



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Aug 23, 2022)

St. George's Schenectady, Albany

30 North Ferry, Schenectady, NY 12305, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

epapazoglakis@albanydiocese.org

Weekly Average Sunday
Attendance (ASA)

40

Number of Weekend
Worship Services

1

Number of Weekday
Worship Services

2

Number of Other per Month
Worship Services

Current Annual
Compensation

\$81800

Cash Stipend

\$55000

Housing / Rectory Detail

Utilities

\$7560

SECA reimbursement

\$6805

Compensation Available for
New Position

\$88960

Housing Available for

6

Pension Plan

**We're in compliance with
CPF requirements.**

Healthcare Options

Full family

Dental

Yes

Housing Equity Allowance in
budget

Annual Equity Amount

Vacation Weeks

4

Vacation Weeks Details

Continuing Education Weeks

2 (standard)

Continuing Education Weeks
Details

Continuing Education
Funding in budget

**up to/including
\$500/year**

Sabbatical Provision

Yes

Travel/Auto Account

Yes

Other Professional Account

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

St. George's had a heart-warming baptism on the Feast of the Ascension this spring. A woman called us, seeking to have her baby baptized. Mom is a practicing Roman Catholic; Dad a practicing Greek Orthodox. Each of their own churches had refused them the sacrament because they are of differing faiths. The husband was deploying to the Middle East shortly, and they were anxious to have the baby baptized. Though lacking a rector, we agreed to help. We called several Episcopal churches in the area. Each declined, as the couple were not members. Ascension Day (one of the BCP-recommended days for baptisms) fast approached. After a few more calls, we secured an Anglo-Catholic priest to celebrate our Ascension Mass. With the caveat of having some time with the family beforehand, he agreed to perform the baptism, too. The family were all in attendance, excited and curious, never having been in an Episcopal church before. Our congregation, informed in advance of the situation, turned out in support. The Mass was majestic, the baptism was beautiful, and the priest was a natural with the baby. It was a joyous evening and we brought a new Christian into God's arms. We are still smiling!

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

St. George's is a bastion of traditional liturgy and music. Our congregation likes to see elegant vestments and hear chanted Masses. While firmly rooted in history, we also want St. George's to not only survive, but thrive. We want to make our faith relevant in a secularized world while continuing to honor our nearly 300 years of service in Schenectady. The St. George's campus was designed to support a much larger congregation. Obviously, we hope that someday we will once again be hosting a large Sunday School and make good use of our spacious meeting hall. Rather than just hope and guess, we have formed a Vestry committee to study two aspects of our facility: (1) Maintenance needs and (2) Utilization. We need to determine what repairs need to be done right now, and what our maintenance needs might be in 2, 5, and 10 years in the future. We will chart a course for each of the five buildings in our physical plant and consider renting or selling property that is no longer of benefit to us. Obviously, we can't grow without facilities, but we can't go on supporting all of our facilities without growth.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

inspiring, skilled administrator, strong faith, Mature experienced

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

St. George's offers a high church, Anglo-Catholic liturgical style. The Rite I Mass, complete with bells and incense, is complemented by the work of Dr. Brian J. Taylor, AAGO, our organist and choirmaster, working in tandem with our talented and gifted choir. Music is very important to the Georgian community, as we routinely feature works from the great masters. A typical Mass setting is the Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena of Healey Willan (1880 - 1968). Our liturgical style and practice are consistent for Sunday liturgies as well as Principal Feasts and Holy Days. When we had a rector, however, normal weekday Masses were offered in Rite II for anyone preferring that style. Weekday prayer services—both the Daily Office and a lay-led (in the absence of a rector) Liturgy of the Word—are also offered during the week. It is our hope that a new rector might directly replace the Liturgy of the Word with a weekday Mass.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

St. George's benefits from an active and enthusiastic laity and this is one of our greatest strengths. Virtually each of our members volunteers in one or more ministries. Each fall, we hold a Ministry Fair, where the congregation is encouraged to sign up for one or more ministries within the parish. This can include Acolyte Service, Choir, Gardening, Altar Guild, Sacristan, Buildings & Grounds, Lectoring, Greeting, and others. Most of these ministries are led by a Vestry member, each of whom presents and oversees the action and progress in his or her area of responsibility. Individuals from the congregation are also frequently approached for help on specific tasks where feasible, so all may share in the stewardship of our parish. Volunteerism is recognized and appreciated. Our quarterly parish newsletter always includes a "volunteer spotlight," i.e., a feature article saluting an individual for his or her ministry at St. George's.

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Covid-19 put several fellowship programs on hiatus, heightening the congregation's vigilance in looking out for each other. If a member is missing for more than a few Sundays, that is quickly noticed and they are contacted to see if they are well or if they need something. Our Pastoral Care team is notified, and may do a phone check and personal visit. They send cards for birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays, each with a hand-written personal note. The Pastoral Care team also routinely visits the sick, infirm, and elderly, bringing them news from St. George's and Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament. Our "Foyers" rotating dinner program was put on hold but is beginning to resume. Weekly coffee hours persisted, with Covid precautions in place (and held outdoors when weather permitted). In the past few months we have resumed scheduling occasional brunches. Parish work days have also proved valuable as a way to maintain our bonds through common work. Our nursing home outreach (Assisted Living Ministry) is still on pause until we are again allowed into those facilities. We hope for a restart soon.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Because of our long and respected presence in the Stockade, many people think of St. George's as "their" church, even if they may visit only once or twice a year. They trust that in a time of need, we will be there for them, and we are. Like many churches, we offer a Blessing of the Pets in observance of St. Francis Day in October. Regardless of any theological basis, our neighbors love this service, which is held outdoors. We rejoice in seeing their beloved companion animals, many returning year after year for a renewed blessing. It's a great bond with the community. We meet them where they are and offer no judgement. Our Assisting Living Ministry is on hold due to Covid concerns, but it served hundreds of nursing home residents over the several years that it was active. It was offered monthly at each of four facilities, where Georgian volunteers would visit with the residents, offer a Mass or other service, and always sing hymns. Additional visits were arranged at Christmas for caroling. We are awaiting word from the nursing homes as to when we can resume this successful ministry.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

St. George's faithfully participates in the annual Diocesan Convention. We also attend many programs held at our Cathedral, and recently contributed to its "For All the Saints" Capital Campaign. Our Community Outreach Committee regularly supports local charitable organizations and promotes activities such as: • SiCM (Schenectady Inner City Ministry)—annual monetary donation, monthly food donations (over 1,500 pounds of food and health care products each year), and assisting at a summer lunch program for food-insecure children • Salvation Army—monetary contributions and Christmas kettle bell-ringing • St. Joseph's Place—donations of home-baked goodies for this inner-city hospitality center • The YWCA—supporting their battered women shelter via donations of bedding and baby supplies • Collecting winter coats and school supplies for those in need In our immediate historic district neighborhood, we support activities such as the annual Stockade Art Show and the Stockade Walkabout, allowing use of our grounds and opening the church for tours, organ recitals, and a place of respite. As with all of our services, our occasional Solemn Choral Evensongs are open to the public.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

Covid lockdowns in 2020 forced St. George's to initiate a live-stream broadcast. At first the services entailed a small altar team and a cell phone camera. Gradually, we invested in better, commercial-grade equipment. We now broadcast all services on our own YouTube channel. Not only does this enable our shut-ins and parishioners who are still hesitant of large gatherings, it has expanded our reach to the immediate community and to our friends and past parishioners who have moved away. Funerals and weddings have been live-streamed for people who cannot make those events in-person. We have accumulated over 3,500 views on YouTube and average about 20-25/week. We also have offered (except during Covid) an adult learning series entitled "Theology on Tap." As the name implies, this is a symposium at a local restaurant where participants can enjoy refreshments and a discussion of varying theological themes. It's open to all and has served to bring new people into the congregation. We also generally offer a Lenten series, consisting of pot-luck dinners, guest speakers, and Stations of the Cross

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

We run a Stewardship campaign every fall. We mail an appeal to the congregation, present talks by clergy and laity, and may offer a focus project or a stewardship luncheon. The enthusiasm is great, but we can do better. We are looking at two approaches: (1) Reinforce that God calls us to build His church, pointing to biblical teachings to guide annual pledging. We hope a new rector could further the biblical basis for stewardship. If we do not believe in our hearts that everything we have comes from God, stewardship will suffer. and (2) Increase our emphasis on endowment bequests, especially with our aging congregation. We need to do as those who came before and left a legacy for us. They took their Stewardship seriously. It is now our turn to leave our own legacy. Our endowment strategy focuses on preservation of principal, which produces earnings to fund our budget. We rely on the endowment earnings for 60% of our annual income, with annual pledges delivering the other 40%. St. George's is also ripe for a Capital Campaign. This has worked well in the past, as we took in over \$400,000 to pay for targeted projects such as steeple and organ repairs.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Recently, we had a major conflict with our sexton team, a mother and her grown son. Their work had been slipping over the course of a year. Warnings and counseling proved ineffective, and it came time for us to walk our separate ways. Their employment was terminated and as a severance we allowed them to stay in their church-provided, on-campus apartment for three months, without having to work. When that period elapsed, however, they refused to leave. Covid at this point was rampant and that became their excuse for staying in the apartment without paying rent. There were many attempts to reason with them, but no progress. The erstwhile sextons wound up staying for an additional year, rent-free, and taking advantage of utilities including hot water, laundry facilities, and Internet access. It was a significant financial burden for the parish. Ultimately, we were forced to initiate legal action. That too was expensive and the eviction process took months. Still, we feel we did the right thing and have a clear conscience. The former employees left peaceably at the 11th hour without having to be escorted out by a sheriff's deputy.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

Until recently, St. George's had never had a woman celebrate a Sunday Mass. Female priests have officiated on occasion, such as at a funeral service or another special service, but not on a Sunday. On this past Mother's Day, our normal supply priest was suddenly taken ill 30 minutes before Mass was to begin. The choir was warming up and people were filing into their usual pews! A few panicked calls ensued, without success at finding a replacement. A woman priest, who had attended St. George's years ago and recently returned to the congregation, said, "Take me." She was neither canonically resident nor licensed in the Diocese, the canons make provision for exceptional circumstances.". After a very brief deliberation, the answer was, "OK, let's get you vested." She celebrated beautifully, delivered a great sermon, and all seemed well. Almost. One parishioner did get up and leave when he learned that a woman would be serving the Mass. Another individual stayed but later voiced disagreement with the decision. Virtually everyone else, however, was enthusiastic about the historic event. Change comes differently to us all. We must try to be open to it.



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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Matthew Stromberg	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2016-08	2021-11

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Paul F. Blanch	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2009-10	2014-11

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Dr. William McSwain	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1999-04	2007-11

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School

Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
		5	1

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School



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Worshipping Community Web site: <http://www.@stgeorgesschenectady.com>

Media Links:

> <https://www.facebook.com/Saint-Georges-Episcopal-Church-116891431698806>

Online References:

> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4w1HLGhnOTf16eSdBbKP Rg/featured>

Languages Significantly Represented:

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

Vacancy

Standing Committee President The Very Rev. Tom Malionek
518-692-3350 SCPresident@albanydiocese.org

Diocesan Transition Minister

The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Papazoglakis

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Current Warden/Board Chair

David Kennison

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Previous Warden/Board Chair

Suzanne Hartz

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Search Chair

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Local Community Leader

Schenectady Inter City Ministries

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