

# ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

*“WE ARE THE CHURCH”*



**ANNUAL MEETING  
2011**

# Saint George's Church

30 North Ferry Street  
Schenectady, New York 12305  
The Reverend Paul Frederick Blanch, Rector  
Parish Telephone 518-374-3163  
E-Mail: [stgeorges@nycap.rr.com](mailto:stgeorges@nycap.rr.com)

## AGENDA ANNUAL MEETING 23 January 2011

**BRUNCH** in the Great Hall

### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

- Opening Prayer – The Rector
- Appointment of Clerk
- Introductory Remarks – The Rector
  - Report from Nominating Committee
  - Procedures – Candidates Presented
  - Ballots Out
  - Voting
- State of the Parish Report – The Rector  
– Senior Warden
- Financial Report
- Election Results
- Town Hall Forum - Questions and suggestions from parishioners
- Blessing & Adjournment – The Rector

# THE RECTOR'S REPORT

The Annual Meeting of 2011 seems to have come upon us with alarming speed, so much so that it reminds me that I have now been here for well over a year and almost three months. How time passes when you are enjoying yourself!

When we came together last year for the Annual gathering my report was relatively short and sweet, having just arrived in the USA. This year I feel that I can confidently speak of a year of numerical and spiritual growth, congregational and administrative consolidation as well as a focused spiritual energy and determination. A number of key factors have been in play over the year to facilitate all of these various aspects of Church life.



## **First things first – Worship and Prayer**

I believe that our central commitment to daily worship, public prayer and praise as well as serious theological study and journeying together on the Way of Jesus Christ has been the most notable change in our life as a Church. You would be amazed at just how many churches have lost their vision and core values by simply trying to survive in an ever more secular world. Our core values and beliefs are what make us a Christian Church, and thus our social and outreach ministry is indeed vital, but if not undergirded by worship of God and study of that great and mysterious God, then we have the cart before the horse.

People frequently tell me that they are attracted to St. George's because of our worship and daily public commitment to prayer and worship. We are now extending this to include a wider variety of liturgical worship in the hope that we become a warmer and even more inviting fellowship to a wider cross section of the City of Schenectady and beyond. We are rightly proud of our strong Catholic liturgy, our Rite I Solemn Mass, but to offer a more broad based liturgical diet such as a Rite II Mass does not mean that we sacrifice either our historic St. George's tradition or our traditional but living theology. We are part of the Church Catholic, not simply a congregational Church, and therefore we are required to be as broad and open, as warm and friendly as we can be, thus taking seriously the many people who today are out there Church shopping for one reason or another. There is no room for complacency or self-righteousness, no room for exclusivity and liturgical snobbery, but we are bidden by God to welcome the stranger into our midst as fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. To this end we shall be continuing to explore how we can best accommodate those new seekers of faith as well as respect all those who are the noble keepers of a long held faith tradition.

## **Generosity and Stewardship**

I wish to express my sincere thanks to you all for the generosity exhibited in our recent Stewardship Campaign. The annual budget has been a source of worry for many years, and at least we are now getting to grips in a business-like manner to remedy some of the serious issues that have plagued us in the past. The only way to do this is by together re-committing ourselves to a sensible and realistic financial operating budget, and then we can move forward in strength and fiscal confidence to a brighter and more stable future under God.



## **Our Parish Plant and Campus**

When I first arrived here back in October 2009 I was a little overawed by the buildings and campus, for at that time most of the parish plant was almost moth-balled and in waiting for a brighter day to come. I could not believe how much space was lying idle, and yet we were heating and lighting and cleaning all this usable space. In the space of one year Cranmer House is fully active with administration on the first floor and music department on the second floor.

The Great Hall classrooms are now almost all fully utilized, bringing in a much needed donation and rental income, plus the Library is now well used for Study programs and movie nights. Very soon St. George's House will be home to our new Director of music and his family – all in all we have put what we have fully to work for the Kingdom of God, rather than being a financial liability for us.



## **The Future**

So what of the future? My plan is to oversee the further and steady consolidation of this parish into an ever growing and healthy center for worship and study, for loving Christian care and non-judgmental compassion to all who come to us. I believe that this last year has shown us just what we can achieve if we put our minds to the task. The growth of the junior and adult choir, along with musical and religious teaching in the “Voice for Life” program can and will I believe reach out even further into the various communities of this city, touching both young and old alike.

I believe also that our regular TV broadcasts of our weekly liturgy already take us into the homes of many families far and wide, the many who contact us and seek our help and advice, as well as those who eventually do actually come and worship with us as a result of what they hear and see on TV.

I pray earnestly for the grace to continue our lively ministry of pastoral care to the sick and the aged, the nursing homes and hospitals of the City. Our ongoing outreach to the various groups and organizations we partner with to alleviate hunger and homelessness is vital, for a Church that simply lives to itself will ultimately die to itself. We are called by God to further His Kingdom right here in Schenectady by doing the best we can in all things. This is our task, this is our work for God – WE ARE THE CHURCH and we must rise to the challenge with enthusiasm and commitment.

## **Epilogue**

Before I close, I wish once again to record my own personal indebtedness to Donna Vrooman our Parish Administrator for her continued diligent and professional work supporting my ministry to you the people of St. George's, and also to Andrew Krystopolski our new and very gifted Director of Music, and to Gerald Cooper our hard working and totally reliable Sexton. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the Churchwardens and Vestry for their continued and enthusiastic support and commitment to our common and shared ministry to you the People of God at St. George's. Last but by no means least I must express my deep gratitude to Maggie, my wife, who as always supports and encourages me in the work I do for the Kingdom.

**“We are the Church”**

*Your friend and priest,*  
**Fr. Paul F. Blanch +**



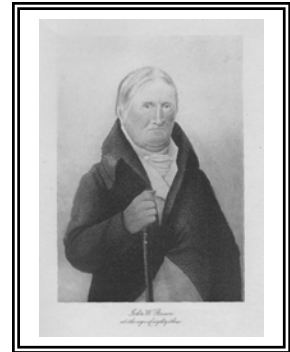
## SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

### *A New Year, New Beginnings and New Challenges!*

I must confess and without being presumptuous, there have been times over the past few years when I've felt just a tiny bit like **John Brown**, the first Warden of St. George's during its formative years of the 1700s. John Brown worked and pushed and prodded and cajoled to build St. George's against all odds. Certainly he enjoyed the visible support of Sir William Johnson, funds from Trinity Church Wall Street, a charter from King George II and the Lord Bishop of London, but the boots on the ground were



John Brown's. Those were tenuous times in the new and fragile church and I'll bet he didn't sleep much, but from everything I have read, he was a man on a mission and would not be deterred. What he didn't have at that time was the insurmountable force of you, the strong and committed people of St. George's that said *We Are The Church* and we will not be deterred.



**G. K. Chesterton**, a noted British author and intellectual, wrote *"The object of a New Year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul and a new nose; new feet, a new backbone, new ears, and new eyes. Unless a man starts afresh about things, he will certainly do nothing effective."*

So does a church really have a soul? Well no, but its people do. And St. George's now has a new heart in a new rector. **A new year, a new heart and bold new beginnings.** John Brown started anew, and so do we.

The changes that St. George's has seen with the arrival of Fr. Paul have been transformational. We the people of St. George's are no less the church than we were before; in fact we are far greater by his addition as our team is now complete.

**And so this report is one of thanksgiving.** I offer thanks for Fr. Paul and for Maggie, who by the grace of Almighty God have come to this place at this time, joining with us in the uplifting of our historic parish. It was that God's grace that gave us the strength, will and wisdom to persevere through the vagaries of the search process. It was that same grace that now sets us on a common course and a mission to grow this parish and maintain it as a holy, sacred and welcoming community for all people.

And I give thanks for all of you, who have done the work, kept the faith and never flagged in zeal. With you, St. George's will grow to loftier heights and greater glory as a witness to the majesty of God in our community and the world.

**Yet our journey is far from over and challenges abound.** A recent NY Times column by Ross Douhat posited that depending on your viewpoint, Christianity is either dominant or under siege, ubiquitous or marginal, the strongest religion in the country or a waning and increasingly archaic faith. The institutional Christianity that has historically generated the social benefits in America seems to be gradually losing its appeal. Millions of Americans, especially the young, may be abandoning organized Christianity altogether.

American Christianity has become what sociologist James Davison Hunter calls a “weak culture” - one that mobilizes but doesn’t convert, alienates rather than seduces, and looks backward toward a lost past instead of forward to a vibrant future. In spite of their social capital, he argues, Christian churches are mainly influential only in the peripheral areas of our common life. In the commanding heights of culture, Christianity punches way below its weight.

Or to put it another way, Christians need to find a way to thrive in a society that looks less and less like any sort of Christendom - and more and more like the diverse and complicated Roman Empire where our religion had its beginning 2,000 years ago.

**What does this mean for St. George’s?** Simply put, we are in an increasingly secular world and it will take commitment from each of us to make this parish grow and thrive. It is our job every day to live the Gospels openly, not only with our mouths but in our lives. Start afresh with a new soul.

Welcome visitors warmly. Spread the good news of Christ and this church. Bring a person or a family to church. Help them feel comfortable. Introduce them to others, take them to coffee. Show them how this living community of faith worships together, works together, laughs together and endures together. Who would not want to be a part of it?

There is much work to be done and we, the people of the church, must do it. The road ahead is shared - rector and people together. The future of St. George’s is in our hands and in God’s Holy Spirit.

*Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality.*

[Romans 12:9-13]

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



## **ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH JR. WARDEN'S REPORT**

This year has been very busy in terms of building and grounds. While this report will be short and, hopefully to the point, what was accomplished by you was incredible. We undertook the upgrading and improvement of the garden and lawn area, but this is covered in another report.

To date we have completed the following:

- The garden and exterior grounds improvements
- The Great Hall roof was completely recovered and rebuilt as necessary
- The sextons apartment was renovated and upgraded
- Electrical work in both the apartment and Cranmer House was done rectifying several safety and code issues
- Work was begun on the grave stones to re-establish the dignity of the cemetery
- Some repairs were done to the brick wall by St. George's House and the Great Hall
- Roof in the rectory was repaired
- We have contracted with Mid-State Roofing for maintenance and repairs as issues present.
- Several missing, loose and damaged slates on the Church roof have been repaired or replaced
- Contract with Stants Combustion for maintenance and repair issues for the heating systems

Projects underway at this time:

- Repairs and improvements to St. George's House to correct issues and bring this up to livable standards
- Continuing work on the outdoor areas and garden grounds

Respectfully submitted,  
Ralph Fusco



## COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

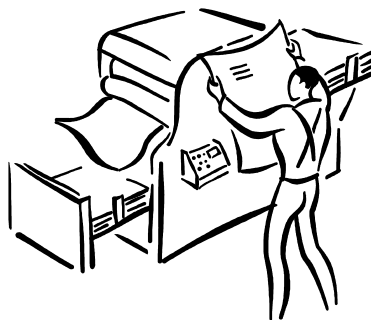
*The Georgian Report*, the official newsletter of St. George's, has grown from ten to twelve pages due to the influx of information for each issue. It comes out four times a year: March, June, September and December. Registered parishioners receive their copy in the mail. The mailing list also includes Georgian friends, Stockade neighbors and clergy from the Albany Diocese. Extra copies are in the Narthax. It is with gratitude that we acknowledge those who write articles, submit pictures and assist with mailings. *Without your help, a difficult job would be impossible.* A big "thank you" to Nancy & Johnnie Angus, Joan Bessarab, Maggie & Fr. Paul Blanch, Judy & Gene DeLong, Rick Forshaw, Ralph Fusco, Margaret Gruener, David Kennison, Dottie Kennison, Joan & Jonathan Pearson, Alice Polumbo, Stella Schultz, Martha Smith, Mike Thiessen, Barbara Todt, Barbara Wengrovius, and Jim Wingate. An even bigger "thank you" to Bob Paska for his composition, layout and photoshop expertise.

Work continues on updating the *website*. Event pictures are up-to-date in the Photo Gallery. All newspaper articles since 2000 are posted under Publicity. Current and past newsletters are also online. Jon Pearson physically keeps up with all submissions. Our goal for 2011 is to have all other categories on the website updated.

Thanks to the *A/V team* of Johnnie Angus, Rick Forshaw and Mike Thiessen, Sunday masses are recorded and distributed to local public access television stations Channel 16 (Schenectady) and Channel 18 (Albany.) They also taped one of our wedding ceremonies, with plans to further develop this ministry. Cameras have been repositioned for better video angles. A new sound system will soon be in place.

*The Parish Directory* will be updated for 2011. Bob Paska will again take pictures of new parishioners for inclusion in the Directory as well as retake some current photos. A sign-up schedule will be available shortly.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynn Paska



# PASTORAL CARE REPORT

Last year we said we were looking forward with great excitement to our first full year with Father Paul as our Rector and leader of Pastoral Care, and we have not been disappointed. Father has expanded his footprint on Pastoral Care not only for our parish family but in the greater community, as well. He is well known when we visit the various care facilities in the area, a real plus for St. George's Church. So often messages from the church office, and our indispensable Donna Vrooman, informing us that someone being admitted to the hospital is followed by the phrase "Father is already on his way". On more than one occasion that rapid response has allowed Father to be able to minister to the individual and family in the most difficult final minutes. What a comfort he has been.

Of all the activities of the committee this year, the one that has gotten the most positive response is the *Spotlight on Pastoral Care* that Lynn and Bob Paska initiated in the newsletter. Families are so pleased to see that their loved one is not forgotten by St. George's. Parishioners have said it is so good to know how those spotlighted are doing now.

As always we thank the entire congregation for helping us learn of those who could benefit from Pastoral Care. Without your input, we often would not learn of an illness or hospitalization until long after the fact. So if you see a need or think we have forgotten someone please let us or the office know.

Each year we try to give a sense of some of the things the committee members do by providing some statistics.

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Personal Visits (private homes, hospitals, care facilities) | 76                       |
| Communions received   | 80                       |
| Telephone calls   | 70                       |
| Cards   | 400 (approximate number) |

The total number of visits and communions are down this year because of two major factors: Father Paul has done such a good job of visitation, and we had an unusually high number of deaths this year. As you can see the number of cards is up, a direct reflection of the growth of our congregation.

No report would be complete without a sincere thank you to the committee members who do our Lord's work all year long: Cards - Wendy Madelone and Nancy Angus  
Visitations - Joan Bessarab and Joyce Kapusta (who also serves as our liaison to the Vestry); Father Wampler - anything and everything, as needed, and of course, the leadership of Father Paul.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jim Wingate



# VIDEO REPORT

St. George's Episcopal Church  
In the Schenectady Stockade  
Is Viewed Worldwide

In 2001 the idea of television within St. George's church was conceived. With much trial and error the video recording room has become a television broadcasting facility that reaches far and wide. We are on air 6 hours each week and can be seen by viewers from Coxsackie to Whitehall. We are on Channel 16, OSM and Channel 18, Time Warner. The broadcast is down-streamed to the World Wide Web. Anyone with a computer can go to [www.OSM.org](http://www.OSM.org) and click on "watch live" during broadcast times. Father Blanch's family can watch in England and Australia. My son is also in Australia and can view the service.

Often people watching at home have called Father Blanch and I to express their enthusiasm and thanks for making the services available through this medium. It is providing a spiritual connection to those who cannot get to church or do not presently have a home church and also to some viewers that would just like to learn more about us here at St. George's. The broadcasting of the services is also providing a wonderful service to local hospitals and nursing homes.

Last year Father Blanch asked Rick Forshaw and Mike Thiessen to assist me in the video ministry. I would like to thank both of them for the many hours they have given to learning the system and report that they have both done an amazing job in assisting me. With a 3 man operation we now have a vastly improved production that has provided many viewers with the opportunity to share in our services.

The cost of operating the video system is about \$500 annually. This covers the CDs, wire, microphones, batteries, tapes and a myriad of small items necessary on a weekly basis. Of course, equipment doesn't last forever, so we have to plan for larger expenditures. I would also like to address the issue of a sound system for the church. It would greatly enhance clarity of the sound during lectures and sermons. The cost of such a system is \$4,000 and any support that you can give to this cause would be greatly appreciated. Please mark your contributions to this cause for the *Sound System* and when the goal is reached, a system will be installed that will be enjoyed for years to come. If you would like a copy of any of the services, please contact Rick, Mike or myself. There is a nominal fee of \$5.00 each to cover the cost of materials.

Respectfully submitted,  
Johnnie Angus



**LAWN & GROUNDS REPORT**  
**For 23 Front St & Church Lawns**



***During the growing season of 2010 on the Church lawns***

Lawn was fertilized 6 times April-November.  
Lawn was treated 4 times for weeds.

***Work completed on the Church grounds***

Stone drainage with plastic was created to cut down dampness in the basements and on brick walls.  
Flagstone sidewalk was designed for safer approach to the garden.

Stone bed under iron fence was created to reduce weed growth and dirt on iron fence.

Attended a workshop at Vale Cemetery to learn the proper way to clean headstones. Headstone cleaning was started on north side of the Church.

***During the growing season of 2010 at the Rectory***

Weed treatment was started in May thru September.  
Lawn was fertilized in June thru November.



***Plans for the Church and the Rectory lawns for 2011***

Fertilize and apply weed treatment 4 to 5 times.

Respectfully Submitted  
Rick Forshaw

# GARDEN REPORT

For the first time in many years our gardens were viewed this past June on The Stockade Secret Gardens tour. Hundreds of garden lovers viewed our beautiful gardens. It was through the hard work of our garden committee and we were blessed to have several young people from Northeast Youth Builders that we were able to open our gardens for this event.

Other work projects accomplished this past year were:

- ⊗ Stone beds around Cramer house and St. Georges house to prevent weed build up and run-off.
- ⊗ A lovely new garden entrance to the Memorial Garden.
- ⊗ The beginning of reclaiming the small Garden on the south side of the church.
- ⊗ The moving of the Glastonbury Thorn Tree to the center of the memorial garden.
- ⊗ Cleaning and expansion of parking lot flower beds.
- ⊗ General cleaning and maintenance of all flower beds and rose arbor.
- ⊗ Planting of donated and protected wildflowers and plants.
- ⊗ Ongoing lawn maintenance by our “weed man”, Rick Forshaw, and Gerald Cooper, our very able Sexton.
- ⊗ We again received hundreds of plants from Cooperative Extension that were planted around the grounds.

## **2011 work:**

- ⊗ General maintenance, weeding, and mulching of all beds.
- ⊗ Under planting of patio lily bed for all season interest.
- ⊗ “Tweaking” of Rain Garden now that it is well established.
- ⊗ Finish garden on South side of church in previously reclaimed area.
- ⊗ Finish installing new Rose bed and plantings around Glastonbury Thorn tree.
- ⊗ Planning for a small Mary Garden within the Memorial Garden.
- ⊗ Ongoing work to reclaim areas of Memorial Garden.

Opportunities abound for volunteers in the gardens. We always need planters, weeders, waterers and dead headers. Jobs are available to work alone or with others.

A garden committee meeting will be held in February to look at possible fundraisers to support ongoing care of the Gardens.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rosemary Pannone



# MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

- The St. Nicholas Youth Choir was resurrected with great success. We currently have 13 choristers who are studying to be musicians through the Royal School of Church Music's "Voice for Life" program. The children rehearse for two hours once a week and sing for 2 Sunday Masses a month. Thank you to all the choir parents for their help and support.
- The St. Cecilia Choir presented a beautiful Choral Evensong for the Feast of St. Nicholas on December 5. Following the service, the choir provided Christmas Carols for the lighting of the Stockade's Christmas Tree.
- Members of both the St. Nicholas Choir and St. Cecilia Choir participated in the annual Schenectady Holiday Parade. Special thanks to Rosemary Pannone for heading up this project.
- We have started to introduce new hymns and service music into our liturgy and we will continue this in our 9:00 and 11:15 masses. Many of these new hymns come from the Hymnal 1982 and its supplement, Wonder, Love & Praise.
- During the months of September and October, we introduced the sung office of Compline at St. George's every Wednesday night.
- A Hymn Survey was held for several weeks to assist in familiarizing myself with the hymns that the people of St. George's like to sing and want to sing.
- The Music Ministry is fully utilizing the space on the second floor of the Cranmer house as choir room, music office, and choral library. Thank you to all those who worked hard to prepare this beautiful space.
- The organ was tuned by the firm, Kerner and Merchant, from Syracuse, NY. Also, the piano in the choir room was brought up to snuff by technician, Michael Lamkin, who tuned it and made some minor repairs.
- We were fortunate and blessed to have a string quartet comprised of members from the Albany Symphony Orchestra to accompany our High Mass for Christmas Eve.
- In progress: Updating the music portion of the church's website.



Respectfully submitted,  
Andrew Krystopolski

## **STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

Stewardship, 2010, centered on “Recommitting to We Are The Church....Imagining Our Future” as a basis for stewardship reflection. St George’s formal stewardship campaign began on Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup> and concluded Christ the King Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>.

Parishioners received an initial document that explored various aspects of our stewardship theme and what good stewardship entails. Georgian’s next received a personal letter and pledge card from Father Paul that asked for everyone to prayerfully and cheerfully consider the degree to which St. George’s would receive their support.

During St. George’s examination of stewardship, three parishioners offered deeply personal and moving remarks about St. George’s in their lives. It was evident that St. George’s has been important in the lives of Jon Pearson, David Kennison and Susanna Sherwood.

In grateful thanksgiving, the stewardship campaign concluded Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup> with a brunch at the rectory in which pledges to St. George’s were received and blessed. All parishioners were personally thanked for renewing their commitment to St George’s.

Respectfully submitted,  
Father Paul Blanch, Joyce Kapusta, Jonathan Pearson, Alice Polumbo  
2010 Stewardship Committee



# OUTREACH REPORT

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works?” *James 2*  
In keeping with St. George’s stated commitment to be a blessing to the community, several outreach initiatives were accomplished in 2010. The parish’s efforts included continuing ministries as well as special seasonal projects.

## Continuing Ministries

- 👉 Weekly collections of various requested food items were donated to the **SICM food pantry**. 6 drop-offs to the food pantry on Albany Street were done in 2010 totaling **798 pounds** for the year. 1,000 pounds donated is a goal for 2011.
- 👉 **42** used cell phones were given to the **YWCA** for re-programming for the battered women the YWCA serves.
- 👉 St. George’s collected used eyeglass frames in support of the **Lions Club** throughout the year.
- 👉 St. George’s monthly meal service to the **Lighthouse**, a group home run by Bethesda House, in which the parish donates one set of weekend day meals once a month was supported by Judy DeLong, Amy Machold, Alice Polumbo and Jim Wingate.

## Special Projects

The parish also successfully accomplished:

- 👉 On January 31<sup>st</sup>, St. George’s in partnership with St. Stephen’s provided a Sunday pot luck style dinner for **Bethesda House** guests. As the inaugural dinner at the new Bethesda House location on 834 State Street, 85 meals were served between 3 and 4 PM. In addition, those in attendance received a new pair of white socks to go with the dinner’s “Knock Your Socks Off” theme. Many Georgians helped make this project successful.
- 👉 In late winter, Georgian’s between 16 and 23 were invited to apply for a **SICM internship**. Three applications were received and part-time scholarships were awarded to JJ Moran and Sam Wengrovius. Please see the next report (page 16) for Sam’s review of his SICM experience.
- 👉 As a small Lenten outreach, Georgian’s were asked to contribute a chocolate item in addition to their regular **SICM food pantry** donation, in recognition with Father Paul’s Chocolat Lenten course.
- 👉 During the week of August 2<sup>nd</sup> St. George’s volunteered at the Carrie Street location in support of the **SICM summer lunch program**.
- 👉 In August, school supplies and backpacks were collected for distribution to needy Schenectady County foster children through **Things Of My Very Own**. The parish generously outfitted 31 backpacks that were blessed during worship on August 22<sup>nd</sup> before they were gratefully received by **Things Of My Very Own**.
- 👉 During the summer months, parishioners were asked to contribute dried pasta in addition to their regular **SICM food pantry** donation. 32 various types of pasta were received.
- 👉 In October/November a total of 64 winter outer garments were collected for distribution to the **YWCA** (women’s and children’s coats) and the **Salvation Army** (men’s coats).
- 👉 On November 10<sup>th</sup>, St. George’s took a full table (\$250) at the **Salvation Army**’s holiday bell-ringer kick-off breakfast.

- 👤 During the late fall, hand-crafted fleece blankets and a book were donated to **Things Of My Very Own**. This project was co-ordinated by **Nancy Angus**.
- 👤 During advent a collection of first class postage stamps and Christmas cards was given to **St. Stephens** for inmates at the Schenectady County jail.
- 👤 Thanks to the **Moran family**, a box was placed at the rear of the church to collect unwrapped toys for the **Toys for Tots program**.

Georgian's responses to the various outreach efforts were inspiring and gratifying. As a corporate body our parish continues to seek ways in which the many talents of our congregation can be utilized in heeding our call to serve. Suggestions of local organizations to support and ways in which to do so are welcome.



Respectfully submitted,  
Alice Polumbo

## **ST. GEORGE'S SUPPORTED** **SICM SUMMER INTERN EXPERIENCE**

For nearly ten weeks this summer, I had the privilege of working for the SICM office in Schenectady. As an intern I was responsible for supervising the Summer Lunch and Edible Gardens Parks programs at HillHearst Park. I am very proud of the time I spent working on these projects, because they were designed to promote the welfare of Schenectady's children, specifically those who don't always know from where their next meal will come. Yet, the assignment proved to be about much more than just feeding hungry mouths. It was also an opportunity to offer children a refuge from the difficult hardships that they must so often endure in life. I had the rare chance to bring happiness into the lives of the children each day I came to the park. Each smile generated by the programs I worked on was a reward unto itself, which made this opportunity to work with SICM most precious of all.

Of course not every kid in the park was interested in hanging out with the SICM crew and our volunteers. Most took a lunch without saying much more than a "thank you", and went on with their daily routine. Suffice to say, it's hard to compete with the allure of a pool in the hot summertime. But for the few kids who did choose to stick around, we attempted to create an environment conducive to learning and having fun. We read stories together, created drawings and paintings, made use of the park's playground and did other activities to encourage the children to spend part of their day with us. A great chunk of our time was spent in the garden, tending to the vegetables and learning about the nature of plants. For their efforts, the kids were allowed to reap the rewards of a well-cultivated garden. I watched as they happily picked cucumbers fresh off the vine and pulled up carrots from the soil with giant smiles on their faces. Many times they were most happy because they could return home that day with a bagful of vegetables to display for their parents and share with their brothers and sisters. It was in these moments, where I saw the benefits of the Summer Lunch/Edible Gardens most clearly demonstrated and where I saw the spirit of SICM most purely exemplified.

When I started the internship I thought that my time spent with SICM would be a transitional opportunity, something to do in between college and whatever it is I decide to pursue next in life. I hardly expected that I would leave the internship having gained as much insight as I did. Proving that age-old axiom, it is likely that the children managed to teach the adult more than he taught them. Prior to joining, I had the usual reservations regarding working with children. But I was proved mistaken, as the kids I worked with happened to be thoughtful, intelligent and eager to assist. It wasn't always smooth sailing, as some days there would be names between kids, or worse, shortages of food. But overall, the program proved its merit and worth in the smiles of the children and the parents involved. I would be remiss in not thanking my fellow SICM interns and the enthusiastic volunteers who worked alongside me at the park. Also, a big thanks to the SICM program on the whole for continuing to support worthwhile community projects such as the Summer Lunch/Edible Parks program.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sam Wengrovius





## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The children have had a busy year making their mark on the church and our parish life. We started out the year creating small banks for our parish families to fill with loose change and helped to raise money to see improvements made to our church grounds. No more puddles on the second floor, after roof repairs made to the Great Hall. We hope to repeat the program this year.

We saw our kids working with the adults at all church events serving food, raking leaves and planting flowers. As the weather warmed up they enjoyed an egg hunt. Trevor Weakley found the alleluia egg and won the lamb cake. We decorated the Jessie tree as part of our Advent program. We learned about Jesus' family and thought about our own.

Father Paul reintroduced family services in the Chapel of the Holy Family bringing life to the chapel on the second floor.

We also learned about Christingle, from Father Paul. Our youth helped in this celebration by decorating the oranges for this special service, and then serving as lectors and greeters. Money raised at this Christingle Service went to Northeast Parent & Child Society.

Andrew brought music to our children and added a children's choir to the church's expanding program. Every Wednesday they are working, singing and laughing. We saw these kids and their families building a wonderful float and then sail it down State Street at the Annual Christmas Parade. We enjoyed hearing their voices as they worked with the adults up in the choir loft.

Our young adults traveled to New York City to visit the Cathedral and participate in a lock in. They also had movie nights at the Rectory with Father Paul and Maggie.

A strong contingency from St. George's went to the Cathedral in Albany and were confirmed by Bishop Love. Congratulations Sam, Taylor, Kalirose, Kathleen and Erin.

We are grateful to have had many guests on the second floor, and we are always glad to make new friends. Most weeks we have 4 children upstairs, and we have learned a lot from each other.

I would like to thank Sandy and Shannon Hughes, as well as Connie and Kathleen Todt for their help. I have been very fortunate to have their support and talent. It has been a joy working with the children and adults of St. George's.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Wengrovius



## HOSPITALITY REPORT

At the close of another year I think it's very appropriate for you all to give yourselves a BIG round of applause and huge Thank You from myself and the Hospitality Committee.

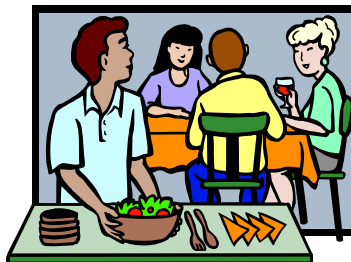
Time and time again Georgians have shown their wonderful talent for having a good time. Over the past year we've shared abundant fellowship from Easter right through to Christmas. Our "Feasts" as they have come to be called are more legendary then ever before.

Whether it's a small reception with "refreshments" and hors d'oeuvres or Christmas Eve dinner for one hundred and fifty we never send anyone home hungry ( in fact we usually send them home with more for later).

Many times this year Georgians have brought family and friends into our midst that are visiting for special occasions. I'm not quite sure what other churches do but for some reason visitors seem to be surprised when attending their first "Feast" at St. George's. And sometimes it's just a little something we've thrown together.

Back to the thank you's! It's important to know that all of our lavish productions are not the work of any one individual or even any small group of people, anymore. They are the result of all of you. All of our sumptuous delicacies are made and donated by all of you. Everything from decorations to table linens, candles, flowers and all the trimmings are all given in thanksgiving from all of you. All of you share your talents in making it happen from start to finish. Gone are the days when we would have to "order out", there simply is no need. This saves a great deal of expense both in time and money for every one of us. To date the Hospitality Committee does not use a budget it doesn't have expenses. All that we do comes from all of you, and I thank you for it.

In the coming year, we hope to be able to use our talents to figure out ways to accommodate our ever increasing flock. There are plans to host a series of events that will draw closer our newcomers and strengthen the bonds we already share. We'd even like to try raising some money, too. Joan Pearson and Jim Wingate do such a wonderful job every year with the Art Show. Now that Rosemary Pannone has involved us all with the Secret Garden Tour we see other opportunities to branch out. Let's hope this year can be the year we all exceed our wildest expectations.



Respectfully Submitted,  
Christopher Henry