



St. Peter's Church
IN THE GREAT VALLEY

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1700

The Beacon

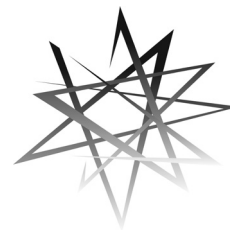
*In thy light shall we see light.
Psalm 36:9*

December 2017 ~ January 2018

Right Over the Place Where Jesus Lay...

by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt

"Henri Matisse: The Cut Outs" was a happy sort of exhibit at New York's Museum of Modern Art featuring a particular stage of the artist's career. Physical limitations late in life caused Matisse to work primarily with cut-out paper which "he then arranged into lively compositions, striking for their play with color and contrast, their exploitation of decorative strategies, and their economy of means," according to the exhibit description. It is rare that I buy anything more than a postcard at museum shops, but after seeing this exhibit I left with a print of a piece called *Nuit de Noel* [Christmas Eve] because of its stars. One large, yellow, pleasingly irregular star with nine points is the obvious focus of the top part of the image. Even better are the other thirteen stars that seem to me to be dancing or maybe jumping rope. Other shapes and colors are nice too, but those fourteen stars are most interesting.



I never came anywhere close to being an astronomer but have been interested in the night sky since I was a young girl. The arrangement of stars into constellations is just so fascinating and the vastness of space so mysteriously intriguing to me. Maybe this is why, when I hear the story of the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night, I picture a dark blue sky splattered with bits of light rather than people, animals, or even angels. Or maybe this is why I find the story of the Magi following a star over "field and fountain, moor and mountain" so captivating.

The cut-out stars of Matisse's print seem to want to announce something. It is as if the little ones are flitting around, trying to direct my attention to the big, bright star in the middle. Eagerly, they are telling me that there is something about its light that I need to see. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

In December 1950, Theodore Parker Ferris began a sermon by saying that "every thinking person in the world today" is aware of the darkness in society. There is always something that troubles our hearts. It might be that lately we have seen more signs of darkness than usual, but it has always been there. And so has the light. Where do you see the light now? It is there and it guides us where we need to be.

This winter there will be many opportunities at St. Peter's to prepare for, wonder about, and bask in the light of the season. In the pages that follow you will find information about our Wednesday evening Advent series and our special services of Evensong, Advent Lessons and Carols, and Epiphany Compline, as well as ways you can help others. I invite and encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities. Also, this is one of the times of year when I am especially mindful of visiting those who are unable to worship with us regularly, so if you or someone you know would like a visit from one of the clergy, please call the parish office (610-644-2261).

I wish you and all those you love a peaceful, meaningful, and joyful season of preparation and celebration that is full of hope and light.

“Prepare Him Room”

by the Rev. Kyle J. Babin

“Prepare” is perhaps the classic word associated with Advent—preparation for Christmas but also preparation for Christ’s second coming. If we focus more on our day-to-day lives, Advent is a time of preparation within our hearts. It is now a cliché that our culture is inordinately busy. Being busy merits praise and has become, sadly, a marker of self-worth. And yet much about Advent is countercultural and invites us to slow down, urging us to live in the present moment in wondrous anticipation. By doing so, we make room in our hearts for Christ to enter in. We make room for the Holy Spirit to speak to us, to convict our hearts, and to show us the Way of Jesus more clearly.

While Advent doesn’t have quite the same penitential character as Lent, it is nevertheless a season that entails some degree of stripping away all that clutters our lives. It is a season that invites us to look within ourselves with a repentant spirit, and ask ourselves in what ways we *don’t* allow Christ into our lives. Advent is also a time associated with judgment, although the reality of judgment need not be hell, fire, and brimstone; judgment is not just in the future but also in the present. It occurs when our sinful actions cause us to miss God’s radiance and glory. It occurs when we fail to serve God by failing to serve and honor God’s presence in our fellow humanity.

One spiritual practice that can help us invite Christ into our hearts more fully is that of private confession, which appears as the Rite of Reconciliation of a Penitent in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. While we confess our sins regularly in the liturgy, those confessions are corporate, general, and often hasty. They tend to acknowledge our collective failings as human beings and don’t allow sufficient time for self-examination. The beauty of private confession is that it forces us to really look inward and see the ways we consciously or unconsciously block God out of our lives and impair our relationships with other people. This rite is healing in many ways. The naming of specific sins before a priest and having God’s absolution pronounced to you alone is profoundly moving. Yes, God forgives our sins without private confession, but the point of the Rite of Reconciliation is that our souls are healed most effectively when we hold ourselves accountable for our faults and receive sacramental assurance of God’s gracious forgiveness. In Anglicanism, private confession has never been mandatory; as the classic aphorism says, “All may, some should, none must.” But Anglican tradition has always held that private confession is a spiritually valuable practice.

As Henri Nouwen points out in *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, the parable of the prodigal son speaks of a spiritual about-face in the son’s relationship with his father. The parable is about being convicted and choosing to repent and turn again to our Loving Father, who is always ready to enfold us in his open arms, before we even choose to turn to him.

This Advent I recommend the rite of Reconciliation as a potential spiritual practice to make room for Christ, as well as Martin Smith’s excellent book *Reconciliation: Preparing for Confession in the Episcopal Church*. If you have any questions or would like guidance on this practice, Abigail and I are happy to talk with you and are always available to hear confessions by appointment.

As Anglicans, we can view the Rite of Reconciliation as a wonderful opportunity to reconcile ourselves to a loving God who wants nothing more than for us to be in right relationship with him at all times. Reconciliation is ultimately about thanksgiving for God’s gracious goodness, boundless mercy, and a Christian life that is all about an infinite number of chances to make things right again.



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Psalm 36:9

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Advent Wreath Workshop

We know it is Advent when we see an evergreen wreath and four colored tapers on a golden stand in the church. Each Sunday we watch one, two, three, and finally four candles being lit, and we wonder why three are blue but one is pink. During Advent we watch, wait, and prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas.

On **December 3**, the first Sunday in Advent, individuals and families will have the opportunity during the formation hour to make an Advent wreath to use at home. We provide the straw wreaths, fresh greens, and candles, and also materials to guide readings, reflections and conversations as you light each candle. You are welcome to bring your own Advent wreath or ring if you wish. Holly Hardester (hahardester@gmail.com) will be happy to answer any questions.

Advent Choral Evensong

by Linda Holden

All are invited to an Advent choral evensong, which features *Preces and Responses* by Humphrey Clucas and Charles Villiers Stanford's *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*, on Sunday, **December 3** at 4 P.M. in the historic church. For the anthem the choir will sing Paul Manz' "E'en So, Lord Jesus," which he drafted in 1953 at his critically ill three-year-old son's bedside and later reshaped into the piece we know today.

At the conclusion of the service, the choir will perform Johann Sebastian Bach's Cantata 140, "*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*," accompanied by strings, oboes, and harpsichord. A reception will round out the evening. Do plan to invite friends and neighbors to join you at this seasonal music offering to experience a calm, candlelit Advent at St. Peter's.



Wednesday Evenings in Advent

December 6 – St. Nicholas Day Carol Sing

The St. Nicholas Day carol sing promises festive fun for all ages. After a 6 P.M. winter supper (hosted by the clergy), we will regroup at the piano to sing Advent and Christmas carols and sip hot beverages in the barn until 8. Consider inviting a friend to join you, and please RSVP to Kyle (kyle@stpetersgv.org).

December 13 – Holy Eucharist, with Healing Music

The time before Christmas often evokes many emotions, including loneliness and sadness; these days we are also feeling conflict, tension, and turmoil in the world around us. We invite you to bring all that is weighing on your heart before God in the Holy Eucharist, asking for God's ever-present healing and comfort; the laying on of hands for healing and anointing with oil will also be offered. This contemplative, intimate celebration of the Eucharist will feature vocal and instrumental music by Ruth Cunningham, formerly with Anonymous 4. She will also offer reflective music before supper and after the service.

Christmas Pageant

Christmas Eve would not be complete without a Christmas pageant, which is one way we tell the remarkable story of the birth of Jesus. Seeing it with our eyes, hearing it with our ears, and speaking and singing it with our voices embed the story in both our heart and memory. So of course there will be a Christmas pageant at St. Peter's on Christmas Eve during the 4 P.M. Eucharist!

All children are invited to participate in the pageant, which Mary Anne Morgan will direct again this year. There will be an opportunity to sign up to take part in the pageant on Sunday, **December 3**, after the 9 A.M. service. Two rehearsals are scheduled—one during the Sunday school hour on **December 10** and the second on **Saturday, December 16**, at 10 A.M.; both will take place in the barn. Contact Holly Hardester (hahardester@gmail.com) if you want more information or have questions.

Following the Saturday rehearsal, both the children in the pageant and all Sunday school children are invited to have lunch and then to create their own special gingerbread house.

Epiphany Compline

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In the collect for the Epiphany we pray, "O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth...." You are heartily invited to come for Compline at 7:30 P.M. on **January 7** and contemplate, by candlelight and choir music, the ways in which Christ has been made manifest to you. Dress comfortably, bring a friend, and treat yourself to this beautiful service at the close of the day.

Advent Lessons and Carols

We will hold our Advent Lessons and Carols service at 10 A.M. on Sunday, **December 17**, in the barn. As the *Book of Occasional Services* explains, "In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger," so we urge you to join us for this special service of scripture and music and then enjoy a festive brunch and warm fellowship afterwards.



The only other service that day is the 8 A.M. Rite I Holy Eucharist in the church.

Christmas Memorials

Christmas memorials are a wonderful way to remember loved ones or celebrate family milestones like weddings, births, or anniversaries. Your gift "in thanksgiving for..." or "in memory of..." will be listed in the Christmas service leaflets. The minimum contribution suggested is \$25; checks should be payable to St. Peter's Church (with "Christmas memorials" noted on the memo line). All orders must be received by **December 10** for inclusion in the Christmas leaflets. Order forms are available in both gathering spaces and from the parish office. Whether you mail your order to the office or place it in the offering plate, please be sure to include the name(s) of those you wish to honor or remember. Thank you!

Christmas Eve Schedule Change

As usual, we will offer three Christmas Eve services—the family Eucharist at 4 P.M. and the two evening Festal Eucharists. But this year, since feedback has been telling us that people are increasingly reluctant to stay out late, we have shifted the Festal Eucharist service schedule accordingly. This year's services will begin half an hour earlier than in the past: the preparatory music will begin at 7 and 10, and Festal Eucharist will begin at 7:30 and 10:30.

Please note the new times on your calendar, and be assured that this is something we are trying this year. We will make further adjustments in the future as needed.

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany at a Glance

December 3

Intergenerational Advent wreath workshop, 10:15 to 11:05 A.M. (see p. 3)
Alternative Christmas, after all morning services (see p. 3)
Gifting tree presents due at St. Peter's
Choral Evensong, 4 P.M. (see p. 3)

December 6 and 13

Wednesdays in Advent (with supper), 6 to 8 P.M. (see p. 3)

December 10

Alternative Christmas Market, after all morning services (see p. 3)

December 17

Lessons and Carols, 10 A.M., followed by brunch (see p. 4)

Family Christmas Eve Eucharist—December 24, 4 P.M. (barn)

Celebrate Christ's birth in this late afternoon Holy Eucharist filled with carols and candlelight, and hear the children retell the Christmas story in the pageant. (pageant information on p. 4.)

Music for Christmas Eve—7 P.M., and Festal Choral Eucharist, 7:30 P.M. (church)

Join us for the festival Christmas Eve liturgy and music celebrating the awe and joy of Christmas. Arrive early for beautiful music that sets the tone before the service and get home long before midnight!

Music for Christmas Eve—10 P.M., and Festal Choral Eucharist, 10:30 P.M. (church)

The late festival Christmas Eve liturgy and magnificent music renews the awe and joy of Christmas. Plan to arrive early, since the music before this glorious service truly sets the tone of this most holy night.

Christmas Day—Instrumental Music & Carols, 10:45 A.M., and Festal Holy Eucharist, 11 A.M. (church)

The Christmas morning liturgy and carols of the season invite us to celebrate God with us, Emmanuel.

December 31—The First Sunday after Christmas

Holy Eucharist, Rite 1, 8 A.M. (church)
Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10 A.M. (church)

January 7—The Epiphany

Our regular 8, 9, and 11:15 A.M. schedule resumes.
Christian formation for all ages at 10:10 and King cake at all coffee hours.

January 7— Epiphany Compline, 7 P.M. (barn)

We mark the Epiphany at this serene service of Compline, with music from Taizé. (see p. 4)

January 21—The Confession of St. Peter

We celebrate our patron saint in word and song at all three services on this Sunday.

Looking Inward and Outward

While most of December is filled with parish-wide activities during Advent (see pp. 3-4), on **December 10**, Mark Nestlehutt's series on the gospels concludes with a look at the Gospel of John, which prompted Mark to wonder, "What was he thinking?"



Once the new year begins, we turn from the bustle of the holidays to a series on prayer led by Kyle Babin. Kyle asks, "Does prayer often seem only like a rote repetition of previously-composed prayers? Do you find yourself failing to find eloquent language to engage in conversation with God? Are you running dry on prayer in your spiritual life?" We will explore different ways of praying in hopes of expanding our sense of what it means to pray.

- **January 7, Praying with *The Book of Common Prayer*:** We will survey the many prayer offerings in this rich book, and also forms of prayer for devotional use and for families to use at home.
- **January 14, Praying with Scripture:** We will explore how scripture reaches deep into the heart and how imagination, guided by the Holy Spirit, lets us converse with God through scripture.
- **January 21, Exploring Contemplative Prayer.** We will see how different forms and methods of prayer can quiet mind and heart, letting us rest in the holy presence of God, even beyond words.

We once again look outward on **January 28**, when the Reverend Matthew Engleby, executive director of *El Hogar*, joins us to preach and teach. *El Hogar de Amor y Esperanza* [Home of Love and Hope] began in 1979 when five members of an Episcopal church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, wanted to address the deplorable situation of children abandoned on the streets of that city. Since then, *El Hogar* has grown to four campuses: an elementary school, a technical institute, an agricultural school, and a residence for high school girls. Its mission is to transform and empower abandoned, hopelessly poor Honduran children by providing a loving home and education; its goal is to break the cycle of poverty and help them fulfill their potential as productive, caring, and independent Honduran citizens. Abigail and Mark Nestlehutt had wonderful experiences leading service teams at *El Hogar* and hope you will enjoy learning about this important ministry.

Please join us for any or all of these 10:20 A.M. sessions in the barn!



On November 10, eighteen young people—including our own youth, their friends, and six St. James upper-school students—gathered at St. Peter's for a potluck dinner and graveyard scavenger hunt, followed by hot beverages and s'mores roasted over a bonfire. For the hunt they pursued a series of clues in riddle form, aided only by their cell phone flashlights on a dark night, and the team that found the most clues received Barnes and Noble gift cards. But *everyone* had a fantastic time! We hope to deepen our relationships with St. James students in the future and collaborate on more social events.

Our young people are holding a fall fundraiser to help support a mission trip being planned for June, to assist with hurricane relief in southeast Texas. They invite you to visit their "pop-up" table at Alternative Christmas, or

to order blank greeting cards (featuring photos they took) during any coffee hour. Thank you for your generosity in support of their service efforts!

In December, you will notice that the Prayers of the People at 9 and 11:15 were written by our youth. These petitions are the product of two sessions on prayer during our Sunday morning gatherings.

On **December 15**, the youth will gather in the church kitchen at 7 P.M. for their second cookie bake. Their confectionary creations will be judged, and the winner of "best cookie" will receive a prize. A Christmas movie will follow the cookie bake, ending around 10 P.M. Please RSVP to Kyle (kyle@stpetersgv.org).

After the holidays, our youth will have a private tour of religious art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art on Saturday, **January 20**, at 11 A.M. Since we need a definite head count in advance, please RSVP to Kyle as soon as possible. All seventh- through twelfth-graders are always welcome at this or any activity!

Generous God † Grateful Giving

Thank you to the many parishioners who have pledged for 2018. Through your generosity, we have received pledges of \$397,254 from 121 parishioners. We have not yet met our goal of \$477,310, but this does not diminish our gratitude for the commitments that have been made. Again, thank you.

If you have not yet pledged, there still is time to do so, and every pledge of any size strengthens St. Peter's ministries. You can pick up a pledge card in the gathering spaces in each building, request one from the church office, or pledge online at www.stpetersgv.org.

It's a Marvelous Night for a Barn Dance

by Paige Infortuna

Many of you may remember the Van Morrison song that goes, "It's a marvelous night for a barn dance." Well, October 28, the date of our community barn dance, certainly was a great night for St. Peter's! The idea was to hold a family-friendly event that was open to the public, and our hope was to sell 250 tickets and raise \$15,000 for the operating budget.

An energetic, resourceful team began planning this past winter, and met regularly throughout the summer and fall. Several members solicited in-kind donations and requested sponsorship from the parish, our vendors, and area businesses. We posted road signs in the surrounding area, ran a Facebook ad, updated details about the barn dance on the website, and sold tickets after Sunday services (and online). We secured musicians, and planned a fun-filled, festive meal.

These efforts culminated in a night to remember! We sold 250 tickets, and close to 200 people attended the barn dance. We held both a silent and a live auction, that offered an ample, diverse array of items for guests to bid on. We reached our fundraising goal, earning \$15,503; our expenses ran \$3,838, which netted us \$11,665.

While this is all wonderful news, the most important things that happened that night had little to do with the money raised or goals met, but much to do with friendships made between our guests and us. We welcomed folks from around the area—some were friends of parishioners, but many just heard about the barn dance or saw our posters and wanted to attend. The fun in this was the connections that people found once they stepped inside the barn and started talking (and dancing) with other attendees.

Thank you to everyone who helped turn this idea into a reality. We could not have done it without you!

Community
Barn Dance



See these photos in color
in the online Beacon.



October
2017



See more photos on
our Facebook page.

The Old Year and the New Year in the Preschool

by Stacy Warkentine

We have been so busy at the preschool playing, learning, and growing and suddenly we are coming up on January, the new year and everything it will bring! Our new Wednesday enrichment program has been a huge success and generated additional funds for the school. The twelve children in the class are busy cooking, doing science experiments, and practicing their ABC's and 1-2-3's. We have also added an optional third day for our two-year-olds to provide more flexibility for busy families; five children are currently enrolled.



Speaking of enrollment, registration for the 2018-19 school year begins in January. Places will likely be available in all three classes, so if you know a child who might love to be in preschool, or know families with young children in your neighborhood or older child's school, please steer them our way. All classes meet from 9 to 11:45 a.m.; an overview of our program and its requirements for each age level follows:

- **2 ½-year-olds:** The class for children between about 30 and 36 months (who need not be toilet trained) meets Tuesdays and Thursdays. This lightweight introduction to the world of preschool is structured like the older children's programs but its learning goals are appropriate for the under-3 set.
- **3-year-olds:** To be in this Mon., Wed., Fri. class, children must be at least 3, but not yet 4, by Sept. 1; the birthday cutoff for those in the Phoenixville Area School District is Sept. 30. This class has developmentally appropriate learning goals that emphasize socialization and lots of preschool skills.
- **Pre-K class:** Children must be at least 4 by Sept. 1; the birthday cutoff for those in the Phoenixville Area School District is Sept. 30. The core program meets Mon. through Thurs.; for families desiring a fifth day we offer an optional Friday enrichment program carefully designed by our pre-K teacher to complement the week's activities without compromising the completeness of the core program. Pre-K children learn in a rich hands-on environment with play as its foundation; their holistic development is its focus, as in all our programs. We stay in close contact with area Kindergartens to ensure that we are teaching what children need to learn—not only academics (letters and their sounds, numbers and their uses, context and culture, and science) but also collaboration, problem-solving, effective communication, empathy, and all the other building blocks of their future education.

Summer camp registration will also open soon, so watch for St. Peter's Lambs Summer Day Camp flyers in both gathering spaces and on our website (preschool.stpetersgv.org). To learn more about the school or camp, or to schedule a tour, please get in touch with me (preschool@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261).

Comfort in Prayer

Prayer is the many ways in which we are heard by God and in which we hear God. Prayer is both very personal and also communal. It is one way we are cared for and also a way we care for each other. In the midst of the holiday season specific needs for prayers that bring comfort often arise, as the fullness and merriment of the holidays can contrast painfully with feelings of loss and discouragement. Prayer helps. God knows our needs.

St. Peter's maintains a prayer list that is updated weekly and included in each service leaflet. Many of us often leave the service leaflets behind each Sunday so the paper can be recycled, but before doing this, please remove the prayer list and take it home. Place it on your kitchen table, nightstand, or any place where you will see it regularly, and when you see it, stop and slowly hold up each name before God who knows the heart and needs of everyone.

The St. Peter's prayer group lifts up each name on the prayer list to God at their weekly Thursday gatherings at 10:30 A.M. All are welcome to join this group, which meets at the home of Dick and Ann Odgers (Bellingham B308, West Chester), as frequently as they can.

If you would like to be added to the prayer list, or would like to add someone else to it, contact Abigail (abigail@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261) or Mary Ann Tatum (maryanntatum5@gmail.com or 610-644-1549).

Pastoral Care
Corner



OUTREACH NEWS AND NOTES

A Time for Work, Hope and Pride

by Randy Klein

Now is the time for St. Peter's to express pride in the accomplishments of its eighteen-year old Good Works ministry and to engage more volunteers who create hope for those in need by making their homes "warmer, safer, drier." Since the Good Works ministry takes place offsite, some parishioners may be unfamiliar with this important chapter in our outreach history. This ministry began in the 1990's, when the youth group, accompanied by adults, began rehabilitating one Coatesville home a year.

In August 2000, their service expanded into a Habitat for Humanity mission trip to High Point, NC. That same year, St. Peter's formalized its commitment to repair the homes of those in need through Good Works, with our volunteers working where needed once each month. St. Peter's soon became a partnership church, which means we "adopted" one particular home and homeowner.



GOOD WORKS

The stories of two of our homeowners illustrate the reach of our ministry:

- Phylliss described her mobile home as dark, dreary, and depressing. Our work crew replaced kitchen cabinets and repaired flooring and many other faulty features; the team also removed a wall to expand her bedroom, repainted brown walls ivory, and added drapes – which helped reduce her depression immediately. Overall St. Peter's improvements to Phylliss' home "enabled her to claim her dwelling as her own, and no longer as the house her father had dragged her to." Inspired by her experience with St. Peter's Good Works crew, Phylliss became a volunteer on subsequent Good Works projects and for Meals on Wheels.
- Willie's tiny row home was improved by the installation of new windows, a kitchen ceiling, and electrical circuits to replace his numerous hazardous extension cords. Lots of painting spruced up the place, which also housed his ailing mother. Willie actively participated with our team in the work on his home, and the improvements so encouraged him that two years after we finished, Willie created a man-cave in his basement.

St. Peter's has established a wonderful tradition of helping create "warmer, safer, drier" homes for folks in need, and has successfully restored their hope. Good Works staffer Russ Herrick observed that unlike most churches that remain active for three or four years, "St. Peter's has far exceeded the length of commitment by any sponsoring church." It also bears mentioning that some of the men and women who were St. Peter's initial Good Works participants have remained active in this ministry for almost two decades!

If you are adept at home repairs or would like to learn new skills, please consider joining the crew on the second Saturday of any month. Plan to visit the Good Works table at Alternative Christmas to learn first-hand about the work of this ministry from our volunteers. Anyone fourteen or older can experience the joy of helping neighbors, but no one has to commit to working every month. With new volunteers, our new project can begin in February. If you have questions or want more information about joining this ministry, contact Mark Carkhuff (mtcarkhuff@gmail.com) or Randy Klein (randolphklein@hotmail.com).

Thank You, Thank You

The outreach commission thanks all parishioners for supporting our ministries. These thanks go to those who attended the wonderful November Chester Children's Chorus concert in November, and also goes in advance to those who support our work through the Alternative Christmas market and the Gifting Tree.

Our next parishwide effort will be our annual collection of items for *Gesundheit* bags to relieve flu patients at The Clinic, scheduled to begin on January 21. Please watch for details about how you can help fill those bags in future Sunday leaflets and issues of Keynotes.

FOOD MINISTRY NOTES

A Thanksgiving Dinner to Remember

Our November dinner at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Phoenixville, created a joyous spirit among our appreciative guests. Their heartfelt comments were touching, and our food ministry is happy to embrace this wonderful community within our family!

Their comments about the special meal were genuinely heartwarming. One man hesitantly took a small helping of turkey gravy because he felt that "accepting gravy other than my mom's just wouldn't be right," but he was pleasantly surprised (and came back for seconds). A young mother and her toddler tried new foods, including homemade whole berry cranberry sauce and carrot salad, and the boy's face clearly showed



The "quality control" group gave the homemade turkey gravy three tasting-spoons up!

how much he enjoyed his meal. Some men enjoyed the food so much that they contacted friends and told them to "come on over" as latecomers. One guest commented on our table decorations, which included yellow tablecloths, colorful leaves, and cheerful, colorful turkey centerpieces (a big thank you to our preschoolers, their teachers, and Stacy Warkentine for creating them); he went on to express his appreciation for our attentiveness and "the special effort [we made] to not just put something out, but to put out something really good."

It was gratifying to see how our large two-shift team came together to serve others. Smiles and convivial conversation abounded as the special dinner we wanted to provide (roast turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, carrot-raisin salad, and pumpkin pie topped with whipped cream) took shape and then exceeded our guests' expectations.

If you decide to try out this ministry by helping to prepare or serve a future dinner, you will probably echo the response of one of our first-time volunteers, "What a joyous and rewarding experience for all of us, guests and workers alike!"



- Paige Infortuna and Beth and Jason Hacker for organizing the barn dance;
- Lloyd Reynolds for his many years of service with the BB&G4J;
- Shannon Mannon for organizing the labyrinth walk;
- Bishop Daniel Gutiérrez and Deacon Karen Kaminskas for preaching and assisting on October 22;
- Steve Ockenden for his seamless management of sign-ups and sittings for the parish photo directory;
- John Alston for speaking with us on November 5 during adult forum and the 11:15 service, and for his outstanding work with Chester Children's Chorus;
- Susy Baum and Holly Hardester for setting up the barn for Compline in November;
- Kyle Babin for his creative work promoting our events and for ordering the new all-weather frames for our on-campus posters;
- The eighteen volunteers who prepared and served the November food ministry dinner at St. Peter's, Phoenixville;
- Jason Hacker and Paige Infortuna for organizing the Sugartown Strawberries hayride;
- The Rev. Canon Shawn Wamsley for preaching on November 12;
- Gail Malcolm for her work promoting The High Point and managing events there;
- Members of the outreach commission, choir, and the BB&G4J, and especially Kate Mallon-Day, for arranging the Chester Children's Chorus concert;
- Katie Franz, Sharon Holt, Paige Infortuna, Molly Kulp, Jen Laurence, David Lockner, and Eric Stoltz for teaching Sunday school this fall;
- Holly Hardester for coordinating the children's Christian formation program and for "subbing" when needed.

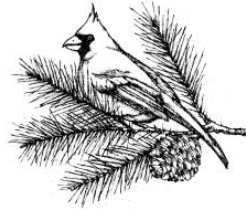
December 2
Needlework ministry
10 A.M.

December 3
Alternative Christmas market
after all services
Advent wreath-making
10:15 A.M.
Choral Evensong
4 P.M.

December 6
St. Nicholas Day supper & carol sing
6 P.M.

December 9
Kairos Outside
9:30 A.M.

December 10
Alternative Christmas market
after all services
St. Peter's Players auditions
1 P.M.



**December 2017
January 2018**

December 11
St. Peter's Players auditions
7:30 P.M.

December 13
Advent healing service, music, & supper
6 P.M.

December 15
Youth cookie bake & movie night
7 P.M.

December 16
Christmas pageant rehearsal
10 A.M.

December 17
Advent Lessons and Carols
10 A.M.
(Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8 A.M., as usual)

January 6
Needlework ministry
10 A.M.

January 7
Compline
7:30 P.M.

January 13
Kairos Outside
9:30 A.M.

January 21
Gesundheit bag drive begins

January 28
Newcomer event
Time TBD

The full Advent and Christmastide worship schedule appears on page 5.

October Financial Snapshot

	October 2017	Year to Date October	Year-end Projection	Budget 2017
Parishioner Contributions	\$ 34,508	\$ 360,710	\$448,378	\$454,350
Total Income	53,068	508,637	662,353	642,932
Total Expense	57,058	526,622	647,325	642,932
Surplus/ (Deficit)	(3,990)	(17,985)	15,028	0
<i>Mortgage Payment</i>	\$ 1,488			
<i>Interest</i>	648			
<i>Principal</i>	840			
<i>Mortgage Balance</i>	208,937			

The finance commission has reviewed this summary.
Please direct any questions about it to Joe Herbst, chair, or any other member.

**Save May 17, 18, and 19
for St. Peter's Players' return in
Plaza Suite by Neil Simon!
Auditions on December 10 and 11**



St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley
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 Telephone: 610-644-2261 Fax: 610-644-7967
 E-mail: parishoffice@stpetersgv.org Web site: www.stpetersgv.org

The Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt, Rector
 The Rev. Dr. Kyle J. Babin, Assistant Rector
 Dr. Bruce Glenny, Organist/Choirmaster
 Susan House, Parish Administrator
 Stacy Warkentine, Preschool Director
 Gail Malcolm, Marketing and Event Manager
 Elizabeth Dwyer, Parish Secretary
 Liam Reid, Weekend Facilities Manager

*Our Mission:
 by the power of the Holy Spirit,
 to nurture people of all ages in the
 knowledge and love of God in Jesus Christ,
 and to make Him known
 in the wider community*

The deadline for the
 February Beacon
 is **January 15.**

Every Week at St. Peter's

Sunday

8 A.M. Holy Eucharist, Rite I*
 9 A.M. Holy Eucharist, Rite II**
 (Nursery care available**)
 10:10 A.M. Christian formation for all ages
 11:15 A.M. Holy Eucharist, Rite II*

Tuesday

7 P.M. Open Me Up**

Wednesday

10 A.M. Morning Prayer & Bible Study*

Thursday

10:30 A.M. Intercessory Prayer Group ****

Friday

7 A.M. Gathering of Men***
 12 NOON Parish office closes

* Church
 ** Barn
 *** Parish House
 **** Bellingham



December 24

Holy Eucharist (church)
 9 A.M.

Christmas Eve

Family Eucharist with Pageant (barn)
 4 P.M.
 Carols and anthems & Festal Choral Eucharist (church)
 7 & 7:30, and 10 & 10:30 P.M.

December 25

Christmas Day

Music for the season & Holy Eucharist (church)
 10:45 A.M.

December 31

Holy Eucharist (church)
 Rite I, 8 A.M.
 Rite II, 10 A.M.