



Cornerstone

January 2016

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

Christmas Going Forward

Dear Parishioners,

Even by the time you receive this newsletter, we will still be in the Twelve Days of Christmas. It is perhaps a good time to reflect on Christmas going forward. What does it mean to be in these Twelve Days? How do we feel spiritually right now? What lessons do we take going forward into next year?

The fact that the Christmas season runs twelve days for the Church reminds us that Christmas once meant more. For one thing, it was slower. We were once encouraged to savor the Twelve Days because what we were savoring, as the word savor intends, needed to be savored slowly. The secular world, like the maternity hospital world these days, wants us out of the Christmas maternity ward as soon as possible. I have heard many stories of new mothers pushed out of the hospital in 24 hours! Well, Christmas as it is presently celebrated isn't much different. We sing our Silent Nights at the manger and we are sent on our way.

The cultural truth, of course, is that we have spent our money and the commercialized Christmas has already moved on. It is ironic that the stores want us Christmas shopping before Thanksgiving is even over. Plenty of time on the front end! The stores would like to stretch out our shopping as long as possible, but there is no give on the other end. No time to savor the birth of the Lord.

Historically, there were several reasons that the Church observed Christmas over 12 days. There were Holy Days, such as the observance of Deacon Stephen, the first martyr, and Saint John the Evangelist as well as The Holy Innocents and The Holy Name of our Lord (also known as the Feast of the Circumcision). Those Holy Days placed the Feast of the Nativity in a larger context of Jesus' observance of the Jewish Law, the "Word made Flesh" of John's Gospel, and the massacre by Herod of the Holy Innocents in his murderous search for the Lord. You may recall the Wise Men visiting Herod in search of the Christ Child and being later warned in a dream not to return to Herod. Deacon Stephen's confession of Jesus as Messiah and Lord led to his martyrdom. We see with Deacon Stephen the early cost of confessing the Divinity of Christ. Then, still within the Twelve Days, the Second Sunday after Christmas' Gospel reading invites us to recall the twelve-year-old Jesus "lost" in the Temple as His parents frantically search for Him. Jesus says to them, *"Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"* (Luke 2:49.)

All of these things, and even some secular observances anticipated in the Twelve Days, filled out the Season to proper proportions. For my own reflections in the Twelve Days, I often find myself thinking about Jesus' growth through the various stages of infancy and boyhood. I ponder His family life and Mary and Joseph trying to raise the Son of God!

In the beginning, I suggested that we check on how we are feeling following Christmas. If you feel as I do, the lesson "going forward" is to slow it down. No doubt we will have to learn this lesson time and again. Still, it seems that each year I find myself a little more wary of the exhaustion that follows Christmas morning. Sometimes I think we should really say "Happy Rushed Christmas" rather than "Merry Christmas." The Twelve Days are for the slowness of wonder. We will know even greater joy as we open the gift slowly. Savor. Enjoy!

Blessed Christmastide,
Fr. Hartt+

From the Associate Rector:

January continues our fresh start!

I've written prior years on New Year's resolutions and how they might fit into one's spiritual life. I choose to do so again, mostly because we all need a fresh start - a need to hit the reset button from time to time in many parts of our life, and our spiritual lives are not exempt.

Many have used the Advent season and Christmas festivities as their "spiritual restart" and this is wonderful. There is no more exciting time of the year to revisit the traditions that we all enjoy so very much: the prophetic writings and hymnody, the Christmas pageant, Lessons and Carols and the Church greening culminating, of course, in our Christmas services. Whether a new or old member of our church, we all felt the magic while kneeling in candlelight singing *Silent Night, Holy Night, All is Calm, All is Bright...*

Because to tell the truth, all is not calm, and all is not bright. The world around us continues to swirl in a degree of chaos and one could become more focused on gloom and doom than the light of Christ breaking in. And yet, the Light has come into the world; we are not only told this, but we actually know it because we felt it. Our spiritual senses were enlivened by it through our common worship together as we focused on that light dancing off each candle around us. The light is real - we know it.

So let this be our New Year's resolution: intentionally focusing on the real light that has come into the world.

- When we turn on the newscast, and events of the day sadden us, return your focus to the real light that has come into the world.
- When we hear a serious medical diagnosis, either for ourselves or someone we love, return your focus to the real light that has come into the world.
- When we are filled with fear, or doubt, or worry over things great or small, return your focus to the real light that has come into the world.

I could list more scenarios, of course; life and our world will give us many more than these. But I don't think that's necessary - you all get the idea of what I am relating to you. Basically, whatever life hands you in the coming months of this new year, choose to return to what you remember from the Christmas season: The One True Light has Come into the World!

This may need an intentional reminder - an intentional re-focus. You can do this in a variety of ways:

- You can recall the memory of our Christmas Eve services - the memory of kneeling in the candlelight and the sweet calm that surrounded us. Picture it in your mind and relive it in your heart.
- You can read a Scripture verse that calls forth God's promise, for example in Luke: *The Angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is the Messiah the Lord."*
- You can revisit the words of a favorite Christmas hymn: *"Then let us all with one accord, Sing praises to our heavenly Lord, That hath made Heaven and earth of nought, And with his blood mankind has bought. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel Born is the King of Israel!"*

Again, I could list more ideas but I think you get the idea by now. My encouragement to each of you is this: The truth of Christmas - the truth of Jesus coming into the world - the truth of the One True Light breaking into earth and all that is in it - is all that any of us need for today, for tomorrow, and for every one of our days to come. It is the eternal light that burns forever to give us light and hope.

What God began that day, in His light brought to the world through the newborn babe of Jesus of Nazareth, he will grow and grow until everything in our world is so filled by it that even the darkness will be completely swallowed up by it. That is His promise to us and to all of creation. Even when our worlds seem frayed, confused or broken, God's light is there and God's light will conquer.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:1-5)

We don't have to focus on the dark things of our world, or bow to them, or submit to them because the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it!

A Blessed Christmastide and start to your Epiphany celebrations, Mtr. Sue+

Annual Meeting: January 31st is the St. Peter's Annual meeting with one combined worship service at 9:30am.

Annual Meeting

Dear Parishioners,

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

Jim Chenot will be running for his 4th two-year term as Sr. Warden.

Maria Holden will be running for his 2nd three-year term on the vestry. She is running to fill her present seat.

Kevin Cehowski will be running for his first three-year vestry term to fill the seat formerly held by Pam Gerfin.

Nancy Creagan will be running for her first three-year term on the vestry to fill the seat formerly held by Judy Burns.

Other nominations must be submitted to the office in writing by Wednesday, January 20st, 2016, in order to appear on the ballot.

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 2016.

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.)

God Bless,

Father Hartt
James Chenot

Overflow Homeless 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 opened for its 7th season on December 1st to augment the ministry of the Capital City Rescue Mission to Albany's homeless by housing up to 20 men when their shelter has exceeded capacity.

We are currently receiving donations of food items and are also scheduling volunteers to offer hospitality during the evening hours; the hours for this are from 8pm until 11pm on the 2nd floor of the Guild House (next to the church).

To sign up to volunteer, please call Judy Burns at [441-7538](tel:441-7538) or email stpeterschurch.albany@gmail.com or contact Meghan Cooney in the church office at 434-3502.

Food items needed include: coffee, tea, sugar, popcorn and snacks, cereal (hot and cold), peanut butter, bread, fresh fruit, milk and juice along with fresh baked items. These can be dropped off to the church office any weekday, or brought to church on Sundays and given to Pat. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Adult Education

Estimate of Giving Cards

Estimate of Giving Cards for 2016 have been mailed out to all parishioners that did not attend the morning worship service on Consecration Sunday, October 18th. If you did not receive a card please call the church office. It would be greatly appreciated if you could please take a minute to complete your card and return it to the church office or place it in the offering plate during the service. You may also call the church office and we would be more than happy to complete a card for you. Thank you to those that have promptly completed and returned their card.

Oaks of Righteousness Creative Worship

Do you love art? Are you good at sports? Do you play music? Are you a Play-Do artist extraordinaire? How about cooking or wood-working? Come join Oaks of Righteousness' new Creative Worship rotation, "Joyful Noise," where you and the Oaks of Righteousness staff will teach worship and Christian Ed to kids through creativity. Bring your gifts, and you'll team together to use them to teach the Gospel! You can help once or you can help on a bi-monthly basis. For more information or to sign up, email Mtr. Hannah Mudge at Hannah.E.Mudge@gmail.com.

The Community of St. Mary

WAITING FOR THE DAY:
MEDITATING ON THE OLD TESTAMENT TEXTS FOR THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER
A Traditional Silent Retreat at St. Mary's Convent

Led by The Rev. Dr. Leander Harding

President's Day Weekend: **February 12-14, 2015**

For further information or to register
Contact Mother Miriam, at 518-692-3028 or MotherMiriam@stmaryseast.org

2016 Albany Diocesan School of Healing Prayer SCHOOL OF HEALING PRAYER LEVEL 1

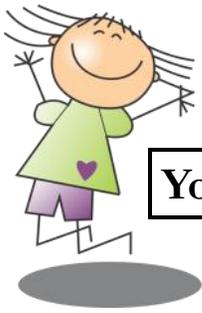
Next class: Friday, January 15 through Monday, January 18
This class is an introduction to the foundations for healing:
The History of Healing in the Church, Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Becoming a Prayer Minister
For information or to apply, call 518-692-9550 ext 201

The First Lutheran Church Shelter Dinners

begins Thursday, November 19th. The Capital Area Council of Churches runs a 20-bed shelter at First Lutheran Church (on Western Avenue in downtown Albany). During the cold months (November through April) when other shelters fill up quickly with women and children, the men can come to this overflow shelter and receive a hot meal and a good night's sleep. The Outreach Committee of St. Peter's Church invites you to volunteer in both cooking and/or delivering meals for the Overflow Homeless Shelter. We are committed to providing a complete dinner for 20 people, cooked and delivered, every Thursday evening to the Overflow Shelter. We are asking that you sign up to cook a complete dinner. Please sign your name next to the date on the board in the Pumpelly Room and take an instruction form. Please include a phone number that we can contact you at. Containers will be in the Pumpelly room to take home to cook in. If you cannot deliver the meal, please return the meal **frozen** to the church on the **Sunday before** the date you signed up for. Pat will put the dinners in the freezer for delivery during the week. If you are delivering the meal you can call Deb Spath at 478-9389 for directions.

Beth Moore Living Well Retreat

February is the month all about love. We all deal with people who are a joy to love and those who are difficult to love. Come join Karen Love and the Living Well Retreat Team on **Friday February 19th through Saturday, February 20th** at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center, 575 Burton Rd. Greenwich, NY 12834 to learn how to love well. Through video, participants will hear from best-selling author and teacher Beth Moore, enjoy fun fellowship with other women, laugh, shed a few tears, eat, stay up late, make new friends, and enjoy old friends. It's a weekend you don't want to miss! Cost for the overnight is \$115 for single occupancy, \$91 per person for double occupancy, and \$45 for commuters (meals and program only). There are a number of special offers available .



Youth Formation & Sunday School

Bowling for Beds

Please note for the new year: We will be participating in Bowling for Beds on Jan. 30 12:30 to 4:30. Capital Council of Churches will be hosting this wonderful event to pay for additional shelter beds in Albany County.....look for donation forms in the near future. This is all FREE, the children and adults get 2 games , shoes, pizza and prizes. Come and help a wonderful event for all!

St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen

The 3rd Saturday of each month (January 16, 2016) (Angels in Training), invites you to join Laura Saffares and others from St. Peter's to prepare and serve lunch at this Episcopal church on Clinton Avenue, Albany. Generally, over 100 adults and children come for lunch so many hands mean light work! Please call Laura for information or to let her know you are coming at 368-4284.



Christmas Pageant



For more information on youth events, please visit:

beavercrossministries.com

Jr. Sonshine

WHEN: February 14-17, 2016
DROP-OFF: Sunday 7PM
PICK-UP: Wednesday 10AM
WHO: 6th - 8th graders
PRICE: \$115/camper

Sr. Sonshine

WHEN: February 17-20, 2016
DROP-OFF: Wednesday 10AM
PICK-UP: Saturday 10AM
WHO: 9th - 12th graders
PRICE: \$115/camper



fresh foods from
small farms™



Local produce delivered to
St. Peter's Episcopal Church on Thursdays

How Does It Work?

Field Goods is a local produce subscription delivery service. Brilliant, right? Each week, you'll receive 5-8 different types of fruits and vegetables. Invaluable to a healthy lifestyle!

Field Goods chooses the items delivered and purchases them directly from over 60 different Hudson Valley farms. A subscription costs \$20, \$25, or \$30 a week depending on which bag you choose. All of the produce is non-GMO, much is organic, and all is grown by small farms.

In the Bag, our newsletter, gives you information about what you're eating and how to eat it: facts, recipes, and photos! We deliver 150+ varieties of fruits and vegetables, and more than a dozen types of local cheese and artisan bread, all grown by local small farms or local producers.

What our customers are saying

"I LOVE vegetable day."

"I am having so much fun experimenting with new foods and recipes."

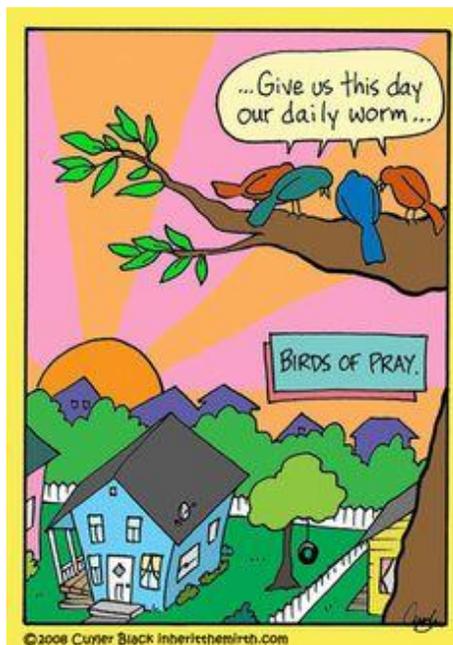
"Excellent quality, value, variety."

"My kids like Baby Turnips and Kale...who knew?"

"Great newsletter. Makes me want to cook."

"THANK YOU for changing the way my family eats!"

Church Chuckles!



EXCEL

When:
January 15-17, 2016

Who:
9-12TH GRADE

BREAKOUT

When:
March 4-6, 2016

Who:
6-8TH GRADE



Field Goods offers great value and variety, convenient delivery, fresh and delicious produce, and supports local farmers.

What's not to love?

To sign up & learn more, go to
Field-goods.com

Email info@field-goods.com
Field Goods is located in Athens, NY



January 2016



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
3 Second Sunday after Christmas 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 4:00pm - Holy Communion	4 5pm - Treble Rehearsal	5	6 The Epiphany Lord's Supper 8:45 am - Top 12:00 pm - Epiphany Communion Service 5:30pm - Epiphany Prayer
10 First Sunday after Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 9:35am - DOK Meeting 10:30am - Morning Prayer 4:00pm - Holy Communion	11 5 pm - Treble Rehearsal	12 4:30pm - Outreach Meeting 5:15 pm - Vestry Meeting	13 8:45 am - Top 12:05 pm - Holy
17 Second Sunday after Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 4:00pm - Holy Communion	18 Confession of St. Peter the Apostle Martin Luther King Day Office Closed	19	20 8:45 am - Top 12:00 pm - Holy
24 Third Sunday after Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer w/ Children's Chapel 4:00pm - Holy Communion	25 Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle 5 pm - Treble Rehearsal	26	27 8:45 am - Top 12:00 pm - Holy
31 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany Annual Meeting 9:30am - Holy Communion 4:00pm - Holy Communion			

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>NEW YEAR'S EVE</p>	<p>1 New Years Day</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	2
<p>phany of our Jesus Christ</p> <p>of the Hill iphany Holy Service hany Evening</p>	<p>7</p> <p>5 pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30 pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>8</p> <p>12:30 pm - Organ Concert</p>	9
<p>of the Hill oly Communion</p>	<p>14</p> <p>5 pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30 pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>15</p> <p>12:30 pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>16</p> <p>11am - Angel's in Training</p>
<p>of the Hill oly Communion</p>	<p>21</p> <p>5 pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30 pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>22</p> <p>12:30 pm - Organ Concert</p>	23
<p>of the Hill oly Communion</p>	<p>28</p> <p>5 pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30 pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>29</p> <p>12:30 pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>30</p> <p>12:30-4:30 - Bowling for Beds</p>

St. Peters Music

Composer Profile

Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

The year 2016 marks the 25th anniversary of the death of this great French organist, composer, improviser, and teacher. Langlais is a household name among organists, but less well known in wider musical circles. Blind from the age of two, Langlais studied at the National Institute for Blind Children, in Paris, where he began organ study. In 1945 he was appointed organist of the Basilica of Sainte-Clotilde in Paris, the church where Cesar Franck had served as organist. Langlais was among a handful of Parisian organists who gained international reputations in the mid-20th century as performers, teachers, and composers. He composed over 250 organ works, and several of his brilliant improvisations, transcribed from recordings, have become staples of organ concert repertoire. He also composed a few choral mass settings still in use. Many of his compositions are based on Gregorian chant melodies, and his unique harmonic language is rich and complex. Listen for some of Langlais' organ pieces upcoming this month as service preludes and postludes.

CHOIR

Choir rehearsals will be on the following schedule:

Mondays: 5:00 - 6:15pm Trebles

Thursdays: 5:00 - 6:30pm Trebles

5:30 - 7:00pm Adult choristers

Sundays: 9:30 rehearse for the 10:30 service

There are several new treble choristers poised to join us, and we would love to welcome more. 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 12:30



**We are adding a new feature on the St. Peter's website -
regular postings of music selections from our Sunday services.
Watch for this in the coming weeks!**



St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

Shed upon thy Church, we beseech thee, O Lord, the brightness of thy light; that we, being illumined by the teaching of thine apostle and evangelist John, may so walk in the light of thy truth, that we may at length attain to the fullness of life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

John, the son of Zebedee, with his brother James, was called from being a fisherman to be a disciple and "fisher of men." With Peter and James, he became one of the inner group of three disciples whom Jesus chose to be with him at the raising of Jairus' daughter, at the Transfiguration, and in the garden of Gethsemane.

John and his brother James are recorded in the Gospel as being so hotheaded and impetuous that Jesus nicknamed them "Boanerges," which means, "sons of thunder." They also appear ambitious, in that they sought seats of honor at Jesus' right and left when he should come into his kingdom; yet they were faithful companions, willing, without knowing the cost, to share the cup Jesus was to drink.

When the other disciples responded in anger to the audacity of the brothers in asking for this honor, Jesus explained that in his kingdom leadership and rule takes the form of being a servant to all.

If, as is commonly held, John is to be identified with the "disciple whom Jesus loved," then he clearly enjoyed a very special relationship with his Master, reclining close to Jesus at the Last Supper, receiving the care of his mother at the cross, and being the first to understand the truth of the empty tomb.

The Acts of the Apostles records John's presence with Peter on several occasions: the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, before the Sanhedrin, in prison, and on the mission to Samaria to lay hands upon the new converts that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

According to tradition, John later went to Asia Minor and settled at Ephesus. Under the Emperor Domitian, he was exiled to the island of Patmos, where he experienced the visions recounted in the Book of Revelation. Irenaeus, at the end of the second century, liked to recall how Polycarp, in his old age, had talked about the apostle whom he had known while growing up at Ephesus. It is probable that John died there. He alone of the Twelve is said to have lived to extreme old age and to have been spared a martyr's death.

From the Archives

Jesse Walker Potts, Church Philanthropist

Jesse Walker Potts the son of Jesse Charles and Eunice U. (Walker) Potts, was born in Albany, on November 4th 1843. After his graduation from Harvard in 1865, he took on the management of his private estate, an inheritance from his father who was a wealthy stove manufacturer. In addition he also worked tirelessly in the service of institutions, for example he was governor of Albany Hospital, a trustee of Albany Medical College, a director of the Albany Institute and Historical and Art Society, and a trustee and vice-president of the Home for Aged Men, to name a few of his activities.

In 1895 he along with his sister, Sarah B. Potts gave the Rectory as a memorial to their father and mother. The plaque in the vestibule of the Rectory reads:

THIS RECTORY
Was built and given to
ST. PETER'S CHURCH
by
Jesse W. and Sarah B. Potts
in loving memory of
Their Father and Mother
Jesse Charles Potts
and
Eunice Walker Potts
A.D. 1895

Jesse Walker Potts died on May 10th 1916 and in his will donated \$300,000 to St. Peter's Church. Of this amount a total of \$60,000 was set aside for the erection of a new Guild House on 107 State Street to harmonize with the Rectory at 105 State Street. The Guild House was to be built in memory of his sister Sarah Benham Potts. The plaque on the stair landing between the first and second floors in the Guild House reads:

THIS GUILD HOUSE
Was built and given to
ST. PETER'S CHURCH
by
Jesse Walker Potts
in loving memory of his Sister
Sarah Benham Potts
Grant them, O Lord, Eternal Rest
Sarah Benham Potts: 1837-1916
Jesse Walker Potts: 1843-1916

There are large and beautiful portraits of Jesse Walker and Sarah Benham's parents on either side of the Aubusson Tapestry in the Pumpelly Room. To the left is Jesse Charles Potts (Sept 30, 1811-Feb5, 1891) and to the right is Eunice Walker Potts (Aug 28, 1812-June 23, 1890).



Daughters of the King

The DOK meeting this month will be Sunday
January 10, 2016 at 9:35am

Outreach

This month's Outreach meeting will be on Tuesday 1/12/16 at 4:30 pm. Please join us to learn about Outreach ministries and hospitality events beings planned!

Lay Eucharistic Ministers:

Are you looking to increase your religious experience?

We are looking for members of St. Peter's who might be interested in becoming a Lay Eucharistic Minister. Experience the joy of serving God by assisting at both the Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharistic Sunday Services. If interested please call the parish office at 434-3502.

Minutes of the Vestry
St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church
November 10, 2015

1. Approval of the minutes of Vestry Meeting, September 8, 2015. - The minutes were approved as amended on a motion made by P. Gerfin and seconded by T. Murphy

2. Sr. Warden's Report- J. Chenot

Jim started his report expressing his sincere thanks and gratitude to all who were involved in making Consecration Sunday such a great success. He first wanted to thank everyone on the Consecration committee, Christie Chenot - chairperson, Terry Flannery, Geoffrey Hoderath, Jim Adams, Mark Lundburg and George Scala – treasurer. He also thanked the vestry for their support and involvement with the stewardship campaign which again proved to be very successful this year. The luncheon that followed was at 90 State and was a great way to celebrate the day and again bring many of us together that would not normally do so outside of a Sunday a service. Thank you letters have been sent out to those who filled out their consecration stewardship pledge cards and we will get an updated report from George Scala, our treasurer, in regards to the numbers and amounts received to date.

This coming Saturday, November 14th, we will be hosting our annual Pre- Thanksgiving Dinner that has become a newer tradition that started five years ago. We will start at 5:00 PM and begin serving dinner at 5:30 PM. Many have signed up to attend as well as those who intend to bring a dish to pass. Others have volunteered and brought turkeys home to prepare beforehand for the dinner. Thank you for all the continued interest in this tradition that brings all of us together for a wonderful evening of fellowship and hospitality.

The Choir is taking order for pies for Thanksgiving as a fundraiser and will be baking them on Saturday the 21st and they will be ready to be picked up the following day after each service.

Members of our parish will also be stepping up again this year to volunteer their time and help at the Equinox preparing Thanksgiving Dinners on Monday evening prior to Thanksgiving. We want to thank Laura Saffares in heading up this outreach as well as the Sunday School children who will be baking pumpkin breads for the congregation this coming Sunday for all of us to enjoy.

Looking ahead in December, the 1st day in December we will be opening our doors again to the homeless overflow shelter which begins our 7th year at St. Peter's serving those from the Capital City Mission. We had one orientation for volunteers last evening and an additional one coming up this Saturday at 10:00 am for those interested in helping this program during the evening. Many thanks to our outreach committee for all their planning to ensure this program succeeds as in past years.

On Sunday, December 13th at the 10:30 service, the Sunday school will be performing their annual Christmas Pageant. That afternoon at 3:00, our Choir will be performing Handel's Messiah. A special thanks to our choir director, Neil Keen for all his hard work and dedication as well as the entire choir for their musical talents and attention they bring to all the upcoming musical events that will be performed in the next few weeks.

Lessons and Carols will be performed by our choir the following Sunday, December 20th 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 these events which always bring the congregation together in fellowship. We always look forward to large turnouts at these events and hope everyone will make an effort to attend and join us.

Jim is excited as many are looking forward to all the upcoming events as well as Christmas Eve services and Christmas Day. Throughout the Advent season he prays that everyone does not get caught up in the commercialization of Christmas that has started already and not forget what Christmas is really all about – the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ.

3. Finance- G. Scala

George S. reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the month of October. Total offerings for the month were \$22,059 which is up from previous months. YTD through October offerings were \$191,798 versus budgeted offerings of \$299,770. The investment/endowment accounts showed gains for the month. Merrill Lynch was up 4.78% for the month and Key was up 5.22% for the month. YTD Merrill Lynch shows a -.24% return and Key shows a +1.02% return. This still continues to cause a significant budget variance of (\$240,707). We continue to hope the market will keep rebounding in the future. Expenses year to date are \$14,626 under budget.

George also reported on stewardship. Consecration Sunday was a huge success. To date 2016 pledges are 54 units at \$145,044. Parishioners that did not attend Consecration Sunday will be contacted to complete an estimate of giving card.

The 2016 draft budget was also presented and discussed. Much discussion ensued concerning offerings, investment income/returns and expenses. Changes to the budget as discussed at the meeting will be incorporated into the budget and presented at next month's meeting for vote.

4. Property- T. Murphy

Farrell Brothers have been here to address the leaks in the Guild House.

5. Outreach- J. Burns

The Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner is scheduled for Nov, 14th. Food For the Poor will visit the parish on Sunday, Nov. 15th. A tree with tags on it for Christmas gifts for the Burmese families will be in the Pumpelly room after the Service of Remembrance. Siena college has offered to provide gifts for the homeless men staying at the shelter.

Fr. Hartt spoke with Canon Bob Haskell about the St. Francis Soup Kitchen. They are looking for people to act as advocates for the Burmese families. Some of the things they may help with include: navigating the social services system, helping with doctor's appointments, registering their children for school, and talking to them about what to do at a parent-teacher conference.

It was suggested that Laura could have the Sunday School children make Christmas cards for the men staying at the shelter during Christmas.

J. Ratzel has been busy doing and planning for outreach activities to welcome new residents of downtown Albany to St. Peter's. He reported that 281 condos/apartments have been completed and 197 more are under construction.

6. Old Business- There was no old business.

7. New Business- There was no new business.

8. Associate Rector's Report-

Children's Chapel: I was very encouraged and joyful about my time with the youth of the church on the last Sunday in October. They are eager to engage the Bible story and celebration of Holy Communion. I want to thank Fr. Hartt for bringing this ministry to our children, and also the Sunday school teachers for their enthusiasm and assistance with this vital ministry to our children.

High School Scholarship for EXCEL: I bid on (and won) a full registration to EXCEL, a conference for teens that is held annually in Saratoga Springs. I announced a contest for teens in our church to enter to win an all expense paid weekend. To enter, they submit in writing "How I have seen God work in my life or the life of someone I love." I eagerly await hearing these faith stories!

Daughters of the King: The Daughters have developed a brochure to share information about our Prayer Order. Thank you Susan Smith for creating its content and also Jim Chenot for the printing! We continue to hold the prayers of our church in our daily intercessions.

Women's Bible study: This group is currently reading Beth Moore's *John: 90 Days with the Beloved Disciple*. *Group meetings will resume after the first of the year.*

Adult Bible study: We are working through Paul's Letter to the Galatians on Sunday afternoons after the 10:30 service. We are using N.T. Wright's video commentary teaching series, which is supplemented by material I prepare and share with the group. We have a fine group of 7 individuals participating in this study. We will be completing this study on or by the first week of Advent.

Overflow Homeless Shelter: We held a planning meeting and scheduled Orientation sessions this week for this year's shelter volunteers. Thank you Dave Poach and Jim Chenot! Announcements have gone out on the Albany Diocese Update seeking volunteers from other churches and a few volunteers have already been scheduled. Siena College has offered to provide Christmas gifts for the men again this year – thanks to the Franciscan Center for Service and Advocacy.

Other News:

Capital City Rescue Mission dinner: We attended this benefit dinner to support the Mission. It was a great evening filled with testimony of individuals whose lives were changed by the Mission's ministry. This continues to be a vital ministry to the folks of Albany and quite worthy of our support and prayers.

EDOA Priests Retreat: This was a wonderful, spiritually refreshing time in retreat with fellow priests as we deeply reflected on Psalm 23. Thank you for giving me the time to attend this retreat, and receive great teaching and fellowship.

4:00pm Sunday Eucharist: We have been holding this new service for 2 months now. We would encourage those who cannot attend morning services to consider this late afternoon service with us. We continue to want to target folks living or moving into our neighborhood but also welcome parishioners with other obligations or travel issues with the morning service times.

Consecration Sunday: I have been asked to be the guest preacher at St. Paul's Kinderhook for their Consecration Sunday Celebration on Christ the King Sunday (November 22, 2015).

9. Sunday attendance-Fr. Hartt

The average Sunday attendance is 116.7.

10. Rector's Report-

Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner

All is set for this wonderful time of fellowship. We have 75 people signed up for attendance and many have promised to bring side dishes. Once importance of this meal is to recognize that Thanksgiving, perhaps the most "family" of family holidays, should include our church family. The pastoral dimension is deep as well. Many struggle with loss at this time.

Overflow Homeless Shelter

The clergy met with David Poach and Perry Jones of the City Mission last week. We are prepared again to receive up to 20 men, beginning December 1st. As in recent years, overnights will be kept by Mission staff and the parish will provide volunteers for hospitality. Already the clergy have witnessed a very active homeless population. The matter is compounded by mentally ill women and men unable to care for themselves and living in our community without treatment. Addiction is also rampant.

The Dragon Lives Here

Father Hartt encouraged the vestry to watch the WMHT series on heroin in the Capital District. This epidemic has hit our area hard and the churches need to be responsive in coordinated ways with local treatment venues.

Sunday School

Father Hartt noted the recent drop in Sunday School attendance. It mirrors much of what is happening in the parish. However, our new Children's Chapel is proving a good addition for both children and parents alike. It may help with overall Sunday School attendance. Our Church School remains strong in the work of Christian formation. The parish's children are many and alive in the Holy Spirit.

Downtown Welcome Initiative

The clergy have been working with Jack Ratzel on a brochure to welcome new residents. Approximately 400 apartments are being built in our immediate area. Jack has worked tirelessly to gather information on locations and ways of distributing our brochure on St. Peter's. Clergy are offering house blessings to new residents, and programs in the parish are outlined in the materials.

Sunday 4:00 PM Holy Communion

The service has been poorly attended thus far, including some Sundays with no visitors at all. Nonetheless, the few who have attended represent folks we are trying to reach in the downtown area. Unfortunately, it does not seem to be attracting parents with children for whom Sunday morning sports have created conflicts.

Cathedral

Father Hartt has been asked to be a part of the Sunday rota in February and March. Father Hartt spoke of the strong ministry of Dean Collum and commended the Cathedral to our prayers.

Food For the Poor

A representative for Food for the Poor will be with us this Sunday. Saint Peter's has been a strong supporter of this charity through the years.

Consecration Sunday

Father Hartt is encouraged by the results of the stewardship program. We have seen a growth both in commitment and our understanding of the theology of stewardship. The personal testimonies have been compelling. Fr. Steve did excellent work as our preacher.

December

12/13 Messiah & Christmas Pageant

12/20 Hanging of the Greens

12/24-25 Christmas Services

11. Adjournment- The meeting was adjourned on a motion made by J. Ratzel and seconded by P. Gerfin.

12. Compline- Fr. Hartt led Compline.

Respectfully submitted,
Judith A. Burns

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Paul J. Hartt..... Rector
The Rev. Susan Waldron..... Associate Rector
Neil K. Keen, F.A.G.O..... Organist & Choirmaster
Laura Saffares..... Director of Christian Education
James P. Shortall..... Sexton
Robert Clancy..... Assisting Sexton
Meghan Cooney..... Administrative Assistant
Janice Chenot..... Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell..... Historian & Archivist

Vestry

James Chenot..... Senior Warden
Deborah Spath..... Junior Warden
Judy Burns..... Clerk
George Scala..... Treasurer
Pam Gerfin, Stephanie Lencewicz, Maria Holden, Moses Kamya, Mark
Lundberg, Earl Stafford, Jack Ratzel, Tim Murphy

How to Contact Us

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E-Mail:

Receptionist@stpeterschurhalbany.org

Website:

www.stpeterschurhalbany.org

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.

Holy Communion 4:00pm

Wednesday

Holy Communion 12:05 p.m.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

