



# THE Cornerstone

## May 2023

Newsletter of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church

107 State Street, Albany, New York

### The Reverend Christina Hunter

Beloved of God,

The month of May makes me think of moms.

Obviously, each May we remember our moms on Mother's Day. Some of us reflect on the burden and joy of being a literal, unofficial, or spiritual mom to others. May also is the month, 7 years ago, when I celebrated my first Mother's Day as a brand-new mom who was bleary eyed from sleeplessness, depleted from childbirth, and in love with my baby daughter.

But there's a different motherhood I want to consider with you all: the motherhood of St. Peter's Church. We are the original mother church of the Diocese, and it seems fitting to remember our "kids" – especially as we continue to ask the question "Who is our Neighbor?" during this period of parish reflection.

Our story began in 1712 when St. Peter's was established in Albany. Our parish became a mom about 100 years later, when some of our parishioners – under the enterprising leadership of Duanesburg priest Richard Bury and others -- left St. Peter's to help establish St. Paul's in 1827. This was the second Episcopal church in our city, and our parishes enjoyed a friendly rivalry. St. Peter's gave St. Paul's a home for 8 months in 1839 when their congregation was waiting on a new building to be constructed. The rectors of the two churches took turns preaching and leading services for the joint congregation.

A second pair of spiritual children that our church helped bring to life were Grace Church – established in 1846 by St. Peter's assistant minister Maunsell Van Rensselaer – and Holy Innocents – built by St. Peter's parishioner William Dewitt in 1849. A third location – a mission outpost in Arbor Hill – was established by St. Peter's and overseen by our assistant minister, Thaddeus Snively.

Eventually, both Grace and Holy Innocents merged into a single parish and relocated to the Arbor Hill location. That church building eventually became St. Francis Mission, today's home of the Loaves and Fishes feeding ministry where St. Peter's parishioners regularly gather to tend the hungry in Arbor Hill and West Hill.

Finally, there is the Cathedral of All Saints. St. Peter's gave generously – of its finances and parishioners – to establish the new Cathedral and the new Diocese. Albany's first Bishop, William Croswell Doane (who was our rector before his election as bishop) said of us, "you will agree with me that St. Peter's deserves all honor from the Diocese, as the largest giver to Diocesan Missions, the chief endower of the Episcopate, and the virtual purchaser of the Bishop's house." It seems fitting – like a child reflecting the gifts of a parent – that the Cathedral has become a model of architectural beauty and musical excellence. We at St. Peter's can rejoice in the Cathedral's gifts and mission because we recognize them in ourselves.

Why am I sharing these stories with you? It's because I want us to understand our past in order to reflect on our relationship with our "adult children" now. There should be no whiff of paternalism in our relationship with St. Paul's, St. Francis, and the Cathedral in 2023. Rather, it is good to remember our shared history and to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in ways we might humbly walk together in mission, worship, and Christian fellowship in the days to come.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus,

Mtr. Christina+





## Palm Sunday



## Easter Sunday

Christ is Risen!





## St. Peter's News

### National Day of Prayer

The Annual National Day of Prayer will be held on Thursday, May 4th, at the downtown Government Center Plaza at 12:00pm.

### Vestry Meeting

The May Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 9th at 5:15pm, in the meeting room on the second floor.

### Outreach Meeting

There will be an outreach meeting held on Sunday, May 21st, following the 10:30am service in the meeting room on the second floor. Please join us with your coffee to talk about some new opportunities to reach our community.

### **Congratulations to Jack Clark on your Confirmation**



### Choir - Choir rehearsals are on the following schedule:

Thursdays: 5:30pm - 7:00pm full choir rehearsal  
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](mailto:maryebon@verizon.net) or call the church office at (518) 434-3502 if you know of a child who might be interested.

### Ascension Day

Please join us as we celebrate Ascension Day, Thursday, May 18th at 12:00pm, with Holy Communion.

### Coffee Hour

Please join us for coffee hour after the 10:30am service. If you wish to volunteer on a Sunday, there is a sign up sheet in the kitchen near the Pumpelly room.

### Carly's Cards

If anyone would like to secure a month, to become part of this marvelous endeavor, please contact Susan Smith at [Gpleasant49@gmail.com](mailto:Gpleasant49@gmail.com) or (518) 505-6051.

### Daughters of the King

The Julia, chapter of the daughter's of the king, hosted coffee hour on Sunday, April 16th.

We will be offering discernment classes for any woman interested in joining the DOK in fall 2023.

Any questions or concerns, please contact:

Susan Smith (president) at [Gpleasant49@gmail.com](mailto:Gpleasant49@gmail.com) or Michelle Lundberg (v. president) at [michelelund65@gmail.com](mailto:michelelund65@gmail.com)

**Mark your Calendar!!** On Mothers Day, May 14th, the Sunday School children will be making very special gifts for the moms, grandmoms, etc... please join us during the 10:30 service.

**We Wish To Thank All our Volunteers  
For Their Service!**

### Albany's CROP Hunger Walk Is Here! - Sunday, May 7th!

St. Peter's Church is, yet again, participating 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 1:30PM with registration beginning at 12:30PM. Please contact Maria Holden at [msholden1@aol.com](mailto: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!

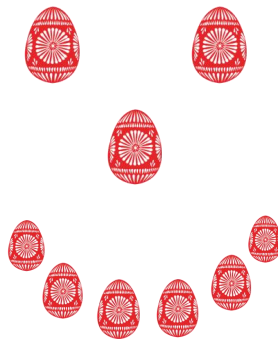




# Easter Egg Hunt at the Rectory



## Easter Egg Coloring





## Community Outreach

### St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen Saturday, May 13th & 20th ~ 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.

I have one last request for the month of May. St. Francis Mission has an abundance of donated clothes that need to get out on the racks. I am looking for donations of **clothes hangers**. This would allow me to hang the spring and summer selections on a larger scale. The Mission only allows clothes shopping when I am there. The more I can hang, the more they can have.

One of our neighbors, The Ten Broek Mansion, was holding their Egg Hunt on Friday April 7th for the children of South End. Earlier that week they were victims of vandalism. I reached out to ask how St. Peter's could help. They stated they needed small gifts for the children to pick from at the end of the hunt. I went shopping and purchased a total of 30 boxes of crayons, little notebooks and chalk for the children. I delivered them that Friday morning as promised. St. Peter's made a lot of children smile that day.

### **Damien Center's Bowling for PAWS**



This annual event raises funds for the Center's pet support program, which offers food, health care and transportation to the many animals who enrich the members' lives.

### **Easter at the Damien Center**



Maria Holden and Sharon DeBonis served Easter dinner to members of the Damien Center. With them are staff members Marion, Jessica and Omari. Some of the members had their photos taken with the Easter baskets prepared by the Daughters of the King and friends Laura Saffares, Laura Grill, and Gloria Vanderpoel. The fabulous food was prepared by Maria Holden, Deb Spath, Cathy Schunk, Mollie Flannery, and Sharon DeBonis.

The members were very appreciative!

Thank you to Sharon DeBonis and friends for serving Easter Dinner at the Damien Center and also for delivering the Easter Baskets that were made by the Daughters of King. Everyone at the center was overjoyed at the generosity of St. Peter's Church. I can say that our congregation supports outreach to our community neighbors like shepherds caring for their sheep, not one is left behind.

Thank you all and God Bless, Laura Saffares


### **South End Children's Café**

**Thanks** to all who have been leaving canned food and non perishable items in the back of the church for me to fill the cabinets 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.

St. Peter's will be doing a Memorial Day cookout at the Damien Center on Saturday, May 27th. If you have an interest in making something for the day, please reach out to Sharon DeBonis.

# May 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	1 Saint Philip and Saint James, Apostles	2	3
7 The Fifth Sunday of Easter Mother's Day  8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion	8	9  5:15 pm - Vestry Meeting	10
14 The Sixth Sunday of Easter  8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer  	15	16	17
21 The Seventh Sunday of Easter  8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 11:45am - Outreach Meeting (second floor meeting room)	22	23	24
28 The Day of Pentecost: Whitsunday  8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion	29 Memorial Day  Office Closed	30	31 The Visitation Blessed Virgin Mary

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>4 National Day of Prayer</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	5	6
	<p>11</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	12	<p>13</p> <p>11:00am - Angels in Training</p>
	<p>18 Ascension Day</p> <p>12:00pm - Holy Communion</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	19	<p>20</p> <p>11:00 am - Angels in Training</p>
	<p>25</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>26</p> <p>5:00pm - Roohan/Hull Wedding Rehearsal</p>	<p>27</p> <p>4:00pm - Roohan/Hull Wedding</p>
<p>Consecration of the Virgin Mary</p>			<p>Thank You to all the Men and Women who have served our country</p> 

## BEAVER CROSS YOUTH MINISTRY



Beaver Cross: Beaver Cross Ministries is a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany and our mission is to Build Community in Christ. Located in Greenwich, NY Beaver Cross Ministries is a year round youth ministry program. Our focus is to be an active youth ministry with retreats and break camps during the school year and summer camp during summer break. Across our ministries, we provide youth and young adults opportunities to explore and deepen their faith through dynamic Biblical teaching, fellowship in a Christian community, and awesome camp activities; new friendships are created and old ones rekindled as Beaver Cross Campers laugh and learn together in an environment devoted to faith, friendship and fun! For more information on Sonshine Youth Retreats and Beaver Cross Day/Night Camp please visit: [www.beavercrossministries.org](http://www.beavercrossministries.org)

### Coming Soon!!

#### Join us for the 155th Annual Convention

of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany  
Will be held virtually on  
June 10th, 2023

In view of the prospect of a second diocesan Convention in 2023 to elect the Tenth Bishop of Albany, the Standing Committee voted to hold the regular annual Convention as a business meeting on the morning of Saturday, June 10, 2023. The format of the meeting will be on-line, but regional “satellite” centers will be designated so that clergy and parish Deputies from each parish will have the option of gathering at a location with adequate broadband internet service within reasonable travel range from their homes

For info visit: <https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/2023-convention/>



*A Mother's love can not be measured.  
It's a brilliant gem to be treasured.*



*Happy Mother's Day to all the Moms  
You all are a true blessing from God.*





## ATTENTION 2022-2023 GRADUATES



We would like to acknowledge all graduates for the 2022-2023 school year. If you, your child, or even your grandchild will be graduating from high school or college or **has already graduated anytime during this past year**, please complete the form below and return it to the church office by Sunday May 21st, so that it can be included in the June Newsletter. You may also email your information to: [office@stpeterschurchalbany.org](mailto:office@stpeterschurchalbany.org)

1. **NAME OF GRADUATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**GRADUATING FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of High School or College)

**WHAT KIND OF**

**DIPLOMA OR DEGREE:** \_\_\_\_\_

(i.e. Regents Diploma, Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts)

**NAME OF COLLEGE**

**HE/SHE WILL BE ATTENDING:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PURSUING WHAT COLLEGE MAJOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **NAME OF GRADUATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**GRADUATING FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of High School or College)

**WHAT KIND OF**

**DIPLOMA OR DEGREE:** \_\_\_\_\_

(i.e. Regents Diploma, Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts)

**NAME OF COLLEGE**

**HE/SHE WILL BE ATTENDING:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PURSUING WHAT COLLEGE MAJOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MINUTES FOR THE VESTRY MEETING  
ST. PETER'S PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Present:** Mtr. Christina, J. Chenot, P. Benson, A. Closson, S. Debonis, F. Hershey M. Holden, M. Lundberg, M. Moran, G. Scala

**Absent:** D. Spath, C. Gordon, J. Russom

Opening Prayer Led by Mtr. Christina.

**Approval of the Vestry Meeting Minutes, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

The vestry minutes from the February 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved on a motion by S. Debonis, seconded by M. Moran, then unanimously approved by the vestry.

**Priest in Charge Report – Mtr. Christina**

**Rector stuff:**

Led Ash Wednesday services at noon and 5:30. Distributed ashes on the street in the downtown Albany area for about 90 minutes between the services.

Teaching Lenten lunches with St. Mark's Gospel series – has gone well.

Had a good turnout for the "What are you Doing for Lent?" workshop on Feb. 26.

Saying Morning Prayer in my office on Fridays in Lent with anyone who wants to come.

Did one home visit in the last month.

We now have two trained LEVs who have begun bringing communion to parishioners. Have created a visitation log to keep track of visits.

Completed a "Lent at St. Peter's" flyer that is in the Vestibule (see copy).

Nearing end of lessons for Jack Clark's confirmation. Will attend the service at the Cathedral with his sponsors and family on Easter Eve.

Met with Fr. Mike Greene, the rector of St. Paul's in Albany. We discussed ways our churches might occasionally partner for fellowship and mission. Kicked around the idea of a two-parish cookout in Washington Park to celebrate the late June feast day of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Met with the director of the Capital Area Council of Churches to learn about their current work in Albany (we're a member).

Mailing out letters and "Holy Week" board books and/or Pretzel making activities our families with kids or teens and inviting them to our Children's Prayer Room dedication in April and to ask them to reflect on future children's and youth formation (see copy of letter).

Filed the parochial report. Will be overseeing a project to do a major update of our electronic membership rolls, based on the work we did in compiling the report (see attached document).

Have begun work on a search process for a new organist/choirmaster.

**Interim stuff:**

**Big Picture Update:**

Lent sermons have focused on the love of Jesus and his power to overcome sin and death in our lives by his grace. Have focused on gospel accounts.

Our "Who is my Neighbor?" Eastertide speaker series is coming together. We'll have speakers from CC Rescue Mission, the Damien Center, the Cathedral, St. Paul's, and hopefully from Loaves and Fishes (and maybe the Children's Café) come to help us reflect on who are neighbors are. I'm asking the speakers to attend (at least) the 10:30 service, offer a 5-minute reflection at announcements, and be present at coffee hour to chat and answer questions of parishioners. I'll also be talking about this series in my April Newsletter article.

Am working on putting together a spring meeting to do "Asset Mapping" which sounds boring but is immensely helpful in enabling a church to see its many assets and discern ways God may be calling us to use the riches we already possess.

Administrative Update: Have been in touch with various task force members regarding their work.

Met with my interim ministry mentor, Bill Thomas, last month.

Submitted by The Rev. Christina Hunter

**Sr. Warden's Report – J. Chenot**

Thank you for attending this rescheduled March's vestry meeting due to last week's major snowstorm. The good news to offer is that today is the first day of spring and Easter is right around the corner.

Before looking ahead, we need to thank all those who were able to attend our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner, beginning our Lenten journey. We also need to thank those who were able to set up, cook and clean up after the dinner. We had a great turnout and we were able to have the parish hall all set back up for the overflow shelter and able to feed the gentlemen with the great food we all enjoyed. The following day, Ash Wednesday, we celebrated two services, one at noon and one at 5:30 including choir.

We are now in our fourth week of Lent, Holy week is upon us in a few weeks beginning on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Palm Sunday. In advance, I want to thank Mother Christina for all the work she has done preparing ahead for all the traditional services we have all been so accustomed to and hold dear to our hearts. Also, to all our committees who have been very proactive making sure things go smoothly during all the services, thank you for all your dedicated service to St. Peter's. The office becomes very hectic this period of time with all the extra services and leaflets they incur. We need to thank Ruth and Janice in the office for keeping us all informed with important information we enjoy in our leaflets and newsletter during this time. To Wayne and Pat who are behind the scenes continually making sure the church is always in order and clean for each service, thank you both, your work does not go unnoticed.

Thank you everyone, looking forward to Easter! Jim

**Sunday Attendance** - The Average Attendance is 91.5.

**Finance** – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

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

	FEB	YEAR-TO-DATE
OFFERINGS	\$12,857	\$22,283
EXPENSES	(\$37,809)	(\$88,887)
GAIN/(LOSS)	(\$24,952)	(\$66,604)
WITHDRAWALS FROM ENDOWMENT TO FUND SHORTFALL	\$8,787	\$46,313

**Endowment Return (Merrill Lynch)**

February: -2.08%

Index Calculated Return: -2.27%

Year-to-Date Return: +3.56%

**Endowment Return (Key)**

February: -2.38%

Year-to-Date Return: +3.28%

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

No change in 2023 Pledges – we remain at 31 pledges for \$98,680

Offerings year-to-date through February 2023 were \$3,223 higher than for the same period in February 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Scala

**Property** – With ongoing internet access issues, we have put in a ticket with Spectrum to install an extra modem which should help with connection issues. Parking options for church are still being discussed. There is a parking lot across the street that we are working on gaining access to. One of the next steps is to acquire insurance for its use. One of our next large projects that the vestry would like to pursue is Restoration to the Exterior of the church. The vestry discussed looking into potential grants as a historical building. The project will include getting estimates from an engineer on how to correct the pitch of the roof to solve the deterioration of the façade. The Rector's office is in need of plaster repair as the walls have been aging and deteriorating. This will also be a project we will begin to get quotes for.

**Outreach – (Report 1)**

During the months of January and February, the outreach committee was blessed to serve. St Francis mission; we continue to feed 250 to 300 meals a week. There was an increased need for coats, gloves and hats that we just could not keep up the supply. Laura Saffares took to Facebook to ask for donations as well as put out a notice for our church to help. Over 300 coats were received and so many other winter items. Reaching out to our community paid off! The generosity was such a blessing. The items were given to the needy of St. Francis every Saturday of February. For Valentine's Day, the children of Sunday school filled plastic hearts with candy and made cards for 20 residents at a nursing home. The children brought so many smiles to the elderly. We have upcoming outreach to the Damien Center. Thank you to the Daughter's of the King who will be assembling 20 Easter baskets to be delivered to the residents. We will also be volunteering to help supply some Easter Dinner items to the Damien Center. **(Report 2)** In the coming weeks St. Peter's will be represented at the Albany Damien Center's annual fundraiser for its pet support program, Bowling for PAWS, by Laura Grill, Katherine Grill, and Sharon DeBonis. On Easter, Maria Holden and Sharon DeBonis will be serving a ham dinner at the Center, with side dishes prepared by Maria Holden, Deb Spath and Cathy Schunk, and desserts by Mollie Flannery. Laura Saffares will deliver the Easter baskets prepared by the DOK, Laura Saffares, Laura Grill and Gloria Vanderpoel for the tenants at the Center. We are overwhelmed by the support for the Center shown by so many people at St. Peter's. We will be seeking the support of the St. Peter's community for the annual Memorial Day weekend cookout, an event which dates back to 2011 and has had the unofficial support of St. Peter's people for all that time. Last year the Outreach Committee adopted it and the parish really came through. The tireless Laura Saffares, Cathy Schunk, Deb Spath and Diana Martin, among others behind the scenes, served the entire Damien Center Community again. This year we will be asking for picnic side dishes from the parish and, especially, grillers to serve on the day, as the core group of volunteers lack the gift of grilling. The event will take place on May 27, a Saturday. Submitted by Sharon DeBonis

**Old Business** – None

**New Business** – Once we get through the Easter Holiday, the vestry has voted for Mother Christina to begin the search for a new Organist/Choir Director. This vote was approved on a motion by F. Hershey, seconded by M. Lundberg, then unanimously approved by the vestry. While we begin this important search, the vestry, choir, and parish as a whole can not thank Mary Bon enough for continuing our wonderful ministry of music. The vestry discussed and voted on delegates for the Annual Diocesan Convention. The delegates will be Maria Holden and John Davis. Mark Lundberg will serve as an alternate. These delegates were approved on a motion by A. Closson, seconded by J. Chenot, then unanimously approved by the Vestry.

**Adjournment** A motion to adjourn was made by M. Lundberg and seconded by F. Hershey, 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

Pete 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

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 10:30 a.m.

(1st, 3rd & 4th Sundays)

Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.

(2nd & 5th Sunday)

Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

**ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**107 State St.**

**Albany, New York 12207**

