



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



Volume 18 Number 1

St. George's Episcopal Church Schenectady NY

March 2025

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

After a delicious lunch in the Great Hall, Fr. Tom opened with a prayer, brief message about “the welfare of our parish,” and got down to business. He thanked outgoing Vestry members (Lynn Paska, Paul Smigelski and Rich Unger); asked the Clerk of the Vestry, Carol Gaige, to distribute the names of the 4 nominees (Alyssa DePaula, Bob Paska, Kim Polner, and Mike Todt) for 3 full-term Vestry positions and one 1-year Vestry vacancy.

As if to prove a point, a spoonful of Fr. Tom (see photo) is never enough, and we learned that we should wait an hour after nominees are announced before voting. That hour went by quickly as Fr. Tom explained the mechanisms of a church meeting, how Junior Warden, Jon Ewbank, was changing jobs and becoming Financial Secretary; that Paul Smigelski was taking over as Junior Warden while retaining his Vestry ministry as Outreach Chairman; Jeff Wengrovius, absent because of the flu, has been renamed Chairman of the Finance Committee; and introduced Senior Warden, David Kennison, who said a fund-raising campaign was in the future for a new boiler. Fr. Tom now has an office staff: Administrative Assistant, Carol Gaige, and Music Director, Brian Taylor, doing double-duty as Assistant to the Rector. To great applause, Bill and Bonnie Daggett were recognized as generously underwriting the church painting project.

lynn paska



SALVATION ARMY



St. George's has a solid history of supporting the Salvation Army in various ways. My oldest records date back to 2010 when many of us attended their SPUD Night dinner at River Stone Manor to raise funds for its summer youth programs. This became an annual event that unfortunately petered out during the pandemic of 2020.

For 2024, St. George's vestry joined by donating \$1,000 from our Mission Fund to be a sponsor at the Kettle Kick-Off Breakfast on November 7th; we had two tables of Georgians at that breakfast.

Bell Ringing by a group of Georgians has become a yearly tradition for the Christmas season. I have records dating back to 2016 (I know we started before that) with many familiar names, including Gene & Judy DeLong and Nancy Angus, ringing bells at Kmart in Rotterdam Square Mall. Although Covid-19 paused our efforts in 2020, we returned in 2022 when we were asked to use minimal crews, and we were still nervous about pandemic risks of gatherings.

St. George's enjoyed bell ringing again this year at Market 32 on Eastern Parkway in Schenectady from 9-5 on December 14th. Those who signed up for one-hour slots were: Crystal Lockwood, Tarik & Pattie Wareh, Bob & Lynn Paska, Wendy Madelone, Meg Hughes, Meg Falco, David & Anne Kennison, Toni Cilberti, Marilyn Humphrey, Paul Smigelski & Louisa Carr, Jordan Shaw, Carol Gaige, Owen & Jean Greenspan, Fr Tom and myself.

jon pearson



SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

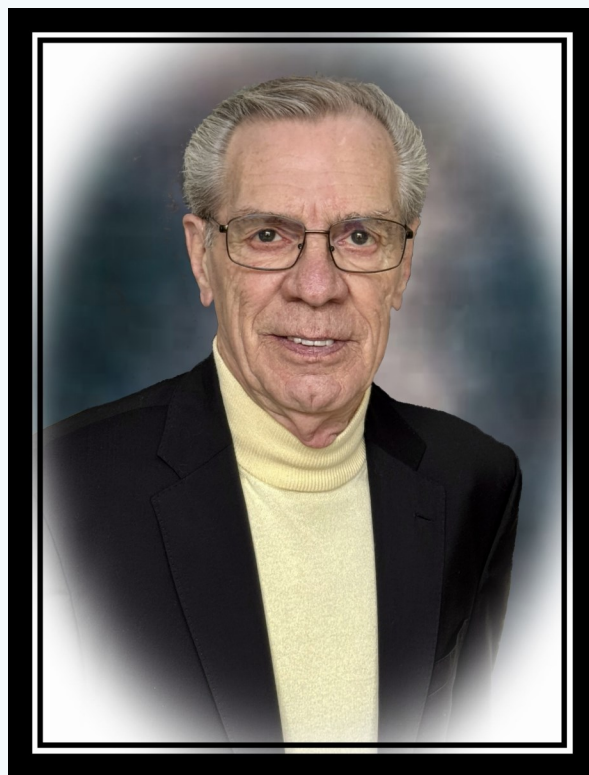
Jon Ewbank moved from St. Louis, Missouri to Schenectady, New York in August 2018. Baptized Lutheran as a child, Jon's religious affiliations journeyed through the Church of Christ (Disciples of Christ), the United Methodist and Presbyterian denominations. Following the death of his first wife, Jon reconnected with and married Meredith (a former high school sweetheart), and in searching for a church in which they both would feel comfortable, Meredith (a lifelong Episcopalian) persuaded him to visit an Episcopal Church. The liturgy resonated with Jon's early Lutheran roots and the rest, as they say, is history. Once the decision was made to move to Schenectady, they researched the local Episcopal churches, and following a visit to St. George's during a house hunting expedition, they knew they had found their church home. "It was a Rite I church; the people made us feel welcome; and the music was good," he offered.

Jon's mother taught him to read music before he could read books. He majored in music (voice and trombone) in college, and was involved in singing groups, from barber-shop to church choirs, while also playing the trombone in jazz bands. As a 20-year Navy retiree, he was a Naval Supply Officer and at one point was paymaster for his ship. "I was (and still am) a spread-sheet nerd," he quipped.

Jon is a voracious reader: a science fiction series, "Backyard Starship," is on his Kindle; "The Piano Shop on the Left Bank," a paperback New York Times bestseller is on his desk; "The Wharton" series about the British Navy during the Napoleonic wars is on his iPad; and a hardbound copy of "The Dante Club" murder-mystery is on the nightstand.

After college and Navy, Jon bounced around working as a factory worker, computer data processor, and job placement officer before landing a 10-year stint as a warehouse manager. His next 10-year career was in law enforcement as a corrections officer ("jailer"), sheriff's deputy, circuit court bailiff, and school resource officer. Currently, he is involved with the Cathedral of All Saints' capital campaign fund accounting; is the office manager for St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Schenectady; and until recently worked part-time for 5-years during tax season at H&R Block. Of that job, he says, "Income tax is not fun anymore. Nobody's friendly; they get belligerent when the numbers don't come out the way they want."

No stranger to church leadership and a former Junior Warden in Arkansas, he assumed that position at St. George's for several years succeeding Chris Henry. Jon also assumed the duties of St. George's financial secretary. He is a volunteer choir member/cantor, counter, and lector. His expertise is appreciated by a grateful parish.



lynn paska

FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK.....



I know that many people are curious and asking, so I want to give you an update on the potential lease of the Parish House building. While what I can share publicly is limited at the moment because we have not worked out all the details of the potential agreement, I want to share with you what I can. We are currently in talks with a local non-profit organization to lease a substantial portion of our Parish House for their use on weekdays as a daycare center. We would maintain ownership of the building and have use of the first floor (Great Hall, Kitchen, & the Shaw Lounge) for church activities on evenings and weekends.

In order to make the building suitable for their needs a great deal of interior work needs to be done to bring the building up to modern code requirements. At this time, our potential lessee is bringing in the various regulatory agencies under which daycares operate to determine what work needs to be done. They are also bringing in contractors to draft plans and determine the cost to make those changes. If the cost of the renovations and upgrades are feasible, and the Vestry agrees to the necessary changes they need to make, we will sign a lease agreement.

Our potential lessee is running under tight deadlines for other construction projects, and should we both agree to go forward, they will need quick access to the building to begin their renovation work. For us, it means the building will need to be ready to be occupied quickly after the agreement is signed.

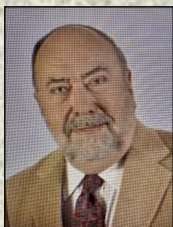
If we move forward with this project it is likely that due to the renovation work, we will have a few months during which we will not be able to use the Great Hall, even on Sundays. This will be a temporary situation, and when their work is done we will have use of the hall on weekends and evenings for church related events.

There are still many details to be worked out with before any agreement is signed. Indeed, there is no guarantee that this will all work out. It's very possible that the renovation work needed make the building useable will be too costly for them. But we cannot wait for a guarantee because by that time we will not have enough time to do the work we need to do in order to prepare the building for occupation. To that end, I have met with the Wardens and other ministry leaders in the parish to begin the process of getting the building ready and making contingency plans.

These plans include going through the second floor church school rooms and sorting the items we do and don't want to keep. We will throw away the items we don't need and storing items we want to keep. It also includes moving the Great Hall Library to a new location. Our current goal is to complete this work by the end of March. Additionally, we are making short-term contingency plans for Sunday coffee hours during renovation work, which could run from April until June; making adjustments to certain Sunday liturgies, like Palm Sunday; and rethinking short and long-term space allocations and use, especially in Cranmer House. There is indeed a lot going on and much to accomplish and I am grateful to the many people in the parish who are working hard to get these things done.

Thank you all for your patience in this process. It's important that we have the whole parish on board for this great opportunity. Should this work out, it will be a great blessing to the parish, and a great benefit to our local community. I realize that many of your questions may not have been answered, so in the near future, we will hold a Parish Forum/town hall to share more information.

Faithfully, Thomas+



Donald Ingram

IN MEMORIAM

Rest in Peace

1932-2024

Former St. George's Organist



A FEAST OF LIGHTS FOR THE EPIPHANY



Everything wonderful about the Christmas season blended to create the Feast of Lights on Sunday, January 5. First the choir sang the Invitatory, announcing Christ's appearing. Then the Kings, who had been approaching the crèche, finally completed their journey to the Christ Child (to the voices of Malcolm, Emerson, and Roger) during "We Three Kings". The congregation's candles were lit and Fr. Tom proclaimed: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come." With this began the candlelight procession and a beautiful service of lessons, Christmas hymns, and anthems.

In his homily Fr. Tom spoke briefly about the importance of family, the focus for many of us during the Christmas season. We were especially pleased to have Bishop Jeremiah and his family with us, and to have him give the final blessing. The party in the Great Hall afterwards had plenty of good food, drink, and fellowship. This light, happy service had the feel of Evensong combined with Lessons and Carols but was less formal, with no goal but the joy of the Kings completing their journey. Fr. Tom also proclaimed the major dates of the coming year.

Epiphany Mass on January 6 focused more on the gifts of the Magi, with gold the gift for kings, frankincense representing prayers ascending to heaven, and myrrh foretelling death and sacrifice. It is a time for us to reflect on what a great thing God has done for us with the gift of salvation.

With these early blessings in our church year we can look forward to 2025 with hope.

joan pearson



Christmas Highlights 2024



Annabelle Guzman, Paul Smigelski, Bill & Bonnie Daggett, Grant Jacquith, Carol Gaige, Fr. Tom Pettigrew, Mike Todt, Louisa Carr, Anthony & Amy Nevells, Kyle Carlson, Chris Henry, Suzy Unger, Barb Wengrovius, Jerry & Sonia Pedinoc-

One of the highlights at St. George's is the "greening of the church" after Mass on the Sunday before Christmas. A time of fellowship with equal amounts of gratification and beautification in making our historic church even more welcoming. From setting up Christmas trees on either side of the altar, to displaying the large indoor manger scene, to the placing of wreaths, garlands, candles and Pointsettias, it doesn't take a Village but it does take Georgians en masse to accomplish this task.

So many people to acknowledge. I may have missed names, but believe me, your input was invaluable. To those mentioned and those not mentioned (because you escaped the writer's eyes), a BIG GI-GANTIC THANK YOU, including: Kevin Decker



(who spearheads this yearly project), Sue Hartz, Kim Polner, Bob Lemmerman, Gloria Kishton, Jean Greenspan, Jon Pearson, Shannon Hartz (with Sasha and Silas), Mike Todt, Sandee Hughes, Daniel Miess, Eliana &

ci, Brian Taylor, and David Kennison. From Meg Hughes placing strings of lights around the church, to Colton Jacquith positioning pieces of the manger scene, to young James Smigelski carrying a small Christmas tree to its place of honor...there was no shortage of jobs to do and people to do them. Jeff Wengrovius kept the festive mood alive with Christmas music on the organ. Bob Paska snapped pictures to be used with this article.

St. George's was all decked out for Christmas 2024...because of the myriad of volunteers who gave of their time and talent for this Georgian tradition. The Christmas spirit continued with a sumptuous buffet, provided by parishioners, in the Great Hall. Thanks to Sandee Hughes and the Hospitality Committee for set-up, clean-up, and all the kitchen chores that go into preparing this awesome feast.

lynn paska





CANDLEMAS 2025



I love the story of Jesus' presentation at the temple at 40 days old, how Simeon and Anna welcomed Mary's baby as the fulfillment of God's promise. We can all imagine Simeon holding baby Jesus as he sings his hymn of rejoicing, the Nunc Dimittis. What a picture of joy! God gave Jesus as a light to shine in the darkness, thus the Feast of the Presentation is also Candlemas, when the church's candles are blessed. We celebrated Candlemas on February 2, beginning Mass with the blessing of both St. George's candles for the year and a banner for The Society of Mary. Then as the Choir sang the Nunc Dimittis everyone received a candle, and the newly blessed banner led the congregation around the church during the processional hymn.

In his sermon, Fr. Tom recalled the temple of Solomon, the heart of the Jewish religion. God dwelt in the holy of holies; mankind met God at the temple. Simeon and Anna spent their days there. Out of the many babies who were brought to the temple, Simeon noticed that Jesus was different. Simeon's song of joy and thanks declares that God fulfilled his word and has given us a light that shines in the darkness. Now candles remind us to bear the light of Christ and to share that light.

Guest organist Faiz Wareh played the prelude and postlude – it is always a delight to see and hear him at the organ! The communion anthem "In principio erat Verbum" was composed by Brian Taylor and is already a favorite of the choir.

Lunch afterward in the Great Hall smelled and tasted fantastic, provided by the Society of Mary: Kevin Decker, Meredith Ewbank, Anne and David Kennison, Wendy Madelone, Suzy Unger, Meg Falco, Meg Hughes, Fr. Tom, Lea Crow, and Daniel Miess. We dined on curried chicken, rice, tomato salad, pitas, and desserts. Thank you to the Society of Mary for organizing and hosting the Candlemas celebration.

joan pearson





PHOTO ALBUM



Bp. Jeremiah Williamson (with Fr. Thomas Pettigrew) holds the historic crozier (held by previous bishops in the Albany Diocese), which was refurbished by St. George's Church as a gift to the Bishop at his consecration last February.



Volunteer kitchen staff for December's pancake breakfast: (l) Lea Crow, Kevin Decker, Meg Hughes; (r) Suzy Unger, Wendy Madelone.



Faiz Wareh, who is studying organ at St. Olaf's in Northfield, Minnesota, poses with St. George's music director, Dr. Brian Taylor, at our 1982 Moeller.



February 8th—St. George's helped commemorate the Schenectady Massacre by the lighting of luminaries around the Stockade area. Later that evening, Bob Lemmerman met up with Fr. Tom Pettigrew for Tavern Night at the Stockade Inn.



On Christmas Day, Bob Lemmerman visited Jamie Taft with a puzzle gift from him and his wife Gloria Kishton.



Fr. Tom Pettigrew and David Kennison officiated at the early Sunday morning baptism (February 23rd) of Eliana Lynn & Annabell Rose Guzman. Also attending, family including grandparents Bonnie & Bill Daggett.

- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

The LAST Boiler Campaign

The BAD News You knew it had to happen. There is no escape. And now, we know the end is near. It may not be of eschatological proportions, but after 40 years of faithful service, the boiler that heats Cranmer House is dying. It's on its last legs. This winter's extended periods of extreme cold has finally done it in.

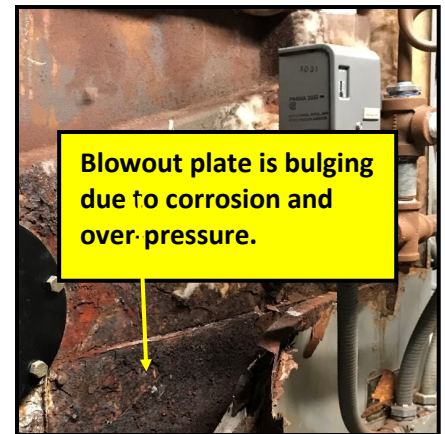
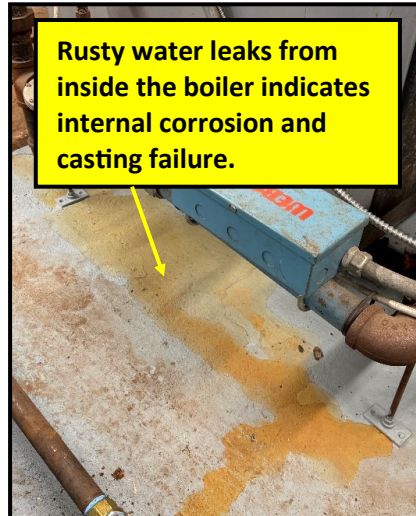


Of course, you'll remember when the church boiler started on its similar journey of death in 2022. It took almost a year to get a new boiler purchased, delivered and installed. You all had a part in that effort, generously raising an emergency fund to get it done. That new church boiler, now completing its 2nd heating season, is humming along like a Swiss watch. Warm pews, even heat, lower gas bills and no worries – what's not to love?

The GOOD News Of the 5 boilers in St George's buildings, the Cranmer House unit is the last one that needs replacement. A modern boiler of this size and quality can be expected to have an operational life of 40-50 years, with good maintenance. Although we now have to raise the money for a new Cranmer boiler, this should be the last one we'll need in most of our lifetimes. This really is *The LAST Boiler Campaign*.

More GOOD News The Cranmer boiler is a virtual twin of the church boiler. If we can get an order placed in 3 months, the manufacturer has agreed to hold the price to the same as the 2023 church boiler purchase, saving us \$12,000. And since we have already replaced all of the common equipment and systems that support both boilers, the price for Cranmer is \$82,500, 45% less than what we paid for the church boiler. Certainly, it's still a lot of money but the Vestry has put a lot of work into examining alternative heating systems, negotiating price and ensuring that this path is the best approach and best value.

The Campaign *The LAST Boiler Campaign* will be launched immediately. With liberal and frequent sprinkling of Holy Water, we will nurse the aging Cranmer boiler through the rest of this heating season. This allows us to procure a new Cranmer boiler and get it installed over the summer months. I urge you to consider what you can offer to reach our goal, sacrificially and generously. As ever, we will only get this done together!



With great affection, david



HOSPITALITY



We held our first hospitality meeting during coffee hour Sunday, February 23rd. Fourteen parishioners were in attendance. We reviewed the purpose of the hospitality committee, the calendar of upcoming events, and planned for the pancake breakfast. All food for the breakfast is being donated by parishioners.

Thank you to: the Kennisons, Carol Gaige, Barb Wengrovius, Amy Nevello, Kim Polner, Suzy Unger, Lea Crow, Sandee Hughes, and Meg and Bob Falco for food donations. Bon Appetit!

sandee hughes



- MUSIC NOTES -



I would like to thank the St. Cecilia Choir and all others who made this past Choral Evensong so successful. It was a wonderful evening of worship and music, and we also enjoyed an informative and inspirational talk by Gail Truechard of the Loaves and Fishes ministry in Albany. I thank Jon Ewbank, Meredith Ewbank and Starrla Lares for assisting me with the reception at St. George's House.



The choir is now preparing for the Holy Week and Easter liturgies. In addition, the choir will be joining other choirs around the diocese to sing a special Easter Lessons and Carols service at the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, on Sunday, May 4th, at 4:00 p.m. We hope that many of our parishioners will come to their cathedral for this special service.

peace, dr. brian j. taylor



PASTORAL CARE UPDATE



As Arnold said in one of the TERMINATOR movies, "I'm baaack". It has been a while since I submitted a report because not much had really changed. However, I do want to assure the Congregation that Ann Duff and I are still doing visits, bringing Communions, sending cards and phoning Georgians. While the number of people we visit on a regular basis is small, they are still very important to those individuals. We have also dealt with some parishioners on an as needed basis for as long as they desired our services.

The two biggest issues we have had to deal with over the last few months is illness outbreaks in rehabilitation facilities. Covid and/or the flu has made it difficult to sustain a regular visitation schedule. And NY State privacy laws while enacted for many valid reasons makes it difficult to keep track of those we visit. There is not enough room in this article to recount one recent saga of "finding" one of our parishioners.

As always I ask for your help in notifying either Father Tom or me if there is someone you think could use some Pastoral Care. If we don't know about someone in need we can not do anything about it. I would also ask for your help with our Card Ministry. If you are not getting cards, I want to know. While we could blame my old age or forgetfulness, it is more likely that you are simply not on any of my lists. So please give me your name(s) birthdate(s) anniversary and address. While there is a form at the back of the church you can also email me at JmsWingate@aol.com.

Jim Wingate



BOOK CLUB HOST LOCAL HISTORIAN ANNE CLOTHIER



At coffee hour on January 19, Anne Clothier--a local historian and friend of Fr. Tom's--offered a fascinating talk on maternal health in Colonial America. The presentation was prompted by the book club's selection of *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon, a fictionalized account of the midwifery career of Martha Moore Ballard (1735-1812). For 27 years Martha Ballard kept a journal using a quill pen and homemade ink. Her diary amounted to more than 1,400 pages and provides a trove of information to scholars of the Colonial era. The book club and all at St. George's greatly appreciate Ms. Clothier taking the time to share some interesting facts and a look at her collection of Colonial-era tools and household goods.

meg hughes



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A Note From Bishop Jeremiah Williamson

GOOD PEOPLE OF ST. GEORGE'S,

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR GENEROUS
COMMITMENT TO RESTORE THE PASTORAL STAFF OF THE
DIOCESE. IT IS A TREASURE AND YOUR STEWARDSHIP
IS A GIFT TO ME AND TO THE DIOCESE OF
ALBANY.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE CARE FOR THE LEGACY
HANDS ON TO US. AND YOU HAVE DONE THAT - IN THIS
INSTANCE AND IN SO MANY MORE.

+ Jeremiah



The Rt. Rev. Jeremiah Williamson



St. George's Vestry 2025



Fr. Thomas J. Pettigrew
Rector



David Kennison
Senior Warden



Paul Smigelski
Junior Warden



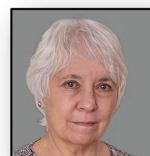
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