



# THE Cornerstone

## March 2023

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

### LENT

Beloved of God,

I'm going to confess something to you: I have trouble keeping my house clean. It's only in the last month that our family has settled into something like a rhythm of regular cleaning of the entire rectory. You all know the rectory is beautiful, but it's a lot of house. So, we've been turning on lights and checking corners and doing battle with epic dust bunnies (or dust dragons) on occasion. And the result of this work is a clean, well-ordered house that is a greater joy to rest and play in.

Lent is a lot like spring cleaning. It's a time when we — as a church family — get back on a personal cleaning schedule. We dare to look under the bed. Sometimes we need to clean out, and sometimes we need to declutter. The happy result of this season of cleaning and simplifying is — or is supposed to be — a tidy and bright heart that has a deeper sense of connection to the love of Jesus.

This is a way of thinking of repentance and forgiveness, which is the true heart of Lent. This time of cleaning house is always meant to lead to freedom, to be rid of wrongs where “the remembrance of them is grievous unto us” and “the burden of them is intolerable.” There is a deep joy in making things right with another person and with God.

Sometimes the language of sin and repentance can make Lent feel like a dark time. We can get tangled up in our scruples or imperfections. That's why it's so important to remember the whole point of this season: it's heading somewhere. Lent is literally a journey to — and through — the cross. Christians don't have to run away from darkness and death. We face it, with Jesus beside us, and then we move beyond it into light and life unending.

The church, from ancient times, has suggested two basic ways of traveling this Lenten journey. We're to leave some things behind that could slow us down, and we're to take up things that will give us strength along the way.

First, leaving things behind: our Prayer Book suggests “special acts of discipline and self denial” during Lent (page 17). This is a way of leaving behind the clutter of our lives. Fasting from some food — especially on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday — is a way to pray with our bodies, to allow moments of hunger to remind us that Jesus is the true bread that satisfies us. But abstaining is also a popular way of leaving clutter behind. Temporarily giving up sweets, meat, soda, alcohol, or a favorite TV show, website or podcast can declutter our bodies and minds enough to make our Lenten journey both more spare and more sweet. Another way of “giving things up” is to choose to give alms to the poor during Lent. For instance, if you're giving up a weekly dinner out, perhaps you could donate that money to a local food bank instead.

Second, taking things on the journey: our Prayer Book suggests observing Lent by prayer and by “reading and meditating on God's holy Word (page 265). There are many wonderful prayer practices and ways of reading the Bible that you could “try on” for Lent.

If you don't have a daily prayer practice, a great place to start is “Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families” in our Prayer Book (pages 136-140). These devotions take 5 minutes or less to pray, and there are options for Morning, Noon, Evening, and Bedtime. They're a great way to begin the day, pause during lunch, conclude the day at dinner, or end the day before going to sleep. (And, they're the way I began to pray using the Prayer Book when I joined the Episcopal

Church as a 22-year-old). Or, if you're interested in going deeper in our prayer tradition, I'm happy to walk you through saying full Morning or Evening Prayer at home. All through Fridays in Lent, I'll be saying Morning Prayer at 8:30 am in my office with anyone who'd like to join me for prayer and a cup of coffee.

Finally, Bible reading. There's no wrong way to do it! Read a Psalm a day. Read the Daily Office Scriptures. Pick a gospel or any book and read a chapter a day — or just a verse. Read a children's Bible story each night to your kids. The church has free devotionals available for anyone who would like them. The key is to read something and to listen. I trust you'll hear our Lord's words of love speak to you.

As we journey with our Lord this Lent, hear Jesus' invitation to you: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus,

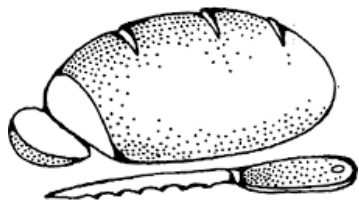
Mtr. Christina+



**Something's New**

**FRIDAY MORNING PRAYER WITH COFFEE**

Join Mtr. Christina at 8:30am Fridays in Lent, in saying Morning Prayer in her office. Coffee will be provided. This is a relaxed way to learn the ins and outs of saying Prayer Book offices at home or in a small group setting.



**Sunday Lenten Lunches with Mark's Gospel:**

Grab a cup of soup and journey with our Lord on Sundays for this Lenten Bible study of the Passion Narrative in Mark's Gospel. Mtr. Christina will lead this 5-part weekly study. A simple lunch of soup and bread will be available each week - signups to help with food will be in the Pumpelly Room. We'll gather after the 10:30am service in the meeting room on the second floor of the Guild House.

**Study Schedule:**

- Lent 1 (February 26): Background and Setting the Scene (Mark 14:1-11)
- Lent 2 (March 5th): The Last Supper (Mark 14:12-31)
- Lent 3 (March 12th): Gethsemane and Arrest (Mark 14:32-65)
- Lent 4 (March 19th): Denied and Condemned (Mark 14:66-15:20)
- Lent 5 (March 26th): Crucifixion, Death, and Burial (Mark 15:21-47)

# St. Peter's Happenings



## Daylight Savings

We "spring ahead" on Sunday, March 12th! Don't forget to set your clocks ahead the night before.

## Vestry Meeting

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

**The Last Supper:** On Sunday, March 26th during the 10:30am service the Sunday School will reenact the Last Supper. This will include the story of Jesus and his disciples, washing of our feet and taking part in the Most Holy Bread and Wine (juice). All are welcome to take part in this wonderful activity.



Is Back

**SOUP SAMPLER SUNDAY:** On Sunday, March 26th the Outreach Committee will be hosting Soup Sampler Sunday following the 10:30am service in the Parish Hall. Bowls of soup along with bread and butter will be available for purchase. Come join us and stay and eat or take some to-go. Please bring your favorite soup to share and your appetite as well! A sign-up sheet is located in the Pumpelly Room to let us know who will be bringing soup and what kind of soup you will be bringing. This year's Soup Sampler will benefit the Overflow Shelter here at St. Peter's Church.

## Want to Help Elect the Next Bishop?:

The Vestry of St. Peter's is accepting nominees for parish representatives to Diocesan Convention. This year, our representatives will be expected to attend two conventions. The first will be held virtually on Saturday, June 10th. The second convention - a special session to elect the next Bishop of Albany - will be held in mid to late September. We will accept names for nominees until 5pm on Friday, March 10th. Submit names by emailing Mtr. Christina at [priest@stpeterschurchalbany.org](mailto:priest@stpeterschurchalbany.org). The Vestry will select representatives from the pool of nominees at an upcoming meeting.

## Easter Lily Requests



Parishioners and friends wishing to place lilies on the altars at Easter to honor, show thanks, or remember loved ones are asked to complete the enclosed form and return it to the church office with your donation no later than Palm Sunday, April 2nd. The suggested donation is \$25.

**Pledge Cards:** Pledge cards for 2023 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 the St. Peter's website at: [www.stpeterschurchalbany.org](http://www.stpeterschurchalbany.org) by clicking on the "Get your pledge card" button. You may also call the church office and we would be more than happy to complete a card for you. Thank you to those that have promptly completed and returned their pledge card or pledged online.

Shrove Tuesday  
Pancake Supper



## Mark Your Calendars!

### HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE


- April 2nd: Palm Sunday**  
8:30AM ~ Holy Communion Service  
10:30AM ~ Choral Holy Communion Service
- April 6th: Maundy Thursday**  
7:30PM ~ Holy Communion w/ Stripping of the Altar
- April 7th: Good Friday**  
12:00PM ~ Liturgy w/ Comm. from reserved sacrament  
1:15PM ~ **PASSION AND LAMENT** - a program of musical selections interwoven with The Seven Last Words of Christ. The music will include works of J.S. Bach, Handel, Greene, Casals, and Walton. All are welcome to attend as your schedule allows, free of charge.
- April 8th: Holy Saturday**  
8:30AM ~ Liturgy  
11:00AM ~ Egg Hunt at the Rectory
- April 9th: Easter Sunday**  
8:30AM ~ Choral Holy Communion Service  
10:30AM ~ Choral Holy Communion Service

# March 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			1
<b>5 Second Sunday in Lent</b> 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 11:45am - Lenten Lunch with Mark's Gospel	6	7	8
<b>12 Third Sunday in Lent</b> Spring ahead 1 hour! 🕒 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 11:45am - Lenten Lunch with Mark's Gospel	13	14  5:15pm - Vestry Meeting	15
<b>19 Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Holy Communion 11:45am - Lenten Lunch with Mark's Gospel	<b>20 Saint Joseph</b>	21	22
<b>26 Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> 8:30am - Holy Communion 10:30am - Morning Prayer 11:45am - Lenten Lunch with Mark's Gospel 11:45am - Soup Sampler in the Parish Hall	27	28	29



Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	2 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	3 8:30 - Friday Morning w/ Morning Prayer & Coffee	4
	9 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	10 8:30 - Friday Morning w/ Morning Prayer & Coffee	11 11:00am - Angels in Training
	16 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	17 <b>Saint Patrick's Day</b> 8:30 - Friday Morning w/ Morning Prayer & Coffee 	18 11:00am - Angels in Training
	23 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	24 8:30 - Friday Morning w/ Morning Prayer & Coffee	25 <b>The Annunciation of            our Lord Jesus Christ</b>
	30 5:30pm - Full Choir Rehearsal	31 8:30 - Friday Morning w/ Morning Prayer & Coffee	

## Archives

### Communion Table

The Communion Table for the Second Edifice of St. Peter's Church was of a smooth and dignified design, constructed of richly veined mahogany by John Meads. It was covered by a dark Lake Champlain marble top donated by John W. Yates. On September 13th 1823 a thank you note was sent by the Vestry members: Gourlay, Trowbridge and Gott, to John Meads for his valuable gift.

In the Sanctuary the Communion Table was replaced with the more familiar Memorial Altar and Reredos in 1885 in honor of Elizabeth McClintock Pruyn, wife of vestryman Charles Pruyn. She died in 1884.

The Communion Table was moved this February from the Old Vestry Room where it was being stored into the Sunday School room to be used as a Sunday School Communion Table.

## St. Francis Mission & Outreach

### St. Francis Mission Soup Kitchen Saturday, March 11th & 18th ~ 11:00am to 1:00pm

On the 2nd & 3rd Saturday of every month, Laura our Director of Christian Education and Chairperson of Outreach, along with other volunteers, all get together to help serve the families of our community in the South End of Albany. You are welcome to come and witness this amazing outreach program anytime you can, we are there from 9am-1pm. Thank You to all that come to volunteer. For information or to let Laura know you are coming please call her at: (518) 368-4284.

## Other Happenings ● Coming Soon



The Men's Retreat is almost here!

With keynote speaker, Kenny Thacker

Do I have enough? The Gospel answers with a glorious YES!

To Register: <https://ctkcenter.org/events/2-uncategorised/275-2023-men-s-retreat-registration-page>

## Beaver Cross Spring Break Camp:

Monday April 10<sup>th</sup> - Friday April 14<sup>th</sup> 2023



What better way to spend time off from school than at Beaver Cross Camp! Spring Break Camp, structured similar to our Day Camp program, brings the excitement of summer to the school year. Campers will have the opportunity to do all of their favorite camp activities including: archery, sports, ropes, crafts, field games, campfire and more! The cost of the program is \$150. Registration includes all programmed activities, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Early drop off with breakfast is an additional extra.

More information at: [www.beavercrossministries.org/spring-break-camp](http://www.beavercrossministries.org/spring-break-camp)

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

**January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**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, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

The vestry minutes from the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved on a motion by D. Spath, seconded by M. Moran, then unanimously approved by the vestry.

**Priest in Charge Report – Mtr. Christina**

**Rector stuff:**

Baptized Demetra Zehner and Morris Bonds on Jan. 8.

Did two home visits in the last month.

Celebrated noon Eucharist for Epiphany on Jan. 6.

Will officiate the graveside burial of Harry Guest tomorrow morning. Harry died on Saturday.

Completed my project to call and pray for all parishioners during Advent. I made some good connections. Also kept a log of what numbers no longer work so we can do some directory updating work in the future.

Was greatly blessed by the glorious Advent and Christmas worship and traditions here at St. Peter's. Many thanks to everyone who worked so hard to celebrate the birth of our Lord.

Coordinated with Fr. Paul so he could begin his teaching series. The four-part Bible study of the Canticles began on Sunday and will be held both in-person and on Zoom.

Continued gradual "welcoming" work in the church until we can undertake the larger project. Maria and Jim are refinishing a sign in the vestibule. Jim printed some additional signage in time for Christmas. We also have flyers in the vestibule about upcoming events.

Am doing thinking ahead regarding a Christian ed offering for Lent and some other ideas for service...more to come on that.

**Interim stuff:**

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.

Big Picture Update: During Epiphany, we'll be doing ongoing reflection through the sermons (highlighting themes of God surprising us by revealing himself and inviting our response to love God and neighbors). As part of the theme of surprises, I'll be unveiling a surprise on the feast of St. Peter's Confession (Epiphany 3) and on Epiphany 4 during the annual meeting Sunday.

Administrative Update: I've gathered feedback from all of you and have assigned tentative members of each task force in the areas of finance, property, personnel and bylaws. Also, a tentative date for meeting is Wednesday, January 25 for a work session. By next Wednesday the 18th, I'll email each team background information on their topic and my suggestions for priorities in each area based on my observations/information gathering during the past six months. Greatly looking forward to doing this work with all of you!

Submitted by The Rev. Christina Hunter

**Sr. Warden's Report** –J. Chenot

Happy New Year Everyone! I want to start my report by expressing how wonderful our December and Advent season was. Just to recap, the Messiah performance, Lessons and Carols, the Hanging of the Greens, followed by two spectacular Christmas Eve services. Mary Bon, our interim Choir director and choir performed all our traditional Christmas music pieces flawlessly and sure Neil was very proud of all of us.

December also brings an awful lot of additional work into our office. I want to thank Ruth and Janice for the extra work and time needed to push all the extra information regarding the Advent season. We also have many others during this season that play a large part making sure our services move along seamlessly. That said, I would like to thank the Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Ushers and LEMs who do such an incredible job each week making sure everything is ready for each service.

Our Homeless outreach shelter, continuing to bring in gentleman in coordination with the Capital City Mission each evening in our Parish Hall. Many thanks to those who have had some part donating food items as well as monetary gifts. Please know these gentlemen are very appreciative for all our hospitality and generosity we have given. Finally, many thanks to Wayne and Pat for all their work and help during the Advent season keeping the church in order and clean for all the extra events.

To end, I would not be able to report any of this wonderful news if it wasn't under guidance and leadership from Mother Christina. She has been able to embrace many of our traditions knowing how much they mean to so many of us here at St. Peter's. What cannot be unmentioned, Mother Christina's sermons have been wonderful and her leadership and pastoral care has been well received. Thank you for all you have done for all as we continue move forward.

Looking forward, we have the annual meeting coming up on January 29<sup>th</sup>. I hope everyone will be able to attend.

**Sunday Attendance** – The Average Sunday Attendance is 93.9.

**Finance** – G. Scala - Treasurer's Report

George reviewed the Treasurer's Report for December. Offerings for the month of December were \$53,093 and Year-to-date we finished at \$210,731. This compares to \$202,753 for 2021. Investment accounts again experienced negative returns for the month. Merrill Lynch was down -4.22% for the month and Key was down -4.60%. Year-to-date Merrill Lynch had a return of -18.35% and Key had a return of -22.48%. Expenses were \$80,814 under budget for the year 2022.

For 2023 we have received 25 pledges for a total of \$81,300.

The 2023 Budget was discussed and approved unanimously. There was discussion about continuing to provide financial information to the congregation through all formats so there is a better understanding of the need to pledge and the shortfalls that exist between total offerings and operating expenses.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Scala

**Property** – New gutters at the rectory have been installed. The next project is working on repairs needed in the basement of the rectory.

**Outreach** – None

**Old Business** – The vestry is still working on nominations for the 2 open vestry seats. The nominations will be finalized and printed in the leaflet the week prior to elections.

The 2023 budget was approved on a motion by M. Holden, seconded by M. Lundberg, then unanimously approved by the vestry.

**New Business** – None.

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by M. Moran and seconded by A. Closson, 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

Pete 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.

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E-Mail:

[Receptionist@stpeterschurchalbany.org](mailto:Receptionist@stpeterschurchalbany.org)

Website:

[www.stpeterschurchalbany.org](http://www.stpeterschurchalbany.org)

## *Services*

### **Sunday**

Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

(1st & 3rd Sunday)

Morning Prayer 10:30 a.m.

(2nd & 4th Sunday)

Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

## **ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**107 State St.**

**Albany, New York 12207**

