



THE Cornerstone

April 2023

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

The Reverend Christina Hunter

Feast of George Herbert, 2023

Beloved of God,

The Sunday morning before Lent, God sent me on a detour.

I was driving to St. Peter's just before 8 am, singing a Taize song to calm down and focus before worship. And suddenly, the thought *Drive to church through Arbor Hill* popped into my head.

I don't know how the Lord talks to you, but I hear God's voice in many ways. Sometimes I get a little nudge or thought like that, and I try to follow where it leads. So I drove through Arbor Hill, down Clinton and over to Pearl, and nothing remarkable happened. But another thought popped into my head: *Hand out ashes on the street on Ash Wednesday*. I sighed and said, (I think out loud), "OK, Lord."

Some of you know that I was a street priest for a good part of my ministry, so doing stuff on the street is within my comfort zone. But, I've never done street ashes. It seemed pretty clear that this was God's idea.

On Ash Wednesday after the noon service, I walked around downtown for 90 minutes with ashes for all comers, occasionally borrowing John Davis' gloves when my hands got too painful from the cold. We walked by St. Mary's. We walked by the bus stop at State and Pearl. We walked over to the South End. We walked up Madison and through the Concourse. And all along the way, God sent us people. State workers. People waiting for the bus. A man who needed prayer for cancer. Younger and older, women and men of varying races and ethnicities. Many people declined when we asked, "Would you like ashes?" A few silently came forward. And some rushed eagerly forward before I could open my mouth to make the offer.

So, what on earth was God doing with this adventure? Certainly, to act as a witness of his presence to the dozens we met, including the nine who received ashes. But also, to show John and I who our neighbors are. This is the work before us now as a congregation: to ask ourselves and God the question, "Who is our neighbor?"

Since I have come to St. Peter's to be your priest, we've spent time telling stories of our church — from our history and from our own experiences. We've reflected on who we are, and a rich picture has emerged: St. Peter's is a church with a glorious history of proclaiming Jesus as the Christ inside her walls in beautiful worship and outside her walls in works of mercy.

This brings us to the second part of our shared work: to hear more stories, but this time from our neighbors. Our city is changing. The pandemic changed the rhythm of the downtown work week. Yet more people — especially working professionals — are moving back into the city as new housing construction continues. Part of our work is to find creative ways to meet and bless these new neighbors. And, part of our work is to hear new stories from neighbors from our past.

To do that, this Eastertide, we'll hear a series of speakers during our worship services who will reflect on the question "Who is our Neighbor?" These speakers will come from both our mission partners (like Loaves and Fishes, the Capital City Rescue Mission and the Damien Center) and from churches with historical connections to St. Peter's (like St. Paul's and the Cathedral of All Saints).

In addition, on Sunday, April 23 (after the 10:30 service) and Tuesday, April 25 (at 7 pm on Zoom) we'll have two hour-long brainstorming meetings where we'll list our relationships and strengths as we seek God's fresh vision for St. Peter's. You'll hear more about these gatherings in the weeks ahead.

Since coming here, I have sensed a growing energy and hope for the future of St. Peter's as the Holy Spirit does his work among us. I am excited to hear many new voices around us, and I hope you'll listen with me. Because — I believe if we listen — we'll hear the voice of our Risen Lord and we'll be able to lead where he follows.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus,

Mtr. Christina+

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

April 2nd: Palm Sunday

8:30AM ~ Holy Communion
10:30AM ~ Choral Holy Communion Service

April 6th: Maundy Thursday

7:30PM ~ Holy Communion with Stripping of the Altars

April 7th: Good Friday

12:00PM ~ Good Friday Liturgy with
Holy Communion from reserved sacrament

1:15PM ~ **PASSION AND LAMENT**

a musical program presented by the
St. Peter's choir with chamber orchestra.

April 8th: Holy Saturday

8:30AM ~ Liturgy Service
11:00AM ~ Easter Egg Hunt at the Rectory

April 9th: Easter Sunday

8:30AM ~ Choral Holy Communion Service
10:30AM ~ Choral Holy Communion Service
with Child Care in the Nursery

St. Peter's Happenings

Vestry Meeting

The April Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 11th at 5:15pm.



Confirmation

Congratulations to Jack Clark, who (as of the printing of our newsletter) is anticipating being confirmed in the Episcopal Church on Saturday, April 8 during the celebration of the Great Vigil of Easter at the Cathedral of All Saints by the Rt. Rev. Michael Smith, assisting bishop. Please keep Jack in your prayers as he continues to grow in love and service to Jesus Christ.



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 maryeb.music@gmail.com or through the church office if you know of a child who might be interested.



PASSION AND LAMENT MUSIC FOR GOOD FRIDAY

April 7th at 1:15 PM,
(following the Noon Service)

Including

G. F. Handel's *Messiah* (passion portions)
J. S. Bach *St. Matthew Passion* (excerpts)
works of Greene, Casals, and Carissimi.

with

The Choir of St. Peter's Episcopal Church
accompanied by chamber orchestra
Everyone is welcome to attend free of charge.

Coffee Hour

Thank you to the many volunteers who have stepped up to take us through the fall and winter with joyful and delicious coffee hours that have truly brought us together as the St. Peter's family. Thanks to Gayle Hartz, Robin LaPlante, Michele Lundberg, Donna Ohlman, Alice Singular, Susan Smith and the DOK and Gloria VanDerpoel. Now it's time to finish out the season with volunteers for April through mid June, and that will be the last coffee hour until fall. There will be a sign up sheet in the kitchen/Pumpelly room. Please consider becoming part of the team! ***Something new** – I would like to encourage the bakers among us to "Fill Our Freezer." Bakers rejoice! We would enjoy new goodies by some superior bakers. There will be a sign up list in the kitchen to enter your donation so we can keep good track. Please contact Michele Vennard at 518-274-4989, 518-858-0525 cell, mlvennard@gmail.com for further information.



Help with Carly's Cards

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

We serve and volunteer confidently, knowing that God has prepared the way for us!

Ephesians 2:10

To be a volunteer to prepare and mail Carly's Cards to parishioners at St. Peter's Church is extremely gratifying not only for you, but your volunteer work is pleasing in God's eyes. The church parishioner receiving Carly's Cards will feel blessed to be thought of. Would you be willing to volunteer one month or two to prepare Carly's Card in which she began the tradition so many years ago? All expenses are covered by the church. If you are interested in giving 2 hours + a month, please contact me at (518) 505-6051 or Gpleasant49@gmail.com I look forward to hearing from you.

Susan J Smith



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 2nd. The suggested donation is \$25.

St. Francis Mission & Sunday School Activities

St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen Saturday, April 8th & 15th ~ 11:00am to 1:00pm

On the 2nd & 3rd Saturdays of every month, Laura Saffares, the 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 Laura at: (518) 368-4284.



Thanks to all who have been leaving canned food and non perishable items in the back of the church. I was able fill a cabinet for our downtown community. I will be keeping the box out year round. When you are out shopping please think of picking up an extra can of soup or veggies. Every little thing helps.

Happy Spring



April's Activities



Easter Egg Coloring

Sunday, April 2nd the Sunday School children will be coloring Easter eggs during the 10:30am service. Please allow them to dress in "old clothes" - but just in case, there will be a small number of smocks available. We hope all of the children will join in this fun event!

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

All are welcome to join the Sunday School children on Saturday, April 8th for the annual St. Peter's Easter Egg Hunt. The festivities will begin at 11am at the Rectory located at 8 Loudon Heights South, Loudonville, NY 12211. Please be sure to bring a basket and a friend!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Due to the Easter Egg Hunt and the Angels in Training falling on the exact same day at the exact same time, Laura Saffares will not be able to participate in feeding the needy. Therefore, she is looking for some volunteers to help the Angels in Training at Grace and Holy Innocents on Saturday, April 8th from 11am to 1pm. Could you please spare 2 hours to help those in need? Thank you so much in advance !!

Children's Chapel

Sunday, April 30th, please bring the children for the opening of the Children's Chapel. We are so thrilled to have this ministry back for the children
God Bless, Laura Saffares



Outreach

A Big **Thank You** to all!

The Daughters of the King, Laura Grill and Gloria Van Derpoel, for helping put together 20 Easter baskets to give to the Damian Center.



Soup Sampler



Thank you to Janice Chenot, for putting this amazing soup fundraiser together. Thank you to all who made the soup and all those who attended. Proceeds go to the City Mission overflow.



COMING SOON!!

Albany's CROP Hunger Walk Is Just One Month Away!








St. Peter's is participating yet again in the John U. Miller Memorial CROP Hunger Walk in Albany, to be held May 7, 2023. Albany's 2023 Walk will take place in person, departing from the First Lutheran Church, 646 State Street, Albany at 1:30 PM with registration beginning at 12:30PM. Please contact Maria Holden at msholden1@aol.com if you would like to join the St. Peter's team of walkers. If you prefer, you may walk in your own neighborhood any time during the month of May. To contribute to Albany's CROP Walk and support our team, please visit our new team web page at:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/team/st-peters-episcopal-church-albany>

CROP Hunger Walks are community-based walk events held in cities and towns across the US to raise funds to respond to hunger, poverty, displacement, and disaster around the globe. Twenty-five percent of the funds raised go to the host community to support local hunger fighting efforts. Hunger is one of the greatest injustices facing our world and our own community. Ending hunger is possible, and it is possible in our lifetime. Thank you for supporting the St. Peter's Team and CROP Walk 2023!

April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			
<p>2 Palm Sunday The Sunday of the Passion 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion</p> 	<p>3 Monday in Holy Week 6:30pm - Choir rehearsal with orchestra</p>	<p>4 Tuesday in Holy Week</p>	<p>5 Wednesday in Holy Week</p>
<p>9 Easter Sunday 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion</p> 	<p>10 Office Closed</p>	<p>11 5:15pm - Vestry Meeting</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>16 The Second Sunday of Easter 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>23 The Third Sunday of Easter 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 11:45am - "Brainstorm" Meeting with Mtr. Christina</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 St. Mark the Evangelist 7:00pm - "Brainstorm" Meeting with Mtr. Christina (Via Zoom)</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>30 The Fourth Sunday of Easter 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 10:30am - Children's Chapel</p>			

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1
Holy Week	<p>6 Maundy Thursday</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir 7:30pm - Holy Communion with Stripping of the Altar</p>	<p>7 Good Friday</p> <p>12:00pm - Good Friday Liturgy 1:15pm - Passion and Lament</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  </p>	<p>8 Holy Saturday</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Sat. Service 11:00am - Angels in Training 11:00am - Easter Egg Hunt at the Rectory</p>
	<p>13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No Choir Rehearsals</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>11:00am - Angels in Training</p>
	<p>20</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>
	<p>27</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>

Other Happenings

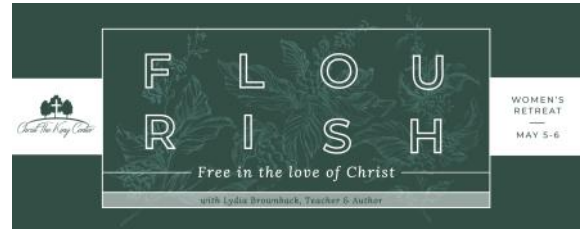
2023 Women's Retreat Event

Flourish: Free in the love of Christ (May 5 - 6)

With guest speaker Lydia Brownback

[REGISTRATION](#) **Registration NOW OPEN!!!!**

[AGENDA](#) § [SPEAKER BIO](#) § [BREAKOUTS](#) § [SATURDAY DINNER TO GO](#) § [DOWNLOADABLE FLIER](#)



From conferences to podcasts, from online journals to paperbacks—we have opportunity to expand our knowledge like never before in history. It's a tremendous blessing for believers who want to grow in their understanding of God and his Word, yet sifting good from bad, true from false, takes discernment. Much of today's teaching has more to do with emotional enrichment and personal prosperity than with true discipleship, and it stifles real spiritual growth. The wrong message has become so prevalent that our real need—salvation from sin and abundant life in God's kingdom—has gotten lost. Also lost is the real way to live the Christian life—discipleship as defined by God's Word. Lydia aims to direct women back to the biblical gospel and true Christian discipleship so that they can discern true from false, full from empty, purposeful from futile, and godly from selfish. In each session, the self-focus that so easily drives our lives will be uncovered, its nature exposed, and in its place will be set the beauty and sufficiency of Christ.

Expect your favorite things and more:

- Vibrant Worship
- Inspiring talks

Healing Prayer Appointments with an experienced prayer team, Marketplace

- Friday night social
- Two breakout session times
- Time to just be

[Dinner to Go](#) on Saturday afternoon...who wants to cook after a wonderful retreat?

For more information or to register: <https://ctkcenter.org/events/2-uncategorised/264-2023-women-s-retreat-registration-page>.



Beaver Cross Spring Break Camp:

Monday April 10th - Friday April 14th 2023

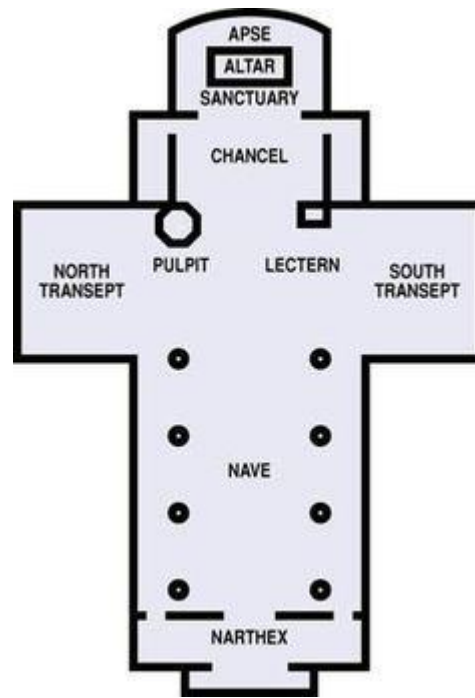


What better way to spend time off from school than at Beaver Cross Camp! Spring Break Camp, structured similar to our Day Camp program, brings the excitement of summer to the school year. Campers will have the opportunity to do all of their favorite camp activities including: archery, sports, ropes, crafts, field games, campfire and more! The cost of the program is \$150. Registration includes all programmed activities, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Early drop off with breakfast is an additional extra.

More information at: www.beavercrossministries.org/spring-break-camp

From the Archives

Design of St Peter's Church



The design of St. Peter's Church follows the plan for Episcopal churches in general and includes a Vestibule, a Narthex, the Nave, the Chancel and the Sanctuary.

As we enter the church and pass the front doors we enter into the Vestibule. It contains the burial place of Lord Howe, the Britisher who died at Fort Ticonderoga, and Colonel Munro who also died following his participation in the French and Indian War.

Leaving the Vestibule we come to the Narthex, a walled off area preceding the Nave, which is the church itself. In the early days of the Church, the Narthex was the place where non Christians could stay since the Nave was closed to them.

From the Narthex we go into the Nave, which consists of church benches. Following the Nave is the Chancel. The Chancel contains the Lectern, the Pulpit, the Choir Stalls and the kneeling rail for Holy Communion. Going up three steps above the Chancel is the Sanctuary, the place where the priest prepares and blesses the Holy Communion. It is the holiest portion of the church.

The Sanctuary of St. Peter's Church consists of the Prunyn Altar and the decorative Reredos. The Reredos are behind the Altar and consist of two large angels kneeling at a cross. The Altar is beautifully decorated with Easter lilies at the Easter services.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter Day.

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

February 14th, 2023

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

Absent: M. Moran

Opening Prayer Led by Mtr. Christina.

Approval of the Vestry Meeting Minutes, January 10th, 2023

The vestry minutes from the January 10th meeting were approved on a motion by M. Lundberg, seconded by J. Russom, then unanimously approved by the vestry.

Priest in Charge Report – Mtr. Christina

Rector stuff:

Preparing a Lenten Lunch Bible Study to be offered on Sundays.

Will be leading a “What are you Doing for Lent?” workshop on Sunday, Feb. 26.

Led a “How to Serve on a Prayer Team” teaching for the Daughters of the King chapter on Feb. 11 in preparation for offering monthly healing prayers again in the coming months.

Will offer The Great Litany on Fridays in Lent as a short devotional service, followed by coffee.

Did one home visit in the last month.

Coordinated with Dr. John Davis for his officiating and preaching at the Noonday Prayer service for Presentation of the Lord on Feb. 2.

Have trained one LEV and doing a second LEV training this week. Creating a visits log and getting a master schedule ready so that we can increase pastoral visitations.

Wrote and presented my Annual Report.

Updated the church marriage policies for members and non-members.

Working on a “Lent at St. Peter’s” flyer to have available in the Vestibule.

Preparing for Holy Week services with Mary and others.

Practicing the Great Litany for Lent 1.

Have begun holding brief weekly staff meetings with the office manager and sextons on Wednesday mornings.

Traveled to my seminary in Ambridge, PA, to work on a theological writing project as part of my continuing education time.

Met with my spiritual director in January.

Interim stuff:

Big Picture Update: Epiphany tide concludes our theme of reflecting on God’s surprises and revealing our identities in Christ. The Annual meeting report continued parish reflection on these themes of “Who Are We?”

Lent will be focused on “small picture” identity questions – who am I, as an individual, in the big story of God’s love revealed in the cross? I’ll try to encourage personal spiritual practices and preach to facilitate these questions.

Meanwhile, I’m attempting to put together a series of speakers for Eastertide from our mission partners (City Rescue Mission, Damien Center, St. Francis) as well as churches we have longtime historic links to (St. Paul’s, the Cathedral) to help us reflect on the question “Who is my neighbor?” I’d like these speakers (ideally) to attend the 10:30 service, offer a 5-minute reflection at announcements, and be present at coffee hour to chat and answer questions of parishioners.

Administrative Update: The Task Force work is underway! Thanks so much for all your initial efforts. We’ve already seen good fruit come out of your discussions, and I expect more in future months.

Met with my interim ministry mentor, Bill Thomas, in late January on Zoom. Have another call scheduled with him later this week.

Submitted by The Rev. Christina Hunter

Sr. Warden's Report –J. Chenot

To start off, I would like to congratulate Peter Benson and Samuel Hartt, both elected at last month's Annual Meeting. They both will begin their first, three year term on the vestry. Also, congratulations to Deb Spath, re-elected as junior warden for an additional two year term, as well as Fred Hershey, re-elected for his second, three year term on the vestry. Thank you, Christie Gordon for continuing to stay on as clerk, as well as George Scala, staying on the vestry as our treasurer.

The Annual meeting went very well. Thanks to all the committees who were able to forward their reports. Again, thank you George for all your great reporting on our financials – you are irreplaceable. Also we want to thank Susan Smith for also running on the ballot for a vestry seat. Thank you for all your continuing love and ministries you bring to St. Peter's. Finally, thanks to Pam Gerfin and Tim Murphy for their services as tellers at the annual meeting.

The work task forces that were put together by Mother Christina have appeared to have met once or twice since our last meeting. I think we are all looking forward on finding out how everyone has progressed in their meetings. Thank you all in advance for all your work and dedication to this new project.

The Lenten season is slowly approaching. We will host our annual Shrove Pancake Dinner on February 21st. The following day, Ash Wednesday, there will be a 12:00 noon service and 5:30 evening service with our choir.

Sunday Attendance - The Average Sunday Attendance is 79.1.

Finance – G. Scala

George reviewed the Treasurer's Report for January. A summary of the month is as follows:

OFFERINGS:	\$9,426
ENDOWMENT INCOME/(LOSS):	\$180,024
EXPENSES:	(\$51,078)
NET GAIN/(LOSS):	\$128,946

*for January there were \$37,526 in withdrawals to fund our excess of operating expenses versus offerings.

It should be noted, that the Endowment accounts encountered significant losses in 2022 so while the return for January is positive, we have a long way to go to recoup 2022 performance losses.

Offerings for the month of January 2023 were \$820 higher than for January 2022. Merrill Lynch (unrestricted) was up 5.64% for January. Key (restricted) was up 5.66% for January.

For 2023 we have received 31 pledges for a total of \$98,680.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Scala

Property –

The property task force has met, and they are hard at work creating a full scope list of repairs that are needed for the whole church, guild house, and rectory. These repairs are not all meant to be done within the next year; some are short term repairs while others are long term. They will be accomplished as needed and as time and budget allow. There were also discussions of creating a Building and Grounds Committee to help facilitate the and oversee these tasks.

Outreach –

**Requesting a report from Sharon or Laura.

In preparation for the upcoming Easter season, Sharon discussed making Easter baskets for the Damien Center, as well as helping to host Easter Dinner for the Damien Center. The outreach committee will put out more information for those who would like to participate.

Discussions have begun for the Annual Albany Crop Walk which will be held on May 1st. For those interested in participating, please contact Laura Saffares or Sharon Debonis.

Please attached Outreach Report

Old Business – None

New Business –

Mother Christina split the Vestry into Task Force groups, all with a different focus for helping to update documentation and policies throughout the church. Mother Christina checked in with each of these task forces to see their progress.

The vestry again has been discussing a new Choirmaster/Organist. They will be getting the process for recruiting ready to begin the search after Easter. The 4th floor apartment will also be prepared to be offered as possible housing for the new Choirmaster.

The vestry began discussing possible representatives for the Annual Diocesan Convention. More to follow on this at the next meeting.

The Soup Sampler Fundraiser has been set for Sunday March 26th. We hope all will bring a soup to try and join in on the tasting.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by F. Hershey and seconded by M. Holden, 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
Christie Gordon.....Clerk

Peter Benson, Ashley Closson, Sharon DeBonis, Samuel Hartt,
Fred Hershey, Maria Holden, Mark Lundberg, Malcom Moran, Jeff Russom

How to Contact Us

Office Hours:

Monday -Friday

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Fax: 518-462-4419

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Website:

www.stpeterschurhalbany.org

Services

Sunday

Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

(1st & 3rd Sunday)

Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.

(2nd & 4th Sunday)

Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

