



THE Cornerstone

September 2021

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

From the Senior Warden

As the summer of 2021 winds down and fall begins, the uncertainty of many issues we were facing last year seem to loom a year later, and then some. The social, economic and mental stresses of these issues have affected each and every one of us to some degree. The "then some" is the additional challenge we face in searching for a new Rector. With so many things going on, we started the summer off with no Rector. A weight quickly loomed over me knowing that a large amount of trust and responsibility now fell squarely on the vestry and my shoulders. Of first importance, we needed to make sure we continued our services during this uncertain summertime securing supply ministers for our Sunday services. The fear and anxiety melted away quickly when we were introduced to Mother Elizabeth from the Albany Episcopal Diocese. Early on she was able to secure a clergy couple from South Carolina to cover our Sunday services for the first eight weeks. Father Paul and Mother Christina Hunter and their two young children stayed at the Rectory and it was a blessing to have them here. While serving with us, they had two funerals to attend to and they did a wonderful job comforting the families during their difficult time in need. They also did an incredible job reaching out to St. Peter's shut-ins as well as those who have been ill. We thank them both for their incredible ministry and we wish them a blessed and bright future.

At this current time, we are still only having one Holy Communion service at 10:30am and we are hoping to resume the 8:30am service this fall. We have also slowly brought back the choir, first singing in the side aisle of the church to now singing from the choir stalls. It has been very uplifting to hear our favorite music being performed again. As some may know, our choir director Neil Keen underwent a few medical procedures during the summer months and he is recovering well. He still has a few more procedures ahead of him but he has been very optimistic and we wish him the best on his road to recovery. Surprisingly, Neil has played the organ for the past few Sundays and looks better each time we see him - God bless you Neil. Many thanks to Neil's wife Mary Bon, who filled in for Neil when he was not up to playing on a particular Sunday.

Presently as previously mentioned, the priority for the upcoming months will be to find weekly supply ministers, who are in high demand throughout our diocese for Sunday services. We are hoping they can help fill the calendar for our Sunday services through the end of October. This gives time for the supply clergy and our office to prepare ahead of time. We are so fortunate to have Ruth Manss at the helm in the office. Ruth is in touch each week with the visiting clergy coordinating the times and dates of the services and she makes sure they have everything they need so that the service runs smoothly each Sunday. She has also had to oversee several funerals and committals this summer, and this is no easy task when you have to deal with supply clergy that are unfamiliar with the way St. Peter's does things. Ruth is very good at accommodating the many last-minute requests she receives in the office and she does an outstanding job of keeping the office and church functioning the way it needs to, especially in the absence of a day to day minister. Thank you, Ruth for all that you do. A huge thank you to our summer LEMS, Gordon Lattey and Jack Ratzel, who have been there each week to assist the visiting clergy with the service and Holy Communion. Thank you also to Sharon DeBonis who is chairing the Altar Guild in Catherine Schunk's absence. Each week she makes sure we have a supply of elements in Reserved Sacrament for Holy Communion. This is very important as a Deacon cannot consecrate bread or wine and our recent supply priests have all been Deacons. Thank you to the Ushers, the Flower Guild and the Sextons, the combined effort of everyone is what makes it possible for St. Peter's to continue offering a Sunday service each week without having a Rector.

So where are we now? The parish survey was distributed in the beginning of July and we had a large response. We received incredible and valuable information from the surveys which was then compiled by our treasurer, George Scala, to present to the vestry for review. George took on the task of finalizing this information so it could then be forwarded to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee then publishes this information in national publications announcing our search for a Rector. In the meantime, we needed to select two people from the Vestry (Search) Committee that would be responsible for interviewing candidates for an Interim Rector position. We selected Junior Warden Deb Spath and Vestry Member Maria Holden. Although the entire committee would be present for the interviews, Deb and Maria would be the only people asking the questions. We had our first interview with a candidate in August. Deb and Maria did a phenomenal job conducting the interview, making sure we followed all protocols required, as well as compiling and preparing questions from the vestry beforehand. Thank you both for all your hard work.

To Mark Lundberg (our Search Committee Chaplin), Nancy Creagan, Ashley Closson, Fred Hershey, Malcolm Moran, Jeff Russom and Christie Gordon, thank you for all your input and suggestions throughout this process. Your contributions have been extremely valuable to all of us. Christie Gordon has assumed the role of clerk on the vestry, taking on all of the clerical work that needs to be compiled and sent to the Diocese for the Rector search. She takes this role seriously, filling out and sending all the pertinent information to the vestry, and she is very good at keeping me on task. Thank you, Christie, for all your hard work.

So, starting my letter with so much uncertainty, why so optimistic? I have found there is so much to be certain about at St. Peter's. It has been heartwarming to have parishioners who have stepped up and reached out to me making sure I knew they were there for me, the vestry and St. Peter's no matter the task at hand. The DOK, LEMS, Altar Guild, Ushers, and Flower Guild have all reached out to me to offer help and great suggestions moving forward. In addition to these committees, there have also been a few individuals who have offered their support wherever it is needed.

Please know I have not taken this charge lightly and though it has been time consuming, it has also been rewarding in so many ways. It has been a great learning experience and I have been able to speak with and meet some wonderful clergy in our diocese. To those that have not been able to return to weekly worship in person, I would like to thank you for continuing to financially support the church, please know we are extremely grateful. Finally, a special thanks to those that have been faithful in attending the Holy Communion service each Sunday this summer supporting St. Peter's, our visiting ministers, the choir and your fellow parishioners. We are the Church and now, more than ever, we all need to show up and support each other.

God has a plan for all of us - this I am certain of. Please continue to pray for our church and for each other.

God Bless,

Jim



Look What's News



Dear St. Peter's Parishioners,

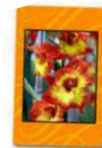
Many of you knew Carly Crewell who passed away on June 28, 2021. Carly was well known for her friendly demeanor and smiling face. She was an ambassador of God's teachings and did her best to spread the word to anyone who would listen. Carly would take the time to speak with everyone at either service she attended. She took great pleasure sending cards to parishioners from St. Peter's for any reason. One thing that made Carly extremely happy was when she received stamps for her correspondence from people within the church.

I had known Carly since she and Al walked into St. Peter's Church on that Christmas Eve many years ago. When Carly chose to dedicate herself to the Julia Chapter of the Daughters of the King at St. Peter's, I was blessed to have the opportunity to assist with other Daughters in Carly's training. We all knew then that Carly was a special and exceptional individual. She seemed to have a "pipeline to God in heaven." Whenever she was asked the question, "How are you today?" Her response was always, "I am blessed." She would then go on to speak of her Lord!

After Carly's passing, I spoke with a variety of church members, and everyone seemed to echo the same sentiment as to how much they will truly miss the cards from Carly. Therefore, I asked God how I could continue her magnificent tradition that seemed to positively affect so many parishioners over the years. With permission and endorsement from the Vestry, I have enlisted volunteers named "Carly's Messenger's." Any support from the congregation will be gratefully received and appreciated. We will always welcome anyone who chooses to be of assistance with Carly's Cards. As one person reaching out to so many to spread the word of Jesus by utilizing only a card and/or a smile, "Carly's Messengers" are confident that Carly's dedication and outreach at St. Peter's Church along with her memory will live on!

Susan J. Smith

Carly's Cards



Those who have entered into REST:

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life
through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to Almighty God:

Shirley Hartt - July 14, 2021

Irene Burnell - July 27, 2021

For Your Information

Vestry Meeting

The September Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 14th at 5:15pm. The meeting will be held in the Vestry Room.



Daughters of the King

The Daughters of the King will meet on Sunday, September 12th (following church & coffee hour services) at 11:30am in the 2nd floor Parish Hall

Parish Picnic CANCELLED

The annual parish picnic will NOT take place on Sunday, September 19th as originally planned. Due to the new CDC and Albany County Guidelines regarding the COVID-19 Delta Variant, we feel that this is in the best interest of our congregation as to keep everyone safe. And not knowing how many of you would even attend a public gathering at this time, we did not want to go through the effort and expense of the picnic and have no one attend. As disappointing as this is, we pray that you can accept the reasons behind this decision, and we thank you for your understanding.

Food Donations

Thank you to all those who have contributed food or made a monetary donation to purchase food to feed the “walk-ins” at our door. Your continued support of those less fortunate is greatly appreciated.



Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is seeking anyone who would like to learn how to prepare the altar for Communion services. You will work with an experienced member while learning what all our beautiful stuff is and where it goes on the altar. You will also learn how to care for our things. A manual with step-by-step photographs is available for handy reference, as is ongoing mentoring. If you'd like to know more please contact Sharon DeBonis at (518) 237-1871 or scdebonis@verizon.net, or find me at church on Sunday; I'm always there.

Holy Communion

You may have noticed that our Holy Communion Service has been a little different for these past few weeks. We have been leaving out the part of the service that consecrates the bread and wine. It is because we have had Deacons preaching and serving communion. Most of the supply priests that are available to help out each week are Deacons. Deacons cannot consecrate the elements therefore we use the elements from the Reserved Sacrament (meaning it has already been consecrated). Mtr. Christina and Fr. Paul consecrated a supply of hosts before they left and Deacon Rick Erickson supplied us with consecrated wine that his priest so graciously consecrated for us. Recently, our Sr. Warden Jim Chenot attended a service at St. George's in Clifton Park where Fr. Tom Papazoglakis consecrated a supply of elements for us that we provided him with. So we pray that you will continue to bear with these changes as we move toward finding an Interim Rector and permanent Rector so our service can return to what we know as “normal”. Thank you.



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 you are interested, please call Ruth in the church office at (518)434-3502.



Ushers Guild

The Ushers Guild is looking for a few volunteers. If you are interested, please call Ruth in the church office at (518)434-3502.

We wish to thank our volunteers for their service to St. Peter's.

If you would like to volunteer, please call Ruth at the church office (518) 434-3502.



Welcome back to St. Peter's Sunday School

Backpacks & Supplies for Back-to-School

Every year the Sunday School collects backpacks (new or lightly used) and back-to-school supplies to be donated to the children at Grace and Holy Innocents. Please pick up an extra backpack, notebook, pack of pens or pencils, loose leaf paper, or markers and place the items in the green bushel baskets located in the Pumpelly Room or in the Sunday School Room. These supplies and backpacks will be delivered to Grace and Holy Innocents on Saturday, September 18th so please have your donations to church by September 12th. Thank you for your continued support, your donations are greatly appreciated.



Prayer Pretzels/Sunday School Registration

On Sunday, September 12th Sunday School registration will take place and the children will be busy making prayer pretzels. Please take a moment to stop upstairs to complete a registration card for your child(ren).

Sunday School & Child Care

Childcare will be provided starting at 9:30am, and during Sunday school classes that start at 10:30am. Please be assured that everyone will be practicing all the proper procedures to keep our children safe. Each Sunday all toys/tables will be cleaned according to the CDC regulations. All the teachers are vaccinated. I leave the choice of masks on your children, we will gladly welcome what makes you feel comfortable.



Something New

We are excited to announce a new addition to our Sunday School lessons, which will take place the last Sunday of every month. Ms. Caitlin Cehowski will be teaching our little angels some children's songs! We hope to show off their talents for your enjoyment during the year!



St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen Saturday, September 18th ~ 11AM to 1PM

On the 3rd Saturday of every month St. Peter's Church is committed to preparing take out meals and goodies bags for the people at the St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen, (formerly known as Grace and Holy Innocents) located at 498 Clinton Avenue, Albany, NY 12206. For information please call Laura at (518) 368-4284.

September 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			1
5 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:30am - Holy Communion	6 Labor Day Office Closed	7	8
12 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:30am - Holy Communion Sunday School Registration and Prayer Pretzel Baking 11:45am - DOK Meeting	13	14 Holy Cross Day 5:15pm - Vestry Meeting	15
19 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:30am - Holy Communion	20	21 St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist	22
26 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:30am - Holy Communion	27	28	29 St. Michael All Angels

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	2	3	4
	9	10	11
	16 5:30pm - Full Choir	17 12:30pm - Organ Concert	18 11:00am - Angels in Training
	23 5:30pm - Full Choir	24 12:30pm - Organ Concert	25
Angels	30 5:30pm - Full Choir		

Archives



Philip Schuyler and the Schuyler Mansion

Philip Schuyler served as a statesman and as a military general in early days of America. He fought in both the French and Indian War and in the American Revolution. He won election to the New York General Assembly in 1768 and to the Continental Congress in 1775. He served in the New York State Senate for most of the 1780s and supported the ratification of the Constitution. He represented New York in the first United States Congress.

The Schuyler Mansion which was built in a Georgian style at the end of the French and Indian War was about a 80 acres from the city of Albany. When the family moved in, the Schuylers already had three daughters: Angelica, Elizabeth, and Margarita (Peggy). These girls were, commonly known as the “Schuyler Sisters.” The later children: John B, Philip J., Rensselaer, Cornelia, and Catherine were born in the mansion. The home was the center of military, business and family affairs, including the wedding of Elizabeth to the Alexander Hamilton. Toward the end of the Revolutionary War Philip Schuyler was an intelligence officer for the American side, operating a network of spies out of his home. Because of this he was nearly kidnapped by the British on August 7, 1781. The Schuylers were famous for their hospitality. Guests included George and Martha Washington, James Madison and even John Burgoyne who stayed in the mansion as a “prisoner guest” after Burgoyne was defeated by the Americans at the Battle of Saratoga.

Philip Schuyler spent most of his later life trying to abolish slavery in New York State. He also helped in establishing the free black schools. He is considered the founding father of Union College in Schenectady which accepted David Rosell as the first documented black student at Union. After the death of Alexander Hamilton, Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton spent her widowed life in poverty, but helped start the New York Orphan Asylum Society. She also founded orphanages in New York City and Washington D.C. and took homeless children into her own home. Also according to Albany Historian John Wolcott she financially assisted in the creation of the first black school which later became a black church (known as the Albany African Church) on Plain Street .

The Schuyler Mansion opened up to the public as a State Historic Site on October 17, 1917 on the 140th anniversary of the Battle of Saratoga. A historic marker was erected 1940 and a visitor center was built on the grounds in 2011. A statue of Philip Schuyler which was erected in 1925 is located in front of Albany’s City Hall.

Other Happenings



The Call to Forgive: a seminar exploring the forgiveness process

Saturday, September 11, 2021 | 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

With Mtr. Sue Troiano

As Christians, we are called to “forgive others as we are forgiven”. We may learn this, know this, and may even come to yearn to forgive and yet living it fully can remain difficult. When we are called to forgive it means that there is real sin done to us, and therefore, deep pain to heal from. For many, the Call to Forgive is a process, not a one-time resolve. In this seminar, we will begin to explore the forgiveness process and how God works to bring forgiveness to our minds, our hearts and our souls. The day will begin with worship and end with a healing service.

Seminar fee: Early Bird Special \$20 | After August 27: \$25 | Both rates include lunch



ST. PETER'S CHOIR

Boys and Girls

Age 8 to grade 8

Join us in 2021

- Musical and Vocal training
- Monthly Salary
- An opportunity for free piano lessons
- No experience required.

***Choir singing makes you smarter
and happier.****



There are also openings in other voice parts.

Please contact Neil Keen with any questions about the program

(518) 339-0137 or email: stpmus@gmail.com

(* Google "benefits of choral singing." you may be surprised.)

CHOIR START-UP

Regular Choir Rehearsals will resume
on Thursday, September 16th

Thursdays: 5:30PM - 7:00PM

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 some details regarding COVID protocols that are
yet to be finalized, but we are eager to sing together again.*

FRIDAY NOONTIME ORGAN CONCERTS

The Friday Noontime Organ Concerts will resume on
Friday, September 17th. These free half-hour concerts
are presented each Friday at 12:30pm. Come and Enjoy,
as our organist performs on our wonderful pipe organ,
one of the largest and finest in the Capital District.



IT'S BACK - COFFEE HOUR HAS RETURNED!!

Through the darkness of so many months, St. Peter's is attempting to return to some sort of normalcy. Therefore, St. Peter's Vestry is pleased to announce that our coffee hour will resume on Sunday, September 12th, and will be held in the garden (weather permitting) until the Pumpelly Room renovations are complete. Now becomes the challenging part to recruit parishioners to assist with and attend coffee hour along with inviting everyone to connect with others and relish the delectable treats.

During COVID-19, it was identified that we all need to continue to worship with our church community. Along with that simple fact, so goes the comradery of a coffee hour. How better to discuss the perils of our lives than with those individuals who we only just worshiped with minutes before.

Regarding the history of coffee hour in churches, according to the Episcopal News Service, initially in the mid-800's coffee was treated by the Vatican as a "hellish" brew and meant to tempt Christians. Thankfully by the 16th century, Pope Clement VII decided to baptize coffee in or to fool Satan and "make it a Christian beverage." Currently coffee hour has become a staple of congregational life for many houses of worship including St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Because of COVID-19, churches were forced to pause in person worship for more than one year. The time of socializing is one of the things that church goers have missed most about meeting in person at their church.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church was designed in the mid-19th century by Richard Upjohn and his son Richard M. Upjohn in the French Gothic Revival architectural style. Every stained-glass window tells a story from the Bible. Take a tour of the church itself and the windows that are so prominently displayed. Can you find the Lamb?

Now that you have been made aware of several historical facts of our picturesque church, along with a little history lesson behind coffee hour, St. Peter's is excited to inform everyone that coffee hour will eventually resume in the Pumpelly Room and see what is next in your experience within this marvelous, historical church of worship which enriches State Street in Albany. Oh yes, one additional item, we are consistently searching for individuals to join our hospitality team assisting with coffee hour immediately following the 10:30am service. Please feel free to contact me anytime at (518) 505-6051 or e-mail: Gpleasant49@gmail.com.

I look forward to hearing from any of our gracious parishioners and possibly a few good bakers as well!

Susan J. Smith
Hospitality Team



Assisting Bishop



The Standing Committee is pleased to announce that Bishop Michael G. Smith has accepted a call from the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Albany to serve as our Assisting Bishop during the interim period before the election of our 10th Bishop. While the Standing Committee will remain the Ecclesiastical Authority of the diocese, Bishop Smith will walk alongside us to provide episcopal ministry focusing on Sacramental and Pastoral responsibilities including regular regional Confirmations. Bishop Smith will also assist the diocese with other duties that are reserved for a bishop.

Bishop Smith previously served as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota for fifteen years. Since then, he has served as part-time Assistant Bishop of Dallas where he teaches “Ascetical Theology and Spiritual Practices” through the Stanton Center for Ministry Formation and part-time Assisting Bishop of the Navajoland

Area Mission where he organizes the Navajoland Iona Collaborative working in the formation of Indigenous leaders from the Four Corners Region and the Diocese of Alaska. Smith jokingly says that his new business card should read, “Have Mitre, Will Travel.”

Smith holds undergraduate degrees in psychology and music from Oklahoma State University and Marymount College of Kansas, as well as graduate degrees in social work and divinity from the University of Oklahoma and Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. His Doctor of Ministry degree in preaching is from Aquinas Institute of Theology.

Bishop Smith is the Chair of the Communion Partner Steering Committee, a fellowship of ordained and lay Anglicans from the U.S., Canada, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Indigenous First Nations who are committed to engaging the ministry of reconciliation by helping to keep theological conservatives in their respective provinces and theological liberals in the discernment processes of the Anglican Communion. He was an invited guest and participant in the most recent Global South conferences held in Egypt and Thailand.

An enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation of Oklahoma and a Benedictine oblate of St. John’s Abbey, he lives in Minnesota when he is not on the road. His wife, the Rev. Lisa White Smith, is the rector of a parish there and they are the parents of three grown children and grandparents of nine. “I look forward to discerning and supporting what God is doing in the next chapter of the history of the Diocese of Albany,” says Smith.

The Standing Committee believes strongly that Bishop Smith is the right person for ministry in the Diocese of Albany at this critical time. We believe he will be able to guide us through the healing and reconciliation that is needed in the diocese, as well as help strengthen us for the next chapter of our life together. We look forward to Bishop Smith beginning his ministry among us.

Prayer in a Time of Transition

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for this, your diocese of Albany. Inspire and sustain us in this time of transition.

Incline our hearts to do your will, and so direct us in your ways that the leader you are raising up to be our Bishop will find here joyful disciples, making disciples, united in faith, unflagging in hope, and steeped in mutual charity.

In your mercy, accept our repentance, and grant us peace; look with patience on our enthusiasms; and pour rich gifts and grace upon all who are entrusted with the ongoing work of your church; so that, with diligence and charity, we may discern correctly and walk righteously in your ways.

This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Clergy & Staff

Neil K. Keen, F.A.G.O.....Organist & Choirmaster
Laura Rulison..... Director of Christian Education
James P. Shortall.....Sexton
Wayne Hill.....Assisting Sexton
Ruth Manss..... Office Manager
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

James Chenot.....Senior Warden
Deborah Spath.....Junior Warden
George Scala..... Treasurer

Ashley Closson, Nancy Creagan, Christie Gordon,
Fred Hershey, Maria Holden, Mark Lundberg,
Malcolm Moran, Jeff Russom

How to Contact Us

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Services

Sunday

Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State St.

Albany, New York 12207

