

The Messenger - February 2016

St Andrew's Church Episcopal
50 Sacandaga Rd
Scotia, New York 12302
Rector - The Rev'd Michael Neufeld



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Parish Mission Statement:

As members of St Andrew's Episcopal Church, our mission is to:

GROW spiritually, rooted in Scripture and Sacraments,

BRING the love of Jesus Christ into the local and wider community

WELCOME all into the healing and worshiping family of Christ's Church

Good News from Fr Mike:

The Christmas decorations have just been put away, yet we find ourselves with Lent just a few days away. The feasting is over and the fasting begins. The noise and the glitter is gone and we are invited into silence.

If we are honest with ourselves, we have mixed feelings towards Lent, in fact some of us look forward to it. This is a time when things can get real. We can put aside that which doesn't matter and focus on that which does. What matters most in our lives is our relationship with the Lord. Everything else pales in comparison.

In the Ash Wednesday liturgy, found in the BCP (Book of Common Prayer), we are called to a Holy Lent. Lent may be austere but it is all about living. We fast – not that we might go without but that we might be filled with the Bread of Life. We enter the quiet of prayer and Bible study – not that we might be bored but that we might sit with our Lord who speaks in the silence and through His word. Lent is a wonderful time of living, living into the depth of our faith. Indeed it is a relief, in the midst of all the insanity, to enter into this very sane and blessed 40 days.

There are many offerings, here at St Andrew's. All are designed to help us to grow deeper in our faith. Some, like Bible study and prayer, are part of our weekly life and have been for many years. Some, like Stations of the Cross, are celebrated only during this time of year. You are invited to be a part of Christ's life in a new way, to see your salvation anew. Don't let this season go by without engaging the invitation that the Lord Himself gives to you.

We recently held our Annual Meeting. Thank you to Steve George and Chris Crouse, whose terms on the Vestry have ended. Thank you to Nanci Wilson who served as secretary of the Columbarium Committee. We look forward to the Lord leading them into new ministries in their lives and in the parish.

We welcome back Deb Battista, reelected to Vestry, and Simone Rockwell, reelected as Warden. Welcome also to Agnes Bukhala, Todd Lavery, Kevin McCarthy and Rick Rapp as new members of the Vestry. Also welcome to Jack Martz who is now our new Columbarium secretary. We look forward to a wonderful year of renewed leadership.

The Diocesan Parish Leadership Conferences this year will focus on addictions. I highly commend it to you. The first in our area will be held in Oneonta on Saturday February 6 and the second will be held in at St George's Clifton Park on Saturday March 5. It is the same topic on both dates. Registration is now open online at www.albanyepiscopaldiocese.org and click on "*Online Registration Now Open! To register, click here.*" in the center of the page. Registration is necessary as lunch needs to be order.

Christian Education offerings for all

Church School & Confirmation Class – Sunday at 11:00AM

Adult Bible Studies –

Sunday morning Bible Study – 11:00AM – Sunday Lectionary readings

Sunday evening Men's Study group – 7:00PM (and occasionally at 5:30PM for dinner out)

Wednesday morning Bible Study – 9:30AM – Colossians

Wednesday evening Bible Study – 6:45PM – Isaiah

reprint from the Annual Meeting report
St Andrew's Church: Rector's report for the year 2015
Annual Meeting – January 24, 2016; the Revd Michael J. Neufeld

2015 was truly a blessed year at St Andrew's. While we have seen a steady decline in average Sunday attendance, over the past few years, we saw an increase of 5% in 2015. With that we were able to live within our means financially and ended the year in the black. Seven young people were Confirmed and two adults were Received when the Bishop came for his pastoral visit. Ten were Baptized, while we lost only two members to death.

The life of the Church is very vital, our educational programs are second to none. We offer more Adult Bible Studies than just about any parish in the Diocese and our Church School is extremely well taught. There are organizations for men and women – Sunday Evening Men's group, ECW, Daughters of the King. Healing Ministry is very much a part of our everyday life and with the Prayer Shawl Ministry, we have reached well beyond our parish walls. The Events Committee has done well in coordinating social, fundraising, and spiritual events.

The Holy Spirit is alive and working in our Church on a day to day basis. The community of St Andrew's is a loving one. We live in the love of the Lord Jesus and we love each other. Witness the peace at any given Service - it is joyous and genuine and extends well beyond the bounds of the Liturgy.

Our biggest challenge is evangelization. We have been called, you and I, to witness in our community – amongst family, friends and neighbors – to the redeeming love of Jesus Christ. This is a critical issue, especially today, living in a post Christian society, which needs a fresh proclamation of the Gospel, if it is to thrive and survive. We, at St Andrew's, need to be at the fore front of evangelism. We as Episcopalians are generally uncomfortable with evangelism. Many of the models we have seen in the Churches around us are counterproductive, doing more harm than good. We need desperately to find new ways to communicate our faith. Stay tuned. There will be an offering coming in the spring for all in the Parish.

We also desperately need to work on the many ministries surrounding worship. We need more adults and young people to join our already dedicated ushers, greeters, acolytes, lectors, LEMs, altar guild, and choir.

Last but not least, we survived and actually prospered during construction in the basement. It looks more beautiful now than it has ever looked. We used it for the first time when the Bishop came to visit in December and we look forward to Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on February 9.

We enter 2016 with great expectation of what the Lord will do. We are a healthy parish. With the Lord in our midst, my prayer is that we will grow in size and spiritual maturity in the coming year.

From the Wardens: Vestry Review -- Warden's Report by Simone Rockwell
This is a reprint of the year summation article in the 2016 Annual meeting report.

The year 2015 began with a primary focus on the repair of the undercroft. It was a long and tedious process, but in the end we are very pleased with the result. We also had a new floor installed in the lounge along with the purchase of ten very needed new chairs. In addition, we had our usual problems with the Church furnace, and in preparation for this year's winter, we had new furnaces installed.

With regard to our events this year, we began the new year with the annual New Year's Eve Service, pot luck dinner and a movie. Also in January, we had our chili sale which was its usual success. The annual Chocolate Fest in February had been cancelled until further notice. We were unable to have our usual Pancake Supper and Seder dinner because the undercroft flooring was not completed. Easter services were very special and well attended.

We had several brunches: the startup of our Stewardship campaign, April 12, as well as for Mother's Day and Father's Day. We had our Vet Appreciation Day service and social hour on Memorial Day weekend. The Chicken BBQ in June was a huge success—a lot of work, but definitely worth it! June closed out with our parish year end picnic.

The Vacation Bible School in July was well attended and a good time for all. Also in July we participated in the Summer Lunch program, had a Ski show outing, and as a group attended several baseball games. In August, we had a sad event --Mother Jackie's Farewell Dinner. We still miss her, but had an opportunity to see her and Tom at Christmas.

The fall began with another Parish Picnic (we do love to eat!) followed in October by a very successful Pulled Pork Dinner and the Blessing of the Pets the following day. We also welcomed Mother Ellen as a member

of our parish clergy at the October vestry meeting. The children, both young and old, had a good time at the Corn Maze at Liberty Ridge. November was a very busy month—Evensong at the Cathedral on the 1st, a successful Soup Sale, Leaf Raking, the ECW Bake sale and of course, Thanksgiving.

On December 5th we had a triple celebration of Bishop Bill's Visit, Confirmation, and St. Andrew's Day with a lovely service and pot luck dinner. The following weekend was the Cookie Sale which was a financial and tasty success. Christmas was celebrated with the decorating of the Church and very well attended Christmas services.

If I have forgotten anything, let me apologize in advance. Getting old definitely affects the memory! On to 2016!

Please note – For monthly Vestry minutes and Finance reports, see copies posted on the Vestry bulletin board.. As a member of the Parish, you are always welcome to visit Vestry meetings.

Next meeting – Thursday, February 11 at 6:45PM in the lounge.

Contact your Wardens: Simone Rockwell (370-3412; srockwe2@nycap.rr.com)

Marji Edgar (370-1725; medgar2@aol.com)

Vestry members for 2016 – Deb Battista, Agnes Bukhala, Christine Bissonette, Karen Jarosz, Todd Lavery, Claudette Mayer, Kevin McCarthy, Rick Rapp, Jeri Vincent

Episcopal Church Women (ECW) of St Andrew's

Reminder – We will NOT be having our luncheons until April. Next gathering is April 13 – noon in the lounge.

Prayer Shawl Ministry – submitted by Alice Mose

We have continued to make Shawls at Church and at our homes. We have had many beautiful colors and varieties of shawls. We can always use more knitters or crocheters. Anyone interested in learning may call me (372-2065) and we can arrange a time to meet if Thursday evening is not good. Thanks to all who have supported this vital ministry through the years.

Super Bowl Party – invitation to gather at Clarkson Farnsworth's house (arriving between 5 and 5:30pm) on Sunday February 7 to enjoy dinner and the first half of the Super Bowl game. This event is sponsored by the Men's Sunday Evening Study Group. See Steve George (381-4444) for more details.

Tuesday Morning Eucharist and Breakfast – has resumed its monthly gathering on the second Tuesdays of each month. Eucharist Service starts at 8:30am followed by breakfast. Next service is February 9.

Altar Flowers – there are available dates in 2016 for donating altar flowers for the weekend services. See Gail in the office for more information.

Oaks of Righteousness in Troy - from Bob & Pat Hagen

We will be collecting mittens, gloves, hats and scarves until Sunday, February 14th to donate to Mother Hanna and Mother Christina, who run the Oaks Cafe in Troy. Please look for the boxes to place your donations in. We still have a lot of cold weather ahead of us, so please consider donating. Thank you.

Services and Events

Any updates and addition will be listed in the Saturday/Sunday bulletin.

February see calendars for full schedule of services and events

Saturday, Feb 6 - Diocesan Parish Leadership Conference in Oneonta (same topic - both dates)

Tuesday, Feb 9 - 8:30am Eucharist and Breakfast

6:00PM Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper - Steve George, chair

Wednesday, Feb 10 - Ash Wednesday Services at 7:00AM, 11:00AM, and 5:30PM

Fridays in Lent - 5:30PM Stations of the Cross

Saturday, Feb 27 - Chili Cook-off - 12noon to 3:00pm

see address page for March highlighted services and events

On in to March (continued from February listing)

Saturday, Mar 5 - Diocesan Parish Leadership Conference at St George's Clifton Park (same topic - both dates)

Sunday, Mar 13 - ECW Bake sale - after both services

Holy Week Services and Events

Sat Mar 19 - 5pm Palm Sunday

Sun, Mar 20 - 8am & 9:45am Palm Sunday

Mon, Mar 21 - 7am Eucharist Service

Tues, Mar 22 - 7am Eucharist Service

Wed, Mar 23 - 11am & 5:30pm 7am Eucharist Service

Thurs, Mar 24 - 6:00pm Seder Dinner

Fri, Mar 25 - 3:0pm Stations of the Cross

7:00pm Good Friday Liturgy

Sat, Mar 26 - 5:00pm Easter Vigil

Sun, Mar 27 - 8am & 9:45am Easter Sunday

Weekly Eucharist Service schedule -

Saturdays at 5:00PM

Sundays at 8:00AM and 9:45AM

Wednesdays at 1:00AM (in the lounge)

February, 2016
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Disciples Making Disciples