



Cornerstone

January 2023

Newsletter of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church

107 State Street, Albany, New York

The Reverend Christina Hunter

Beloved of God,

Get ready. It's about to get interesting.

This month, we enter the church season of surprises -- the time God opens our eyes to a deeper vision of who God is. This is Epiphany.

We know that when someone says, "I just had an epiphany!" they're describing an intense insight that they didn't have beforehand. But the original meaning of Epiphany is a "revealing." The Christian feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revealing of Christ to the first Gentiles (the wise men) and the season after Epiphany ends, right before Lent, with the Transfiguration.

Epiphanies matter here at St. Peter's. Our leaflet, for many, many years, has had the words of an epiphany emblazoned on the cover. Can you remember what it says without looking? We'll come back to that.

The reason epiphanies matter at St. Peter's is that Peter -- our patron -- became famous for an epiphany of Jesus that he had. Peter said, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." God the Father gave this special insight to Peter, and Peter truly saw Jesus for who he was. There is an entire church feast dedicated to this moment known as The Confession of St. Peter the Apostle that we'll celebrate on Sunday, January 22nd (and there will be a special surprise at the 10:30 service, so I hope you'll be able to attend worship that day).

But, this brings us back to the words of the epiphany that are printed on our leaflet cover. Do you remember them yet? Here they are: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The epiphany printed on our leaflet's the proclamation of Jesus, spoken to Peter. And, those words are the key to understanding any true Epiphany of God: When we see Jesus for who he is, Jesus helps us understand who we truly are, in him. When Peter saw Jesus as the Christ, it was then that Jesus could help Peter understand his high and holy calling of leadership among the disciples, to take up a faith that would crush the gates of hell.

As a church, we're in a season of discerning. We need to hear Jesus speak the epiphany he has for us, as a congregation, in 2023. We need to hear who we are. And, we need the compassionate and holy eyes of Jesus to see the people all around us who we are called to serve in his name.

Our Lord Jesus wishes to speak to us. Let us then enter this Epiphany season, brothers and sisters, with the expectation of hearing his voice. May we see ourselves, in him. May we see our neighbors, in him.

And most of all, may we ever more clearly see his glory.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus,

Mtr. Christina+

Blessing Bags



The Daughters of the King met on Sunday, December 4th, immediately following the 10:30am service to prepare “blessing bags” for females who reside at The Code Blue Shelter, St. Francis Mission and several other unnamed locations.

Items were purchased by the DOK thanks to the generosity of the St. Peter’s Church parishioners. Without your support the DOK would not have been able to provide the funds to purchase items that women so desperately need while during their stay at the shelters. The Daughters were able to purchase (to name a few items) the following: Deodorant; Shampoo; Conditioner; Bath and Body lotion; Hats/Gloves; Tooth brush and paste; Dental necessities; Other feminine items and Hair brushes/Combs/Ties.

The Daughters of the King are extremely grateful for everyone’s monetary support in this endeavor. We wish you and yours a healthy and safe 2023!



Gloria Frontal Restored



Judith Henningson (left) and Gwen Spicer (right) of Spicer Art Conservation, LLC, www.spicerart.com, have spent months restoring our Gloria Frontal to its former beauty.

Thank you to them both.

St. Peter's Happenings

Baptism

Please join us in celebrating the Baptism of Demetra Joan Zehner on Sunday, January 8th at the 10:30am service. Please join us for a light lunch after the service.

Vestry Meeting

The next Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 10th at 5:15pm.

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.

Outreach Meeting

The next Outreach meeting will be held on Sunday, January 22nd following the 10:30am service. The meeting will be held in the second floor meeting room.

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. Cost of flowers: Main Altar is \$50, St. Mark's Altar is \$35, and the Tower Altar is also \$35. All requests are payable in advance.

Pledge Cards

Pledge cards for 2023 were mailed out in November. 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.

Annual Parish Meeting

On Sunday, January 29th, the Annual Parish Meeting will be held immediately following the 10:30AM service. We invite you to grab a cup of coffee and join us in the church.

The Vestry Nominating Committee is at work to present a slate of candidates to the parish to be elected for open seats on the Vestry. Here are the candidates so far:

Deborah Spath will be running for her second 2-year term as Junior Warden. She is running to fill her present seat.

Fred Hershey will be running for his second 3-year vestry term. He is running to fill his present seat.

Christie Gordon and George Scala are completing their Vestry terms, but they will continue to serve in non-voting roles as clerk and treasurer, respectively.

The Nominating Committee is currently accepting names of potential candidates for two vacant 3-year Vestry positions. Nominees must be baptized members of St. Peter's Church who regularly attend worship and who contribute financially to the work of the parish. Names to be considered for the ballot must be submitted to the church office in writing by Wednesday, January 18th. Additional nominations may be made during the Annual Meeting from the floor, assuming the nominee is present and accepts the nomination.

St Francis Mission & South End Children's Café

St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen Saturday, January 21st ~ 11:00am to 1:00pm

On the 3rd Saturday of every month, Laura our Director of Christian Education and Chairperson of Outreach, along with other volunteers, all get together to help serve the families of our community in the South End of Albany. You are welcome to come and witness this amazing outreach program anytime you can, we are there from 9am-1pm. Thank You to all that come to volunteer. For information or to let Laura know you are coming please call her at (518) 368-4284.



We are collecting gently used coats for kids and the elderly of St. Francis Mission. Donations can be dropped off in the green barrels in the back of the church, or upstairs in the Sunday school room, or you may call the church office to schedule a time for drop off. The cold weather is coming and many people at the soup kitchen are in need this year. So look through your closet and tell a friend or neighbor to see if they have anything to donate as well. We are in need of children's coats sizes 2t to 5; Women's medium to 2XX; and Men's large to 2XX. We are also collecting hats and gloves/mittens for children and adults. Laura will pick up any donation!



We will be collecting non perishable food for the South End Children's Café cabinets until March of the new year. The box for the food is in the back of the church, along with a list of the most needed items. Please find it in your heart to pick up an extra box of pasta or a loaf of bread while doing your weekly grocery shopping. Laura will bring the donations down to the South End Children's Café each Sunday to fill the cabinets.



Christmas Gifts for the Children of the South End

St. Peter's Christmas Pageant



Hello and Happy New Year.

I want to take this time to thank everyone who donated Christmas gifts to the children of the South End Children's Café and to the St. Francis Mission. Your generosity allowed me to bring 40 gifts to each place. While giving gifts out at St. Francis, I ran out of presents. The need is so great at the soup kitchen, we are feeding between 250 and 300 meals a week. So, I went home and reached out to my close friends. My dear friend held a party on that Wednesday and had the guests bring an unwrapped gift. The blessing was over 30 more toys for the children of our south end community! I volunteered on Christmas eve at the soup kitchen to give out the gifts. We had just enough. I am so blessed to have all the support of my church and the community to help serve people in need. Blessings to all of you.

I want to thank The Daughters of the King for making special personal hygiene bags for me to take to St. Francis. This allowed many women that walked through our doors to receive a much needed gift of love from our parish. Thank you!

I have told many members of our Outreach Committee that St Peter's is located in a very special part of Albany. We are not a neighborhood church, we are a city church that has the ability to reach out to our city. I am very proud to say that our congregation is doing God's work downtown, and all of you are making a difference!

In closing , I do have to thank James Chenot and the Vestry for their continued support of our Sunday School, teachers and Outreach. Thank you to Janice Chenot, Ruth, Pat and Wayne for always helping me. Thank you to our Sunday School teachers, Ariana Saffares, Sharon Vardabash, and Kelly Welch. Also thanks to Mother Christina and family for being so involved in what I am doing with the children and our community.

If anyone has any questions or ideas for the Sunday School or Community outreach, please give me a call or drop me a text.

God Bless,

Laura Saffares (518) 368-4284

THANK YOU FOR CHRISTMAS AT THE DAMIEN CENTER!

St. Peter's first Christmas dinner at the Damien Center was a great success, thanks to the contributions of so many parishioners, including Susan Smith, Deborah Spath, Maria Holden, Judy Burns, Mother Christina Hunter, and Tanya Douglas, who cheerfully prepared a variety of traditional desserts and side dishes to go with the turkeys and delivered them to church on Christmas Eve. Our guests were so appreciative, and piled their plates high. We also prepared quite a few take-out orders. Thanks to your generosity we had plenty of food! Thank you all so much for making Christmas special for the Center's members and for letting them know they were not forgotten on that blessed day. A special thank you to Cathy Schunk for her help with organizing and shopping, as well as preparing food, and to Laura Saffares Rulison for spending the day at the Center and doing most of the actual work that day.



January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<p>1 The Holy Name</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>8 First Sunday after the Epiphany The Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion w/Baptism 11:45am - Bible Study</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>5:15pm - Vestry Meeting</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>15 Second Sunday after the Epiphany</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion</p>	<p>16 Martin Luther King Day</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>22 Confession of St. Peter the Apostle (transferred)</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 11:45am - Outreach Meeting 11:45am - Bible Study</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 Co St. Pa</p>
<p>29 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 12:00pm - Annual Meeting</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	5 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	6 The Epiphany 12:00pm - Holy Communion	7
	12 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	13	14
	19 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	20	21 11:00am - Angels in Training
Conversion of Paul the Apostle	26 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	27	28
			 <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. Peter's Music

Join us for a New Year filled with joyful singing
Singing makes you.....

10 Reasons Singing is Good for You

- Singing makes you feel better.
- Singing enhances lung function.
- Singing helps you beat stress and relax.
- Singing helps improve memory.
- Singing builds a sense of community.
- Singing lets you express yourself.
- Singing can help with pain relief.
- Singing boosts your confidence.
- Singing in the choir is a joyful way to serve God and St. Peter's Church.

Rehearsals are every Thursday from 5:30-7 pm. Contact Mary Bon at 518-439-9238 for more information

CHOIR

Choir rehearsals are on the following schedule:

Thursdays: 5:30pm - 7:00pm Adult choristers

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

We are eager to welcome boys and girls age 8 to grade 8 to join the Treble section of the choir.

Contact Mary Bon at maryebon@verizon.net or through the church office if you know of a child who might be interested.

ONLINE AND IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY BEGINNING IN JANUARY

Tunes of Glory: The Biblical Canticles.

In this study we will read and discuss the four great New Testament hymns found in St. Luke's Gospel: The songs of Mary, Zechariah and Simeon and the Gloria, sung by the Angels to announce the birth of Christ. Having been set to music countless times, these biblical songs remain an integral part of worship for Christians around the world, especially in the Anglican tradition. The Songs of Mary and Simeon are part of Evening Prayer and the Song of Zechariah is frequently sung at Morning Prayer, and the Gloria forms the basis of the Gloria sung at nearly every Sunday Eucharist. Over the course of four sessions we will read the Canticles in depth, considering them both as poetry and as sacred scripture. Each session will last approximately 45 minutes and will be offered in person on Sunday mornings and a second time by Zoom on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm.

In-Person Schedule: Sunday January 8 following the 10:30 am service: The *Magnificat* (Song of Mary). Luke 1:46-56

Sunday January 15: No Session. Fr. Paul Hunter out of town.

Sunday January 22 following the 10:30 am service: The *Benedictus* (Song of Zechariah) Luke 1:67-80.

Sunday January 29 Annual Meeting. No session.

Sunday February 5 following the 10:30 am service: The *Nunc Dimittis* (Song of Simeon). Luke 2:29-32.

Sunday February 12 following the 10:30 am service: The *Gloria in Excelsis*. Luke 1:14 and other sources.

Zoom Schedule: Tuesday January 10, 7:30 PM on Zoom: The *Magnificat* (Song of Mary) Luke 1:46-56

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/84063267867?pwd=MFRXalN3N29aTHJrZHUvZ1BVNDA5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 840 6326 7867

Passcode: 9bhV2L

Tuesday January 17, 7:30 pm: The *Benedictus* (Song of Zechariah). Luke 1:67-80.

Tuesday January 24, 7:30 pm: The *Nunc Dimittis* (Song of Simeon) Luke 2:29-32.

Tuesday January 31, 7:30 pm: The *Gloria in Excelsis*. Luke 1:14 and other sources.



Capital City Rescue Mission and St. Peter's Episcopal Church Overnight Men's Shelter

Partnering together for Winter Emergency Shelter since 2009

Please consider volunteering with the Mission and the Church as this vital ministry is offered to needy men in Albany!

Volunteers will assist Mission and Church Staff with hospitality, ministry, and oversight of all guest needs. Specific duties include explaining shelter guidelines, serving snacks and drinks, and settling in guests for the night. Additional time may be spent exchanging stories and enjoying Christian movies. Volunteers may choose to volunteer a few hours a night, or volunteer for a full night, Overnight Volunteers have the option to sleep in reclining chairs provided by the Church.

Thank you for considering! The rewards of serving the homeless far outweigh the sacrifices!

For more information, please contact us today!

To volunteer through the Mission, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator!

Hope Smith Office # 518-462-0459 ext. 237 vcoordinator@albanymission.com

To volunteer through St. Peter's, please call or email one of the following:

Ruth Manss, Office # 518-434-3502 x 5 or email receptionist@stpeterschurchalbany.org

Mtr. Christina Hunter, Office # 518-434-3502 x4 or email priest@stpeterschurchalbany.org

Or Jim Chenot, cell phone 518-669-3096

For St. Peter's Shelter and Mission Operations, please contact the Mission's Intake Coordinator

Lance Rowland, 518-462-0459 ext. 246 (office) or (cell) 518-320-5758

or email Lrowland@albanymission.com

*** Additionally, we are accepting donations for the Overflow Shelter's use including monetary donations, coffee, sugar, fruit juice, microwavable popcorn, cold cereal, danish/muffins, bread, peanut butter, fresh fruit, milk and creamer.**

**Thank you for considering joining us this winter!
May Jesus Christ our Lord richly bless you as you work with us
as His hands and feet to the needy people of Albany!**

THANK YOU CHOIR

For Your dedication, musicianship and hard work.

For the beauty of your music - a worthy offering to God.

For your countless hours of rehearsal and service - an offering to the church.

For a terrific Messiah concert and a fine Lessons and Carols Service - an offering to the community.

For your heart and caring for the church and each other.

For the beautiful music throughout the Advent Season.

For the magnificent singing at two Christmas Eve Services.

St. Peter's is indeed blessed to have such a dedicated, talented choir and the support of the vestry, staff and congregation of St. Peter's. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to work with you, to receive your comfort and support as we continue to mourn Neil Keen's passing, and to build on the musical foundation he laid.

Thank you,
Mary Bon

MINUTES FOR THE VESTRY MEETING
ST. PETER'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
November 9th, 2022

Present: Mtr. Christina, J. Chenot, D. Spath, A. Closson, S. Debonis, C. Gordon, F. Hershey M. Holden, M. Lundberg, M. Moran, J. Russom

Absent: G. Scala

Opening Prayer Led by Mtr. Christina.

Approval of the Vestry Meeting Minutes, October 11th, 2022

The vestry minutes from the October 11th meeting were approved on a motion by D. Spath, seconded by F. Hershey, then unanimously approved by the vestry.

Priest in Charge Report – Mtr. Christina

Rector stuff:

Nathan and Solomon Douglas received first communion on All Saints' Sunday.

Morris Bonds has been prepared for Holy Baptism. A service date is pending.

Did two home visits last month.

Led a graveside service for Agnes Beverley on Oct. 28

Attended part of the Diocesan priest retreat last week at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center.

The "St. Peter's Stories" preaching series concluded on All Saints' Sunday. The final video in the series will be posted on youtube this week.

Moses Kamyra has stepped down as head usher after over 15 years of service (he will remain in the usher guild). Jeff Russom has agreed to serve as head usher for at least the next year. He has drafted an updated set of usher instructions, and we're collaborating on a final draft.

Stewardship letter was written and sent out.

Funeral Policy updated, including fee schedule (see handout).

Working on "punch list" for welcoming ideas needed to be completed by Christmastide

Interim stuff:

Review: My job as interim involves essentially two duties: My first duty is do "big picture" vision/mission work with the whole congregation that answers three questions: Who are we? Who is our neighbor? What is God calling us to do? The second duty is to review ministries, systems, policies, etc, and see if anything needs to be updated, cleaned out, done away with, or highlighted/celebrated.

Update on the "Who are we?" piece of my interim work:

We collected some great St. Peter's stories from parishioners in the last couple of months. Some were told to me personally, some were written in the "take home kits," and some were told at the Storytelling Sunday/Chili Cookoff on October 16.

The St. Peter's timeline is complete and posted between the church and Pumpelly Room.

I'm praying about/working with my interim ministry mentor on what next steps might be helpful for St. Peter's to continue "Who are we?" work and to begin considering question two: "Who is my neighbor?"

Sr. Warden's Report –J. Chenot

I would like to begin my November report by thanking Mother Christina for taking up the task of diving deeply into our past history and incorporating her findings in her weekly "Story Telling" sermons. Mother Christina has been working hard not to miss any small details on services and events, getting accustomed to our annual traditions. Also, Mother Christiana's Story telling/chili cook off was a great success.

Our office begins to get busy this time of year. Over and above the weekly preparations Ruth and Janice work on each week. Janice Chenot has been getting things ready for the pre-Thanksgiving event. The Turkeys have been purchased and ready for those interested in cooking them at home. Many thanks to Wayne and Pat juggling all the extra work needed before hand to set up for these special events. They also have everything set for this upcoming winter's snow season. Thank you both for all your work and preparation.

Coming up as mentioned, the pre-Thanksgiving dinner will be this Saturday. We are preparing and looking forward to our upcoming events in December. Starting off with the Messiah Sing along on December 11th, including full orchestra. The concert will be in honor of our dear choir director Neil Keen. Neil's wife Mary, our interim choir director has been working tirelessly rehearsing with our choir. The choir is sounding fabulous, thank you all for all your hard work and dedication. Please note the choir is always looking for and recruiting new members to join our choir – spread the word.

We will begin the 10:30 service on Sunday, December 11th, with our Sunday School Christmas Pageant. The following Sunday December 18th at the 10:30 service, we will have Lessons and Carols, followed by our annual greening in the church, “The Hanging of the Greens” event, including a luncheon. We hope that many will attend this great ministry and fellowship, it is a great time for all. We will move forward from there preparing for our Christmas Eve Services we all look forward to.

God Bless you all and thank you for all your dedication and incredible work.

Jim

Sunday Attendance – The Average Sunday Attendance is 69.7.

Finance – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

George reviewed the Treasurer's Report for October. Offerings for the month of October were \$10,526 and Year-to-date we are at \$142,811. This compares to \$150,846 for 2021. Investment accounts saw positive returns for the month. Merrill Lynch was up +5.53% for the month and Key was up +3.64%. Year-to-date Merrill Lynch has a return of -19.16% and Key is at -23.12%. Expenses were \$97,431 under budget year-to-date through October.

We remain at 27 pledges for 2022 for a total of \$104,730. Mother Christina will be sending out a Stewardship letter soon.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Scala

Property – There has been a to-do list that is slowly being worked through at the Rectory including repairs to the kitchen ceiling, smoke alarms installed, fall cleanup and tree removal, as well as getting a quote for gutters.

In the guild house, we will be having the phone system replaced, we are looking to replace the carpet in the office in the Spring, and fixes to the 4th floor apartment are being worked on.

Outreach – S. Debonis

The Outreach Committee had its November meeting on Sunday, November 6, and has begun thinking about Christmas. There will be a giving tree in the Pumpelly Room again this year, with an emphasis on board games and similar family activities as requested gifts. Janice will organize that, along with Ruth. Sharon was asked to contact the Damien Center to find out if there's anything we can help with for the holidays. Laura continues her year-round work at the soup kitchen and the Children's Café. There is a box for food donations for the soup kitchen at the back of the church; Laura will deliver any donations. There is also a basket there for donations of new or gently used coats and other outerwear, in all sizes.

The Committee was able to secure a commitment for 330 single-use containers each month, for use in the soup kitchen for individual meals. We are very grateful to the family who facilitated this significant gift. An anonymous donor has also given \$5,000 to the soup kitchen as a direct result of learning about the project from our director of outreach, Laura Saffares Rulison.

Old Business – After much research, Mother Christina has come across what we believe to be the second altar of St. Peter's Church. The vestry has had many discussions about where we think this altar should be placed, and after much consideration it has been decided that it will serve our youth in a space that will be repurposed for Children's Chapel. More to come on this in the near future.

New Business – The annual meeting and Vestry nominations will be coming soon. The vestry has begun discussing where the openings will be as well as potential nominations.

The Vestry will be sending out a postcard to neighboring areas to encourage new members for our Advent Season.

Adjournment

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

Compline was led by Mtr. Christina.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christie J. Gordon

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Christina Hunter.....Priest-in-Charge
Mary E. Bon, M. Mus., CAGO, ARCM.....Organist & Choir Director
Laura Rulison.....Director of Christian Education
Ruth Manss..... Office Manager
James P. Shortall.....Sexton
Wayne Hill.....Sexton
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

James Chenot Senior Warden
Deborah Spath.....Junior Warden
George Scala.....Treasurer
Ashley Closson, Sharon DeBonis, Christie Gordon,
Fred Hershey, Maria Holden, Mark Lundberg,
Malcom Moran, Jeff Russom

How to Contact Us

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 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.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

