



THE Cornerstone

January 2020

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

Epiphany Rising

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you."

(Isaiah 60:1.)

Like many of my generation, I grew up with the books of Dr. Seuss, My mother often read them to me. They were always among my favorites. I still enjoy revisiting the stories and find to my amazement that the rhymes remain with me.

One of the better known books of the good Doctor is *The Cat in the Hat*. The mother heads out for the day while the kids are left bored at home. We see the brother and sister parked by the window watching the rain with sad faces. Suddenly, Cat in the Hat shows up out of nowhere and comes through the door. He tells them it will be fun and games. The pet fish in the bowl isn't persuaded any good can come, which proves correct. The Cat proceeds to do an elaborate juggling act with multiple household items -- including the poor fish -- and soon the structure comes tumbling down to the floor. Right on the heels of this chaos, the Cat's friends Thing One and Thing Two pop out of a magic box and pile on more mess as they run about the house knocking things over with kites. The Cat and Things One and Two then take off.

The time has come for Mom to return. The kids are going to need to explain a very big mess. But right before Mom appears, the Cat returns and does a miracle clean up for them with his magic cleaning machine. The two kids are spared the wrath of their mother who arrives home oblivious to the mayhem just moments earlier. It remains one of my favorite stories in the Seuss series.

One day, my own mother confessed that she had always been troubled by one aspect of the story. There is a part in *The Cat in the Hat* in which some of the mayhem left a toy ship sunk deep in a cake that the kids' mother had made. "How on earth did that get fixed?" asked my mother. The rest of the clean-up seemed plausible, but not that part. Of course, my mother makes a good point. Even in a fantasy, a measure of reality is required for the plot to work. Admittedly, it never much troubled my child's mind.

So what is my point? The one thing that always seems unfix-able in our story is the bit about -- well, all of us. In fact, we are quite right about our own unfix-ability. It is not in our power and God is quite aware of the problem. So, as an act of pure mercy, God's light has shined upon us in Jesus. We have neither made the light nor made things shine. Here we are recipients only. It's called Grace. And that, my friends, is the Good News. We are unfix-able of ourselves. God takes the job from us. It wasn't going very well anyway. But it's not magic at all. It is Divine Love. It is Jesus Himself. Jesus, the friend of sinners and lover of souls.

In the wonder of God's creation, we are the ship sunk deep in the cake. But God has this one. The Light has come.

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you."

The glory of the LORD.

Epiphany blessings,

Fr. Hartt+

From the Associate Rector

New Beginnings....

It's January – the time we often focus on new beginnings. This year with the calendar turning to 2020, there is something quite surreal about looking forward to that year being reality. Like many of us, I'm sure, I can't help but feel that we are still somewhere in the 1980's!

And this brings me to my very point...every new beginning not only looks forward but looks backwards too. I say this for many reasons. One is because we are a connected people – we live in and for relationships. Relationships are always moving forward while being rooted in the past. Another reason is that we are cyclical people. We don't seem to focus on the here and now too long without straining ahead at what is to come or looking backwards at what has happened. And, lastly, we are a dynamic people. Hardly ever does everything or everyone stay exactly the same. And, thanks be to God for that! We are meant to develop, grow, learn, change and adjust throughout our lifetimes. And this dynamic nature of ours is strongly enriched by the past, the present and looks also towards the future. There is connectedness all around us even while we contemplate new beginnings.

So, let's be quite realistic this year and acknowledge that every new beginning is quite connected to the present and the past even while it looks forward to the future. Instead of committing to a New Year's Resolution that stretches us greatly or commits ourselves in some way that has proven impossible to maintain in the past, let's commit ourselves to a new beginning that honors the connectedness of past and present to our future. Especially spiritually, we don't need to try to make giant leaps, i.e. attempt to be Mother Theresa overnight....one step towards her actions and nature is quite enough.

The Women's Bible study group ended our last study in discussion about Rule of Life...it is a discussion that continues. Basically, a Rule of Life is a well thought out, intentional plan for the nurturing and development of one's faith and spiritual life. I suggested the women spend the rest of December praying and reflecting on what does or does not feed their spiritual life and make some commitment to a change in the New Year that might nurture their spiritual life better. This reflection causes one to look seriously at the past and its successes and failures. Without this reflection, a New Beginning may not be new at all, or ineffective at the very least.

Although I cannot give a full teaching on Rule of Life within this article, I'd like to invite each person reading this into a reflective time of discernment. Ask yourself: What has helped nurture my faith and relationship with Jesus Christ? Where have I become lax? What could help me moving forward? Some key areas to consider are worship, prayer, ministry involvement, giving, Bible study, fellowship and service to others. There are more, but these may offer enough reflection for us to begin with.

After reflecting deeply on what has worked well, or hindered us in the past, we then make a commitment towards a New Beginning...a new plan that will nurture the faith within us and help us continue to “grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Ephesians 4:15b). This could be an exciting exercise for us to contemplate corporately as well as we venture together into this new year and decade. My prayers for this parish family continue as we look to our future together, all while honoring our great past.

With Blessings,

Mtr. Sue (Troiano)

Happenings



A representative from Food for the Poor will be our guest preacher on Sunday, January 19th at both services. Please pray about a donation to this organization which makes transforming differences, as a testament to our Christian faith, in communities throughout the world. More about this organization can be found at: www.foodforthe poor.org

Daughters of the King

The January DOK meeting will be held on Sunday, January 12th, after the 10:30am service. The meeting will be held in the Vestry Room.

Outreach Meeting

The next Outreach meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14th at 4:30pm.

Vestry Meeting

The next Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14th at 5:15pm.

Pledge Cards

Pledge cards for 2020 have been mailed out to all parishioners. If you did not receive a pledge card please call the church office. It would be greatly appreciated if you could please take a minute to complete your card and return it to the church office or place it in the offering plate during the service. Pledges can also be made on the St. Peter's website at www.stpeterschurchalbany.org by clicking on the "Get your pledge card" button. You may also call the church office and we would be more than happy to complete a card for you. Thank you to those that have promptly completed and returned their pledge card or pledged online.

Interior Restoration Project

If you made an Interior Restoration Project pledge for 2019, now is the time to send in your payments. We are also accepting additional donations for Phase 2 of the Interior Restoration Project. Please make your checks payable to: St. Peter's Church Interior Restoration Fund. Thank you for your support.

Annual Meeting: January 26th is St. Peter's Annual meeting, with two worship services at 8:30am and 10:30am, and the meeting following the 10:30 service.

Annual Meeting

Dear Parishioners,

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

- ◆ James Chenot will be running for his 1st two-year term as Sr. Warden. He is running to fill the seat formerly held by Deborah Spath.
- ◆ Christie Gordon will be running for her 2nd three-year term on the vestry. She is running to fill her present seat.
- ◆ George Scala will be running for his 2nd three-year term on the vestry. He is running to fill his present seat.
- ◆ Fred Hershey will be running for his first three-year vestry term to fill the seat formerly held by Earl Stafford.

Other nominations must be submitted to the office in writing by Wednesday, January 22nd, 2020, in order to appear on the ballot. James Chenot is currently serving as Junior Warden. In the event of James Chenot's election to the position of Senior Warden, a vacancy will be created in the seat of Junior Warden. In the case of a vacancy, the vestry is empowered to fill it until the next Annual Meeting at which time the vestry-appointed seat will be opened for parish election. In the interest of transparency, the Vestry wishes to alert the parish that in the event James Chenot is elected as Sr. Warden, the Vestry has resolved to appoint Deborah Spath as Junior Warden until the next Annual Meeting.

From time to time, we are asked about how one qualifies as a parish member and thus able to vote. The qualification of voters is by Canon and law determined by the rector, if there be one. The relevant language is as follows: "Persons of full age belonging to the parish, who have been baptized and are regular attendants at its worship and contributors to its support for at least twelve months prior to such election or special meeting or since the establishment of such parish, shall be qualified voters at any such election or special meeting. ..." RCL Section 43, 6. Thank you for your faithfulness to St. Peter's and may God Bless you in 2020.

God Bless,
Father Hartt
Deborah Spath

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

Youth Formation & Sunday School

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

Saturday, January 18th ~ 11AM to 1PM

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



Sunday School Pageant



REGIONAL YOUTH GROUP

**ROOTED
HIGH SCHOOL**

WHAT: A YOUTH GROUP FOR ANYONE!	WHERE: ST. JOHN'S (146 1ST STREET TROY, NY 12180)
WHEN: EVERY THURSDAY 6:45 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.	WHO: 7TH-12TH GRADE

A FREE EVENT!

HOSTED BY: **BEAVER CROSS MINISTRIES**

WWW.BEAVERCROSSMINISTRIES.ORG | (518) 692-9550 EX. 114

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REGIONAL YOUTH GROUP

**ROOTED
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

WHAT: A YOUTH GROUP FOR ANYONE!	WHERE: ST. GEORGE'S (912 RT. 146, CLIFTON PARK, NEW YORK 12065)
WHEN: EVERY TUESDAY 6:15 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.	WHO: 5TH-8TH GRADERS

A FREE EVENT

HOSTED BY: **BEAVER CROSS MINISTRIES**

WWW.BEAVERCROSSMINISTRIES.ORG | (518) 692-9550 EX. 114

Saint of the Month Club



JANUARY 4: ELIZABETH ANN SETON, Monastic and Educator, 1821

Elizabeth Ann Seton was the founder of the Sisters of Charity, the first community of sisters established in the United States. Elizabeth was born in New York City on August 28th, 1774, and was raised in the Episcopal Church. She endured a turbulent childhood and suffered severe bouts of depression. She survived by immersing herself in poetry, piano lessons, and devoted participation in the Episcopal Church. From a young age, she desired to help the sick and poor. In 1795 she married William Seton, and their family came to include five children. During this time, she also founded the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children. In 1801, however, the family business went bankrupt. In 1803, her husband developed symptoms of tuberculosis, and they set sail for Italy in the hopes that the warm climate might cure his disease. The Italian authorities, fearing yellow fever, quarantined them in a cold stone hospital for the dying. William soon died and left Elizabeth a young widow with five

children and few resources. While struggling with these losses, she was befriended by Roman Catholics and, as a result, was drawn to Roman Catholicism. Returning to New York, she encountered bitter opposition from her Episcopalian family for her new religious leanings. With five children to support, she found herself alone and in financial straits. She turned to Roman Catholic clergy for support and, in 1805, she formally became a member of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1806, she met Father Louis Dubourg, who wanted to start a congregation of women religious, patterned after the French Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul. In 1809 Elizabeth took vows and became "Mother Seton" to a small community of seven women, known as the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph, dedicated to teaching. The sisters were given land in rural Maryland and, in 1810, they opened Saint Joseph's Free School to educate needy girls. The sisters intertwined social ministry, education, and religious formation in all of their varied works. Out of the pioneering work of 50 Elizabeth Seton, five independent communities of the Sisters of Charity now exist, offering ministry and care for the most vulnerable. Elizabeth Ann Seton remained the superior of the Sisters of Charity until her death on January 4th, 1821.

Collect:

Give us grace, O God, to love thee in all things and above all things, that following the example of thy servant Elizabeth Ann Seton we might express our love for thee in the service of others. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Coming Soon

Altar Guild Workshop for All Levels of Experience

January 18, 2020

Registration at 9:30; Noon Prayers & Lunch;
Program ends at 3:30 with Tea w/the Sisters

The Sisters will open up their sacristy and demonstrate their routines in preparing for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, how to take care of the linens and vestments, stain removal, candle preparation and wax clean up, the extras for different liturgical seasons, what to do with worn out vestments, availability of materials for vestments, and, of course, a tour of the museum quality vestments from our history in Peekskill.

St. Mary's

Suggested Donation: \$25.

Mighty to Save Women's Retreat

Friday and Saturday, February 21st & 22nd , 2020

A Women's Retreat Studing through the book of
Zephaniah

guest speakers from Titus Women Ministries:

Beth Coppedge and Cricket Albertson

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL (Until 2-01-20)



January 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			1 The Holy Trinity Our Lord Jesus Christ Office Closed
5 Second Sunday after Christmas Day 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion	6 The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ	7 11:00am - Dr. James Castleman Funeral Service	8 8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho
12 First Sunday after the Epiphany The Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 11:45am - DOK Meeting	13	14 4:30pm - Outreach Meeting 5:15pm - Vestry Meeting	15 8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho
19 Second Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion Food for the Poor (Both Services)	20 Martin Luther King Day Office Closed	21	22 8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho
26 Third Sunday after the Epiphany Youth Sunday 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 12:00pm - Annual Meeting	27	28	29 8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Holy Name of and Jesus Christ Church Closed</p>	<p>2 No Choir Rehearsals</p>	<p>3 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Top of the Hill Holy Communion</p>	<p>9 4:30pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>10 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>11 12:00pm - Jack Avakian Committal Service</p>
<p>Top of the Hill Holy Communion</p>	<p>16 4:30pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>17 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>18 Confession of St. Peter the Apostle 11:00am - Angels in Training</p>
<p>Top of the Hill Holy Communion</p>	<p>23 4:30pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>24 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>25 Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle 8:30am - 4:30pm - Parish Leadership Conference (at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center)</p>
<p>Top of the Hill Holy Communion</p>	<p>30 4:30pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir</p>	<p>31 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	 <p>Wish you and your family a joyful, bright, healthy, prosperous and happiest new year ahead. !!</p> <p><i>Happy New Year!</i></p>

St. Peters Music

FRIDAY NOONTIME ORGAN CONCERTS

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

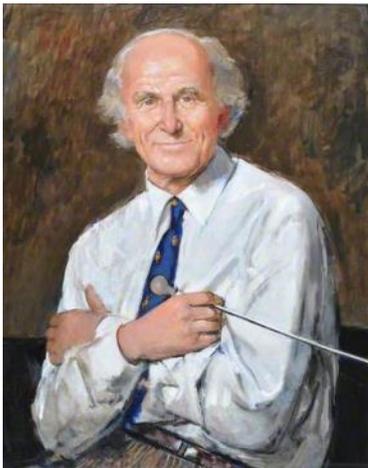
We want to thank Neil Keen and our marvelous St. Peter's Choir for bringing such joy through music during the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Their dedication to their art and to the people of St. Peter's is something we shouldn't take for granted. Blessings on each of you!

CHOIR

Choir rehearsals are on the following schedule:
Thursdays: 4:30pm - 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.



Composer of the Month



Sir David Valentine Willcocks, CBE, MC (30 December 1919 – 17 September 2015) was a British choral conductor, organist, composer and music administrator. He was particularly well known for his association with the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, which he directed from 1957 to 1974. During his tenure the broadcast of the annual service of Nine Lessons and Carols achieved worldwide fame. Many of the descants and carol arrangements he wrote for this service are still in regular use, here at St. Peter's Church and all over the world.

Prior to coming to King's College, he had served as organist of Salisbury Cathedral, and later Worcester Cathedral.

Beyond his work at King's College, Willcocks conducted a variety of choral societies, and in 1970 became Director of the Royal College of Music. He traveled widely with his choir, as guest conductor and clinician, and made many groundbreaking recordings.



Part II – Early Wars in America

One exciting skirmish of the French and Indian War was the Battle for Fort Ticonderoga. It occurred on July 6, 1758, when British Brigadier General George Augustus Viscount Lord Howe led British troops toward the French held Fort Ticonderoga. Howe was killed. His body was brought back to Albany and his funeral and burial were held at the First Edifice of St. Peter's Church. The vestibule of the Third Edifice of St. Peter's Church now contains Lord Howe's remains and two commemorative plaques in his honor. There is also a commemorative statue in his honor in Westminster Abbey in London.

On September of 1759 the British defeated the French at the Plains of Abraham, Quebec, Canada when British General Wolfe defeated French General Montcalm. Both generals died in the encounter. After their defeat the French evacuated Quebec as well as their remaining military forces in Canada. The rest of North America came under increasing pressure from the British. The defeat of the French in the French and Indian War formally concluded with the Treaty of Paris in 1763.

In 1764 after conflicts back and forth, the British defeated the Dutch forces. The fort at the top of the Albany hill was renamed Fort Frederick after Frederick Louis Prince of Wales, son of King George II. Fort Frederick acted as a reminder of the new British authority over the Dutch residents of Albany.

At this point not only the Dutch but all the colonists had become British subjects. But this was not to last. British rule was extremely authoritarian. The British passed laws that negatively affected the colonists. They also taxed the colonists for funds they needed to finance their many wars around the globe. One example of such a tax was the Tea Act passed on May 10, 1773. This bill stipulated the payment of tariffs on tea purchased from Britain and required that the colonists use only tea from the British East India Company. The colonists responded on December 16, 1773 by dumping 92,000 pounds of newly delivered tea into the Boston Harbor, the so called "Boston Tea Party."

This "Boston Tea Party", so enraged the King and Parliament that they passed a series of Coercive Acts which among other things closed the Boston Port, took away the Massachusetts' charter, and limited town meetings. In addition to the Coercive Acts the British passed the Quebec Act which placed the government of Quebec in the hands of an English governor and his council, and expanded the boundaries of Quebec to the Ohio River on the south and the Mississippi on the west. The Coercive Acts and the Quebec Act drove the colonists to initiate their first Continental Congress on September 5th 1774 in Philadelphia. At this Congress they passed the Suffolk Resolves which basically required a redress of grievances. Following the Congress the colonies began organizing an army. They organized the town militia of their own men, and created a quick response force of at least 50 men called Minute Men. (See illustration above).

On April 9, 1775 British General Gage of Boston sent his 700 regulars to Lexington and Concord to "teach the colonists a lesson." The colonists were ready for them. General Gage's forces were chased back to Boston in a humiliating defeat. This was the beginning of the American Revolution. The highly qualified General William Howe and his brother Admiral Richard Lord Howe (both brothers of Brigadier General Viscount Lord Howe) were selected by the British to win what they hoped would be a quick victory. The Howe brothers captured the major cities of the colonies including Brooklyn, New York, and Philadelphia while the discouraged patriots experienced the hunger and cold of the winter at Valley Forge. It looked to the patriots as though they would not win.

But things were to turn around. In the north British General Burgoyne was defeated by the colonial army at Saratoga. As the war shifted to the south, there were battles and victories on both sides. But when British General Cornwallis was ordered by his commander General Clinton to construct a fortified naval post at the Virginia peninsula called Williamsburg Neck, General Cornwallis feared he would be trapped. And he was. Cornwallis was defeated by the combined forces of the patriots and French at Yorktown on October 19, 1781. The Americans had won the war and the new nation would take on the economic and political responsibilities of nationhood. Another responsibility would be the founding of a new American Episcopal Church.

MINUTES FOR THE VESTRY MEETING
ST. PETER'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
November 12, 2019

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

Absent: None

Opening Prayer Led by Father Paul Hartt

Approval of the Minutes of Vestry Meeting, October 8, 2019

The October 8, 2019 minutes were approved on a motion by J. Russom and seconded by M. Lundberg. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry.

Warden Report –D. Spath

As we mentioned in our last vestry meeting report, October is quite common to be a quiet month, in regards to parish activities outside of our regular Sunday worship services and classes. During October we usually are preparing for this month, November as well as December. To start off, we will be hosting our annual Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner this coming Saturday, November 16th at 5:00. This dinner and gathering has become an annual tradition for some years now. Each year we have a tremendous turnout that includes many parishioners and guests that attend. Again, we look forward seeing everyone and want to thank those in advance who brought a turkey home to cook, as well as other who will be preparing side dishes to pass.

Last month, David Poach from the Albany City Rescue Mission reached out to us, in regards to this year's overflow shelter which we begin hosting December 1st. This year will be our 11th year, hosting gentleman as we had done in years past. The women we have been helping in the past few years now have a permanent home that has been in the works at the city mission, rehabbing a large warehouse into small living quarters so they can slowly rebuild their lives. The congregation of St. Peter's should be proud, yet humbled to be able to minister to this important outreach mission to the less fortunate in our community. For those that may be interested in volunteering some time welcoming these gentlemen preparing light snacks and drinks for them as they come in each evening, we request you attend one of the two orientations meeting beforehand. The first orientation date is Thursday, November 21st at 7:00 pm and the second is on Saturday November 23rd at 10:00 am. Both are held at our parish hall.

A stewardship letter will be sent out this week to the congregation from our treasurer George Scala. George has worked hard the past few years relaying the importance of stewardship and we want thank him in advance for all his effort in doing so. Our budget is so heavy relying on our investment returns from our endowment. Your pledge means a great deal to our finance committee when planning for the next year's budget. Pledge cards will be included with the Georges letter and we pray that everyone takes a moment to reflect on how much St. Peter's means to them and their family when you fill out your pledge card.

Again, this year we will be helping at the Equinox on Thanksgiving Day morning at 9:00 am preparing Thanksgiving Dinners. We want to thank all the volunteers and also Laura Rulison for heading up this outreach we do each year.

As mentioned, December 1st we will be opening our doors again to the homeless overflow shelter for its 11th year. We would like to thank those who have donated food as well as financial donations in past years. This year we anticipate 10 to 15 gentlemen staying with us each night and your continued support to this very important to this outreach mission and much appreciated by all.

Christmas Season is near and our choir will start the season off performing the Handel's Messiah on Sunday December 8th at 3:00 pm. Many thanks to our choir director Neil Keen and the entire choir, for their commitment to our incredible musical program they bring to all the musical events and services upcoming the next few weeks and leading into December. On Sunday, December 15th, the Sunday school will be performing their annual Christmas Pageant. Again, I would to thank Laura Rulison and the entire Sunday school staff for their commitment to our younger upcoming generation, as well as those who help in the nursery.

Lessons and Carols will be performed by our choir the following Sunday, December 22nd at the 10:30 service, followed by our annual Hanging of the Greens at 12:00 which includes a luncheon that is served during the event. We hope that everyone will be able to attend this traditional event that brings the congregation together in fellowship and beatifies the church for our Christmas season. Again, we ask those who plan to stay and enjoy the luncheon to bring a dish to pass if possible.

As we move into this busy Holiday season, please keep our clergy and office personnel in your thoughts and prayers. The amount of additional work added to their day to day work is incredible, and we truly appreciate all their effort and love they have for our church. We are all looking forward to the upcoming events, as well as the Christmas Eve services and Christmas Day and hope see everyone at all the upcoming activities and services.

Have a safe and thankful Thanksgiving

Sunday Attendance – The Average Sunday Attendance is 110.4

Rector's Report - Father Hartt

Father Hartt began by thanking our Sr. Warden, Fred Hersey, Ruth and so many others who have been working behind the scenes for Mtr. Waldron and Jimmy Troiano's December wedding. We rejoice for them both and for the love that this parish is showing to them. Such kindnesses and delight in others are among the many spiritual marks of this parish. We give thanks to God for such grace among us.

Fr. Hartt spoke about Phase Two of the Interior Restoration Project. We received a generous donation on Sunday that brought us very close to the matching grant funds requested by the Bender Grant. There is considerable momentum as a result of the spectacular work in Phase One. Fr. Hartt thanked Fred Hersey for his work on the Bender Grant.

Fr. Hartt spoke about the Stewardship Drive. Treasurer George Scala sent a superb letter to the parish. The clergy will follow. One strength of George's letter was a detailed account of varied ways of giving, including stock options. We will continue to work on electronic giving methods. It is clear that those of us who write checks will soon be in the minority.

The Strategic Growth Committee has met twice. Already considerable ground has been covered. We will soon send a survey to the parish. We are also working on better newcomer incorporation and matters of communication. Frequency of attendance will be a needed focus. As Fr. Hartt has said on several occasions, ASA is key. It is what happens on "ordinary Sundays" that makes or breaks a church.

Sunday School continues to be a strong face of the parish. Fr. Hartt thanked the Sunday School staff for their devotion in teaching and caring for our youngest ones. One clear strength at St. Peter's is the number of children we have in our midst. Our children can sense their important place among us.

The clergy attended a clergy conference last week at the SLC. The series of talks concerned Advent preaching. These talks were offered by our Canon Theologians, Fr. Christopher Brown. The talks could not have been better. We also had "bishop time" in which we were made aware of the status of the disciplinary actions against Bishop Love. There will be an ecclesiastical trial, but the date has still not been set. The trial concerns Bishop Love's November Pastoral Letter to all parishes on same-sex marriage and the related Resolution B012. Fr. Hartt will keep us informed as things develop.

Fr. Hartt reported that all of the frozen turkeys were taken for Saturday's Pre-Thanksgiving Thanksgiving Dinner. We have also had a wonderful response this year to requests for side dishes. We look forward to this time of fellowship.

Alpha continues to be well attended. This run of Alpha will conclude on December 15th.

Finance – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

George reviewed the Treasurer's Report for October. Offerings YTD through October were \$171,651. This compares to a budgeted number of \$189,708. YTD Offerings through the same period in 2018 were \$169,829.

The investment/endowment accounts both showed gains for October. Merrill Lynch showed a return of +1.56% for the month and is at a YTD return of +16.74%. The Key accounts showed a return of +1.02% for the month and have a YTD return of +15.66%. This leaves us with a positive budget variance in this area YTD of \$431,623. Both accounts performed favorably versus market indexes. Expenses YTD through October were \$17,975 over budget.

Pledges for 2019 remain at 49 pledging units for a total amount of \$126,154.

Stewardship was discussed. George's letter will be mailed to the congregation. Online pledging will be stressed as well as other methods of giving. The draft 2020 budget was discussed and reviewed. Minimal changes were suggested. A final budget will be voted on at the December meeting.

Property –

A new gas and electric contract has been signed for the next 3 years at 5% less cost.

The greens for decorating the church have been ordered and will be ready for Hanging of the Greens Sunday.

The chairlift from the 2nd floor of the guild house to the gymnasium has been installed to make it easier for parishioners to access for parish events.

January 1st we will move forward with Phase 2 of the Interior Restoration Project.

Outreach – Mother Sue

The Annual Pre-Thanksgiving Thanksgiving dinner will be held on Saturday November 16, 2019 at 5:00 with dinner served at 5:30pm. Janice Chenot is coordinating the sign-up sheet for food items. Please RSVP with # of family members attending along with what dish your family may provide or if you can cook a turkey (provided by the church).

Volunteers are requested for meal preparations on Thanksgiving morning from 7:30-9:30am for Equinox dinners. Please see Laura Rulison for more information if you are interested in volunteering. Laura is also collecting new or gently used coats for women and children for distribution at the St. Francis Mission.

The Overflow Homeless Shelter is planned for opening December 1st for the 11th year. We are pleased, once again, to provide this ministry in support of the Capital City Rescue Mission, housing up to 20 men nightly this year. Orientation and training for volunteers is set for November 21, 2019 at 7:00pm or November 23, 2019 at 10:00am. Women, men and teens (with parent accompaniment) may volunteer for hospitality (8:00pm on) and/or may stay for overnight hours. Please see Ruth, Mother Sue or Jim Chenot to sign up as a volunteer.

Christmas gifts for Burmese refugees from St. Francis Mission are being organized. Stay tuned for more information on this year's Giving Tree.

Donations for Blessing Bags: like in years past, we will be collecting and assembling Blessing bags to be distributed to homeless men and women throughout winter months. These include personal care items, snacks and other necessities. Also this year, we are accepting gently-used pocket-books for distribution to the women. The DOK, and other interested members, will assemble the bags on December 8th.

Food for the Poor is scheduled to visit St. Peter's on Sunday January 19, 2020. Their representative will preach and request donations towards their global efforts.

Old Business- None

New Business – The vestry was given a copy of the Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children and Youth provided by the Episcopal Diocese of Albany. On a motion by F. Hershey and seconded by M. Lundberg, the policies were acknowledged and adopted for our parish. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry and the appropriated documentation was signed and sent to the EDOA.

The Altar Guild presented a letter to the Vestry detailing some of their needs including every day needs as well as some bigger needs such as replacements for frontals that have taken some wear and tear. The vestry has decided to increase the Altar Guild budget for 2020 in order to accommodate some of these needs and to slowly be able to start replacing some necessities over time.

Associate Rector's Report – The Women's Book and Bible Study group continues through December 3rd reading *Sensible Shoes, a Story about the Spiritual Journey*, by Sharon Garlough Brown with weekly gatherings and reflection. Some women of the church join our weekly gatherings, others read the book on their own. Alpha continues to meet weekly on Sundays and is having a strong impact on everyone attending.

Instruction for First Holy Communion completed with Phoebe Clark's receiving Communion on All Saints Sunday – a wonderful celebration for the parish.

The clergy attended the EDOA Preaching Conference last week which explored Advent themes and preaching. I'm certain this will bless us all as we move through the Advent season this year (which will be upon us in no time at all).

My wedding date, with Jimmy Troiano, has been set for December 29, 2019 at 10:30am here at St. Peter's Church with Fr. Hartt officiating. Jimmy and I invite our parish family to share our joy that day and thank the countless people who are helping with the plans and arrangements – what a parish family!

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by C. Gordon and seconded by A. Spath, 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 Troiano.....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..... Office Manager
 Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
 E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

Deborah Spath Senior Warden
 James Chenot.....Junior Warden
 George Scala.....Treasurer

Ashley Closson, Nancy Creagan,
 Christie Gordon, Fred Hershey, Maria Holden,
 Mark Lundberg, Tim Murphy, Jeff Russom

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.

Wednesday

Holy Communion 12:05 p.m.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

