

Cornerstone

December 2019

Newsletter of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church

107 State Street, Albany, New York

From the Rector



For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven
(Nicene Creed)

We take great care in choosing our leaflet covers for Sunday mornings. Many images are examined and many discarded before we decide where to land. This image was a part of a recent search. It is hauntingly beautiful. I wanted December's newsletter to hold it. I believe it speaks an Advent word that we need to hear.

Obviously, there is a purity to the image. It is Jesus as an infant before the expanse of heaven. We are disarmed and caught off guard by the image of a baby alone before the night sky. But we also know it is Jesus and our alarm is quieted. His arms are reaching to heaven as an infant child would extend arms to a parent. But there is something much more going on here. The arms are not to the air but to heaven itself. There is a direct connection to the realm that is not ours. The utter purity of communion with the Father is felt. There is a direct line between them in the form of a beam of light.

When we think of the manger scene, it tends to be crowded with people and cattle. These visitors are there to get a peep at "this thing that has taken place." This crowd-filled hustle and bustle will never leave Jesus' earthly life. But in this image above, there is a moment of peace. A moment of origin. A moment of nothing obscuring where this Child hails from. Perhaps baby Jesus of the manger felt this way while the crowds peered on.

Many times I am moved by the Scriptures about Jesus trying to get a moment of peace. The Gospels speak of how he would go off by himself to pray, often at night. These moments never seem to last, but I bet they were soul restoring. Perhaps they even felt like the image above.

Advent seems especially to invite us to the dignity of nocturnal prayer and communion. There is something about Advent that simply says, "enter holy nighttime." We too need to stretch out our arms to heaven. We light the candles of our home Advent Wreath and dim the lights. We have a chance to say "here I am" to the Father. In our own small way, we can be encouraged by this image above to exit the crowds in our life.

What is happening in that image is of cosmic dimensions. Of course, it is unique. It is a communion of the Persons of the Trinity. But you know, we can dim the lights and find our place in the Holy Spirit -- a candle at a time. It is my prayer for you this Advent. There is a beam coming down for each of us.

Peace of Christ, Fr. Hartt+



From the Associate Rector

Keeping the Merry in Christmas

Every year, about this time of year, we are drawn deeply into Christmas preparations. Black Friday sales (which now begin on Thanksgiving Day) beckon to us, Christmas songs play non-stop on the radio and the Hallmark Channel's lineup is complete with every known (and unknown) Christmas movie ever made! We begin to make solid plans around Christmas celebrations, including visits to family or far-off friends. We lower our bank balances and increase our credit card balances. Some of these activities encourage us...others drain us. So, how can we strive to keep the "Merry" in Christmas?

Google "merry", if you will, and the first definition that appears is:

...cheerful and lively (of an occasion or season) characterized by festivity and rejoicing...

I'd like to focus on the last word...rejoicing. And in contemplating this word, we don't turn to shopping malls or other secular thoughts, do we? No, I think most of us turn towards the Holy. The word rejoice is found throughout the Old and New Testaments. In fact, there are more references of it in the Old than the New. But, since it's Christmas we are focusing on, I thought we'd look at how it's used in the Gospel of Luke. Your first thoughts regarding Luke's Gospel might be the birth story of Jesus Christ. Many of us treasure reading that during Christmastime. However, rejoice is not found there, but rather earlier in Luke's Gospel:

"But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth for he will be great before the Lord." (Luke 1:13-15a)

"Many will rejoice at his birth (John the Baptist) for he will be great before the Lord."

This word, rejoice, in the Greek (chairō), means to be glad and full of joy; but it is also directly connected to the Greek word (charis) which means grace. So, when we think of rejoicing, we think not only of joyful happiness but also grace. Grace, as used in the Bible means "that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness..."

Grace is a wonderful thing to root ourselves in for Christmas thoughts. Grace, the means by which God blesses us with joy, is abundant during this season. During Advent, we recall the birth of John the Baptist and his call to repentance for the preparation for the coming of our Savior. Yes, we can see why "rejoicing" is used by the gospel writer in his announcement about John.

I hope you have followed the rabbit trail of my thoughts moving us from "merry" to "rejoice" to "grace". Even more so, I hope you have followed the connection made between these words and how they might bring deeper spiritual meaning to us during Christmastime. Anchoring ourselves in the holy, rather than secular, is surely something to strive for at Christmastime.

In fact, we might even replace the word "merry" with grace in our thoughts and greetings towards one another during this Holy Season. Why not greet one another with: Have a grace-filled Christmas! If we began greeting each other this way, surely it would help us keep the "merry" in Christmas?

A Blessed Christmastide,
Mtr. Sue



Advent and Christmas at St. Peter's

Advent Wreaths, Calendars, and Candles

Available Sunday, December 1st

Messiah Concert

Sunday, December 8th

3:00pm

Sunday School Pageant

Rehearsal

Sunday, December 8th

Sunday School Pageant

Sunday, December 15th

10:30am Service



Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 22nd

12:00pm

Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 22nd

10:30am Service

Christmas Eve Services

Tuesday, December 24th

4:30pm Family Service w/ Crèche

9:30pm Choral Prelude

10:00pm Choral Service

Christmas Day Service

Wednesday, December 25th

9:00am Holy Communion

Daughters of the King - Julia Chapter

The Daughters of the King's next meeting will be on December 8, 2019 when we will assemble Blessing Bags for the Overflow Homeless Shelter. Daughters and other members of the parish are welcomed to join us in the front 2nd Floor Classroom following services.

Outreach Meeting

The next Outreach meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 10th at 4:30pm. Please join us to learn about Outreach ministries and hospitality events being planned!

Vestry Meeting

The December Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 10th at 5:15pm.

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 22nd. The traditional ham luncheon will be served at 1pm. We ask you to please dress comfortably and bring a dish to share. We need cooks, servers, set-up and clean-up help. We hope that you will join us for this long-time festive tradition.

Christmas Giving Tree

This year St. Peter's Parish will be providing Christmas gifts for the Men in the Overflow Shelter. On Sunday, December 8th, a Christmas Giving Tree will be located in the Pumpelly Room and will be decorated with paper ornaments indicating various clothing items and a few surprises. We hope that you will consider taking one or more of the ornaments. The gift you select should be returned to St. Peter's wrapped (with gift tag attached) No later than Sunday, December 22nd. Thank you for your generosity!

Christmas Poinsettia & 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 Monday, December 16th. We urge you to be as generous as you can. Thank you for your support.



Pledge Cards

Pledge cards for 2020 have been mailed out to all parishioners. If you did not receive a pledge 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. Pledges can also be made on St. Peter's website at: www.stpeterschurchalbany.org by clicking on the "Get your pledge card" button.

Thank you to those that have promptly completed and returned their pledge card.

Adult Education

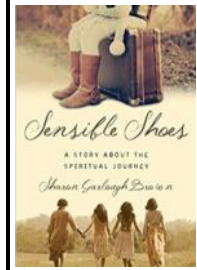
Searching
for more

#tryalpha

Alpha

ALPHA SERIES: Alpha is a series of talks exploring the Christian faith, run over eleven weeks. Each talk is presented in DVD form. The program comes out of the Church of England. The DVD talks are followed by open conversation in small groups. The Alpha program is now run around the globe. Everyone is welcome, but the program aims at those with fundamental questions about the Christian faith. Alpha is especially suitable for seekers.

The Alpha course is held in the Vestry Room on Sunday afternoons from 12:15pm - 1:30pm. The final Session will be on December 15th.



Women's Book and Bible Study:

Please join the women of the church as we read and reflect on *Sensible Shoes*

A Story About the Spiritual Journey by Sharon Garlough Brown. We read one chapter weekly and then discuss the material and spiritual guidance/practices. We gather on Tuesday evenings at 5:00pm, in the Vestry Room.

December 3rd Chapter 12: *Walking Together in the Love of God* *Final Class

Outreach



Blessing Bag Donations



To assist and offer comfort for individuals who stay in the homeless shelters, the Daughters of the King will be assembling Blessing Bags on Sunday, December 8th. These are small (quart size) bags of good will and hospitality that are given to people who may need some cheer and comfort. Please consider bringing an offering of care products such as: tooth paste, tooth brush, a comb, scented lotion, hair bands, mints, candies, wipes, granola bars, travel deodorant, lip balms, band aids, cotton swabs, small cracker packets, Slim Jim snacks, feminine pads/wipes, small tissue packets, small note pads and pens can also be useful. Products that contain alcohol such as mouth wash and hand sanitizer should not be included (hand sanitizer wipes are ok). Gently used purses/handbags are also welcomed to assist women in need. Please bring in your donations by Sunday, December 8th. If you'd like to join the Daughters in assembling the bags, please join us in the Sunday School Room on the second floor, immediately following the 10:30am service.

Overflow Homeless Shelter Opens December 1st !!

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 11th season on Sunday, December 1st to augment the ministry of the Capital City Rescue Mission to Albany's homeless. This year we will be housing up to 18 men each evening through March 2020.

We are currently receiving donations of food items and financial support. We are also scheduling volunteers to offer hospitality during the evening hours from 8pm to 11pm, or overnight from 8pm until 7am the next morning in the Parish Hall on the 2nd floor of the Guild House (next to the church). To sign up to volunteer, please call Ruth or Mtr. Sue in the church office (518-434-3502), or email the church at: 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 at the church office any weekday, or brought to church on Sundays and given to Ian or Pat. Thank you in advance for your continued prayers and support.

Youth Formation & Sunday School



December 8th - Rehearsal for the Christmas Pageant
Angels, shepherds, and more! We will be giving out parts and readers. Please bring the children up to get their costumes during Sunday School and perhaps an hour afterwards.

December 15th - The Christmas Pageant, 10:30am

Please have the children upstairs by **10:00am sharp**.

AFTER THE PAGEANT, I WILL TAKE THE CHILDREN UPSTAIRS TO MAKE GOODY BAGS FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUP KITCHEN.

PLEASE JOIN US!

December 24th - The Christmas Eve Family Service, 4:30pm

All the children of St. Peter's are invited to join in the procession of the Crèche. Each child will carry a piece of the Manger to be put together before the service. Meet us in the Pumpelly Room for your piece.

Questions? Give Laura Rulison a call at (518)368-4284.



Children's Chapel on 11/24/19



Pumpkin Bread & Applesauce

St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen

Saturday, December 21st ~ 11am to 1pm

On the 3rd Saturday of every month St. Peter's Church.

For information please call Laura at (518)368-4284.



Cathedral Lock-In

WHEN: December 13th - 14th

WHO: 7th-12th Graders

PRICE: \$30

DROP OFF: Friday 6 PM

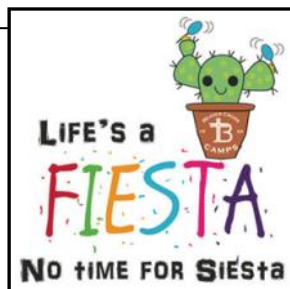
PICK UP: Saturday 10 AM

LOCATION: Cathedral of All Saints, 62 South Swan Street, Albany, NY 12210

Dinner is provided on arrival


Register at:


<https://www.beavercrossministries.org/cathedral-lock-in.html>



Thanksgiving Altar

December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<p>1 First Sunday of Advent</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 12:15pm - Alpha Course</p>	2	<p>3</p> <p>5:00pm - Women's Book & Bible Study (Final Class)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho</p>
<p>8 Second Sunday of Advent Healing Prayers</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 11:45am - Assemble Blessing Bags 12:15pm - Alpha Course 3:00pm - Handel's Messiah</p>	9	<p>10</p> <p>4:30pm - Outreach Meeting 5:15pm - Vestry Meeting</p>	<p>11</p> <p>8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho</p>
<p>15 Third Sunday of Advent</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion with Sunday School Pageant 12:15pm - Alpha Course (Final Class)</p>	16	17	<p>18</p> <p>8:45am - Top 12:05pm - Ho</p>
<p>22 Fourth Sunday of Advent</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Lessons and Carols 12:00pm - Hanging of the Greens with Luncheon at 1:00pm</p>	23	<p>24 Christmas Eve</p> <p>4:30pm - Holy Communion 9:30pm - Choral Prelude 10:00pm - Holy Communion</p>	<p>25 Christmas Eve Office</p> <p>9:00am - Holy</p> 
<p>29 The First Sunday after Christmas Day</p> <p>8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion Waldron / Troiano Wedding No Youth Sunday</p>	30	<p>31 New Year's Eve</p>	

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>o of the Hill ly Communion</p>	<p>5 4:30pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>6 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>7 9:30am - Messiah Rehearsal with the Orchestra</p>
<p>o of the Hill ly Communion</p>	<p>12 4:30pm - Treble Rehearsal 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>13 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>o of the Hill ly Communion</p>	<p>19 5:30pm - 7:00pm Treble and Full Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>20 12:30pm - Organ Concert</p>	<p>21 Saint Thomas the Apostle 11:00am - Angels in Training</p>
<p>mas Day e Closed Communion</p> 	<p>26 Saint Stephen, Deacon & Martyr Office Closed 5:30pm - Spath /Closson Wedding Rehearsal</p>	<p>27 Saint John, Apostle & Evangelist 5:30pm - Spath /Closson Wedding No Organ Concert</p>	<p>28 The Holy Innocents</p>
			

St. Peters Music

CHOIR

Choir rehearsals are on the following schedule:

Thursdays: 4:30pm - 6:30pm Trebles

5:30pm - 7:00pm Adult choristers

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

We are eager to welcome boys and girls age 8 to grade 8 to join the Treble section of the choir. Please contact Neil Keen at (518)339-0137 for further information. There are also openings for singers of high school age and above.



DECEMBER 8th, 3:00pm

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 donations will be gratefully received.

FESTIVAL SERVICE of LESSONS & CAROLS

Sunday, December 22nd at 10:30 am

FRIDAY NOONTIME ORGAN CONCERTS

Free half-hour recitals each Friday at 12:30pm



Saint of the Month Club

Lucy (Lucia) *Martyr at Syracuse, 304*

About this commemoration

Lucy, or Lucia, was martyred at Syracuse, in Sicily, during Diocletian's reign of terror of 303-304, among the most dramatic of the persecutions of early Christians. Her tomb can still be found in the catacombs at Syracuse. She was venerated soon after her death and her cult spread quickly throughout the church. She is among the saints and martyrs named in the Roman Canon of the Mass. Most of the details of Lucy's life are obscure. In the tradition she is remembered for the purity of her life and the gentleness of her spirit. Because her name means "light", she is sometimes thought of as the patron saint of those who suffer from diseases of the eyes.

In popular piety, Lucy is perhaps most revered because her feast day, December 13, was for many centuries the shortest day of the year. (The reform of the calendar by Pope Gregory VIII (1582) would shift the shortest day to December 21/22, depending upon the year). It was on Lucy's day that the light began gradually to return and the days to lengthen. This was particularly powerful in northern Europe where the days of winter were quite short. In Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden, Lucy's day has long been a festival of light that is kept as both an ecclesiastical commemoration and a domestic observance.

In the domestic celebration of Lucia-fest, a young girl in the family dresses in pure white (a symbol of Lucy's faith, purity, and martyrdom) and wears a crown of lighted candles upon her head (a sign that on Lucy's day the light is returning) and serves her family special foods prepared especially for the day. In praise of her service, the young girl is called Lucy for the day.

Collect: I Loving God, who for the salvation of all didst give Jesus Christ as light to a world in darkness: Illumine us, with thy daughter Lucy, with the light of Christ, that by the merits of his passion we may be led to eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

Song of Solomon 6:1-9

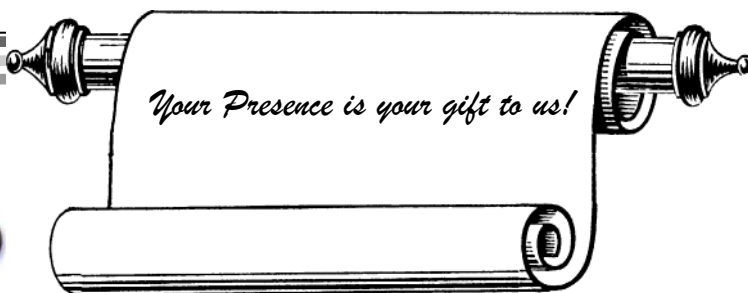
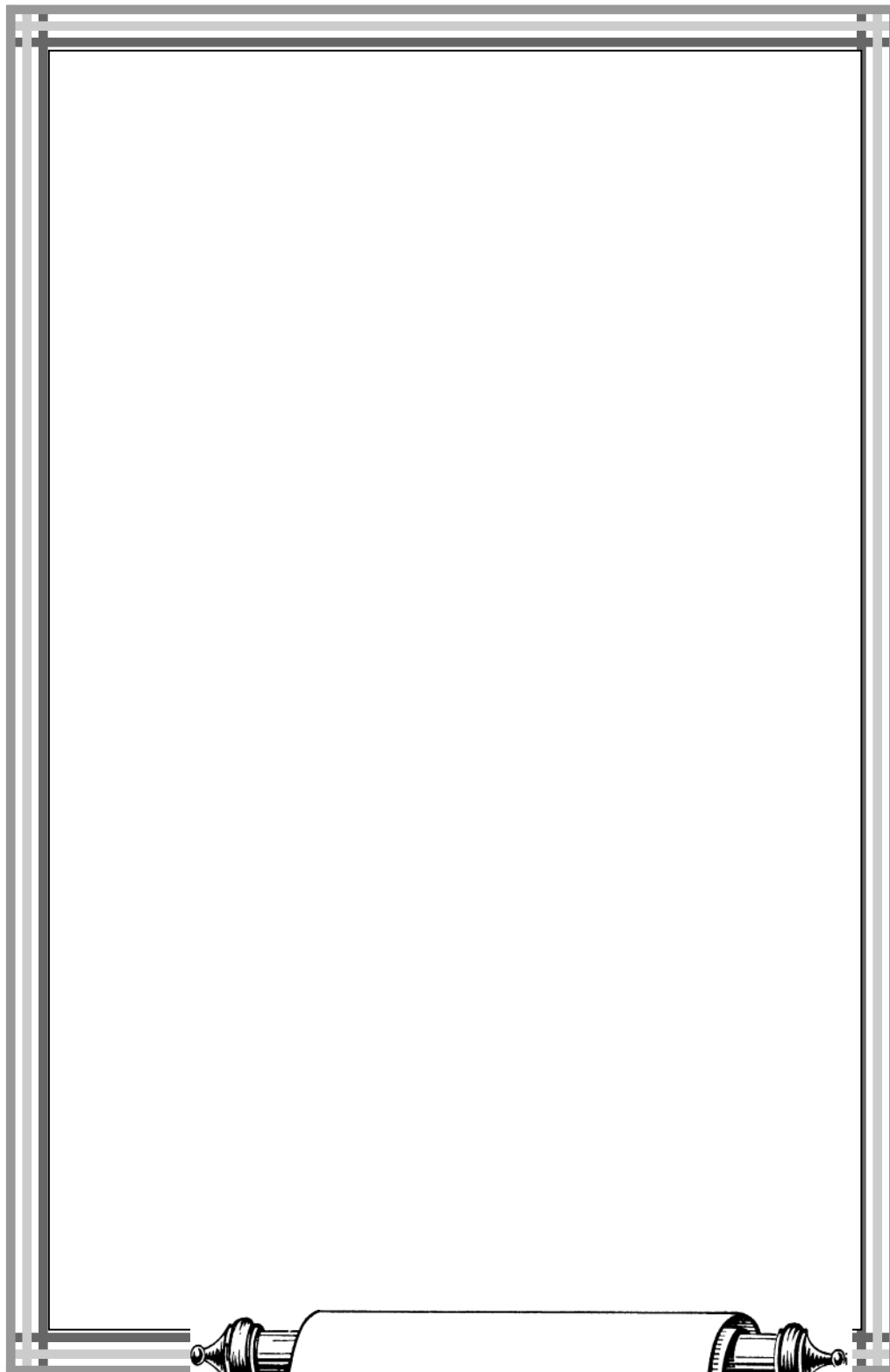
Revelation 19:5-8

John 1:9-13

Psalm 131



Wedding Invitation



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

October 8, 2019

Present: Fr. Hartt, Mtr. Sue Waldron, D. Spath, J. Chenot, N. Creagan, C. Gordon, F. Hershey, M. Holden, M. Lundberg, T. Murphy, J. Russom, G. Scala, A. Spath

Absent: C. Gordon

Opening Prayer Led by Father Paul Hartt

Approval of the Minutes of Vestry Meeting, September 10, 2019

The September 10, 2019 minutes were approved on a motion by M. Lundberg and seconded by A. Spath. The motion was unanimously approved by the vestry.

Warden Report –D. Spath

We would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who contributed and attended this year's annual picnic in September. Each year this gathering is a great way to start off our new church calendar season. We would also like to thank Pat Shortall and Ian Mike for all the set up the morning of the picnic as well as many others that helped out including Jordan Chenot and Jim Chenot for their assistance cooking on the grill. Finally, many thanks to those who brought a dish to pass as well as those who stayed afterwards making the picnic run smooth and successfully. Our parish picnic has always been a great way for all of us to enjoy great food and enjoy each other's company.

First communion and confirmation classes will begin next Sunday after each service and Bible study classes have already begun on Tuesday evenings. Also, the Alpha program has started each Sunday after the 10:30 service which has been well attended. I would like to thank both Mother Sue and Father Hartt for all their time and effort putting these programs into place, enriching the spiritual education to our congregation and others at large.

The parishioner's third quarter financial statements will be sent out later this week. Also, a letter went out to the congregation last month regarding the funding of the second phase of the interior restoration project. It is very encouraging to report that we have received additional gifts since the letter went out from those who had not invested in the first phase, as well as, additional gifts from those who have already given. We are hoping to meet our goal so we may move forward with the next phase in early January.

The finance committee will begin working on this year's stewardship campaign as well work on next year's budget. Our plan is for the vestry to begin reviewing the proposed budget at vestry meeting in November. It is so important that we continue to get the message out to the congregation the importance of stewardship as well as increasing the endowment that supplements approximately fifty percent of our annual budget.

The month of October is where we begin preparing for the busy November around the corner. There are a few events that will be taking place to take note of. One to mention is our pre-Thanksgiving dinner which will be held on November 16th. Each year there is an incredible interest for this event and it has become an annual tradition at St. Peter's. We hope that those who have not been able to attend in the past to please mark this date on your calendar for a wonderful event. The event is a great time for the congregation to get together enjoying great food and fellowship. Moving ahead, Thanksgiving Eve Holy Communion Service and volunteers helping Thanksgiving morning at Equinox headed up by Laura Rulison from 7:30 to 9:30 AM.

We are also beginning to prepare steps needed to continue our efforts hosting the overflow homeless shelter beginning the first week in December. The Albany City Rescue Mission is still in the process of rehabbing an additional building in Albany dedicated to women which is sorely needed in downtown. We are not sure if it will be ready for this winter season yet, if it is not ready by December 1st we will again be ready to bring in the women in for another year. If the building is completed before then, we will then return to bringing the gentlemen overflow they have each night during the winter months. We will let the congregation know which way we will help the Albany City Mission as soon as we can so we can plan for the needs of these individuals that need a safe place to stay in the evening during the winter months. We will have two orientations for those who want to volunteer before the program begins in December. The dates and times will be announced early in November and will be announced in the weekly leaflet. The congregation has been very generous in the past supporting this ministry with food and monetary donations and hope that this generosity continues again this year for those who are in need. This has been a great outreach to our local community.

Finally, we would like to thank the Clergy, vestry, choir, Neil and those who volunteer on committees with all their work and support they put forth on the upcoming busy schedule of services and events. We hope everyone will take advantage of all the upcoming events.

Sunday Attendance – The Average Sunday Attendance is 110.8

Rector's Report - Father Hartt

Fr. Hartt and Mother Waldron attended the Diocesan Sexual Harassment Prevention training mandated by NYS. Father Hartt gave the Vestry the Sexual Harassment Prevention Policies for Saint Peter's. Saint Peter's has adopted the NYS Model Policy. Many on the Vestry have already received the mandated training at their workplace or have previously seen the Training Videos provided by NYS. Fr. Hartt will provide an opportunity for interactive training after the Vestry meeting for those who have yet to see the training videos. For those present who have seen the videos, Fr. Hartt reviewed the policies and provided an opportunity for questions and discussion. At this point, all paid and volunteer staff at St. Peter's have received the mandated anti-harassment training. Fr. Hartt also gave to the Vestry the model Policies and Procedures for The Protection Of Children And Youth. Fr. Hartt asked the Vestry to review the Policy for approval at the next Vestry meeting. Fr. Hartt also spoke of the Training needed and provided by Praesidium related to these policies. Praesidium is used by the Diocese and is a highly regarded independent provider of such training.

Fr. Hartt reported that Alpha on Sunday afternoon has proved to be a huge success. We presently have 17 participants. Fr. Hartt again shared his hope that Alpha will be grounded in our common life and serve as a vehicle for renewal or conversion. The wonder of Alpha is how God uses it to accomplish both. At some point very soon, we will be ready to have Alpha run by our laity. It is not designed to be clergy driven. This is now our 3rd run of Alpha. Positive word of mouth has helped us receive the great attendance this session.

Fr. Hartt spoke glowingly of the glorious anthem sung by our Choir last Sunday. The choir offered Charles Villers Stanford's *For lo, I raise up, OP 145*.

In terms of our fellowship together, Fr. Hartt thanked the Chenot family for all of their work at the grills during the Parish Picnic. Thank you, also, to those who brought a dish to pass. Attendance was quite good and a wonderful time had by all. Next month (11/16) will be the Pre-Thanksgiving Thanksgiving Dinner. We do enjoy being together. Coffee Hour continues to grow as many linger to share fellowship. It is a healthy sign.

Fr. Hartt thanked Maria Holden, Ashley Spath, and Christie Gordon for the initiative undertaken to accomplish a nuanced analysis of and response to church attendance. Last Sunday was a good example of the gift of having so many of our members together. The age ranges and joy are attractive to newcomers. We need only to show up for ourselves. Fr. Hartt added that Mother Sue did a stunningly good children's homily on St. Francis.

Fr. Hartt spoke with Sue Perry of the City Mission about the overflow shelter this year. They are still undecided as to men or women this year. As we meet, our City Mission is holding an annual fundraiser at a nearby hotel. The clergy and wardens regret not being able to attend this year due to Vestry.

Fr. Hartt has begun his role as Director of the Diocesan Deacon School. This work will entail one Saturday a month and occasional Diocesan events. Preparations are underway for the upcoming December weddings of Ashley Spath and Dan Closson as well as Sue Waldron and James Troiano. The Daughters of the King held a surprise luncheon for Mtr. Sue this past Sunday.

We are off to a good start. The spirit of the parish is strong and joyful. Programs for renewal are underway and new initiatives to encourage attendance are in the works. First Holy Communion instruction will begin this Sunday. At this time, no teen has approached the clergy for Confirmation. There are times when we may need to skip a year. We will continue to ask the parish for possible candidates.

The initiative for email and cell numbers has yielded good results. We have had 32 electronic responses and 14 paper submissions. We will continue to announce the need at church and by newsletter. It would be wonderful to be able to send our Newsletter electronically to those who wish to receive it in that manner. Electronic contact should save the parish a good bit of money and labor in the future.

Finance – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

George reviewed the Treasurer's Report for September. Offerings YTD through September were \$152,496. This compares to a budgeted number of \$170,738. YTD Offerings through the same period in 2018 were \$147,521.

The investment/endowment accounts both showed small gains for September. Merrill Lynch showed a return of +.05% for the month and is at a YTD return of 15.18%. The Key accounts showed a return of +.87% for the month and have a YTD return of 14.64%. This leaves us with a positive budget variance in this area YTD of \$383,305. Both accounts performed favorably versus market indexes. Expenses YTD through September were \$19,730 over budget.

Pledges for 2019 remain at 49 pledging units for a total amount of \$126,154.

Stewardship was discussed. George will prepare a letter to be mailed to the congregation. Also, the draft 2020 budget will be presented at the November Vestry meeting.

Property – None

Outreach – Mother Sue

Appeal was made by Dr. Moses Kanya for our continued support of the West Buganda AIDS orphans. The scholarships provide tuition, food, housing, clothing, texts and other educational supplies. Outreach will provide four scholarships again this year, at \$670 annually per student, for a total of \$2,680.

Donations were also made to:

Healing a Woman's Soul in the amount of \$150.00

Food Pantries of the Capital District in the amount of \$75.00

The Annual Pre-Thanksgiving Thanksgiving dinner will be held on Saturday November 16, 2019. Janice Chenot is coordinating the sign-up sheet for food items. Please RSVP with # of family members attending along with what dish your family may provide or if you can cook a turkey (provided by the church).

Volunteers are requested for meal preparations on Thanksgiving morning from 7:30-9:30am for Equinox dinners. Please see Laura Rulison for more information if you are interested in volunteering.

The Overflow Homeless Shelter is planned for opening December 1st for the 11th year. We are pleased, once again, to provide this ministry in support of the Capital City Rescue Mission.

Food for the Poor is scheduled to visit St. Peter's on Sunday January 19, 2020. Their representative will preach and request donations towards their global efforts.

Old Business- None

New Business –

The Clergy, staff, and the Vestry went through NYS Sexual Harassment Compliancy Training that was made mandatory this year to be completed by October 9th.

Associate Rector's Report – Mother Sue

The start of the new academic year was stupendous! We give thanks for the generous donations of backpacks and school supplies and for Laura's dedication to the children at the St. Francis Mission. The "mountain" of backpacks was an overwhelming blessing! The start of Sunday school and our celebratory Parish Picnic surely mark the beginning of a successful and joyful year here at St. Peter's.

September also marked the start of the Fall Women's Book and Bible Study group. We are reading *Sensible Shoes, a Story about the Spiritual Journey*, by Sharon Garlough Brown with weekly gatherings and reflection. Some women of the church join informal weekly gatherings, others read the book on their own.

We had the Annual St. Francis Animal Blessing this past Sunday (10/6/19) with four furry friends and nine of their closest humans in attendance! We are always so thankful for our animal companions and it is a delight to pray God's blessing on our relationships with them.

Instruction for First Holy Communion begins next Sunday (10/13). As Father will report, Alpha has begun with an amazing level of participation. Our parish family looks forward to two weddings during Christmas season. We continue to be excited about these signs of spiritual growth in our parish.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by M. Lundberg and seconded by D. Spath, then was approved unanimously by the vestry.

Compline

Father Hartt led Compline.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christie J. Gordon

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Paul J. Hartt.....Rector
The Rev. Susan Waldron.....Associate Rector
Neil K. Keen, F.A.G.O.....Organist & Choirmaster
Laura Rulison.....Director of Christian Education
Ian Mike.....Sexton
James P. Shortall.....Assistant Sexton
Ruth Manss..... Office Manager
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

Deborah Spath Senior Warden
James Chenot.....Junior Warden
George Scala.....Treasurer
Nancy Creagan, Christie Gordon, Fred Hershey,
Maria Holden, Mark Lundberg,
Tim Murphy, Jeff Russom, Ashley Spath

How to Contact Us

Office Hours:

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Fax: 518-462-4419

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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

