



# THE GEORGIAN REPORT



St. George's Church Schenectady, NY

June 2011

## ST. GEORGE'S DAY

The Feast of St. George the Martyr on Sunday, May 22nd included a Solemn High Mass at 9AM followed by a Procession around the Stockade with St. Andrew's Society Banners, the Schenectady Pipe Band, and enthusiastic marching parishioners.



# SALUTING ST. GEORGE'S VOLUNTEERS

Videotaping St. George's masses for local television stations was the brainchild of the late Charles B. King, lifelong parishioner and longtime WRGB production manager. Although Charlie did not see his dream completed, the project was far enough along for another production guru, Johnnie Angus, to oversee the installation of the audio/video equipment in 2001.

Fast forward to 2010....Fr. Paul's vision of taping mass every Sunday + special occasions (i.e., Christmas, Easter, St. George's Day) recruited Rick Forshaw and Mike Thiessen to assist Johnnie. Thus, our dynamic A/V Team was born....flourished....expanded into taping wedding ceremonies for the brides and grooms of St. George's, onsite concerts, and more.

**JOHNNIE ANGUS** (director.) Our original "one man band" taping select masses, Johnnie is still the "go to" guy who fiddles with dials, knobs and wires. His electronics/communications experience goes back to 1955 when he joined the army and saw the world; worked in microwave transmission; earned degrees from HVCC and Empire State College; and was one of the pioneers of E-TV at SUNY. Now supervising our videotaping, Johnnie once held a more prestigious job....as the "red telephone man" between the White House (during President Eisenhower's administration) and Heidelberg, Germany.

**RICK FORSHAW** (video.) From a smattering of video production in high school, to doing home videos of his daughter Tara growing up....Rick has successfully transitioned into taking over the video controls at St. George's. As he vows not to stay too long on one camera, he has learned to "super," "wipe" and "dissolve" effortlessly. After months on a learning curve, he finally received his hard-earned A+ from those he asked to critique his work. "I enjoy it," he said of this ministry, but admits that wife Karen would like him to be able to sit with her in church "...at least once a month."

**MIKE THIESSEN** (audio.) A "techie" who makes a switcher (among other things) work, Mike is constantly trying out different techniques, balancing his audio with Rick's video. Because Mike has a condition known as "overhearing," his audio is "spot on" (and nothing whispered is safe with him nearby.) From getting his hands slapped by Rick to being scolded by Johnnie, he's the "fall guy" if something goes wrong! He did lighting and audio (15 years) for the annual onstage performances at his grandmother's ballet camp. Mike also played the back end of a horse in one production, but that's yet another talent.....

St. George's is seen on PBS (Channels 18 and 16) on a regular weekly schedule....providing spiritual service to shut-ins (housebound and infirm) and those who do not regularly attend church but remain close to God. *This is not a closed ministry*. Expert training will be provided to volunteers interested in learning television production with a "state of the art" a/v system.



# OUTREACH



← VERSUS →



Our ongoing outreach collection of food donations to SICM's food pantry, used cell phone to the YWCA, and retired eyeglasses to the Lions continue uninterrupted throughout the summer. This summer, however, those two historic partners - peanut butter and jelly - will be squaring off in a fun challenge to further benefit SICM's food pantry. You are encouraged in making your donation to the SICM food pantry basket to include either some peanut butter or jelly and, before the two are reunited once again in gastro-nomic harmony after Labor Day weekend, both the number of containers received and their weight will be shared.

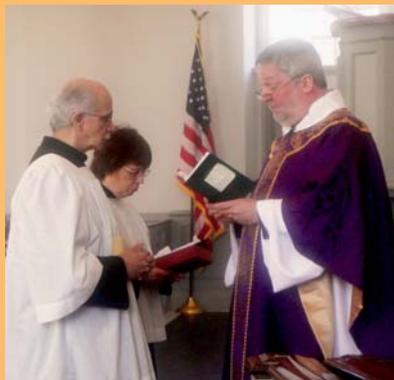
St. George's will again be involved with the SICM Summer Lunch Program. We have been assigned the week of August 15th-19th at Wallingford Park in Schenectady. Volunteers (1-2 per day) for the 5-day period are needed from the congregation.

The Lighthouse meal service continues to be provided one weekend a month by the teams of Jim Wingate/Amy Machold and Alice Pumbo/Judy DeLong. Additional teams are welcome in rotation for this easy at-present once-a-month ministry.

Looking ahead to Fall 2011....Things of My Very Own backpacks, the annual coat drive, the Salvation Army bell-ringer kick-off breakfast, the prison ministry of Christmas cards and postage stamps, and the yearly Bethesda House pot luck. See Outreach Chairperson, Alice Pumbo, for information about any or all of these important community projects or ideas that you may have to fulfill St. George's mission to be a blessing to the community.

*alice pumbo/lynn paska*

## FAREWELL BLESSING



*Godspeed....  
Rosie & Ralph Fusco*



Miss Lisa's Music Studio is hosting a 5-week music camp for young children and their caregivers. Come join in for lots of music: song & dance, hands-on instruments, storytime & cuddling time. It's a great for family bonding time.

Contact: Lisa Russo, 377-7733.

[vocalisea@verizon.net](mailto:vocalisea@verizon.net) <https://>

[www.facebook.com/pages/Miss-Lisas-Music-Studio](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Miss-Lisas-Music-Studio) 192698910767708

## ***THE RECTOR WRITES ....***

The Diocese of Albany under Bishop Love is heavily focused right now on a back to basics campaign, with particular emphasis on the Bible. Of course we need to be familiar with our scriptures, of course we need to be at ease with the Bible, but there is also a lot more than scripture that makes up our total religious life as Christian Episcopalians. I am frequently appalled at how little many people know about their faith. Many people want a simple faith, just the Bible and Jesus, yet we know that the development of our faith is far from simple just in historical terms. We need to delve deeper into the history, the doctrine and the thorny issues that have clarified the faith we own today.



A recent survey of Americans' knowledge of religion found that atheists, agnostics, Jews and Mormons outperformed Protestants and Roman Catholics in answering questions about major religions, while many respondents could not correctly give the most basic tenets of their own faiths. Forty-five percent of Roman Catholics who participated in the study didn't know that, according to church teaching, the bread and wine used in the Mass is not just a symbol, but becomes the body and blood of Christ. More than half of Protestants could not identify Martin Luther as the person who inspired the Protestant Reformation. And about four in ten Jews did not know that Maimonides, one of the greatest rabbis and intellectuals in history, was Jewish. I wonder how many Episcopalians could recount their Church's history to a stranger.

The United States is one of the most religious places on earth, but it is also a nation of shocking religious illiteracy. Only 10 percent of American teenagers can name all five major world religions and 15 percent cannot name any. Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe that the Bible holds the answers to all or most of life's basic questions, yet only half of American adults can name even one of the four gospels and most Americans cannot name the first book of the Bible.

Despite this lack of basic knowledge, politicians and pundits continue to root public policy arguments in religious rhetoric whose meanings are missed—or misinterpreted—by the vast majority of Americans.

One-third of Americans falsely believe, according to other polls, that evangelist Billy Graham delivered the Sermon on the Mount. And more than half of Americans do not recognize that Judaism is a religion. Religious knowledge surveys are good at serving up black humor too. An early poll showed one in 10 Americans believe Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. Another one in five actually believes that Sodom and Gomorrah was a married couple. The implications of this religious ignorance are huge for the U.S., where more than nine out of 10 believe in God and 85 per cent profess some form of Christian faith.

What happened to the Christian emphasis on intellect? With notable exceptions, a majority of American Christians don't bother to look up what Jesus actually said in the New Testament, or how various Christian denominations have handled important ethical questions.

The great Evangelical English churchman John Stott in his book "Your mind matters" rightly and quickly dismantles the claims of anti-intellectualism, concerning the role of the mind in the believer's life. He does this with regard to our involvement with the Scriptures. We need a balance between orthodoxy (The word orthodox, from Greek orthos + doxa, is generally used to mean the adherence to accepted norms, more specifically to creeds, especially in religion) and orthopraxy (the belief that right action is as important as religious faith) to combat the rise of absent mindedness with regard to the substitution of experience,

traditions, and society for sound biblical doctrine. “Mindless Christianity”, Stott identifies as a prime example of the type of anti-intellectualism that “regards theology with distaste and distrust.” As a remedy to this predominant worldview, John Stott desires to demonstrate that true Christian intellectualism is not anti- or hyper-intellectualism but instead resembles “a biblical balance” and avoids “fanatical extremes.” He states, “I am not pleading for a dry, humorless, academic Christianity, but for a warm devotion set on fire by truth.”

Religious experience alone cannot function as the supreme standard of truth. We need a developing biblical theology of the Christian mind from creation, revelation, redemption, and judgment. Revelation in nature is visualized and in Scripture it is verbalized. Both types of revelation call for the discernment of the human mind. Moreover, Christianity needs the mind to play a major part in its livelihood due to the fact that it is a “revealed religion.” In the Old Testament we see how the “Wisdom and Poetry” literature teaches that only fools hate knowledge. Likewise, in the New Testament much of Paul’s letters are packed to the brim with repetitive terminology such as knowledge, wisdom, discernment, and understanding.

It is my firm belief that every Christian’s walk must engage with the role of the intellect: Christian worship, Christian faith, Christian holiness, Christian guidance, and Christian evangelism, and Christian ministry. God never intends knowledge to be an end in itself but always to be a means to some other end. To which I would say, the glory of God, the salvation of the lost, and the holiness of his people. All knowledge of God’s self-revelation ought to serve as a means to the eternal worship of our great and loving God.

Let us not be narrow in our “back to basics” campaign here in this Diocese, but I would ask the question, what about the whole gamut of religious experience, all those areas of faith that require our knowledge to be up to date, active and thorough. Europeans, once educated and even saturated in religious studies, are now not believers, except for a small minority. In contrast, many Americans still profess a faith they know little or nothing about. Religious fervor, uncontained by any structure of religious knowledge, can be dangerously unstable.

Ignoring or trivializing our beliefs is not an option, in a world where ocean and wilderness can no longer isolate and insulate us. We must learn to understand them if we are to deal effectively with twenty-first century challenges.

Your friend and priest,

*Fr Paul F Blanch*

## EASTER EGG HUNT

St. George’s Annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on Mother’s Day, Sunday, May 8th between the 9 and 11:15AM masses. Six very enthusiastic children hunted for eggs that were pre-hidden in the Memorial Gardens.

Congratulations to Joseph Tonneau who found the precious Alleluia egg. Other children who participated in the hunt were Chloe Tonneau, Colton Jaquith, and Ava, Trevor and Liam Weakley.



# HOLY WEEK 2011



From the solemnity of Ash Wednesday through the exuberance of Easter Day, St. George's again approached the Easter season with faith and splendor. Our Lenten study series explored other faiths from Jewish through Buddhism, an experience that proved there are more similarities than differences in our teachings.

Easter week always begins with a joyous Palm Sunday procession, this year with ringing bells and crosses made of palms and a homily by visiting Bishop Gordon Mursell. Hearing and participating in the passion reminds us that Jesus' disciples and detractors were as human as we are. Faure's beautiful "Elegie," played by Tina Danley on cello and Andrew Krystopolski on piano, set a more somber tone for the week to come, when Bishop Mursell's homilies explored the themes of complete trust in God and selfless, unconditional love toward others.

Our participation on Maundy Thursday forced us to relive the embarrassment of the disciples by having Fr. Paul wash our feet. Mirroring the events of the Last Supper, Bishop Mursell's sermon combined the importance of sharing meals, simple conversations, and loving service. We must let God wash the dark, embarrassing, painful parts of ourselves so we can be healed. During this intense service we heard Sarah Becker on violin play Charles Callahan's exquisite "Communion," and then watch as the altar was

stripped. Many Georgians kept watch as Peter could not, until on Good Friday we solemnly observed Jesus' death. Kali Rose Moran's beautiful presentation of Faure's "Pie Jesu" evoked the grief of Jesus' family and disciples.

At the Easter Vigil on Saturday, the holy fire was re-kindled and bells again were rung as we celebrated the Risen Christ. Adding to our sense of joy, Kevin Grace was received into the church, and after mass we had a big party organized by Chris Henry and his crew. However, Easter Sunday was still the main event, with flowers and brass and the children's choir joining the adult choir. Two of the children received surplices during the service, to their great satisfaction. As Bishop Mursell reminded us, Easter is a shared experience that is renewed weekly during the mass. This is our faith, that the best is yet to come.

*joan pearson/wendy madelone*



## - VISITATIONS -



Recently, Fr. Paul wrote about the dynamics of change. Reflecting upon Pastoral Care in that context, I was reminded that originally we had four 2-person teams of visitors and a freezer full of casseroles. Time saw the passing of those we visited and also members of the Pastoral Care teams. Casseroles went to waste as more of our housebound moved to facilities where food was provided. Our card ministry started small but expanded greatly. Fr. Paul has been very active in providing and extending Pastoral Care, reducing the need for our committee to carry the full load.

What next for Pastoral Care? What are we not doing that we could/should be doing? How can we expand our commitment to this population?

After meeting with Fr. Paul, there is a clearer image of our committee's future. But, first, what will not change. We will continue visitations to private homes, nursing/rehab facilities, and hospitals as need requires. Communion will be administered on a regular basis. Cards will be sent for significant events to our parish family members. We will continue to rely on parishioners to alert us to those needing our attention and support.

As for the future, three areas were identified as focal points. First, getting the youth of St. George's involved. These could be at private homes or nursing facilities and team our youth with committee members. We have all seen the special bond that can develop between those at both ends of the age spectrum. A second area involves fulfilling a need for ministering to those in nursing homes, particularly at the Scotia Mansion and the Dutch Manor. Fr. Paul started visiting only those long-time Georgians who were residents and soon discovered a real desire for visits and masses. Fr. Paul currently conducts masses at both places with 16-20 in attendance at each mass. Pastoral Care could assist by making regular visits to these residences and also fill in for him when he is away by giving Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament.

While we have not worked out all the details, we have a general blueprint for Pastoral Care as we try to discover God's plan for us here at St. George's and in the great community of Schenectady.

*jim wingate*



# LENTEN STUDIES

This year's Lenten study took us out of the comfort of St. George's as we explored faiths other than Christianity, discovering more similarities than differences.. We visited the Congregation Gates of Heaven Synagogue on Ashmore Avenue in Schenectady on March 16th; an Islamic Mosque on Lansing Road in Schenectady on March 23rd; the Hindu Temple on Albany-Shaker Road in Loudonville on March 30th; the Baha'i Faith on Jay Street in Schenectady on April 6th; and the Buddhist Centre on Washington Avenue in Rensselaer on April 13th. Our various hosts were gracious, and we learned so much about how others worship.



*Congregation Gates of Heaven Synagogue*



*Islamic Mosque*



*Baha'i Faith*



*Hindu Temple*



*Buddhist Centre*

St. George's realized \$652.57 from our Sunday School children's "creamer cartons" collection during Lent. A big *thank you* to generous Georgians for supporting this project with your loose change.

# WHITE DRAGON SALE



This year, St. George's Annual White Dragon Rummage Sale was expanded to two days, Friday (March 25th) from Noon-7PM and again on Saturday (March 26th) from 9AM to 3PM. There were volunteers galore to "man" the inventory....cooks in the kitchen to feed the hungry volunteers....and it ended successfully with a net income of \$2713.37 after expenses. A big, big **THANK YOU** to Rosemary Pannone, Rick Forshaw, Barbara Wengrovius, Alice Pumbo, and the many, many Georgians who worked tirelessly throughout the week sorting and pricing merchandise, and acting as "sales persons" during the actual sale.



## IN MEMORIAM

*L. Clark Willsey  
1920 - 2011  
Rest in Peace  
You are missed  
by your church family*

**Due to an influx of church news and pictures, the popular EPISCOPAL EDUCATION column will not appear in June. We are giving Senior Warden, David Kennison, this issue off. Part IV, Episcopal Growth in the 1800s and 1900s will be published in it entirety in September.**

## - SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -



Relationships can be rocky in a church or in a diocese or across the Anglican Communion. I used to think that people of God would always worship together and work together for the common good. Isn't this what they did in the Acts of the Apostles?

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.  
All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.*

So it bothers me to hear of rancor in any of our relationships. During the interregnum, we openly discussed how to strengthen our diocesan rapport. After all, we are an Episcopal church, not a Congregational one. We worship the same God; as Christians, we profess Jesus as the way to God; we pray for acceptance, love and forgiveness amongst all people; at St George's we pray for our bishop, clergy and people, by name at every service, three times a day.

I often read about meetings of the primates of the Communion such as the Lambeth Conference, where bishops from various global provinces publicly refuse to attend because our Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori will be present. They will not sit down with her in discussion; they will not break bread with her nor approach the communion rail to receive the Body and Blood of Christ if she is present, all because they do not agree with certain policies and practices in the US Episcopal Church. If this is Christian leadership, I want no part of it.

It would be unrealistic to think that we should or could see eye-to-eye on all things. This doesn't happen in any family. Yet it sometimes seems that this is exactly what we require of each other – agreement and obedience, “my way or the highway”. Bishop Love often preaches about our sinful and broken world and how the devil is at work in our midst. I can't speak to that, but it seems that we sometimes focus on and magnify that which divides us and not on those things that unite us as the Body of Christ. Jesus would be weeping.

The uniqueness and graciousness of Anglicanism is that it makes room for all at the table. Anglican diversity of thought and opinion expands our vision and ultimately strengthens us. When we all think alike, we have lost the strength that the tension of diversity provides.

St George's is a wonderful congregation of sentient, intelligent people who are neither liberal nor conservative, but moderate in their thinking. In our rector search, we emphasized Richard Hooker's posit that Anglican church polity is a three-legged stool of scripture, tradition and reason. That is what the Church and the Anglican Communion has always been. We must not lose Hooker's precious gift.

Hooker's *Via Media* should be a place where we all come together, but in some circles it has unfortunately come to be seen as a place where enemies dwell. The true enemy lies in not caring about each other as Christian brothers and sisters and in not sitting down and talking to one another with open hearts and open minds. And that wide gulf is where Satan lives.

We are all brothers and sisters in Christ. And as a brother, I love you all.

*With great affection, david*

## - JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT -



### Building/Grounds Developments - June 2011

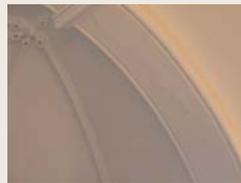
#### Church

The roof has been repaired from the ice and snow damage.

The attic boards have been treated for mold and mildew, and new insulation is back in place.

Painting of the arch and column is completed. The plaster over the altar will be done also.

(Before)



#### Cranmer House

The 2nd floor ceiling required painting due to ice and water damage. The roof and flashing have been repaired.

#### St. George's House

1st and 2nd floors are just about complete. Kitchen cabinets are installed. Repaired and refinishing floors are completed. The baseboard trim needs to be installed for the 1st floor.



Albany Fire Extinguisher completed an onsite inspection for 21 extinguishers on May 2nd. Eight extinguishers are too high. The extinguisher handles should be no more than 5-feet from the floor. Two extinguishers must be a minimum of 4-inches off the floor.

The sidewalk and patio outside the Shaw Lounge was repaired before Palm Sunday.

The new Church sign was installed. (Thanks to the Todt family.)

Four new lights on the brick wall were installed. Two more lights to install. (Thanks to Chris Henry & the Forshaws.)

Work has been started on the Chi Rho Room. Members of the group are helping.

*rick forshaw*



**St. George's Episcopal Church**  
 30 North Ferry Street  
 Schenectady, New York 12305  
 The Reverend Paul F. Blanch, Rector  
 Telephone (518) 374-3163  
[www.stgeorgesschenectady.org](http://www.stgeorgesschenectady.org)

NONPROFIT  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 ALBANY, NY  
 PERMIT NO. 781

*The Georgian Report*

**Editor:** Lynn Paska  
**Layout:** Bob Paska

**Contributors:**

- Maggie Blanch
- Fr. Paul Blanch
- Rick Forshaw
- Margaret Gruener
- David Kennison
- Dottie Kennison
- Wendy Madelone
- Joan Pearson
- Alice Polumbo
- James Wingate

*The Vestry*

- Richard Forshaw, Jr. Warden
- Christopher Henry
- Joyce Kapusta, Clerk
- David Kennison, Sr. Warden
- Daniel Machold
- Rosemary Pannone
- Marilyn (Lynn) Paska
- Jonathan Pearson IV
- Alice Polumbo
- Michael Thiessen
- Barbara Wengrovius

*Office Staff*

- Donna Vrooman  
 Administrative Assistant
- Andrew Krystopolski  
 Music Director
- Gerald Cooper  
 Sexton
- Robert Paska  
 Financial Secretary
- Jonathan Pearson IV  
 Treasurer

Current Resident or

**EDITORIAL**

We have a wonderful congregation who *prays* together and *plays* together! That's not to say that 100% of our parishioners are 100% satisfied with everything we do, but...we come close.

Our liturgy is beautiful. We use Rite I at the 9AM, and even some who advocated for a shorter Rite II Mass at 11:15AM are being "converted" to the more formal service.

Our activities run the gamut from the annual White Dragon Sale (an event that brings the community en masse to our Great Hall) to St. George's Day (a celebration to our patron saint that ends with a march around the Stockade Area) to fabulous pot lucks on Easter, Christmas, Start-Up Sunday, at the Annual Parish Meeting and – frankly – any time there's a reason to "meet 'n eat."

Our parishioners sign up to collate *The Georgian Report*; "man" the church on summer open hours; work on the altar guild, and as acolytes, greeters and counters; as members of the volunteer choir; and so much more. Our parishioners help keep our grounds appealing to the eye, toil laboriously representing St. George's during Stockade events and with community outreach projects.

Our rector is an "idea" man who visits our shut-ins, hosts movie nights with our teens, blesses our animals, and schedules interesting trips – from a Sunday afternoon at Auriesville to a 5-day trip to Rome, from a Lenten series that took us to different religious sites to providing for and working at an annual Sunday meal at Bethesda House.

We have something for every ONE, every AGE, every INTEREST. Our diversity is what makes us so unique....so appealing....so *St. George's*.