



THE Cornerstone

February 2017

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

2016 Annual Reports

ST. PETER'S CHURCH RECTOR'S REPORT

Beloved Parishioners,

Like many children of my generation, I was taught in Sunday School the little game with the hands, "This is the church. This is the steeple. Open the door and see all the people." It is a sweet mode of instructing children about the nature of the Church. It begins to show children the connection between the physical stones and the living stones of the Church. It is these living stones who receive the life, which is symbolized by the wiggling fingers. It is the living stones who are the recipients of the hope of the Gospel. It helps if the roof doesn't leak, but we know that a church is not the roof. The Church is the Body of Christ.

We love our church. Hardly a day goes by that I do not hear from visitors of their marvel at the beauty of our Sanctuary. Even after 12 years as your rector, my breath is taken away at times. In fact, I recently had a dream of finding myself in another church and being embarrassed at my heart aching for the beauty of St. Peter's. Sometimes the sheer beauty of St. Peter's can lead us to stop there: "If we can only get people to see the church and experience our worship, then...." There is some truth there. The "worship experience" at St. Peter's is amazing. But it alone will not hold these visitors. The more difficult task before us is how soundly to share the Good News of Christ to a new generation. We need to do so in a manner that makes church make sense to them.

As I reflect upon this past year and indeed the past dozen years, I see with you a church buffeted by the cultural forces of secularization and declining commitment to a disciplined religious life. It is reflected in our attendance figures to be sure. But there is a greater truth by far. It is that St. Peter's is more committed to the values of the Gospel than at any time in my tenure. There is genuine love for one another. There is care for the poor. The Faith is being conveyed within our families. We see multi-generational membership in this parish. We are a church of many fond memories. It is sensed by and attractive to newcomers. The secular culture is thin. We offer deep spiritual history.

Saint Peter's has always had a sentimental streak, but it is more grounded now. We love our church. We love our Lord. We are reaching new members who are integrating into our common life at depth. There is a desire to engage in Bible study and to learn Christian doctrine and morals. More importantly, there is a desire to see it lived by the living stones and to learn by example. The clergy feel a freshness and holy curiosity in these new members entering our common life. We give thanks for their life-giving presence. I wish here to thank Donna and Fred Hersey for their work at new member incorporation.

The "open the door and see all the people" may not have as many fingers wiggling as before, but that is deceptive. It is deceptive on two levels. The first is that cultural context matters. We are in a time of rapid cultural change. Such change has not been kind to the church, especially on the East and West Coasts. For us, "cultural Christianity" is over. But there is a positive side as well. We are more focused on what matters, which brings me to the second level.

I believe St. Peter's is engaging the culture more effectively for the kingdom. We are doing so in several ways. We are engaged at much greater depth in Christian essentials. We desire strongly Biblical sermons. We are serving the poor. We are showing love for one another and real mutual care. There is genuine community here. It is felt by those who spend even a short amount of time with us. We truly desire the fellowship of everyone who comes through our doors; rich or poor, regardless of race or religious background. This spirit among us is true Gospel. It is bearing fruit. We have added several new young adults, married and single. These young members have blessed us richly and been faithful in attendance. They will draw others by their presence. We also have longstanding members who have been working hard to integrate our new members and to grow in their own knowledge and love of the Lord.

In terms of your clergy, I often say at vestry meetings that our pastoral care list is our membership list. Your clergy are ministering to a much larger number of parishioners than Sunday morning reveals. Our membership remains quite large by Episcopalian standards, while our attendance patterns mirror more the Episcopal Church as a whole. As in many Episcopal churches, Christmas and Easter reveal that membership number.

One of the tasks before us is to find more effective ways to convey to our entire membership that what some only see on principal Sundays gives a false sense of security. Our average Sunday attendance for last year is 126.2, and that figure includes Christmas services due to the calendar. Even a small increase in attendance by our broader membership who also deeply love St. Peter's would boost parish morale. Without guilt or embarrassment, we need to be more effective in contact and encouragement of our whole membership roll. At the same time, we need to continue the strong integration of our new members. Nonetheless, we need to be realistic about attendance. We will not be returning anytime soon to the church many of us recall from our youth.

In terms of parish finances, the endowment alone is not sufficient to carry the church and hasn't been for some time. We need to be clearer about that truth and to do so at times other than our stewardship drive. We all avoid uncomfortable truths, but we need to lean into this one. We first should be encouraged that there continues to be sacrificial stewardship by so many faithful members. Our understanding of the true nature of Christian stewardship has very much grown through the years. However, we still need a broader level of financial support from our membership to secure our future.

The truth is that St. Peter's is an expensive church to run. In this regard, it is not about cutting costs or juggling investments. Both have been done by our vestry with the greatest diligence. There is no more to cut if we want the St. Peter's we love. Rather, it is simply true that the kind of church we desire (music program, buildings, staff, clergy etc.) costs what it does. When we accept that we have the church we truly want, we will become responsible to support it financially. While financial concerns are real, the greater truth by far is that Saint Peter's is a healthy church. The Gospel is preached, received, and rejoiced in. Liturgy is reverent and glorious in our choral offerings. New Christians are finding their questions of faith answered and their need for Christian community met. We all desire with our full heart to make this ever more so. Our older members are honored. One finds Christian joy here Sunday morning. The Coffee Hour reveals well our delight in one another.

Like most Episcopal churches these days, we are overtaxing a few volunteers. Altar Guild, Ushers, Lectors, Altar servers, Flower Guild, Sunday School, coffee hours, parish suppers, and office needs are increasingly falling on fewer hands to lift a very heavy load. Indeed, there is almost no one regularly worshiping without one or more substantial tasks. I do not believe that there is an easy answer here. What we can do is try to keep an eye on those who are especially in need of relief. Some people leave church from exhaustion. We need to avoid that at St. Peter's. However, we need to give thanks that we see such an exceptional level of dedication.

Our Senior Warden's Report mentions the large number of parish events. Again, we enjoy being together. Christian community is intended to give joy and share genuine love. We see this joy and love both in times of fellowship and in our outreach to the community. The parish has a good schedule of events to gather us and to welcome newcomers. I would like to see even more in 2017. In terms of outreach, there is much to report.

This year we transitioned from an overflow shelter for men to a shelter for women. The transition has been successful. The sad truth is that the need is great. The good news is that St. Peter's is already doing much to help these women feel our support. The women were given gift cards, hats, and gloves at Christmas. The Daughters of the King made "Blessing Bags" for the women. The bags were filled with personal care items. The volunteers from the Mission spoke of the delight of the women in being remembered with such kindness. Many have donated store food items, home baked goods, or made monetary donations. The parish also gave a substantial number of Christmas presents to Burmese refugee families this past year. We collected a considerable amount of food for the Food Bank. Our "Angels in Training" continue to serve once a month at the local soup kitchen. In this important way, Laura Rulison has our younger members connect Sunday School to care for the poor. The Sunday School also undertook collecting school backpacks and coats for those in need. Many hands go into Outreach. I wish to thank Judy Burns for chairing the Outreach Committee and Maria Holden for coordinating the CROP Walk.

All of this leads me to speak of our urban context. We are a downtown, inner-city parish. For countless years, St. Peter's has responded to our context faithfully. Recently, our Archivist found a book containing a curate's record of outreach. It is amazing how little has changed. Hardly a day goes by that the clergy and office staff are not engaged with the "streets" of Albany. There is much pain out there: homelessness, substance abuse, mental illness, acute pastoral needs, and simple poverty. Some of these souls we get to know well. We endeavor to show the love of Christ, and so do you. I am proud of this parish for its engagement in outreach. Many of you do things for the needy that your clergy only hear about secondhand from the recipients themselves. This truth about St. Peter's is not new. By the Columbarium is a monument to Mary Jane Potter from 1847. It reads: "Known in this Parish during 14 years as the unwearied Friend of the Poor."

Downtown Albany continues to be developed with hotels, Convention Center, restaurants, and housing. Last year, Jack Ratzel both researched and went to several new residential developments to handout leaflets on St. Peter's. The leaflets spoke of our history, outreach, Choir, and offered new residents house blessings. We thank Jack for his initiative and courage. We pray for fruit to come. Seeds are planted, but God gives the growth, says St. Paul.

There is considerable excitement in the Daughters of the King. Several new candidates are discerning a call to join this lay order of women. Daughter of the King Carly Crewell has been quite the evangelist. Please know that many prayers are being said on our behalf by the Daughters. They are a powerful spiritual presence at St. Peter's. We look forward to the induction of new members.

Our Confirmation Class this year has five teenagers and three adults. They have worked diligently and it will be an honor to present them for Confirmation on May 20th. If you have teens yet to be Confirmed or desire Confirmation as an adult, please speak to the clergy. It is an important Sacrament for Episcopalians.

It is an honor to serve with the Vestry of St. Peter's. The Vestry serves this parish with the utmost faithfulness and care. I want especially to thank our Senior Warden, Jim Chenot and Junior Warden, Debbie Spath for their leadership. Both have deep history at St. Peter's and the wisdom it brings. We ask a great deal of our Wardens. Each in their own way puts in countless hours for this parish. The job of church Treasurer is demanding under any circumstances, but St. Peter's is especially complex with the investments and number of employees. George Scala is a gifted and dedicated treasurer with the complete confidence of the parish and Vestry. We all give thanks for his labors on our behalf. Your Vestry as a whole is a fine balance of younger and older members. There is singleness of heart and a desire only for what is best for St. Peter's. There is a good balance of authority between the Vestry and clergy. I want here to thank Moses Kamyra as he reaches his term limit. Moses has served with distinction, holy faith, and wisdom. He will be very much missed on Vestry night.

The Parish Office is a busy place. Without Kristin Robinson and Janice Chenot, we would be unable to meet the demands of the parish and downtown community. Kristin and Janice both have a gift for dealing with visitors and people in need when the clergy are absent. With newsletters, leaflets, funerals, weddings, and Vestry minutes, our parish office sometimes feels like a small publishing house. Janice is a volunteer and puts in an enormous number of hours. You will often find Janice here late at night. The clergy and parish could not be more grateful.

Connie Powell continues to serve strongly in the important work of parish Archivist. Connie answers many inquiries from the public and has sorted and cataloged a sizable collection of our history. I am particularly thankful for the articles Connie has submitted to the Cornerstone. It is a treat to read about our history from her informative submissions. We are grateful to have Connie in this important role. Connie has been of considerable help to your rector in historical research.

Our Flower Guild does beautiful and creative work to the glory of God. The beauty of the flowers is a frequent comment from visitors and parishioners alike. I wish to thank Sally Jennings for chairing the Flower Guild with such care. To beautify the church is to point to heaven.

The Usher's Guild is an essential "first face" of the parish. We are blessed by the dedication of 23 members. Many also usher at funerals and weekday services. It is a joy to see family members often serving together. The torch is being passed to the next generation. I thank Moses Kamyra for chairing this important Guild.

Our Altar Guild has a demanding schedule. Serving on the Altar Guild means coming in during the week to set up and staying after services to clean Communion vessels. There is also a good bit of laundering and polishing required. The Altar Guild is a tight ship. I wish to thank Cathy Schunk for her diligence as Director and the labor of each member in this holy work.

We are blessed with devout and able Altar Servers. I wish to thank Gordon Lattey, John Davis, David Noi, Jack Ratzel, Kevin Cehowski, Joe Spath, John Barna, and Susan Smith for their faithful service at the Altar. They often keep the clergy on track in kind ways! I wish also to thank Geoffrey Hoderath for his skilled work as Crucifer.

The Women of Saint Peter's made common cause with the Daughters this year in outreach to the women's shelter. The Women of St. Peter's also planned times of fellowship and provided several coffee hours. I wish to thank Julie Hotmer Drao for adding to her other roles at St. Peter's the chairing this of this longstanding organization. Julie works hard for St. Peter's.

It is difficult to say enough about the quality of our music program. It is an honor to work with Neil Keen. This parish is indeed blessed to have such a kind and brilliant Choir Director. The Choir not only glorifies God in our worship but deeply forms us in the Faith. Diana Martin continues faithfully as Choir Mother. The Choir Mother is an important position, as she keeps track of the needs of our youngest choir members. We wish the Choir a wonderful trip to England in July.

Pat Shortall is more than our Sexton. Pat is approaching our St. Peter's Mascot. We dearly love this dedicated, wise, and good man. It goes without saying that it is hard work keeping old buildings going and clean. We thank Pat for all he does routinely and behind the scenes. We welcome Shawn Van Ness as Pat's new assistant. We also thank Wayne Hill for his good work in greeting visitors and keeping the church safe.

Our Christian Education Director, Laura Rulison, has served for many years with such faithfulness. Laura is gifted in making our children love to come to church. I wish to thank the entire staff of the the Sunday School for their spiritual care of our children. Sharon Vardabash, Kelly Welch, Vicky Pautler, Ashley Labib, and Kristin Cassuci are all adored by our kids. The work of meeting the spiritual wonder of children could not be more important.

Finally, I want to give thanks for my colleague in ministry, Mother Sue Waldron. Mtr. Sue is a priest of many gifts. I am especially grateful to Mtr. Waldron for the quality of her Christian Education offerings, spiritual direction, and women's ministry. Mother Sue is a true colleague to me and offers much wisdom and prayer support as we minister together. The wonderful news for the parish and for the Church as a whole is that Mtr. Sue is returning to full-time ministry. After having tried to juggle a bi-vocational career, it became clear to Mtr. Sue that it must be one or the other. Mother Waldron is honoring her calling and I am delighted to say that she will be doing so at St. Peter's.

As we look forward to a new parish year, I believe that we need to stay the course. We are on the right track in terms of our core strengths of worship, music program, Christian education, and outreach. We need to continue to work on new membership and those new members' incorporation into our common life. Most of all, we need to pray and continue to stay focused on Gospel values. Please know that it is an honor to be your Rector.

May the Lord bless and keep us.

Faithfully, The Rev'd Paul J. Hartt, Rector

ST. PETER'S CHURCH ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

St. Peter's Episcopal Church had another successful year of ministry and service in Albany NY. How we mark success might differ than how the world might mark success and yet I am certain success can be claimed by us. I say this because without a doubt, St. Peter's has not only heralded the Kingdom of God, but has continued to be part of the Kingdom of God in Albany and beyond, and this is all the success we should ever desire or strive for.

Our children continue to be our greatest joy and hope for the future. It is wonderful to see time honored traditions celebrated by yet another generation of young people and also to develop new ways to celebrate our faith and common life together. We continue to welcome many new Christians through Baptism. This is a unique ministry with profound effect as we invite not only the baptismal candidates but also their families and loved ones into our midst. The children's ministry here, headed by Laura Saffares and the other Sunday school teachers, continues to be filled with love, joy and solid Christian teaching. The whole parish is enjoying Youth Sunday and Children's Chapel on the last Sunday of each month. These ministries help our youth connect with our faith and also our liturgy and helps them grow into their future roles among us. Also, many of our youth attend Beaver Cross summer camp and other Diocesan youth ministry events. I thank God for our children, for their families who commit to bringing them up in the Christian faith and for the Sunday school teachers and leaders who teach them and love them unconditionally.

Women's Ministry continues to be a particular focus of mine here at St. Peter's. There were many events throughout the year that helped the women of the church grow in their faith and in fellowship with one another. Together, the women attended the 'Loving Well' Retreat at the Spiritual Life Center in February. This was a great time to connect with one another and many other women from throughout the Albany Diocese. There were many laughs despite some unfortunate circumstances that could not be helped or avoided. I cannot stress enough the high quality offerings found at the Spiritual life Center and the women greatly look forward to this year's retreat. We hope it becomes a strong tradition for many. The women of the church also gathered in February for a Valentine's Day luncheon at The Wellington. This gave us a unique opportunity to connect with each other and also to meet some new friends. We ended our year once again at a luncheon gathering at the Hilton Hotel. These social opportunities help strengthen our bonds of friendship.

The Daughters of the King Julia Chapter remains a strong and vital ministry at our church. The Daughters commit to the daily prayers of the church through our Intercessory Prayer Cards and also member requests. We met monthly throughout the year and hosted some parish events as well including a March Lenten Quiet Day, the October Neighborhood Prayer Walk and a December luncheon. All members of St. Peter's were invited to these events and each had a nice group of people participating. Next year the Daughters' Julia chapter hopes to grow and already has planned a discernment class for several interested women. In addition, we plan to become more active in the wider Diocesan DOK activities. We are always welcoming of new members to our Chapter. Our thanks go to Julie Drao, our chapter president, as well as Susan Smith, our secretary who also maintains the Daughter's Prayer List.

Women's Bible Study remained strong throughout 2016. Our Spring study centered on the book "Your Beautiful Purpose" and our Fall study followed the format of Discovery Bible Study. Each offering was unique and yet also offered us the opportunity to grow in our understanding of Holy Scripture and how we can lean on God's word to help us in our lives. I personally want to thank the women who attend our studies for their commitment to God and one another. The care and concern that has grown among our group is vital to each of us. It is a joy to witness the spiritual growth of the women of the church.

There were also many Outreach opportunities to celebrate this year and I draw your attention to the separate Outreach report for the full details. In particular, I would like to mention the Soup Sampler in March, the April Spring Tea and our annual participation in the May CROP Walk and National Day of Prayer. Our thanks to Judy Burns for her tireless efforts in Chairing the Outreach Committee and organizing its efforts as well as to all the volunteers and individuals donating to support the our many ministries. I'd also like to thank Carly Crewell for her tireless dedication to coffee hour, hospitality and many other ministries and also Maria Holden for dedicating herself to the CROP walk coordination and Deb Spath for the Thursday night meal ministry.

Another particular outreach ministry bears mention and that is the annual Christmas Gifts for needy families. St. Peter's parishioners continue to be generous beyond words in providing Christmas presents and meals to several needy families in the Capital District. It is special for each of us to know that we "bring Christmas in" for other people. Many thanks go to Kristin Robinson, our parish secretary who organized this ministry for us.

The Overflow Homeless Shelter which ended its 7th season in March opened for its eighth season on December 1st and continues to be a great witness to our downtown Albany neighborhood. Last year we housed men and this season we are housing homeless women. There are many who continue to support this ministry to the homeless through volunteering and donations. Our thanks go to The Rev. Perry Jones and Dave Poach from the Capital City Rescue Mission for their tireless and loving work with the homeless community they serve. We also thank the Siena College Franciscan Center for their donation of Christmas gifts each year to our shelter residents.

Our ministry of street outreach and presence in the downtown community remains strong. There are many individuals who come through our doors seeking prayer, direction and various forms of assistance. It is an important witness to these visitors that our community cares for them as it reminds all how much God cares for them (and us).

We held many social events through the year as well. Shrove Tuesday was enjoyed by many with our traditional Pancake supper. We greatly enjoyed our annual Parish Picnic and welcomed back the Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner enjoying all of the traditional favorites with over 100 people in our fellowship hall.

Other ministry occurs outside St. Peter's walls. As part of the Albany Diocese, I have continued to serve in the capacity of Provisional Deputy to General Convention, completed a six year term on the Great Chapter of the Cathedral of All Saints and served on the weekday rota at the Cathedral. Additionally, I serve as the Chair of the Commission on Ministry (assisting Bishop Love with the Ordination process for the Episcopal Diocese of Albany). Diocesan events included the Parish Leadership Conferences in March: Ministry in our Community Today: Addiction – Parish Mission and Ministry, our June EDOA Convention, the September Bible symposium and clergy retreats rounded out the year as well.

In ending, I must echo my previous years' sentiments in giving thanks for the great team that I serve with: Fr. Hartt, Neil Keen, Laura Saffares, Kristin Robinson, Janice Chenot, Connie Powell, Pat Shortall, Shawn Van Ness and Bobby Clancy. You are each a gift and you all offer the very best of yourself every day among us. Although there is not room to mention each individually, my greatest appreciation is given as well to the countless volunteers that truly make ministry happen here. I give great thanks to God for bringing me to serve among you.

With Love and Blessings, Mother Sue+

ST. PETER'S CHURCH SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

I would like to begin by thanking everyone for staying with us today for our annual meeting. Our annual meeting gives each committee the opportunity to report to the congregation, whether large or small, the contributions and successes that were accomplished this past year. I would hope that everyone takes the opportunity to read through all the reports when they get a chance as well as offer thanks to those who contributed to these reports and those who put together the PowerPoint presentation for us today.

Normally I would start my report summarizing the past year from the beginning of last year moving forward. I felt it was first important to reflect on the Advent season we recently celebrated this past month. As each year passes, social media seems to have become the barometer on many issues, positive or negative. This year in particular was amazing to look at all the positive things posted on social media regarding St. Peter's. We saw postings of the parts of Handel's Messiah performed by the choir; the beautiful pictures of the church decorated after the Hanging of the Greens; and a video at the end finishing our Christmas Eve service candlelit, singing Silent Night. As I write and reflect on this magical moment, it brings tears to my eyes on how beautiful it was to see us all worship together on such a special night in such a beautiful setting. The postings, pictures and comments from everyone on social media is a true testimony to what St. Peter's has been and continues to be – a spiritual home full of love, hope and peace. The attendance on Christmas Eve, the family service at 4:30PM and the 10:00PM service combined, was over 450 parishioners and visitors, which was an incredible turnout.

Jumping to the beginning of last year, Lenten season started early in the year starting with our well attended Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner, followed by Ash Wednesday services and Evensong at 5:45pm each Friday during Lent leading us to Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday Services. I want to acknowledge the commitment of our choirmaster Neil Keen and the efforts made by the entire choir during these extremely busy seasons including Advent and every Sunday service. The music performed each week is exceptional to say the least and we are very fortunate to have such dedicated individuals rehearsing tirelessly each week to lead us in song of worship. Also I would like to acknowledge the choir going to England this summer wishing them a safe trip as they represent St. Peter's in song abroad. Finally I would like to thank our choir mom Diana Martin keeping the choir looking angelic at all times.

Our Christian Education program, headed by Laura Rulison is another important ministry at St. Peter's that needs to be noted. Laura and the Sunday school teachers as well as those who help in the nursery are essential to the future of St. Peter's helping guide our young children on a path toward a life in Christ. Thank you for all your work, love and dedication to these young parishioners.

The fall brought our traditional annual events, our parish picnic, our Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner, followed by a celebratory luncheon held on November 20th at 90 State. This luncheon was our third year celebrating the support the congregation has given to St. Peter's in response to our stewardship campaign that started earlier in the fall. Our finance committee works extensively on our investments and the annual budget making sure that St. Peter's stays financially sound. Your pledges are so important in this process to budget and I would like to thank everyone who has already pledged for this year and those who may be thinking of doing so in the near future. Fortunately, St. Peter's has an endowment that continues to help supplement our budget with its investments. I want to commend and thank our treasurer George Scala for all the work he does throughout the year in regards to our investments as well as heading up the stewardship campaign this past year. His work is immeasurable and I cannot thank him enough for all the time he takes to work on all the reports needed for the vestry.

There are parishioners I would like to recognize for their immense time efforts, the altar and flower guilds, ushers, acolytes and lay ministers. All your work before, during and after services, as well as during the week does not go unnoticed. We appreciate each and every one that volunteers on these committees for the betterment and Christian life of St. Peter's Church. Another important ministry is our outreach committee. The past seven years the committee has worked with the Capital City Mission opening our doors to men looking for shelter during the winter months, beginning the first week in December. It became apparent that there was a greater need for homeless women in the Albany area for a place to stay during the cold months during the winter, so we changed this year, our 8th to a women's shelter. I would like to thank everyone involved in making this very important transition helping these women in need. Thanks to those who have donated food, supplies and or monetary donations to support this very important outreach mission.

I wish to thank our Junior Warden, Deb Spath who is always by my side offering her support and guidance. She has been a friend and someone whose opinion, I value greatly. We are also blessed to have a dedicated vestry that makes sacrifices of time and effort for the betterment of our church and I greatly appreciate all your support during this past year. Unfortunately, this year we must say goodbye to Moses Kamy, who has served on the vestry for two, three year terms, and I wish to offer my heartfelt thanks for all his years of service to St. Peter's Church.

The day to day operations would be impossible without our sexton, Pat Shortall. Pat makes sure everything is presentable and in order each week as well as maintaining the church property. With the retirement of Bobby Clancy in the fall, we hired an assisting sexton Shawn Van Ness, to work with Pat. Shawn is shadowing Pat learning the everyday duties Pat has tirelessly been doing for so many years. I wish to thank Connie Powell, our Historian and Archivist, for the many hours she dedicates to the Archives. Her meticulous cataloging and organizational skills go above and beyond the average volunteer Archivist. We are grateful for her knowledge and skills in this area. I also want to thank our office staff, Janice Chenot and Kristin Robinson, who work in such a professional way of which the parish should be so proud. Kristin joined us in March and has adapted very well to this sometimes demanding job. In addition to working the front office, she also works with the parishioners, compiles and processes the monthly newsletter, as well as offers help to individuals coming in off the street. There is not enough time in a day to thank Janice for all she does in the office behind the scenes. Her impeccable record keeping and dedicated time that she volunteers to the church helping all of us is overwhelming and I thank her for all her support.

Now, just as important as in the beginning of my report, I would like to acknowledge the love and support of this congregation. This past fall our son was involved in an extremely traumatic motorcycle accident that could have taken his life. My son and my two daughters are well vested in St. Peter's as well as their significant others and their children. What is St. Peter's worth to me, my wife and my children? There is not a price tag or words that can be expressed on how fortunate we are to have such a loving and caring parish family that helped us through this tough time. Your ongoing support and prayers during these past few months have been so heartfelt. Your love and our faith got us through this period and I wonder how some could ever endure a tragedy like this or a loss without faith and the loving church family we have at St. Peter's. Thank you all so much for your love and support from all of us.

That said, as parishioners we would not have such love and faith if we did not have our incredible clergy teaching us the Gospel and the way we should live our lives day to day in faith. We are so fortunate to have Father Hartt, our Rector and Mother Sue, our Associate Rector. They are always there for us, whether it be in good times or in times when their prayers and comfort are needed the most. Father's spiritual leadership, shepherding all of us to become faithful servants, and the compassion Mother Sue has had for all of us are gifts and blessings to all of us at St. Peter's. Thank you both so much for your love and support.

God Bless - Jim

2016 VESTRY MEMBERS

SR. WARDEN: James Chenot
JR. WARDEN: Deborah Spath
TREASURER: George Scala
VESTRY MEMBERS: Kevin Cehowski
 Nancy Creagan
 Maria Holden
 Moses Kamy
 Stephanie Lencewicz
 Mark Lundberg
 Timothy Murphy
 Earl Stafford

PAROCHIAL REPORT FIGURES

Baptisms	11
Confirmation/Reception	1
Weddings	3
Funerals/Committals	5
ASA 2016	126.2

ST. PETER'S CHURCH FLOWER GUILD

The Flower Guild has once again had a successful year, thanks to generous contributions from parishioners and friends wishing to provide memorial or thanksgiving flowers for the altars. We work hard to control expenses and provide appropriate arrangements for the altar each week.

We have decorated the Main Altar every Sunday, except for Lent, when the altars are bare, and Advent, when we use only greens. If there are special requests, we will also do flowers for St. Mark's and the Tower altars. Christmas poinsettias and greens, Palm Sunday palms, Easter lilies and our special Thanksgiving display of food are long-standing traditions at St. Peter's, organized and implemented by members of the Guild.

Help for the Guild is always appreciated. We welcome the generous contributions from so many at Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving. We also urge parishioners to think of requesting flowers for other specific Sundays (memorials for loved ones, honoring of birthdays, anniversaries or other special events). Flower for the main altar (\$50) and for St. Mark's or the Tower (\$35) are arranged through the Church Office. We also welcome new members, both men and women, to join this very satisfying ministry.

Sally Jennings, Chair

Edith Allen, Sherry Bishko, Ann Collins, Nancy Creagan, Sharon DeBonis,
Delly Everett, Catherine Gabriels, Laura Grill, Jeffrey Hartt

ST. PETER'S CHURCH ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild is responsible for preparing our altars for service, and caring for our church vessels and linens. We have a dedicated group of volunteers who come to the church during the week, to set for Sunday at 8:30, and who clear and reset between the services. Our volunteers also prepare the altars for Holy Week, Christmas, and Thanksgiving. Several volunteers wash and iron the linens.

This year, my first as director, has been blessed. We have replaced the old green frontal with a new one from Almy. It is pleasure to have it for services. We have had a membership meeting and a refresher class on setting the altar. The vessels were polished for the Christmas services.

Our membership is devoted and strong, but we are always looking for new members.

Thank you to Pat Shortall, whose time, expertise and advice have been invaluable.

Cathy Schunk, Director

Barbara Adams, Lisa Benson, John Cerniglia, John Davis, Adele Everett, Dianne Ewashko, Terry Flannery, Pam Gerfin, Laura Grill, Catherine Gabriels, Donna Hershey, Lynne Jonquieres, Barbara Kelly, Ashley Labib, Michele Lundberg, Diana Martin, Vickie Pautler, Laura Saffares, Deb Spath.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH ARCHIVES

Archives – Accomplishments 2016

The Archives Accomplishments for 2016 are the following:

1. I have reorganized the books and document boxes under subject headings to make items in the collection easier to find.
2. I have emptied and filed materials from the storage boxes.
3. I have researched and written an entry under the heading "From the Archives" for every monthly newsletter.
4. I continue to arrange for binding of important sets of histories of St. Peter's Church.
5. I managed the storage of the regular publications of the church including the service leaflets and newsletters.
6. I have answered genealogy and history questions and given tours of the Archives and the Church.

Sincerely,

E. Constance Powell, Archivist

ST. PETER'S CHURCH USHERS GUILD

I am most grateful to all the members of the St. Peter's Church Ushers Guild. Ushers are the first faces of welcome and hospitality that people encounter at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. They welcome the congregation and visitors attending services at our historic Church. Ushers meet, greet, and offer service bulletins to our congregation. They keep order, collect tithe and offering, and guide the congregation during services. They assist the Rector to ensure that all services proceed and flow smoothly. Please join in acknowledging the contributions of the following ushers:

8:30AM Service: Clark Daggett, Fred Lincoln, Bernie Burnell, John Davis, John Sterrett, Robert Hull, Teddy Hull

10:30AM Service: Catherine Schunk, George Saide, Julie Hotmer Drao, Sharon DeBonis, William Collins, Kevin Creagan, Jack Ratzel, Jeff Russom, Sherry Bishko, Frank Spath, Lawrence Everett, Chris Grill, Mark Lundberg, Michelle Lundberg, John Ewashko, Moses Kamyra

We are always looking for new Ushers to assist with the regular Sunday services and during special services. The Ushers Guild is a great way for parishioners to become active in the life of St Peter's. If you are interested or know someone who might be interested please contact Moses Kamyra at 518-869-6599 or mmkamyra@aol.com or any member of the Ushers Guild for more information.

Respectfully submitted:

Moses M. Kamyra, Head Usher

ST. PETER'S CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL

I want to begin my report by thanking James Chenot and the Vestry for their support with St. Peters Sunday School. The only way to have a successful Sunday school is to have full support of the Church. I want to thank Fr. Hartt and Mother Sue for the wonderful children's sermons each week. They continue to bring the children to the front row to hear the word of God! Thank you both.....

I want to thank the parents and grandparents for bringing our little angels to church each Sunday. A big THANK YOU to some of the most fantastic Sunday School teachers; Sharon Vardabash and Kelly Welch in the nursery, Vicky Pautler and Ashley Labib, and Kristen Cassuci, all bringing exciting lessons to our children every week. Thank you also to Pat, Shawn, Kristin Robinson and Janice Chenot for all the behind the scenes support that allows me to do my best to reach our children.

This year we collected "Back to School Backpacks" in which the children and the parishioners collected school supplies for St. Francis Mission (formerly known as Grace and Holy Innocents.) We collected over 50 bags and supplies to stuff them. Many children of the Soup Kitchen were able to start school with everything on their supply list. Thank You ! On the same note, we collected coats, gloves ,and hats for the children and elderly of Grace and Holy, and the congregation of St. Peter's Hit a Home Run! For two months I was able to bring children back to the kitchen and fit them with warm coats for the winter months. Blessings to all that donated.

Please check the monthly newsletter for more outreach opportunities to come, and please give me a call with any comments or suggestions you might have for our Sunday School, always love hearing from you . Thank you for letting me serve the children of our church. I am truly blessed.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura (Saffares) Rulison

ST. PETER'S CHURCH MUSIC PROGRAM

2016 was a busy year for music at St. Peter's. Friday noontime organ recitals continued, including performances by guest musicians. Our choir continued its work with great skill and dedication, and we welcomed several new singers to the choir. In addition to the Choir's principal work, providing music to enrich regular Sunday worship, we note these special services and events in 2016:

March/April: Ash Wednesday service

Friday Lenten Evensongs (six services)

Good Friday: Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*

Easter Day: Two choral services, with trumpet and timpani

Organ recital by Vaughn Mauren

May: Evensong for Ascension Day

October: Concert by the wind quintet Fünf, which included performance by the choir, and featured a semi-staged version of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*.

Choir members offered pottery, notes cards, and "frozen gourmet" as fund raisers.

November: Thanksgiving Eve service

Neil Keen played an organ recital at the Cathedral of All Saints.

December: A well received and well attended performance of Handel's *Messiah*

Service of Lessons and Carols

Two choral services for Christmas Eve, with trumpet and timpani

In addition the choir sang for one wedding and one funeral during 2016.

In the fall of 2016 we welcomed seven new singers to the choir.

We are grateful for the support that the parish gives to its music program. We particularly thank the Women of St. Peter's for help with vestments. Choir Mother Diana Martin gives the choir invaluable service. She keeps the vestments organized, polishes medals, facilitates the Easter breakfast, is always there to help at every service and event, and plays a vital role in the training and orientation of new treble choristers. We also owe a great deal to the strong support of the parents of our young singers, without which we couldn't even begin. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Neil Keen, Organist and Choirmaster

ST. PETER'S CHURCH OUTREACH PROGRAM

Outreach continues to grow and thrive at St. Peter's Church. We have had a wonderful year with many projects and programs. Thank you to all who have contributed in so many different ways and made this such a special year.

Here are some of our many 2016 activities-

St. Peter's Overflow Shelter- This ministry in conjunction with the Capitol City Rescue Mission is in its 8th year. During the colder months, St. Peter's serves as an overflow shelter and host for 12- 15 homeless men from the mission. The support for this project has been truly amazing. We have received numerous monetary and food donations.

Bowling for Beds- This event is sponsored by the Capital Area Council of Churches and raises money for its overflow shelter at the First Lutheran Church in Albany. A Team from St. Peter's enjoyed a day of bowling and helped raise money.

Grace and Holy Innocents Soup Kitchen- Laura Saffares and her "Angels in Training" together with other church members volunteer in the preparation and serving of a hot lunch to over 100 people on one Saturday a month.

Outreach also provided scholarships for girls from West Bugunda to attend school.

For the fifth year, a large collection of food donations adorns our altar at Thanksgiving. Thanks to Jeffrey Hartt, the youth and flower guild members for arranging this beautiful display. Some of the food is kept at the church and much of it is donated to the food pantry at st. Mary's Church.

Adopt A Family for Christmas- St. Peters adopted some Burmese refuge families, Thank you to all who participated and contributed many gifts.

Equinox-Many members and church families helped prepare meals for the annual Thanksgiving Meal Program. Parish families also donated cranberry sauce to be given to Equinox for their Thanksgiving Day dinners

Overflow Shelter at the First Lutheran Church- This major outreach program provides a complete hot dinner for 20 men each Thursday evening from November 1st through April 30th. Volunteers from St. Peter's sign up for a week. They may either deliver the meals to the first Lutheran Church or to St. Peter's on the Sunday before for Pat Shortall (our sexton) to deliver the meals during the week. Many thanks to Pat Shortall and Deb Spath for seeing that this program runs smoothly.

Thanks to Maria Holden for organizing the CROP Walk and the parishioners who walked to raise money for hunger.

Through outreach, St. Peter's also provided three Beaver Cross Scholarships.

Church Office Staff Outreach- Pat, Bobby, and Janice continue to provide outreach and welcome to the many daily "walk-ins" in need during office hours on a daily basis. A special thanks to the staff for going the extra mile to help those in need.

Free Organ Concerts- Our very talented organist and Choirmaster, Neil Keen, continues to graciously reach out and generously provide free recitals on Fridays at 12:30 pm for the enjoyment of the public.

St. Peter's Softball Team- St. Peter's Angels Softball Team led by Peter Benson provides a wonderful athletic and fellowship program for church members.

Bereavement Program- A yearly Service of Remembrance is offered for those who would like to remember their loved ones.

Backpacks- Laura Saffares and the youth with donations from members filled back packs with school supplies for needy children.

UNICEF- The young people of the parish trick or treat during coffee hour to raise money for UNICEF

Top of the Hill Group- This group of gentlemen gather together each Wednesday morning for fellowship and discussion.

As Chairperson of Outreach, I continue to be thankful and truly amazed by the support and generosity of so many members of this parish to our many outreach programs. I am grateful to Carol Daggett for all her years as Chairperson of Outreach and the many wonderful programs she helped start . A special thanks to Jim Chenot, Deb Spath, Father Hartt, Mother Sue, Carly Crewell, Janice Chenot, and Pat Shortall for all they do to assist with our Outreach programs, and to Laura Saffares for all she does to involve the children of the parish in outreach.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Burns

ST. PETER'S CHURCH DAUGHTERS OF THE KING JULIA CHAPTER

The Daughters of the King ended 2016 with several new initiatives planned for the new year. It is anticipated that several new members will be joining the Julia Chapter of the DOK and Discernment classes will begin in January and run for six weeks. The DOK are going to host Coffee Hour once per month after the 10:30am service as well as help with St. Peter's Homeless Shelter by making "Blessing Bags" and volunteering at the Shelter. The DOK hosted its annual Prayer Walk in October 2016 which has become an annual tradition. The DOK will provide additional service to St. Peter's Church as well as continuing with prayers for all those in need. Monthly meetings will be on the 2nd Sunday of the month after the 10:30am service on the 2nd floor classroom.

Julia Hotmer Drao

Consilio et Animis

WOMEN OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH

In 2016, The Women of St. Peter's partnered with the Daughter of the King hosting Coffee Hour a few times as well as recently working with DOK members making "Blessing Bags" for the St. Peter's Church Homeless Shelter. The Women of St. Peter's featured an evening get together at the Albany Center for Arts during 2016. The Women of St. Peter's continue to look for new and innovative ways to bring our fellow women parishioners together for 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Hotmer Drao



February 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			1 8:45am - Top 12:00pm - Ho
5 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 12:00pm - DOK Discernment Class	6 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal	7	8 8:45am - Top c 12:05pm - Hol
12 Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 12:00pm - DOK Discernment Class	13 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal	14 Valentine's Day 3:00pm - Women's Bible Study	15 8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho 4:30pm - Out 5:15pm - Vestr
19 Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 12:00pm - DOK Discernment Class	20 President's Day No Treble Rehearsal Office Closed	21 1:00pm - Friends of St. Peter's 3:00pm - Women's Bible Study	22 8:45am - Top 12:00pm - Ho 6:00pm - Disc
26 Last Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer Youth Sunday with Children's Chapel 12:00pm - DOK Discernment Class	27 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal	28 1:00pm - Friends of St. Peter's 3:00pm - Women's Bible Study 5:00pm - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
of the Hill ly Communion	2 Presentation of Jesus in the Temple 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	3 12:30pm - Organ Concert	4
of the Hill ly Communion	9 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	10 12:30pm - Organ Concert	11
of the Hill ly Communion reach Meeting ry Meeting	16 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	17 12:30pm - Organ Concert	18 11:00am - Angel's in Training
of the Hill ly Communion covery Bible Study	23 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	24 St. Matthias the Apostle 12:30pm - Organ Concert	25

Happy Valentine's Day



The Season of Lent at St. Peter's Church

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper:	Tuesday, February 28th 5:00pm-6:30pm
Ash Wednesday Services:	Wednesday, March 1st 7:30am Holy Communion with Ashes imposed 12:00pm Ash Wednesday Service with Ashes imposed 5:15pm Holy Communion with Ashes imposed
Friday Lenten Evensong:	5:45pm every Friday during Lent beginning March 3rd

SHROVE TUESDAY

Our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held on Tuesday, February 28th from 5PM to 6:30PM. Volunteers are needed to cook and should arrive by 4PM. Many other volunteers are needed for clean-up so that the Parish Hall can be ready by 8PM for the arrival of the women from the Overflow Shelter. If you have any questions or are volunteering to cook, please contact Janice Chenot at 786-1070.

Office Closed

In observance of President's Day, the church office will be closed on Monday, February 20th.

Daughters of the King

There will be no regular DOK Meeting held in February as they complete the Discernment Class. The next DOK meeting will be held on the **first** Sunday in March, March 5th, following the 10:30am service.

LENTEN EVENSONG

Fridays: March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st, April 7th
Please join us for our Lenten Evensong services which will be held every Friday evening during Lent beginning at 5:45PM.

Outreach Meeting

The February Outreach meeting will be held on **Wednesday**, February 15th at 4:30pm. Please join us to learn about Outreach ministries and hospitality events being planned!

Vestry Meeting

The February Vestry meeting will be held on **Wednesday**, February 15th at 5:15pm.

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 has opened for its 8th season on December 1st to augment the ministry of the Capital City Rescue Mission to Albany's Homeless. This year, we will be housing up to 20 women each evening.

We are currently receiving donations of food items and financial support and are also scheduling volunteers (women volunteers only) 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 or email stpeterschurch.albany@gmail.com

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

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE BY EASTER

The online FaceBook group continues reading through the Holy Bible in 90 Days! If you'd like to join us, please send a request to Mother Sue (Sue Pitsas Waldron) to be added to the FaceBook group! Each week's reading is posted by Sunday. Daily reflections with questions and comments are posted as well with your questions and comments welcomed.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Join the Women of the Church as we read and discuss *Hearts of Fire: Eight Women of the Underground Church and their Stories of Costly Faith*; on Tuesday afternoons from 3:00pm to 4:00pm starting on 2/14/17. The group will meet in the Pumpelly Room for 8 consecutive weeks (2/14-4/4/17). The books will be pre-ordered and cost \$12.00 each. Please let Mother Sue (or Kristin in the office) know that you would like a copy of the book. Please read Chapter One: Adel prior to our first meeting on 2/14.

CO-ED DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

Mother Sue and Fr. Hartt will jointly facilitate a new Discovery Bible Study for men and women. The first session will begin on Wednesday, February 22nd at 6PM. The study will continue to meet on Wednesdays for a total of ten sessions. Discovery Bible Study is a very different kind of Bible study. If you have ever wanted a practical, "real life" mode of Bible study, this is it. The sessions will be strictly one hour in length. Your clergy appreciate that time is pressing during the week and this method of study lends itself to a substantive hour. DBS is a powerful tool for faith formation. Your clergy promise that DBS will speak concretely to your daily life. The DBS group will gather in the Vestry Room. Tea and coffee will be served.

VESTRY ELECTIONS

Deborah Spath was elected Junior Warden for her fourth two-year term, Earl Stafford was elected for his second three-year vestry term, George Scala was elected for his first three-year term as Vestryman and Christie Gordon was elected for her first three-year vestry term. Congratulations to all!

YOUTH SUNDAY / CHILDREN'S CHAPEL

Sunday, February 26th during the 10:30AM Service

On the last Sunday of each month we invite the children of our parish to take special part at the 10:30AM service. The teens will fill important roles during the service in the Sanctuary. Additionally, we will be offering **Children's Chapel** for our youngest members. In lieu of our traditional Sunday School offering, pre-Confirmation youth and Sunday School teachers will celebrate a Youth Eucharist in the Pumpelly Room during the service. Children will begin worship with the parents in the main Sanctuary and following the first reading the children will be invited to process into Children's Chapel for their own Gospel message, homily and instructed Eucharist service. Please speak to Fr. Hartt or Mtr. Sue if your child would like to have a special role during an upcoming Youth Sunday.

Join us for *Faithful, Abundant, True*—
a rich study from Kay Arthur, Beth Moore & Priscilla Shirer!

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!
(A perfect Christmas gift!)

**Women Going Deeper
Retreat**

February 24-25, 2017

Christ the King Spiritual Life Center
www.ctkcenter.org & Click Programs

lifeway.com/women LIFEWay Women

Last year, a group of women from St. Peter's attended this yearly women's retreat and we will be going again. For more information, please speak with Mother Sue. You can register for the retreat at: http://www.ctkcenter.org/page/women_going_deeper_retreat

Flower Memorials

During the year, our Flower Guild arranges flowers to bring beauty to our sanctuary and joy to our congregation. Those wishing to make a donation for flowers for a memorial, thanksgiving or celebration should call the Church Office to confirm available dates. During Advent, we use only greens; during Lent, the altars are bare. Other Sundays, we welcome contributions. The cost of flowers is: Main Altar is \$50, St. Mark's Altar is \$35, and the Tower Altar is also \$35. All requests are payable in advance.

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 either of the Holy Eucharistic Sunday Services. If interested please call the parish office at 434-3502.

Retreat for the Soul

The churches of Lake George are sponsoring a Pre-Lent Retreat entitled *Retreat for the Soul: Giving God Room to Transform Heart & Mind*. The retreat will be led by The Rev. Adele Calhoun, author of *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*. Mtr. Adele will teach us disciplines to help us surrender our lives to God and share them with others. The retreat will be held **Friday, February 17th through Saturday, February 18th** at St. James' Church, located 172 Ottawa St, Lake George, NY 12845. Registration is requested with a \$25 check, which includes Saturday lunch. Childcare is available. To download a flyer please visit:

<http://www.albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/events/2017SJLGPreLentRetreat.html>.

Community of St. Mary

The Community of St Mary, 242 Cloister Way, Greenwich, NY, 12834, is hosting a President's Day Retreat **February 17th-19th, 2017** entitled *Were You There When Our Lord Went Up The Mount?* This is a traditional silent retreat with meditations on the Transfiguration of Christ led by Mother Miriam, CSM. The retreat begins with 5:30pm Vespers on Friday and ends after lunch on Sunday. The three transfiguration of Christ stories of the synoptic Gospels teach us who Jesus is on a deeper and deeper level. Participants will climb Mount Tabor with Jesus and his three closest disciples, Peter, James, and John and spend the weekend in the Light of Christ. The cost for the full weekend is \$158. The commuter rate (meals and program only, no lodging) is \$75. To register, please visit: <https://www.albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/contact/cform.php?whoto=mmiriam&subject=%27Presidents%20Day%20Retreat%27> or call Mother Miriam at 518-692-3178.

Youth Formation

BEAVER CROSS YOUTH MINISTRY

SONSHINE RETREATS

Beaver Cross Camp meets the winter in our SonShine Retreats! These retreats will be running over school winter break, middle school and high school students, will be playing epic games, having inspiring worship, prayer, and engaging with teachings. All of this to have fun, build community in Christ, and draw closer to Jesus!

Jr. Sonshine

WHEN: February 19th - 22nd
DROP-OFF: Sunday 7PM
PICK-UP: Wednesday 10AM
WHO: 6th - 8th GRADERS
PRICE: \$195/\$140*

Sr. Sonshine

WHEN: February 22nd - 25th
DROP-OFF: Wednesday 11AM
PICK-UP: Saturday 10AM
WHO: 9th - 12th GRADERS
PRICE: \$195/\$140*

PRICE: \$140* (\$140 is a subsidized family rate for families with more than one child)



ITS ALMOST TIME FOR WINTER AND SPRING BREAK CAMPS!

Can't wait for Day Camp to start up again? No worries, our winter and spring break camps are just around the corner! Break Camps include all the usual trappings of a week at camp, from friends to campfire and we can hardly wait!

Winter Break Camp

WHEN: February 20th - 24th
DROP-OFF: 7:30AM for breakfast or
8:00AM Regular
PICK-UP: Between 5:00PM & 5:30PM
PRICE: \$150 for the week
\$25 to add breakfast
BRING: snow boots and snow clothes, hats
and gloves, and a water bottle--its
the perfect time to play in the snow!

Spring Break Camp

WHEN: April 17th - 21st
DROP-OFF: 7:30AM for breakfast or
8:00AM Regular
PICK-UP: Between 5:00PM & 5:30PM
PRICE: \$150 for the week
\$25 to add breakfast
BRING: a jacket and clothes to play
outside in, plus a water bottle--
we'll be outside!

We'll have a blast all day, with your camp friends, your favorite camp lunches, and all the camp games and activities you've been missing! It's just like camp--just during the year! Can't wait to see you!

Youth Ministry programs are held at **Christ the King Spiritual Life Center.**
More information may be accessed at: <http://www.beavercrossministries.org>

Bishop's Appeal

It's not too late to donate to the Annual Bishop's Appeal! The Bishop's Appeal gives you the opportunity to help the Bishop to minister to many in the diocese, helping clergy and lay people alike in times of need. Your donation to the Bishop's Appeal also helps the Bishop support missionaries overseas and many other worthwhile efforts. To donate online please visit: <http://www.albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/forms/BishopsAppeal/2016BishopsAppealDonation.php>.

Friends of St. Peter's

Please come and see what this newly formed group called 'Friends of St. Peter's' is all about. This group will meet on Tuesdays at 1:00PM beginning February 21st. Come and enjoy coffee and conversation. All are welcome!!



The First Lutheran Church Shelter Dinners

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.

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

On the 3rd Saturday of each month (February 18th) we invite you to join Laura Rulison 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. Many hands mean light work! Please call Laura for information or to let her know you are coming at 368-4284.



**Daughters of the King and Others ~ January 15th
Stuffing Blessing Bags for the Overflow Shelter**

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 rehearse 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

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I invite you to join me at one of this year's Parish Leadership Conferences (PLC). This year, the PLC's will provide an *Introduction to Healthy Congregations*. Clergy, parish staff, church wardens, vestry members and other parish leaders, along with members of each congregation will have an opportunity to learn how to detect and avoid unhealthy patterns of living together in community, along with learning about ways to positively influence the health of a congregation.

The *Introduction to Healthy Congregations* workshop uses the insights of family systems theory to help church leaders become more effective stewards of their congregations. The workshop was developed by Dr. Peter Steinke and is based on the work of Dr. Edwin Friedman, author of *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. The presenters for the PLC's will be the Revs. Tom and Elizabeth Papazoglakis, Priests-In-Charge at St. George's, Clifton Park, who bring extensive training and experience with Healthy Congregations.

Each Parish Leadership Conference begins with sign-in at 8:30 a.m. The program will begin at 9:00 a.m. Lunch will be provided, and the day will close with the celebration of Holy Eucharist, which should wrap up by 3:45 p.m. PLC's are offered regionally, and you may attend whichever PLC is most convenient for you. The details for the PLC's are as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Nearest Deaneries</u>
Saturday, February 4th	Christ the King Spiritual Life Center 575 Burton Road Greenwich, NY 12834	Hudson Metropolitan, South Adirondack and Upper Hudson

There is no cost to you for this program, but in order to help make sure there is adequate food and learning materials, **please register for the PLC most convenient for you by** going to <http://www.albanyepiscopaldioocese.org/forms> Thank you for investing your day to learn how this *Introduction to Healthy Congregations* may bear fruit in your parish, since "...we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Romans 12:5).

+Bill

**MINUTES FOR THE VESTRY MEETING
ST. PETER'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

December 13, 2016

Present : Fr. Hartt, J. Chenot, G. Scala, M. Holden, S. Lencewicz, T. Murphy, M. Lundberg, K. Cehowski, M. Kamyra

Absent: E. Stafford, D. Spath, Mtr. Sue Waldron, N. Creagan

1. Approval of the Minutes of Vestry Meeting, November 9, 2016

The November 9, 2016 minutes were approved on a motion by S. Lencewicz and seconded by M. Lundberg. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry. The 2017 budget was approved on a motion by M. Lundberg and seconded by M. Holden. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry.

2. Senior Warden Report –J. Chenot

We are well into the Advent season and now preparing for the many activities and services coming up the next few weeks. That being said, November was an incredible month first by bringing the congregation together hosting the Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner. On Saturday November 12th the dinner was held and it was a tremendous success with up to 100 parishioners and friends attending. Many thanks to everyone who was 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 for all with great food for all to enjoy.

On November 20th we had a stewardship celebratory luncheon at 90 State Street after the 10:30 service. The luncheon was well attended celebrating the support the congregation has given to St. Peter's with pledges as well as those who volunteer their tireless time on committees that help keep the church run smoothly. I would like to thank all of those who have sent in their pledge cards already and hope others will be able to fill out a card to help the finance committee properly budget for next year. So far this year's stewardship drive looks to have been very successful and the luncheon was another great time to bring the congregation together in fellowship.

The church again volunteered at the Equinox preparing Thanksgiving Dinners on the Tuesday evening prior to Thanksgiving. Laura Saffares headed up this outreach and we want to thank her for this incredible community service held each year in Albany. The Sunday School Children baked pumpkin breads for the congregation the Sunday before Thanksgiving for all of us to enjoy during the Thanksgiving week. Also we held a service on Thanksgiving eve which was well attended which included the choir that sang for the service.

On December 5th we had orientation for those who will be helping at our women's shelter with over 19 women volunteer attending. We opened our doors on Wednesday December 7th to women in need for a warm place to stay in the evening during these upcoming cold months in conjunction with the City mission in Albany. This is our 8th year at St. Peter's helping those in need in the immediate downtown area for those who direly need this important outreach. Many thanks to our outreach committee who coordinated this important outreach making sure this program again will be a great success as in the past. Please remember that we are always looking for donations; drinks, snacks as well as momentary donations to support this program.

This past Sunday, December 11th at the 10:30 service, the Sunday school performed their annual Christmas Pageant. Again I would like to thank Laura Saffares and all those in the Christian education department for all the coordination and rehearsing that went into this performance. Then in the afternoon at 3:00, our Choir performed The Handel's Messiah. We are blessed to have such musical talent in our choir that continues to shine in song and Neil Keen as our choir director. We would like to also thank Father and Jeffrey Hartt for opening their doors at the rectory hosting the traditional Messiah party for the choir after the performance. A special thanks to our choir director, Neil Keen for all his hard work and dedication during this year.

Lessons and Carols will be performed next Sunday, December 18th at the 10:30 service followed by The Hanging of the Greens at 12:00. Lunch will also be served for all those helping decorating and preparing the church for Christmas. We always look forward to this Sunday event each year beautifying the church for our Christmas services.

During this time of year there is an incredible amount of unseen extra work and time put in that is needed to for us to enjoy the Advent and the Christmas season. The vestry would like to thank the Flower Guild, Altar Guild and the Usher's who volunteer so much of their time during this time of year, as well as all they do throughout the year. We need to thank Pat Shortall for keeping the Church and physical plant clean and tidy especially during this busy season. On that note, Pat has been looking to slowly retire in the near future and we have hired Shawn Van Ness to begin shadowing Pat learning the everyday duties the churches needs Pat has tirelessly been doing for many years.

To Kristin and Janice, enough cannot be said for the gratitude we have for both them for all their work throughout the year and especially this time of year in the office. We are truly deeply indebted to both of them, and we thank them both for all their efforts.

I would also like to thank Father Hartt and Mother Sue for all their tireless work preparing for the upcoming Advent Season. We all want to thank them for their love and commitment to St. Peter's Church as well as the community for outreach. St. Peter's is very blessed to have both of them.

I want to wish everyone a blessed and Merry Christmas and wish everyone a safe and Happy New Year.

3. Finance – G. Scala

George S. reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the month of November. Total offerings for November were \$19,260. Year to date offerings through November are \$206,730 which compares to a budgeted number of \$290,081.

The investment/endowment accounts both showed gains for the month. For November Merrill Lynch was up +1.63% and Key was up +.42%. YTD Merrill Lynch is at a positive return of 4.59% and Key is at 3.15%. This leaves us with a positive budget variance in this area of \$75,106. Both accounts performed favorably versus market indexes. Expenses year to date are \$38,487 under budget through November.

Discussion occurred concerning the Stewardship campaign as well as the budget for 2017. George relayed that he didn't feel any additional adjustments were needed to the budget based on November's performance. We will have the yearly numbers/recap at the January meeting.

4. Property

None

5. Outreach – Mother Sue

None

6. Old Business

None

7. New Business

Working on PowerPoint for Annual Meeting

8. Associate Rector's Report – Mother Sue

None

9. Sunday Attendance

The average Sunday attendance is currently 116.6

10. Rectors Report - Father Hartt

Christmas Eve Services will be at 4:30PM and 10:00PM. Carols will begin at 9:30PM. Christmas Day this year will be on a Sunday, with services at the usual times. Our traditional advertisement will appear in the Times Union.

Fr. Hartt commended the Choir and Mr. Keen for the exceptional performance of Handel's Messiah of December 11th. Attendance was quite high. The performance continues to attract both parish members and the public in about equal measure.

Fr. Hartt reported that ASA was now 121.1, including the attendance at the Messiah. 150 for the combined 8:30AM & 10:30AM services.

The Christmas Pageant was joyful as always. Our children have a sweet earnestness in their offering of the Nativity story. It is a worshipful play.

Fr. Hartt reports that things are underway for Lessons and Carols and the hanging of the greens. Fr. Hartt thanked Jack Ratzel for his willingness again this year to prepare the traditional meal following the work.

The 2017-18 Budget was discussed. Fr. Hartt thanked George Scala and Jimmy Chenot for their work on the budget and throughout the year. Jim and George work tirelessly to keep expenses down and our investments performing well.

Fr. Hartt was pleased with the initial stewardship results for 2017. Consecration Sunday had good attendance. The time of fellowship at 100 State was a nice break in the busy time before Thanksgiving.

Fr. Hartt spoke of the need to focus primary attention on parish growth in the new year.

Outreach needs have been about as constant as last year. Albany is a city with many folks on the edge.

The women's overflow shelter at Saint Peter's has begun receiving the women. The operation is being tightly run by the Mission.

Discovery Bible Study will be on hold until January.

Going back to November, Fr. Hartt was pleased with the response to the "Pre-Thanksgiving Thanksgiving dinner." We had a nice turnout and the food was great. Fr. Hartt thanked those who cooked the turkeys and Janice Chenot for her co-ordination of the event.

At the last Vestry meeting, Fr. Hartt distributed a number of reflection questions taken from the Vestry retreat. He asked that those unable to attend the retreat would reflect on those questions for tonight's meeting. A discussion ensued about structure of meetings and ways of assisting some parish members who have carried a great deal of responsibility for church functions and need some relief.

Teen Confirmation classes continue through January 8th. We have five teens and three adults preparing to be Confirmed. We have one baptism thus far for 2 Epiphany.

Fr. Hartt wished the Vestry a joyful and holy Christmas and New Year.

11. Adjournment

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

12. Compline

Father Hartt led Compline.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kevin M. Cehowski

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Paul J. Hartt..... Rector
The Rev. Susan Waldron.....Associate Rector
Neil K. Keen, F.A.G.O.....Organist & Choirmaster
Laura Rulison..... Director of Christian Education
James P. Shortall.....Sexton
Shawn Van Ness.....Assisting Sexton
Kristin Robinson.....Administrative Assistant
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

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

How to Contact Us

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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

