



Cornerstone

February 2023

Newsletter of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church

107 State Street, Albany, New York

2022 Annual Reports

ST. PETER'S CHURCH PRIEST-IN-CHARGE THE REVEREND CHRISTINA HUNTER

Beloved of God,

I'd like to begin my annual meeting report by telling you a story — another of God's surprises.

As you remember, when I came here in July as your priest in charge, I began immersing myself in the stories of St. Peter's — both stories you told me and stories from our 300 year history. As I was reading a history book, I came across this passage describing events that took place in September 1823 under the Rev. Dr. William Lacey, ninth rector of St. Peter's. The passage described a "communion table" that was gifted to the church. It said, "The older members of the parish can remember this 'altar table' as it stood at the head of the middle alley within the chancel rails, in all its glory of richly veined mahogany, and with its slab of dark Lake Champlain marble." This communion table was displaced by the stone altar we use today, but it was used for years in the vestry room for the preparation of elements for Holy Communion.

I read that passage, and I thought to myself, "That description sounds really familiar." So I went into our downstairs Vestry room, and there was a table fitting that description with a bowl of decorative plastic fruit on it. I asked our historian, Connie Powell, what she thought of all of this, and we both think we've correctly identified the communion table from the second St. Peter's church structure.

This, in itself, is a delightful surprise. But, I'm even more delighted by what your Vestry has decided to do with this communion table. In cooperation with Laura Saffares, we're working on setting aside a sacred space upstairs near the children's area as a special prayer room. It will contain the re-dedicated communion table, along with the beautiful icon of St. Peter that was painted by Maria Holden and blessed last week as we celebrated the Feast of St. Peter's Confession of Jesus as the Christ. During fifth Sundays of this coming year, we will resume our celebration of youth Sundays, with me leading the children in special communion services in this new prayer space and with Dr. John Davis exercising his ministry of lay preaching by leading Morning Prayer on those dates for the adults.

I am telling you this story because I'm excited about it. I believe it is a window into the way God is leading us, together, into a renewed sense of our identity and mission in our city. It is a story of re-discovering the altars of our past and handing them forward to the new generation of disciples.

I was called here to do interim work with you as priest in charge, and we're already seven months into that two year process. My charge, aside from doing administrative updating, is to lead our listening to the Lord and one another as we discern the answers to three questions: 1. Who are we? 2. Who is our neighbor? 3. What is God calling us to do?

We've spent a lot of time, so far, telling stories. These stories help us to remember who God has made us — both in the past and today. St. Peter's is many things. It's been the mother church of the Diocese of Albany, birthing many new parishes over the years. It's been a multicultural hub of disciples, a place where English soldiers, Mohawk believers, Dutch speaking children, and American-born colonists worshipped. Both the powerful and the powerless have heard the gospel preached here and been fed on the sacraments. And beauty is such a great part of our story — expressed in architecture and in sacred music.

This coming year, we'll continue to tell stories. And as we do, we'll begin to ask God to reveal to us how to share the riches of our faith and tradition with the city around us. We remember that St. Peter stood up boldly on the day of Pentecost to proclaim Jesus Christ to a city filled with people from many nations and languages. And God has placed us in this still multicultural hub

of powerful and powerless and given us a Confession to share. We know we are called, and we'll be meeting and reflecting together in various ways this year to discern how God would have us proclaim the gospel in this moment.

Our other work, this year, is to love one another. We are a parish in transition, and we are still grieving. We lost Neil Keen last year, just as we lost many others who I could name in the years since the pandemic began. Things won't be the same as they were. But we serve a God who wept at his friend's grave, and tears for the dead are never wrong. They are a sign of love, and love is eternal.

Our work, as we grieve, is to love one another as our Lord Jesus loves us. An impossible task, certainly, but one we're to attempt with the humble confidence that our Heavenly Father will forgive all of our stumbling and smile upon our efforts. One of the strengths of this parish is the familial bond between parishioners. Like brothers and sisters, we laugh together, we bicker with each other, we delight in beauty and learning and song, we forgive one another, we are shaped by the instruction of our Father, and we share the work of caring for our Father's house.

So our task is twofold. First, we'll tell and hear stories and as we ask God to give us eyes to see how He wants us to share his Great Story with the world. Second, we'll love one another as we walk more deeply in discipleship together.

A final note: I am grateful. I could have very easily taken up this entire annual report with a list of thanks for so, so many of you. Your dedication to our Lord Jesus, to this parish, to one another, and to the people outside these walls has shown me dozens and dozens of examples of God's love made manifest. The saints of St. Peter's aren't only in our windows.

My family and I are personally grateful for your outpouring of love and encouragement to us as we have moved here, settled into a new life here, and navigated our own sorrows. It is a sacred joy to work and serve our Lord alongside of all of you.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all forevermore.

Mtr. Christina Hunter+

ST. PETER'S CHURCH SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Happy New year to everyone! Just a year ago at this time, I was penning my annual report. The report was mainly affirming how well we had been able to overcome many obstacles the prior year. With the absence of clergy and the pandemic facing us, it was quite amazing how we were all able to come together to worship each week with supply ministers and Deacons, right through the Advent season. Not too long after my report was complete, I was told there were no supply ministers or Deacons available to preach on the day our Annual Meeting was being held. I was informed that if I was willing, I could be granted permission to perform Morning Prayer and use my report in place of a sermon. I went back and tweaked the report a bit, it was then that I knew the Holy Spirit had been working through all of you along with me to help us move forward in our Journey. What an incredible experience it was for me.

At the beginning of last year, we continued the work on the Interior Restoration of the Chancel. The altar, walls and stenciling were cleaned and repaired and were ready for our Lenten and Easter season. During that time, we were able to inform the congregation that Mother Christina Hunter had been called as our next Priest-in-Charge and would be arriving the beginning of July. We began getting the Rectory ready for the Hunter family: Mother Christina, Father Paul, their daughter Martha and son Jonathan.

Excitement and anticipation were building with the news of new clergy arriving. Unfortunately, at the same time, there was the sting of pain and grief coursing through so many of our hearts as we watched the struggle of our dear friend, mentor and Choir Director Neil Keen lose his fight against cancer. The battle he fought was as strong as his faith. His love for music was endless and his love for our choir was immeasurable. Neil fought the good fight to the bitter end, sometimes playing the organ in excruciating pain. As I write this report through tears, I take comfort in knowing he is in a better place. I find myself at a loss for words to describe how much he meant to this church and how much he is truly missed. In the end, all that I can say is God Bless you Neil and thank you for your dedication and friendship.....until we meet again.

While Mother Christina was just beginning her ministry with us, she would now need to help us say goodbye to Neil. And during this sad time, Mother Christina notified us that her own sister had suddenly passed away and would need to return home to Ohio to perform her sister's funeral service. And while still grieving the loss of her sister, she returned to Albany to perform Neil's funeral on September 3rd, 2022.

We went into September having a new minister and questioning how to move forward with our music program. Fortunately for us, Mary Bon (Neil Keen's wife) extended her talents to us and agreed to become our Interim Organist and Choir Director. She resumed Thursday evening rehearsals with the choir and plays the organ and directs the choir for the 10:30am Sunday morning services. And in December, Mary organized a grand Messiah Sing-A-Long performance with full orchestra and choir honoring Neil. Under the direction of Mary Bon, the choir continued performing beautiful music throughout the Advent season and Christmas Eve services. Thank you Mary, we appreciate your hard work and dedication in continuing the musical traditions here at St. Peter's.

Mother Christina started her ministry with St Peter's running.....digging into our history, getting familiar with everyone and the traditions of St. Peter's. Her story telling sermons really helped all of us get to know her, as well as her getting to know all of us along the way. Early on, Mother Christina recognized the importance of outreach in the immediate area. Mother Christina has made it a priority to help with this ministry and has visited some local shelters first hand to introduce herself and extend any assistance we can offer. The Outreach Committee Chair Laura Saffares has also taken on many outreach ministries and projects within, as well as outside St. Peter's Church. On December 2nd, we were again excited to reopen our Overflow Shelter in conjunction with the Capital City Rescue Mission in Albany. We thank those who have made monetary and /or food donations supporting this incredible outreach mission.

The Vestry reconvened in August and worked with Mother Christina in getting her up to speed with the practices of St. Peter's Church. We found that we were able to start off another church season in September and continue through the Advent season without any hiccups, as we did the past year with her care. She respected the traditions that many of us hold dear to our hearts. Thank you Mother Christina, for making us feel at home instead of the other way around.

The above sounds a bit like the beginning of this report - the difference is that we now have a magnificent shepherd - Mother Christina - to lead us forward. For many of us it has been difficult these past few years with so many changes, but I believe that the Holy Spirit has helped us carry our cross through the tough times and has now blessed us with the gift of Mother Christina.

Looking ahead, Mother Christina has created four task forces within the vestry. These various groups are tasked with many duties within the church. They will be working with all of the Guilds to help everyone get back on track after completing our search for our new minister.

Looking at this report, it truly shows how strong and resilient our St. Peter's family is. With that said, we are now beginning on a new Journey. I believe God surely has a plan for all of us at St. Peter's, the Holy Spirt brought us Mother Christina and we need to embrace this blessing. Through the past few years we have weathered so much, shouldering our crosses and keeping our faith strong. It is time for those who have been absent, for whatever reason, to please consider returning home, St. Peter's is waiting for you. The Lenten season is approaching and I pray this will be a time for everyone to reflect on how much St. Peter's has meant to you and your families. This is a perfect time to reintroduce yourselves to us and meet Mother Christina. We want to see you, not just at Easter and/or Christmas. Your presence worshipping with us each Sunday is the only way we can get the word out that St. Peter's is alive and doing well. We cannot do that with an empty church.

Our Vestry and many others work very hard, in so many ways, to ensure that we all have a beautiful, spiritual place to come to worship and pray. St. Peter's is the home we come to when we are struggling and need comfort. It is the home where we, along with others who have gone before us, have experienced tears of joy and sadness from baptisms, weddings, and funerals. St. Peter's is the holy place where many of us will be carried through the rear doors of the church one last time before going to our final resting place. And many of us, like Neil Keen, will make St. Peter's our final resting place in the Columbarium at the back of the church. My hope, like the hope of those who left this beautiful church in our care, is that this holy place will be here for those that follow us, and that they will be given the same blessings that were bestowed upon us and our families.

There is much to look forward to here at St. Peter's. Your brothers and sisters in Christ need your love, help and support to ensure the future of St. Peter's Church. I am sure there have been times in the past that many carried the hope and knowledge that others, like us, would follow them and pick up their cross and continue to help others.

I want to thank each and every one of you who have been so faithful and loyal to our church over the past few years. Your help and time given have meant the world to me and St. Peter's. Watching everyone pull together has been heartwarming. Mother Christina has hinted she has a lot up her sleeves for this upcoming year and I don't doubt her! We will wait to see what the Holy Spirit has in store for us as we move forward together.

God Bless - Jim

ST. PETER'S CHURCH PROPERTY AND RESTORATION REPORT

In 2022, our main focus was getting the Rectory in order and ready for the Hunters to arrive in July. Now that they have settled in, we have been able to identify a lot of cosmetic work inside and out, that we have just started to look into.

As mentioned in the Senior Warden report we started the restoration work in the Chancel which included the cleaning of the altar. The work was completed before Easter. In February of this year, new choir stalls will be installed in place of the existing ones we now have. Presently, the majority of pieces we now use were older ones from our Cathedral. Not sure exactly what happened to our original stalls, but we were able to find old pictures and sketches to replicate the original ones. Egan restoration, who has been doing the work in the interior restoration of our church, found the wood craftsmen that built our original pews and stalls in England. We had the choir stalls replicated last year in England and shipped over late fall. The choir stalls will be ready before this upcoming Lenten and Easter season.

Also, as mentioned, task forces have been formed including the property committee. We will be meeting in the next few weeks. Fortunately, we have a beautiful church we worship in and we will continue to do our best to maintain the church for many more generations to come.

Jim

ST. PETER'S CHURCH ALTAR GUILD

The past year was another challenging and busy year for the St Peter's Altar Guild. The beginning of the year saw a continuation of setting for services with visiting clergy and deacons. With the arrival of our Priest-In-Charge, Mtr. Christina, we have finally been able to revert to our pre-Covid schedule of Holy Communion every Sunday at 8:30, and twice a month at 10:30. A change has been using the St. Mark's altar for the 8:30 services.

We completed the restoration of our Gloria frontal through the careful work of Gail Spicer, textile restorer, and her assistant Judith. The frontal was glorious to see this Christmas. Gail was also able to clean a few of our pieces that are in need: we will hopefully be able to carry on that work for the rest of our collection.

An Altar Guild meeting was held in October during which we discussed the new procedures in setting up the St. Mark's altar. An instruction sheet on setting and clearing St. Mark's was developed and distributed.

I appreciate the efforts of all our members especially during the changes of last year. This is a faithful and caring group, and I am grateful for their care and devotion to our church.

Anyone who is interested in becoming a member of the Altar Guild can contact me (cathschunk@aol.com) or call the church office. Training will be provided to you.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Schunk, Director

Active members for 2022: Barbara Adams, Sharon DeBonis, John Davis, Pam Gerfin, Laura Grill, Catherine Gabriels, Donna Hershey, Barbara Kelly, Michele Lundberg, Diana Martin, Malcolm Moran, Donna Ohlman, and Gloria Vanderpoel.

WOMEN OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH

Remains Inactive

ST. PETER'S CHURCH FLOWER GUILD

This past year of 2022 was a busy and productive one for us. As usual, we created weekly arrangements for the Main Altar, including arrangements of greens during Advent, poinsettias for the Christmas season, palms and lilies for Palm Sunday and Easter, as well as our traditional Thanksgiving altars of food given by the congregation and then donated to a local food pantry. We also held a class in the fall to demonstrate the basics of arranging altar flowers, which was fun and well-received.

This upcoming year we are very happy to have Catherine Gabriels back as a member of the guild and to welcome Susan Smith to our group. We are thankful to have such talented and dedicated members. We would also like to express our appreciation to Ruth Manss, in the church office, for all her invaluable assistance during the year.

Of course we would not be able to operate without the generous support of the congregation! We are very grateful to those who made donations of memorial, thanksgiving and celebration flowers during 2022. If you would like to make a donation this year, please call the Church office to reserve a Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Creagan, Chair

Sally Jennings, Ann Collins, Sharon DeBonis, Cathy Schunk, Laura Grill, and Maria Holden.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH USHERS GUILD

St. Peter's Church is most grateful to all in the Ushers Guild who served during the past year, those continuing to serve and those who have recently joined the guild family. Ushers are the first faces of welcome and hospitality that people coming to St. Peter's Church encounter. In this post pandemic time, our ushers have welcomed back the congregation and visitors attending both morning services in our historic downtown church. Our ushers meet, greet, offer service bulletins, collect tithe and guide visitors and congregation during each service.

Please join us in acknowledging the contributions of the following ushers:

Catherine Schunk, Sharon DeBonis, Bill Collins, Kevin Creagan, Mark Lundberg, Michele Lundberg, Robin LaPlante, Moses Kanya and Jeff Russom.

A special thank you to Aaron Connors and Jack Healy who offered their services for Christmas Eve.

This January we welcome in the Ushers Guild John Davis, Sam Hartt and Debby Spath.

The Ushers Guild is an excellent ministry of St. Peter's Church and we encourage anyone who may be interested in joining to contact Jeff Russom at 518-879-2388, russomjeff@gmail.com or any member of the Ushers Guild for more information.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Russom

ST. PETER'S CHURCH ARCHIVES

Archives activities include organizing and upgrading the collection. This has meant adding to the files such as the newsletter files and the weekly leaflet files, as well as my current birth, marriage and death files. In addition, it has meant adding to my current church history file.

I am continuing to write articles for the monthly newsletters.

I answer archival questions both in person, in paper and online. One interesting archival question concerning the church layout at the time of the golden age, when a movie was being created of that time period. I submitted copies of pictures of what the church looked like at that time.

I have created boxes, and labels for these boxes to expand the collection when we needed more space.

I have continued to collect newspaper clippings relevant to the church.

Submitted by Evelyn Constance Powell, Archivist

ST. PETER'S CHURCH MUSIC PROGRAM

This has been a period of transition for the music program and choir at St. Peter's. Through the retirement of Father Hartt, Covid, the illness and death of our Organist Choirmaster, Neil Keen and the welcoming of Mother Hunter, the choir has been a constant and steadfast presence.

Our choir continues its excellent work with great skill and dedication. The Choir's principal work is the musical enrichment of regular Sunday worship. We are grateful for their generous commitment of time, energy, musicianship and beautiful music at weekly Sunday services. Their attendance at Thursday Choir rehearsals and pre-service rehearsals makes it all possible. St Peter's is indeed fortunate to have such a talented group of people willing to dedicate themselves to this ministry. It is a joy and privilege to work with them.

The production of many YouTube services while the church was not in session allowed our congregation to worship in their homes. With the assistance Father Hartt, music previously recorded by the choir, newly prepared organ music, and many congregational readers, Neil Keen was able to produce complete worship services each week. Neil also took many photographs which highlighted the beauty and singularity of St. Peter's. These services are still available on YouTube.

In addition, we note these special services and events in 2022.

Good Friday	Schutz <i>Passion</i> , with orchestra
Easter Day	Two choral services, with trumpet and timpani
August	Death of Organist Choir Master, Neil Keen after forty-two years of service to St. Peter's Church and its music program
September	Mary Bon assumes duties of Interim Organist Choir Director
December	Handel's Messiah Sing-Along with guest conductor, Dr. Tim Reno Service of Lessons and Carols

Two choral services for Christmas Eve, with trumpet and timpani
Many Funeral Services with choir including the Funeral of Organist Choir Master, Neil Keen with full choir and guest organist, Vaughn Mauren

As 2023 begins, we are eager to welcome new singers. We are developing plans for the treble section. The strong support of parents of trebles makes it possible. We ask for the help of our parish members in reaching out to musical youngsters and adults.

We are thankful for the support that the vestry and parish give to its music program. Choir Mother Diana Martin gives the choir invaluable service. She keeps the vestments organized, polishes medals, is always there to help at every service and event, and plays a vital role in the training and orientation of new choristers.

I, personally, am especially grateful to each and every choir member; the vestry and Senior Warden, James Chenot; office volunteer, Janice Chenot, and the staff; and to the congregation for continuing to be a pillar of support and comfort during the long illness and death of my beloved husband, Neil Keen and the period of transition it ushers it.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Bon Interim Organist and Choir Director

ST. PETER'S CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL

I want to start my report by thanking James Chenot, Deb Spath and the Vestry for their support with St. Peter's Sunday School. I would also like to thank the parents who bring our little angels to church each Sunday. A BIG THANK YOU to our Sunday School teachers; Ariana Saffares, Sharon Vardabash and Kelly Welch for being there for our children each week. Thank you to Pat, Wayne, Ruth and Janice Chenot for all the behind the scenes support.

Here are some things we did this year in Sunday School

Prayer Pretzels made by the children for Sunday School registration
Collected Backpacks for Back to School
Pumpkin Bread to be shared with families on Thanksgiving
The annual Christmas Pageant
The filling of the Creche during our family Christmas service
Making Valentines for local Nursing Homes
Coloring eggs for the annual Egg Hunt
Mothers days gifts
End of the Year Ice Cream Social

Thank you for letting me serve the children of St. Peter's, I am truly blessed.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Saffares

ST. PETER'S CHURCH DAUGHTERS OF THE KING JULIA CHAPTER

After several postponements, on April 4th, the Julia Chapter of the Daughters of the King met for elections. The positions available were President and Vice President/Recording Secretary. I am pleased to announce that I was elected as President and Michelle Lundberg as Vice President/Recording Secretary. Thanks to Michele, the Daughters have been diligent with all confidential prayer requests presented to us by St. Peter's congregation, the Albany Diocese and the International Chapter.

The Daughters have met both via zoom and in person during the 2022 year. We believe it is essential to enhance the spirituality within the Julia Chapter, review the confidential prayer list, prepare for the remaining months of the spring along with a fall 2022 schedule. The DOK also looked into the likelihood of sponsoring a Discernment Class provided by the Julia Chapter in the fall. The Daughters voted on sponsoring the initial Coffee Hour on Sunday, September 11. The DOK utilized the Coffee Hour as a reintroduction of the Julia Chapter of the DOK. We also agreed to prepare Blessing Bags for females who are homeless or in shelters for battered women. The date to prepare the bags was the first Sunday in December 4th. Upon completion, the majority of the Blessing Bags were received by the Director of Christian Education Laura Saffares, as she will be distributing the Blessing Bags as part of the St. Peter's Outreach Program.

The DOK Assembly was held on Saturday, November 5th, at Christ the King Center. Two women from the Julia Chapter of the DOK were in attendance and one joined the Assembly via Zoom. We all enjoyed a delightful and constructive day of comradery with a plethora of amazing women who are filled with spiritual energy, the gift of the holy spirit and devoted to further the kingdom of God.

May I as president, thank the entire St. Peter's congregation, clergy and staff for the continued support felt by the Daughters. I believe we can only be successful as those who support us daily. We are Christian women who are dedicated to grow in God's love and spread the good news of Jesus Christ.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Smith

Julia Chapter of the Daughters of the King
President

ST. PETER'S CHURCH OUTREACH PROGRAM

It is an honor and privilege to serve St. Peter's Church as the Outreach Chairperson. The congregation of St. Peter's has helped me provide the many facets of our program. I can only do what I do because of you! I am truly blessed to have the support to help our downtown community.

Here are some of the 2022 outreach activities:

St Francis Mission Soup Kitchen - I now go on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of the month. The need to feed and clothe our community has doubled since last year. On average we feed from 250 to 300 meals a week. We provide goodie bags with fresh fruit, toilet paper and baked goods for the people to take with their meal. We buy in bulk from the Regional Food Bank, which allows us to have a shopping table with cereal, yogurt, drinks and personal care products. I also have the honor of distributing clothing on the weeks I am there. The donations of coats, hats, gloves, clothes and household items are accessible to all that come in our doors. I encourage anyone that can volunteer on either Saturday, to come join us in our ministry. We are there from 9am to 1pm, the address is 498 Clinton Ave, come to the back of the parking lot and knock on the big grey door.

West Bugunda - Outreach provided scholarships for 4 girls from West Bugunda to attend school.

Thanksgiving - A large collection of food donations adorns our altar at Thanksgiving. Thanks to Nancy Creagan and the flower guild members for arranging this glorious display. Some of the food was kept at church to assist with walk-in requests, some was donated to fill the walk up food cabinets at the South End Children's Café and some was brought to the New Life Baptist Church here in Albany.

Christmas - This year we were able to serve the community of the Damien Center with a home cooked Christmas meal. This was coordinated by Sharon DeBonis. She reached out to the congregation to make pans of Turkey, sweet potatoes, green bean casserole and desserts. I had volunteered Christmas eve at St Francis and was able to get a pan of mashed potatoes and ham to add to the dinner. I would like to thank all that contributed in making many people of the center so happy on Christmas day. Thanks to Sharon also for making this happen.

Crop Walk - Thank you to Maria Holden for organizing the CROP Walk and to all the parishioners who helped to raise \$1,326.43 for the hungry.

Carly's Cards - Thank you Susan Smith for creating this outreach in honor of Carly. She just loved sending cards to everyone in our church! If anyone would like to help with this amazing outreach, please reach out to Susan Smith

Daughters of the King - Thank you all for providing Blessing Bags to the women of The St. Francis Mission. I was able to hand out over 25 bags! Thank you also for the two additional full shopping bags of more Blessing Bags to be distributed in the weeks to come!

Church and Office Staff - Thank you to Ruth Manss who continues to provide outreach with the many daily "walk-ins" in need, during office hours. Thanks to all that made monetary donations, food and drinks to make this possible. A big thank you to Pat and Wayne who assist with keeping our church beautiful but also assist with people that come in our doors.

Backpacks - We collected over 70 "Back to School Backpacks" filled with school supplies for the children of St Francis Mission. I even had enough to fill a "Gap" with the South End Children's Café! Thank you all so much.

South End Children's Café- For Thanksgiving this year we collected money from the congregation and Greenbush Tape and Label to fill 25 Thanksgiving day bags. They were filled with gift cards for a turkey, stuffing, potatoes, carrots, pies and more. They were topped off with a beautiful dish towel! Thank you Janice Chenot for helping me coordinate and shop for this amazing outreach! I will continue to collect food for the South End Children's Café walk up cabinets, please consider buying a few extra things at the market to help feed our community. The box is in the back of the church

The Giving Tree-- We put up the tree and decorated it with gift tags for 60 board games for the families of the St Francis Mission and South End Children's Café. St Peter's provided! Thank you all for helping make many childrens Christmas morning a special one.

St. Peter's Overflow Shelter--It has returned to the upstairs auditorium after a long hiatus. In coordination with The City Mission, we now house 10 men where they can safely sleep, grab a healthy snack and much needed comradery. Thank you to Mother Christina and James Chenot for providing this service to our community.

Damien Center - St. Peter's held their annual Memorial Day BBQ at the center this year. We had various donations of food prepared by our congregation. This event had music, great food and wonderful people. It was an honor to be a part of such a celebration. Thank you Sharon DeBonis for coordinating this event, all that was donated. Thanks also to Diana Martin for handing out Dog/cat goodie bags for the residents' animals. We would like to offer Easter baskets this year, to the 20 residents living in the center. Look for more details in the bulletin.

Welcome Bags--We have several welcome bags located in the back of the church. They are filled with a coffee mug and information on our church. If you see a new family or person in the pew, I encourage you to go over to chat with them and bring them a bag.

I continue to be thankful and blessed by the generosity of St Peter's Church. I need to thank the Vestry for all the support and encouragement that allows me to head this committee to help our community. I can only do this by the grace of God and the support of all of you .

Respectfully submitted , Laura Saffares

St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Treasurer's Report for Annual Meeting
January 29, 2023

2022 has shown us more than ever, that St. Peter's can not be a church that solely relies on being "Endowment Protected". With the unstable and significantly declining market that the country has seen in 2022, St. Peter's has been impacted as many other American individuals and businesses have been. Significant losses were encountered in both our Key (Restricted) and Merrill Lynch (Unrestricted) accounts. With approximately \$200,000 in offerings and \$600,000 in expenses, we must significantly rely on the income from our endowment accounts to balance our annual budget. Years like 2022, significantly alters our budget and bottom-line results and produces some scary financial numbers.

Our expenses are monitored and evaluated continually. If there was a way to reduce our operating expenses by over 60% to balance our budget on offerings alone, it would have already been done. We are very proud of the outstanding worship, music, education, plant maintenance and administration that we are able to provide to all of our parish at a very economical amount.

We are extremely grateful and appreciative of our parish contributions to "project specific" campaigns such as the Interior Restoration Project, Christmas Giving Tree and Overflow Homeless Shelter. At the same time, Utilities, Insurance and salaries of our Clergy and Staff, are some of the expenses that while not as glamorous, are just as important to the church.

Our congregation historically has a very low pledging rate. It is through pledging and regular giving that the church is able to effectively budget and ultimately address our operational expenses. I am asking, on behalf of the Vestry, that everyone who hasn't, please reconsider completing a pledge for 2023. We cannot rely on income from the endowment accounts to balance our budget every year. Your pledge helps to address all of the critical expenses that I previously mentioned, which allows our church to provide all of the wonderful offerings to our parish congregation and beyond.

Following is a summary of our annual finances:

OFFERINGS

Total offerings for 2022 were \$210,731. This compares to our 2021 offerings of \$202,753.

ENDOWMENT/INVESTMENTS

Our unrestricted Merrill Lynch accounts had a negative return in 2022 of -18.35%. Our restricted Key accounts also had a negative return of -22.48%.

Our year end balances compared to the end of 2021 are as follows:

	12/31/2021	12/31/2022
Merrill Lynch (Unrestricted)	\$2,187,031	\$1,613,136
Key (Restricted)	\$2,091,929	\$1,579,811

It should be noted that for our Key/Restricted accounts we do not have any access to principal but only the income that the accounts generate.

EXPENSES

Total expenses for 2022 were \$558,190. For 2021 our total expenses were \$528,284.

Our bottom line for 2022 was a loss of (\$1,139,896). For 2021 we showed a gain of \$200,243. Primarily this was a result of the negative performances of our investments/endowments in 2022.

2023 BUDGET

The 2023 Budget with comparisons to 2022 actual and 2022 Budget follows.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - 2023 BUDGET

	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
INCOME			
Offering Income/Pledged/Envelopes	\$ 170,000	\$ 167,997	\$ 180,000
Offering Income/Loose	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,311	\$ 3,000
Offering Income/Special Funds			
Altar Guild	\$ 500	\$ 554	\$ 500
Sunday School Offerings	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ 100
Easter/Lenten Offerings	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,682	\$ 4,000
Flowers	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,635	\$ 5,500
Capital Funds from Offerings	\$ 150	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Memorials	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,950	\$ 2,000
Special Services Contributions	\$ 150	\$ 615	\$ 150
Christmas Offerings	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,833	\$ 5,000
Undesignated Gifts	\$ 500	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,500
Other Designated Gifts	\$ 6,000	\$ 10,349	\$ 6,000
Choir & Music Gifts	\$ 250	\$ 8,205	\$ 1,500
TOTAL Offering Income:	\$ 195,150	\$ 210,731	\$ 211,250
Other Income			
Columbarium	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Interest, Miscellaneous Income	\$ 1,000	\$ 25,402	\$ 1,000
TOTAL Other Income:	\$ 1,000	\$ 25,402	\$ 1,000
Investment Income			
Key Trust Return (Net of fees)	\$ 72,258	\$ (415,384)	\$ 66,700
Merrill Lynch Return (Net of fees)	\$ 78,750	\$ (402,455)	\$ 68,651
TOTAL Investment Income:	\$ 151,008	\$ (817,839)	\$ 135,351
TOTAL INCOME:	\$ 347,158	\$ (581,706)	\$ 347,601
=====			
=====			
EXPENSES			
Outreach			
Outreach	\$ 15,000	\$ 5,224	\$ 15,000
Total Outreach	\$ 15,000	\$ 5,224	\$ 15,000
Fellowship			
Parish Events/Hospitality	\$ 5,000	\$ 9,710	\$ 9,000
Total Fellowship	\$ 5,000	\$ 9,710	\$ 9,000
Music/Choir			
Guest Organist Stipends	\$ 1,500	\$ 13,100	\$ 1,500
Special Service Musicians	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,824	\$ 4,500
Choir Member Stipends	\$ 8,500	\$ 3,047	\$ 8,500
Music Supplies	\$ 500	\$ 267	\$ 500
Instrument Tuning & Maint, Other Misc.	\$ 3,500	\$ 6,607	\$ 3,500
Total Music/Choir	\$ 16,000	\$ 27,845	\$ 18,500
Pastoral Support			
Diocesan Conferences/Training	\$ 3,000	\$ 730	\$ 3,000
Travel	\$ 2,500	\$ 4,481	\$ 2,500
Discretionary - Rector	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,201	\$ 4,800
Discretionary - Curate/Deacon	\$ 1,000	\$ 300	\$ -
Visiting Clergy Stipends	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,865	\$ 1,500
Total Pastoral Support	\$ 18,900	\$ 14,577	\$ 11,800

Christian Education	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
Sunday School Supplies	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,906	\$ 2,000
Adult Education/Alpha	\$ 1,200	\$ -	\$ 2,500
Total Christian Education	\$ 2,700	\$ 1,906	\$ 4,500
Worship			
Altar Supplies	\$ 5,750	\$ 15,349	\$ 5,750
Altar Flowers	\$ 2,750	\$ 2,015	\$ 2,750
Total Worship	\$ 8,500	\$ 17,364	\$ 8,500
Administration/Salaries			
Salaries	\$ 180,104	\$ 151,776	\$ 191,833
Clergy: SECA Tax Reimbursement	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,678	\$ 5,355
Outside Services/Temporary Help	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000
Legal Fees	\$ 1,000	\$ 18,487	\$ 10,000
Diocesan Assessment	\$ 66,000	\$ 71,214	\$ 66,000
Total Administration	\$ 254,604	\$ 244,155	\$ 277,188
Operations			
Advertising	\$ 1,500	\$ 440	\$ 1,500
Archival Expense	\$ 1,000	\$ 31	\$ 500
Books & Subscriptions	\$ 1,000	\$ 598	\$ 500
Office Supplies	\$ 2,750	\$ 1,228	\$ 2,000
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 6,000	\$ 15,864	\$ 10,500
Maintenance Agreements	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,880	\$ 4,000
Equipment Lease Expense	\$ 4,700	\$ 4,985	\$ 4,700
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ -	\$ 3,544	\$ -
Postage	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,122	\$ 2,500
Printing/Web Site Expense	\$ 350	\$ 2,203	\$ 2,250
Telephone/Cable/Internet	\$ 9,000	\$ 7,354	\$ 7,500
Bank Charges	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,762	\$ 1,500
Insurance (Liability, Property, Auto, Comp)	\$ 35,000	\$ 33,454	\$ 35,000
Parking: Staff & Parish	\$ 7,000	\$ 6,960	\$ 7,000
Total Operations	\$ 77,300	\$ 85,425	\$ 79,450
Payroll Related Expense/Benefits			
Payroll Processing	\$ 6,000	\$ 5,224	\$ 5,500
Health & Dental Insurance	\$ 75,000	\$ 49,010	\$ 48,000
Clergy Housing Allowance/Equity	\$ 15,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -
Pension	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,052	\$ 12,000
FICA (Employer Expense)	\$ 15,000	\$ 7,610	\$ 10,000
Disability Expense	\$ 1,000	\$ 631	\$ 1,000
Total Payroll Related/Benefits	\$ 132,000	\$ 74,527	\$ 76,500
Plant Operations			
Capital Improvements	\$ 50,000	\$ 18,950	\$ 25,000
Janitorial Supplies	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,618	\$ 1,000
Church & Guild Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 20,000	\$ 16,933	\$ 20,000
Church & Guild Gas/Electric	\$ 22,500	\$ 31,671	\$ 25,000
Water/Sewer	\$ 1,000	\$ 655	\$ 1,000
Property Taxes/Town NFP Fee	\$ 500	\$ 520	\$ 500
Rectory Maintenance	\$ 10,000	\$ 4,102	\$ 8,600
Rectory Electric/Gas	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,008	\$ 4,000
Total Plant Operations	\$ 109,000	\$ 77,457	\$ 85,100
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 639,004	\$ 558,190	\$ 585,538
GAIN/(LOSS):	\$ (291,846)	\$ (1,139,896)	\$ (237,937)

2022 PAROCHIAL REPORT FIGURES

ASA 2021	69.3
Baptisms	3
Confirmation/Reception	0
Weddings	1
Funerals/Committals	8

2022 VESTRY MEMBERS

SR. WARDEN: James Chenot

JR. WARDEN: Deborah Spath

TREASURER: George Scala

Ashley Closson; Sharon DeBonis; Christie Gordon; Fred Hershey; Maria Holden; Mark Lundberg; Malcolm Moran; Jeff Russom

2023 VESTRY ELECTION RESULTS

Deborah Spath was elected Junior Warden for her second two-year term.

Fred Hershey was elected for his second three-year vestry term.

Peter Benson was elected for his first three-year vestry term.

Samuel Hartt was elected for his first three-year vestry term.

Congratulations to all !

St. Peter's Happenings

Vestry Meeting

The February Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14th at 5:15pm in the second floor meeting room.

Ash Wednesday Services

Please join us for services on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. They are as follows: 12pm and 5:30pm both with imposition of ashes. The 12pm service will be without Holy Communion. and the 5:30pm service will be a full Holy Communion service with music.

Shrove Tuesday

Our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held on Tuesday, February 21st from 5pm to 6:30pm. Volunteers are needed to cook and should arrive by 4pm. Many other volunteers are needed for clean-up so that the Parish Hall can be ready by 7pm for the arrival of the men from the Overflow Shelter. If you have any questions or are volunteering to cook, please contact Janice Chenot at 518-786-1070.

Offering Envelopes for 2nd Quarter of 2023

We are in the process of preparing a final list for the printers of those parishioners who wish to receive weekly Offering Envelopes for the second quarter of 2023. Please review your envelopes for accuracy in your name and address. Should you wish to make any changes or be added or taken off the list, please email your requests to Janice Chenot at: office@stpeterschurchalbany.org or call the church office at (518)434-3502. In order for you to receive your second quarter contribution envelopes by April 1st your changes must be received by **Sunday, February 19th.**

Malcolm Moran All Beethoven Piano Recital

3 pm, Sunday, February 26th, 2023

St. Peter's Church Choir Room

On Sunday February 26th at 3 pm you are invited to join pianist Malcolm Moran in a piano recital in the St. Peter's Church Choir Room. Malcolm is a talented pianist holding a Bachelor's Degree in Music from The College of Saint Rose, and a Master's Degree in Piano Performance from Kent State University. You may also know him as a soloist and member of the St Peter's choir for almost 20 years and a regular crucifer on Sunday mornings.

He will be performing an all Beethoven piano program featuring *The Piano Sonata in D, opus 28 (Pastoral)*, and *The Piano Sonata in D minor, opus 31 no. 2 (Tempest)*. While none of the nicknames given to these sonatas are from the composer himself, these two works certainly live up to their titles. The Pastoral's beautiful, long melodies and incessant pedal tones are reminiscent of simple country life, while the short and furious motivic fragments, and minor key center of the Tempest certainly evoke more stormy imagery.


Written at about the same time period, 1800-1803, these two pieces are perfect examples of the beginning of Beethoven's middle period. Due to their stark differences, they together make a delightful program. We hope you'll join us for this celebration of the music of one of the greatest composers to have ever lived.



February 2023



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

			1	2 Presentation of Jesus in the Temple 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	3	4
5 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am Holy Communion 10:30am Holy Communion 11:45am Bible Study	6	7	8	9 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	10	11 11:00am Angels in Training
12 Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am Holy Communion 10:30am Morning Prayer 11:45am Bible Study	13	14 Valentine's Day 5:15pm Vestry Meeting 	15	16 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	17	18 11:00am Angels in Training
19 Last Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30am Holy Communion 10:30am Holy Communion 11:45am Workshop	20 President's Day Office Closed	21 5:00pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	22 Ash Wednesday 12:00pm Service with Ashes 5:30pm Holy Communion Service with Ashes and Music	23 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	24 St. Matthias the Apostle	25
26 First Sunday in Lent 8:30am Holy Communion 10:30am Morning Prayer 11:45am Lenten Bible Study	27	28				

* In observance of President's Day, the church office will be closed on Monday, February 20th.

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

December 13th, 2022

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

Absent: None

Opening Prayer Led by Mtr. Christina.

Approval of the Vestry Meeting Minutes, November 9th, 2022

The vestry minutes from the November 9th meeting were approved on a motion by J. Russom, seconded by F. Hershey, then unanimously approved by the vestry.

Priest in Charge Report – Mtr. Christina

Rector stuff:

1. Preparing up to three people for baptism on January 8.
2. Did one home visit last month. Another is scheduled for Thursday.
3. Have begun preparing a couple for marriage in May.
4. Led a Service of Committal for Frank Spath on Nov. 21.
5. Have worked with Mary, Ruth, Janice and Jeanne Bianchine (a freelance promotions consultant we hired for a few hours) to help coordinate publicity for Messiah, Lessons/Carols, and Christmas services. Has included newspapers, facebook, website, in-house printings, Diocesan updates (as well as signage, fliers and banners that Jim produced for us)
6. Am calling/praying for each member of St. Peter's in the directory during Advent. Plan to get through entire directory by Christmas.
7. Thinking about "thank you" ideas for awards Sunday in the spring.
8. Continuing to teach Sunday and Zoom confirmation classes to Jack Clark, who will be confirmed on the Easter Vigil.
9. Visited the Damien Center open house.
10. Planning to begin training a team of Lay Eucharistic Visitors to expand our home communion visits on 2023.
11. Robin LaPlante has agreed to take over as administrative team leader of the LEMs since Gordon's retirement. I'll remain the liturgical leader of the team in charge of training (it's a Diocesan rule that clergy do that part).
12. Doing work this week to put a few basic "welcoming" things into place in time for Christmas services, including the bathroom signs that Jim has put together, a small table with simple pamphlets/upcoming events, and some web updates on our "staff" section.
13. Finished rewriting of funeral policy/handout that we reviewed last month (copy available).
Is there an interest in Fr. Paul teaching a class in January until the start of Lent?

Interim stuff:

1. Review: My job as interim involves essentially two duties: My first duty is do "big picture" vision/mission work with the whole congregation that answers three questions: Who are we? Who is our neighbor? What is God calling us to do? The second duty is to review ministries, systems, policies, etc, and see if anything needs to be updated, cleaned out, done away with, or highlighted/celebrated.
2. Big Picture Update: During Advent and Christmas, some of the deliberate "big picture" self-reflection has been on pause. We'll be resuming reflection on "Who are we?" and "Who is our neighbor?" starting with some activities in January.
3. Administrative Update: In January, I'm hoping to have a second Vestry meeting work session where we'd split into four teams and do some updating of policies/procedures in four areas:
 - a. Finances (to include suggestions on future budgeting...I'd also like to get something on paper regarding some housing questions)
 - b. Property (to include compiling a comprehensive list of potential repairs, projects, and a maintenance schedule)
 - c. Personnel (Update or create job descriptions for all staff, clarify the chain of command, and make a provision for yearly reviews)
Bylaws (writing a basic set for St. Peter's – our original bylaws cannot be located)

Submitted by The Rev. Christina Hunter

Sr. Warden's Report –J. Chenot

My report for December begins by reporting just a few things left from November. November was spent preparing and getting our new Priest in charge, Mother Christina, up to speed with our upcoming Advent season. During the end of November, we gave thanks in so many ways – Outreach to local shelters, our Sunday School children baking pumpkin bread for all of us to enjoy, and the decoration of our altar for Thanksgiving with nonperishable food items donated to then be used for food pantries in our area. Finally, we were able to celebrate our annual pre-thanksgiving dinner with the Hunter Family and with many parishioners who have returned since the Covid pandemic. The dinner was wonderful. Thank you to all who had a hand in making all these activities a success.

We began this month of December with opening our overflow shelter in our Parish Hall on December 2nd. This past Sunday, we had the Sunday School Pageant at the 10:30 service followed by the performance and sing-a-long of the Messiah which was a huge success. Many thanks to Mary Bon for her leadership as Interim Choir director able to engage all of us to do our best while having Neil close in all our minds. Choir – you are the best – Thank you.

Next week we will have our Lessons and Carols at the 10:30 Service followed by the Hanging of the Greens and luncheon.

Looking forward to two Glorious Christmas Eve Services and to celebrate the Birth of our Lord Jesus!

God Bless.

Sunday Attendance - The Average Sunday Attendance was 69.7 as of December 11.

Finance – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

George reviewed the Treasurer's Report for November. Offerings for the month of November were \$14,827 and Year-to-date we are at \$157,638. This compares to \$169,502 for 2021. Investment accounts saw positive returns for the month. Merrill Lynch was up +5.03% for the month and Key was up +5.14%. Year-to-date Merrill Lynch has a return of -14.13% and Key is at -17.98%. Expenses were \$117,295 under budget year-to-date through November.

For 2023 we have received 23 pledges for a total of \$61,180.

There was discussion about the 2023 budget which a draft version will be sent to the Vestry and Clergy prior to the end of the year and voted on at our January meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Scala

Property –

The lights in the choir room and the upstairs guild house kitchen have been updated and replaced.

Vaughn Mauren brought in an organ specialist to assess the organ and what repairs it is in need of. The Vestry is waiting on the organ report to then move ahead with these repairs.

The vestry had a service come in to look at upgrading our alarm system and sound system. This company also can help with a live streaming service which is being discussed as a new opportunity.

Outreach – S. Debonis

Sharon updated the Vestry on various ongoing November and December outreach initiatives.

Old Business –The Guild Liaisons are looking to start a Google Docs for Sunday job assignments. This will make it easier for those involved to know who to look for if they have questions regarding the altar, flowers, coffee hour, etc.

The Vestry has spoken with a Marketing Intern from Siena College. She would be able to begin at the end of January and will help with updating our social media regularly with upcoming events as well as any special projects such as our Post Card mailings. This is an unpaid internship.

New Business – The Vestry is still discussing potential candidates for the 2 open seats that will need to be filled. The preliminary budget for 2023 was also discussed and will be voted on at the January meeting prior to the Annual Meeting.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by F. Hershey and seconded by M. Moran, then was approved unanimously by the vestry.

Compline was led by Mtr. Christina.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christie J. Gordon



Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Christina Hunter.....Priest-in-Charge
Mary E. Bon, M. Mus., CAGO, ARCM.....Organist & Choir Director
Laura Rulison.....Director of Christian Education
Ruth Manss..... Office Manager
James P. Shortall.....Sexton
Wayne Hill.....Sexton
Janice Chenot.....Office Volunteer
E. Constance Powell.....Historian & Archivist

Vestry

James Chenot.....Senior Warden
Deborah Spath.....Junior Warden
George Scala..... Treasurer
Christie Gordon.....Clerk

Peter Benson, Ashley Closson, Sharon DeBonis,
Samuel Hartt, Fred Hershey, Maria Holden,
Mark Lundberg, Malcom Moran, Jeff Russom

How to Contact Us

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Telephone: 518-434-3502

Fax: 518-462-4419

E-Mail:

Receptionist@stpeterschurchalbany.org

Website:

www.stpeterschurchalbany.org

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.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

107 State Street

Albany, New York 12207

