

**St. George's Episcopal Church**  
**Annual Parish Meeting**  
**January 21, 2024**

**Meeting Called to Order**

Approximately 40 Georgians gathered in the Great Hall following worship on Sunday, January 21 for the church's 288<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. Attendees received a 24-page report that included an agenda, the Rector's address, and updates on the church's various ministries.

**Appointment of Clerk and Ballot Counters**

Following an opening prayer, Father Thomas J. Pettigrew appointed Meg Hughes as the clerk of the meeting. He also requested that Gloria Kishton and Robert Paska function as ballot tellers.

**Announcement of Candidates**

On behalf of the Nominating Committee (Fr. Pettigrew, Jon Ewbank, Meg Hughes, and Sandee Hughes) Meg announced the open positions on Vestry and the names of parishioners who had been nominated to fill them:

- **Dr. Jeffrey Wengrovius** has finished a first (renewed) full term on Vestry. Being eligible for another three-year term, he agreed to continue to serve.
- Meg Hughes has completed two three-year terms. She nominated **Jerry Trant** to succeed her.
- Sandee Hughes has also concluded two full terms and is thus eligible to step down. **Kevin Decker** agreed to fill the newly vacated slot.
- **David Kennison**, being eligible to run for a second two-year term as Senior Warden, agreed to stay on for a second term.

Fr. Pettigrew asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

Meredith Ewbank made a motion to accept the slate of candidates by general acclamation. Joyce Cockerham seconded the motion, which passed readily. There were no dissenting votes on the succession plan as presented.

As members of the Hospitality Committee (including Sandee, Carol Gaige, and Barbara Wengrovius) hastened to set up the buffet table, Fr. Pettigrew thanked the retiring Vestry members for their service and noted that a new clerk of Vestry would be needed, as Meg is vacating that position. Father directed the two new Vestry members to arrange with Bob Paska to have their pictures taken for the website.

Father urged all to read the details on the work being done by the church's volunteers. As splendid and appreciated as these activities are, however, they are tangential to the primary mission of the church, Father reminds us.

For 288 years the clergy and congregation of St. George's have strived to fulfill the charge of Jesus Christ: "Do this in memory of me." And as Senior Warden Kennison stated in his own written report: "Was ever a command so obeyed?" (Quote from *The Shape of the Liturgy* by Benedictine liturgist Dom Gregory Dix, published in 1945.)

Father expanded on that quote, which muses poetically on the ubiquity and miraculous continued relevance of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Father read a moving excerpt from that passage to his rapt audience.

The assembled faithful then broke for a light luncheon of egg bakes, salads, and cookies.

### **Senior Warden's Report**

David Kennison looked back on the past two years that St. George's was without a Rector, noting with pride that our church met this adversity by following the motto "We are the church." It was a challenging time but also an opportunity for renewed unity and improvements to our physical plant. David had kind words for his Vestry colleagues and for all in the parish who worked hard and stayed faithful even as leadership was in short supply.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Jeffrey Wengrovius opened his remarks by thanking parishioners for their generous giving of time, talents, and treasure. He also spoke gratefully of the efforts of Bob McCloskey, Financial Secretary.

Jeff noted that the Finance Committee is now taking a more active role in budgetary matters. In addition to Jeff himself, this group includes Fr. Tom, David, Jon Pearson, and Jon Ewbank. The committee was instrumental in constructing the 2024 budget.

Jeff referred to his written remarks where a pie chart summarizes a projected quarter-million dollars in income for the coming year. About half of that is expected to come from parishioner contributions, and the rest will be income from our endowment funds. As illustrated by a second pie chart, however, our expenses are expected to exceed our income by about \$160,000. This shortfall will need to be funded out of our endowment principal. This is on top of the \$135,000 we were forced to take in 2023 for boiler replacement and other repairs. It is not a viable long-term strategy as reductions in principal lead directly to a decrease in interest income. "We need to reverse that trend," says Jeff. He will be working hard with the Finance Committee in 2024 to look at ways of cutting costs and generating new income (perhaps a capital campaign).

### **Rector's Closing Remarks**

Father happily noted that average attendance is trending upwards, although we need to do even better. He is optimistic for 2024 and believes that St. George's will be well represented at a diocesan level going forward. He looks forward to the consecration of Fr. Jeremiah Williamson as our new bishop on February 24 at the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany. Father served on the Bishop Search Committee and continues to play an active role in the transition. He also eagerly anticipates his own institution as our 20<sup>th</sup> Rector on March 15, with an evening service and a catered dinner in the Great Hall.

Father closed out the program by leading the congregation in reciting "A Prayer for St. George's Church." The 2024 Annual Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully,  
Meg Hughes, Vestry Clerk