



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



St. George's Church Schenectady, NY

March 2011

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Voting and Vestry Reports spearheaded St. George's Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday, January 23rd. But, the real reason for such an enthusiastic turn-out was Ralph Fusco's amazing Lasagna with Caesar salad, bread, and unlimited "goodies" for dessert provided by the hospitality team of Chris Henry, Mike Thiessen and Amy Machold. Pictorially, this was the scene in the Great Hall.....



RAFFLE AT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING



As a fund-raiser for St. George's, and to generate even more "fun" at our Annual Parish Meeting, Outreach Chairperson Alice Polumbo went shopping and hosted a raffle (3 tickets for \$5, 10 tickets for \$10.) Raising \$200 for our church, five lucky winners brought home five very nice prizes: Rosie Fusco (Limoges server), Jeff Wengrovius (Faberge-inspired champagne flutes with a bottle of bubbly), Joy Adams (French demitasse set), Erika Pelletier (holiday serving plate), and Aileen Caruso-Smith (Harry & David gift assortment.)

A MILESTONE BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday to Cornelia Thayer who celebrated her 90th birthday at St. George's with her daughter Rosemary Pannone and granddaughters Anna and Erin Thiessen.



ST. NICHOLAS YOUTH CHOIR



Our very own St. Nicholas Youth Choir poses for a picture in the choir room of All Saints Cathedral. On Sunday, February 13th, choristers and parents began the afternoon with the new 11:15AM mass followed by a pizza party at Ci Ci's Pizza. The day was topped off with an awesome Choral Evensong sung by the choir of men and boys. We were given a tour of the building and even had the privilege to sit in the choir stalls with the choir as they sang the service. Thank you to Fr. Paul and all the parents who helped make this day a success.

OUTREACH

REFLECTIONS OF A SICM SUMMER INTERN



Sam Wengrovius was one of two recipients of part-time scholarships from St. George's to work at SICM (Schenectady Inner City Mission) during summer 2010. Here is what Sam wrote about his interactions with three of the children:

"Through working for the Summer Lunch/Edible Gardens Program, I had the privilege of coming to Hillheerst Park and spending time with the hundreds of kids who decided to venture over to our humble pavilion. Some kids made only brief appearances, like the ones stopping by our set-up in-between cannonballs at the pool in search of a stray apple or juice box. Other children made the daily trip to the park, often alongside their hungry siblings and appreciative parents, eager to enjoy the program's numerous offerings.

Oddesy, a spirited nine-year-old girl, lived just two blocks down and came to the program devotedly. After a fire threatened to destroy her home, she came to the park the next day in search of outreached arms to comfort her at a time when she felt fear and sadness. She is the same girl who felt more satisfaction from assisting the volunteers serve meals to her friends than from partaking in the meal itself. On the final day of the program, Oddesy dressed up in her favorite dress and her most elegant shoes, just to say goodbye to her friends at the park.

Skylar, a young boy who, despite certain medical ailments that limited his breathing, enjoyed visiting the park with his grandmother. At the time, he was in-between major surgeries, but you couldn't tell by the energetic way he approached you. Whenever Skylar stopped by the

park, he made sure that the garden had been properly managed, as he became quite enamored with watering the plants. After toiling in the garden, he'd hold up a zucchini or a squash that he discovered among the vines and give me one of his mostly-toothless grins.

Finally, there was Dawnette. She had been visiting the park for the first time with her cousins, who came often to help with the garden. Dawnette came from the Bronx and loved vegetables, but she had never seen a garden like the one she visited in Hillheerst Park. Being unaccustomed to this level of freshness, she was amazed by the abundance of vegetables around her and she harvested them with a tremendous tenacity. Before she left, her cousins took a picture of Dawnette proudly displaying the carrots that she had dug up from the ground. She wanted to show her brothers and sisters what a garden looked like and where vegetables come from."

As Sam's reflections indicate, working for SICM can be a personally impacting experience as well as a meaningful way in which to serve our greater community.

Funds have been approved to offer either one full-time or two part-time summer internships for SICM summer 2011. This is a paid internship. All Georgians between the ages of 16 and 23 should be receiving application materials for the 2011 SICM summer internship program before long, and it is hoped those who meet the age criteria will seriously consider spending this summer in service to our community. See either Father Paul or Alice Polumbo if you have any questions or would like additional information.

THE RECTOR WRITES ...

Cardinal John Henry Newman, now a Saint of the universal Church, has left the world and the Church a very powerful heritage of writings and theology. One of the most powerful and yet simple sayings of Newman is all to do with the notion of change. ***“To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”*** Newman could say this because he himself had to deal with change in his own life on many levels. Anglicans have latterly struggled with the concept of change and adaptation, yet the fact of the matter is there would be no Anglican Church or worldwide Communion today had not our forebears been prepared to adopt change as a necessary part of their spiritual life.

The early church as seen in the Acts of the Apostles needed to change from a small group of first generation believers to a mature group of people that would take their faith and their message to the far corners of the world. As those faith communities matured, so they discovered each other and what common life meant for them, but they also had to come to terms with their differences. I hear all around me that St. George’s is changing, and many say this in terms of fear that we are losing the golden age of the past, and all those things that made St. George’s great. This kind of talk totally bewilders me. The golden age has been long gone my friends, we have been in survival mode for many years. Where is our faith? Why are we so frightened of change - if as Newman states boldly we only become perfect *through* change.

There are some within our faith fellowship that still refer to the great days of Fr. Kirby, but conveniently forget that when Fr. Kirby arrived here and made all the changes we now take as the St. George’s tradition, over half of the then-congregation left en bloc. Nothing stands still, nothing remains the same forever. How often I have heard over my twenty-five years ministry ***“We’ve always done it this way”*** yet in reality that is not totally the case. This statement is really about resistance to change, and it assumes that what we do now, we have always done. But this is rarely the truth of the matter. Change is part of life!

So what changes are we talking about? A Rite II Mass at St. George’s at 11:15am on Sundays, a simpler liturgy, no incense, only two readings and yet running alongside the already established 9am Solemn Mass. New and more appropriate music for our small but enthusiastic non-paid and non-professional choir. Change is inevitable and it is required for us to survive, it is even more vital if we are to grow, develop and blossom as a church. There really are few other options, except to mothball and downsize, and eventually employ a part-time semi-retired Rector, and then gradually watch the demise of St. George’s.

As your current committed and energetic Rector, I cannot envision such a negative route for us to travel, which is why

each and every day I work hard with Vestry members, Churchwardens and our small paid staff to creatively find new ways to revitalize and renew this Church and congregation, engaging with our



local and wider community, just in the exact same way as Father Kirby did in his day and generation. But let us not forget that the world has changed beyond all recognition, and fewer people attend Church today in every place, and the prospect of even fewer in the decades to come is more than likely.

Not even the reign of Jesus was to last forever, nor was the faith invested in Jesus, for this must not be confused with faith in God. The reign of Jesus was to be a reign of reconciliation. The kingdom belongs not to Jesus but to God, the maker of all things. Now these are surprising words, maybe even shocking to you. Perhaps they conflict with your deepest convictions about yourself and the Church. Dare we more fully rely on God rather than on ourselves? It has been my experience that this means when we are no longer filled with certitude, we might just be filled with surprise.

To conclude: the Church is a community of vision, given its identity and mission by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Without a clear idea of its calling and purpose, the church will fade away, the custodian of cultural memories that fewer and fewer want to recall. We simply cannot live on memories; we can, however, live and act on the powerful and energizing vision that has been passed down through the apostles to us. Our theological openness can help us appreciate vitality, proclaim its excitement to others and live out its joy and delight in the world in which we now live.

“To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”

St. John Henry Newman

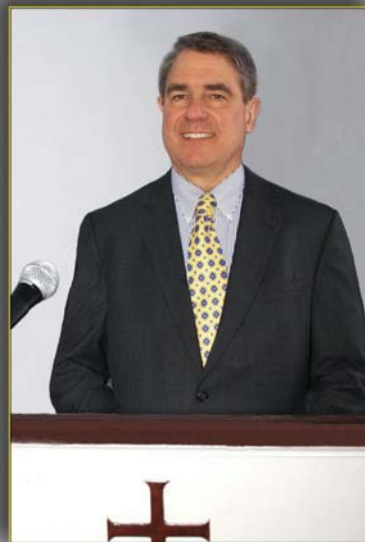


Yours in Christ,
Fr Paul F Blanch

SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

St. George's two-man "financial team" has their pulse on church assets, keeping us fiscally responsible stewards....and, solvent. The treasurer (a suit-and-tie kinda guy) reviews all paperwork, issues parochial reports to the diocese, signs checks, and gives presentations to the Vestry and congregation in easy-to-understand language. The financial secretary (he prefers sweaters) pays the bills, does the grunt work, most analytical work, and submits paperwork to the treasurer.

JON PEARSON was asked to be treasurer in 1995, *couldn't* think of a reason not to do it then, *can't* think of a reason not to do it now....which is why he's *still* doing it today! His maternal grandparents were Georgians....Jon always attended St. George's, except during his college days. Jon never "glosses" over finances: he tells us where we stand; when we're doing okay, need a shot in the arm, or should rethink our pledge status. The name of his game is "finance," which he knows backwards, forwards, inside out and upside down. Jon's most challenging, time-consuming project is studying our endowments with respect to investments and cash flow....of which he is known to be uber-conservative.



BOB PASKA is generous with his time but tightfisted when it comes to the dollar! He thinks nothing of working seven hours "crunching" numbers down to the penny - but let someone buy something for the church without using a tax-exempt form, and he/she invokes the wrath of BP (not the oil company.) As St. George's financial secretary since 2003, Bob toiled in a little cubby until last year when he moved into the vacant former curate's office. You'll find him behind his desk Monday afternoons, Wednesday mornings (which often spills over into the afternoons), and whenever he's needed. It's Bob's "home away from home," with Lynn gladly packing a lunch....sending him on his way, and out of her hair.

Because the treasurer has a day job and the financial secretary is retired, Jon admits "Bob does the lion's share of the work." Respecting each other's talents they work collaboratively, going *above and beyond* normal volunteer duties. It's a win/win situation for St. George's, recipient *of* the best...*from* the best.

Evelyn Gibbons

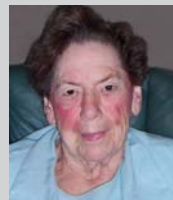
1919 - 2011



IN MEMORIAM

Rest in Peace

You are missed by your church family



Barbara Gillette

1917 -2011



CHRISTMAS 2010

Every year the St. George's Christmas Celebration grows in beauty and in purpose. Our focus is on joy, not on gifts; on love, not on envy; on Christ's wonderful birth, not on frantic attempts to create a "perfect" holiday. At St. George's we already have the ingredients for a perfect celebration: generosity, love of beauty, love and affection for each other, and love of feasts.

Generosity was the theme of St. George's Christingle Celebration of December 19th. A service new to us, it asked participants to think of how Jesus cared for all of mankind and to carry that lesson forth in our daily lives, especially as we encounter those in need. The Christingles, made from oranges, fruits, nuts and candles, were distributed and carried around the church, and all proceeds from the offering given to a local charity. Over \$650 from this service went to Northeast Parent and Child Society.

Love of Beauty dominated the Christmas Eve Mass from Lessons and Carols to its conclusion, in a sanctuary warmed by greenery and candles and dominated by the creche. For the first time in several years we heard the sweet voices of St. Nicholas' Youth Choir as well as the St. Cecilia Adult Choir, accompanied by a string quartet and directed by Andrew Krystopolski. Joseph Haydn's *Missa Brevis* featured the loveliest of solos in the *Benedictus*, sung by Kali Rose Moran. As we were reminded in Fr. Paul's sermon, we are among the most fortunate people in the world, free to celebrate openly the birth of Jesus.

Love of Feasts is a given at St. George's, with food and drink for all. Chris Henry, Amy Machold and Mike Thiessen organized and served and let our pleasure in each other's company be the entertainment. After all, we are the St. George's family.

Celebrating and honoring the Christ child's birth with the wise men was the focus of a beautiful and intimate Epiphany mass. Despite a secular emphasis on the gifts brought by the wise men, we were reminded that

Epiphany is about worldly power bowing to God's power. And so we joined the shepherds, wise men, and Jesus' parents in awe and joy at this wonderful birth.

joan pearson



BOY BISHOP CEREMONY



Festal Evensong, aka The Eve of the Feast of St. Nicholas, took place on Sunday, December 4th at 4PM, followed by the Lighting of the Stockade Christmas Tree and fellowship afterwards at the First Reformed Church. Highlight of the event was the boy bishop ceremony with young Will Ottery in the starring role, Fr. Paul as a supporting player, and members of the choir, congregation and neighborhood braving the plummeting temperatures to partake of this symbolic ceremony.



Kindermusik with Miss Lisa is up and running right here in St. George's. Music, creative move-

ment, storytime and hands-on instruments are perfect for children from newborn to age 7 with a caregiver. One day "Playdates" or weekly "Family Time" classes are great for family bonding time. Contact: Lisa Russo, 377-7733.

vocalisea@verizon.net or find me on Facebook: Lisa Russo, Schenectady.

EPISCOPAL EDUCATION

The History of The Episcopal Church Part III-Growth of the American Church



The arms of the Episcopal Church includes both the cross of St. George and St. Andrew's cross

In the first two installments, we saw how the Episcopal Church arose from the Church of England, brought by early English colonists. By the mid-1600s, those colonists had sown the seeds of the American church in Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and New England, the church quickly growing to over 400 congregations. The American church had many troubles during the Revolution – a shortage of money, split allegiance amongst the clergy and lack of even a single consecrated bishop. With the eventual consecration of Samuel Seabury in 1784, the first General Convention in 1785 began the formation of the new American Church, but dissention was rampant.

New Nation, New Church, New Problems Fresh within a new political republic, the church still maintained important cultural ties with England and soon sought assistance for training Episcopal clergy. This was a critical step toward survival of the Church as most clergy, by virtue of their ordination vows, continued as Loyalists to the King. Many churches were disestablished during the Revolution and in some places, their property was seized.

During and immediately after the Revolution, about 80,000 Loyalist citizens went into exile, most of them to Canada [this includes the rector of St George's, Rev John Doty]. In a nation of 4 million, Anglicans were reduced to about 10,000. Of the 400 congregations that had existed prior to the Revolution, half the parishes remained vacant. Many clergy left ministry, convinced that the new Episcopal church was doomed.



Trinity Church Wall Street, a Loyalist parish and a major benefactor in the building of St. George's



Bishop William White, chaplain of the Continental Congress

New Ordinations Finally in 1786, the English Parliament allowed American bishops to be ordained without an oath of allegiance. Soon, Rev William White (rector of Christ Church Philadelphia and chaplain of the Continental Congress) and Rev. Samuel Provoost (first bishop of New York and chaplain to the US Congress) were ordained in England, as well as James Madison (cousin of the 4th US president). With new American bishops and formation of a more stable national government, the ranks of the clergy soon increased.



Bishop James Madison, President of the College of William & Mary and cousin of the 4th US president

1789 – The American Church Starts Anew With new stability, a second General Convention was held in 1789 in Philadelphia. A new church constitution was adopted that provided for church structure, independent of foreign and civil authority. Laity involvement was addressed and included, as well as rules for election of bishops and training of clergy. Seventeen new Church Canons were ratified and a newly-revised Book of Common Prayer was drawn that addressed American political sensibilities. Later, this convention would come to be known as the formative point in the Church. On October 16, 1789, the *Protestant Episcopal Church* in the U.S. was officially established.

1792 – New Bishops Consecrated in America Finally and for the first time, everything was in place for the Episcopal Church to elect and consecrate its own bishops, the first being John Claggett as Bishop of Maryland. The first 4 American bishops (Seabury, White, Provoost, Madison) performed the consecration and thus began a continuous succession of apostolic succession for American bishops – through the bishops of Scotland that consecrated Samuel Seabury and through the English Church that consecrated William White and Samuel Provoost. Now, the Episcopal Church could truly be independent and put its energies into growth and the spread of the word of God.

Next Time – Part IV, Episcopal Growth in the 1800s and 1900s

david kennison

“A NEW DIMENSION IN THE WORLD OF SOUND” - MUSIC AND LENT

“When in our music God is glorified, and adoration leaves no room for pride, it is as though the whole creation cried, “Alleluia!” How often when making music we have found a *new dimension in the world of sound*, as worship moved us to a more profound alleluia.” These words by F. Pratt Green have been set to the tune Engleberg in the 1982 Hymnal (tune #366 in Hymnal 1940.) It is my favorite hymn of all time. I even concluded my senior recital in 2005 with this hymn and the audience sang with such gusto that the roof almost flew off the church; truly an unforgettable moment. The music in our worship has the power to open our hearts and minds to a “new dimension” of worship if we are willing to open our hearts and minds to it. As we enter this season of Lent, I challenge you to make music an integral part of your prayer. For the rest of this article, I’d like to share a piece published in the February edition of *The American Organist* magazine written by Bob Bailey of the First Presbyterian Church in Lynchburg, Va. I think the article captures the way music moves us to a new dimension of worship in through the Lenten season.

Music has the power to evoke and channel emotions that words or even pictures cannot match. You cannot experience this emotive force directly by watching a movie that aroused a strong emotion in you with the sound turned off and just the dialogue closed-captioned or with subtitles. You will find that not only are the emotions generated much less intense, but they might not even be the same emotions. Sometimes a terribly frightening movie can be almost funny without the soundtrack. The soundtrack is an important tool for guiding an audience’s feelings.

Music serves a similar purpose in our worship. Singing is one way we glorify God. But a good worship experience also focuses our thoughts and emotions on certain themes that are important for that day. Music plays a key role in this aspect of

worship. For example, the season of Lent is a time of quiet reflection of the humanity and suffering of Christ and how they relate to our own human failings. Many aspects of the music during the season reflects this sentiment. The texts of the hymns and anthems touch on the theological meaning of Lent. The musical tones, patterns, and harmonies of the prelude and anthems set a quieter mood than usual. Even the harmonies that accompany the singing set a tone more consistent with the meaning of Lent.

The mass is rich with sounds and actions that carry deep meaning and feeling. Everything that we do in worship is designed to focus our hearts and minds on the Triune God, the Father who created us, the Son who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit that sustains us. The more aware we are of all that goes on around us, the greater the chance that we will recognize God as He calls to us.

andrew krystopolski
music director



SUNDAY SCHOOL



Our Sunday School children are pictured making church “banks” out of empty milk creamers for our 2nd Annual Lenten Collection. Each parishioner will be given a decorated carton to fill with small change during the Lenten season. It’s easy, environmentally friendly, and fun! Last year, this fund raiser realized almost \$1,000.



- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -

*A Sunday school teacher asked her little children, as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"
One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."*

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"



A Baptist Pastor related, "After a worship service, a mother with a fidgety seven-year old boy told me how she finally got her son to sit still and be quiet. About halfway through the sermon, she leaned over and whispered, 'If you don't be quiet, the Pastor is going to lose his place and will have to start his sermon all over again!' It worked."

I love children and I love to see and hear them in church. Children are innately spiritual beings. With a little freedom, their lively expressions of life and of faith can transform a church and make everyone smile. It's awfully quiet when we have no children with us on a Sunday and when that happens week after week, we are all diminished.

So it troubles me when I occasionally hear that someone has criticized the behavior of someone else's children. After all, they are just kids. I'm sure the Mass doesn't make a lot of sense to them at a young age and maybe it's too long and maybe - having grown up in an age of video, computers and graphics - there's just not enough excitement and entertainment to keep the attention of a young child. But didn't we all go through a fidgety phase? When I was a lad I am certain that I was the model of good behavior and propriety. But if I did get a little disruptive, one firm squeeze of my hand by my mother was normally all it took to quiet me. If that didn't work, I got "the look" and knew I was in for it later. I learned quickly. But I was there in church and my life in God was being formed in the pew day-by-day.

Children get bored easily and all the coloring books, quiet games and other distractions you can offer is not going to turn them into little adults. To parents with children – don't worry, your child is completely normal and we love them!



Remember this little tyke from our 2005 Stewardship campaign?

We the Church are called to love, shelter, protect and defend all children. *We the Church* are called to proclaim the Gospel to all children, in ways that let them know and receive God. *We the Church* are called to include all children as participants in the body of Christ and in the church's life of prayer and service. Jesus got it right when he said:

"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."
Luke 18:16-17

*With great affection,
david*

- JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -



Below is a description of our most significant updates and buildings/grounds developments.

Church - the leak from the ice and snow has been repaired by Mid-State; the insurance company will cover the expense. Some of the tin Church roof has been caulked. Lighting behind and side of Church was installed for safety and security.

St. George's House - completion is progressing and should be finished by Easter. 2nd floor bedrooms/ceilings/walls are ready for painting. 1st floor carpet in 3 rooms was removed. 1st floor plastering has been started. Kitchen lighting/fan are installed.

Cranmer House - emergency lights and exit signs for choir room and foyer are installed. Back stairs emergency lighting is complete. Four exit signs are in place. A 24/7 thermostat unit to further cut fuel costs has also been installed.

The Great Hall - emergency lights and exit signs for the foyer and back stairs have been installed.

Parking Lot - I am pleased with the new plow person's excellent performance. With a potential parking problem between Sunday services, we should reconsider how cars are utilizing lot spaces.

rick forshaw

- TREASURER'S REPORT -



As spring gets a slow start in the northeast, many of you are looking for the snow to melt. As church treasurer, I am looking forward to the snow melting from our church roofs. Many people around the Capital District had problems with their roofs this winter. St. George's did too, and the repair bills have started to add up. Through the end of February we paid Mid-State Industries, our primary roof contractor, about \$1.700, and I anticipate more bills to come through.

Other than the annoyance of unanticipated expenses, the church finances are looking better than they have for several years. With the help of several new parishioners, many of them transfers from St. Stephens, we have budgeted for a 15% increase in giving for 2011 over the amount collected in 2010. When compared to the amount we had budgeted for 2010 (not what we collected), our 2011 budget is actually 33% higher than the 2010 budget! We are still running a deficit budget with an anticipated deficit of \$21,684 for this year, so please consider extra giving for special occasions such as Easter which is just around the corner.

jonathan pearson iv

OUTREACH: BETHESDA HOUSE



St. George's and St. Stephen's cohosted their 2nd Annual "Knock Your Socks Off" Pot Luck Dinner at Bethesda House on January 30th providing food for 200, serving up 50+ meals, and utilizing many volunteers for the event. Pictured (L-R) the church women toil in the kitchen....the St. George's "elf" put on his required cap/hair covering to serve up food....the church men display an appealing array of desserts.



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The Georgian Report

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VISITATIONS

During these dark and cold days of winter, we have seen an ever-growing list of housebound folk who require this home-based ministry. As Rector, I enjoy my visits to the housebound enormously, for it keeps me in touch with all the members of our Church family. However, during these last few weeks we have had two sudden deaths of long-standing home communicants, namely Evelyn Gibbons and Barbara Gillette. We send our love and prayers to their respective families.

For many elderly people, the day they receive Holy Communion at home is the day they reconnect with Christ and the wider Church family. This is such a valuable ministry, so please pray for our home ministry team.

fr. paul