



# THE GEORGIAN REPORT



St. George's Church Schenectady, NY

March 2012

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING



*The 2012 Annual Parish Meeting was held on Sunday, January 29th in the Great Hall following a combined 10AM Mass. Serious cooking.....serious eating.....serious socializing.....serious discussions.*

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - LASAGNA



Before Ralph Fusco left for Saudi Arabia, Georgians had one last bite of his “famous” lasagna at the 2011 Annual Parish Meeting. Was this the end? Wringing our hands in consternation, we wondered how we could survive without this “staple” in our lives. Enter: Kevin Grace, who has taken up where Ralph left off and supplied **HIS** “famous” lasagna for the 2012 Annual Parish Meeting.

Oh, Ralph, we still love ye (lasagna) but, never fear, Kevin’s lasagna will continue in the tradition you so generously started several years ago....providing happiness to hungry Georgians who do not want to be weaned off this perfect recipe of noodles, ground beef, tomato sauce, cheeses and spices.

Thank you, Ralph! Thank you, Kevin! Now, pardon me while I go back for 2nds....or is it 3rds?????

*lynn paska*



## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - RAFFLE



Thanks to everyone who participated in the annual meeting raffle in which \$300 was realized. Special thanks to Laure Thiessen for donating the Pampered Chef “earned” merchandise from last fall’s party that made up three handsome raffle packages. The Pampered Chef collections were won by Andrew Krystopolsi, Bob Moran and Dawn Tonneau. Joan Pearson won the unique decanter and port wine while the three highly coveted Limoges cadeaux d’amour boxes went to Wendy Madelone. *alice polumbo*



# OUTREACH

Having completed a productive 2011 in service to our community, St. George's started the new year by completing one of its biggest yearly outreach projects on January 29th serving Bethesda House guests a Sunday dinner. Georgians' generous natures and excellent cooking skills were in evidence when significant quantities of tasty dishes were loaded into Alice Polumbo's car for delivery to Bethesda House. This effort was a joint undertaking with St. Stephen's, who likewise provided abundant quantities of food.

During meal service time from 3PM to 4PM, over 100 delicious, nutritious meals were heaped onto Bethesda House guests' plates. By pre-arrangement, St. Stephen's took care of the volunteer commitment with a few Georgians on hand: Fr. Paul, Alice Polumbo, Devon and David Dare, and Olivia, Isabelle and Colton Jaquith.

Before turning attention to 2012, Georgians donated 1082 pounds of food to SICM's food pantry last year surpassing an informal goal of 1000 pounds of donated food. Another informal goal of 100 pounds per month or 1200 pound for the year has been established for 2012. We're off to a good start with 150 pounds received in January.

Parishioners ages 16-23 have been invited to

submit an application to represent St. George's in SICM's summer intern program. This is a paid internship with an excellent opportunity to serve and learn about our community. In addition to helping with SICM's summer lunch program, interns also work at the SICM food pantry, the Damien Center, Edible Playgrounds and the Home Furnishings Program.

A new outreach project.....on Thursday evening, March 22nd, St. George's has invited women in the YWCA residential programs and battered women's shelter first crack at the clothing donated to the White Dragon sale. An expected 40 guests will be served a modest dessert, then be able to "shop" for about an hour afterwards.

Another new outreach endeavor will be Georgian participation in the annual CROP (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) Walk on Sunday, May 6th. This 5K event begins at Emmanuel Friedens Lutheran Church and continues through the downtown area. All proceeds pledged to walkers are distributed to Church World Services, with 75% going overseas for relief and self-help programs; 25% stays within our community and is used primarily in assisting food pantries and senior meal programs.

*alice polumbo*

## ST. NICHOLAS YOUTH CHOIR

The awesome voices of our St. Nicholas Youth Choir were highlighted during a combined 9 and 11:15 Sunday mass at 10AM



on January 29th. Renee Russo and Kali Rose Moran, Head Choristers, cantored the Responsorial Psalm then joined the entire children's choir for the offertory anthem, a rousing spiritual rendition of "This Little Light of Mine," led by Andrew Krystopolski, Director of Music and Organist, on the piano. Members of the children's choir include: Elizabeth Petta, Lili Sanchez, Anna Thiessen, Chloe Tonneau, Ava Weakley, and Samantha Whiteman.



# THE RECTOR WRITES .....

On a bright Sunday morning, a little boy was going to Mass for the first time with his mother. He was very excited to be going to God's house, for his mom had told him it was a very special place. "Will I see God?" he asked. His mother pondered the question and answered that indeed he would, since God would be in all the people gathered in church.

As he came into church, the boy looked around and saw many people with unsmiling faces. No one seemed to notice either him or his mom. As he sat in his pew, his mother kneeling beside him, he grew more excited. After all, he was going to see God! He looked all around and began swinging his little legs back and forth. A very stern-faced person seated next to him leaned over and said, "Little boy, stop that! Behave yourself in church. This is God's house." Before his mother could intervene, the child burst into tears and blurted out loud, "Boy, God is sure in a bad mood! I don't like coming to his house. Can we go home?"



## **What is hospitality?**

From Genesis to Revelation, the sacred Scriptures might be read as a series of "table talks" and lessons on the relationship between "host" and "guest/stranger." The root of the word hospitality is the Latin word "hospes", which literally means "guest."

In the first century, hotels and motels did not exist. One of the first things set up by the early Church was the practice of hospitality so that those Christians who traveled, whether for business or missionary purposes, would have safe lodging. In the Middle Ages, the Church organized official "hospices," or places where officials could stay overnight. During the Crusades, many hospices became care centers for the sick and those wounded in battle. In modern times, hotels for travelers came into existence. We now speak of a "hospitality industry." In addition, the Church's hospices that took care of those who were poor, sick, aged, and disabled evolved into today's "hospitals." The history is long and complex.

For Christians, hospitality is empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is understood to be the desire to welcome others, to share one's concern, time, love, personal space, and resources with another without expecting a return. True hospitality is not extended to others because of their status, age, attractiveness, influence, or social graces. We are not hospitable because of the gratification we receive or even for appreciation or reciprocity. The virtuous or habitual practice of hospitality challenges us to continually consider the "bigger picture" and to refocus often on hospitality's purpose and mission. It will always seek the good of the guest; it is not about the host's personal worries, agendas, concerns, comfort, or interests.

What did that little boy experience as he came to church for the very first time? He certainly did not feel welcome or accepted, and in his innocence attributed this coldness to God's bad mood. After all, his mom had said that God was present in all the people. If we truly believe God is present in each of us and in the whole community, then hospitality will be the visible fruit of that belief in action. There are no real strangers where the virtue of hospitality is practiced.

A parish community that understands this can welcome even a little boy as well as his family. Once he is welcomed into the community of faith, it will take many people over many years to reach out and guide him through his sacramental life, his formation in the faith, and his growth into young adulthood. A hospitable parish community continues to welcome each new stage of growth, each success and failure—especially the failures. Most often, hospitality will be in the simple way people welcome newcomers and are there for them so that small children no longer see God as being in a bad mood. Eventually, little by little, the small child will be challenged to see himself as the person responsible to welcome others, to become himself the friendly face of God.

In 2004 an article appeared in America magazine entitled “Hospitality at Church.” Students were asked to attend liturgical services in many different places and to rank their experiences. Much to the surprise of the instructor, the twenty-year-olds’ experiences of “Church” were profoundly affected by simple hospitality, that is, whether it was offered to them. They rated highly such experiences as being greeted at the door, people’s moving over so they could be seated in the pew, parishioners visiting with one another before and after the liturgy, and parishioners’ simply acknowledging them.

What does it take to transform a parish congregation from a group of individuals praying privately to a community of hospitality? It involves a conscious choice of those present to be aware of all those around them.

A Rector recently invited his congregation to turn toward the center of the Church at the Sunday liturgy. He asked the people to look at one another and to see beyond those who sat around them. At first it was awkward, but gradually people began to do this, even though some could not muster the courage to look at those across the aisle. God forbid, they might catch someone’s glance and even smile.

Why did the pastor ask this of the congregation? His intention was simple: “We need to develop a sense of the community at worship. This is hospitality in simple form. Eye contact is one important way in which to acknowledge and welcome others.” It might even be the case that in so doing, we glimpse the risen Jesus in our midst!

*Your friend and priest,*

*Fr Paul*



*George D. Roben*

*1920 - 2012*

*Margaret Gruener*

*1931 - 2012*

*Rest in Peace*

*You are missed by your church family*



# CHRISTMAS 2011

As Fr. Paul lit the first candle of the Advent wreath, our minds raced to busy days ahead: shopping, food to plan and prepare, travel, guests, parties to host and attend. Fr. Paul reminded us of serendipity, that God's gifts can't be purchased and aren't always what we sought. Advent is a time to reflect on God's gifts. A special Advent celebration of Lessons and Carols on December 4th highlighted our parish gifts. Lynn Paska, JJ Moran, Chris Henry, Lili Sanchez, Dawn Tonneau, and Wendy Madelone, representing the Vestry, Acolytes, Hospitality Team, Youth Choir, Outreach Volunteers, and Adult Choir, each read an Advent lesson. St. Cecilia's Adult Choir, the St. Nicholas Children's Choir and the congregation joined in the carols. We heard new music and sang familiar hymns as we ushered in Advent, followed by the Stockade tree lighting and hot chocolate at the Reformed Church.

The Hanging of the Greens and building the creche the Sunday before Christmas took less time than ever this year for two reasons: more volunteers and new candlesticks. Anyone who has broken fingernails trying to secure those nasty old poles to the pews was happy to see these new, trustworthy candlesticks. St. George's was beautiful with greenery and candles for the second annual Christingle Celebration on December 18th, honoring Christ as the Light of the World. Each participant received a Christingle, an orange decorated with a candle and candies, and paraded around the church singing the Christingle hymn. All donations from this service were again presented to the Northeast Parent and Child Society.

Christmas Eve Midnight Mass was the climax of all preparations, with candlelight, an expanded Christmas choir, glorious music, joyful readings, and stimulating preaching. From Don Ingram's delicate prelude, "A Christmas Cradle Song," to the majesty of Handel's "And the Glory of the Lord," from the stirring notes of "O Come, All Ye Faithful," to the quiet lullaby "Silent Night," the sounds of Christmas

shaped our worship. Following Mass, a simple but festive reception welcomed everyone in the Great Hall.

20+C+M+B+12 is not an algebra problem but the initials of the names of the Magi separated by crosses and the year, 2012. This is what we write above or next to our homes' entrances with special chalk. At Epiphany Mass, Fr. Paul blessed chalk "to make it helpful to man. Grant that we who use it now with faith and inscribe with it the names of Thy saints Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar upon the entrance of our homes, may through their merits and petitions enjoy physical health and spiritual protection." We ended Epiphany Mass with the gift of God's blessings on our homes, the challenge to live a more spiritual life, and a St. George's feast of food and friendship hosted by Chris Henry and Kevin Grace.

*joan pearson*



## - VISITATIONS -



To meet Philip Brown, go to the Glen Eddy in Niskayuna, knock on his door and wait. You'll hear a "Come on in," and upon entering be greeted by a tall, stately man with a broad smile and a hand extended in welcome.



Philip loves visitors and entertains them with fascinating stories of his adventures of 90+ years.



Philip was raised in Oregon and attending Oregon State University when World War Two interrupted his studies. He served as a pilot in the Army Air Corp stationed primarily in Asia. After the war, he finished his degree and eventually became an engineer working at GE. An Episcopalian from childhood, it is not surprising that he, like so many GE employees at that time, found his way to St. George's during the Fr. Kirby era. Philip remembers thinking, "What a beautiful church." His and his wife Barbara (deceased) had two children, Alison (Massachusetts) and Halsey (Voorheesville.)



During World War Two, Philip flew cargo planes (he is quick to point out he never dropped bombs) and on one mission realized he was only 90 miles from the South Pole. Realizing he might never have the opportunity again, he "altered" his route to fly over the South Pole. As he maneuvered his plane over the desired area, it suddenly dawned on him that if he developed engine trouble and crashed or made a forced landing, no one would find him as he was not on his assigned route. He returned to his flight path as quickly as he could but had the satisfaction of accomplishing something very few have been able to do.



Philip never fails to thank us for visiting and bringing him communion. As we walk down the corridor from his room, we say "Thank you, Philip. The pleasure was all ours."

*jim wingate*



## Why Incense?

Recently, one of our younger acolytes, while watching incense being placed in the thurible and blessed, said “Is that what makes it smell so nice?” I smiled and thought “Out of the mouth of babes...” knowing that some might think otherwise.... Why do we use incense at the Mass and how did this practice start?

What Is Incense? Incense comes from various aromatic resins and gums of trees and other plants. It may be blended with spices or other ingredients for a different smell or consistency and is burned atop charcoal to produce a sweet and fragrant smoke.



Incense in History The use of incense in the ancient world was common, both for perfuming (an ancient air freshener) and especially in religious rites. In Judaism, incense was included in the thanksgiving offerings of oil, rain, fruits, wine. In Exodus, God commanded Moses to build an altar of incense on which the sweetest spices and gums were burned. A special branch of the Levites was given the responsibility for its daily renewal. Elsewhere in the Old Testament incense was often burnt in connection with the burnt offerings of animals.

We all know that one of the gifts of the Magi to the Christ child was frankincense, which we still use today. We don't know exactly when the use of incense was introduced into the Mass or other liturgical rites. At the time of the early Church, the Jews continued to use incense in their own Temple rituals, so it is likely that Christians adapted its usage for their own rituals and its usage became increasingly common from the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century.

Symbolism Of Incense Incense, with its sweet-smelling perfume and ascending smoke, has both ritual and symbolic meaning. Its fragrance symbolizes our offering of prayer, pleasing and acceptable to God. The purpose of censuring and the symbolic value of the smoke is that of purification and sanctification. The smoke symbolizes the prayers of the faithful rising to heaven. From Psalm 141: “Let my prayer come like incense before you; the lifting up of my hands, like the evening sacrifice”.

The Book of Revelation describes the heavenly worship: “Another angel came in holding a censer of gold. He took his place at the altar of incense and was given large amounts of incense to deposit on the altar of gold in front of the throne, together with the prayers of all God's holy ones. From the angel's hand, the smoke of the incense went up before God, and with it the prayers of God's people.”



Incense is also a sign of reverence and dedication. Censing the body at a funeral Mass is a sign of reverence for the body that was once the temple of God, as the rising smoke carries the community's prayers for the deceased to God. In a solemn liturgy, censing the Gospel book indicates reverence for the word of God and Christ himself. Censing the altar shows respect for the sacrifice of Christ as the Lamb of God.

Incense in The Mass The usage of incense adds a sense of solemnity and mystery to the Mass as good liturgy assists and guides our connection to God. Rich vestments, processions, ceremony, singing and chanting are all important elements of liturgy, stimulating each of our senses. Incense enables even fuller participation in the liturgy by stimulating the sense of smell. It also provides color, movement and sound as the thurible is swung and its chain ‘clinks’ and ‘tinkles’. The visual imagery of the smoke and the smell remind us of the transcendence of the Mass which links heaven with earth, and allow us to enter into the presence of God. Incense is also used at Benediction, Requiem, choral Evensong, and for many blessings of people and things such as clergy, congregation, crucifix, altar, Gospel book and many more.



Incense is a token of the best we have to offer. In 2 Corinthians 2:15 we read, “We are indeed the incense offered by Christ to God both for those who are on the way to salvation, and for those who are on the way to perdition. To the latter it is a deadly fume that kills; to the former a vital fragrance that brings life.”



reverence for the body that was once the temple of God, as the rising smoke carries the community's prayers for the deceased to God. In a solemn liturgy,

censing the Gospel book indicates reverence for the word of God and Christ himself. Censing the altar shows respect for the sacrifice of Christ as the Lamb

## SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

It has been a pleasure watching four of our children grow into young adults. Energetic and dedicated, they have become an integral part of our church community as they volunteer to do the grunt work for any number of ministries....including Stockade events, the Hanging of the Greens at Christmastime, and the White Dragon tag sale. These young Georgians deserve recognition for their efforts.

**JJ MORAN** (19) spends most Sundays and Holy Days as an Acolyte on the altar at St. George's and was a reader at this year's special Advent mass. Admitting that he became involved with St. George's because his father drove him to church "against my will," the dutiful son did what had to be done....church became second nature....and now JJ, who is studying criminal justice at Schenectady County Community College, drives himself to church and willingly helps out whenever he can.



**KALI ROSE MORAN** (16) has a tremendous talent: her voice! Adult choir members are "proud parents" whenever she has solos. She sings with the adult choir and is mentor/role model to the children's choir. St. George's is her second home, where she involves herself with many church activities. "I grew up here," she said. "When I brought my boyfriend to church for Epiphany, it was like introducing him to my family." A student at Schenectady High School, Kali's career path is pre-med.



**ERIN THIESSEN** (14) takes church seriously. Perfecting all of her duties as an Acolyte, Erin can also be found working on various ministries....from teen events, to being part of her grandmother's "garden gang," to assisting her parents in their church projects. Why does she work so hard for St. George's? "It gives me hope and keeps me strong when things go wrong," she offered philosophically. Erin is a student at Schenectady High School, concentrating on a career in pediatric psychology.



**JENNAFER THIESSEN** (18) can always be counted on at church events, whether it's serving food at a fund-raiser or cleaning up after a Georgian meal. She pitches right in and doesn't leave until the job is completed. An avid photographer, Jennafer is camera shy (*which is why her picture does not appear here*), but is visible on the Acolyte schedule several Sundays a month. Enrolled at Schenectady County Community College studying early childhood development, she is also employed as a cashier at Target.

We appreciate all that JJ, Kali, Erin and Jennafer do....and encourage other young Georgians to follow their example by becoming active participants in church activities.

**- SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -**



“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” That may have been true to William Shakespeare’s Juliet, but apparently not to those dioceses/groups who take pride and even vainglory in wrapping themselves in the cloak of orthodoxy. Today, the word “orthodox” is being used to drive wedges between Episcopalians and Anglicans worldwide.

How can naming someone “orthodox” cause such division? If you have encountered writings or speeches of schismatic groups within the Anglican Communion - ACNA Anglican Church in North America, CANA Convocation of Anglicans in North America (to which former Albany Bishop David Bena jumped), GAFCON Global Anglican Future Conference, AAC American Anglican Council, IRD Institute on Religion & Democracy, etc., they love to call themselves and their clergy “orthodox”. Since their positions on many social issues are often at odds with the wider Episcopal Church, this must mean that we in the Episcopal Church are not orthodox. What name is left for us? It must be the antonym “heterodox,” that such groups freely used to disparage those who disagree with them.

Orthodox – *sound or correct in opinion or doctrine, especially theological or religious*

*doctrine; conforming to the Christian faith as represented in the creeds of the early church. Heterodox - not in accordance with established or accepted doctrines or opinions. Really? Are we at St George’s and those in the wider church really not living in accordance with church doctrine? Do we not conform to the Christian faith in the creeds?*

Does “orthodox” mean that those people alone hold the truth of the Gospels? Or that they are adept at proof-texting Holy Scripture, picking out the bits that support their cause and casually ignoring the rest? Do they enjoy shrimp cocktail, do they wear cotton/poly clothing, how about a tasty pork roast? It’s so easy to disregard all these parts of scripture and beat people up with other parts.

We are a New Testament people. Jesus brought believers out from under the law so that he might fulfill the law. If there was one overriding lesson that Jesus taught, it was to love one another. Why do we persist in dividing ourselves? Words hurt, divide, cause pain. Why use them in this way?

No, we are not called to sink into a dungeon of homophobia and biblical fundamentalism. We, the sentient and intelligent people of St George’s, are called to make room at the table for everyone. Be strong with the tension that diversity provides. What’s in a name? For us, that name must be *Love*.

*With great affection, david*

**- JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -**



The Church boiler was cycling every 3- 5 minutes, taking up to 24-hours to heat the church. Troy Boiler Works checked the unit, determining the boiler gage and a steam trap needed replacing. As a result, we can increase the temperature by 5 degrees in less than an hour, reducing the energy cost.

A similar problem with the Great Hall boiler - 5 bleeder valves not working have been replaced; 4 more valves need replacement. This has decreased the running time to bring up the temperature. Within a short period of time, we will see a savings.

In early February, 2” thick insulation for the steam/ condensation pipes for both boilers was installed. The remainder of the building must also be insulated.

*rick forshaw*



*Church Boiler*



*Cranmer Boiler*



# MARDI GRAS



Approximately 65 parishioners and new, friendly faces enjoyed Mardi Gras in the Great Hall on Sunday, February 19th. Chef Kevin Grace prepared authentic New Orleans-style food: Seafood Gumbo, Muffalatta sandwiches, Etouffee, Red Beans & Rice, and the ever-popular King Cake for dessert. A “live” band for dancing....Keith Pray, saxophone; Bob Moran, drums; Andrew Krystopolski, piano; Joel Servant, bass. Exciting raffle prizes....two tickets to a Proctor’s show, and gift certificates from Hartz Family Cleaners, Experience, and these Schenectady restaurants: Slick’s, the Van Dyck, Pinhead Susan’s, Petta’s, and Ambition.

Raffle winners included: Joan Bessarab, who won 2 prizes and gave one to a friend; Ann Duff; Johnnie Angus; Fr. Paul; and Mary Ann Grace (Kevin’s mother.) The youngest winner was 6-month old Lilianna Bertinetti, daughter of Matthew & Leah/granddaughter of Peter & Trish VanDerhoof, who generously gave her restaurant gift certificate to her parents so that they could celebrate their wedding anniversary.

All proceeds from this fund-raiser (and other exciting 2012 monthly events) will go toward the refurbishing of the church organ. Andrew Krystopolski is committee chairperson; members of the committee are: Don Ingram, David Kennison, Chris Henry, Dawn Tonneau, Aileen Smith-Caruso, Joan Pearson, Charlie Stamm, Elizabeth McFarland, Joan Bessarab, and Jeff Wengrovius.



*andrew krystopolski/lynn paska*



**St. George's Episcopal Church**  
 30 North Ferry Street  
 Schenectady, New York 12305  
 The Reverend Paul F. Blanch, Rector  
 Telephone (518) 374-3163  
[www.stgeorgesschenectady.org](http://www.stgeorgesschenectady.org)

NONPROFIT  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 ALBANY, NY  
 PERMIT NO. 781

**The Georgian Report**

**Editor:** Lynn Paska  
**Layout:** Bob Paska

**Contributors:**  
 Maggie Blanch  
 Fr. Paul Blanch  
 Rick Forhaw  
 David Kennison  
 Dottie Kennison  
 Andrew Krystopolski  
 Joan Pearson  
 Jonathan Perarson  
 Alice Pumbo  
 Dawn Tonneau  
 Barbara Wengrovius

**The Vestry**

Joyce Braun, Clerk  
 Richard Forshaw, Jr. Warden  
 Christopher Henry  
 Grant Jaquith  
 David Kennison, Sr. Warden  
 Rosemary Pannone  
 Marilyn (Lynn) Paska  
 Jonathan Pearson IV  
 Karen Perka  
 Alice Pumbo  
 Dawn Tonneau

**Office Staff**

Donna Vrooman  
 Administrative Assistant  
 Andrew Krystopolski  
 Music Director  
 Gerald Cooper  
 Sexton  
 Robert Paska  
 Financial Secretary  
 Jonathan Pearson IV  
 Treasurer

Current Resident or



**- TREASURER'S REPORT -**

Have you ever wondered how St. George's processes and tracks your giving to the parish? Considering that a major portion of our parishioners benefit from the tax deductibility of their gifts, this is an important area of church administration.

Most regular givers to St. George's have a box of numbered and dated envelopes that we distribute in December each year. When gifts are put in the collection plate during services, the use of one of these envelopes ensures that you get credit for that gift. It doesn't matter whether the gift is cash or a check, we track that gift. At year-end, we send you an accounting that satisfies the Internal Revenue Service's requirements for written acknowledgment of deductible gifts.

If you don't have envelopes, I encourage you to request some (see me, Fr. Paul, or one of the Wardens.) If you do have envelopes, please us them. The counters (two people who do the count immediately after the 9:00 service each week) are diligent in their efforts to make sure that donors get credit. If you do not use your envelope, the counters must look up your box number and make a dummy envelope for you. By using your envelopes, you reduce the workload on the counters and you reduce the risk that you won't receive proper credit.

*jonathan pearson*