

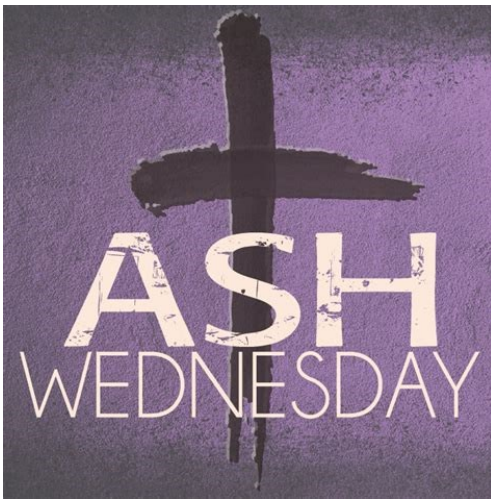


The Dragon's Tale

FEBRUARY 2021

"St. George's is a community of disciples joyfully reaching out in love to nurture, teach, and heal in Jesus' name"

***St. George's Episcopal Church
912 Route 146 · Clifton Park, NY 12065
(518) 371 - 6351 www.stgeorgescp.org***



Lent Begins

Ash Wednesday Services

**Wednesday, February 17th 12:15PM
and 6:30PM**

Morning Prayer (Virtual) 6:45AM

There will not be a Healing Service on Ash Wednesday. There will be an Ash Wednesday service with Holy Eucharist at 12:15PM. There will be another service 6:30PM. Please plan to join us for this solemn and beautiful way to start a holy Lent.

Link for Morning Prayer on Zoom can be found on page 6.



From the Rector

This time last year, who could have anticipated that everything could have changed so dramatically and seriously? Conditions led to the state mandating that no “in-person” worship was allowed for the latter half of Lent, including Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. We would not worship together for Easter or Pentecost nor be allowed to open for “in-person” worship until June 13th. Despite all of these setbacks, we have been blessed to offer, at least weekly, opportunities to worship our Lord during this challenging period. To make this happen, we have had to make numerous adjustments as we continue to learn new things along the way.



I am a firm believer that God provides, prepares, and equips us for what we are called to do. God is always at least one step ahead of where we need to be. For example, when we began preparations in 2016 to add the projectors and replaced the nave’s sound system, we could not have anticipated how those improvements would help us get through this pandemic. We had to remove all Bibles, prayer books, and hymnals from the pews to re-open for in-person worship with proper social distancing. Because we were already using and had become proficient at using PowerPoint for the contemporary service, we quickly converted all of our services to electronic projection. This has allowed us to offer in-person worship without passing or sharing materials such as bulletins and books in the church. Who could have figured this would become so important, much less so quickly? The flat-panel TVs we had transitioned to in several of our school classrooms and our familiarity with their use allowed us to pivot from in-person classes and meetings to virtual and hybrid offerings, with as many as 20 people attending some of our offerings. An average of 30 people now follow our daily gospel reflections. We are coming up on our 52nd virtual ‘Zoom’ morning prayer service. This service has a loyal attendance of about a dozen parishioners who log in for this interactive weekly service. We plan to continue as long as people attending this service do not feel comfortable returning to the public forum for worship.

As we approach Lent 2021, amid our first anniversary of adapting to this pandemic, this seems like an excellent opportunity to reflect on some important considerations to keep in mind during this special time of preparation. The practice of recognizing the 40 days of Lent dates back to around the time of the fourth century and the Council of

Rector, cont’d

Nicaea (AD 325). The 40 days likely evolved based on the Biblical precedent of fasts by people such as Moses, Elijah, and even the Lord himself. The 40 days are spread over six weeks less the Sundays, which we observe as Feast Days. In the early church, the 40 days of fast were strictly observed with only one meal a day, restricting or forbidding foods such as flesh-meats, fish, and even in some places, eggs. By the 9th century, these practices began to be considerably relaxed.

As a visual reminder of the Lenten season, we strip much of St. George’s ornamentation and change our vestments and colors for worship to the traditional purple. We will again place the freestanding wooden cross in the nave and invite people to thumb-tack their prayer requests to the cross to be burned in the new fire of Easter. If it is more comfortable for you, please feel free to come by the office when the building is lightly occupied to place your prayer request or regret on the cross. Lent is generally observed as a time of penance that becomes especially meaningful when observed by intentional acts of sacrifice that include committing more time to things like prayer and study of the Bible, accompanied by giving to the poor and those in need. One of the things that the pandemic has made unique about this year is how it has changed many of our routines, traditions, and customs, including attending church and participating in community worship. I know for some having to make an intentional decision about attending church in a public gathering for worship has been spiritually renewing. Having to decide if worship was all that important has served as a wake-up call to the priority of worship in the lives of some. For others, the challenges of the pandemic have forced them to find other ways to nurture their relationship with God. This difference doesn’t change what we as Christians are called to do. Jo Anne Robbin’s article introduces the new sign that she helped to have installed in the Narthex that reads, “You are now entering the mission field,” instructing us to “go and spread the Gospel.” In a recent TR, Randy Demler observed that the required electric exit sign also sits inside that arch, now leaving us with something profound to consider every time we go to St. George’s. Randy suggested we ask ourselves, are we being prepared, equipped, and willing to enter the mission field, or are we merely exiting? Our recent classes on the Book of Revelation have shown how God has given us free will to choose in all these matters. The ultimate choice is to put God first and

Cont’d on p.3

Rector, cont'd from p.2

follow our Lord, Jesus Christ, the lamb that was slain for our sins. As you go through the days from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, use this time to reflect on where you are in your relationship with God. If there are areas of your life that need to be put right with God and his church, use this time to allow God to help you make that happen. There is nothing in this life that can compare with the love, joy, and peace you will find when you do these things. May this season of Lent and celebration of the resurrection of our Lord be a time of blessing and renewal.

In God's peace,
Fr. Tom

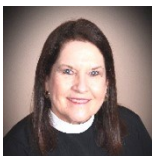
Mother's Musings

It is often said that people don't like change. That is sometimes true but what is always true is that people don't like loss. Anytime there is change there is a bit of uncertainty. Even if the change is exciting and something anticipated like graduation, marriage, a move of home or job, having a baby, change still brings a bit of uncertainty.

Our diocese is beginning a period of transition. Bishop Love has served as diocesan bishop for the past 14 years. Some have loved him (pun intended) while others are happy that he has stepped down. Any way that you see it, the diocese is beginning a period of uncertainty and change.

The way that we can navigate this transition with the best possible outcome is with fervent prayer. Without a bishop, the standing committee of the diocese serves as the ecclesiastical authority. Decisions that would have been made by Bishop Love will now be made by the standing committee. I must say that the standing committee has made good preparation for this transition as was recently explained in the communique to the diocese that was sent out on January 22, 2021. If you would like to receive these communiques and are not already on the mailing list you may sign up for them at <https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/>.

The standing committee offered a prayer to be used in parishes throughout the diocese during this time of transition. In addition to including this prayer in our regular worship services, I am asking that all parishioners pray this prayer in their daily prayers.



Musings, cont'd

If we unify in prayer, I know that God will lead us to the person that he would like to serve this diocese in the years ahead.

Prayer in a Time of Transition

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for this, your diocese of Albany. Inspire and sustain us in this time of transition. Incline our hearts to do your will, and so direct us in your ways that the leader you are raising up to be our Bishop will find here joyful disciples, making disciples, united in faith, unflagging in hope, and steeped in mutual charity. In your mercy, accept our repentance, and grant us peace; look with patience on our enthusiasms; and pour rich gifts and grace upon all who are entrusted with the ongoing work of your church; so that, with diligence and charity, we may discern correctly and walk righteously in your ways. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

We are blessed with a good and faithful leadership team at St. George's for which we are very thankful. As the diocese goes through this time of transition, St. George's will stay the course with the worship, ministry, and Christian formation programming we are blessed to have in place. I would like to encourage you remain active in your support of St. George's. Please do not hesitate to call on Fr. Tom or me if we can help you explore ways to exercise your gifts and talents as we all strive to reach out in love to nurture, teach, and heal in Jesus' name.

Mtr. Elizabeth

Prayer Shawl Ministry

From Cindy Hoetzer

Prayer Shawl Knitters have decided to suspend in-person meetings for the time being.

However, we encourage all knitters and crocheters to continue making shawls at home. Shawls are blessed at the altar of St. George's periodically and are delivered to those who are ill, shut in, or in any other need of comfort.



For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

Galatians 5:5 (NRSV)

Praise Band



Greetings to you all in Jesus' name! I have been serving as leader of the Praise Band here at Saint George's for two months now, and it has been a joy and privilege to work alongside our band members Tom Bena, Tom Lessard, Tad Knight, Abby Bee, Nancy Johnston, and Stephanie Mojallali. We pray each week before we begin our rehearsals, asking that God send his Spirit on us to anoint us as we lead his people in praise and worship. We also work hard to bring you the joy of the Lord as we sing and play. I urge you to come and hear us at the Saturday service and sing along with the music we offer. Saint George's has given me, Stephanie, and Matthias a very warm welcome, and we thank you for making us feel at home here.

Some of you may feel led to consider being a part of our Praise Band. I would love to talk with you. Anyone interested should contact me at dmojo26@me.com, and we can get together for an audition and a chance for me to hear about your musical skills and background. We want to make a joyful noise unto the Lord that is excellent and pleasing to the ear, and we desire to offer our very best to God. Let me know if you'd like to know more, and I will look forward to talking with you.

Also, if there is a contemporary praise and worship song you especially love and you want to suggest it, please let me know. We have a growing repertoire of songs that are easy to sing with, and it is our hope that we may with one voice give praise to God. I believe that the Holy Spirit is released when we sing to the Lord from our hearts, and it is my heartfelt prayer that our ministry as the Praise Band will lead all of us into a deeper experience of the power and joy of the Spirit. Please keep us all in prayer, and remember, come to the service and lift your voice in song!

With love to all, in Jesus,
Father Darius Mojallali+

February Anniversaries

Wayne & Carole Diesel
Richard & Donna Perry
Linda & Chet Wilson
Jeffrey & Rosemarie Casale



Women's Bible Study

From Cindy Hoetzer



Beth Moore

Beth Moore has released a brand new Bible study, called "Now That Faith Has Come: A Study of Galatians." Beth and her daughter Melissa have teamed up once again to co-write this one. Join us for a Women's Bible Study in this 6-week exploration of Paul's letter to the Galatians. It promises to be interesting and relevant to our present world. We will meet in a hybrid format (in person and on ZOOM) on Monday evenings beginning February 8th from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

There is a Workbook which accompanies this study. The cost is \$20 and includes a bonus podcast with Beth Moore and her daughter Melissa. If you have the means and internet access, please purchase your copy on-line at: <https://www.lproof.org/galatians>. Financial assistance is available by contacting Mtr. Elizabeth. **To register, contact Cindy Hoetzer at choetzer78@gmail.com.**

Please indicate if you will be participating in person or via ZOOM and/or if you are in need of a workbook.

What is Evangelism?

Third in a Series

From Tom Lessard



I have good news for those who do not think they are very good at sharing or demonstrating their trust in God. Your skill does not matter. If you look at the parable about sowing seed (Matthew 13), God is responsible for the seed (The Word of God) and He promised That His Word "shall not return empty" (Isaiah 55:11). You are responsible for throwing your seed everywhere and as often as possible, but you cannot know if the seed will fall on good soil or bad. One caution: it can hurt to be hit by seed so whatever you share do it with love. Ephesians 4:15 says "Rather, speaking the truth in love." You can read the first 2 articles in this series in the December and January issues of the Dragon's Tale. They will help you to understand this one. Anyone that has a God in my life moment that they can share, please send it to me. It may help someone else with their faith timeline.

Lenten Simple Suppers

Mission and Outreach

Be a Blessing to a Neighbor in Need

Each week during Lent, Mission and Outreach will be sharing a recipe for a special Friday Lenten simple supper. The recipe will be sent out by email and posted on our website at [Simple Suppers - Blessing a Neighbor in Need](#). Each recipe includes the ingredients and directions for preparing the meal. Our outreach during Lent will focus on sharing our recipes and the needed ingredients with a family in the area through the Jonesville Helping Hands Food Pantry. When you shop for the ingredients for a recipe, please pick up another bag of ingredients to share with a family in need.

We will begin this outreach the week following Ash Wednesday. Most ingredients for our recipes will be canned or packaged. Ingredients that are fruits or vegetables (like 4 apples or 2 zucchini that need no refrigeration) may be packed in a smaller paper bag and included. Herbs and spices may be placed in a small Zip Lock bag. The bag of ingredients should be dropped at church on a marked table in Hatlee Hall no later than Monday, February 22nd. Our committee will add a copy of the recipe, a bag of Freihofer cookies, and a milk card from Stewart's to complete the meal.

We will be doing this each week thereafter on Tuesday, March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29. The Outreach Committee will deliver our bags of ingredients to the food pantry each Wednesday. Participate once, twice or weekly – and be a blessing to a family in our Clifton Park community. If you have questions, or have a simple recipe to share, contact [Jo Anne Robbins](#).



Peanut Butter Pit



Greek Orzo Salad

Community of Hope

From Deacon Maureen



We are hoping to hold a training for the Community of Hope to be held as a hybrid (live/virtual). The mission of the Community of Hope is to create Christian communities of lay volunteer pastoral care givers united in prayer, shaped by Benedictine spirituality and equipped for and serving in pastoral care ministries. The training consists of 13 two and one-half hour weekly sessions. We would love to have you join us.

If you have any questions, please ask Deacon Maureen, 518 369-3816 or deacon.maureen.demler@gmail.com.

May God bless us as we seek to discern His will for us.

Grief Support Group

From Deacon Maureen



We will be starting a group at St. George's to support people whose loved ones have died at any time in the past or who are dealing with debilitating or terminal illness. We will be meeting on Zoom on Mondays from 2pm to 3:30 for six weeks beginning February 15th.

For information or the Zoom link, please contact Deacon Maureen at 518 369-3816 or deacon.maureen.demler@gmail.com.

Donating to St. George's

As with many organizations, churches have been impacted financially by the COVID-19 pandemic. There are a several options for donating financially to St. George's including cash, check, credit card, debit card, or directly from your checking account. Checks can be mailed to St. George's Church. You may go to our website at www.stgeorgescp.org and click on the Info Center, then Donating to St. George's. You will find 2 tabs, Multiple Ways to Donate and Online Giving, where you will find options with directions for use. If you are attending one of our live worship services, you are welcome to place your donation in the offering plate. See page 8 for listings of in-person and virtual worship services.

Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer During Lent

From Tom Golden

Lent is a time to reflect and prepare ourselves for the Great Celebration of Easter. A positive step is to incorporate Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer to bookend our day by centering us in the Christian way of life, praising God and thanking Him for his many gifts in our lives. To help you to navigate these services in the Book of Common Prayer, St. George's has cards available in the office. You may pick up on the table outside the church office or request them to be mailed to you. They are also available online at these links: [Morning Prayer Card](#) and [Evening Prayer Card](#).

It has been a Lenten practice at St. George's to hold Morning Prayer services in the Chapel on weekdays. This year, pandemic restrictions will not allow us to gather in the small space, so we will hold completely remote Zoom Morning Prayer services beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 17th at 6:45AM Monday through Friday during Lent. The service should conclude by 7:30AM. Please join with us from home, starting Ash Wednesday morning from your computer/tablet/smart phone via the web or the Zoom app. Questions? Contact Tom at evangelism@stgeorgescp.org

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82340422187>

Meeting ID: 823 4042 2187

One tap mobile

February Birthdays

Dan Shepard, Avery Prendergast,
Anne Wagle, Nancy Johnston,
Ellen Gilhooley, Maryellen Eyer,
Claire Brunkhorst, Tyson Brewer,
Carole Hickey, Louise Burns,
Noah Bullock, Pete DeCuyper, Pam Sabourin,
Sara Casale, Jane Harrington, John Heim,
Jim Stafford, Jeff Granger, Jennifer Heim,
Paul Gregg, Marc Quail, Arthur Erno



but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31 (NRSV)

Christ the King Spiritual Life Center Greenwich, NY

Healing Services are recorded and available on the Christ the King website every Tuesday beginning at 10:00AM with a prayer team available for live prayer in a private chat room. The service is then streamed daily at 10AM, 3:30PM and 6:30PM daily Tuesday through Sunday.

Lenten Fish Fry, Fridays 5PM – 7PM. Reservation required

The Place of the Heart, a free, virtual, 4-part spiritual formation seminar exploring the Door of God's Presence with the Rev. Dr. Ellen Neufeld. Saturday mornings, February 27, March 27, April 24 and May 22, 9:30AM to noon.

2021 Welcome Home Initiative Retreat, a healing program for those in need of Soul Repair.
July 8-10 for women veterans
October 14-16 for law enforcement officers
November 8-10 for veterans

A Women's Retreat is being planned for August 2021.

Please call 1-518-692-9550 for more information or to register for any of these programs.

SAVE THE DATE!

February 5th - 8th [Labyrinth Walk](#)
February 6th Boy Scout Sunday at 4:30 service
February 8th [Women's Monday Night Bible Study](#)
Begins
February 14th The Burning of the Palms
February 17th Ash Wednesday
February 27th [St. George's Serves at Loaves & Fishes](#)

Boy Scout Sunday Service

**Saturday February 6th
4:30 PM service**

Yes - Boy Scout Sunday will be celebrated on Saturday. Plan to come to the Saturday 4:30PM service as we celebrate and honor our Boy Scouts and their leaders.



Labyrinth Walk February 5th - 8th

A labyrinth is an ancient tool for meditative prayer. Walking a labyrinth is a symbolic pilgrimage. There are no dead ends. It is a tool which can clear the mind; calm our anxieties during periods of transition and stress, guide healing, deepen self-knowledge, and lead to personal and spiritual growth.



St. George's has borrowed a labyrinth from First Reformed Church of Scotia. It will be set up in Hatlee Hall and available to be walked during the following time periods:

- Friday, February 5th Noon - 8:00PM
- Saturday, February 6th 8:00AM - 4:00PM
- Sunday, February 7th Noon - 8:00PM
- Monday, February 8th Noon - 5:00PM

See the St. George [web page](#) for all the details including how to schedule a time for your personal journey.

Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and shield. Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Psalm 33:20-22 (NRSV)

The Burning of the Palms

Sunday, February 14th
10:00 AM



Every year we burn the palms from the previous year. The ashes are used for our Ash Wednesday services. If you wish to contribute your old palms or palm crosses, bring them to the church by February 7th. There is a basket in the narthex to collect the palms.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

1 Peter 5:6-7 (NRSV)



You Are Now Entering the Mission Field *From Jo Anne Robbins*

When Jesus commissioned His followers near the end of His time on earth, He directed them to “therefore go and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20). Nowhere in this command did He indicate where a Christian’s work should be done.

Above our (EXIT) front door, you will see a new message. In large blue print it says, ***“You Are Now Entering The Mission Field.”*** Below that, in bright red text is says, ***“Go into all the world and preach the gospel.”***

Jesus invited his disciples to follow Him and to become “fishers of men.” We, as Jesus followers, are his disciples. As disciples, we go about our Christian lives, listening, learning, and reading about Jesus. Gradually, we become more like Him. As we become more like Him, others around us can see Jesus in us.

As we leave church and return to our world, we are entering our “mission field” – where we live and work and play. May God grant us open eyes, open minds, open hands and open hearts, so that we can continually be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ here on earth. Rejoice and be glad as we share our love of Jesus with our family, friends, and neighbors.

In Person Worship Services

Sunday:

9:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite II with Organ, with COVID-19 precautions

Wednesday:

12:15 pm Weekly Healing Service with Eucharist, with COVID-19 precautions

Saturday:

4:30 pm Holy Eucharist Rite II, with Praise Band and with COVID-19 precautions

Please note:

Deadline for weekly announcements is **Wednesday morning at 9 AM**. Send to stgeorgescp.announcements@gmail.com

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

John 14:27 (NRSV)

Weekly Virtual Worship Schedule

Sunday:

7:30 am Morning Prayer Rite II virtually through Zoom. Request room access via stgeorgeofc@gmail.com if you would like to join.

9:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite II virtually. Access via https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqGV25ahrgM9i8RQEOBjJmo2Fro8yRj_x

10:30 am Theological Reflection (TRs) on the Gospel reading for that day virtually through Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87182104399?>

Weekdays:

6:45 am Morning Prayer weekdays during Lent. Begins Ash Wednesday. On Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82340422187>

Reflection on the Gospel reading from the Daily Office lectionary via <https://www.facebook.com/StGeorgesCP/>

See the St. George's Online web page at https://stgeorgescp.org/st_georges_online for up to date information for online worship services and classes

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