

THE Cornerstone

January 2018

Newsletter of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church
107 State Street, Albany, New York

New Year's Dreaming

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

(Isaiah 64: 8.)

As a younger man, New Year's Eve parties had their appeal. After all, it is hard not to like champagne corks popping and balls dropping in Times Square. We easily get caught up in the hope of the new year. A part of us deeply craves the idea of new beginnings. "Maybe this year it will be different," we say. "I will start this or stop that." Getting older can beat some of that optimism out of us. Too many failed resolutions take a toll. Sometimes I wonder if it wouldn't be better to make a resolution to accept one's inherently weak condition!

In Christianity, there is something that we call "sanctification." It is the work of the Holy Spirit within us. Sanctification is about our cooperation with grace to live the Christian life. Justification has to do with our being accounted as worthy before God through the merits of Christ. Justification places our complete faith in the work of Christ. There is a tendency in church traditions to favor one or the other. In particular, the Protestant accent is on Justification, the Roman Catholic on Sanctification. Classical Anglicanism is somewhere in the middle.

Regardless of the leaning in one's own theology, it is safe to say that Christians are to behave as Christians. The fact that we all fail to varying degrees has us running to Justification. The fact that the Holy Spirit keeps prompting us to try has us heading to Sanctification. Saint Augustine famously said that "Our souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee." Our souls are also restless until they respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in whichever of the two directions the Holy Spirit deems needed.

The problem with New Year's resolutions is that they are about neither Justification nor Sanctification. They are about what we fancy we can do by our own agency. Resolutions brings us back to our own resources, which is why they fail as they do! Our peace is found in that mysterious place of the Holy Spirit's work. When we are attentive there, we feel the direction in which we are being pulled and will find the Holy Spirit supplying the strength we lack and need. This is the truth of Christian experience.

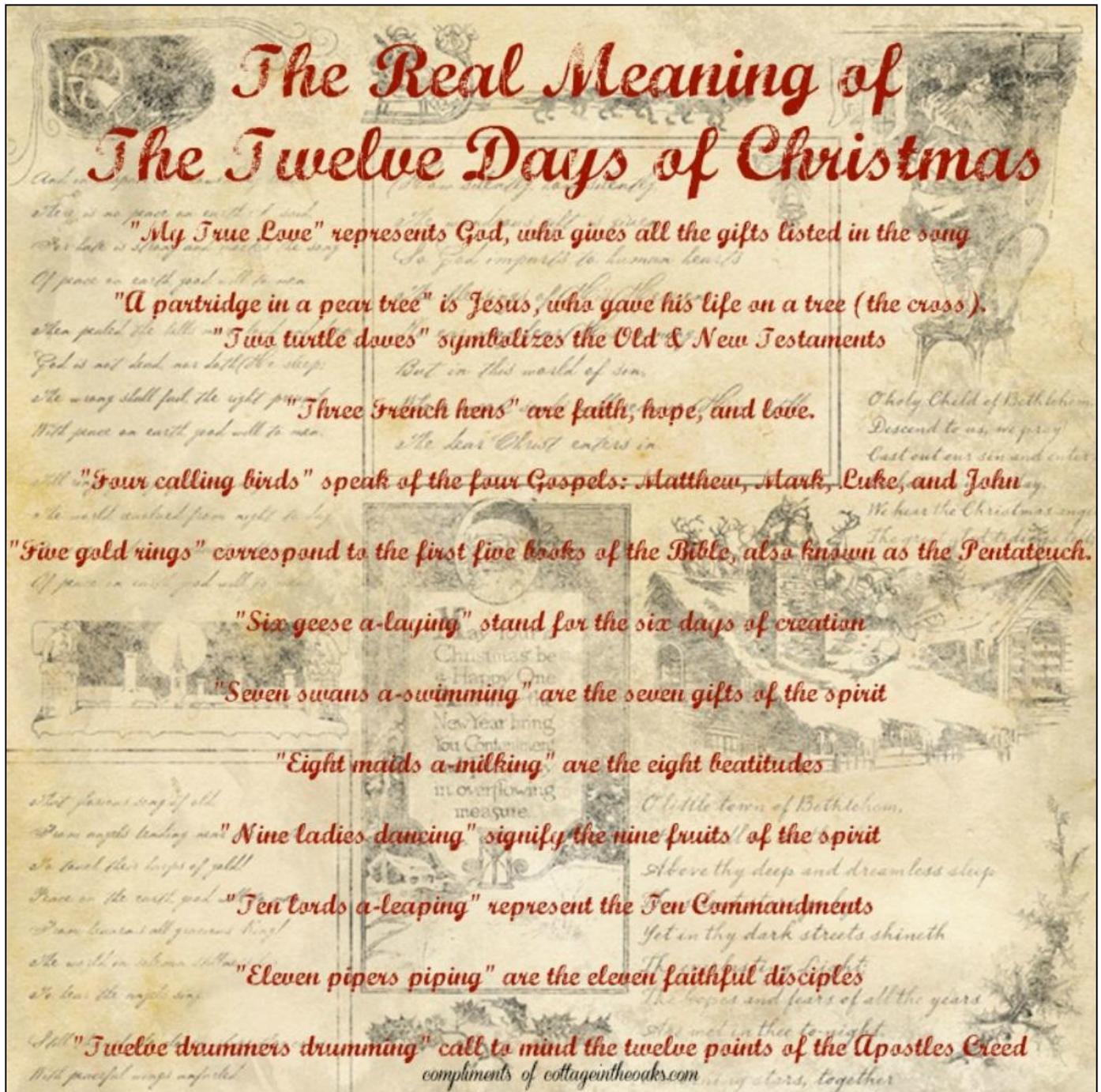
Sometimes I think the irony of New Year's Eve parties escapes us. There we are indulging the flesh to the max while resolving that we will yet overcome it! Better to have a good party and leave the New Year's resolutions to God.

One of the great things about our Anglican tradition is that it has a sober view of human nature. It also doesn't tend to make excuses for a good party. If we do make a New Year's resolution this year, it would seem best to go along the lines of Isaiah: "I am the clay. You are the Potter." I resolve to be clay. I'll keep you posted.



Peace of the Christ Child,
Fr. Hartt+

It may be January – but it's still Christmas!



Yes, I am still celebrating Christmas even though we have turned the calendar to a new month and a New Year. I know many people that decorate their homes right after Thanksgiving so that they can enjoy the colors and lights and make the Christmas season last a bit longer. I do the same, only I celebrate into January! We all know the diddy about the 12 Days of Christmas – I hope you enjoy the picture I've shared detailing the meaning of each of the "gifts".

It's important for us to remember that my true love is God and each of us sings this song recalling the great gifts God has given us. The 12 days of Christmas, from Christmas Day on December 25th through The Epiphany on January 6th, is a wonderful time to remember these although they are gifts that "keep on giving all year long." Christmas is indeed a great celebration and the gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, tops them all. I pray that you and your loved ones have a blessed Christmastide and start to our New Year! May the Peace and Joy of Christmas fill your hearts and homes.

Blessings, Mtr. Sue

Annual Meeting: January 28th is St. Peter's Annual meeting,
with two worship services at 8:30am and 10:30am, and the meeting following the 10:30 service.

Annual Meeting

Dear Parishioners,

After much prayer and reflection, the Vestry has nominated the following parish members to serve on Vestry:

- ◆ Deborah Spath will be running for her 1st two-year term as Sr. Warden.
- ◆ Tim Murphy will be running for his 2nd three-year term on the vestry. He is running to fill his present seat.
- ◆ Stephanie Lencewicz will be running for her 2nd three-year term. She is running to fill her present seat.
- ◆ Fred Hershey will be running to fill out Earl Stafford's remaining term of two years. Earl will be stepping down.
- ◆ Ashley Spath will be running for her first three-year vestry term to fill the seat formerly held by Mark Lundberg who completed his third term.

Other nominations must be submitted to the office in writing by Wednesday, January 24th, 2018, in order to appear on the ballot. Deborah Spath is currently serving as Junior Warden. In the event of Deborah Spath's election to the position of Senior Warden, a vacancy will be created in the seat of Junior Warden. In the case of a vacancy, the vestry is empowered to fill it until the next Annual Meeting at which time the vestry-appointed seat will be opened for parish election. In the interest of transparency, the Vestry wishes to alert the parish that in the event Deborah Spath is elected as Sr. Warden, the Vestry has resolved to appoint Jim Chenot as Junior Warden until the next Annual Meeting.

From time to time, we are asked about how one qualifies as a parish member and thus able to vote. The qualification of voters is by Canon and law determined by the rector, if there be one. The relevant language is as follows: *"Persons of full age belonging to the parish, who have been baptized and are regular attendants at its worship and contributors to its support for at least twelve months prior to such election or special meeting or since the establishment of such parish, shall be qualified voters at any such election or special meeting. ..."* RCL Section 43, 6. Thank you for your faithfulness to St. Peter's and may God Bless you in 2018.

God Bless,
Father Hartt
James Chenot

O God, from whom all good proceeds: Grant that by your inspiration we may think those things that are right, and by your merciful guiding may do them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP, 229.)

Vestry Meeting

The next Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 9th at 5:15pm.

Outreach Meeting

The next Outreach meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 9th at 4:30pm.

Daughters of the King Meeting

The DOK Julia Chapter welcomes all women of the parish to consider our current Discernment Classes running through January 2018, with a February 11, 2018 Installment date. The classes provide the opportunity to learn about the Daughters and pray if you are called to join the order. We meet monthly in the Vestry room (on the 2nd Sunday) immediately after the 10:30 service, with our next meeting on January 14, 2018— feel free to join us!

The Bishop's Visitation: Save the Date!

February 11th, 2018, Bishop Love will visit St. Peter's Church. Our celebration will include Confirmations as well as Installation of the new Daughters of the King.

3rd Annual CtK Women's Retreat

February 23-24, 2018

featuring the in-depth Bible Study

Breathe, Making Room For Sabbath
by Priscilla Shirer

Get ready for a powerful retreat filled with friends,
renewal, revival, fellowship, food and
just plain FUN!

*"I had a great time! It was exactly what I needed to be spiritually
refreshed and renewed!"*

*"Thank you!!! I was so looking forward to this weekend and it
surpassed my expectations—exceedingly abundantly "*

This retreat tends to sell out. We recommend you register
early. That will also enable you to take advantage of the...

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL!

To register, go to
www.ctkcenter.org/page/3rd_annual_womens_retreat
(find out about our NEW CtK Café Friday Night)

Outreach and Adult Education



Blessing Bag Update:

Thank you for
your donations!

61 Bags were
assembled!



St. Peter's Overflow Women's Shelter



Could you consider giving up one evening this winter to offer the gift of hospitality and show another the love and mercy of God?

The St. Peter's Overflow Homeless Shelter 107 State Street Albany, NY, opened for its 9th season on December 1st to augment the ministry of the Capital City Rescue Mission to Albany's homeless. This year, women are housed each evening. St. Peter's is currently receiving donations of food items and financial support and are also scheduling volunteers (women volunteers only) to offer hospitality during the evening hours of 7:00pm until 10:00pm. The overflow shelter is on the 2nd floor of the Guild House, next to the church. Volunteer training will be provided. To volunteer, please call Judy Burns at 518-441-7538.

Parish Leadership Conference 2018

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." These words from Matthew and Luke's Gospels are as true today as they were when Jesus spoke them. The secularization of our nation and an increase in the number of people claiming to have no religion ("the nones") has made the harvest plentiful. But the workers are few: there has been a simultaneous decrease in church attendance. The number of clergy available to serve parishes has also decreased, due to the aging of the clergy population and the decrease in the number of graduating seminarians, so there are fewer workers to teach other workers. This is an issue that is troubling not just The Episcopal Church but the Church Universal. Jesus commanded His disciples: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20a). And the first letter of Peter (1:9) says that we "are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that [we] may declare the praises of him who called [us] out of darkness into his wonderful light." So *all* people, not just clergy, are called to proclaim the Good News and bring the message of Jesus Christ to the world. So in order to help *all* people in the Diocese, clergy and lay, to follow Jesus' command (and our Diocesan motto) to make disciples, the Parish Leadership Conferences this year will focus on celebrating the many and various lay ministries across the Diocese and to explore ways to strengthen those ministries and expand them, enabling all orders of ministry to carry out their calling as fully as possible. The format of the PLC's will remain the same as usual. Each PLC will begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude by 4:00 p.m. They will be in the context of a Eucharist, with the teaching taking the place of the sermon. This year, there will be speakers discussing the need to expand lay ministries in the morning. After lunch, a lay perspective will be given and parishes will have the opportunity to meet together to take a brief spiritual gifts inventory and discuss the results and how those results can be used to help the whole church, clergy and laity, reach out more effectively to the community at large.

This year's Parish Leadership Conference is on January 27th, 2018 at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center, Greenwich, NY, with carpooling from Albany. Please let your clergy know you'd like to attend.

Youth Formation & Sunday School

St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen (a.k.a. Angels in Training)

Saturday, January 20th ~ 11AM to 1PM

On the 3rd Saturday of every month St. Peter's Church is committed to preparing and serving lunch to 100+ people at the St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen (formerly known as Grace and Holy Innocents) located at 498 Clinton Avenue in Albany. We invite you, and the youth of our church (the Angels in Training) along with their friends, to join Laura Rulison (our Director of Christian Education) in helping with this outreach program that is in such desperate need of volunteers. For information or to let her know you are coming please call Laura at (518)368-4284.

Fight Hunger Bag!

Please support the St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen by purchasing the "Fight Hunger" bag during the month of January at the Hannaford's in Windsor Plaza, 96 Wolf Road, Colonie, NY 12205. For every "Fight

Hunger" bag purchased at this Hannaford location during the month of January, 25¢ will go to the St. Francis Mission Soup kitchen which feeds over 100 people at each of its Saturday luncheons.

Young Adult Service Corp

Applications are now available for 2018-2019 placements in the Young Adult Service Corps (YASC). YASC gives young adults ages 21-30 years old an opportunity to transform their own lives while engaging mission and ministry in the Anglican Communion. Amelia Brown, former staff member of the Spiritual Life Center, is currently serving in the Anglican Communion Office in London as a member of the YASC. Possible placements for 2018-2019 include (but are not limited to) Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, England, Honduras, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Jerusalem, Mexico, Panama, the Philippines, South Africa, Taiwan, and Tanzania. The application for a 2018-2019 placement with additional information and instructions is available [here](#). **The application deadline is Friday, January 12, 2018.**

Jr. & Sr. Sonshine - February 16 - 19

Beaver Cross beats the mid-winter blues with our annual winter retreat! From epic snow fights to cocoa and cookies, we make the best of the cold weather. Most of all, we learn more about Christ. For more information or to register, call 518-692-9550.



The cast from our Christmas Pageant 2017.



Children of St. Peter's perform the Annual St. Peter's Christmas Pageant December 10th, 2017

January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	1 The Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ No Treble Rehearsal Office Closed	2 1:00pm - Friends of St. Peter's	3 No Top of the Church 12:05pm - Holy Communion
7 First Sunday after Epiphany: The Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ Healing Prayers 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 12:00pm - DOK Discernment 12:00pm - Confirmation Class	8 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal	9 1:00pm - Friends of St. Peter's 4:30pm - Outreach Meeting 5:15pm - Vestry Meeting	10 8:45am - Top of the Church 12:05pm - Holy Communion
14 Second Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 12:00pm - DOK Meeting 12:00pm - Confirmation Class	15 Martin Luther King Day No Treble Rehearsal Office Closed	16 1:00pm - Friends of St. Peter's	17 8:45am - Top of the Church 12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:45pm - Holy Communion
21 Third Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 12:00pm - DOK Discernment 12:00pm - Confirmation Class	22 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal	23 1:00pm - Friends of St. Peter's	24 8:45am - Top of the Church 12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:45pm - Holy Communion
28 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany Youth Sunday 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 12:00pm - Annual Meeting	29 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal	30 1:00pm - Friends of St. Peter's	31 8:45am - Top of the Church 12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:45pm - Holy Communion

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>of the Hill Holy Communion</p>	<p>4 No Choir Rehearsals</p>	<p>5 12:30pm - Organ Concert 5:30pm - Eve of Epiphany Holy Communion Service</p>	<p>6 The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ</p>
<p>of the Hill Holy Communion</p>	<p>11 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>12 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>of the Hill Holy Communion Story Study</p>	<p>18 Confession of St. Peter the Apostle 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>19 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>20 11:00am - Angels in Training</p>
<p>of the Hill Holy Communion Story Study</p>	<p>25 Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>26 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>27 8:30am - 4:00pm - Parish Leadership Conference (at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center)</p>
<p>of the Hill Holy Communion Story Study</p>			

St. Peters Music

CHOIR

Choir rehearsals are on the following schedule:

Mondays: 5:00pm - 6:15pm Trebles

Thursdays: 5:00pm - 6:30pm Trebles

5:30pm - 7:00pm Adult choristers

Sundays: 9:30am rehearsal for the 10:30am service

Please contact Neil Keen for more information at stpmus@gmail.com or 339-0137.

FRIDAY NOONTIME ORGAN CONCERTS

Free half-hour recitals each Friday at 12:30pm

We want to thank Neil Keen and our marvelous St. Peter's Choir for bringing such joy through music during the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Their dedication to their art and to the people of St. Peter's is something we shouldn't take for granted. Blessings on each of you!

Quotes from Composers

"People usually complain that music is so ambiguous, that it leaves them in such doubt as to what to think, whereas words can be understood by everyone. But to me it seems exactly the opposite."

Felix Mendelssohn

"..music is the only language with the contradictory attributes of being at once intelligible and untranslatable.."

Claude Levy-Strauss (not a composer, but a scientist)

"Music is the arithmetic of sounds as optics is the geometry of light."

Calude Debussy

"My faith is the grand drama of my life. I'm a believer, so I sing words of God to those who have no faith. I give bird songs to those who dwell in cities and have never heard them, make rhythms for the who know only military marches or jazz, and paint colors for those who see none."

Olivier Messiaen

"It's easy to play any musical instrument: all you do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument plays itself."

J. S. Bach

Saint of the Month Club

January 18 - The Confession of Saint Peter the Apostle

Prayer: *Almighty Father, who didst inspire Simon Peter, first among the apostles, to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the Living God: Keep thy Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith, that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

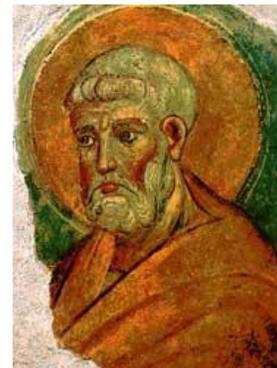
The When Simon Bar-Jona confessed, "You are the Christ," Jesus responded, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church." This rough fisherman and his brother Andrew were the first disciples called by Jesus. Peter figures prominently in the Gospels, often stumbling, impetuous, intense, and uncouth.

It was Peter who attempted to walk on the sea, and began to sink; it was Peter who impulsively wished to build three tabernacles on the mountain of the Transfiguration; it was Peter who, just before the crucifixion, three times denied knowing his Lord.

But it was also Peter who, after Pentecost, risked his life to do the Lord's work, speaking boldly of his belief in Jesus. It was also Peter, the Rock, whose strength and courage helped the young Church in its questioning about the mission beyond the Jewish community. Opposed at first to the baptism of Gentiles, he had the humility to admit a change of heart, and to baptize the Roman centurion Cornelius and his household. Even after this, Peter had a continuing struggle with his Jewish conservatism; for Paul, writing to the Galatians, rebukes him for giving way to the demands of Jewish Christians to dissociate himself from table-fellowship with Gentiles.

Though the New Testament makes no mention of it, the tradition connecting Peter with Rome is early and virtually certain. According to a legend based on that tradition, Peter fled from Rome during the persecution under Nero. On the Appian Way, he met Christ, and asked him, "Domine, quo vadis?" ("Lord, where are you going?"). The Lord answered, "I am coming to be crucified again." Peter thereupon retraced his steps, and was shortly thereafter crucified, head downwards. "I am not worthy to be crucified as my Lord was," he is supposed to have said.

As we watch Peter struggle with himself, often stumble, love his Lord and deny him, speak rashly and act impetuously, his life reminds us that our Lord did not come to save the godly and strong but to save the weak and the sinful. Simon, an ordinary human being, was transformed by the Holy Spirit into the "Rock," and became the leader of the Church.



Henry Holiday and the Stained Glass Windows of St. Peter's Church

Henry Holiday was a British artist and a frequent visitor to the London studios of Edward Burne-Jones. He took over as stained glass window designer at Powell's Glass Works after Burne-Jones left in 1861, working for Morris & Co. He started his own firm in 1891.



He is the designer of many of the lovely stained glass windows in the sanctuary of St. Peter's Church, including:

The Wells Window (1884) [See window at left]

The Wells Window depicts at the head of the window the raising of Lazarus. Below are the three Marys: Mary of Bethany, the Virgin Mary and Mary wife of Cleophas. Especially notable is the third Mary with her hair so long that she supports it on her arm. This window was placed in memory of vestryman Agur Wells and his wife Abigail.

The Owens Window (1885)

The Owens Window depicts the Sacrament of Christian Baptism. At the top of the window we see Christ blessing the children. Below is the Baptism of our Lord with the legend, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. There are other biblical scenes below. The window was placed in memory of Edward Owens and his wife Poly Sabrina Hawley.

The Kidd Window (1884)

In the Kidd Window the infancy and boyhood of Christ are depicted. At the head of the window are the nativity angels proclaiming "Gloria in Excelsis." The chief section shows the enthroned Virgin and the divine Child. Side sections show the adoration of the Magi. Underneath are small windows showing the flight into Egypt and the boy Christ in the Temple and in the carpenter shop.

The inscription reads: "To the Glory of God and in memory of James Kidd, died May 20, 1879. James Kidd was a vestryman during selected years from 1839 to 1879.

The Dexter Window (1884)

The Dexter Window which is often considered one of the most beautiful of the windows depicts Faith, Hope and Charity. Under Faith are the words "Earnestly contend for faith." The scene below depicts Peter's confession of the divinity of our Lord. Under Charity are the words "Love one another for love is of God." The scene below depicts Peter and John healing the cripple in the temple. Under Hope are the words: "Looking for that blessed hope" and the scene below is John's vision at Patmos and a banner reading "And behold a door was opened in heaven."

This window is in memory of Dr. Samuel Dexter who died August 28, 1825. Both of his sons, George and James would serve as vestrymen of St. Peter's Church. George for the years 1879-1883 and James for the years 1840-1853.

The Lansing Window (1901)

The Lansing Window depicts scenes from the night of the Nativity, as angelic host proclaim to the shepherds "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men." The large central angel declares "Born this day unto you is a Savior which is Christ the Lord." The sexfoil about the lancets depicts the Blessed Virgin and the Divine Child.

The Memorial Inscription reads: "In loving memory of Abraham Lansing who died October 4, 1899, son of Christopher Y. Lansing and Caroline M. Thomas. Abraham Lansing served on the vestry from 1890 to 1899.

Our Church is truly thankful for the many stained glass windows of Henry Holiday.

**MINUTES FOR THE VESTRY MEETING
ST. PETER'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
November 14, 2017**

Present: Fr. Hartt, Mtr. Sue Waldron, J. Chenot, D. Spath, G. Scala, M. Lundberg, K. Cehowski, C. Gordon, M. Holden

Absent: T. Murphy, E. Stafford, S. Lencewicz, N. Creagan,

Opening Prayer Led by Father Paul Hartt

Approval of the Minutes of Vestry Meeting, October 11, 2017.

The October 11, 2017, minutes were approved on a motion by M. Lundberg and seconded by M. Holden. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry.

Senior Warden Report –J. Chenot

Our stewardship campaign began in October with a wonderful stewardship letter sent out to the congregation from our treasurer George Scala. His heartfelt letter of what St. Peter's means to him and his family was truly a testament to how the church life at St. Peter's remains an important part of family life for many. Pledge cards also were sent out and have been coming in steadily. George will report on the numbers in his upcoming report. For those who have not filled out a pledge card, I pray they will take the time and fill one out, looking into their hearts when they pledge and keep in mind how much St. Peter's means to them and their family as well. We had a beautiful celebratory luncheon on Consecration Sunday, October 29th, after the 10:30 service at 90 State. The luncheon was to celebrate the support the congregation has given to St. Peter's with their pledges as well as those who volunteer so much of their time on committees that are so critical in keeping the church running smoothly. Many thanks for those who have already sent their pledge cards, ensuring St. Peter's a bright future for generations to come.

The last week in October I lost my dad. Up until the past two years he hadn't missed a Christmas Eve service since I was 9, listening to our choir. His last day at the hospital, Father Hartt was with our family the entire day until he passed to comfort all of us. A few days later, we had his funeral at St. Peter's with Father Hartt and Mother Sue officiating, as well as the choir participating at the service. As I type my report, my heart is overwhelmed by the support from all the church members who reached out, the choir and more importantly, Father Hartt, who in the difficult days his pastoral care truly meant so much to so many in this time of sorrow. This is why I do what I do for St. Peter's - we are all one family and we can always count on each other for all the good times as well as the rough ones. Our family thanks each and every one of you from the bottom of our hearts for all your love and support.

This past Saturday, November 11th, we hosted our Pre- Thanksgiving Dinner that has become an annual tradition. The dinner was a tremendous success with up to 100 parishioners and friends attending. Many thanks to everyone involved in preparing all the side dishes for the Thanksgiving feast as well as those who cooked all the turkeys beforehand at their homes. It was a great evening with great food and hospitality for all to enjoy.

Again, there are members of our parish who will be stepping up this year to volunteer their time to help at Equinox preparing Thanksgiving Dinners. This year we will be helping on Thanksgiving Day morning at 9:00 AM. We want to thank Laura Rulison for heading up this annual outreach. Also, we would like to thank the Sunday School children who baked loaves of pumpkin bread this past Sunday for the congregation which will be blessed and given out this Sunday for Thanksgiving.

Looking ahead to December 1st, we will be opening our doors to the homeless overflow shelter for its 9th year at St. Peter's, serving those from the Capital City Mission. For a second year in a row, we will be housing women (rather than men) who are in dire need of shelter during the cold winter nights. Many thanks to our outreach committee who have been working the city mission, ensuring this program will succeed as it has in past years. I would like to thank those who have donated food as well as financial donations in the past and hope that many will continue to support this very important outreach mission.

Christmas Season is near and our choir will start the season off performing the Handel's Messiah on Sunday, December 3rd, at 3:00. Many thanks to our choir director, Neil Keen, for all the musical talent he brings to all of us as well as the entire choir for their commitment and talents they bring to all the upcoming musical events that will be performed in the next few weeks. On Sunday, December 10th, the Sunday school will be performing their annual Christmas Pageant. Again, I would like to thank Laura Rulison and the entire Sunday school staff for their commitment to our younger upcoming generation as well as those who help in the nursery.

Lessons and Carols will be performed by our choir the following Sunday, December 17th, at the 10:30 service followed by our annual Hanging of the Greens at 12:00, including the luncheon served during the event. We hope that everyone will be able to attend this traditional event which brings the congregation together in fellowship and beautifying the church for Christmas Eve.

Please keep the clergy and office personnel in your thoughts and prayers as we move into this busy season as everything moves into high gear. I am looking forward to all the upcoming events as well as the Christmas Eve services and Christmas Day.

Have a safe and thankful Thanksgiving.

Finance – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

George S. reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the month of October. Offerings for October were \$21,294. Total offerings YTD are \$184,793. This compares to a budgeted number of \$228,042. YTD through the same period in 2016 was \$187,470.

The investment/endowment accounts both showed gains for October. Merrill Lynch showed a positive return of +1.57%. YTD the Merrill Lynch account shows a positive return of 11.85%. The Key accounts showed a return of 1.56% for the month. YTD the Key accounts show a positive return of +12.70%. This leaves us with a positive budget variance in this area YTD of \$421,943. Both accounts performed favorably versus market indexes. Expenses YTD through October are \$40,222 over budget. YTD we show a gain of \$182,298, primarily as a result of performance of the investment accounts.

Pledges for 2018 are at 27 pledging units for a total amount of \$89,552. We should continue to receive many additional pledges through the end of the year.

Property

All work paid in full and complete.

Outreach

The Overflow shelter opens in December. We will house up to 8 women through the Capital City Rescue Mission. We have updated guidelines for the running of the shelter. We have contacted the Franciscan Center at Siena College to request Christmas gifts for the women of our Overflow Shelter (again) this year and they are happy to bless us in this way. St. Paul's in Albany has sent a donation of \$200.00 to benefit our Overflow Homeless Shelter.

We have received a donation of \$300.00 to assist families with Thanksgiving/Christmas needs. We will be purchasing Price Chopper gift cards to give to families in need for these purposes. We will be providing Christmas gifts once again for Burmese refugee families new to the Albany area. The Giving Tree will be available in the Pumpelly room throughout December.

The Outreach Committee voted to provide an end-of-year donation to Healing a Woman's Soul ministry for \$500.

The Annual Service of Remembrance is scheduled for Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 6:30pm. Thank you Judy Burns for coordinating this meaningful service.

Old Business – None

New Business

Elections, Mark Lundberg and Jim Chenot have reached term limits.

Associate Rector's Report – Mother Sue

I attended the annual Diocesan Bible Symposium on Saturday, October 14, at The Cathedral of All Saints. The Rev. Dr. Michael Cover presented on "*Not as Orphans: Praying and Preaching with the Saints of Scripture*". It was an incredibly rich day of learning and reflecting on Holy Scripture. Additionally, The Rev. Fleming Rutledge led the Diocesan Clergy Retreat November 7-10 at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center. This was, once again, a theologically rich experience for the clergy.

The Stewardship Celebration luncheon on October 29th was wonderful – thank you Jim for organizing it and to all the people of St. Peter's who faithfully commit to supporting ministry at St. Peter's each year. Likewise, our pre-Thanksgiving Dinner was a phenomenal success. Thank you to Janice (and the many volunteers) who cooked, set up, cleaned up and made this dinner a wonderful experience for us all.

The Women's Bible study (began on September 19th) continues to meet on Tuesday evenings at 5:00 in the Vestry Room. We are reading and reflecting on *Lazarus Awakening: Finding your Place in the Heart of God*, by Joanna Weaver. The study will complete next Tuesday, November 21.

Daughters of the King:

are asking for donations of items so we can create Blessing Bags for the women who stay in our Overflow Shelter this winter. Needed items include: trial sized shampoos, lotions, toothpaste, sanitary products, lip balm/gloss, hand/face wipes, hair ties, snacks or other items that would bless the women this winter. Please bring in donations through December 3rd as the DOK will assemble the bags at their meeting on December 10.

The DOK also led a Neighborhood Prayer Walk, during which we offered prayers in various stops in downtown Albany. We had a group of six that participated.

A new DOK discernment class begins in December (and runs for six weeks through January), to help women learn more about the DOK.

New members will be installed during Bishop Love's visitation on February 11, 2018.

Confirmation Class has begun with two youth. If there are others, or adults who would like to prepare for Confirmation or Reception, please speak with the clergy. We are preparing for Bishop Love's visit to St. Peter's in February 2018.

We continue to hold the Chenot family in our prayers as they mourn their loss of Jim and Bill's father, Alfred. May light perpetual shine upon him and may he rest in peace.

Sunday Attendance – ASA - 120.6

Rectors Report - Father Hartt

Father Hartt conveyed his condolences to the Chenot family at the recent death of Jim's father, Mr. Alfred Chenot. The funeral service at Saint Peter's and the calling hours at the funeral home showed the love and depth of community that surrounds the entire Chenot family. We give thanks for the support of the whole parish.

Father Hartt thanked all who cooked for the traditional Pre-Thanksgiving meal. Fr. Hartt especially thanked Janice who prepared the Parish Hall as well as cooked a great deal. By all reports, it was another blessed time of fellowship with good attendance.

For several months, the nearby Hilton has been subject to a strike by employees. As the weather gets ever colder, the union has again been in touch about our support. Most recently, a request has been made for the parking places in the rear of the church in an effort to find space to set up a heating station for the strikers. Fr. Hartt relayed the request to Jim Chenot who will reach out to the union. Fr. Hartt also is aware of some unhappiness of parishioners about the way the strike is being conducted. In particular, there is often loud screaming that begins in the early morning and carries on into the evening. The strikers have been courteous and always willing to quiet protests during services and events.

Fr. Hartt again mentioned the need to get information out about the 4th Sunday of Advent, which falls on Christmas Eve morning. There will be a single service at 8:30AM to observe 4 Advent. Thanksgiving Eve Service will be at 7:30PM.

A Service of Remembrance will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 6th. This Service is a time to remember loved ones who have died in the past year.

Vestry minutes continued...

Fr. Hartt reported glowingly on the recent Priest Retreat. The Diocese was fortunate to secure the Rev. Fleming Rutledge to lead the retreat. Rev. Rutledge is one of the most highly regarded preachers in our Church. The retreat theme was "Advent begins in the dark." Rev. Rutledge called forward the hope that is in us of the Lord's Second Coming and the restoration of all things.

Father Hartt spoke to the Vestry of the upcoming Vestry elections. Vestry concerns were discussed as Jim Chenot reaches his term limit as Senior Warden.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by C. Gordon and seconded by M. Lundberg, then was passed unanimously by the vestry.

Compline - Father Hartt led Compline.

Respectfully Submitted, Kevin M. Cehowski

Vestry

James Chenot.....Senior Warden
Deborah Spath.....Junior Warden
George Scala.....Treasurer
Kevin Cehowski, Nancy Creagan, Maria Holden, Moses Kamy,
Stephanie Lencewicz, Mark Lundberg, Tim Murphy, Earl Stafford

How to Contact Us

Office Hours: Monday -Friday: 9:00am to 2:00pm (And sometimes later. Call ahead)

Telephone: 518-434-3502 • **Fax:** 518-462-4419

E-Mail: Receptionist@stpeterschurchalbany.org

Website: www.stpeterschurchalbany.org

Staff: Neil K. Keen, Organist & Choirmaster; Laura Rulison, Director of Christian Education; Angie Schlossberg, Administrative Assistant; Ian Mike, Sexton; James P. Shortall, Assisting Sexton; Janice Chenot, Office Volunteer; E. Constance Powell, Historian & Archivist

Services

Sunday

Holy Communion 8:30 a.m.
Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.
(1st & 3rd Sundays)
Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.
(2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays)
Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday

Holy Communion 12:05 p.m.

The Rev. Paul J. Hartt.....Rector

The Rev. Susan Waldron...Assoc. Rector

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

