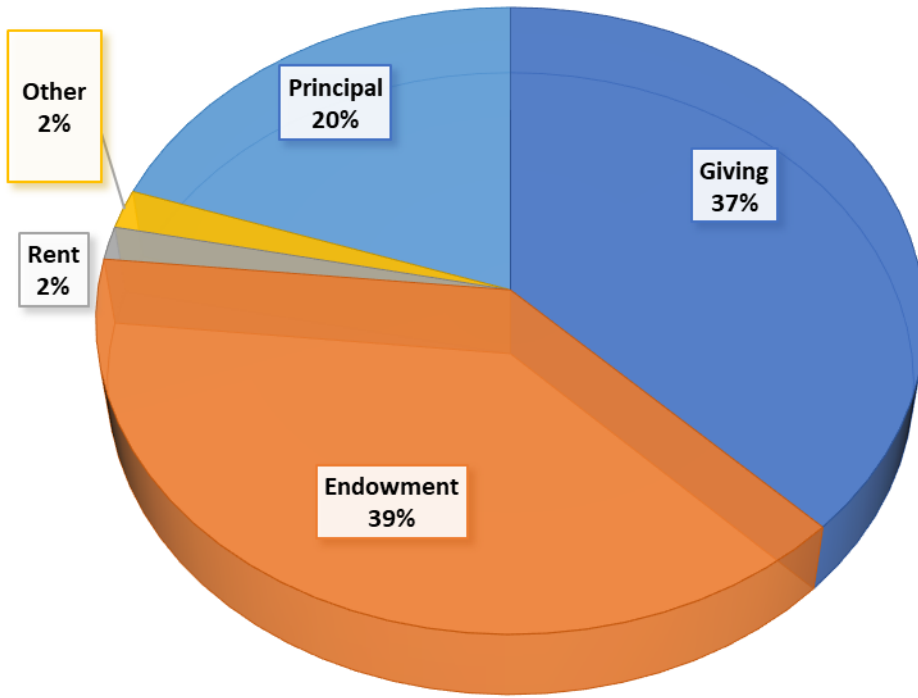
We anticipate needing about \$60,000 of endowment principal to balance expenses.

Projected **income** for 2025 - \$304K (including principal):

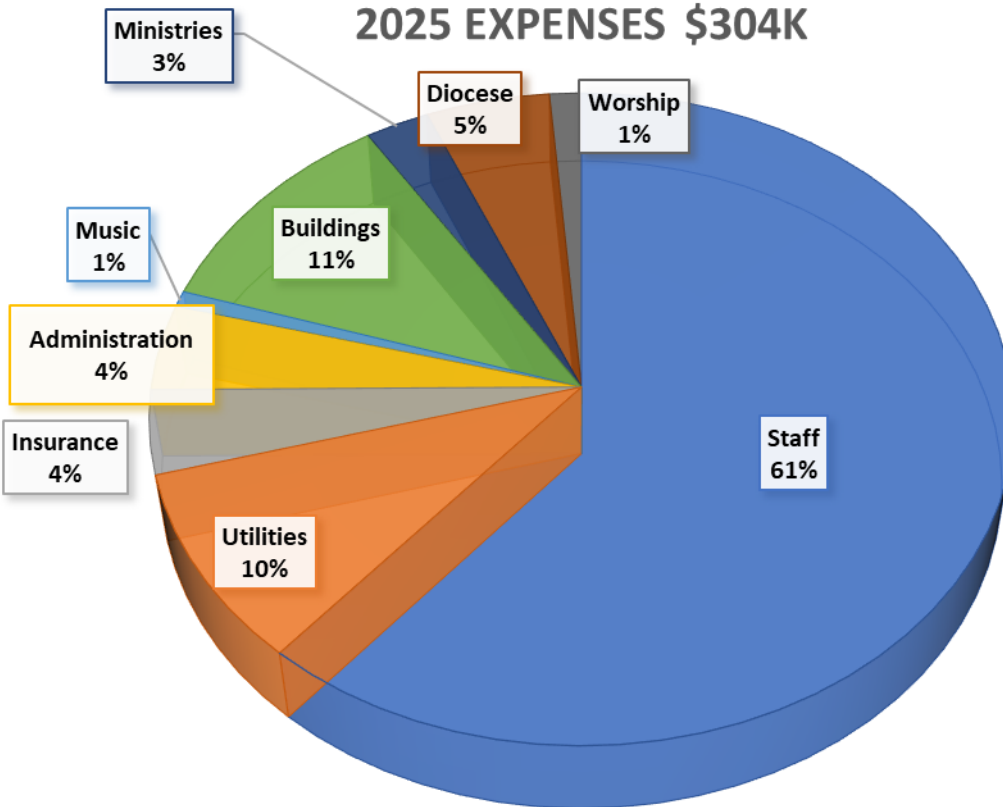
Projected **expenses** for 2025 - \$304K.

Capital expenses could be higher if the Cranmer House boiler fails.

2025 INCOME \$304K



2025 EXPENSES \$304K



MINISTRY REPORTS FOR 2024

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC'S REPORT

Music for the praise, prayer and proclamation of God is integral to Christian worship, and most especially in an Anglican church which observes the fullness of Catholic tradition as we do here at St. George's. We strive to offer the best music possible in our liturgies for the glory of God and for the edification of God's people who worship in this place week by week.

The St. Cecilia Choir, the parish choir of St. George's Church, provides the musical leadership for our liturgies. The full choir sings from September through June, and cantors drawn from the choir continue that musical leadership throughout the year.

This past year the choir had a number of special services to sing, most notably the Institution and Induction of Our Rector on March 15th. This Mass included a choral setting of the ordinary, a choral Te Deum and several anthems including one written by the Director of Music for the occasion.

The choir also offered choral masses for Easter Day, Pentecost Day, All Saints Sunday and Christmas Eve. In addition the ensemble offered two choral evensong services this past year along with a chanted Requiem Mass for All Souls on November 5th.

For the first time in many years the choir was also invited to sing at the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, in combination with other choirs at a Mass commemorating The Very Rev'd Marshall J. Vang's 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. (Dean Vang had previously been Rector of St. George's in the 1990's and had returned to celebrate masses regularly in 2022-2023 when we were without a Rector.) The choir has been invited to return to the cathedral this coming spring to once again join with other choirs in offering an Easter Lessons and Carols Service on May 4th.

Finally, although it actually happened in 2025, I would like to mention our new service, A Feast of Lights for Epiphany, which we offered for the first time on Sunday evening, January 5th. This was a successful event in every way, and we were especially pleased to have our bishop present along with his family. We hope to make this an annual tradition.

It remains a great honor and privilege for me to serve as the Organist and Director of Music of this historic and vibrant parish. I thank all the Georgians for their continued support of my ministry in this place.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian J. Taylor

OUTREACH ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024

Paul Smigelski – Vestry Chair

To prepare for this year's annual report, I took the time to revisit the 2023 report, and I was delighted to see how much we accomplished that year. I am amazed at how much more we accomplished in 2024. Whether it was in donated goods or acts of service, St. George's continued to shine its light in the community throughout the year. As you read the synopsis below, please note all the individuals who stepped forward to take the lead in an outreach activity in 2024.

A year-long emphasis on donations to the Sycamore Collaborative (formerly SICM) food pantry located at 839 Albany St yielded 3,536 pounds of food. Compared to the 3,249 pounds contributed in 2023, this was a generous increase in giving. Thanks to all who contributed to this mission, and special thanks to Carol Gaike for graciously transporting our donations each month. Fr. Tom has challenged the parish to increase our giving once again with the goal of reaching 4,000 lbs in 2025.

St. George's continued to support the YWCA's emergency shelter program for women and children by providing always-needed pillows, bedding, and personal care items. Regular quarterly deliveries of bedding and personal care items continue to meet their great and ongoing need. This year the Society of Mary has graciously taken on this ministry with Wendy Madelone taking point.

Georgians were once again "ringing the bell" in support of the Salvation Army's annual campaign at the Eastern Parkway Market 32 on Saturday, December 14th. Many thanks to all the participants in this St. George's tradition led by Jon Pearson. Participants were invited to attend the Salvation Army Kettle Kickoff on November 7th with Georgians filling out two tables of volunteers, prominent placement in the program, and an enjoyable time had by all. At least one Georgian family participated in the Angel Trees program, providing Christmas gifts for children who would otherwise have a spartan Christmas morning.

St. George's assisted the Sycamore Collaborative in its annual summer lunch program, distributing meals at the Schenectady Public Library Main Branch. This was another new location for us and largely regarded as an improvement over the prior year. Turnout at this location amounted to approximately eighty lunches served. The Sycamore staff was dramatically cut resulting in us having no support staff from Sycamore that week and I am proud to say we really stepped up to meet the challenge of flying solo. We will continue to look for even better locations in 2025.

Fr. Thomas and Sue Hartz continued the "Loaves & Fishes" outreach, a Diocesan-supported feeding ministry housed at St Francis Mission, the old Grace and Holy Innocents Church on Clinton Ave. This is an opportunity for firsthand ministry to the most vulnerable in our midst, including children. Fr. Tom has indicated that months with a fifth Saturday often result in that Saturday requiring volunteers. The dates of the fifth Saturdays in 2025 are March 29th, May 31st, August 30th, and November 29th.

In partnership with our Music Ministry led by Brian Taylor, our Choral Evensongs have become another opportunity to show our support for our community with speaker Dr. Amaury Tanon-Santos from Sycamore Collaborative joining us at the November 17th Evensong. In September, St. George's Church co-sponsored a folk concert at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church which was another fundraiser for Sycamore Collaborative.

St. George's is blessed to have a Mission endowment which yields a modest amount of interest each year. This year, \$1000 was donated from the fund to each of the Salvation Army, Sycamore Collaborative, and the YWCA.

Many thanks and a Blessed New Year to all who participated in the Outreach Ministry in 2024. I look forward to all the great works and ideas of the St. George's community.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Smigelski

COMMUNICATIONS

Lynn Paska

The Communications Committee is responsible for issuing Website notifications posted whenever applicable, i.e., the Greening of the Church, Salvation Army Bell Ringers, Evensong, etc. The pictures and information are given to Jon Pearson for the actual posting on the website.

The Communications Committee is responsible for issuing a church newsletter (full color, 12 pages, winter, spring, summer and fall) with the very first Georgian Report in December 2008. It was the "brainchild" of David Kennison, Bob Paska and Lynn Paska and has been published 4x a year since then. Lynn Paska is editor, Bob Paska is main photographer and layout guru, and many Georgians contribute to this ministry via articles (Joan Pearson, religious articles; Meg Hughes, garden ministry; Pattie Wareh, book club; Sandee Hughes, hospitality; Fr. Tom, from the rector's desk; David Kennison, senior warden report, episcopal education; Jon Ewbank, junior warden report; Brian Taylor, music notes; Jeff Wengrovius, treasurer) and pictures (Gloria Kishton, Jon Pearson, Brian Taylor, Meg Hughes, Sandee Hughes, and others supply pictures to supplement Bob's photography.) I might have missed a few names but no-one is ever turned down.

We don't have meetings since it's basically a two-person operation, but everyone knows their input is invaluable and never turned down. They always are credited in "contributions" on the back cover of The Georgian Report. Bob and I try to attend the various ministry meetings, although most times the head of the ministry will either do an article or give us the information for an article.

Newsletter: deadline for March issue, Monday, March 3, 2025

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Paska

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Carol Gaige, *Chair*

Throughout this past year, we have welcomed several new members / families to our Parish. Also I have asked Jim Wingate to co-chair the Membership Ministry with me.

Please, if you have any new contact information such as a new address, phone number, birthdate, anniversary date, etc., please contact either Jim or I, so we can update your church file. We will use this information to construct a new parish directory this year.

Feel free to contact me any time at the church office phone number 518 374-3163 or email me:
Secretary@stgeorgesSchenectady.org

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Sandee Hughes, *Chair*

The purpose of the hospitality committee is two fold. To organize refreshments for weekly coffee hour after Sunday Mass and to plan, set up, serve and clean up the food for several parish events during the year.

Apart from that the maintenance of the kitchen (dishes, cutlery, pots and pans, food etc) also falls under this group's responsibilities. Social gatherings continue to be a big part at the heart of St. George's parish life. Coffee hour provides time for conversation with other members of the parish. Informal committee meetings are frequently held and volunteer opportunities organized. New parishioners can be introduced to our community in an informal setting.

During the past year we have planned the menu and provided food for the following: January - Annual Meeting lunch February/March - Pancake breakfast March/April - Easter reception following Mass. April/May - Patronal festival luncheon celebrating St. George's Day. December - "Greening of the Church" lunch and Christmas Eve reception.

We also help support "elevated" coffee hours when different church groups take over the refreshments on Sunday mornings or a celebration is being held Members of this "committee" fluctuate with the calendar. Many parishioners sign up for coffee hour refreshments.

Others step up to contribute to events when they are available. Meetings usually are informal and happen as needed during coffee hour clean up. Carol Gaige (co-chair) Barb Wengrovius, Chris Henry, Kevin Decker, Wendy Madelione, Lea Crow, the Ewbanks, the Kennison's, Meg Hughes and all support this committee. Brian Taylor graciously volunteers to brew the coffee each Sunday. We truly live "many hands make light work" and "it takes a village..."

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandee Hughes.

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

Meredith Ewbank, *President*

After a hiatus of several years, a small group of Daughters finally saw the reinstatement of the St. George Chapter of The Order of the Daughters of the King (DOK) on Christ the King Sunday, 24 November 2024.

DOK is a lay religious order for women and girls who desire a closer walk with God. We are a sisterhood, bonded together by a Rule of Life, living out vows to pray and serve Christ every day as part of our regular lives. We are at different stages of our Christian journey, having just begun or having been on this path our whole lives, and we may be lay or ordained... but we all seek to know Jesus Christ and spread Christ's kingdom throughout the world.

Three Georgian Daughters, Lea Crow, Meredith Ewbank, and Gerri Moore, were joined by Jennifer Firth, Past President, and Deb Tatro, President of the Diocese of Albany DOK Assembly, to welcome Wendy Madelone, as she professed her vows and was received into the Order after a 12-week period of discernment.

When Daughters are received into The Order, they make a three-fold vow of prayer, service, and evangelism. The ways that their service in their parish and in their Diocese plays out varies, but among other ways, examples of their service throughout the world include:

- Praying for the clergy
- Praying for the members of the parish
- Supporting the ministry work of their church through prayer and service
- Leading retreats and study groups
- Calling or sending notes to newcomers
- Providing emergency prayer support
- Visiting the sick, elderly, and shut-ins
- Assisting in healing services
- Comforting the bereaved and the suffering
- Supporting or organizing feeding programs, backpack ministries, and other outreach programs

Hosting community meals

During Lent 2024, Georgian Daughters hosted a Lenten Quiet Day for men and women, open to the entire Diocese. Our guest speaker was Brynna Carpenter-Nardone, Director of Cathedral Arts at The Cathedral of All Saints in Albany. Using art and scripture, Brynna presented on the topic "Imagining the Passion" to over 20 attendees. A simple bread and soup luncheon was provided between the morning session and the afternoon session.

In late October, Wendy and Meredith attended the Daughters' Diocesan Fall Assembly at the Christ the King Center, where Mother Judith Malionik invited Daughters to ponder the gifts of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Currently, Daughters meet monthly for fellowship and a business meeting. Women who are interested in more information about The Order may contact Meredith: 417-989-1256 by text or meredithewbank@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Ewbank, President

PASTORAL CARE

Jim Wingate, *Chair*

During 2024 we had the opportunity to work with Father Pettigrew to try to meet the pastoral care needs of our parish. It is with gratitude that we report Father Tom takes pastoral care very seriously. We were pleased to be able to accompany him on several occasions as we made visitations. He has been very quick to respond when notified of a specific need at a hospital, nursing facility or private home. We are very thankful for his support and leadership.

Recently I was looking back at the year 2000 when I first took on this ministry and that then we had 24 people or couples on our visitation list. While our numbers are much lower today, I constantly remind myself that those on our list today need and appreciate our visits every bit as much as those we visited 25 years ago. In 2024 we are still in communication with parishioners from as far away as Syracuse. Stella Schultz and I have delightful, long phone conversations throughout the year. If I don't call her, she calls me. We visit two rehabilitation centers on an ongoing basis and have made some visits to private homes.

One of the things I have experienced too many times over the years is the problems that develop when there has not been the necessary planning for the time when one can no longer take care of themselves. I would very strongly urge all members of St. George's to find the time to review their plans and documents for that time. And if you don't have any, please consider consulting with your family and an attorney. It will be a gift to your family and yourself.

The Card Ministry continues to flourish, especially as our numbers have increased significantly. I try to keep up with the new people in the congregation but if you know of someone new who I should be sending cards to, please let me know. I would also like to say thank you to all who have given me cards for this ministry. They are much appreciated and they do get used.

Finally I want to thank Ann Duff who in good and bad weather accompanies me on visitations and brings her own set of skills to brighten the day for our parishioners. It would not be the same without her. And I want to also thank all of you, our parish family for letting me know of those who could benefit from our ministry whether by a visit or a card or call.

The Numbers:

Visitations- 32

Communion Received- 28

Phone Calls- 15-20

Cards-360

Respectfully,

Ann Duff

Jim Wingate

SACRISTANS

To be sure, there is some overlap between Sacristan and Altar Guild. Up until the late 1800s, there was no concept of an Altar Guild, their present tasks being done by clergy and later by the Sacristan of the parish. When Altar Guilds came into being, they were first formed for men and only later were women allowed. It is not surprising therefore that the duties of a Sacristan and those of an Altar Guild do not have a hard dividing line.

At St George's, we enjoy the contributions of a Sacristan team, who normally set up the church for Mass on the Saturday prior. This includes preparing the chalices, cruets, altar frontal, books and vestments.

For special services, such as baptism, additional items and setup are required. All this requires a deeper knowledge of liturgical seasons and requirements of the church year as well as knowing what the Rector has planned for each service. Holy Week is an especially busy time.

Sacristans also manage the sacristies, ensuring there are adequate supplies of everything needed for Mass and other services, also keeping things neat and tidy, including repair and cleaning of vestments.

We're always looking for willing volunteers, who will be trained and scheduled into the Sacristan rota; see David Kennison

ACOLYTES

Acolyte [*from the Greek "acolytos" and Latin "acolythus"- companion, attendant, helper*] – it's not a word that easily trips off the tongue, is it? Yet, the dedication of St George's acolyte corps is crucial to the beauty of our liturgy. Our acolytes show daily commitment, enthusiasm and love of God that inspires us all.

Why acolytes? – The *Book of Common Prayer*, pg 322 says: *At all celebrations of the Liturgy, it is fitting that the principal celebrant, whether bishop or priest, be assisted by other priests and by deacons and lay persons.* But is this what stirs people to offer themselves for acolyte service? No, it is the deep desire to serve God at His altar, for that short time suppressing their self to worship and to God's glory.

Acolytes have an important ministry, which they approach with dignity, humility and care. In all things, our acolytes are aware that the purpose of their labor is "that God may be glorified". Acolytes are trained in liturgy, sacred vessels and vestments, decorum and prayer. In their duties, they are not sloppy, careless or stiff, but act in the simplest way possible so as to not distract the congregation. Theirs is a proud and honorable ministry, unique in that it involves our youth and adults, working side by side.

Acolytes hold St Vincent, deacon and martyr as their patron saint. Living in the 3rd century, St Vincent is remembered for his love, faithfulness and loyalty to God, his bishop and his Church. We who serve at the altar embrace these virtues as we seek to perfect our offering and to be as steadfast as Blessed Vincent. St Vincent's Guild, a worldwide organization of acolytes and lay ministers, has as their motto - *Amori Christi et Ecclesiae* (for the love of Christ and His Church).

Our acolyte team consists of altar servers, crucifers, torch bearers, banner bearers, thurifers and MCs. Serving God on the altar is a very special as you feel so close to God. New acolyte candidates are welcome and cherished so if you would like to have fun, learn, enjoy a new sense of closeness with God and enjoy the camaraderie of our acolyte team, see David Kennison.

ALTAR GUILD

At St George's, the Altar Guild is named in honor of St Martha & St Mary. You'll remember in Luke 10:38-42 that when Jesus visited Martha's house, Martha became consumed with the work of preparations to serve Jesus, while Mary sat quietly at Jesus' feet to listen and learn, angering Martha in the process. In truth, both working and learning are virtues that Altar Guild members espouse.

The dedicated group of our Altar Guild, men and women, makes sure the altar area is clean, linens are washed and ironed and all sacred vessels are properly set up for the Mass and washed and properly stored after Mass. A talent for sewing is an asset, as there are always things that need to be mended. Several times a year, there are work days for polishing all silver items, washing chandelier chimneys and other tasks. The busiest time is prior to Christmas, Holy Week and Easter.

As written so beautifully by Josephine Smith Wood in her Altar Guild Manual, 1915, *"Before entering upon work about the Altar, kneel a few moments at the Chancel rail, and, offering your work to God, ask Him to accept and bless it, and enable you to do it worthily as unto Him. It is a great honor and privilege to be allowed to care for the holy things in God's house, and a devout spirit and reverent demeanor should characterize those who are thus engaged."*

If you would like to explore being a member of the Altar Guild, you'll be welcomed with open arms; see Anne Kennison.

THE SOCIETY OF MARY

The Society of Mary is dedicated to the Glory of God and was founded as an Anglican society with the object of loving and honoring Mary, spreading devotion to her and taking her as a model, in purity, personal relationships and family life.

We celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary, on the third Sunday of each month at 9:15, before Mass, with a recitation of the Holy Rosary in the Lady Chapel.

We find it a wonderful time of prayer and encourage all members of the parish that may be interested to join us!

In May, Father Tom had a beautiful Ceremony for the Crowning of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

While Mary, the Mother of God, is revered and celebrated all year long, May is a special month to celebrate the Queen of Heaven.

We celebrated the Feast of Saint Mary the Virgin in August with a beautiful evening Mass.

On Sunday September 8th, we celebrated the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

December 8th was a wonderful Mass celebrating the Immaculate Conception of Mary, followed by a luncheon provided by our members.

Our main ministry is collecting and delivering donations for the YWCA Women's shelter.

We deliver the parish's donations of women's hygiene products and children's underwear on a quarterly basis. They appreciate so much the generosity of our parish.

If anyone is interested in becoming a member of the Society of Mary, please let me know!

GARDEN MINISTRY

Garden Ministry garnered a new member, Jean Greenspan, who pitched in to help Meg Hughes, Suzy Unger, Barb Wengrovius, and Gloria Kishton winterize the perennial beds. Joyce Cockerham and Lisa Schoonmaker also supported garden maintenance efforts on a few occasions during the growing season. Longtime member Debbie Lambeth, who has relocated to Florida, is sadly missed as a member of the team.

The club concluded its work on November 8, having met two mornings a week starting on April 22, with rare cancellations due to weather or personal obligations. Notable achievements in 2022, along with routine garden maintenance, included:

- Spearheaded the demolition and removal of the old parade float which had been deteriorating in the southeast corner of the parking lot for several years.
- Took delivery of a truckload of mulch and distributed it on the gardens over the course of the summer.
- Cleared trash and weeds from a neglected gravesite at the rear of Cranmer Hall; righted the toppled gravestone; and replanted the plot with grass.
- Eliminated grass growing up through the brickwork along Ferry Street; treated the surfaces with environmentally friendly Borax to discourage reemergence.
- Assured that the grounds were in respectable shape for the Walkabout on Saturday, September 24.
- Removed ferns and other overgrowth from the flowerbed south of the sanctuary. Specific donations earmarked for the revitalization of this site were pledged by Kevin Decker and Gloria and Bob Kishton. Work will conclude in 2023.

Performed much-needed organization and cleaning of the toolshed at the conclusion of the season. Camaraderie also marked the long days of spring, summer, and fall for this crew:

- More often than not, the gardeners rewarded themselves with coffee treats at Arthurs's Market once the day's labors were concluded.
- A field trip to the Berkshire Botanical Gardens in Stockbridge on September 13 gave Meg, Suzy, Barb, and Gloria an opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments and wish Deb a fond farewell before she headed south.
- On November 4, the core gardeners were treated to festive luncheon by a grateful Dr. Brian Taylor at his home following noontime prayer.

Community Liaison Report
2025 Annual Meeting

Richard Unger
January 10, 2025

The purpose of the Community Liaison ministry for the year 2024 was to maintain St. George's position as a religious institution within the Historic Stockade Neighborhood. Year 2024 has been a continuation of past years' objectives.

Objectives Include:

Being involved as a member of the Stockade Association

Dr. Brian Taylor, Gloria Kishton, Bob Lemmerman, Kim Polner, Betsie and Henry Lind, and Rich and Suzy Unger are members of the Association. Suzy, Gloria, Bob and Rich are continually active in Stockade programs and committees.

Placing regular St. George's advertisements/ service schedules in the Stockade Spy (free)

We continue to place service schedules in the Stockade Spy, especially the Holy Week and Christmas season service schedules.

Offering complementary meeting space for Stockade Association Board and/or committee meetings

The church continues to offer the Great Hall for the Stockade Association meetings and special events when needed. In exchange, the Stockade Association Board of Directors continues to provide St. George's Church free advertising space in the Association's publication, "the Stockade Spy." The Spy is published nine times per year. The cost of ad space would normally be \$350 per year.

However, fewer meetings have been held in the Great Hall over the past couple of years as wi-fi internet is not available in the Great Hall. The Stockade often needs wi-fi for meeting presentations.

Improving the visual appearance of the church property

The members of the St. George's Garden Ministry Committee, led by Meg Hughes, continues to maintain the church grounds every year, and every year the grounds look better and better. Other members of St. George's regularly and actively involved in the Garden Ministry include Barb Wengrovius, Gloria Kishton, Suzy Unger, Jean Greenspan and Kim Polner.

Members of the church Garden Ministry and volunteers from the Stockade neighborhood worked hard to prepare the church gardens for the 2024 Stockade Walkabout (House Tours) held in September.

Importantly this Garden Ministry effort is accomplished on a shoestring budget. So, once again come spring of 2025, the Garden Ministry will be looking for volunteers to continue maintenance and improvements to the church gardens. This will include weeding, seeding, shrub and tree trimming, and other potential improvements.

Welcoming/introducing guests at church services and offering them a permanent place of worship if they are new residents of the area

Father Tom has continued and improved the practice of specifically welcoming church service visitors and providing welcome packets in the pews for our guests.

Participating in the Annual Art Show, Stockade Walkabout (House Tours) and Stockade Annual Sidewalk Sale

Many St. Georgians helped provide the “Outdoor Café” and “Mum Sale” on our front lawn for September Stockade Art Show participants and visitors. Dr. Brian Taylor, Joan Pearson and Dr. Jeffrey Wengrovius also conducted organ concerts for the Stockade Art Show participants and visitors. Not only was the food service a great fund raiser for St. George’s, but it was also a tremendous showing of support for our Stockade Neighborhood. A special thanks needs to go to Dr. Brian Taylor for organizing and directing the group fund-raising effort. St George’s members should be proud of our continued success in support of the Annual Stockade Art Show, the longest running local art show in the country.

For the Stockade Walkabout (House Tours) held this past September, St George’s Church was opened to the public for tours guided by David Kennison. As they did for Stockade Art Show, Dr. Brian Taylor, Joan Pearson and Dr. Jeffrey Wengrovius conducted organ concerts for the Stockade Walkabout visitors.

This Year St. George’s also participated in the annual Stockade Neighborhood sidewalk sale. St George’s part in the sidewalk sale was organized by the Society of St. Mary. Members of the church donated unwanted items that were offered during the sidewalk sale. St George’s raised \$300 that was donated to the local YWCA Women’s shelter.

Participating in the Stockade Christmas Tree Lighting celebration at the Stockade Circle near the Church

Once again, St George’s opened the Great Hall to the neighborhood and church members for a gathering after the Stockade Tree Lighting Ceremony, held December 6. Approximately 40 people attended the reception and enjoyed refreshments and Christmas season cheer. In particular everyone enjoyed singing Christmas carols led by Stockade residents Bruce Holden and Doug Chilton on the piano.

Inviting neighborhood residents to participate in the St. George’s Day Parade and brunch.

The 2024 St. George’s Day parade and brunch was a great success, as always. The weather held and the procession through the neighborhood was wonderful, bringing many outdoors to watch and a few to join in. The parade was followed by brunch in the Great Hall, where members of the church mingled with members of the neighborhood.

