



THE Cornerstone

March 2019

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

From the Rector

Lent as Love

"See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are." (1 John 3:1)

It certainly is possible to be overly sentimental about kids. I know that I am with my own at times. Perhaps it is a function of evolution that we usually have rose-colored glasses as we look at them. We are, after all, charged with their care and it definitely helps to be fond of them. But we all know that there are times when we would rather throttle them. Raising children is not for wimps. It takes wisdom, patience, sacrifice, love, and discipline. The accent is always on the love, but the others are a necessary function of it.

So we are children of God. The Bible is clear about that fact. I think we can safely say our heavenly Father has His hands full.

Of course, as with any family, some of the kids are perhaps more on the straight and narrow than others. Some are pretty consistently problem cases. Some are good most of the time, yet have their lapses. Some have special challenges. Some try to be good but are impulsive. Some have flat-out taken a bad road. Some are "good" but tend to lord it over the others. (Think of the older brother in the Parable of the Prodigal Son.) Some can be naughty in an almost cute way. Some are such trouble they monopolize parental attention. On and on it goes. I hope that we all can find ourselves in this list or any obvious additions to it. I certainly do.

So my thesis is that Lent is Love. It is first private time with our heavenly Father. We have our own case reviewed. Such a review is held from the start in the love, mercy, and redemption of the crucified Son. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* No one is so bad as to despair. No one is so good as to need less than His cross. Lent is also a time to get the family back on track. Because sin is rarely a private thing. It spills out at work, at home, and in the church family. A good parent is one who knows their children well, knows what is possible and impossible given their nature. The Father knows perfectly. The task before us is about who we really are, not some hypothetical self. We don't parent hypothetical children. Neither does the Father.

For these reasons, I really do think it is helpful for us to approach Lent as children. It is not only helpful, but true. Lent is for the children of God. Children are to be loved and aided. Lent is love. God's love. God's dealing with our special case as a parent would a beloved child. Lent is also a time for a church family to reorder its common life to the will of the Father. So, let us not forget the family as a whole.

God loves us. That is the bottom line. Any Lenten correction is for our blessed good and that of the family.

I love the pictures.

Keep them in your Lenten heart.

Lenten blessings, Fr. Hartt+



From the Associate Rector

My sister leaves this morning for a two-week vacation in sunny Florida. I can't help but admit I'm a bit envious. I imagine most of us living in the Northeast, who haven't had the luxury of a recent southern vacation, are hungry for some sun and warmth right about now as we continue to endure our long winter. This stretch of winter always seems difficult to get through. The exciting Holiday festivities are long past, and spring seems a long way off yet. It seems we are just enduring and waiting. I might even call this time of year winter "down time" when we are just waiting for the next thing to happen.

Sometimes it feels like large parts of our lives are spent waiting in "down time". We may have moments carved out for special events, time with family or friends, and work or leisure activities. But, what do we do the in-between time – the time that exists between the events and activities in our lives? Sometimes that "down time" lasts for only a few minutes, sometimes it lasts much longer. We can even look at the seasons of our life and see that our "down time" can occupy a huge amount our lives.

Liturgically, there are even moments of "down time"; moments in between the Feast Days and special seasons of the Church. This became very apparent as the Christmas Season ended and we all settled in for a long winter's nap until the Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. Or, do we? And what are we to do now that Lent is arriving? Is this, too, a season of down time as we await Easter and Spring or can it bring unique purpose in our lives?

Traditionally, Lent was the season of preparation for those preparing for baptism into the Christian faith; a time of penitence and abstinence. Today, many Christians use the season of Lent to draw closer to God through fasting or abstaining from certain foods or activities, albeit others add acts of devotion like a Lenten study, Friday Evensong, Bible study and/or new dedication to one's prayer life.

While these good practices certainly feed us spiritually, I suggest there is one additional act of devotion we might consider incorporating during the season of Lent. And that is simply to increase our time of rest with God with intentional prayer, solitude and silence. I say this as it seems as though we fill most of our "down time" today with any activity to busy ourselves. Even a five-minute gap is filled with a few moments on Facebook, playing Candy Crush or reading an online article. In our over-filled lives, many find that it is quite hard to hear God speaking and quite hard to find the energy to do all that we feel we must do.

Throughout his earthly ministry, and particularly highlighted in the Gospel of Mark, in between his miraculous works and teachings Jesus often left the crowds behind to seek solitude with his Father. To see just how prominent this was in Jesus' life, take a few moments to look at some of these Scripture verses: Mark 1:35, 3:13, 4:36, 6:31, 6:46, 9:2, 9:30, 10:32, 14:32, and 14:39.

These examples of Jesus show us that we don't need to fill every moment of our lives with activity. We don't need to use up each bit of "down time". We can choose to abstain from the business of the world – the chaos that surrounds us and even tries to engulf us – and dedicate time specifically to rest in the Lord.

Those who regularly do this will attest that they have renewed energy, clarification of priorities and clearer direction from God. It is God's peace and his strength that can truly renew us, and his voice that can truly guide us. May God draw you even closer to Him this Lenten Season.

In Christ, Mother Sue+

"THANK YOU "

Thank you for the strong support at our Soup Sampler, which raised \$375 for the West Buganda AIDS orphans. Outreach added to this to provide (5) annual scholarships

Pictured are students from the school with Moses Kamya during his visit this past year.



Upcoming Events

The Season of Lent at St. Peter's Church

- ♦ Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper: Tuesday, March 5th 5:00pm - 6:30pm
- ♦ Ash Wednesday Services: Wednesday, March 6th
7:30am Holy Communion with Ashes imposed
12:00pm Ash Wednesday Service with Ashes imposed
5:30pm Holy Communion with Ashes imposed
- ♦ Friday Lenten Evensong: 5:45pm every Friday during Lent beginning March 8th
- ♦ Alpha Course: 6:00pm-7:30pm every Wednesday from March 13th to May 29th
- ♦ Lenten Day Program: Sunday, March 10th 12:00pm - 4:00pm

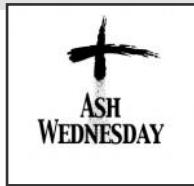
Daylight Savings



We “spring ahead” on Sunday, March 10th! Don’t forget to set your clocks ahead the night before so that you are prompt for church services that morning.

SHROVE TUESDAY

Our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held on Tuesday, March 5th 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 7PM 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 518-786-1070.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

Please join us for Ash Wednesday services on March 6th. They are as follows: 7:30AM, 12PM and 5:30PM all with imposition of ashes. The 7:30AM and the 5:30PM services will be services of Holy Communion. The 12PM service will be a Wednesday Noon Service.

LENTEN EVENSONG

Fridays: March 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, April 5th and 12th. Please join us for our Lenten Evensong services which will be held every Friday evening during Lent beginning at 5:45PM.

Daughters of the King

The March DOK meeting will be replaced with the Lenten Day Program on Sunday, March 10th. If any Daughter can provide a lunch item for the Lenten Day Lunch, please email our President, Julie Hotmer Drao at hotmermurphy@gmail.com. Thank you.

Lenten Day Program

Please join us after the 10:30am service on Sunday, March 10th for an afternoon program exploring Praying with Anglican Prayer Beads. Lunch will be provided followed by hands-on instruction on making a set of prayer beads and also how to pray with them.

Outreach Meeting

The March Outreach meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12th at 4:00pm. Please join us to learn about Outreach ministries and hospitality events being planned!

Vestry Meeting

The March Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12th at 5:15pm.



Easter Lily Requests

Parishioners and friends wishing to place lilies on the altars at Easter to honor, show thanks, or remember loved ones are asked to complete the enclosed form and return it to the church office with your donation no later than Palm Sunday, April 14th. The suggested donation is \$25.

Ministry News & Opportunities

Healing Prayers

On the first Sunday of every month, prayers for healing will be offered *during* Holy Communion in the Tower Altar at the rear of the church. If you desire prayers and/or anointing, please join us in the Tower Altar after you have received Holy Communion.

Scholarships Available

CM CARES believes helping today's vibrant and dedicated religious scholars will ensure strong faith-based communities of tomorrow. That's why, for the third year in a row, we're offering 50 scholarships totaling \$250,000 for the 2019-20 academic year. Students of all faiths are encouraged to apply by April 15, 2019. CHURCH MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY FOUNDATION CM CARES, the Church Mutual Insurance Company Foundation, was established by Church Mutual in 2016 to support charitable, educational and religious causes that improve the human condition.
DETAILS: churchmutual.com/cmcares-scholars

Overflow Homeless Shelter draws to the close of its tenth season this month. There are still openings on the March calendar if you'd like to volunteer. We consider this year a great success and know that the homeless women we housed are blessed beyond measure. The Capital City Rescue Mission greatly appreciates our space, donations and volunteers and how we strengthen their ministry to the homeless in Albany. To sign up to volunteer please contact Mary Malone at (518) 527-5025 or e-mail her at:
mmmalone2017@gmail.com.

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 518-434-3502.

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.

Comfort For Those Who Mourn

This is a 6 week grief support group for all who are mourning the death of a loved one at St. Luke's on the Hill in Mechanicville beginning Wednesday, March 6th, from 4:30-6:00pm. Following the group, all participants are invited to stay for Eucharist at 6:00pm and a potluck supper. If you or anyone you know would be interested in attending this group, please call 518-664-4834 for registration and further information or email: stlukesonthehill@biznycap.rr.com. Please call St. Luke's office at 518-664-4834 to register.

Progress of the Interior Restoration Project Funding

In November, the Church was aware that the tremendously favorable response to our Fund Raising Campaign would qualify us to receive the \$100,000 Challenge Grant. To date a total of \$166,000 has been raised in cash and pledges. On that basis, we proceeded with the contract proposal of \$223,000 for Phase I which included painting the walls and cleaning the stone frames of the windows. Phase I has been completed.

In doing the Phase I work, it was discovered that deteriorating plaster in the upper sanctuary walls needed repair and replacement. That added another cost of \$11,500 to the project. Additionally, in the campaign, a designated pledge of \$6,800 was received to clean the stone pulpit. This project, although part of Phase II, has also been completed. Thus far, we have made a total expenditure of \$241,275 to Egan Restoration.

That brings us to the good news! We have outstanding pledges for \$16,600 and a balance in our restoration account of \$8,100 giving us a total of \$24,700. That is one half of the money necessary to clean the stone columns and capitals in the Nave and at the Chancel entry. By raising the needed \$24,000 we will be able to complete Phase II of the Restoration.

The success of this fund raising campaign speaks wonderfully to the generosity of members and friends of the St. Peter's family. We are all excited to see the beautiful results of the historic restoration of the sanctuary of St. Peter's Church. In our April newsletter, we intend to publish the names of all the donors to this campaign in order that their important part in this process may be publicly acknowledged. Those who contributed anonymously will not be named.

Submitted by Fred Hershey

Adult Education



ALPHA SERIES: Alpha is a series of talks exploring the Christian faith, run over eleven weeks. Each talk is presented in DVD form. The program comes out of the Church of England. The DVD talks are followed by open conversation in small groups. The Alpha program is now run around the globe. Everyone is welcome, but the program aims at those with fundamental questions about the Christian faith. Alpha is especially suitable for seekers.

ALPHA COURSE: Our spring Alpha course will be held in the Pumpelly Room on Wednesday evenings from 6PM to 7:30PM beginning Wednesday, March 13th and ending May 29th. We hope you will consider joining us....what better way to begin Lent! Please register with Ruth Manss in the church office or speak to Diana Martin or one of the clergy for more information.

Youth Formation & Sunday School

St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen

Saturday, March 16th ~ 11:00am to 1:00pm

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

Beaver Cross Summer Camp - Registration is officially open! Get ready for the summer by securing your place at the Diocesan summer camp. Beaver Cross has been *Building Community in Christ* since 1964. Camp activities include: Christian teaching, high ropes & low ropes course, swimming, worship, crafts, archery, sports, camp-wide games and more! For more information visit:

<http://www.beavercrossministries.org/camps.html>

A message from Bishop William Love:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This past fall, we launched the “Friends of the King Appeal” with the stated goal of raising \$500,000 in support of the ministry of Christ the King Center. We are off to a great start with 208 people responding so far, giving a total of \$212,915. An additional \$6,500 has been pledged, but not yet received, for a combined total gift/pledge of \$219,415. I am so appreciative to everyone who has given thus far to the “Friends of the King Appeal.” It means more than you know. Your extreme generosity and sacrificial giving is such an inspiration an encouragement to me personally and to so many others. THANK YOU!!!

For those of you who have not yet had a chance to give to the “Friends of the King Appeal,” or would like to give again, it is not too late. If you are in a financial position to meet the initial challenge of giving a \$1,000 or more, I would ask you to prayerfully consider doing so. I know there are many of you who can’t give \$1000, but would like to give as best you can in support of the incredibly important ministry that takes place day in and day out at Christ the King Center, where lives are being touched, healed and transformed by the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Please know every gift is important and very much needed and appreciated.

For more information, please visit:
<https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/>
and click “Friends of the King”

SAVE THE DATE

- ♦ Annual Spring Tea - Sunday, April 28th
 - ♦ CROP Walk will be Sunday, May 5th at 1:30pm (with registration beginning at 12:30pm). This Albany Walk joins other National walks to raise funds for feeding programs both locally and abroad. We are looking for a Coordinator volunteer to help disseminate information and organize a team of walkers from St. Peter's. Please let the clergy know if you are able to coordinate this Outreach activity.

March 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			<p style="text-align: right;">"All are from and to dust a Ecclesiastes</p> 
3 The Last Sunday after the Epiphany Healing Prayers 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion	4 5:00pm - Treble Make-up Rehearsal	5 5:00pm - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	6 Ash Wednesday 7:30am - Holy Communion w/Ash 8:45am - Top of the Cross 12:05pm - Ash Wednesday w/Ash 5:30pm - Holy Communion w/Ash
10 First Sunday in Lent Spring ahead 1 hour! ☺ 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 12:00pm - Lenten Day Program w/ Lunch	11 5:00pm - Treble Make-up Rehearsal	12 4:00pm - Outreach Meeting 5:15pm - Vestry Meeting	13 8:45am - Top of the Cross 12:05pm - Holy Communion 6:00pm - Alpha
17 Second Sunday in Lent 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 	18 5:00pm - Treble Make-up Rehearsal	19 Saint Joseph	20 8:45am - Top of the Cross 12:05pm - Holy Communion 6:00pm - Alpha
24 Third Sunday in Lent 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer	25 The Annunciation of our Lord Jesus Christ 5:00pm - Treble Make-up Rehearsal	26	27 8:45am - Top of the Cross 12:05pm - Holy Communion 6:00pm - Alpha
31 Fourth Sunday in Lent Youth Sunday 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer w/Children's Chapel			

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
"...in the dust, all return." 3:20, ESV		1 12:30pm - Organ Concert	2
Wednesday Communion Services the Hill Wednesday Service Communion Services	7 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	8 12:30pm - Organ Concert 5:45pm - Evensong	9
the Hill Communion Course	14 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	15 12:30pm - Organ Concert 5:45pm - Evensong	16 11:00am - Angels in Training
the Hill Communion Course	21 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	22 12:30pm - Organ Concert 5:45pm - Evensong	23
the Hill Communion Course	28 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	29 12:30pm - Organ Concert 5:45pm - Evensong	30

Saint of the Month

Charles Henry Brent

Bishop of the Philippines, and of Western New York, 1929

Born in Canada in 1862, educated at Trinity College of the University of Toronto, and ordained in the Anglican Church of Canada, Charles Henry Brent came to the United States where, in 1901, the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church elected him Missionary Bishop of the Philippines. Though he arrived in Manila with all the trappings of the new American establishment, Bishop Brent soon demonstrated that he would resist the nationalistic and cultural imperialist temptations that marked some Protestant missions. He refused to waste his time in criticism of the Roman Catholic faith of most Filipinos. He declined to serve as a mere chaplain to the wealthy American expatriate community in Manila. As a missionary bishop, he determined instead to go to the multitude of non-Christians in the islands and to see that American government of the islands was responsible.

Bishop Brent founded several schools and a charity hospital in Manila. He began a crusade against the opium trade, which he expanded to the Asian continent, becoming in 1909 a sort of early 20th century “drug czar” as President of the Opium Conference in Shanghai.

His evangelistic missions took him to the sophisticated Chinese community of Manila and to the pagan and uncivilized Igorots of Luzon. He initiated a Christian mission among the hostile Moros of the Sulu Archipelago. But by 1917 his health was such that he accepted election as Bishop of Western New York, having declined three previous elections to remain at his post in the Philippines.

As remarked in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* (1980), Bishop Brent was the outstanding figure of the Episcopal Church on the world scene for two decades. The central focus of his life and ministry was the cause of Christian unity. After attending the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, he led the Episcopal Church in the movement that culminated in the first World Conference on Faith and Order, held in Lausanne in 1927, and over which he presided.

The historian James Thayer Addison described Brent as “a saint of disciplined vigor...a priest and bishop who gloried in the heritage of his Church, yet who stood among all Christian brothers as one who served...He was everywhere an ambassador of Christ.”

While serving as Bishop of Western New York, Brent preached a sermon at the consecration of Dr E. M. Stires as Bishop of Long Island, which sermon Brent entitled, “The Authority of Christ”. The concerns of the truly catholic bishop and ecumenist show in his admonition that

The unity of Christendom is no longer a beautiful dream. It is a pressing necessity for the arousing of that passion for Christ which will be the most flaming thing in the world...Nationalism began to eat into the body of Christendom four hundred years ago and has continued to work until Christianity has been nationalized instead of the nations being Christianized...Until the churches unite we shall have to move as men grievously wounded—haltingly, lamely, without a supernational and final guide in the moral and spiritual movements of the time. We shall be unable to invite the nations to walk in the light of the Kingdom of God and in this way bring their glory and honor, together with that of their rulers, into it.

One of Brent’s prayers for the mission of the Church was included in the American Book of Common Prayer (1979):

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. *Amen.*

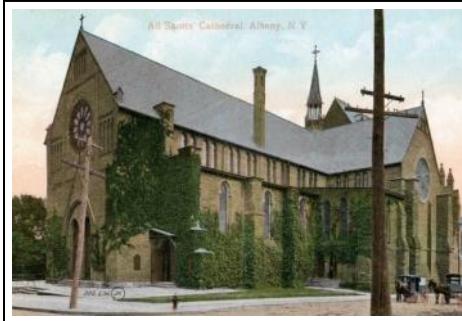
Bishop Brent died in 1929.

The Collect:

Heavenly Father, whose Son prayed that we all might be one: Deliver us from arrogance and prejudice, and give us wisdom and forbearance, that, following your servant Charles Henry Brent, we may be united in one family with all who confess the Name of your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

From the Archives

Cathedral of All Saints



Early Bishops of the Albany Diocese

The first Bishop of the Diocese of Albany was **William Croswell Doane**. As bishop from 1869 to 1913 he was active in preaching and confirmation. He also made plans for building a Cathedral Complex to include a grand Cathedral as the home of the bishop of the diocese and site of the bishop's consecration. It was also to follow the European model that is, it was to be accompanied by a complex of other services including a Convent, Cloister, Hospital and School. In 1870 the Girl's School was founded. The Convent and Hospital were established in 1884. The Cathedral, named the Cathedral of All Saints, (see picture) though not completed, was complete enough to be dedicated in 1888.

The second Bishop of the Diocese of Albany was **Richard Henry Nelson**. He was Bishop from 1913 to 1929, having been consecrated in a most elaborate service in 1913. During his tenure as Bishop he was active in preaching, consecrating and confirming, especially in the northern mission of the Diocese in the Adirondack Mountains.

The third Bishop of the Diocese of Albany was **G. Ashton Oldham**. He was the bishop from 1929-1949. Thus, he served the church during the turbulent times of the Great Depression and the Second World War. He was the author of the Catechism used by the church until 1979.

The fourth Bishop was **Frederick L. Barry** who served from the year 1949 to 1960. Bishop Barry's dream was the Good Samaritan Center. It was built on Hackett Boulevard in Albany. This center joined together: the Child's Nursing Home and Hospital, St. Margaret's House and Hospital for Babies, the Bender Hygienic Laboratory, the Nelson House for assisted living, and St. Paul's Church with its adjoining Parish House and Chapel.

The Albany Diocese was well served by these early bishops.

Composer of the Month



Adolphus Hailstork (born April 17, 1941) is an American composer and educator. He grew up in Albany, where he studied violin, piano, organ, and voice. He sang as a boy chorister at the Cathedral of All Saints.

Hailstork has degrees from Howard University, Manhattan School of Music, and Michigan State University. He also studied at The American Institute at Fontainebleau with Nadia Boulanger.

He has served as professor at Youngstown State University, as well as professor of music and Composer-in-Residence at Virginia's Norfolk State University. He is currently a professor of music and Composer-in-Residence at Old Dominion University.

Hailstork's works blend musical ideas from both the African American and European traditions.

A concert of his works will be presented at the Cathedral of All Saints on March 2nd at 3:00pm.
Admission: Adults \$10, Children under 18 and students with ID free.

Sponsored by the Eastern NY Chapter, American Guild of Organists

St. Peter's Music

Choir rehearsals are on the following schedule:

Mondays: 5:00pm - 6:15pm Treble Make-up Rehearsal

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

5:30pm - 7:00pm Adult choristers

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

Please contact Neil Keen for more information at (518)339-0137
or stpmus@gmail.com.

FRIDAY NOONTIME ORGAN CONCERTS

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



**MINUTES FOR THE VESTRY MEETING
ST. PETER'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH**
January 8, 2019

Present: Fr. Hartt, Mtr. Sue Waldron, D. Spath, J. Chenot, N. Creagan, C. Gordon, F. Hershey, M. Holden, T. Murphy, G. Scala, A. Spath

Absent: S. Lencewicz

Opening Prayer Led by Father Paul Hartt

Approval of the Minutes of Vestry Meeting, December 11th, 2018.

The December 11th, 2018 minutes were approved on a motion by T. Murphy and seconded by F. Hershey. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry.

Warden Report –D. Spath

The wardens began their report by wishing everyone a Happy New Year. December is usually one of the busiest months of the year as we all look forward to celebrating our traditional Christmas Eve services at 4:00 pm and 10:00 pm with a choral prelude at 9:30 by the choir. Both services were well attended and on Tuesday, Christmas Day we celebrated with one service at 9:00.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our choir director, Neil Keen and the choir for all their hard work and dedication with the preparation of all music that was performed during the Advent season including the 4:30 and 10:00 Christmas Eve services. Looking back before Christmas, Sunday December 16th we had a service of Lessons and Carols at the 10:30 service, followed with the Hanging of the Greens. We would like to this opportunity to thank our choir director, Neil Keen and the choir for all their hard work and dedication with all the preparation of music performed for this choral service as well as all the music prepared for the Advent season including the 4:30 and 10:00 Christmas Eve services. The Hanging of the Greens was well attended with many helpers, young and old. Each year is so encouraging to see everyone helping beautify the Church, which has been a large part of St. Peter's tradition for many years. We would like to thank Janice Chenot who headed up the luncheon as well as Caitlin Cehowski who helped in the kitchen afterwards for cleanup. It was truly a great day had by all.

We want to thank both Father Hartt and Mother Sue for their preparation and spiritual leadership they offer each year leading up to and during the Advent season. Their love and commitment to all of us at St. Peter's means so much too all guild, the ushers, acolytes, and clergy for making this past Advent season a meaningful and joyful time for all of us. A special thanks to Janice, Ruth, Pat and Ian for all their work and preparation before and after all the services.

As mentioned in December notes, we opened our doors in the parish hall sheltering women in need for a warm place to stay at night. This is our tenth year hosting this shelter for the homeless in conjunction with the Capital City Mission in Albany. There is a great need for women looking for shelter in the Albany area during the winter months. We continue to look for women willing to volunteer a few hours during the evening helping the Capital City Mission staff make these women feel a bit at home. Thank you to those who have already volunteered their time as well as those donating food and monetary gifts designated to this worthy cause.

Our annual meeting will be on the fourth Sunday of this month, January 28th after the 10:30 service. Committee reports need to be submitted to the church office by Wednesday, January 17th. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Maria Holden for all her service on the vestry, as she steps down serving her two three-year terms. Vestry nominations have been posted – James Chenot will be running for his 1st, two-year term as Jr. Warden. Jeff Russom will be running for his 1st three-year term, Mark Lundberg will be running for his 1st three-year term, and Nancy Creagan will be running for her 2nd three-year term. We also want to thank George for all his dedication and hard work on the finance committee including the stewardship drive that he spearheaded in October of last year with his letter. Your impeccable work and commitment to St. Peter's is very much appreciated and does not go unnoticed.

Looking ahead, Lent begins March 6th and will again have our annual Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner on March 5th.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year.

Sunday Attendance – The Average Sunday attendance is 93.9

Rector's Report - Father Hartt

Father Hartt began by thanking Maria Holden for her faithful service on the Vestry. Maria will be reaching her term limit. We are grateful for her wisdom and service in many ways over her term. Maria has most recently been instrumental in advancing the parish's interior restoration project.

Father Hartt welcomed Mtr. Waldron back following her time in the hospital and subsequent recuperation. The parish was most faithful in prayer and support throughout. Fr. Hartt has encouraged Mtr. Sue to continue to take it easy until at full strength.

Christmas Eve Services could hardly have been better. The Choir was in exceptional form. We were blessed as well by the return of Choir alumni as is customary. Our Epiphany Services last Sunday were strong in spirit and attendance. Advent was strong this year as well. The Greens are coming down as we meet.

Father Hartt has a wedding on February 23rd. John Sterrett and Carol Ann Tiberia will be married on the 23rd of February. Outreach needs continue apace during the winter months. We have had many walk-ins. Father Hartt reminded us that we truly are an urban parish, and Albany is struggling in many ways. We seem to be known in the community as a place where needs are addressed compassionately. May it always be so.

Tomorrow night the ALPHA group will be meeting at Fred Hersey's home to plan our next series of sessions. We are persuaded as a

group that ALPHA will be a powerful tool for evangelism. Fr. Hartt encouraged our prayers as we start up again March 13th. The meeting at Fred's home will focus on promotion and advertising. Fr. Hartt is hoping that additional parish members will try ALPHA.

Former Vestry member Moses Kamya recently returned from a visit to the girls' school in West Buganda that we have been supporting through scholarships. Moses spoke of the immense value of those scholarships and how impressed he was by what he saw on his visit. Lives are being transformed by this school, founded by Moses' father, Bishop Kamya. The school helps vulnerable orphan girls get a quality education. Many of these girls became orphans from the AIDS crisis.

Father Hartt mentioned a few items in need of repair around the office.

Fr. Hartt spoke enthusiastically of the Alpha presentation planned for the Annual Meeting.

Finance – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

George reviewed the Treasurer's Report for December. Offerings for December were \$30,089 which while much higher than most months was low for a December/end of year. YTD offerings through December were \$205,705. This compares to a budgeted number of \$277,300. YTD Offerings through the same period in 2017 were \$240,893.

The investment/endowment accounts both showed significant losses for December. Merrill Lynch had a return of -6.48% for the month and is at a -5.90% return YTD. The Key accounts showed a monthly return of -5.51% and is at -6.40% YTD. This leaves us with a negative variance in this area YTD of (\$449,103). Both accounts performed favorably versus market indexes. Expenses YTD through December were \$15,815 over budget.

Pledges for 2018 continue to be received. We are currently at 32 pledges for \$97,464. By next month, those members who have not yet pledged will be contacted.

Property – The Interior Restoration Project has continued to progress into Phase 2 with the cleaning of the stonework throughout the church.

Outreach – See "Associate Rector's Report"

Old Business- None

New Business – None

Associate Rector's Report – Mother Sue

Many thanks to those who donated items for the Christmas giving to the Burmese refugee families. We thank everyone for their generosity again this year. The families were very blessed by your gifts. Thank you also for your donations to the Blessing Bags for the women who stay at our Overflow Shelter. They will bless these women all winter long! St. Peter's Christmas generosity continues to overwhelm us!

The Overflow Homeless Shelter continues daily housing up to eight women nightly through March. Mary Malone (from Capital City Rescue Mission) is the Director again this year. Women volunteers can provide hospitality (from 7-11pm) or can stay overnight. Please consider volunteering this winter. We have had a strong response of volunteers to date, with January's calendar nearly full. You can register by calling Mary at 518-527-5025 or visit www.capitalcityresuemission.org

A \$200 check was received from St. Andrew's Episcopal church to benefit the Overflow Homeless Shelter ministry – thank you St. Andrew's!

The Outreach Committee voted to support the West Buganda AIDS Orphans with multiple scholarships. These monies provide life-changing quality to orphaned girls' lives by providing education, including books and uniforms, as well as room and board.

The Annual Soup Sampler is scheduled for Sunday, February 3rd following the 10:30 service. Please bring your favorite soup to share and your appetite as well! To-go containers will be made available. This year, our Soup Sampler will benefit the West Buganda AIDS Orphans.

Great news for downtown – recently approved building rehab that will put 300+ new apartments with residents in our neighborhood – this project was approved this month and rehab will be underway soon. These new neighbors give us neighborhood evangelism opportunities.

The Church's Instagram and Facebook posts continue to gain more and more followers with some posts seen by over 600 people! Our increased social media presence is surely to continue to bear fruit for our church.

The Daughters of the King continue to gather monthly on the 2nd Sunday of each month. We have been working through the DOK Spiritual Formation Bible study together, and will study chapter 6 this month on January 13th. We welcome new women to our order – please ask about the Discernment classes starting later this year.

Thank you to Fr. Hartt and many parishioners for your support and prayers during my convalescence in December. I was blessed by your prayers, your presence your notes, cards and visits. Thank you so much for your care. Although I missed part of Advent, and some important church functions, Christmas Eve service was the highlight of my Christmas experience this year. Thank you so much for that great Blessing! You are a wonderful church family to belong to.

Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by G. Scala and seconded by C. Gordon, then was approved unanimously by the vestry.

Compline - Father Hartt led Compline.

Respectfully Submitted, Christie J. Gordon

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
Ian Mike.....Sexton
James P. Shortall.....Assistant Sexton
Ruth Manss.....Administrative Assistant
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

Deborah SpathSenior Warden
James Chenot.....Junior Warden
George Scala.....Treasurer

Nancy Creagan, Christie Gordon, Fred Hershey,
Stephanie Lencewicz, Mark Lundberg,
Tim Murphy, Jeff Russom, Ashley Spath

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
107 State St.
Albany, New York 12207

How to Contact Us

Office Hours:
Monday -Friday
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Telephone: 518-434-3502
Fax: 518-462-4419
E-Mail:
Receptionist@stpeterschurchalbany.org
Website:
www.stpeterschurchalbany.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.

Wednesday

Holy Communion 12:05 p.m.