



THE Cornerstone

June 2023

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

The Reverend Christina Hunter

Eve of the Visitation, 2023

Beloved of God,

I wanted to use this month's newsletter article to share some results from the "Holy Brainstorming" sessions that we held at church in late April. But first, let me explain what this exercise was and why we did it.

First, the why. As you know, part of my job as interim priest at St. Peter's is to lead all of us through three big questions: 1. Who are we? 2. Who is our neighbor? 3. What is God calling us to do?

Our time together last fall began with my sermons and your stories from our past to help us learn and understand who we are now based on who God has called us to be in our history. A picture emerged of a parish that expresses the proclamation of the gospel through transcendent liturgy and choral music. But, we also have always proclaimed Christ through works of mercy in the lives of the people of Albany.

This spring, we've been working through the question "Who is our neighbor?" We heard from many of our neighbors in Albany with historic or current connections to St. Peter's during our Eastertide speaker series. Representatives from the Capital City Rescue Mission, the Damien Center, St. Paul's Church, Loaves and Fishes, the Cathedral of All Saints, and the South End Children's Cafe shared their stories of who our neighbors are to help us reflect on that larger question.

This brings us to "Holy Brainstorming" (also known as "asset mapping"). This was part of answering the "Who is our Neighbor?" question in another way by asking parishioners at in-person and Zoom meetings to name assets the church currently has in four areas. By naming the gifts God has already given us — not gifts we wish we had or used to have — it allowed us to begin to see ways he might be calling us to use those gifts in our city.

I'll try to summarize some answers from the Holy Brainstorming sessions. We did brainstorming in four categories.

The first category was "Physical." This includes any asset that is a thing the church possesses. Answers included: Our organ, our downtown location, stained glass, our 300-year history, Lord Howe, the interior of the church, our garden, the Queen Anne silver, the Guild Hall, the bells, our rectory, our musical tradition, the mosaic floor, our emphasis on Morning Prayer and traditional liturgy, our gargoyles, and our endowment.

The second category was "Individual." This includes people who attend the church and, specifically, skills or gifts they possess that are assets to St. Peter's. I won't name individual church members in this article, although many were named during the meetings. Strengths that our parishioners possess include cooking, leadership, art, music, sports, teaching, legal aid, humble service, flowers/gardeners, knitting, prayer, generosity of heart and public speaking/reading. We viewed our diversity as a congregation as a strength, including differing perspectives, backgrounds, ages and economic levels. We also saw our newcomers and many visitors as strengths.

The third category was “Associational.” This includes any outside group that our parish has a connection with that might be valuable for our mission. We listed all of the groups from our Eastertide speaker series, as well as: the Capital Area Council of Churches, the Royal School of Church Music, ecumenical connections with non-Episcopal churches in Albany, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Junior Friday Morning Club, the school for girls in Uganda, Food for the Poor, and Top of the Hill.

The final category was “Institutional.” This includes any connection we have within the Episcopal or Diocesan family. Our answers included: Beaver Cross, previous Episcopal choral gatherings at the Cathedral, Doane Stuart, the Daughters of the King, the Diocese of Albany, the Christ the King Center and the Episcopal hospital chaplaincy.

You can see from the above Holy Brainstorming sessions that St. Peter’s has been richly blessed with possessions, people, and connections. We’ll continue to prayerfully explore these connections together and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in how the Lord would have us share the riches of his grace with our good city.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus,

Mtr. Christina+

Upcoming Events

Vestry Meeting

The June Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 13th at 5:15pm., on the second floor in the meeting room.

Daughters of the King

A discussion was made regarding the upcoming Discernment Classes, which are open to any laywomen who are communicants of the Episcopal Church or of churches in communion with the Episcopal Church. As a Daughter, we obey the two Rules of the Order: the **Rule of Prayer** and the **Rule of Service**. We offer at all times loyal aid to our clergy and parish to spread Christ’s Kingdom. Members of the DOK faithfully wear the cross of The Order and work for the purposes of the Order as God may give us the Opportunity. Our mission of the Order is the extension of Christ’s Kingdom through **Prayer, Service** and **Evangelism**. The mandatory Discernment classes are held for 6-7 weeks and will begin on Sunday, September 10th. Classes will NOT be held on the following Sundays: Annual Church Picnic and Columbus weekend. The Daughters would be pleased to speak with any interested female who may be interested in joining the Julia Chapter of the Daughters of the King. We look forward to all those who may have questions to inquire at your convenience to any of the following members:

Susan Smith (President) (Gpleasant49@gmail.com)
Michele Lundberg (Secretary/VP) (MicheleLund@aol.com)
Judy Burns, Karen Chatman, Cathy Connors, Donna Ohlman, and Alice Sanigular.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Smith, President



Awards Sunday and Ice Cream Social

This year’s Awards and Ice Cream Social will take place on Sunday, June 18th. The Awards will be presented during the 10:30am service and the Ice Cream Social will be held immediately following the service. Please join us in honoring the work of many who serve our church.

Carly’s Cards

I would like this opportunity to personally thank all of those who have previously assembled Carly’s Cards for mailing and those who will be preparing the cards in the next several months. The enthusiasm is refreshing and I believe it reinforces our commitment as Christians as to how devoted we are to the members of St. Peter’s Church.

For anyone who may have questions regarding the procedure we follow with **Carly’s Cards**, or if you are interested in volunteering for a month, all are welcome to contact me, Susan Smith at (518) 505-6051 or Gpleasant49@gmail.com. Thank you in advance, Susan Smith

Coffee Hour Goodies

Thank you to all who responded and “actually filled the freezer.” We have a good supply of goodies with the supplement from our weekly volunteers to see us through the spring. Thanks so much to all and of course, thank you to the volunteers who create a great coffee hour fellowship experience each week.

Youth Formation & Sunday School

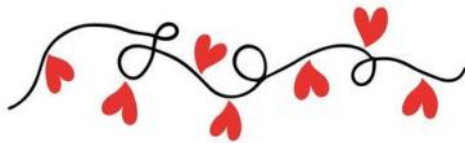
Mother's Day on May 14th



Thank you!

I would like to thank Jim Chenot and Mother Christina for all their support of our children's ministry. Thank you also to Sharon Vardabash, Kelly Welch and Ariana Saffares for teaching and caring for our children each week. Thank you to Pat and Wayne for always being there to help with anything I ask them. Also a huge thanks to Ruth Manss and Janice Chenot for all their support during the year. God bless you all for the continued support with St. Peter's Sunday school.

Laura



St. Francis Mission

St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen - Saturdays, June 10th & June 17th ~ 11:00am to 1:00pm

On the 2nd & 3rd Saturday of every month, Laura Saffares our Director of Christian Education and Chairperson of Outreach, along with other volunteers, get together to help serve the families of our community. We served 323 meals the last Saturday in May. You are welcome to come and witness this amazing outreach program anytime you can, we are there from 9am-1pm, For more information or if you would like to volunteer, even for just a couple of hours, please contact Laura at (518)368-4284.

Thank you to all the volunteers that came to help, and to all the generous donations of clothes and household items.



Thank you and may God Bless,

Laura



Father's Day Outreach

This year for Mother's Day at the St. Francis Mission, Gail, the woman that spoke at St. Peter's a few weeks ago made little gift bags for all of the moms. So I decided to ask her what St. Peter's could do to help her with Father's Day bags. She asked if we would like to help with getting donations of 30 pairs of men's socks, 30 decks of playing cards and, if we have the means, some \$5 Dunkin Donuts gift cards. Therefore, I am asking you to find it your heart to help us put some smiles on the dads of the South End community. As always, I thank you for all your support with St. Peter's Outreach. Just find me before or after church to collect your donation. I will be keeping all donations in the office until I volunteer on June 17th.

Blessings to all ~ Laura Saffares.

St. Peter's Music

Choir

Choir rehearsals will continue on the following schedule until June 8th :

Thursdays - 5:30pm - 7:00 pm full choir rehearsal

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



The Summer Choir

Come join **the Summer Choir** at St. Peter's, on Sundays June 25 through September 3. Everyone ages 8-88+ is welcome. Just come to the choir room for rehearsal at 9:45 a.m. to prepare an easy anthem, service music and hymns for the 10:30 a.m. service. No experience is necessary and there are no mid-week rehearsals. Just sing on the Sundays that are convenient for you. It's rewarding, fun, and an opportunity for the whole family to sing together. If you can sing in the shower, you can sing in **the Summer Choir**. Contact Mary Bon for more information at 518-434-3505 or maryeb.music@gmail.com or just join us any Sunday.

News on our Pipe Organ.

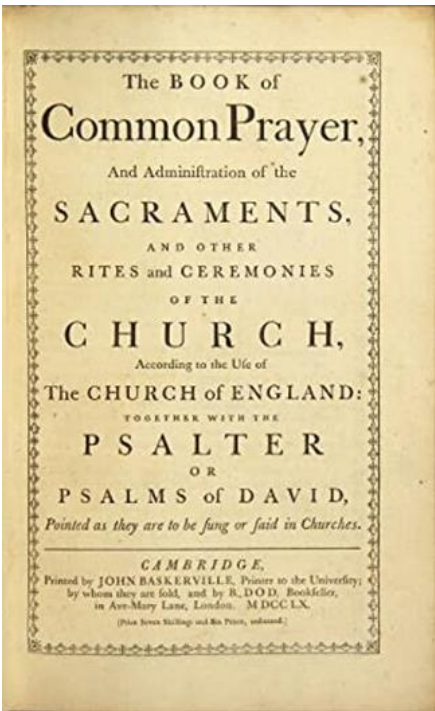
On Maundy Thursday our main organ stopped working. The choir smelled something burning after the service but, after scouring the buildings, we couldn't locate the source of the smell. Turned out the main blower on the front organ had burned out. Located in the cellar under the organ, the blower is one of the least glamorous but most essential parts of our pipe organ. It's an electrically powered motor that supplies the wind enabling the pipes to sound and make music.

Luckily St. Peter's has two organs, the main one in the front and a smaller organ in the balcony. We have been able to play the balcony organ from the front even when the rest of the main organ is not working. The blower (which like the organ is fifty years old) is being removed and taken to a local machine shop to hopefully be rebuilt. If that is not possible we will be searching for a new blower.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we adjust to working with only the back organ. Bravo to our choir for rising to the occasion, coordinating singing from the front while being accompanied from the back- no mean feat.

Thank you St. Peter's Choristers

As the choir season draws to a close I want to thank each of the St. Peter's choristers for their faithfulness, hard work and glorious music throughout the year. Our choir is made up primarily of volunteers who each donate over 200 hours a year to the joyful duty of beautifying our worship services with their music. Even the few paid choristers are paid only a token amount. We are blessed to have them and it is a joy to work and serve with them. We will thank them on Choir Awards Sunday, June 18th. Join us.

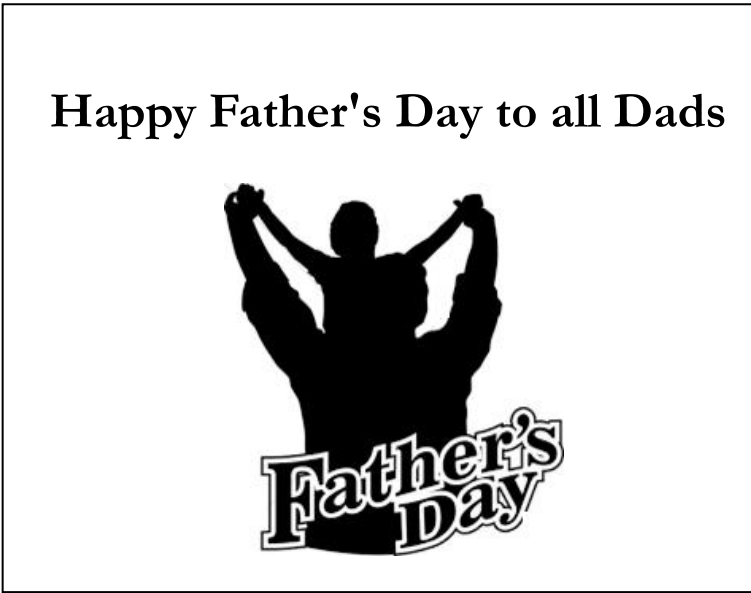


The Book of Common Prayer

The Book of Common Prayer is essential to the Episcopal Church. It includes the Daily Devotionals, the Great Litany, the Collects, Compline, the Rites for Holy Communion, as well as Proper Liturgies for Special Days, including those preceding Easter and after Pentecost and Holy Days, celebrating the lives of saints. Included also are the Rites of Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Ministration to the Sick and the Burial of the Dead. There are Rites of Ordination of a Bishop, Priest, and Deacon and the Celebration of a New Ministry.


A unique addition of the Book of Common Prayer are the suggested readings in the back of the book called the Lectionary, guiding the readers to the appropriate Psalms and Bible Passages to go along with the Church Calendar. Faithfully following these readings will allow the reader to read all of the Psalms and Bible passages to go along with the church calendar.

The book of Common Prayer has a unique history. It was in September of 1548 that a committee under Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, met to draft what was to become the first Book of Common Prayer in English. It was authorized by the first Act of Uniformity passed on January 1549 and published later that same year. We have a copy of this original book in the Archives titled “The First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI”. Edward VI was the son of Henry VIII, founder of the Church of England that was the mother church of the Episcopal Church.



June 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
4 First Sunday after Pentecost / Trinity Sunday 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion	5	6	7
11 Second Sunday after Pentecost 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer	12 Saint Barnabas	13 5:15pm - Vestry Meeting	14
18 Third Sunday after Pentecost Awards Sunday - Father's Day 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion Ice Cream Social following the 10:30am service	19	20	21
25 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer	26	27	28

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>1</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>
	<p>8</p> <p>5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>11:00am - Angels in Training</p>
	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>11:00am - Angels in Training</p>
	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 The Nativity of St. John the Baptist</p>
	<p>29 Saint Peter & Saint Paul</p>	<p>30</p>	

ALBANY DAMIEN CENTER THANKS

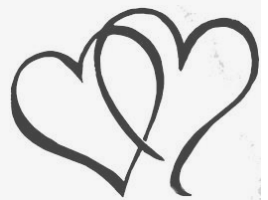
The cookout at the Damien Center on Saturday was once again a success and we are so grateful to all the parishioners and others who participated in making a party for the members. St. Peter's was represented by Cathy Schunk, Laura Saffares, Diana Martin, Deb Spath, Maria Holden, Jeff Russom, Laura Grill, the Douglas family, Mollie Flannery, Clark and Carol Daggett and Sharon DeBonis, and the members were especially impressed by the array of dishes and desserts on offer this year. Thanks to all that came out and helped put on an amazing BBQ. Everyone enjoyed the food and the company.



Congratulations

Patricia Roohan &

Tyler Hull



5/27/23

Other Happenings



BEAVER CROSS YOUTH MINISTRY

Beaver Cross 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



Con GRAD ulations !

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR 2022-2023 GRADUATES

MAXWELL BENSON graduated from Presbyterian College with a Bachelor of Science Degree. (Max is the son of Pete and Jessica Benson and the nephew of Maggie Russom).

AMARI DOUGLAS graduated from the University at Albany School of Business with a Bachelor of Science Degree. (Amari is the son of Tanya Green Douglas and brother of Nathan and Solomon Douglas).

JULIAN CLARK KOVACS graduated from Hartwick College with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Liberal Arts with a Double Major of Public Health and Political Science. (Julian is the son of Cristi and Jule Kovacs and the grandson of Clark and Carol Daggett).

HANNAH WEIR TUCKER graduated from Sacred Heart University with a Doctorate in Physical Therapy. (Hannah is the granddaughter of Diana Martin).

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

April 11th, 2023

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

Absent: P. Benson, M. Moran

Opening Prayer Led by Mtr. Christina.

Approval of the Vestry Meeting Minutes, March 20th, 2023

The vestry minutes from the February 14th 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:

Led Holy Week services – Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday.
Attended Jack Clark's confirmation at the Cathedral at the Easter Vigil, along with his sponsors Laura Saffares and Malcolm Moran.
Concluded the Mark Lenten lunch series. Considering what adult ed to do next – possibly a short session after Eastertide
Enjoyed the Morning Prayer Fridays during Lent in my office. Will likely offer that again in the future for another "short run."
Did one home visit in the last month.
Officiated the funeral of Jane Streiff on April 1.
Represented St. Peter's at the yearly Chrism Mass on April 3.
Put together a plan for the organist/choirmaster search (we'll address this in old business).
Am working with several parishioners on putting together the remaining components on the children's prayer room, which will be dedicated during the April 30 Morning Prayer service at 10:30. I will lead children's chapel upstairs (with ukulele!), and Dr. John Davis will officiate the adult service and preach.

Interim stuff:

Big Picture Update:

Have scheduled most of the speakers for the Eastertide "Who is my Neighbor?" series and introduced the idea in the April newsletter. Our first speaker will be Perry Jones from the Capital City Rescue Mission this coming Sunday, April 9.
As part of our reflection on our neighbors, I've scheduled two "holy brainstorming" sessions on April 23 (after the 10:30) and April 25 (at 7 pm via Zoom) to reflect on the riches God has already given St. Peter's in people, resources, connections, etc, and how we might be called to use those resources for the kingdom.

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

Met with my interim ministry mentor, Bill Thomas, in March.

Submitted by The Rev. Christina Hunter

Sr. Warden's Report –J. Chenot

I would like to begin the meeting thanking Mother Christina for all her tireless work and leadership during this past Lenten and Easter Season. Palm Sunday and both Easter Sunday services were well attended.

The Sunday school children colored Easter eggs on Palm Sunday, for the Easter egg hunt the following Saturday at the Rectory. It ended up being a beautiful day with many showing up, young and older veterans looking for eggs. We want to thank Laura Saffares and all the other Sunday school volunteers for all their work each Sunday helping with all these special events.

We need to give special thanks to Mary Bon, our choir director who works tirelessly with our choir, who performed beautiful Lenten and Easter music. The schedule for choir rehearsals and working with Mary, learning all the music was a small undertaking to say the least. I would like to thank each and every one of the choir members for their talent and gifts that they were able to share with all of us. Also, I would like to thank our choir Mom, Diana Martin who coordinated the brunch in between the Easter Services for the choir, as well as, making sure the choir is looking their best at all times for the services.

Also, many thanks to all those involved in the logistics of all these services. First starting by thanking the altar guild for all their work on the Maundy Thursday evening service, and then preparing the altars for both services on Easter, making sure everything was clean and in order, your ministry does not go unnoticed. We also are blessed to have the talent that comes out from the flower guild and this Easter was no exception with their labor and loves to beautify the church with all the flower arrangements throughout the church. Many thanks to the ushers and the hospitality they offer to all the newcomers, as well as our parishioners each and every Sunday. To Wayne and Pat for their work, keeping the physical plant clean and in order as well, does not go unnoticed. Finally, we want to thank Ruth and Janice who have work tirelessly in the church office during this past Lenten season. It is incredible how much work is produced out of the church office during the Lenten season – printed items for all the services including all the record keeping for the Easter Lilies memorials. We are so fortunate to have both of them and sincerely thank them for all their tireless work.

Finally, I want to thank the vestry for supporting and helping Mother Christina and the congregation at large. Last September we started our church calendar year, picking up where we left off prior to the covid shut down and having new clergy in place. Today, we can see all the fruits of labor and faith everyone has put forth with many past members returning to St. Peter's to worship on Sundays, as well as many newcomers returning each week.

Thank you all, God Bless,
Jim

Sunday Attendance – The Average Attendance is 89.2.

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

	MAR	YEAR-TO-DATE
OFFERINGS	\$19,598	\$42,031
EXPENSES	(\$52,140)	(\$141,027)
GAIN/(LOSS)	(\$32,542)	(\$98,996)
WITHDRAWALS FROM EN- DOWMENT TO FUND SHORTFALL	\$40,732	\$87,045

Endowment Return (Merrill Lynch)

March: +1.90%

Index Calculated Return: +0.61%

Updated 2023 Pledges:

32 for a total of \$116,880

YTD Offerings through March '23 are \$10,058 higher than '22

Property –

The fourth floor apartment continues to be updated including taking out of old carpet which will be replaced with new flooring.

The vestry was presented with proposals for two projects requiring plaster repair and repainting. The first project is in the Rector's office, and this proposal was approved on a motion by D. Spath, seconded by A. Closson, then unanimously approved by the vestry. The second project proposal was for the vestibule between the guild house and the church. This proposal was approved on a motion by M. Lundberg, seconded by M. Holden, then unanimously approved by the vestry. We are hoping to begin the first of these projects in early Summer.

The stoves in the Guild House kitchen have found a new home. They will be removed in the near future to make room for new stoves. The vestry has been looking to make this change for quite some time due to the hood not being up to code for this particular type of stove.

There are a few projects occurring at the Rectory. The vestry is currently receiving radon and mold assessment quotes for the basement at the Rectory. We are also looking to have the façade repainted now that the gutters have been installed.

Outreach –

Laura Saffares and the Outreach Committee continue to serve the guests of St. Francis Mission on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, with food and clothing. More help is always welcome. Laura is also very grateful to all who have brought food in for the South End Children's Café and left it in the box at the back of the church. Laura also got in touch with the Ten Broeck Mansion when she learned that their children's stations had been vandalized, days before their Easter Egg Hunt, and was able to provide them with 30 boxes of crayons, little notebooks, and chalk in time for the Hunt.

Laura Grill, Katherine Grill and Sharon DeBonis represented St. Peter's at the Damien Center's Bowling for PAWS on March 26. Maria Holden and Sharon DeBonis served Easter dinner at the Center. The food was prepared by Deb Spath, Cathy Schunk, Maria Holden, Mollie Flannery and Sharon DeBonis. Easter baskets were provided by the Daughter's of the King, with assistance from Laura Saffares, Laura Grill and Gloria Vanderpoel. Maria also decorated the tables. Planning for the May 27 cookout is underway.

Old Business –

The vestry will be welcoming our first marketing intern from Siena College mid-May. She will meet with Mother Christina and the vestry to discuss projects we would like her to work on.

Mother Christina presented her plan for moving forward with our Choir Master/Organist search. She will be posting the job description ad in the near future and it will run for about one month. After this time, there will be a small advisory group to look through all applicants and conduct phone interviews. The phone interviews will hopefully narrow down to a few in person interviews. The vestry and choir are open and excited to move forward with this process.

New Business – None

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by J. Russom and seconded by M. Lundberg, 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@stpeterschurhalbany.org

Website:

www.stpeterschurhalbany.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

