



Cornerstone

November 2016

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

TURKEY

"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but one of power, love, and self-discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7)

I will never forget the day that a beloved parishioner asked me to go turkey hunting. It took place in my former parish in Delaware County, where hunting was quite the thing. Being a "city kid," I hadn't fired more than a BB gun in my life. It was decided that a crash course in shotguns was not advisable. I was asked to observe.

The first thing was to get up at the crack of dawn in frosty November. As I recall, there was a camouflage jacket of some sort. I don't remember exactly. But I do recall sitting under a tree on the frozen ground-- and I mean for hours. In the process, I learned a lot about turkeys.

Turkeys are smart. They have amazing eyesight and hearing. You can't fool a turkey easily. Only by not moving and waiting and waiting are you likely to have one for dinner. My respect for the Pilgrims and Indians went up considerably.

But if I were to name the most striking characteristic of a turkey from the human perspective, it would be timidity. If you are a bird that spends 99.9% of your time on your feet, and can fly only in brief bursts, you had better have some other tricks. For the turkey, it is caution in the extreme.

Turkey timidity brought to mind St. Paul's words to Timothy with which I began: *"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but one of power, love, and self-discipline."* In a sense, St. Paul is telling Timothy not to be a turkey. We are to be bold, Paul says. We have been given the spirit of power, love, and self-discipline to live out our Christian life. We are in fact hunters for opportunities to serve, to love and forgive, to work for justice and peace, and to grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Finally, we are called to share our faith in Christ not only in deed but in word.

It is in the last of these callings that it seems our inner turkey comes out. The spirit of timidity descends. We could say that Episcopalians of recent decades have almost been trained to be turkeys with respect to the word shared. Yet our Patron St. Peter tells us, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15.)

So let's talk turkey. In our long history, Episcopalians have been good at good deeds. We also have been on the front lines of social justice issues and care for the poor. While it is essential that these Episcopal characteristics remain strong, we need to overcome our inner turkey with respect to sharing our faith with others. By sharing our faith, I mean simply what St. Peter is saying -- offering an account of "the hope that is in us" with "gentleness and respect."

As I review the 300 year history of this parish, it is evident that "evangelism" was central to our identity for many years. We need only to look at the Queen Anne Communion Set in the back of our church to be reminded that our mission to the Indians is part of our spiritual DNA. Likewise, the establishment later of The Protestant Episcopal Church in this new Nation took bold professions and defenses of our faith. But then for quite some period, we were able as Episcopalians to coast on cultural Christianity. Despite occasional talk of "evangelism," we really relied on in-house reproduction for new members.

It reminds me of an old Episcopalian joke. The rector starts talking about evangelism. The head of the ECW says, "Now none of that, Father. Everyone in this town who ought to be an Episcopalian already is." Let's be candid, we know the days of simple cultural and reproductive membership are gone. Fortunately, it is possible to share our faith "with gentleness and respect." Indeed, we may be uniquely positioned to do so as Episcopalians. Gentleness and respect are seen as our defining characteristics.

So back to hunting turkeys. I came across an interesting fact when exploring wild turkeys in America. By the late 1930s, the wild turkey population was down to 30,000. The population is now 7 million. Some food to ponder as Episcopalians about the possibilities.

In case you are curious, our hunt that day did not impact the 7 million! A blessed Thanksgiving to all, Fr. Hartt+



From the Associate Rector

Practicing Gratitude

I was having dinner with a dear friend a few weeks ago and we were catching up on the various changes in our lives. I was telling her what I was excited about and also some challenges I'm experiencing. I then said, "I'm trying to be grateful"...at which she stopped me short and said, "Either you are grateful or you aren't!"

Hmmm....when I got home I reflected on what she had said to me. "Either you are grateful or you're not." Is that true? Is gratitude black and white, or are there shades of grey? I've spent a few weeks reflecting on this and believe that one can grow into gratitude even if they aren't fully experiencing it. Let me explain.

Gratitude is more than a feeling. Gratitude is more a state of being. It is active, not passive and I believe is interconnected with other things. Perhaps you have part of your life that changes and although there is nothing outwardly bad about the change, and it even comes with some great benefits, you may be missing old parts of your life. This is similar to what I was experiencing. And, I believe the "missing" part was counteracting the "thankful" part.

As I've reflected on this, I've decided that I *wanted* to be grateful. I *wanted* to feel gratitude and *experience* gratitude and that meant I had to let go of the *missing* part. So I set out to ask God to help me. I began to ask God to help me *BE* thankful - not just wait to *feel* thankful.

On my daily walks, as I noticed beautiful parts of creation, I would intentionally thank God for them. As I talked with friends, I thanked God for them. As I ate a wonderful meal, I thanked God for it. I think you get the picture. All through the day, I made intentional efforts to *be* thankful rather than just waiting to *feel* thankful. This line of thinking might be compared to "seeing the cup as half full rather than half empty". It is intentionally focusing one's attention and energy towards the positive - rather than the negative.

Feeling thankful might come naturally at certain times but not always. During these times, one can BE thankful and wait for the feeling to grow within them. I call this "Practicing Gratitude". And the more one practices, the better one gets at it. I say this, because I have been experiencing it these last few weeks. The more I have prayed for God to help me, and the more I have thanked him for things in my life, the more I have *felt* thankful - experienced gratitude.

With November here and our Thanksgiving gatherings just around the corner, I know there are many among us that are dealing with terrible struggles in their lives. And yet, each of us has so much to be thankful for. Each of us can be thankful to God for our faith and our church community as a start. Think about that - pray about that - say your thanks out loud and in prayer. Be consistent and *practice* gratitude and before long, you will be experiencing it more and more! May bountiful blessings be with you!

Yours in Christ,
Mother Sue+



Daughters of the King

The November DOK meeting will be held on Sunday, November 13th at 9:35am

Vestry Meeting

Due to Election Day, the November Vestry meeting will be held on **Wednesday**, November 9th at 5:15pm.

**Just a Reminder,
Daylight Savings is November 6th
Fall back!!**

Thanksgiving Eve Service of Holy Communion will be on
Wednesday, November 23rd at 7:30PM.

Thanksgiving Altar Donations

Again this year, for Thanksgiving, we will decorate the Altars with a bounteous display of food – cans, boxes, jars or packages destined for distribution to the food pantry. (No fresh foods that can spoil, please.) We are asking for contributions from the whole parish family so that our altars may truly reflect our dedication to community outreach. Donations may be left at the Church before Saturday morning, November 19th when the Flower Guild will be decorating the altars with food, instead of the usual flowers. These Thanksgiving altars are given in memory of Jan D'Agostino, beloved leader of St. Peter's Flower Guild, whose idea for this decoration has become a fine tradition.

Equinox Donations

Again this year Equinox has asked us to donate 100 cans of cranberry sauce. Boxes marked for the cans will be located in the Pumpelly Room and in the Sunday School. We will be collecting through Sunday, November 20th. Thank you all in advance for your support.

Equinox Volunteers Needed!

Thanksgiving week, we will be joining hundreds of volunteers in preparing Thanksgiving dinners for Equinox at the Empire State Plaza. Please join us for our time slot on Tuesday, **November 22nd from 5:45PM to 9PM**. We will meet at the church at 5:30PM and walk over to the Plaza together. If you have any questions, please call Laura Saffares at 368-4284.

Outreach Meeting

Due to Election Day, the November Outreach meeting will be held on **Wednesday**, November 9th at 4:30pm. Please join us to learn about Outreach ministries and hospitality events being planned!

Service of Remembrance

Wednesday, December 7th 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.



Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner at St. Peter's

**Saturday, November 12th, 2016 ~ Beginning at 5PM
Dinner Served at 5:30PM**

Please join us for our 6th Annual Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner as we celebrate the holiday together. St. Peter's will again supply the turkeys and we are looking for volunteers who are interested in helping out by cooking a turkey and bringing it already sliced to the dinner. For those who cannot help with the turkeys we ask you to please sign-up to bring one of the other many Thanksgiving side dishes or desserts. There are two sign-up sheets located in the Pumpelly Room: one sheet is to let us know what you are bringing and the other sheet is to let us know how many of you are coming. Or you may call the church office at 434-3502 to let us know.

We also ask you to please bring a donated food item (canned goods, rice, cereal, etc.) to be included in our traditional Thanksgiving Altar display. These items will then be donated to our local food pantry for distribution. For more information or to help with the dinner (set-up, cooking or clean-up) please contact Caitlin Cehowski at 669-3095 or caitlin.cehowski@gmail.com or Kevin Cehowski at 390-5718 or kcehowski@gmail.com

Outreach

The First Lutheran Church Shelter Dinners begins Thursday, November 24th. 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 shelter and receive a hot meal and a good night's sleep. St. Peter's Church is committed to providing a complete dinner for 20 people, cooked and delivered, every Thursday evening. We are asking that you sign-up to cook a complete dinner, putting your name next to the date on the board in the Pumpelly Room and taking an instruction form. (Please include a phone number at which we can contact you.) Containers will be in the Pumpelly room for the meal items. If you cannot deliver the meal, please return the meal **frozen** to the church on the **Sunday before** your date for the meal. 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.

Adult Education

Church Chuckles!



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Discovery Bible Study is a very different kind of Bible study. It is not about instruction, but practice. If you have ever wanted a practical, "real life" mode of Bible study, this is it. Our sessions are only about 45 minutes in length, so you are experiencing a powerful tool for faith formation that makes good use of your time. I promise that this approach to Bible study speaks concretely to your daily life. If you would like to know more, please join us Wednesday evenings at 5:30PM in the Vestry Room.



Women's Bible Study

Please join the women of the church as we delve into Holy Scripture. We meet on Tuesday evenings from 5:30pm to 7pm at Mother Sue's house. Our meetings are informal and help us to study the Bible in the form of Discovery and Discipleship. This is a perfect Bible study format for all Christians, and especially the unchurched so please feel free to invite a friend to our gatherings! Please call the church office for directions.



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 8th season on December 1st to augment the ministry of the Capital City Rescue Mission to Albany's Homeless. This year, we will be housing up to 20 women each evening.

We are currently receiving donations of food items and financial support and are also scheduling volunteers (women volunteers only) 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 or email stpeterschurch.albany@gmail.com

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.

Choir Card Sale

Handcrafted cards perfect for Christmas or any occasion. charming watercolor vignettes of St. Peter's by Choir member Patrice Malatestinic are available for purchase in the Pumpelly Room or by special order. All proceeds support the Choir's 2017 trip to England and residency at Chichester Cathedral.



Youth Formation & Sunday School

Many new and exciting things happening at St. Peter's.....

We are celebrating Youth Sunday, the last Sunday of every month. Father Hartt and Mother Sue have captivated the children with their own Eucharistic service. The children are able to participate with all aspects of the service. Please come and join us.

The Sunday School will be baking pumpkin bread on Sunday, November 13th. Please allow the children to wear old clothes so they may enjoy the wonders of baking. There will be a blessing of the bread on Sunday, November 20th and each member of the church will be able to take a loaf home to share for Thanksgiving day dinner.

Also on November 20th, we will be collecting cans of cranberry sauce for Equinox. Taking it one step further, we are volunteering at the Empire State Plaza on Tuesday, November 22nd at 5:45pm. We will meet at the church by 5:30pm and walk up to the plaza. While there, we will help prepare "fixings" for the up coming Thanksgiving day feast. Please bring a ball cap.

I am once again collecting gently used coats for children ages infant to 10 years old. Donations of hats and gloves are also welcome. Donation boxes will be located in the Pumpelly Room and in the Sunday School classroom. I want to bring these donations to Grace and Holy Innocents on Sunday, November 13th to be distributed. St. Peter's always goes beyond blessing these wonderful people. Please if you can, clean out your closets and donate.

On Sunday, November 27th, we will be making Advent Wreaths for the Congregation! Please stop by and help us!

Last but certainly not least, the Christmas Pageant is going to be held on Sunday, December 11th.

Any questions or comments, please give me a call at 368-4284.

Blessings,

Laura Saffares



St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen


(a.k.a. Angels in Training)


On the 3rd Saturday of each month (November 19th) we invite 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. Many hands mean light work! Please call Laura for information or to let her know you are coming at 368-4284.

Performance by the Wind Quintet Fünf, and by members of St. Peter's Choir.



November 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
 <p>Count Your Blessings</p>		<p>1 All Saint's Day</p> <p>12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:30pm - Women's Bible Study @ Mother Sue's Home</p>	<p>2 Commemoration of the Faithful Departed</p> <p>8:45am - Top of the Hill 12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:30pm - Men's Bible Study</p>
<p>6 All Saint's Sunday</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 12:00pm - Confirmation Class</p>	<p>7</p> <p>5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal</p>	<p>8</p> <p>5:30pm - Women's Bible Study @ Mother Sue's Home</p> <p>Albany Diocese Priest Retreat</p>	<p>9</p> <p>8:45am - Top of the Hill 4:30pm - Outdoor Service 5:15pm - Vestibule Service</p> <p>Albany Diocese Priest Retreat</p>
<p>13 Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 9:35am - DOK Meeting 10:30am - Morning Prayer 12:00pm - Confirmation Class</p>	<p>14</p> <p>5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal</p>	<p>15</p> <p>5:30pm - Women's Bible Study @ Mother Sue's Home</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8:45am - Top of the Hill 12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:30pm - Men's Bible Study</p>
<p>20 Last Sunday after Pentecost</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 12:00pm - Confirmation Class 12:15pm - Celebratory Luncheon @ 90 State Events</p>	<p>21</p> <p>5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal</p>	<p>22</p> <p>5:30pm - Women's Bible Study @ Mother Sue's Home 5:45pm -9:00pm Equinox Volunteers</p>	<p>23</p> <p>8:45am - Top of the Hill 12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:30pm -7:00pm Men's Bible Study 7:30pm - Thanksgiving Service</p> <p>No Men's Bible Study</p>
<p>27 First Sunday of Advent</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer No Confirmation Class</p>	<p>28</p> <p>5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5:30pm - Women's Bible Study @ Mother Sue's Home</p>	<p>30 St. Andrew the Apostle</p> <p>8:45am - Top of the Hill 12:05pm - Holy Communion 5:30pm - Men's Bible Study</p>

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Commemoration of All Departed of the Hill ly Communion 's Bible Study	3 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	4 12:30pm - Organ Concert	5
of the Hill reach Meeting ry Meeting se Priest Retreat	10 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir 5:30pm - Men's Bible Study Albany Diocese Priest Retreat	11 Veteran's Day Office Closed 5:00pm - Knarvik/Mantey Wedding Rehearsal Albany Diocese Priest Retreat	12 5:00pm - Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner 5:00pm - Knarvik/Mantey Wedding
of the Hill ly Communion 's Bible Study	17 5:00pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir	18 12:30pm - Organ Concert	19 11:00am - Angels in Training 9:30am - Harvest Altar Decorating
of the Hill ly Communion m Full Choir Rehearsal hksiving Eve Service le Study	24 Thanksgiving Office Closed	25 Office Closed	26
ew the Apostle of the Hill ly Communion 's Bible Study	 <p>WE WISH YOU A HAPPY THANKSGIVING</p>		

St. Peters Music

CHOIR

Choir rehearsals are on the following schedule:

Mondays: 5:00pm - 6:15pm Trebles

Thursdays: 5:00pm - 6:30pm Trebles

5:30pm - 7:00pm Adult choristers

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

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 12:30pm

Organ Concert

Our Organist, Neil Keen will be performing a half-hour recital at the Cathedral of All Saints on Sunday, November 27th at 2:30pm. The concert precedes the Cathedral's Advent Procession service. Neil's recital will feature music of Max Reger and J. S. Bach.

~ HANDEL'S MESSIAH ~

DECEMBER 11TH, 3 PM

On Sunday, December 11th at 3pm 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.

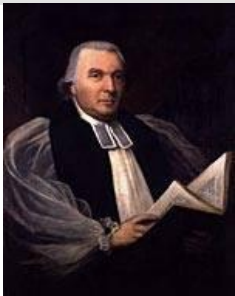


Composer of the Month

Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937) was a Parisian organist, composer, and teacher. He was appointed "provisional" organist the church of Saint-Sulpice in 1870 but continued in that post for 63 years. Widor succeeded Cesar Franck as Organ Professor at the Paris Conservatoire. His organ classes focused almost exclusively on the music of J. S. Bach, Widor's own compositions, and the study of improvisation. His students included many organists destined for fame, from Marcel Dupre to Albert Schweitzer.

Widor wrote music for a variety of instruments, including operas and ballet, but he is remembered principally for his ten organ symphonies.

Saint of the Month Club



Samuel Seabury

First American Bishop, 1796

Prayer: Eternal God, who didst bless thy servant Samuel Seabury with the gift of perseverance to renew the Anglican inheritance in North America; Grant that, joined together in unity with our bishops and nourished by thy holy Sacraments, we may proclaim the Gospel of redemption with apostolic zeal; through Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Samuel Seabury, the first Bishop of the Episcopal Church, was born in Groton, Connecticut, November 30, 1729. After ordination in England in 1753, he was assigned, as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to Christ Church, New Brunswick, New Jersey. In 1757, he became rector of Grace Church, Jamaica, Long Island, and in 1766 rector of St. Peter's, Westchester County. During the American Revolution, he remained loyal to the British crown, and served as a chaplain in the British army. After the Revolution, a secret meeting of Connecticut clergymen in Woodbury, on March 25, 1783, named Seabury or the Rev. Jeremiah Leaming, whichever would be able or willing, to seek episcopal consecration in England. Leaming declined; Seabury accepted, and sailed for England. After a year of negotiation, Seabury found it impossible to obtain episcopal orders from the Church of England because, as an American citizen, he could not swear allegiance to the crown. He then turned to the Non-juring bishops of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. On November 14, 1784, in Aberdeen, he was consecrated by the Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor of Aberdeen and the Bishop of Ross and Caithness, in the presence of a number of the clergy and laity. On his return home, Seabury was recognized as Bishop of Connecticut in Convocation on August 3, 1785, at Middletown. With Bishop William White, he was active in the organization of the Episcopal Church at the General Convention of 1789. With the support of William Smith of Maryland, William Smith of Rhode Island, William White of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Parker of Boston, Seabury kept his promise, made in a concordat with the Scottish bishops, to persuade the American Church to adopt the Scottish form for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. In 1790 Seabury became responsible for episcopal oversight of the churches in Rhode Island; and at the General Convention of 1792 he participated in the first consecration of a bishop on American soil, that of John Claggett of Maryland. Seabury died on February 25, 1796, and is buried beneath St. James' Church, New London.

From the Archives

Church Choir Mother

From the Archives last month discussed Neil Keen's contributions to the success of the music at St. Peter's Church. There is an additional person who is important in maintaining this success. This is our Choir Mother, Diana Martin. Diana has a long history in our church. Her grandparents joined St. Peter's Church in 1913 when they emigrated from Northern Ireland. Diana's parents Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Scott Smith were married by Reverend Charles C. Harriman on October 10, 1936. Diana was born August 7, 1937. From the beginning, her whole family was active in St. Peter's Church. Having participated in the church longer than any other parishioner Diana has had many opportunities through the years to serve in various church activities.

She has worked with young people as the Sunday School Teacher (first grade) for 10 years. She co-chaired the Girls Friendly Society a society which in the early days was popular with church youth. She was assistant director of the Christmas Pageant. She volunteered at the Downtown Daycare Center.

Diana has also worked in adult activities. Asked to join the Altar Guild at age 19 she has since served for 56 years. She served on a Rector's Search Committee, the Outreach Committee, the Flower Guild, volunteered on Wednesdays to count money before the Vestry assumed that responsibility, served on the Board of the WSP (Women of St. Peter's) for several years and was Chairperson of many booths at the annual Christmas Fair.

She volunteered at the Church Mouse Thrift Shop two times a month while it was active, and she worked for the Lenten Luncheons once a week until they were finally abolished. She also served on the nominating committee for Vestry candidates for two years and assisted the late Rev. Robert Zerbe in his Thanksgiving Outreach Project filling and distributing food baskets for the needy. She co-chaired Father Eggenschiller's Investiture and later served on the St. Peter's Tricentennial Committee where she designed and sold memorabilia.

The choir truly appreciates Diana as Choir Mother. She is responsible for ordering the choir vestments and making sure that choir robes are clean, neat and fit properly. She coaches youngsters who are new to the choir, even sitting with them in the congregation as they learn how to follow the service. She is in charge of the Easter Brunch served to all choir members, LEMs (Lay Eucharistic Ministers), and clergy when the choir sings for both the 8:30 and 10:30 services on Easter Day. She continues to participate in choir fundraisers. She has travelled with the choir on their trips to Europe, often serving to watch the young children on the trip. Her work has been indispensable. This year at the Choir Awards she was given a certificate for 40 years of service.

In all her activities including as Choir Mother, Diana has served this Parish well. She deserves our appreciation. Thanks Diana.

Flower Memorials

During the year, our Flower Guild arranges flowers to bring beauty to our sanctuary and joy to our congregation. Those wishing to make a donation for flowers for a memorial, thanksgiving or celebration should call the Church Office to confirm available dates. During Advent, we use only greens; during Lent, the altars are bare. Other Sundays, we welcome contributions. Cost of flowers: Main Altar is \$50, St. Mark's Altar is \$35, and the Tower Altar is also \$35. All requests are payable in advance.



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 experiencing Holy Eucharistic Sunday Services. If interested please call the parish office at 434-3502.



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

September 13, 2016

Present: Fr. Hartt, Mtr. Sue Waldron, J. Chenot, G. Scala, D. Spath, T. Murphy, M. Lundberg, N. Creagan, K. Cehowski, M. Holden, S. Lencewicz

Absent: E. Stafford, M. Kanya

Opening Prayer Fr. Hartt

1. Approval of Minutes of Vestry Meeting , June 14, 2016

The June 14, 2016 minutes were approved on a motion made by K. Cehowski and seconded by M. Holden. The motion was unanimously approved by the Vestry.

2. Senior Warden Report – J. Chenot

Jim started his report welcoming everyone back from the vestry's summer break. The Sunday school will be starting up this Sunday which includes school registration. The children in our Sunday school will also be busy making prayer pretzels. Many thanks to Laura Saffares for her continuing support leading our Sunday school program as well as those who take care of the younger children in the nursery. This coming Sunday we will be hosting our church picnic and we hope that many that can will attend this important ministry bringing us all together for great food and fellowship.

Fall programs and classes will begin shortly, First Communion, Confirmation Classes, Bible studies, just to name a few. There a few new exiting programs that will be added this year that Father Hartt, Mother Sue and the outreach committee has been working on during the summer and will be announced in the bulletin as well as in their report that will follow. We hope that many will be able to attend these events which bring the congregation together in fellowship. The first event will be our annual parish picnic on September 20th which is great time for all to get reacquainted with each other after the summer months.

Our financial portfolio did very well over the summer with the stock market moving in a positive direction. I again would like to take the opportunity to thank George Scala for his work with our investments and reports he generates each month for all of us. The finance committee will be working on a new Stewardship campaign this year deviating a bit from Consecration Sunday we have the past few years. We will begin shortly with plans to move forward with a new approach to stewardship, but will planning our stewardship Sunday luncheon we have had the past few years. The importance of this Sunday celebrating the commitments individuals make to the stewardship drive brings the congregation together for fellowship at this luncheon.

We continue to look for those interested in volunteering on committees such as the Flower, Altar, and Usher guilds. We have been very fortunate to have many dedicated members volunteer a considerable amount of time to these committees. We look forward seeing new members as well as those who may think they might be interested to inquire about these important ministries that are vital to our church life.

I would like to mention that this summer's attendance had a notice bump compared to past summers. Mother Sue and Father Hartt made a great effort in both their articles in Junes Cornerstone to the importance of doing our best to attend church during the summer months. Finally to both our caring ministers – there are so many in this parish that have a crosses to bare – long term illnesses, deaths, those in hospitals and emergencies at any given moment. Please know firsthand from our family and from many others, that your heartfelt concerns for each and every one of us in these troubling times is so much comfort to us and we are very grateful to have both of you as ministers and true friends to all of us at St. Peter's

3. Finance – G. Scala

George S. reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the months of June, July and August. Total offerings for the three months were \$14,761 for Jun, \$29,985 for July and \$12,336 for August. Year to date offerings through August are \$149,609 which compares to a budgeted number of \$210,968.

The investment/endowment accounts did pretty well over the summer months. For the June – August period, Merrill Lynch was up 3.5% and Key was up 2.91%. YTD Merrill Lynch is at 4.62% and Key is at 4.36%. This brings us to a positive budget variance in this area of \$112,918. Both accounts performed favorably versus market indexes. Expenses year to date are \$25,127 under budget through August.

George also reported on the updated stewardship numbers. There have been no changes from previous figures. The Finance Committee will report on the 2017 Stewardship Campaign at the October meeting.

George reviewed the Treasurers report for the months of June, July, August , 2016.

Motion to approve the budget was made by K. Cehowski and seconded by D. Spath. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry.

4. Property – None

5. Outreach - Mtr. Sue

We were invited to the 5th annual Harvest Evening Celebration 10/6/16 benefitting the Capital District Food Pantries and Outreach voted to donate \$100.00 to the event.

Backpacks for back-to-school: we received very generous donations to this appeal – thank you! We were able to assist some of our own families as well as families at St. Francis Mission.

We have many Fall activities planned including: the Soup Sampler, Pre-Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas adopt-a-family. Stay tuned for details on these upcoming events!

The Outreach committee is in conversation regarding the day and time that we meet. If you would like to join Outreach, please let the clergy know when you are available.

6. Old Business - None

7. New Business -

8. Associate Rector's Report - Mtr. Sue

We had a stronger summer this year and I want to thank the individuals who made it their priority to attend more frequently this summer....it lended to a stronger choir and also stronger experience for our may visitors.

The summer was filled with many pastoral events and celebrations from Bishop Ball's 90th birthday celebration, to Diocesan convention to sick and homebound related pastoral visits. I am particularly grateful for the deep care and concern our members show to one another as was evidenced through some recent tragedies...you are truly the Body of Christ and deeply woven within one another's lives and it is such a blessing to serve alongside you!

Women's Bible study will begin in October. We will be using Discovery Bible Study, the training for which is October 22nd at the Spiritual Life Center. Please feel free to join us at the training if you'd like to learn more about leading a Bible study. The women of the church will meet on (3) Tuesday evenings each month (except Vestry nights) at Mother Sue's home. I welcome all women of the parish (and friends outside the parish as well) to join us and learn more.

Youth: First Holy Communion Classes begin this month with children receiving their first Holy Communion on All Saints Sunday (November 6th). Children's sermons continue to be a strong offering to the parish and we are very excited about Children's Chapel continuing this year. This summer we had some families visit and at least one family join our parish. This is a wonderful sign of hope for our future!

Daughters of the King: The Daughters continue to hold intercession for St. Peter's Church. We are planning a Fall Neighborhood Prayer Walk and also an upcoming discernment class. Our first meeting is Sept 18th in between the two services. We welcome all interested women of the parish to join us.

Commission on Ministry: I assisted the Diocese at a retreat this past weekend at the Spiritual Life Center (9/10-12 Friday-Sunday). I have also been requested to supply much more frequently lately. There is a shortage of priests currently in our Diocese.

Bible Symposium 9/24: Fr Behr will explain how we can search the scriptures to encounter Christ and come to realize that we were created for this encounter. He is a world class theologian and I encourage parishioners to consider attending this conference.

Walk through the Door to Holiness: 10/3-5 An Ecumenical conference held at the Spiritual Life Center, Greenwich NY with Lord George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rt. Rev. Scharfenberger RC Bishop of Albany and Very Rev Hatfield Chancellor of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary: representing the (3) leading Christian denominations in the world. This will be a conference you don't want to miss – register today!

9. Sunday Attendance - Fr. Hartt

The average Sunday attendance is currently 112.5

10. Rector's Report - Fr. Hartt

Father Hartt welcomed the Vestry back after the summer break. It has been a difficult summer with sickness and injury, Our hearts go out to the Chenot family with the motorcycle accident of their son Jordan. Jordon is recovering well by God's grace and the wonderful spirit he possesses. Father Hartt commended the parish for their support of Jordon and the Chenot family during this difficult time. In the midst of these difficulties, joy is had at Christie and CJ's upcoming wedding in October. Our prayers continue for the Spath family, both Vicky and Ashley. Again, the parish has been a true and supportive parish community, bearing one another's burdens.

Father Hartt thanked Jimmy Chenot for recent repairs inside the rectory. Major plumbing issues have been addressed.

Father Hartt reported that the ASA is now 112.5. A low number is to be expected due to summer attendance patterns, but this number reflects a trend that should be of grave concern. Sunday felt lively and full after the summer, but it still reflects a total congregation of only 123. We see a full return often takes most of September. The Diocese itself had a over a 7% drop in ASA just in the calendar year 2014-15. It gives us some clarity that what is happening to us is a Diocesan and, indeed, National trend.

The plans for the parish picnic are well underway. Father Hartt said that Mrs. Hartt has worked hard on the garden. It will be lovely for the picnic. The vestry had previously discussed reaching out to encourage attendance.

Father Hartt had a blessing of a civil marriage on July 2nd. Olivia and Demola Adepoju were the couple. The Episcopal Church has a liturgy for the blessing of those civilly married. The blessing had about 180 present. Father Hartt hopes the couple will make St. Peter's their church home. Dr. Demola Adepoju is a resident at Albany Med.

Father Hartt had the funeral of Susan Smith's mother, Ethel Smith, today at St. Stephen's, Delmar. Our prayers are with the family.

Personnel matters were discussed.

At June's Vestry meeting, we spoke of having a Vestry retreat in September to correspond to the presentation on the Discovery Bible Study program. The date for that presentation has been changed to October 22nd. Discussion about rescheduling the Vestry retreat ensued.

Carly Crewell has offered several excellent ideas for the fall. Among them is the start of a women's group along the lines of Top of The Hill. An exploratory meeting will held shortly. Carly has also been busy at work with the Daughters of the King. There is a plan to visit with the Chapter at St. Stephen's, Delmar. Carly has also been working on Visitor Bags. She has met with Father Hartt.

Father Hartt has twice had a weekday Eucharist at both the Cathedral and St. Peter's with no attendance. In general, Wednesday Eucharist's at St. Peter's have not had this problem.

Father Hart and Mother Waldron will each be holding Discovery Bible Studies this fall. Father Hartt discussed the importance of a serious mode of Christian formation such as DBS.

Our standard parish events are planned through Christmas. The Pre-Thanksgiving Thanksgiving dinner continues to be a major draw.

We seem to be in good shape for the Overflow Shelter. Angel's in Training need support for the Grace and Holy Innocent's Soup kitchen.

Father Hartt has been appointed to the Advisory Committee for The Spiritual Life Center.

Father Hartt was delighted by the success of the Choir Open House on September 11th. It appears new choir members are in the making. The Choir trip to England is well in the works for this summer. Expect Fundraisers.

Father Hartt said that the single most important work this year will be that of the Parish Growth Committee. But Father Hartt said that the goal is depth of commitment and knowledge of the Faith, as well as growth in membership.

Father Hartt has been holding Adult Confirmation these past Sundays. Father Hartt will be offering Confirmation for teens beginning Sunday, October 30th. There are a large number of eligible teens in the parish.

11. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by M. Lundberg and seconded by N. Creagan. It was passed unanimously by the vestry.

12. Compline

Fr. Hartt led Compline.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Spath

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
Kristin Robinson.....Administrative Assistant
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

James Chenot.....Senior Warden
Deborah Spath.....Junior Warden
George Scala..... Treasurer
Kevin Cehowski, Nancy Creagan, Maria Holden, Moses Kamy,
Stephanie Lencewicz, Mark Lundberg, Tim Murphy, Earl Stafford

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.

Wednesday

Holy Communion 12:05 p.m.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

