



The Dragon's Tale

MAY 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***



St George's Praise Band



"Come let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation!" (Psalm 95:1)

The Praise Band has been hard at work during this Easter season. We have been rehearsing songs as well as learning new ones, and I want to thank our devoted band members, Tad, Nancy, Stephanie, Abby, Tom B. and Tom L. They give generously of their time, talent and love. We rehearse each Saturday at 3 p.m., first going over the songs for the following Saturday, and then running through the songs for that afternoon. By the time we are done, it's usually at least 5:30, and we are tired but gratified that God has used us as instruments of his joy and power in the lives of those we serve. Stephanie and I always come away from our Saturday services pumped and excited about what we sense God is doing among us at Saint George's. The Holy Spirit is present in our worship!

Remember that "the Lord is enthroned on the praises of his people" (Psalm 22:3) and that when we lift God up in praise, he lifts US up. We may come to worship despondent, tired, or discouraged, but when we give our hearts, voices, and bodies to worship, he transforms and renews us. What an exciting thing that the living God is *thankful* when we choose to honor him with praise!

Our Praise Band is a work in progress, and if you should ever feel like being a part of our ministry, please contact me at dmojo26@me.com and we can find a time to talk and for you to tell me about your musical background.

Let's all pray for each other - that the ministry and life of Saint George's will be transformed and empowered as God's people offer a sacrifice of praise.

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

2021 Vestry Retreat

This past weekend we had our annual spring vestry retreat, with all vestry members able to attend. It was time well spent as the leaders of this parish spent a day and a half in prayer and discussion discerning the way forward for St. George's as we move toward the next phase of, God willing, emerging from this COVID pandemic.

We have been blessed to offer services throughout the duration of the pandemic, including the offering of virtual and in-person options for worship. We are beginning to see some new and returning faces to worship for which we are immensely thankful. We hope this trend continues as more and more people are vaccinated. We are committed to following the CDC guidelines as we move forward with masks, sanitizing surfaces and our protocols for worship and gatherings. I know I look forward to the day when we can stop wearing the masks and socially gather again.

The retreat included some time to look back with thanksgiving on the things we were able to adapt to and accomplish to get through a challenging 2020. The biggest tangible is the significant improvements and updating of technology at St. George's that should serve this parish well for years to come. We also had a time of thanksgiving for the significant amount of pastoral care and mission and outreach activities that our Community of Hope and Mission and Outreach ministry were able to accomplish during this time as the work of ministry continues.

The "re-imagining" committee has been making progress and is continuing to move forward with possibilities for the use of the space in Randles Hall and our mission to teach in Jesus' name. This work is going well as we gather under the faithful leadership of Fran Gordon to discern a new path forward. Blessings and opportunity abound at St. George's. We do not take this lightly and commit ourselves to being faithful stewards with appreciation and thanksgiving to God for the many blessings he continues to bestow upon us.

As a part of our retreat conversation, our two wardens, Jean Lauria and Abby Bee, facilitated a discussion on the metaphor of this tree. The tree was recently cut down on the side of our property and proved to be a very effective conversation starter for discussion about our mission statement at St. George's and how it needs to help inform all of our decisions about who we are as a parish. The odd shaping of the tree has an artistic and even creative

Vestry Retreat, cont'd

flair in its uniqueness, however it does not take much to look a little deeper and see a tree that never met its potential. In fact what we see are the residual of a tree and vine that continued to adapt to one another until neither could survive. This proved to be a powerful metaphor for what happens when a parish loses site of its mission or what is called "mission drift." Our mission is to joyfully reach out in love to nurture, teach, and heal in Jesus' name. One of the themes this year was to ask questions like: What does it mean to reach out in Jesus' name? What does it mean to nurture in Jesus' name? What does it mean to heal in Jesus' name? What does it mean to teach in Jesus' name? We encourage every member of St. George's to reflect on these questions and ask how you can help this parish live faithfully into answering them as we move forward in Jesus' name.

Peace,

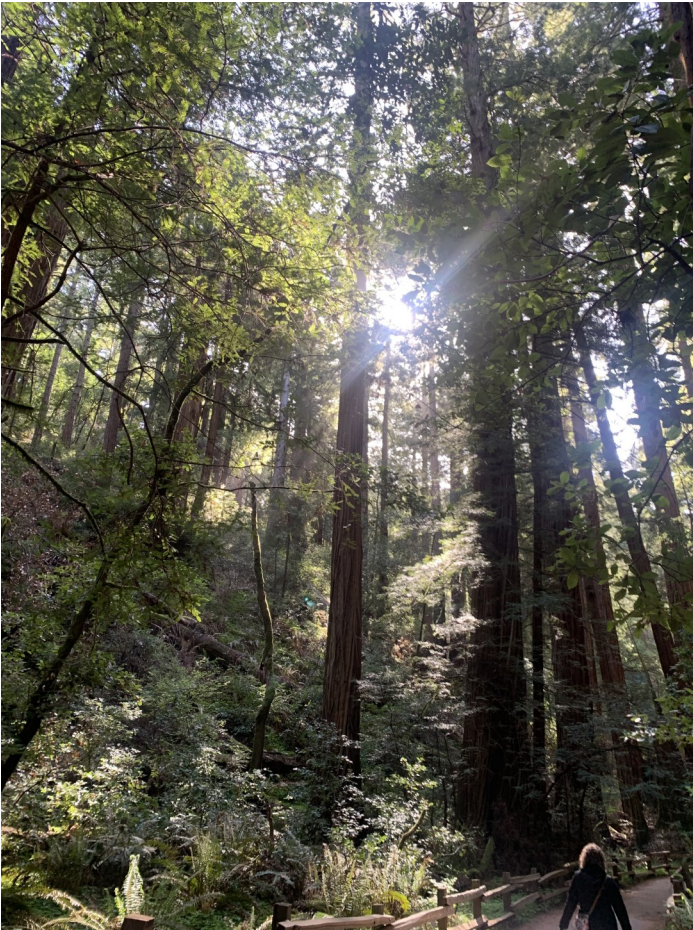
Fr. Tom and Mtr. Elizabeth



Tree and Vine

Mother's Musings

Fr. Tom and I were blessed to fly to San Francisco the week after Easter to visit our youngest daughter, Sarah, and her husband, Boris. When we were planning the trip, our daughter asked us what we wanted to do while we were out there. I told her that the only thing that I *really* wanted to do other than to visit with them was to go and walk through Muir Woods. If you have never been there, I encourage you check it out on the web or visit if you get out to the west coast.



On my first visit to Muir Woods, I found it to be a gorgeous place that allowed me to experience awe at God's creation. Sarah was more than happy to accommodate my request as Muir Woods is also one of her favorite places.

We headed out early, selfishly hoping to get there before the bus loads arrived and the quiet of the woods would be overwhelmed with the noise of the days' visitors. Even though we arrived early, it wasn't long before the woods were bustling with people. As we ambled through the park, the still small voice of God and the soft sounds of the woods were overwhelmed by loud conversations, groups

Musings, cont'd

cajoling one another and the use of cell phones. Occasionally, there was a break when we were alone for a few minutes. In those times, the sounds of birds, locusts, frogs, water splashing along a small stream, crickets, and the miscellaneous sounds of these great woods would speak. In those moments, it was infinitely easier to not only see God's creation, but hear it speak as well.

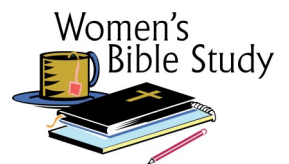
As we continued on the path, the metaphor for how we sometimes miss God in our very midst came to mind. Evidence of God's incredible creation in heaven and earth, including all his creatures, are around us on a daily basis. All you need to do is pay attention, look around, and experience awe at God's creation. I simply don't want to miss God in the busyness of life.

As things begin to ease and we move out from under the cloud of the Covid-19 pandemic, if you're not already out and about, give yourself a gift. Take a few hours, maybe sit on your porch or take a walk or maybe take a bike ride, be silent, and enjoy the sights and sounds that are all around proclaiming the glory of God. As it says in the 23rd Psalm, take a moment to let God show you how to lie down in green pastures and rest beside the still waters. Let that be time for your soul to be restored as God leads you in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. I look forward to meeting up with you on the path.

Mtr. Elizabeth

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study has been meeting on Monday evenings this spring. After finishing a recent Beth Moore study of Galatians, we are now learning more with Bible scholar Priscilla Shirer through an in-depth study of the prophet Elijah. Mark your calendars and join us for a study of Genesis, God of Creation with Jen Wilkin beginning in the fall. These women are incredibly knowledgeable and engaging, even fun. Each of these Bible studies includes a weekly 30 to 45 minute video & a study guide for each day of the week. St. George's owns the following Women's Bible Studies: The Armor of God, The Voice of God, Jonah, Galatians, & Elijah. These videos (some on DVD, some on a memory stick) are all available to borrow if you'd like to do one of them on your own. Inquire by emailing the church office.



Community of Hope Ministry and Circle of Care Community

*From Karen Myers Malcolm
COHI Circle of Care Facilitator*



Have you ever wondered what you could do to make a difference in someone else's life? We attempt to answer that question collectively and individually every time we take part in a St. George's church activity, worship service, Bible Study, contribute to "So Others May Eat" that supports the Shenendehowa Helping Hands Food Pantry, donate to the Capital City Rescue Mission, or when we collected food for "Lenten Simple Supper-Helping a Neighbor in Need." The ways to reach out to others at St. George's are too numerous to list all of them here. Nevertheless, there is an additional way to serve what God is calling us to do that may not be as well known as some of our church outreach efforts. That way involves pastoral care, and St. George's membership in the Community of Hope International, "A School for God's Service." (Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue, Verse 45).

Community of Hope International (COHI) "equips lay people to serve in pastoral care, which is when a person is 'present' in a listening, compassionate, non-controlling manner to an individual or group for the purpose of consciously or unconsciously representing God to them and seeking to respond to their spiritual needs." Once a person participates in a 14-week, 42-hour curriculum of COHI, members take part in monthly Circle of Care meetings where we pray, read and reflect on "The Rule of Benedict," engage in continuing education, and offer each other mutual support through individual contributions to the COC community, and as we engage with others in our parish, and in our larger community.

You may have noticed the calls to parishioners starting in March 2020 asking about each person's welfare during COVID, or pastoral notes sent to you around April and May 2020, and a second round of pastoral calls in August 2020 for those people we missed. COHI Circle of Care members also made a third round of calls to parishioners starting in October through November 2020, asking about people's welfare, relaying our church's services, programs and COVID procedures, and inquiring into what parishioners thought they needed during the time of COVID. COHI Circle of Care also sent Christmas Cards to parishioners, and baked Christmas cookies for people who were shut in their homes as clergy made visits to let the most vulnerable people among us know they were in our thoughts and prayers, and

Community of Hope, cont'd

loved by God through this extremely difficult time. All this was done according to COVID safety guidelines.

Most recently, COHI Circle of Care members sent Easter cards to parishioners during Lent 2021, and helped our Parish Life outreach effort to assemble Easter Bags with bookmarks with Scripture passages for all parishioners, and special bags for the children in our parish. COHI also provided Easter Bags for clergy visits to people who continued to be shut in their homes, that included scripture bookmarks, and a prayer.

All of the above gestures, we have done partially for the purpose of communicating what The Rule of Benedict teaches us about praying through the Psalm of Lauds. The Rule of Benedict reminds us of two unflinching realities:

1. "The first reality is that life is not perfect, that struggle is to be expected, that human beings live on the brink of danger and defeat at all times", and
2. "... having lived through everything life had to give...the community bursts into unending praise for having survived it, learned faith in God from it again, and been saved one more time by a loving God." (The Rule of Benedict, Chapter 13, The Celebration of Lauds on Ordinary Days, page 111-112)

This is our hope, this is our prayer, as a Community of Hope. We pledge ourselves to listen with the "ears of our heart" to others. And as the Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg, COHI Founder said, "It's about the skills and the practices of spiritual life that prepares each of us to be open to one another...to believe and trust that the hospitality of the Christian faith is to look for Christ in the other person..."

Prayer Shawl

The Prayer Shawl knitters and crocheters have started meeting in person once again. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 11, from 1 to 3 PM in room #1 of Randles Hall (the former school office). Come ready to knit or crochet - help is available if your skills are rusty. Shawls are blessed periodically at the Wednesday Healing Service and are always appreciated by those who receive them.

Prayer Shawl Ministry



Parish Life Update

From Heidi Bonacquist

I would like to introduce myself as the new Vestry person for Parish Life at St. George's. My name is Heidi Bonacquist and my husband, Bruce, and I have attended the 4:30 service at St. George's for many years. I am retiring in June, finishing up 21 years as an elementary principal. I am really excited to start the new work with the Vestry and parishioners at St. George's as we look forward to gathering again in community and move beyond some of our current Covid protocols.

Since we were unable to gather after the Easter services, we decided to share Easter Bags with families and children to celebrate the Risen Lord and remind everyone, in spite of social distancing, that we are still a community of disciples reaching out to each other in love. I hope all of you enjoyed the Easter message, scripture, and goodies! I would like to thank all the people who donated cookies and helped in assembling the gift bags.



Heidi and helpers assemble Easter bags

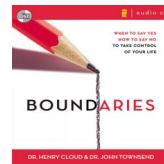


Easter bags for adults and children

Boundaries: When To Say Yes, How To Say No

From Fran Gordon

Christian Formation Facilitator



“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” (Romans 15: 7) This piece of scripture is central to our understanding of God’s expectations concerning our relationship to one another. If we are to be the people He has created us to be we need to fully understand what God, through scripture, shows us about loving and giving in healthy relationships.

Isn’t it difficult at times to tell someone that you feel they are not respecting your wishes or point of view? Have you ever agreed to help someone out and then resented having to do it? Have you ever said no to a friend or spouse and then felt guilty about saying no? Healthy relationships sometimes mean saying “no” to someone you care about. It means standing up to hurtful or abusive behavior. It means being able to say “yes” from a place of genuine love and not from guilt or fear of harming the relationship. As Christians we are often taught that self-sacrifice and being loving and giving should have no boundaries but that is NOT actually what Jesus teaches us to do. Scripture has much to say about healthy boundaries!

Boundaries classes have been offered at St. George’s for several years now. This series of eight biblically based sessions is based on a book by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend. Through an understanding of the 10 Laws of Boundaries, detailed in the book, participants begin to discover a happier and healthier path to being the loving individuals God has created us to be. Once classes are completed, we are now offering on-going opportunities for participants to meet, share, and support one another as they work to continue developing healthy boundary skills.

This individual boundary work is foundational to the health and well-being of the whole St. George’s community, as well. Despite our differences and diversity, we can learn to love and respect one another’s boundaries in healthy ways as we strive to live more fully into our mission to be a community of disciples joyfully reaching out in love to nurture, teach and heal in Jesus’ name.

We will continue to offer the Boundaries series of classes on a regular basis. Look for the next one this summer and please, prayerfully consider joining us on this rewarding journey!

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd



Would you like to deepen your relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd? The next school year presents an opportunity. The Church of St. John in Troy will be sponsoring a training in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd to be held one Saturday a month beginning September 25.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a way that adults and children can live the spirituality of the child. We can live out the gospel command to become like little children, to enter into a deep simplicity with great joy and peace. It is a gift to come to the heart of Jesus and enjoy the presence of God. Mary Golden and Deacon Maureen are excited to be completing our training for Level II for 6 to 9 year old children this summer and have begun planning our Level II atrium in Randles Hall. Our Level I atrium for 3 to 6 year olds is furnished and was hosting the children until the COVID disruption. We look forward to welcoming the children in the fall. The two atria are physically connected but we are hoping and praying that more adults will hear God's call to the training and preparation to work with the Level I children.

The catechist's role is to call forth the child's response. We listen with the child and together ask, "God, Who are You? How do You love us?" We reflect with the children. Catechesis is a celebration of the encounter with the Father, in listening to Jesus, in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

Please talk with Mary or Deacon Maureen about our experiences and pray about assisting in the atria and/or taking the training in Troy.

Facility Update

From Tom Lessard

**CAN
YOU
HELP?**

Anyone that owns a home knows there is always something that needs attention. I am looking for helpers. There are tasks as simple as cleaning windows and others like listing and planning the replacement of batteries. Susan Gray does a great job of caring for the flowers, and I am sure she could use help or at least use a backup person. Please let me know about your talents and time you can volunteer to help out. The church has times when no one is in the building and we have been doing a good job of following the guidelines, so anyone can feel safe completing tasks. Please Email me at facility@stgeorgescp.org and let me know how you would like to help.

The Stations of the Resurrection

You are welcome to join the remaining 3 weeks of a five week Bible Study on the Resurrection and what happened over and above the event of Good Friday.



The only prerequisite for this course is an inquiring and discerning heart. Participants are encouraged to have a Bible available for use in this course. Prior knowledge or expertise with the Bible are not required to participate in this course.

Saturdays following the 4:30 service at St. George's (5:45 pm – 6:45 pm)

Hybrid Format: In-Person in the library and on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83201115556>

May 1 – The Resurrection Narratives in Matthew

May 8 – The Resurrection Narrative in Luke-Acts

May 15 – The Johannine Resurrection Narratives

Mission and Outreach

From Jo Anne Robbins



Our Lenten Simple Suppers outreach project provided two recipes each week during Lent to our congregation for the creation of a delicious meatless meal. In addition, 6-8 bags of food including a gift card to purchase the consumable ingredients for one of those meals, and a copy of the recipe was delivered each week to Jonesville Food Pantry. Each bag fed a family of four a complete meal including bread and milk. We received a very nice thank you from the folks at the Jonesville Helping Hands Food Pantry for our ongoing support.



Thank you to Carol MacNaughton for the excellent job she did with our messaging for this project. Each week, she created a special email message that was sent out on Tuesday with the recipes for the following weekend. Each bag of food for one of the two recipes was dropped on a table inside the front door and delivered to the food pantry every Wednesday. In that message, Carol emphasized that praying and fasting are part of our Lenten journey and so is giving. Encouraged to give with the “generous heart of our loving, self-giving Lord,” over 60 St. George’s families participated.

We continue to support the **Jonesville Helping Hands Food Pantry – So Others May Eat (S.O.M.E.)** We are seeking ongoing donations of shelf-stable food and non-food items such as paper goods, personal hygiene products (especially diapers) and cleaning supplies – basically any item available from a grocery retailer or distributor. If every family brings one item each week, we would have a significant contribution to this essential community ministry.

Please note:

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

May Anniversaries

Fran & Gene Gordon
Jean & Michael Blinstrub
Ed Morrison & Monica Chaplin
Don & Judy Nelson
Ryan & Erin Prendergast
Bill & Louise Burns
Randy & Maureen Demler
Dan & Diana Glaser



Vestry Retreat begins with Holy Eucharist



Easter preparations in the Sacristy

If you would like to help the Altar Guild, contact Abby Bee at bhive6@gmail.com.

May Birthdays

Donna Perry, Linda Jewett,
Luke Abramo, Sue Lessard,
James Pellett, Lydon Benson,
Bev Ross, Maureen Demler,
Arlene Josef, Douglas Fare, Melinda Reed,
Lorraine Simpkins, Logan Golden, Karen Malcolm,
Sue Mehringer, Colette Odell, Albert Betzwieser,
Susan Gray, Nolan Decuyper, Tom Harding



We love because he first loved us.

1 John: 4:19 (NRSV)

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

A reminder from **Mission and Outreach**:
Anyone doing outreach work through St. George's
must sign and return the Outreach Covenant.

Need a copy? Have questions, concerns? Contact
Kathryn Pellett at Kathrynpellett@yahoo.com or
by phone or text at (518) 429-9334. You may also
contact [Jo Anne Robbins](#).

St. George's Episcopal Church

912 Route 146

Clifton Park, NY 12065

Weekly Virtual Worship Schedule

Sunday:

7:30 am Morning Prayer Rite II virtually through
Zoom via St. George's Online web page at [https://
stgeorgescp.org/st_georges_online](https://stgeorgescp.org/st_georges_online)

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

7:15 am Morning Prayer weekdays . On Zoom at
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82340422187>

Reflection on the Gospel reading from the Daily
Office lectionary via [https://www.youtube.com/channel/
UCTO_9-AKQzYZzbL_L8YDKQw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTO_9-AKQzYZzbL_L8YDKQw)

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