



St. Peter's Church
IN THE GREAT VALLEY

✠
1700

The Beacon

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

November 2017

Tradition!

by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt

The year no one bought chocolate turkeys for the Thanksgiving table was when we realized that having them at the Thanksgiving table was a tradition we had come to adore. It must have been a late high school or early college year for me, a time when I had not been of any help with planning the family feast but expected to enjoy all of its delicacies. Around midmorning my sister and I realized that an element we considered essential was missing, so she and I hopped in a car and went to remedy the situation. After a great deal of searching we found the only open store for miles, a pharmacy in a neighboring town. It had a motley collection of marshmallow-filled chocolates that were not exactly shaped like turkeys, but whose packaging bore images of the celebrated Thanksgiving bird.

Since then I have carried on the tradition wherever I have been. I have brought foiled-wrapped chocolate turkeys to my in-laws' home, to friends' homes, and to the Army and Navy Club. The year my husband was recovering from surgery we had a great big confection nearly the size of a small chicken. Some years the candy must be nut-free or dairy-free or gluten-free depending on the needs of family and friends. Whatever the case, chocolate turkeys are a comforting constant at my holiday table even as my holiday table has changed size, location, and circumstance.

A place-setting treat is hardly important, but it is a good reminder that traditions in general are important. The things we do over and over as a family, group of friends, or parish become part of our shared story, contribute to a feeling of connection, and shape our identity. Traditions are stable, but not static, which is to say that they are flexible enough to accommodate change but stable enough to remain recognizable, even though sometimes they fade away. Traditions tend to age well, but sometimes develop quickly. There are the things we do for years before we realize the pattern, and there are the things that are instantly and obviously worth repeating. For better or worse, we are coming into a season particularly full of traditional customs. I wonder what yours are and why they matter to you.

For me, the customs, traditions, and rituals of life contribute to my understanding of who I am, but it is from knowing whose I am that I have the ability to live into all that I am called to be. You and I are many things to many people, but first, you and I are God's beloved. As the "holiday season" approaches, I invite you to start by grounding yourself in the knowledge that no matter what, you are God's. Remind yourself each day. I know it might sound goofy, but give it a try. And take advantage of opportunities. Join us for the peaceful contemplation of Compline on November 5. Make time to attend the pre-Advent quiet evening on November 29. Mark your calendar for choral evensong on December 3. The rituals of relationship with God will take different forms, but you can count on the comforting constant of the divine to give you the freedom and courage to live with faithful integrity.

It has been a wonderfully busy fall at St. Peter's. I want to thank all the people who so tirelessly served to make possible events, activities, and new opportunities to learn, serve and worship. St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley is thriving because of you and in partnership with God.

Loving God with the Mind

by the Rev. Dr. Kyle Babin

This fall, it has been a great joy to collaborate with Abigail in teaching the inquirers class. Over six weeks we explored topics related to the Christian life as encountered and experienced within the Episcopal Church. Our discussions included a brief introduction to Anglican tradition, interpretation of scripture, and thought and spirituality; worship in the Episcopal Church and its teaching and tradition; and an exploration of the sacraments of the Church. During these wonderful discussions, the excellent questions and comments from members of the class made me realize how rich these topics are. And there was so little time to address many facets of the Anglican expression of Christianity! For each class, I offered a list of additional readings, which prompted one participant to suggest that the parish create a library of sorts for parishioners to use in their own continuing education.

To that end, Abigail and I invite you to take part in this venture by borrowing books from the parish to further your own ongoing Christian formation. From time to time, we will display books in both the church and barn (St. Peter's own little lending library!) and will feature information on these books in our parish communications. If any of the books interest you, you will be able to sign them out and borrow them from the display. We hope this new project will foster parish conversation about living the Christian life.

As a seminary student, I frequently heard a saying (which I'm not sure is attributable to one person) that Anglicans value loving God with the mind. The eloquent language of *The Book of Common Prayer*, the rich theology of hymns, and the sophisticated liturgy of the Anglican tradition all invite participation in knowledge of God through mind and heart. The complex and wondrous brain with which God has gifted us is a way in which we deepen our relationships with a living God who longs for intimate relationships with us. In our lifelong quest to know this God more deeply and to love God with heart, mind, and soul, our continuous thirst for knowledge draws us into relationship with a God who created us to live fully, learn unceasingly, and love uninhibitedly, an example to which Christ himself witnessed.

I pray that our corporate and individual journeys in the Christian life will be enhanced by our parish education and formation opportunities, by sharing of wisdom and knowledge, and in some small part by our common reading of rich texts within the Christian tradition. Happy reading and learning!



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The Beacon is produced monthly by St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley
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Staff: Trudi Graves (editor), Charlotte Mark,
David Graves



Saturday, Nov. 11, at 5 P.M.
(arrive between 4:30 and 4:45)

Sugartown Strawberries
640 Sugartown Road, Malvern

\$6 per person; \$20 per family of 4 or more
We provide hot dogs, s'mores fixings,
hot chocolate, and water.

We suggest you bring sticks for roasting hot dogs
and marshmallows, flashlights, a blanket to sit on,
and warm clothes.

We must give the farm a head count in advance,
so a timely RSVP to Paige Infortuna is required
(pinfortuna@msn.com or 610-608-2093).

A Note for Seniors about the QCD Pledging Option

If you are over 70 ½ and receiving the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from a traditional IRA, you may be able to designate a portion of the RMD as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) and have those funds contributed to St. Peter's Church to fulfill your pledge. We have therefore added QCD to the 2018 pledge card as a pledge payment option. Using a QCD to support St. Peter's may reduce tax liability for some, but it is important to consult a tax adviser to determine if this option is right for your particular circumstances.

Generous God + Grateful Giving

Thank you to the many who have already pledged to St. Peter's for 2018. Through October 22, we have received 42 pledges totaling \$ 143,985. These pledged funds move us towards the goal of \$477,310. Since 77% of the income needed to cover St. Peter's expenses for 2018 comes from pledges, they are important to planning church programs. With God's help, we will meet the pledge goal.

On **November 5**, we will gather and bless all pledges at all three worship services. So if you have not pledged yet, please prayerfully consider your pledge and return the form by that Sunday. Additional forms are available from the parish office; if you prefer, you can submit your pledge online (www.stpetersgv.org).

God has done good work in and through us, and God has more for us to do. Thank you for pledging.



Youth Happenings

On the last Friday of September, some of our parish youth (along with several friends) gathered at Maggiano's Little Italy in King of Prussia for a sumptuous Italian dinner. Content after the pasta and sweets, we reconvened at the nearby Expedition Escape to tackle an escape room called "The Quest for the Throne." The young people deftly used their clever brains and, with eight seconds to spare, escaped the room! It was a fun evening.

On Friday, **November 10**, at 7 P.M., the youth of the parish will participate in a potluck dinner and church

graveyard scavenger hunt, followed by hot apple cider, hot chocolate, and desserts. This activity is designed to explore creatively (in the aftermath of All Saints' Day) our ongoing relationship with the communion of saints, who always surround us on the St. Peter's campus and are visibly represented in our historic churchyard.

Meanwhile, St. Peter's youth continue to gather on Sunday mornings for rich discussions about our experiences in the Christian life of faith. We are also developing an idea for a fall and spring mission trip fundraiser, as well as homing in on a mission trip opportunity. Stay tuned for more details!



OUTREACH NEWS AND NOTES

CCC to Perform at St. Peter's This Month

If you haven't already done so, put a big red circle around **Saturday, November 18**, on your calendar to make sure you won't miss an evening of wonderful choral music, youthful exuberance, and pure joy presented by the Chester Children's Chorus at 7 P.M.! This free concert, to which the neighboring community is invited, is a terrific opportunity to invite a neighbor, friend, family member, or all three to experience the musical offerings of this talented group of youngsters from Chester. (A free will offering to benefit CCC will be taken, and donations will be gratefully accepted).



John Alston, an associate professor of music at Swarthmore College, founded CCC in 1994, because his own childhood was transformed when he joined the Newark (NJ) Boys Chorus and because the city of Chester, south of Swarthmore, reminded him of the tough neighborhood where he grew up. He was determined to use his teaching, conducting, and singing skills to offer the children of Chester the same opportunity to change their lives through music that the Newark Boys Chorus had given him.

As one of St. Peter's core outreach ministries, CCC receives financial support from the outreach commission as well as from Alternative Christmas donations. These funds support CCC's year-round activities, which include school-year rehearsals five days a week and a five-week, full-day summer program that includes two to three hours of music daily, reading, science, art, literature, history, hip-hop dancing, and African dance and drumming.

Before the concert, we will welcome and get acquainted with the singers at a 6 P.M. dinner on the lower level of the barn. We have room for about forty dinner guests (in addition to CCC and our own choirs); if you would like to join us, please reserve your place as soon as possible at www.stpetersgv.org. We will need help preparing the meal, setting up the dinner, and moving chairs before and after the concert, so please contact Kate Mallon-Day (610-613-8965 or kantakate@aol.com) to offer your help or for more information.

Blood Drive Update

The outreach commission thanks everyone who gave blood during our October drive, which netted twenty-one pints for the Red Cross blood bank. Thanks to Elissa Lewis, Lynn Mander, Helen Ockenden, and Brenda Grove, the event ran smoothly and efficiently. We were pleased to welcome donors from the surrounding community who also had a chance to learn about St. Peter's.

Service Opportunity at St. James School

If you would you like to meet and serve the students at St. James School, you can volunteer to help at a November 21st holiday dinner at the school. Email Brenda Grove (brenda.grove@villanova.edu) for more information.

The Gifting Tree Returns

You can brighten the lives of less fortunate children and adults at Christmastime through our annual gifting tree. After the trees arrive in the barn and church on **November 11**, simply select a tag that lists gift suggestions and record the tag number, recipient's name, and your contact information in the nearby logbook. Then have fun shopping for the gifts suggested by either Episcopal Community Services or Church Housing Corporation, and deliver your unwrapped gifts to the church by Sunday, **December 3**.



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Coming December 3 and 10
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Our annual Alternative Christmas market benefiting our focus ministries.
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Taking Stock: Adult Formation in November

by Melissa Shaner

This month adult Christian formation turns its attention to the workings of our diocese and parish.

- On **November 5**, our diocesan convention delegates will report on what happened at this year's annual meeting and what it is like to participate as a delegate.
- On **November 12**, Canon Shawn Wamsley will visit us. As Canon to the Ordinary for Evangelism and Administration in our diocese, he promotes and proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and action, emphasizing mission and reconciliation, outreach, social justice, and works of mercy and charity in a hurting world. He also acts as chief of the diocesan staff and assists in organizing and planning such activities as diocesan events, learning opportunities, and clergy gatherings.
- On **November 19**, members of our finance commission will present the semi-annual review of where our budget stands to date and what we need to do to accomplish our goals.
- On **November 26**, Mark Nestlehutt will lead the first of two sessions on the gospels. This one will be devoted to the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. What were the circumstances of their composition? Who were their intended audiences? What sources did they share? How do their similarities and differences teach us about Jesus and the beginnings of Christianity? In December, John's gospel will get a session all to itself.



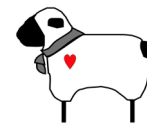
As always, all are heartily invited to join us at 10:20 in the barn. Bring your coffee and your questions!

We Need Each Other

We commonly think of pastoral care as the care given to us by Abigail and by Kyle. They have perhaps spoken comforting words to us after church. Or maybe we have called them when a crisis arose in our life or when our faith was floundering, and they listened and cared. They have visited us in the hospital and at home, prayed with us, and assured us of God's prevailing love. They have written us notes and sent us emails. And, yes, all of this is pastoral care, which each of us has received. We are blessed.

But pastoral care is more—it is all of us. Yes, it is also you and I. The late Thomas Troeger sums up pastoral care in this verse from his hymn, "We Need Each Other's Voice to Sing":

We need each other's strength to lift the cross we're called to bear.
Each other's presence is a gift of God's incarnate care.
When acts of love and tender speech convey the savior's voice,
our praise exceeds what words can reach and we with song rejoice.
We give our alleluias to the church's common chord.
Alleluia! Alleluia!



- Elissa Lewis and Brenda Grove for organizing the October blood drive;
- Liam Reid for helping ready the website for the stewardship drive;
- Steve Ockenden and the communications commission for their work on the logistics of the photo drive and the sign-up process;
- Kristin and David Eddy, Holly Hardester and Becky Dempsey, Queenie and Jack Northrop, and Eileen and Randy Klein, for leading the Darby dinner ministry teams, and the twenty-four parishioners on the teams who have prepared and served three hundred fifty meals to residents of Darby since the beginning of the year;
- St. Peter's Good Works team—Mark Carkuff, Rick Duffield, David Eddy, Ken Fleischer, David Graves, Karen Joyce, Catherine Kerrison, and Randy Klein—for their eighteen months of work on Elwin Yerger's Phoenixville home;
- Lynn Mander, Katie Franz, Holly Hardester, Nancy Lauby, and Nancy Buford for their work on the women's weekend;
- Peter Gilmore and Jason and Beth Hacker for organizing the October 22nd brunch.


Thanks
from the Vestry

for All You Do

Looking Ahead to Our Advent Offerings

December 3 marks the first Sunday of Advent. As the days grow shorter and darkness falls earlier, the Christian liturgical year moves to a place of anticipation—both of the celebration of the great miracle of the Incarnation at Christmas and of that undetermined day when, as tradition and scripture tell us, Jesus will come again “to judge both the living and the dead.” While not as penitential a season as Lent, Advent does draw us to a place of introspective reflection. Sunday morning scripture readings look at God’s judgment, which in turn calls us to examine our selves, our actions, and our lives in the world as Christians. In what ways are we called to cooperation with God in bringing the kingdom to earth?

As we do our own spiritual work in Advent, St. Peter’s will offer three Wednesday evening events, including one two days before Advent’s official start, that help us enter into the anticipation and contemplation of the season. We hope you will join us in the barn **from 6 to 8 P.M.** for any or all of these evening gatherings! Please let Kyle know (610-644-2261, ext. 308, or kyle@stpetersgv.org) which evening(s) you will attend. If driving to church in the evening is problematic for you, please let Kyle know so that we can help you find a ride.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel—A Pre-Advent Quiet Evening *Wednesday, November 29*

On this Wednesday before the first Sunday of Advent, we will gather at 6 P.M. for dinner, a clergy-led meditation/reflection, and time for individual prayer and silence. Come spend a simple, contemplative evening amid the busyness of the pre-Christmas rush.

St. Nicholas Day Intergenerational Carol Sing *Wednesday, December 6*

Your clergy invite you to come to the parish hall for dinner at 6 P.M. on St. Nicholas Day, and then to gather around the piano afterwards for a joyful evening of singing Advent and Christmas carols. Cozy, hot drinks will accompany our singing during this wonderful event for families and people of all ages. We also invite you to consider inviting a neighbor or friend to come along as well.

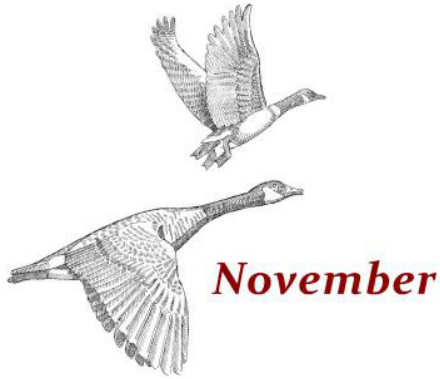
Holy Eucharist, with Healing Music Offered by Special Guest Ruth Cunningham *Wednesday, December 13*

The period before Christmas typically brings up many emotions, some of which are loneliness and sadness, and now we are living in a time of conflict, tension, and turmoil in the world. We invite you to bring all that is weighing on your heart before the presence of 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 be offered for those who desire it. This contemplative, intimate celebration of the Eucharist will feature vocal and instrumental music by Ruth Cunningham, a former member of the well-known women’s *a cappella* ensemble Anonymous 4. Ms. Cunningham will also offer reflective music both before dinner (which begins at 6 P.M.) and after the service. (For more information about our guest, visit www.ruthcunningham.com.)

Advent Choral Evensong

by Bruce Glenny

At 4 P.M. on **December 3**, the first Sunday in Advent, the gallery and chamber choirs of St. Peter’s will sing evensong, featuring service music by Humphrey Clucas, Charles V. Stanford, and Johann Sebastian Bach. At the end of the service, which will take place in the historic church, instrumentalists will join the choir in a performance of Johann Sebastian Bach’s Cantata #140, *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*. A reception will follow in the common room. Mark your calendar now, and plan to invite friends and neighbors to join you for this event.



November 3 & 4
Diocesan convention

November 4
Needlework ministry
10 A.M.

November 5
Gathering and blessing of pledges
8, 9, and 11:15 A.M.
Compline
7:30 P.M.

November 10
Youth potluck supper and scavenger hunt
7 P.M.

November 11
Kairos Outside
9:30 A.M.
Hayride at Sugartown Strawberries
5 P.M.

November 13
Food ministry dinner
St. Peter's, Phoenixville
2:30 to 6:30 P.M.

November 18
Chester Children's Chorus concert
7 P.M.

November 19
Semi-annual financial update
10:20 A.M.

November 29
Pre-Advent quiet evening
6 to 8 P.M.

September Financial Snapshot

	Sept. 2017	Year to Date Sept.	Year-end Projection	Budget 2017
Parishioner Contributions	\$ 27,008	\$326,202	\$447,302	\$454,350
Total Income	54,105	455,569	661,478	642,932
Total Expense	55,161	469,564	644,443	642,932
Surplus/ (Deficit)	(1,056)	(13,995)	17,035	0
<i>Mortgage Payment</i>	\$ 1,488			
<i>Interest</i>	672			
<i>Principal</i>	816			
<i>Mortgage Balance</i>	207,306			

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



St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley
 2475 St. Peter's Road, Malvern, PA 19355
 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
 December/January *Beacon*
 is **November 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**

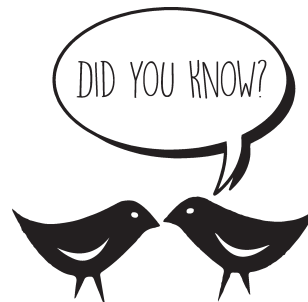
Thursday

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

Friday

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

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



Keeping up with the Diocese

Did you know that you can follow the work of the Diocese of Pennsylvania by reading its publications online? Or that you can request a hard copy of the new diocesan magazine, *Caminos*, through our parish office if you don't use a computer?

To subscribe to online diocesan publications go to www.diopa.org/resources, and click on "Resource Guide" on the red bar. On that page, click on the "subscribe" link on the right to provide your email address.

You can preview the new magazine, *Caminos*, on the home page at www.diopa.org.