



THE Cornerstone

December 2015

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

ADVENT Waiting and Watching

Reading the Psalms, it often strikes me how David is waiting and watching; specifically, he is waiting and watching for the Lord to act. The 71st Psalm comes at once to mind;

Psalm 71

12. O God, be not far from me;
come quickly to help me, O my God.

13. Let those who set themselves against me be put to shame and
be disgraced;
let those who seek to do me evil be covered with scorn
and reproach.

14. But I shall always wait in patience,
and shall praise you more and more.

15. My Mouth shall recount your mighty acts
and saving deeds all day long;
although I cannot number them.

16. I will begin with the mighty works of the Lord God;
I will recall your righteousness, yours alone.

17. O God, you have taught me since I was young,
and to this day I tell of your wonderful works.

18. And now that I am old and gray-headed, O God, do not
forsake me,
till I make known your strength to this generation
and your power to all who are to come. ...

24. My tongue will proclaim your righteousness all day long,
for they are ashamed and disgraced who sought
to do me harm.

David's words are Advent words and recognized or not, the world's words. They are the words of a world reaching out for what is beyond its agency, beyond its scope of power. It is the cry of a world in the deep end, in well over its head. It is a world that thinks it fumbles and teeters at the edge without God -- but, thanks be to God, is never actually there without God. It is a world "old and gray-headed" indeed, but also one forgetful of Divine intervention after Divine intervention.

There is an "old and gray-headed" priest I know. He will sometimes say that one of the proofs for the existence of God is that we haven't destroyed ourselves yet. There is something to that view. He looks back over nearly eighty years of life. He has seen the world at the brink many times; the Nazis, the Cuban missile crisis, the Cold War, on and on. Yet he knows the story is much older. It is in the mouth of David. It is in the mouth of Jesus, when He says "Fear not little flock" and "Even the hairs of your head are all numbered." (Luke 12:32, Matthew 10:30.)

Waiting and watching, Advent. Advent with the world on the brink. The story does not change. How could it? We fumble and teeter and forget. But thanks be to God, it is God's world. It is a world in which we are ever dependent on the mercy and intervention from Above. Intervention that comes. As David cries, "In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free; incline your ear to me and save me. Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe; you are my crag and my stronghold. ...For you are my hope, O Lord God, my confidence since I was young. I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have been my strength...Do not cast me off in my old age; forsake me not when my strength fails. ...You strengthen me more and more; you enfold and comfort me." (Psalm 71.)

It is an old world, a very old and gray-headed world. But it is not a forsaken world. It is a rescued world. It is God's world.

Jesus is coming. He will arrive into the very Holy Land so much the focus of our anxiety, something perhaps to ponder as we are watching and waiting.

A Prayer:

Grant us, O Lord, we pray thee, to trust in thee with all our heart; seeing that, as thou dost always resist the proud who confide in their own strength, so thou dost not forsake those who make their boast of thy mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (BCP 181.)

The Lord bless and keep us as His Advent people,
Fr. Hartt+

From the Associate Rector:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called

Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

If you are like me, the tune of Handel's Messiah was ringing in your ear as you read those words from the prophet Isaiah. I can't help but love that particular tradition of ours here at St. Peter's Church. In fact, I can't help but love all of the Advent and Christmas traditions we have here at St. Peter's Church. And if you are like me, it takes a little while to get into the Christmas spirit. I find, as I hope you do, that each of our traditions helps move me spiritually closer to Christmas building week by week, hymn by hymn, event by event.

And so we begin with Advent. Advent, the start of the new Church year, is all about waiting, expecting, and anticipating; the word means “coming”. Many people, especially those who are unchurched, move from Thanksgiving straight to Christmas. But at church we do have Advent, and I find, as I hope you do, that moving spiritually through Advent helps prepare me more fully for Christmas.

Afterall, just how is one to prepare for the arrival of the One who is called ***Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!*** The many weeks of Advent purposes to do just that. Advent is the time of preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Christ and also the expectation of the second coming of Christ which we all eagerly await.

We use this time of preparation both at home and in church through prayers, devotional readings and worship. I hope you will take the Advent Wreath and Prayers home with you and travel along with us daily. I also hope you will dedicate to gathering each Sunday and worship with us weekly.

It is important to anchor ourselves in the two-fold preparation we are in. One looks backwards and celebrates the birth of Christ. The other looks forwards and anticipates the final coming of Christ. And because of this, we find the season of Advent has a theme of not only “coming”, but also reconciliation. It is likened to Lent in that we are called to self-reflection, confession and commitment to our Lord. This is one of the reasons I am happy that Advent lasts four weeks long: I am rarely quick to be ready for full self-reflection, confession and commitment to our Lord. I need the time for prayer, reflection and encouragement; the time and also the readings, hymns and devotions that Advent provides. I need time set aside in my life and space created in my heart to fully welcome our Lord Jesus Christ!

Fully traveling through Advent is the best way I know to fully celebrate on December 25th. I pray that God uses these next weeks mightily in your life so that His full blessing may be experienced by you on Christmas Day.

Let us pray,

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with undending life. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever. Amen [The Episcopal Church Advent Blessing]

Yours in Christ, Mtr. Sue+

Service of Remembrance

December 3, 2015 at 7pm: An ecumenical prayer service will be held to gather and remember our departed loved ones. Each remembrance will be signified by the lighting of a candle and an ornament placed on our Remembrance Tree. A reception follows the service in the Pumpelly Room. We thank Judy Burns for coordinating this annual prayer event.

Advent and Christmas at St. Peter's

Advent Wreaths, Calendars, and Candles

Available November 29, 2015

Service of Remembrance

December 3, 2015

7:00pm Service

Messiah Concert

December 13, 2015

3:00pm

Sunday School Pageant

December 13, 2015

10:30am Service



Lessons and Carols

December 20, 2015

10:30am Service

Hanging of the Greens

December 20, 2015

12:00pm

Christmas Eve Services

December 24, 2015; 4:30pm

Family Service w/crèche

December 24, 2015; 10:00pm

Choral Service

Christmas Day Service

December 25, 2015

9:00am Holy Communion

Helping Families in Need this Christmas

St. Peter's Parish is partnering with St. David's Parish, East Greenbush, to provide Christmas gifts to two relocated Burmese families, a total of 12 individuals.

A Christmas tree will be located in the Pumpully Room at the beginning of Advent. The tree will be decorated with paper ornaments indicating the recipient's age, gender, size and gift idea. Items of need are winter jackets, sweaters, hats & mittens, socks, and gift cards for WalMart. Please take one or more of the ornaments. The ornament should be attached to the wrapped gift and returned under the tree no later than Sunday, December 20. Instructions are printed on the ornament as well.

Thank you for blessing these families.

Handel's Messiah

On Sunday, December 13th at 3 pm the St. Peter's Choir will present a performance of Handel's Messiah, accompanied by a chamber orchestra. All are welcome to this performance. There is no charge for admission, but a \$10 donation is suggested. Mark your calendar now for this seasonal favorite.

Hanging of the Greens

The annual Hanging of the Greens in which we decorate the church for Christmas with pine and balsam will take place immediately following the 10:30AM service on Sunday, December 20th. The traditional ham luncheon will be served at 1PM by the men of St. Peter's. We ask you to please dress comfortably and bring a dish to share. The men of St. Peter's are looking for cooks, servers, set-up and clean-up help. Please contact Jack Ratzel at 466-2871 if you are available to help. We hope that you will join us for this long-time festive tradition.

Christmas Poinsettia and Hanging of the Greens Donation

Your special gifts for poinsettias and greens to honor, show thanks, and to remember loved ones are crucial to this beautiful display and annual parish event. If you would like to be part of this floral tribute, please complete the enclosed Christmas Flower form and send it to the church office with your donation. The deadline is Sunday, December 20th. We urge you to be as generous as you can. Thank you for your support.

A HUGE THANK YOU!

The St. Peter's choir would like to thank all those that supported their Thanksgiving Pie Fundraiser by purchasing pies. They sold 30 frozen apple pies and raised a total of \$550 towards their England trip in 2017. They would also like to thank all of the "little choir elves" that gave up their Saturday to help make all of those pies. **THANK YOU!**

Adult Education

Advent Retreat

On Friday and Saturday, December 4th and 5th, The Healing Center at Christ the King invites you to experience the refreshing and renewing power of God in a weekend away. Come away for rest and renewal, and learn some tools to help you enter into God's peace through the power of the Holy Spirit. The retreat will be led by Dcn. Lynne Crimi, MSW and Dee-Dee Whitten, M.Ed. Prices are \$91 per person for double occupancy, \$115 per person for single occupancy, and \$45 for commuters (no lodging provided). Prices include lodging in the King's Inn (except commuters), Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and retreat materials. All are welcome.

Surviving and Healing the Holidays

Is the Thanksgiving-Christmas-New Year's season difficult for you or someone you know? Bereavement, loss, moving, or the "blues" can be challenging at any time, but especially when others are focused on joyful celebration. St. Paul's Church, 6 Silvester St, Kinderhook, NY 12106 is offering a workshop to help those who find the holidays challenging to cope. *Surviving the Holidays* presents coping strategies that can reduce stress and provide an alternative to isolation. *Healed for the Holidays* is a service of prayer for physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, relational, and intergenerational healing. Jesus can break through even the toughest pain and sadness. Let Him overcome the obstacles that prevent you from knowing fully the peace and joy God longs to give. The workshop, followed immediately by the healing service will be offered Friday, December 18 beginning at 2:00 p.m. and finishing at 5:00 p.m, with the healing service immediately following. The workshops and service are free of charge and open to all. St. Paul's is handicapped accessible. For more information, call St. Paul's at (518) 758-6271.

Adult Bible Study:

Paul's Letter to the Galatians

Sunday's from 12:00-1:00pm

November 29 & December 13th

Bring a cup of coffee with you following our 10:30 service coffee hour as we meet in Mother Sue's office for a video presentation from N.T. Wright on Paul's Letter to the Galatians, followed by questions and conversation. This New Testament epistle not only conveys an early church community's growth in the faith, but also conveys much Christian theology; all presented by one of the leading Anglican theologians of our day!

Thanksgiving Altar



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Overflow Homeless Shelter

Could you consider giving up one evening this winter to offer the gift of hospitality and show another the love and mercy of God?

The St. Peter's overflow homeless shelter will open for its 7th season on December 1st to augment the ministry of the Capital City Rescue Mission to Albany's homeless by housing up to 20 men when their shelter has exceeded capacity.

We are currently receiving donations of food items and are also scheduling volunteers to offer hospitality during the evening hours; the hours for this are from 8pm until 11pm on the 2nd floor of the Guild House (next to the church).

To sign up to volunteer, please call Judy Burns at [441-7538](tel:441-7538) or email stpeterschurch.albany@gmail.com or contact Meghan Cooney in the church office at 434-3502.

Food items needed include: coffee, tea, sugar, popcorn and snacks, cereal (hot and cold), peanut butter, bread, fresh fruit, milk and juice along with fresh baked items. These can be dropped off to the church office any weekday, or brought to church on Sundays and given to Pat. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

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 434-3502.

Daughters of the King

The DOK meeting this month will be Sunday
December 13, 2015 at 9:35am

Outreach

This month's Outreach meeting will be on Tuesday 12/8/15 at 4:30 pm. Please join us to learn about Outreach ministries and hospitality events beings planned!

Estimate of Giving Cards

Estimate of Giving Cards for 2016 have been mailed out to all parishioners that did not attend the morning worship service on Consecration Sunday, October 18th. If you did not receive a 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. You may also call the church office and we would be more than happy to complete a card for you. Thank you to those that have promptly completed and returned their card.



The First Lutheran Church Shelter Dinners

begins Thursday, November 19th. The Capital Area Council of Churches runs a 20-bed shelter at First Lutheran Church (on Western Avenue in downtown Albany). During the cold months (November through April) when other shelters fill up quickly with women and children, the men can come to this overflow shelter and receive a hot meal and a good night's sleep. The Outreach Committee of St. Peter's Church invites you to volunteer in both cooking and/or delivering meals for the Overflow Homeless Shelter. We are committed to providing a complete dinner for 20 people, cooked and delivered, every Thursday evening to the Overflow Shelter. We are asking that you sign-up to cook a complete dinner. Please sign your name next to the date on the board in the Pumpelly Room and take an instruction form. Please include a phone number that we can contact you at. Containers will be in the Pumpelly room to take home to cook in. If you cannot deliver the meal, please return the meal **frozen** to the church on the **Sunday before** the date you signed up for. Pat will put the dinners in the freezer for delivery during the week. If you are delivering the meal you can call Deb Spath at 478-9389 for directions.

Youth Formation & Sunday School

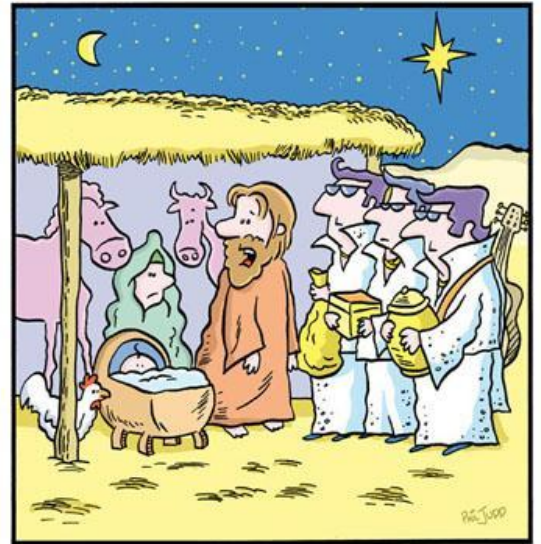
Mark your Calendars!

December 6th rehearsal for the Christmas Pageant
During Sunday school and for about a hour after

December 13th The Christmas Pageant
please have the children upstairs by 10:00am sharp.

December 24th The Christmas Eve family service
I invite all the children of St Peters to join us in the procession of the Creche. Each child will carry a piece of the Manger to be put together before service. Meet us in the Pumpelly Room for your piece.

Church Chuckles!



"They say they are three kings."

Making Pumpkin Bread!



St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen

The 3rd Saturday of each month (December 19, 2015) (Angels in Training), invites you to join Laura Saffares and others from St. Peter's to prepare and serve lunch at this Episcopal church on Clinton Avenue, Albany. Generally, over 100 adults and children come for lunch so many hands mean light work! Please call Laura for information or to let her know you are coming at 368-4284.

Angels in Training



I want to thank the congregation for the outpouring support with the donations of coats for Grace and Holy Innocents. You have made many people of the community warm for the winter.

Another thanks for all that volunteered at Equinox. Stuffing was this year's job, over 150 pans. Thank you all for helping.

The Christmas pageant will be December 13 with practice for readers and parts this week and next! Please join us.

Sending blessings to All.

Laura Saffares



fresh foods from
small farms™



Local produce delivered to

**St. Peter's Episcopal
Church on Thursdays**

How Does It Work?

Field Goods is a local produce subscription delivery service. Brilliant, right? Each week, you'll receive 5-8 different types of fruits and vegetables. Invaluable to a healthy lifestyle!

Field Goods chooses the items delivered and purchases them directly from over 60 different Hudson Valley farms. A subscription costs \$20, \$25, or \$30 a week depending on which bag you choose. All of the produce is non-GMO, much is organic, and all is grown by small farms.

In the Bag, our newsletter, gives you information about what you're eating and how to eat it: facts, recipes, and photos! We deliver 150+ varieties of fruits and vegetables, and more than a dozen types of local cheese and artisan bread, all grown by local small farms or local producers.



Field Goods offers great value and variety, convenient delivery, fresh and delicious produce, and supports local farmers.

What's not to love?

What our
customers
are saying

"I LOVE vegetable day."

*"I am having so much fun
experimenting with new foods
and recipes."*

"Excellent quality, value, variety."

*"My kids like Baby Turnips
and Kale...who knew?"*

*"Great newsletter.
Makes me want to cook."*

*"THANK YOU for changing
the way my family eats!"*

To sign up & learn more, go to

Field-goods.com

Email info@field-goods.com

Field Goods is located in Athens, NY



EXCEL
2016

Contest for our High School teens!

Enter our contest to win an all-expense paid weekend at the 2016 EXCEL conference (January 15-17th 2016) in Saratoga Springs NY! This includes the registration for all EXCEL events as well as meals and accommodations in a nearby hotel (with other people from our Albany Diocese).

About EXCEL: Since 1988, with the help of hundreds of volunteers and staff, the EXCEL High School Conference is held each January. Attendance from 3 states and many denominations brings over 1,500 students and leaders each year. **EXCEL** is a fast paced, exhilarating weekends featuring inspiring Christian musical guests, drama, comedy, and motivational speakers from all over the country. Leaders and students enjoy spiritually charged assemblies, worship and seminars that address tough issues facing today's teens. Year after year, these conferences have become "mountaintop" life-changing experiences for many students, youth groups and their leaders. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.beavercrossministries.org/excel--breakout.html>.

To enter the contest: Write and tell us one way that you have seen God work in your life or in the life of someone close to you. You can email it to Mother Sue at: mothersue@stpeterschurchalbany.org or bring it to her in Church!

December 2015



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
		1	2 8:45 am - Top 12:05 pm - Ho
6 Second Sunday of Advent 8:30am - Holy Communion 9:35am - DOK Meeting 10:30am - Holy Communion 4:00pm - Holy Communion	7 5pm - Treble Rehearsal	8 4:30pm - Outreach Meeting 5:15 pm - Vestry Meeting	9 8:45 am - Top 12:00 pm - Ho
13 Third Sunday of Advent 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer with Sun- day School Pageant 12pm - Galatians Bible Study 3:00pm - Handel's Messiah	14 5 pm - Treble Rehearsal	15	16 8:45 am - Top 12:05 pm - Ho
20 Fourth Sunday of Advent Youth Sunday 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Lessons and Carols 12pm - Hanging of the Greens with Luncheon following 4:00pm - Holy Communion	21 St. Thomas the Apostle 5 pm - Treble Rehearsal	22	23 8:45 am - Top 12:00 pm - Ho
27 First Sunday after Christmas 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 4:00pm - Holy Communion	28 The Holy Innocents Office Closed	29	30 8:45 am - Top 12:00 pm - Ho

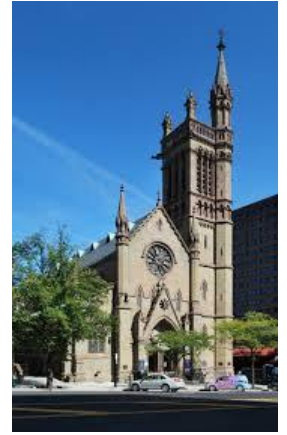
	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
of the Hill oly Communion	3 5 pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30 pm - Full Choir 7pm - Service of Remembrance	4 12:30 pm - Organ Concert	5
of the Hill oly Communion	10 5 pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30 pm - Full Choir	11 12:30 pm - Organ Concert	12
of the Hill oly Communion	17 5 pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30 pm - Full Choir	18 12:30 pm - Organ Concert	19 11am - Angel's in Training
of the Hill oly Communion	24 Christmas Eve 4:30pm - Holy Communion 10:00pm - Holy Communion	25 Christmas 9:00am - Holy Communion Office Closed	26 St. Stephen
of the Hill oly Communion	31 New Years Eve		

From the Archives

Memorials and Gifts to St. Peter's Church

The building of the third Edifice of St. Peter's Church in French Gothic style by the renowned Architect Richard Upjohn sparked a movement for beautification of the new church by members of the Parish. A walk through the church reveals some of these gifts.

Before entering the church proper one sees the church tower. This was designed by Richard M. Upjohn, the son of Richard Upjohn. The church tower and chimes were the generous contribution of John Tweddle and his family. The early bell installed in the first Edifice in 1751, which is mistakenly called the Queen Anne Bell (she died in 1714), is included among the chimes.



Entering the church we pass through the lovely bronze doors. These doors, designed by Marcus T. Reynolds and Worthington Palmer in 1933 were the gift of Alice Glassford Boyd in loving memory of her vestryman father Henry A. Glassford. They have been refurbished twice, first by Rector Laman Bruner in October 1965, and again by Rector Robert Eggenschiller in September 1999.

In the vestibule above the entrance to the church is a depiction of the Queen Anne Royal Arms in bas-relief. It was given on April 11, 1971 by Mrs. Albert Oliver in loving memory of her husband.

In the narthex of the church we notice a separate room on the East wall. The church Columbarium is located in this room. In the same room on the walls are several memorial tablets. One tablet of interest located on the outside wall of the room is the Potter Tablet constructed as a memorial to Mary Jane Potter, wife of Rector and later Bishop Horatio Potter. She died June 8th 1847. This room was also the home of the War Chapel that was used during the Second World War.

Once inside the church we notice the beautiful mosaic floors in the Nave, the Choir and the Sanctuary. The mosaic flooring of the Nave in front of the Chancel includes a depiction of a vine symbolizing Christ, the life-vine of the church and humanity. Interspaced are four medallions containing Christian symbolism. The middle and side aisles also contain medallions. This flooring was given in 1901 in memory of church Warden John Wilbur Tillinghast and of his son Wilbur Tillinghast.

The mosaic flooring of the Chancel incorporates the designs of Architect Robert Gibson. The floor in the Chancel outside of the Sanctuary was given by Robert C. Pruyn in 1886 and consists of simple wave-lines symbolizing the laver of baptism. In contrast the mosaic flooring of the Sanctuary is very ornate and includes a depiction of the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). It was given in memory of church warden Orlando Meads, who died in 1884.

On the left side in the front of the Nave is the a Memorial Organ Chamber which was contributed in June 1885 in honor of Giles W. Porter by his daughter . The walls of the Nave and also the Chancel and Sanctuary contain numerous stained glass windows adding great beauty to the church. One especially colorful window in the Nave which was given by George S. Weaver in 1880, was designed by Burne-Jones and made under the supervision of the William Morris Company of London. It contains the three depictions of Christ as shown in the Old Covenant: Abram Heres Mundi (Abraham, Inheritor of the World), Melchisedech Rex Salem (Melchisedech, King of Salem, and David Rex Israel (David King of Israel) . We are especially proud of this very beautiful window.

Approaching the altar, on the left is the Tibbits Memorial Pulpit that was installed in 1886 and on the right, is the fine bronze Gorham Lectern in the shape of an angel, placed in 1892. In the center is the stone altar and reredos given by Charles L Pruyn in 1885 in memory of his wife, Elizabeth McClintock Pruyn.

The church continues to be a haven for gifts from its parishioners. For example gifts for church celebrations were contributed by our parishioner Diana Martin. She contributed our Easter Paschal Candle Stand in 1997 (this Candle Stand may also be used at weddings and funerals), in thanksgiving for the birth of her first granddaughter Molly Bronson Tucker. In 1999 she contributed the arms on the Candle Stand which are used to hold the Advent Wreath, in thanksgiving for the birth of her second granddaughter Hannah Weir Tucker. And finally, along with other family and friends, she contributed the lovely Fontanini Nativity Set in 1998, in memory of her mother, Agnes Weir Smith.

St. Peters Music

Composer Profile

George Frederick Handel (1685-1759)



Handel was born in Germany to a family not at all supportive of his interest in music. His father tried to prevent him from having access to musical instruments as a boy, and insisted he study law. He did, but the same time served as a church organist. At age 18 he accepted a position as violinist and harpsichordist in an orchestra in Hamburg. After spending time in Italy he returned to Germany as Kapellmeister to prince George, the Elector of Saxony, who would later become King George I of Great Britain and Ireland. After 1712 Handel took up permanent residence in England.

Handel's compositions include 42 operas, 29 oratorios, more than 120 cantatas, trios and duets, numerous arias, chamber music, a large number of ecumenical pieces, odes and serenatas, and 16 organ concerti. His most famous work, the oratorio Messiah is among the most popular works in choral music and has become the centerpiece of the Christmas season.

In reply to Lord Kinnoull, who had complimented him on his Messiah, "the noble entertainment which he had lately given the town," Handel wrote, "I should be sorry if I only entertained them, I wish to make them better."

We invite you to hear the Choir sing Messiah on December 13th at 3:00pm. We can't promise to make you better, but we do hope you will be entertained and, perhaps, enriched.

CHOIR

Choir rehearsals will be on the following schedule:

Mondays: 5:00 - 6:15pm Trebles

Thursdays: 5:00 - 6:30pm Trebles

5:30 - 7:00pm Adult choristers

Sundays: 9:30 rehearse for the 10:30 service

There are several new treble choristers poised to join us, and we would love to welcome more. Please contact Neil Keen for more information at stpmus@gmail.com or 339-0137.

FRIDAY NOONTIME ORGAN CONCERTS

Free half-hour recitals each Friday at 12:30



FOOD FOR THE POOR

Saving Lives... Transforming Communities... Renewing Hope

For only \$3,200* we can provide a destitute family with a safe and secure new home with sanitation. The gift of a house is a lasting and loving gift that will change lives forever!



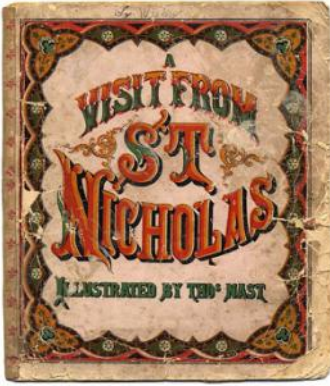
Give the
Gift of Safe
and Secure

Housing!

Families living in mud huts and makeshift shacks need your help. Your gift for housing can give a destitute family safe shelter.

If you would like to donate, please contact the Church Office for more information.

Did You Know?



Did you know **T**'was the Night Before Christmas was first published in Troy, NY?

The classic poem was originally titled "A Visit from St. Nicholas" and was first published in Troy by the Troy Sentinel Newspaper on December 23, 1823. Although the poem was submitted anonymously, it was later attributed to Clement Moore, a professor of classics at the General Theological Seminary in New York City. Prior to this poem, Moore's best-known work was a two volume publication entitled "A Compendious Lexicon of the Hebrew Language."

"A Visit from St. Nicholas" was well-received by the public and was republished frequently by the Sentinel. Most important, this landmark work literally created the Santa Claus we know today. This poem was the first to describe Santa Claus's appearance (the

"bowl full of jelly" as well as his clothing), the fact that he delivers toys to children, his transportation, the number and names of his reindeer, and the night he visits. Prior to the poem, there was considerable variation with respect to American ideas about St. Nicholas and other Christmas visitors.

An added bit of trivia about this poem is that the names given to the reindeer of "Donner" and "Blitzen" were taken from the Dutch "Dunder" and "Blixem" which literally translate into "Thunder" and "Lightning" in English.

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through
the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds;
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And Mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap;
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the latch.
The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny rein-deer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his couriers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vicen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

Minutes of the Vestry
St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church
October 13, 2015

1. Approval of the minutes of Vestry Meeting, September 8, 2015. - The minutes were approved as amended on a motion made by P. Gerfin and seconded by M. Lundberg.

2. Sr. Warden's Report- J. Chenot

Jim started by thanking everyone who participated in making September a success to kick off our new church calendar season. The annual picnic was well attended with plenty of hospitality and food. I would like to thank Michele and Mark Lundburg for all their help with preparing and setting up the morning of the picnic as well as Pat Shortall for his help with the food, cooking supplies and cleanup. I would also like to thank Kevin Cehowski and Jordan Chenot for their assistance cooking on the grill. Also many thanks to those who brought a dish to pass and making the picnic run smoothly and successfully. It was great for all the families, friends and young ones that attended this annual event enjoying each other's company and enjoying the great food that had been prepared.

First communion, confirmation and Bible study classes are in full swing. I would like to thank both Mother Sue and Father Hartt for all the work they put into these programs as well as some new activities that have been added to the calendar. One of the activities added in September was a night of dancing in the parish hall which was well attended with many enjoying the opportunity for those with no dancing skills able to be guided with two dancing instructors. I would like to thank Mary and Vinnie Troiano for heading up such a great event.

The new afternoon service added on Sunday afternoon has begun and Father feels very optimistic about the service with some attending more than one Sunday. Last Sunday October 3rd, we had a small service in the Church garden with Mt. Sue officiating at a Blessing of the Animals service. We would like to thank her for her efforts providing this service to our pet loving congregation.

Last week the office sent out the third quarter statements to our parishioner's as well as a letter from Father Hartt regarding Consecration Sunday which is this coming Sunday. This year we will have the luncheon at 90 State following the one service held at 9:30. Jim wanted to thank the following individuals on this committee who have taken up this new undertaking in our church stewardship: Christie Chenot, Terry Flannery, Geoffrey Hoderath, Jim Adams, Mark Lundburg and George Scala. In addition, I would like to thank both Mark Lundburg and Jim Adams for their testimonies at the past two Sunday services. Their stories, truly heartwarming and sincere shows us how important the church has meant to both of them and how important it is that we all work together as a family to continue our faith and traditions for the next generation.

The finance committee will be working on next year's budget this month so we can review it at the next vestry meeting. It is important that we continue to get our message out to the congregation regarding the importance of stewardship and increasing the endowment with gifting in wills and estate planning.

Upcoming events will be reported shortly by our outreach committee. One to mention will be the Pre-Thanksgiving dinner held in November. Jim also wanted to mention the continuing effort of St. Peter's hosting the overflow homeless shelter again this year. This year will be our seventh year doing so which has been an important ministry helping these gentlemen in the local community during the winter months. We will begin this ministry the first week in December and have volunteer orientation in November for those who would like to volunteer to help during these nights to get these gentlemen settled for the night and prepare light snacks with City Mission coordinators.

Lastly, Jim wanted to thank the Clergy, the choir and Neil for all their work and support during the very busy upcoming schedule of events that lead us through the musical performances, special services and dinners that are coming up in the near future as well as throughout the Advent season. The remaining part of this year will be quite busy for many committees as well, as the office and I want to thank each and every one of them for all their help and support.

3. Finance- G. Scala

George S. reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the month of September. Total offerings for the month were \$14,213 which are down from August. YTD through September offerings were \$169,739 versus budgeted offerings of \$269,793. Offerings are most likely down as attendance is down fairly significantly. The investment/endowment accounts had another down month in September again consistent with the market. Merrill Lynch was down -2.95% for the month and Key was down -2.43% for the month. YTD Merrill Lynch is down -4.64% and Key is down -4.20%. This continues to cause a significant budget variance of (\$436,265). We continue to hope the market will rebound in the near future. Expenses year to date are \$28,826 under budget.

George also reported on the stewardship. Consecration Sunday is set for October 18th. The speakers did a fantastic job and the committee is following up this week with all parishioners that who have not responded yet to the event.

4. Property- T. Murphy

Repairs continue at the rectory. Fr. Hartt reported that there are plumbing issues at the rectory. Farrell Brothers are investigating leaks in the guild house. A painting was donated to the church by Norm Mc Gratten.

5. Outreach- J. Burns

St. Peter's Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner will be held on November 14, 2015. Since there are so many events planned for the Fall, we decided to move the Soup Sampler to the winter in January or February.

The Service of Remembrance is scheduled for Thursday, December 3rd at 7:00 pm. A representative from Food for the Poor will visit St. Peter's on Sunday, November 15, 2015. A meeting will be arranged with the City Mission to discuss planning for the overflow shelter.

6. Old Business- There was no old business.

7. New Business-

The vestry discussed the gift of a Memorial Font for the Columbarium area by Eugene Whitney. Fr. Hartt is going to see to the installation. St. Peter's has also received a gift of a bronze relief of Dickson Welt, a former vestry member.

8. Associate Rector's Report- Mtr. Sue

Daughters of the King: The Daughters provided coffee hour for the parish on 10/11 and participated in our Neighborhood Prayer Walk the same day.

They are also developing a brochure to share with women who may wish to learn more about our Prayer Order – please see a draft copy in your Vestry packet. We continue to meet monthly and hold intercessions for the prayers of the church and prayers received on our Confidential Prayer Cards (in the pew racks).

Women's Bible study: This group is currently reading Beth Moore's John: 90 Days with the Beloved Disciple. Group meetings will resume after the first of the year.

Adult Bible study: We are working through Paul's Letter to the Galatians on Sunday afternoons after the 10:30 service. We are using N.T. Wright's video commentary teaching series, which is supplemented by material I prepare and share with the group. We have a fine group of 7 individuals participating in this study.

Outreach: Plans are underway for orientation sessions and the opening of the Shelter on December 1st. This will be our 7th season providing housing for Albany's homeless population and I thank the folks of St. Peter's (and beyond) for their generosity and service to these men.

Other Events this month:

St. Peter's Dance: On Saturday September 26th we held our first dance with instruction in the Fox Trot and open dance following. Thanks to Vinnie and Mary Troiano for coordinating the musician and dance instructors and also to Michelle Lundberg, Janice Chenot and Pam Gerfin for arranging the bountiful food and decorations. It was a great time for all who came, including many people from outside the St. Peter's parish family.

Daniel Plan Broadcast: This is a whole foods/spiritual formation program that brings health and wellness to every part of the person: body, soul and mind. St. Peter's provided the funding for the broadcast of the Daniel Plan basics, led by Mary McDonald, a member of the Albany Diocese and a Whole Life Coach.

Blessing of the Animals: In honor of St. Francis of Assisi, I held a service for the Blessing of Animals on Sunday October 4th at 2:00pm with 14 in attendance (people and pets)! We enjoyed Scripture readings, prayers, Blessed the animals with their families, and also remembered our pets who have died.

Field Goods: This is an organic vegetable/fruit subscription and delivery service now offered to St. Peter's families, with delivery occurring to the Guild House each Thursday afternoon (from noon-4:00pm or later on choir rehearsal nights). We are a public pickup site and thus encourage walk-in traffic to our church!

Neighborhood Prayer Walk: Twice this month, I have walked our “neighborhood” on Sunday afternoons to engage and pray with and for our neighbors and community. On the 11th, a group of Daughters joined me with formal prayers at Academy Park, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Capitol, the Capital City Rescue Mission, the So. Pearl St. Probation Office and the Greyhound Bus Terminal.

EDOA Homiletic Class: Fr. Hartt and I co-teach this class monthly to individuals being formed in our Diocesan Deacon school.

EDOA Priest Retreat: Fr. Hartt and I will join fellow clergy of our diocese on retreat from 11/3-11/6/2015 at the Spiritual Life Center. We are available by cell phone in case of pastoral emergency.

9. Sunday Attendance-Fr. Hartt

The average Sunday attendance is 116.2.

10. Rector's Report- Fr. Hartt

Father Hartt spoke of his appreciation for the work done to prepare for Consecration Sunday. Christie Chenot has done an excellent job coordinating the stewardship team. We look forward to having Fr. Steve Schlossberg be our Guest leader this year. Fr. Schlossberg is a highly regarded preacher and Rector of St. John's in Troy.

Consecration Sunday program's principal merit is the way it goes deeply into the theology and spirituality of Stewardship. It may be that when the parish is formed by this theology and spirituality, the program itself will have lived out its purpose.

The 4pm Service of Holy Communion has begun. The aim is both new residents of the downtown community and existing members who occasionally find Sunday mornings difficult due to their children's sports activities or other conflicts. Fr. Hartt reminded us that keeping the Sabbath is a commandment and its observance is that upon which we build our lives.

The Parish Picnic was both well attended and organized. Many hands went into the preparations and grill work. Fr. Hartt thanks the volunteers who set up and cooked for us.

Saint Peter's Dance on September 26th was a wonderful event. Mary and Vincent Troiano encouraged and planned the event. Janice Chenot and Pam Gerfin made certain that food and beverage was well supplied. Fr. Hartt said that he looked forward to future events of this kind to build fellowship and to enjoy one another's company.

Fr. Hartt shared the list of events planned from the beginning of September through Christmas. The calendar is quite full.

The Overflow Shelter was discussed. It is to be opened December 1st. Fr. Hartt and Mother Sue will be meeting with Mission staff in the coming weeks. Already, a great number of people in need have been seeking the care of the parish. The streets of Albany hold real ministry and much pain.

Fr. Hartt spoke of his concern for the Grace and Holy Innocent's Soup Kitchen (now St. Francis Center). It needs a new generation of leadership and organization since the death of the Director.

Father Hartt returned to the subject of our attendance patterns. He showed the flow of the church year by periods. What the patterns reveal is not an attendance pattern in which many merely "take the summer off." It actually reveals a shockingly short church year in terms of steady attendance. From the parish picnic of 2014 through Easter 2 of 2015, the average Sunday attendance was 141.1 (30 Sundays total). From Easter 2 to the Sunday School/Choir awards, average Sunday attendance dropped to 121. From the Sunday School/Choir awards to August 30, the Average Sunday attendance dropped to 83.5. In other words, taking the last church year as a whole, decent attendance occurred for only 58% of the year. Fr. Hartt wishes to attack directly the idea that "we merely take the summer off." It is not true. Many are in attendance only from the parish picnic through Easter. We must remedy these patterns by personal commitment and reaching out to family and parish friends. The issue is essential to our parish's hope of growth. Empty pews breed empty pews. We cannot appeal to newcomers without a robust commitment to being here every possible Sunday.

Father Hartt reported the Children's Chapel was a huge success. The children are delighted to have their own service of Holy Communion. Fr. Hartt believes that our focus on both the biblical education and sacramental formation of our children will yield great fruit in their lives and ours.

11. Adjournment- The meeting was adjourned on a motion made by P. Gerfin and seconded by M. Lundberg.

12. Compline- Fr. Hartt led Compline.

Respectfully submitted,
Judith A. Burns

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Paul J. Hartt.....Rector
The Rev. Susan Waldron.....Associate Rector
Neil K. Keen, F.A.G.O.....Organist & Choirmaster
Laura Saffares.....Director of Christian Education
James P. Shortall.....Sexton
Robert Clancy.....Assisting Sexton
Meghan Cooney.....Administrative Assistant
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

James Chenot.....Senior Warden
Deborah Spath.....Junior Warden
Judy Burns.....Clerk
George Scala.....Treasurer
Pam Gerfin, Stephanie Lencewicz, Maria Holden, Moses Kamya, Mark
Lundberg, Earl Stafford, Jack Ratzel, Tim Murphy

How to Contact Us

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Services

Sunday

Holy Communion 8:30 a.m.

Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

(1st & 3rd Sundays)

Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.

(2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays)

Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

Holy Communion 4:00pm

Wednesday

Holy Communion 12:05 p.m.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

