

November - December 2009

The Messenger



Time and Tide

During this season of Thanksgiving and Advent as we move toward celebrating the Holidays ahead we are called on to remember all the blessings we have and the time that we have been given to share those blessings and live in expectation and joy. During this season we can be open once again to the gifts and love that we have been offered in our lives and open to sharing our blessings with others to make the time and the lives we have been given all worthwhile.

“Time and Tide wait for no one,” goes an old saying. It sounds trite, obvious, pedestrian doesn’t it?

But it is still true!

Time will not wait for you. You were born at a certain time in history. You grew to be older over a period of time. You are now in the midst of the time God has given to you as life. You are a living, breathing, spiritual creature living inside of time. You cannot escape from it.

In the culture we live in we plan and prepare for the future as if we are immortal, having all the time in the world. However, the Advent message to us is that we are to be ready because there is no way to truly know how much time we have. Thus in this season we recognize that we are not immortal and that the precious time we have is really a gift from God. This season helps us to remember that time passes too quickly. We may realize that as we have been running that “rat race of success”, we have not spent precious time nurturing those important relationships (those with our children, parents, spouses, friends and our God), or dreams and activities that may make our lives deeply satisfying.

This season of thanksgiving and advent is a preparation for the celebration of God breaking into history—into Time. How do you use the time that God has given you? Well? Or poorly? Each of us, I’m sure, does a bit of each. Most people think of this season as simply a precursor to Christmas - a time to buy our Christmas gifts. But this season can mean a whole lot more. Advent calls us to put into perspective the recent events of our lives. The season calls us to recognize all the blessings and time that God has given to us and to use them in his service and love. Advent proclaims that there is no time to waste; each day, each hour and minute holds all the promise and possibility of an entire lifetime. The season reminds us not to get so preoccupied with the routines of life that you miss the message of love and joy that God is revealing in our lives today.

Can we this season, in these coming months, find ways to slow down enough to focus on God and His time, His blessings, His love? Can we find ways to use His time in service and love to one another? Give Him some of your time! God will hold up neither time nor tide for you or I, but you and I can use both God’s blessings and God’s time and enjoy them tremendously as we offer our worship and our service to the maker and sustainer of both.

So in this time, I wish you a most blessed and joyful Holiday Season! May God keep you and bless you in all of your time and all of your life!

Yours in peace and love,

The Rev. Douglas Reans
Interim Rector

St. Peter’s Episcopal Church

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THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS

We will be once again assembling food baskets for those in our community who are in need. The baskets will be assembled and distributed on Sunday November 22nd. All food donations need to be in that morning. If you would like to help assemble the baskets and/or deliver or if you know of someone in need, please contact Sue Hoyt. Your help is welcomed!

The following items will be placed in each basket along with a turkey and food vouchers for perishable items. Use the list for your shopping convenience.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Cake Mix & Frosting | Macaroni & Cheese |
| Canned Tuna | Muffin or Roll Mix |
| Canned Vegetables | Pasta |
| Coffee | Peanut Butter |
| Crackers | Boxed Potatos |
| Cranberry Sauce | Soup |
| Gravy | Spaghetti Sauce |
| Jelly | Stuffing |
| Juice | Tea |

CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKETS & GIFT TREE

Share the joy of the holiday season with someone in need by donating food and/or Christmas gifts. The Christmas "Giving Tree" will be in the back of the church on Sunday, Nov. 29th, decorated in gift tags with



the first name, size and age of the person your gift will be intended for. Take a tag(s) and return the wrapped gift by Dec. 20th for distribution that day. Use the same list as above for the food donations. Again, volunteers to help sort and deliver would be welcome. **PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR GIFT IS BROUGHT IN ON TIME OR THE PERSON FOR WHOM YOUR GIFT IS INTENDED WILL NOT HAVE A GIFT FOR CHRISTMAS.**

THRIFT SHOP

Please limit your donations to 2 bags at a time. There are not enough volunteers to sort through and tag all that has been so generously given. Thank you for your cooperation!

Advent Coin Folders



On November 29th we begin the spiritual disciplines of Advent which are daily prayer and "a moment of remembrance" as we prepare for the "Coming of our Lord." Advent is the season where we celebrate the "Joy of Heaven" who came to earth. The birth of Christ sent a "Ray of Hope" and the weary world rejoiced because Emmanuel, the Word, became flesh.

Daily we pause during Advent. Daily we stop and remember God's gift to us. Daily we say a prayer for the work of the church and we use our Advent Coin Folders as a tangible expression of our commitment to the words He taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Advent is an exciting time. Advent is a joyful time. Advent is a time of expectation and anticipation and we join in with the ancient carol, singing "Let every heart prepare Him room!" As you prepare room for the Christ child this year, remember your Advent Coin Folder. You may pick your labeled folder up in the Bell Tower otherwise one will be mailed to you.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Property Committee is in need of volunteers during the winter months to help with shoveling the walks on Saturday afternoon or evening or on Sunday morning if it should snow before Sunday services. If you could volunteer to be on call (with a number of others) to help in this regard, please let Brett Fagan know or call him at 732-723-0666.

Ecumenical Prayer Service

All the churches in our community are sponsoring an Ecumenical Thanksgiving Prayer Service on Wednesday, November 25th at 7 p.m. at The Spotswood Reformed Church. Join us in giving thanks as a community of worshippers.

Senior Warden's Report

It has been my experience that Stewardship is often misunderstood. There is a tendency to think that it is all about money. Money is just one part of Stewardship. Stewardship is how we care for our church. We like to refer to it as the three T's: Time, Treasure, and Talent.

Pledge cards were mailed to you recently. The reason we ask you to fill out a pledge card is because it helps the vestry to set a budget when we have an idea of what to expect from congregational giving. The church has expenses, just like we have at home. We have to pay for utilities and insurance which are set dollar amounts. When we know what has been pledged from the congregation, we have a better grasp on how much, if any we have left to spend on our ministries or property maintenance. For the past few years our expenses have been higher than money coming in and the vestry is faced with hard choices. Do we cut back on outreach? Do we cut back on maintenance? Do we dip into our savings? Unfortunately sometimes the answer is yes to all three. Recently we decided to increase our efforts with fund raising to try to help make up some of the difference. As you can see even then we are still short.

The purpose for having a stewardship "season" is to give you time to consider and reflect upon your situation. You know what your needs are, and hopefully I've raised your awareness as to what St. Peter's financial needs are. These are not easy decisions; hopefully time and prayer will help us to be comfortable with the amount we choose to pledge.

As I said earlier stewardship is about more than money. Stewardship is a year round effort of time and talent too. When I was new to St. Peter's I never thought about what was required to keep a church running or even what is required for a single worship service. What I've learned since then is that it takes many hours of dedicated service that many of us don't realize. You may want to consider becoming an usher or lector, join the Altar Guild or sing with the choir. You can sign up to host a coffee hour. Did you know that we hire a snow plow to clear the parking lot when it snows, but the sidewalks are shoveled by volunteers? That's a great way to help make a difference. This year we have two handmade blankets to raffle off that have been donated by parishioners. One is a quilt and one is crocheted, they are both beautiful and are both excellent examples of stewardship.

Remember the three T's: Time, Treasure, and Talent. There are many ways to give and I encourage you to find the ways that best fit you.

- Laura Bonamici

Discernment News Update

The Self Study Committee would like to thank everyone who completed the parish survey and participated in the Cottage Meetings. The next step in the process is to submit a draft of the Profile to the Vestry for their November meeting. The final version will be submitted to the Diocese before producing it in CD format, a booklet and as a link on the St. Peter's website. At that point the Self Study Committee's part in the process will be complete and the Discernment Committee will continue the Search for our new Rector.



The Grennen Family wishes to express their thanks for all the help, thoughts and prayers during John's stroke and heart surgery recovery., as well as with Jessica's

medical issues. Our church family definitely made a difference through all this. God Bless everyone.

"When Two or Three Are Gathered"

The Women's Prayer Group that met for eight years is planning to start up again on two Friday mornings a month from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Nancie McTaggart's home. We plan to include Morning Prayer, prayers for those in need and discuss who could use a visit, a card, phone call, or even some soup or cookies to cheer them up. We'll share fellowship over tea and coffee. Our first meeting will be Nov. 13th. For more information, call Nancie at 732-257-6768.



Seasons of the Church Year

The liturgy of the Episcopal Church proclaims the story of Jesus' love in a rhythm that follows the seasons of the year. This church calendar represents hundreds of years of tradition, dating to fifth century Jerusalem. For Episcopalians, the church calendar provides a framework for our spiritual life. Beginning with Advent, we are immersed in the stories of our faith – of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection. Liturgical colors are used for vestments and altar cloth to mark the six seasons.

The season of Advent starts four Sundays before Christmas. Considered the first season of the church year, Advent, which is derived from the Latin word *adventus* or "coming," prepares us for the arrival of Christ.

During Advent, we quietly make ourselves ready for the wonder of Jesus' birth. Advent is, then, a time of hopeful anticipation of God's coming into our world – and a reminder that He will come again. As a result, Advent liturgies are characterized by a sense of majesty and expectation.

Altar decorations and vestments may be blue or purple. An Advent wreath is used to mark the time of waiting, with some families observing this custom at home as well.

Children Pray: At the beginning of Advent -



How dark outside!
but see — a star's in the sky;
Mary and Joseph are passing by.
So let's light a candle to welcome them
as they go on their way to Bethlehem.
We'll light a candle in church each day,
We'll light one candle each week and pray.
We'll light a candle at home each day,
We'll light a candle each week and pray.

Prayer while lighting the Advent candle: a family prayer for every day of Advent



O God,
as light comes from this candle,
may the blessing of Jesus Christ
come to us,
warming our hearts and
brightening our way.
May Christ our Savior bring life
into the darkness of this world,
and to us, as we wait for his coming.



Christmas Flowers

Requests for flowers in Thanksgiving for or in Memory of your loved ones should be submitted no later than December 13th to be included in the Christmas bulletins. Special giving envelopes for flowers will be available in the Bell Tower of the church.

ALTAR GUILD



The Altar Guild will meet December 24th at 9:30 a.m. to clean and decorate the church for Christmas.

Holiday Services

CHRISTMAS EVE

4 p.m. Children's Service with special readings & prayers designed for children to make their holiday worship especially meaningful to them.
8 p.m. & 11 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

CHRISTMAS DAY

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

NEW YEARS DAY

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

ST. PETER'S HOLIDAY BAZAAR

November 28th

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

- ◆ Pictures with Santa
- ◆ Kids Crafts
- ◆ Raffles
- ◆ Vendors & Crafters
- ◆ Bake Sale
- ◆ Food
- ◆ and much much more!!!



Bring your family & friends and help support our parish!!!

Volunteers are needed to help set up, work during the bazaar and to help clean up. If you can help out, please contact Eric Pertschuk, 732-690-8058 or sign up on the sheet in back of the church.



COOKIE BAKERS NEEDED!

We are also in need of items for our home-baked cookie sale. If you would like to donate, please bring your items to the parish hall by 9 a.m. Nov. 28th.

HANDMADE QUILT & HAND CROCHETED AFGHAN RAFFLE

Raffle sales begin at the Holiday Bazaar for 2 top prizes of a handmade quilt created and donated by Barbara Tonkin and a hand crocheted afghan created and donated by Fran Schwarzenberg. Watch for the display in the Bell Tower!

LOOKING AHEAD



We are trying to find out if there is an interest in putting together a bus trip to the Sight & Sound Theatre in Strasburg, Pennsylvania for the "Miracle of Christmas" show. Tickets will be \$115.00 for adult, ages 13-18 is \$98.00, for children ages 3 -

12 is \$78.00 and will include transportation on a luxury bus, 2 1/2 hour show and dinner at The Hershey Farm Restaurant. Price is inclusive of gratuities for bus driver and wait staff and sales tax. The trip will be in December 2010. Payment plans can be arranged. If interested, please contact Eric Pertschuk.



SHOP ONLINE

St. Peter's receives a percentage on all purchases made through our website: www.stpetersspotswood.org click on Shop Online in the navigation bar on the left of the screen. There is no additional cost to you. There are over a thousand well known stores to choose from. When you shop online this Christmas, please remember to shop through our website. Better yet, make our website one of your "favorites"! Our thanks to those who are already shopping online through St. Peter's and don't forget to sign up for Donor Recognition!



SHOP RITE GIFT CARDS

If you shop at Shop Rite, you could be supporting St. Peter's just by buying gift cards at face value.

There is no cost to you and 5% of each card is donated to our church. Cards are available in \$25, \$50 and \$100 denominations and can be purchased in the office during the week or in the sacristy on Sundays.

INK JET RECYCLING

Another way to help St. Peter's fund our ministries at no additional cost to you. There are collection boxes in the Bell Tower & Parish Hall for ink jet cartridges. Help the environment too!



PLEASE NO TONERS!!!

In 2009 we have received **\$142.67** so far for something that would otherwise be thrown out!



A BIG THANK YOU to all of you that supported the 2nd Grade's Annual Cookie Sale last Sunday! You helped us raise \$153 and with a very generous donation match made by one of our families, we were able to donate a total of \$306 to the new organ fund! This was quite an accomplishment and a wonderful lesson in stewardship for the children. My thanks to the wonderful parents for all of their delicious baking!

- Jodi Hoover

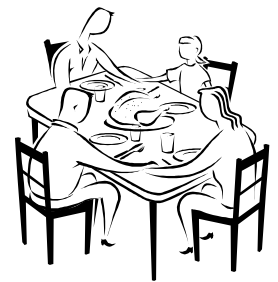
Community of Hope Ministries

Of the many guests gathered around the tables of our Wednesday Night Fellowship Suppers, few faces are more familiar than the trio of “grande dammes” who have been with us almost since these suppers began back in 1992. Now all in their 80’s, these lovely women grace us each week by sharing their life-stories and their unique, historical perspectives on life. They generously receive and share fellowship with other guests while supporting each other.

When asked about what has kept them coming back to the suppers during all these years, their answers are very similar. Toni, who is 83, offered the following: “For us seniors on fixed incomes, every little bit helps. The meals are delicious and the baked goods from Mendoker’s are a real treat. But the nicest part is the opportunity to share a meal and have conversations with other people. I’m alone all day, and these dinners help keep me from feeling lonely”. Joanna, 85, remarked, “Knowing that I’ll be coming here every Wednesday gives me something to look forward to; it’s one of the best parts of my week”. Perhaps Fran captured it best in her comments that “For us older people who keep coming back, we’ve become like a little family to each other”.

While the meal is clearly an important element of the Suppers, fellowship is equally valued by our guests. Community of Hope Ministries, through the generosity of its many volunteers and continuing financial support of the Parish, continues a proud tradition begun by St. Peter’s Parish many years ago. A warm, nutritious, homemade supper becomes the backdrop for community and fellowship.

This valued ministry to the community at large continues growing, and is always looking for others to share in this tradition of Christian hospitality. Please contact Alice Ryan at 732-967-4883 for more information or to volunteer.



Deciding Who To Help

It is my privilege to volunteer in the Community of Hope Food Pantry because it offers me the opportunity to directly help others in need. How do I know they are “in need”? They tell me. Their stories are depressing, sad, sometimes unbelievable and obviously sincere. People who come to the pantry are usually very embarrassed. Many have to wait until they can get a ride because either they physically can’t drive, don’t have a car or can’t pay for car insurance. They bring their kids with them and wonder if there are any diapers this month. Or, they bring their grand kids with them because their daughter has moved home while her husband serves in Iraq. They come in wheelchairs or using walkers or oxygen. They’ve lost their jobs so they’ve also lost their medical insurance. They need government assistance but have no way to get to New Brunswick to fill out all the paperwork. If they’re lucky they have prepaid phone cards from Rite Aid. They can’t afford a land line, or they have no home for a land line. They sometimes have no “real” address because they really don’t have an address - they’re living in their car or sleeping on a friend’s living room floor.

Some of the people I meet can’t read. Some can’t write. Some are very educated and are in shock they are standing in a food pantry. Some cry they are so mortified. “When I get back on my feet, I’m coming to help the pantry,” they promise. Some don’t even come every month; they only come in if they “really” need to, they tell me.

So I listen to all the stories and wonder...are these two bags of groceries really going to help these folks? With all their problems and needs and health issues and depressing situations, are these two bags of tuna, soup and macaroni really going to make a difference?

Today we are lucky to have some eggs, day old bread and some fresh tomatoes from a local farmer in addition to the usual canned and boxed items. You would think we were giving away gold coins. “Thank you so much”, a gentleman cries. “We are so blessed you folks are here for us.” As if I am personally giving him these groceries from my home. As if bread and eggs are such a big deal. As if he wouldn’t eat if we weren’t here.

- Kathy McDonnell



Birthdays

November

November 1 st	Emily Biroc Richard Bronzellino Rachel Drew
November 2 nd	LuAnn Bettin
November 3 rd	Sandy Caruso Thomas Dougherty Sean Ignosis Ryan Maniscalki Andrew Smith
November 4 th	Caress Fenton Maxwell Guen Salvatore Porcelli
November 5 th	Gabrielle Ignosis
November 6 th	Robert Kilpatrick
November 7 th	Victoria Guen Nancy Pertschuk
November 8 th	Peter Zinchuk
November 9 th	Michelle Laryea Lorraine Shelters
November 10 th	Krista Grobelny Theodore Klein
November 14 th	William Andrews
November 15 th	Paul Fatum Gregory Tonkin
November 16 th	Paul Gale Michael Miller
November 17 th	Georgina Benhardt Catherine Patufka
November 18 th	Peggy Ellis Richard Patufka
November 19 th	Colin Barlow
November 20 th	Craig Kafafian Meghan Knowles Derek Santora
November 24 th	Sharon Gale Rebecca Marfitt
November 26 th	Kerri Dvorak Daniel Palisay
November 27 th	Kaleigh Soles Nicole Wheeler
November 28 th	Michael Gyumolcs
November 30 th	Richard Dvorak Carolyn Gugliotta

December

December 1 st	Mary Reans
December 2 nd	Cheryl Hack
December 3 rd	Kenneth Irons Barbara Tonkin
December 5 th	David Donaldson Barbara Nagy Bob Stocker
December 6 th	Stacey Evans Tammy Jones Cathy Mennitt
December 8 th	William Begley Rev. Doug Reans
December 9 th	Jeffrey Hack
December 10 th	Victoria Chmielowicz Stephanie Fatum Alexis Gramata
December 11 th	Jesse James Ellis Elizabeth Fagan Kerri Meyers
December 12 th	Kristina Porcelli
December 13 th	Scott Bransky Bruce Horne RJ Paprota
December 14 th	Lorraine Kaplan
December 15 th	Carol Goldfinger Dominic Porcelli
December 16 th	Laura Caruso Betty Donnamaria Christopher Irons
December 17 th	Georgann Benhardt Darryl Jolly Natasha Rosario
December 18 th	Taylor Soles
December 19 th	Kaitlyn Perez
December 21 st	Kelley Evans Shailyn Santora Gene Vogel
December 23 rd	Patricia Smith
December 26 th	Shirley Clementi Evan Jones Scott Tannura
December 27 th	Christina McCarthy
December 28 th	William Knowles
December 30 th	Julia Hood Erika Nuñez
December 31 st	George Poko Frances Schwarzenberg

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

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Anniversaries

November

November 3 rd	David & Jennifer Persson Brian & Jennifer Shonk Richard & Sarah Wisniewski
November 5 th	Ken & Linda Adams Eugene & Margie Weiland
November 23 rd	Lester & Sandra Reti
November 24 th	Keith & Dorothy Gabbett Rev. Doug & Mary Reans
November 25 th	Raymond & Erin Johnson
November 27 th	Ralph & Kathie Evans

December

December 3 rd	Craig & Jodi Hoover
December 5 th	John & Amy Loughran
December 6 th	James & Catherine Mennitt
December 16 th	Robert & Peggy Ellis
December 21 st	Bob & Georgann Benhardt

