



THE GEORGIAN REPORT



St. George's Church Schenectady, NY

December 2014

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN



Thanks to all Georgians who have participated in this year's Stewardship campaign. I have mixed results to report. On the positive side, our Vestry-sponsored dinner in October was attended by over 60 parishioners. We enjoyed each other's fellowship, we thanked our volunteers, and we completed our Time and Talent pledge cards. On the not-so-positive side, the number of financial pledges is low. As of December 4th, our committee has only received 31 pledge cards for 2015 (50% of the number of pledging units in 2014.) The money committed so far is off 40% from 2014 levels. In addition, our weekly giving on Sundays has been off recently. For those of us who have simply forgot to hand in our cards, please do so ASAP before the end of the year. For those who have not pledged out of concern for our future, you may be causing the very thing you fear. If we cannot support ourselves through your pledges, our future is uncertain indeed. Timing is critical for 2015 budget planning. We risk a significant negative impact on spending for important ministries that sustain our spiritual life.



respectfully submitted, jeff wengrovius - stewardship chair



SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS



Gerri Moore is an amazing woman and an amazing local artist who paints in various medium including oils and acrylics. Last year, Gerri volunteered to be the illustrator for St. George's "Divine Temptations" cookbook; this year, she painted and donated the 14 Stations of the Cross to St. George's. Traditional in style and rich in color, they were blessed and dedicated by Fr. Paul on November 30th and will proudly be displayed in our nave after framing.

Starting her master's program at SUNYA at age 50, less than five years later Gerri received her MA (Masters of Arts) and her MFA (Masters of Fine Arts.) But it didn't come easy! She was required to study Art History, do research, and take written tests which she found particularly challenging. She also had some initial difficulty selecting a suitable theme for the body of work that she would complete for her MFA. When it came time for review, Gerri's professor put her on probation and told her to take a few months off. Determined, Gerri worked hard every day in her school studio. Son Jimmy accompanied her, and she started painting him. Ultimately, he became her focus and subject of her thesis....and she was reinstated into the program.

For many years, Gerri's studio was over Key Bank at Proctor's. Now she bides her time between Florida and New York, with a one-room studio in each home. She also was an instructor at University Without Walls at Skidmore College. When husband Jim was transferred to Maine (1978-82), Gerri taught at an elementary school there for the art teacher on a leave of absence.

Married by Fr. Kirby at St. George's in July 1964, Jim and Gerri were active church members....Jim is a former vestryman, Gerri did the art program and bible school (among other ministries), their children (Jimmy, John and Jessica) were involved in youth programs, and son Jimmy is still an acolyte on special occasions.

Gerri has a sense of humor...."I used to be a runner; now I'm just a fast walker." Music and reading are among her other interests. As to religion...."I've always loved St. George's; it's my church," she said, adding, "I've been an Episcopalian longer than I was a Roman Catholic." Grateful for family and friends, Gerri ended simply, "Life is good, but I wish there was more peace in the world. I pray that things will improve."

We appreciate the artistry and generosity of this amazing Georgian who gives so unselfishly of her time and talent to St. George's.

lynn paska



OUTREACH

As our parish enters an uncertain period, the needs of our community remain unchanged. During the fall months, Georgians heeded the ongoing call for assisting those who often cannot manage the most basic aspects of life. Through the SICM food pantry, the YWCA, The Salvation Army and Things Of My Very Own, Georgians fulfilled the mission to be our brother's keeper.



Approximately 200 lbs ready for delivery to the SICM food pantry.

To date, 908 pounds of food have been turned into the SICM food pantry. This puts us within our informal goal of 1,000 pounds donated this year. Perhaps you will consider adding an extra item or two to the food pantry basket as an Advent offering. In January, we'll begin 2015 with a special focus on SICM's food pantry in an effort to rebuild inventory which has been depleted by holiday demands.

Cold weather clothing needs were met in a slightly different manner this fall. Instead of St. George's traditional collection of coats, parishioners were asked to turn in hats, scarves, and gloves for men, women and children. Close to 100 items were taken to the YWCA just before Thanksgiving.



Hats, gloves, headbands and scarves await delivery to the YWCA.



Gift bags arrayed for Georgians to compose in support of Things Of My Very Own.

As an Advent outreach, St. George's is once again composing holiday gift bags to be turned over to Things Of My Very Own for delivery to Schenectady County foster children.

On Saturday, December 13th, Georgians were in view at the Eastern Parkway Price Chopper ringing the bell for the Salvation Army's annual holiday appeal. Those taking part were: Jon Pearson, the Whitehead family, Toni Cilberti, Dot Dever, Gene and Judy DeLong, the Moran family, the Tonneau family, Dusty Ifflander, and Nancy and Johnnie Angus.

We'll begin our outreach to the community in 2015 with an intensified focus on the SICM food pantry and an extended project to provide Schenectady School district children with clean, new undergarments. The demanding needs of our community remain stubbornly constant, as we live our faith in kind service to them.

alice polumbo

THE RECTOR LEAVES

Farewell Brunch - Sunday, November 30th



NEW RECTOR SEARCH BEGINS



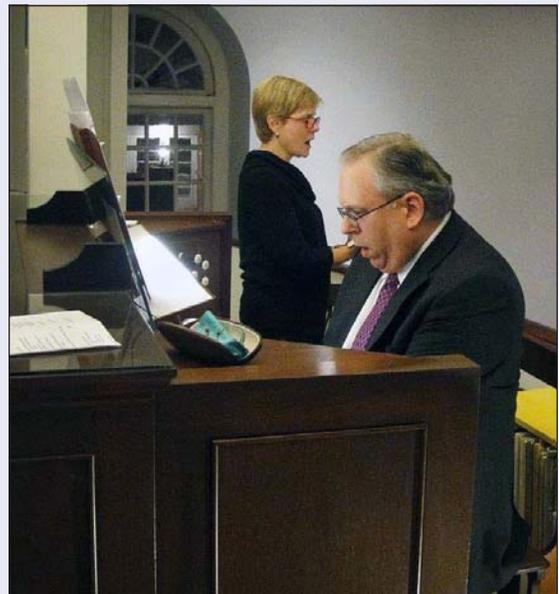
The Vestry/Search Committee meeting with Transition Minister Beth Strickland and Bishop William Love of the Diocese of Albany took place on Sunday, November 23rd at 3PM in the Shaw Lounge. It was 2 and 1/2 hours of information and directions pertaining to the search process. Each vestry member gave a brief autobiography and took part in two exercises: (1) what keeps you coming back to St. George's, and (2) what are you looking for in your next rector. After productive dialogue between all participants, Bishop Love gave us this piece of advice: *"Don't change who you are....make sure you know what you are."*

lynn paska

ORGAN REDEDICATION

Anyone nearing St. George's the weekend of September 19-21 likely heard --- fabulous music! Because not one, not two, but three days of celebration capped three years of work toward the new sounds of our refurbished Moller. Count two recitals, one reception, one organ class, one gala, a blessing mass, one cookout, and nonstop smiles from Andrew Krystopolski and the Organ Committee.

The Friday night recital of Canon Mark Laubach of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Wilkes-Barre showcased the new capabilities of our organ with music from Bach through Mendelssohn through Gerre Hancock. We even sang hymns and then heard improvisations on them. On Saturday morning Mark shared his skills with a dozen organists who gathered in the loft for a lively session on hymn-playing. He began the class by announcing: "Every skill an organist needs can be learned from playing hymns." Tempo, melody, pedaling, breathing, interludes, transposing --- it's all there.



What fun was the Saturday Gala at the Stockade Inn! Tuxes and shimmering dresses, toasts to the happy occasion, good food and roaring laughter with good friends. Most fitting, Fr. Paul read a letter from Kevin Grace recalling Andrew's energy and vision for organ renovations from the first moment. Without Andrew's leadership the committee, fundraising, and rebuilding could not have been accomplished. Nor the celebration weekend.





A snappy cabaret act, Nancy Timpinaro-Hogan, Ward Dales and Andrew, bawdied us through dessert. Next morning, a cookout after Sunday Mass included parishioners of all ages in a relaxed summer picnic.



At Sunday Mass Fr. Paul blessed the organ and we welcomed guest organist Simone Stella of Florence, Italy: composer, harpsichordist, and organist. Simone's Postlude Recital Sunday afternoon was different from Mark's, consisting primarily of music from the Baroque era. Very beautiful, very intricate. He ended with Mozart's Fantasia in F Minor, which is just fun to hear.

Both Mark and Simone, who have played enormous organs in huge, echoing spaces, enjoyed inaugurating our "new" Moller. Simone explained that acoustically, St. George's does not echo for three or four seconds after each note: that changes how a piece of music is played, if he must allow more or less space between the notes. To us the music sounds more or less legato. Mark took full advantage of the hundreds of memory settings the organ now has --- up from the previous eight!



Now we have returned to the day-to-day use of our organ, with confidence that it will be a reliable instrument adding joy and beauty to the church. Thanks to countless benefactors plus the skills of Kerner and Merchant, it shouldn't need another update for many years.

joan pearson

A JOB WELL DONE, ANDREW!

NOW, GRAB A FEW ZZZZZZZS!

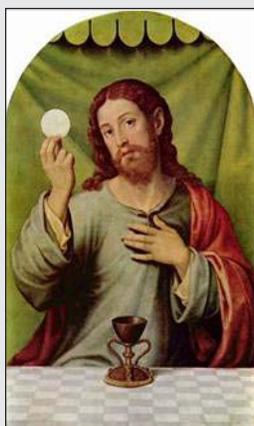
We often hear the term “Sacrament”, “Holy Sacrament”, “Blessed Sacrament” or something similar. It’s pretty easy to figure out that “Sacrament” is probably related to the word “sacred”, but what does it mean? And what are the Sacraments of the Church?

Sacrament – The word derives from the Latin “sacramentum” and “sacro” and “sacer”, meaning sacred or holy. While the root words were not wholly church-related, Episcopal ecclesiastical usage of sacrament is that they are “outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means that we receive that grace.” (see BCP pg 857, the Catechism). That’s quite a mouthful and needs some unpacking.

Outward and Visible Signs of an Inward and Spiritual Grace – Again, BCP, pg 858: “Grace is God’s favor towards us, unearned and undeserved; by grace God forgives our sins, enlightens our minds, stirs our hearts, and strengthens our wills.” God’s grace is freely given. It cannot be earned, it is a gift. If we had to earn grace, it would no longer be grace (Romans 3:24). Grace by itself is not visible except insofar as it is manifested in a physical action, a sign or a rite. God uses such material things to communicate his spiritual gifts.



Baptism of Christ, Francesco Trevisani



Christ with The Eucharist, Vicente Juan Masip, 16th

The Anglican Church teaches that there are two sacraments – Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist.

Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ’s Body, the Church, and inheritors of the kingdom of God. The outward and visible sign is water, in which the person is baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The inward and spiritual grace is union with Christ in his death and resurrection, birth into God’s family the Church, forgiveness of sins and new life in the Holy Spirit.

Holy Eucharist (or the Lord’s Supper, Communion or the Mass) is the sacrament commanded by Christ for the continual remembrance of his life, death and resurrection, until his coming again. The outward and visible sign is the bread and the wine, given and received according to Christ’s command. The inward and spiritual grace is the Body and Blood of Christ, given to his people and received by faith.

Five More Visible Signs – While the Episcopal (and greater Anglican) Church speaks only of Baptism and Eucharist as the two great sacraments of the Gospel, five other actions are commonly referred to as sacraments – Confirmation, Penance (Confession and Absolution), Orders (Ordination), Matrimony and Extreme Unction (Last Rites). However, the Articles of Religion XXV (BCP, pg 872) clearly states that these five rites “are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles ... for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.” These actions are “states of life allowed in the Scriptures” but are not ordained of Christ in the Gospel. They are sometimes seen as “Sacraments of the Church” as opposed to “Sacraments of the Gospel”.

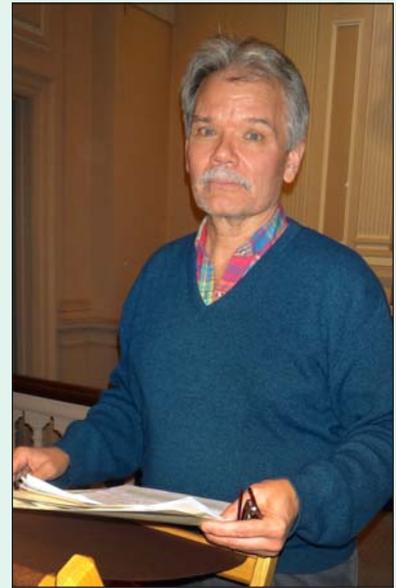
That said, the Roman Catholic Church regards all seven rites as sacraments, declaring that “if any one saith...that even any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be anathema [i.e., accursed]”. The Orthodox Church also accepts all seven signs as major sacraments (i.e., “principal mysteries”) but does not limit itself to those, allowing that anything the Church does as Church is in some sense sacramental.

Of the Sacraments – The Articles of Religion XXV states: “The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves damnation, as Saint Paul saith.” Strong stuff, indeed.



Seven Sacraments altarpiece, 1445-1450 by Roger van der Weyden. If you look closely, you will see: LEFT - Baptism, Ordination, Penance, CENTER - Holy Eucharist, RIGHT - Unction, Matrimony, Confirmation.

WHAT IS AN ANGLO - CATHOLIC?



A teaching course on Anglo-Catholicism, held on three consecutive Thursdays, began with Mass at 7PM that was celebrated in various traditional and modern Catholic styles. This was followed by short lectures and Q&A sessions, on the history and development of the Catholic movement in Anglicanism.

September 25th - "What is Anglo-Catholicism?" Fr. Paul discussed how Catholicism has evolved and changed over the years. *October 2nd* - "The Oxford Movement" began on July 14, 1833, was explained eloquently by Rembert Herbert. *October 9th* - "The Catholic Church - Roman and Anglican." John Weslowski's talk centered on the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

ALL SAINTS' AND ALL SOULS' DAY

Honoring saints, remembering souls, a requiem mass and choral evensong carried us through All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. All Saints' is a mass of celebration of those who have unintentionally become our role models. At All Souls' Requiem Mass we stop to think of our loved ones in quiet, purposeful prayer.

In his sermon on All Saints' Day, Fr. Paul used a friend's treasured bit of Elvis' shirt to illustrate the evolution of relics. We may not trust in religious relics as did medieval worshippers, but standing by St. Peter's bones in Rome still means standing next to someone who stood next to Jesus. Wow! Elvis was no saint, but inspirational stories of saints offer us hope in our journey toward holiness. In modern times we have Mother Theresa, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King to remind us of what is possible when we have faith.

All Souls' Day started with Requiem Mass and ended with Choral Evensong at the First Reformed Church. During the Requiem Mass Fr. Paul reminded us that we pray for the dead every day because we are progressively drawn toward God, even after death. Jesus will not reject anyone who comes to him. We can only prosper when we are in harmony with each other. During the Necrology many parishioners remembered and lit candles for their departed loved ones.

All Souls' Day concluded with Evensong at neighboring First Reformed Church, combining voices from the choirs of St. George's, First Reformed, and First United Presbyterian Church in Troy, directed by Julie Panke and accompanied by Andrew Krystopolski. Fr. Paul officiated. With the beautiful introit "Stay with Us" by Egil Hovland, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by John Stainer, anthem "And I Saw a New Heaven" by Edgar Bainton and traditional evening hymns, music was rich and delightful. A beautiful end to the weekend: prayers of thanksgiving, hymns to the evening, and a blessing of peace and fellowship.

joan pearson

- SENIOR WARDEN REPORT -



The season of Advent brings anticipation to St. George's in many ways this year. We have said goodbye to our Rector, and wish him and Maggie only the best on their journey. Your Vestry has convened a search committee and begun the process of discerning who God is calling to be the next Rector of St. George's.

While it has only been a matter of weeks since Fr. Paul has left us, the search committee already has the process well underway. The appropriate notifications have been made. The parish profile is nearing completion. Our obligatory meeting has taken place with the Diocesan Transition Minister. We have even had an opportunity to meet with Bishop Love to discuss how we would like to proceed in an open and transparent manner. We have asserted our right to discern who the next Rector will be, but wish to include the Diocese in our decision process.

Over the next few months, St. George's will welcome the Rev. Canon Charles King who will serve as Supply Priest. We have secured supply with Fr. King for December through Easter. We have also secured Fr. Peter Schofield to supplement Fr. King during this time. Fr. Michael Webber will continue to maintain the Friday Noon Mass and has offered himself in extreme situations for Sunday Worship. All three have expressed great enthusiasm to be with us. They have also expressed a desire to continue beyond Easter as necessary.

We are definitely blessed to have three men of strong faith and ability to help us through this process. Please join me in extending a warm Georgian welcome to them all.

Yours in Christ, Chris

- JUNIOR WARDEN REPORT -



The trees outside of the office and patio have been cut down. The grass is filling in nicely.

For the past year and a half, the Ladies Room toilets have been under repair. Last month one stopped working. It was time to replace them because of the continuing problems (\$1,200.)

rick forshaw

"We Are the Church"



- TREASURER'S REPORT -

As another year slips by us, we find St. George's in transition. While the departure of a rector may cause angst for many parishioners, it also presents opportunity for renewal with an incoming rector who will bring new energy. Fr. Paul was a great rector, but his normal church postings tend to be five years, and that is exactly how long he stayed at St. George's. As a communicant of St. George's, my initial reaction to Fr. Paul's move was anger. That anger has transitioned through a period of acceptance and is now focused on optimism that Georgians will get through this period of grieving a loss, and will come out stronger for it. A Search Committee has begun work and we should have a new rector in 9-12 months.

As treasurer, my immediate concern is that parish giving has fallen off. St. George's struggles to balance its budget in the best of times and it is human nature to ease off giving in a time of uncertainty. But a drop in giving is not helpful. My own pledge for 2015 is the same as we gave in 2014. My giving is to the church, not to the rector. I encourage you to do likewise. It is the intent of the Vestry to carry on the same programming that has been in place prior to Fr. Paul's departure. We also expect that a new rector will carry on with the two Mass times that have served us well for the past four years. However, we need your continued support during this process. Please continue your generosity. St. George's is our extended family and we serve God through our efforts and contributions here.

Jonathan Pearson IV

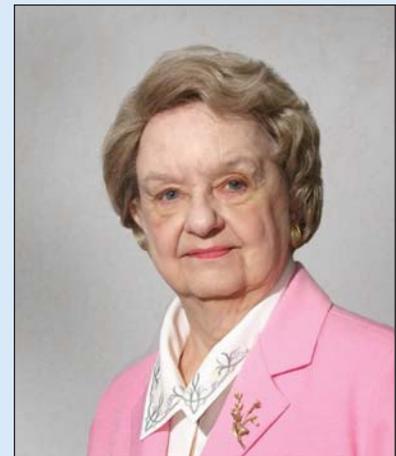
- VISITATIONS -

1945 was a very important year in the history of the world as the Second World War came to an end. It turned out to be a significant year for Shirley Fahey as that is when she began attending St. George's. Nearly seventy years later, most Sundays you will find Shirley attending Mass with her niece Pat Gibbons. Shirley was the youngest of a large family that included Evelyn Gibbons who also attended St. George's until her death. Shirley had two daughters, one is deceased and the other is St. George's own Suzi Ruota who now lives in Florida with her husband Frank.

Shirley has been a member of the ECW and taught Sunday School. In recent years she has worked on rummage sales, and her baked goods have graced the table at many functions. When asked what has kept her at St. George's, Shirley smiles and says the beautiful liturgy and music and, of course, the people. She mentions that living across the street from the church has allowed her to attend mass more regularly than otherwise might have been possible, which is very important to her.

While Fr. Paul and the Pastoral Care Committee have tried to meet Shirley's needs, spiritual and otherwise, there has been one very special person

who has been indispensable. Parishioner Rick Forshaw has for several years been Mr. Everything for Shirley. From filling out forms to helping sell her home and finding an apartment to advising on colors of paint to actual painting. Mention Rick's name and Shirley beams and says, "He is just wonderful." And we agree: thanks, Rick.



Currently Shirley is in Ellis Hospital recovering from an operation, but by the time this article appears she will in all likelihood be in a rehabilitation facility and hopefully on her way to better health. She continues to receive visits and Communion from our committee members and will for as long as she needs them. We look forward to the Sunday when we can once again see Shirley take her place next to Pat at the Mass that she loves so much.

Jim Wingate



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The Georgian Report

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FOYERS FUN!

Join us!!

Contact Mike Bishop or Pauline Holmes for information on the next round of dinner parties that start in February.



Fr. Delos Wampler - enjoying retirement and living at the Home of the Good Shepherd in Saratoga Springs - is visited by Johnnie Angus. He looks forward to visits from other Georgians.



Lt. Mark McCracken of the Schenectady Police Department, who heads up a 17-member squad specially trained in dealing with the mentally disturbed, gave a talk on the issue of security. He pointed out that Schenectady has a copious number of such troubled folk due in part to the halfway houses. It was a great presentation, and he answered questions thoughtfully and thoroughly.

michael bishop