



The Beacon

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

March 2019

“Let All Things Be Done for Building Up”

(1 Corinthians 14:26)

by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt

Nearly two decades ago Robert Putnam’s *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, was received as a definitive statement on the state of an increasingly disconnected society. He argued that the changing habits of Americans away from communal activities, including church, eroded the health and well being of our communities. David Brooks’ recent “Opinion” piece in the *New York Times*, “A Nation of Weavers,” makes a similar point noting that “our lack of healthy connection to each other, our inability to see the full dignity of each other” lead to a “culture of fear, distrust, tribalism, shaming and strife.” Brooks’ piece is part of a larger project in conjunction with the Aspen Institute and coordinates with an upcoming book highlighting the diverse ways in which people around the country are working to build relationships, to knit back together the brokenness of our communities. This is happening in all sorts of ways and places. It is work that looks for the common ground in the midst of difference and knows the value of being in relationship with one another. Brooks calls the people who do this work “Weavers” and explains that for Weavers like himself “the measure of our life is in the quality of our relationships.”

We recognize this at St. Peter’s. It is why I encourage you to stay for coffee hour after services each week and to greet someone you do not know before seeking out those with whom you speak regularly. It is why activities like the pancake supper or an Italian dinner and game night are essential to the health of the parish—they are opportunities to make connections. It is why one of the volunteer assignments at St. Peter’s in Phoenixville and at the Darby Dinners is simply to sit and talk with the guests to whom we are serving a meal. In our Baptismal Covenant we promise to “seek and serve Christ in all people” and “respect the dignity of every human being.” Interacting, connecting, knitting together, and building relationships are essential as we do our part to make the world around us look more and more like the kingdom of God.

This Lent we offer some important opportunities to connect. Our Sunday morning adult forums will address questions having to do with race. The series has been put together with great care by a team of parishioners who have been meeting regularly, attending trainings, and consulting people in other parishes; part of their preparation includes participating in a facilitator training for the Civil Conversations project through Interfaith Philadelphia. On Wednesday evenings during Lent we bring in guest speakers to address aspects of spirituality that will encourage attention to our relationships with God. *And*, most simply perhaps, everyone will take part in an intergenerational project. We have purchased a set of Seven Last Words coloring posters from Illustrated Children’s Ministry and all of us will take a turn or two or three to color them in with a crayon, marker or colored pencil. The posters will be available on Sunday mornings and at other times throughout the week. This is an opportunity both to engage in prayer and meditation through coloring and also to strike up a conversation with someone coloring near you. (More about this will appear in our Sunday leaflets in Lent.) Then on Good Friday, we will once again host the community Good Friday Service of the Seven Last Words of Christ, a three-hour service of prayers, music, silence and homilies. You can read about these and other opportunities on the pages that follow.

As you set your intentions for Lent and begin this holy season, I invite you to focus not only on who you are as an individual but also on who you are as part of our community and its ongoing ministry of building, knitting, weaving.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



Shrove
Tuesday

Enjoy breakfast at dinnertime at this year's Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on **March 5**, sponsored and organized by St. Peter's youth, with support from the vestry. Come to the parish hall between 6 and 7:30 p.m. on Shrove Tuesday, and indulge in a variety of all-you-can-eat pancakes . . . and then take part in the second annual pancake toss race (or just be a cheerleader if you ate too many pancakes to move quickly).

Donations to benefit the youth mission trip to Chicago in June will be gratefully accepted. If your schedule changes at the last minute and you find you can come (but hadn't *rsvp'*ed to Elizabeth Dwyer at elizabeth@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261), come anyway. There will plenty of food to go around.

Newcomer Event

If you are new to St. Peter's or have never attended a newcomer event, Abigail, the vestry, and the newcomers committee cordially invite you and your family to join us for dinner on **Sunday, March 3**, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Abigail's home. This informal dinner is an opportunity for our newer members, visitors, and guests to enjoy dinner and fellowship together. We hope you will join us and we look forward to sharing time together, getting to know each other a little better. For more information or to RSVP please contact Paige Infortuna (pinfortuna@msn.com or 610-608-2093).



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The Beacon is produced monthly by St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley
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Submit articles to beacon@stpetersgv.org or fax them to 610-644-7967

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Staff: Trudi Graves (editor), Charlotte Mark, David Graves



March 6

Holy Eucharist
with imposition of ashes if desired
12 noon
7:30 p.m. (with choir)

Thank You for Supporting the Youth Mission Trip

With heartfelt gratitude St. Peter's youth group says, "Thank you" to everyone who either bought cookies or made a donation to support their Valentine's Day cookie fundraiser. With your generous contributions they were able to raise \$850 towards their 2019 mission trip to Chicago. Special recognition and thanks go to Suzanne Casey who helped spearhead the project and passed along some of her expertise in working with chocolates and presentation. The cookies turned out perfectly and tasted fantastic.



Coming Sunday, May 19
Parishwide Service, 9 a.m.
Annual Parish Meeting, 10 a.m.

Pasta and Party Games!

The ancient Romans enjoyed their “bread and circuses,” but this year at St. Peter’s we can enjoy an Italian dinner and game night all in one! Join us for food, fellowship and fun on **March 30**, when we combine our traditional wintertime game night with a dinner fundraiser for the youth mission trip. From 6 to 7 p.m., our young people will serve lasagna, bread, salad, and tiramisu, all prepared by them; wine as well as non-alcoholic beverages will be available. Proceeds from the \$15 cost of the dinner will go toward supporting this summer’s youth mission trip to Chicago. After dinner, board games, card games, and more will start at 7 and run until 9.



Italian Dinner



If you cannot make it for the dinner, simply come at 7 for game night (there is no cost for the fun and games but donations will be gratefully accepted). If you have a board game you enjoy, please bring it, and consider bringing some snacks to share. Most importantly, bring a friend! Please let Elizabeth Dwyer (elizabeth@stpetersgv.org) know by **March 24** that you are coming to the dinner. If you have questions, contact Lynn Mander (lsmander@gmail.com) or Steve Ockenden (steveock@verizon.net).

Outreach News

Thank You, Thank You for the Gesundheit Bags

The children of St. Peter’s—both in the preschool and in Sunday school—took the lead in decorating and then filling the *Gesundheit* bags for The Clinic in Phoenixville. They transformed more than fifty plain white bags into colorful, creative, cheerful containers for the variety of soothing items that parishioners donated. Thank you for your work, children!

The outreach commission thanks everyone who made this project a success. Without the many individuals and families who provided the contents of the bags and the children who prepared the bags, we would not have been able to bring both comfort *and* some cheeriness to Clinic patients suffering from colds and flu.



Sharing Easter Joy with Darby Mission Again

by Holly Hardester

For the first time last year, St. Peter’s shared the joy of Easter with people we have come to know at Darby Mission in Darby Borough, one of the local communities recently affected by the Federal government shutdowns. Many residents there are TSA workers who continued their vitally important work despite not receiving pay on time to meet the needs of their families. Darby Mission was there to assist them and to provide support as they struggled. This mission is the coming together of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, Episcopal Community Services (ECS) and Darby Borough to provide community to residents of Darby challenged by poverty: the Rev. Doris Rajagopal leads the mission, which is housed in the Darby Recreation Center.

All of us at St. Peter’s will again have the opportunity to share Easter joy with the people of Darby by providing bags of groceries for their Easter dinners. Here’s how it will work. Sturdy grocery bags and grocery lists will be available in church for parishioners to take, fill and return. The listed items will be staples (including scalloped potato mix and the makings for string bean casserole) and of course some Easter candy. Our food ministry received generous donations at Alternative Christmas and is using some of those funds to add a ham or roasted chicken to each bag, along with an Easter flower. We will deliver the bags to Darby Mission on Good Friday.

Many of us have opportunities to give food at Thanksgiving and Christmas. What better way could there be to share the joy of Easter than to provide dinners to Darby Mission? Watch for the bags in church, take and return one, and share in this joy.



LENTEN OFFERINGS AT ST. PETER'S

Wednesday Soup Suppers—Exploring Personal Spiritual Practices

by Melissa Shaner



On Wednesday evenings in Lent, from **March 13 through April 10**, we will explore spiritual practices and ways of incorporating them into personal prayer life. Guest speakers from other faith traditions will present interactive sessions, and as always, your presence and participation make the conversation richer. Come for as many sessions as you can, and perhaps discover a new way to approach God and your understanding of yourself. Thumbnails of each session appear below.

Please join us at 6 p.m., before the program, for a simple soup supper in the parish hall; the program itself runs from 6:30 to 8 p.m. You are invited to provide bread or soup for a supper; there are sign-up sheets in both gathering spaces. Direct any questions you have about the suppers to Nancy Wilson (nancicwilson@gmail.com) or Jenny Disque (jdisque47@gmail.com), coordinators of this part of the evening; direct questions about the programs to Melissa Shaner (myshaner@verizon.net).

March 13: Father Mark Brown on developing a rule of life. "A Rule of Life is not 'rules' *per se*, but rather a kind of trellis, which maximizes exposure to light, supports the branches in all kinds of weather and gives an upward thrust to the plant. It gives shape, provides resilience and encourages the fruitfulness of our lives grounded or rooted in Christ. We will discuss not only writing and keeping a Rule, but also revising it as we make our way through the various seasons of life." Fr. Mark is an Episcopal priest, retreat leader, spiritual director, and teacher in the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

March 20: Asheq Fazlullah on correspondences between Muslim and Christian prayer practices. What can we learn from the connections we share? Both traditions place an emphasis on water and on praying throughout the day. Asheq has served as a speaker for the Delaware Valley Speakers Bureau, the local affiliate of the Islamic Networks Groups (ING) since 2014, delivering presentations informing fellow Americans regarding Islam and Muslim Americans at faith groups, schools, universities, senior centers, and local civic and law enforcement organizations across the greater Delaware Valley. In 2018 he joined the board of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia.

March 27: Father Frank Kaminski on the Ignatian Examen. "The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. The Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience." Fr. Frank serves at the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth in Wernersville and was formerly Director of Hispanic Ministry at the Office of Ignatian Spirituality for the Society of Jesus' Maryland and Northeast Provinces. His interest in Ignatian spirituality began in Chile, where he worked for more than ten years with the Christian Life Community, a world-wide community of lay people who follow the Ignatian path in their daily lives.

April 3: Martin McElroy on tactile prayer. Many of us think of prayer in terms of words, but how can we bring our whole bodies to the relationship? Martin will offer an overview of "sensory devotions" involving all five senses, the history and variety of prayer beads (aboriginal, Hindu, Muslim, and Christian), and the types of beads and prayers associated with them in Christian practice. Samples of different styles of beads will be available for examination. Martin is a St. Peter's parishioner.

April 10: The Rev. Dr. Howard Kempzell on spiritual direction. What is spiritual direction and how might an "ordinary" person benefit from it? "Spiritual direction is helpful in the way that deploying a spinnaker is helpful to a yacht 'running before the wind' in a regatta. When the spinnaker balloons out and is filled with wind, the yacht 'flies.' So, too, people who embrace spiritual direction put themselves in the best position to receive the divine wind/breath/spirit, so they can flourish in their personal and professional lives." Dr. Kempzell, a member of Spiritual Directors International and leader of Spinnaker Spiritual Direction, studied the subject with a special interest in its place in an age of rapid communication, at the University of the South (Sewanee) and the Graduate Theological Foundation.



LENTEN OFFERINGS AT ST. PETER'S

March Adult Formation: Learning from Lives

On **March 3**, the last Sunday before Lent, Mary Anne Morgan and a group of St. Peter's actors will present a second set of selections from Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*. After hearing these musings of souls buried in a midwestern cemetery, we will discuss what we can learn from the complexity of these lives.

On all five Sundays during Lent, our adult forum will feature "Seeking and Serving Christ in All People," a series designed by the antiracism committee to help us explore how to move towards healing and wholeness with regard to race and whiteness in ourselves, our parish, and our society. This series is one small step in fulfilling our desire to live into our baptismal vow to be Christ's body on earth with regard to race in these times of disturbing attitudes about race and difference. Each week's TED Talk[®] by a prominent person of color will serve to stimulate our small-group conversations aimed at deepening our reflections and awareness.



**March 10: *The Most Rev. Michael Curry, "Spirituality and Racial Justice, Lesson One: Conversation"*
*Paul Rucker, "The Symbols of Systemic Power and How to Take Away Their Power"***

Racism is part of our national history and, lamentably, also part of our church life. On this first Sunday of Lent we launch an adult formation series on racism – a topic that, as Presiding Bishop Curry says, "we don't want to talk about." In this first session we will consider how racism hides in the fabric of our lives – in our parish, our schools, our neighborhoods, and the places where we work.

March 17: *Chimamanda Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story"*

How often do we internalize a story that speaks to only one aspect of someone? By reflecting on the single-focus stories she heard as a child in Nigeria and those she has unthinkingly embraced as an adult, the award-winning novelist invites us to do likewise. If believing a single viewpoint can too easily strip people of their dignity, embracing multiple narratives restores it and can help us fulfill our baptismal vow to respect human dignity.

March 24: *Melody Hobson, "Color Blind or Color Brave?"*

Is our being "color blind" robbing us of the true wealth of our differences as we submerge our prejudices? What if we, here in the safe harbor of an accepting God, became bold and brave initiators of new ways of thinking and engaging with all others? Could we acknowledge our history and begin, however tentatively, to welcome our differences? Successful entrepreneur and financial executive Melody Hobson will lead us into this introspective exploration.

March 31: *Bryan Stevenson, "We Need to Talk about an Injustice"*

Racism, as Catherine Kerrison noted in her February lecture series, is a structure that is often hidden from view, the product of centuries of accumulated precedent. As she pointed out, "There doesn't need to be racist intent for there to be a racist outcome." With insights from a distinguished attorney, we will look at one example of this: the judicial system that, intentionally or not, results in disproportionate sentencing outcomes and the loss of the political franchise among people of color.

April 7: *"Spirituality and Racial Justice, Lesson One" Revisited—What Do We Do Now?"*

In this concluding session of the series, we will consider what steps we can take to keep "listening with new ears and speaking with new lips," as Bishop Curry encourages. Taking our charge from the liturgy, how might we, both as individuals and as a parish, embrace a response to racism that demonstrates our faithfulness to God's call "not only with our lips, but in our lives?"

As always, please join us in the barn at 10:20 with your coffee, your questions, and your open mind.



LOOKING AHEAD TO HOLY WEEK

Enter Holy Week by Hearing Jenkins' Stabat Mater

Prepare yourself for a special spiritual and musical experience at 4 p.m. this Palm Sunday! Plan to come hear our choirs in concert when they present Karl Jenkins' 2008 *Stabat Mater* in its entirety, accompanied by a chamber orchestra. Instead of singing our traditional Palm Sunday choral evensong, this year the choirs have undertaken the Welsh composer's exciting 2008 oratorio that reflects on the suffering of Jesus' mother Mary at his crucifixion.

Like the more familiar settings of *Stabat Mater* by such masters as Vivaldi, Haydn, Rossini, and Verdi, Jenkins' work is based on a medieval Roman Catholic poem of the same name. But unlike them, Jenkins' work introduces original ideas – both textual and musical – to the score and “reaches new emotional heights, without becoming sentimental or self-indulgent,” according to a 2008 *Guardian* review of the CD release featuring the Royal Liverpool Symphonic Orchestra and Chorus. According to the reviewer, “Echoes of Jenkins' previous work . . . are apparent from the first movement [and] the sound is epic, the orchestration enveloping. In contrast, the second movement, with its Middle Eastern influences, cuts down to an ambient calm.”



STABAT MATER

The choirs are excited about this Palm Sunday offering, and invite everyone to experience the first day of Holy Week in a totally new way through this “challenging and eclectic exploration of suffering” as the *Guardian* reviewer puts it. Before the performance, at 3:45, Bruce Glennly will offer brief spoken “program notes” to introduce everyone to this contemporary work that is largely unfamiliar to many of us. Following the *Stabat Mater*, there will be a Middle Eastern style reception to encourage fellowship as well as conversation about the work and the experience. So reserve the time on your calendar, and plan to invite friends and neighbors as well.

Snapshot of Holy Week and Easter

- April 14 – Palm Sunday, with Blessing of the Palms and Passion narrative, 8, 9, and 11:15 a.m.
Stabat Mater concert, 4 p.m.
- April 17 – Stations of the Cross, featuring etchings by Jauneth Skinner, 12 noon
- April 18 – Maundy Thursday *Agape* meal, 6:30 p.m.; liturgy, 7:30 p.m.
Watch night, after the service ends until 7 a.m., Good Friday
- April 19 – Good Friday
Good Friday liturgy, 7 a.m.
Seven Last Words, 12 noon to 3 p.m., with Paoli area churches
- April 20 – The Great Vigil of Easter, 7:30 p.m., this year at St. Francis in the Fields
- April 21 – Easter Day
Holy Eucharist, Rite 1, 8 a.m.; Festal Choral Eucharist, 9 and 11:15 a.m.
Family egg hunt after the 9 a.m. service



The History Nerds Hit the Road Again!

Plan now to join us Saturday morning, May 18, when St. Peter's “history nerds” (i.e., adults and children of all ages who like history and/or field trips) travel by chartered bus to the Museum of the American Revolution, the newest museum in Old City Philadelphia. If you have already visited the museum, you know that it is impossible to see everything in one visit, so plan to join us whether this will be your first, or a repeat, visit. The bus will leave St. Peter's at 9 a.m. and return by 3 p.m.; included in the \$55 cost of the trip is a gourmet box lunch (your choice of contents). Join us for a great day of community, history, learning and fun. Sign-up sheets are in the gathering spaces of the church and barn. Contact Dave Tatum (davetatum@aol.com) if you have questions.

March 2
Needlework ministry
10 a.m.

March 3
Newcomer Event

March 3 thru 7
Drop-off for rummage sale
11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

March 5
Shrove Tuesday pancake supper
6 p.m.

March 6
Ash Wednesday
Holy Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes
12 noon & 7:30 p.m. (church)



March 9
Preschool rummage sale
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

March 10
Daylight saving time begins

March 13
Lenten soup supper
6 to 8 p.m.

March 20
Lenten soup supper
6 to 8 p.m.

March 23
Kairos Outside
9:30 a.m.

March 27
Lenten soup supper
6 to 8 p.m.

March 30
Italian dinner & game night
6 to 9 p.m.

- Leigh Pavoni for organizing our volunteers for the Rise Against Hunger event;
- Mary Ann Tatum for scheduling our lay assistants;
- Linda Huggler for leading the *Gesundheit* bag project and the staff and students of the preschool for filling them;
- Violinist David Clarke, Bruce Glenny, and the choir for leading Compline, and Susy Baum, Holly Hardester, and Mary Ann Tatum for setting up the barn for it;
- Baut Doors, who installed our new barn doors, and the donors who helped fund the project;
- Wilson Smith who spearheaded the committee (Peter Gilmore, Linda Holden, Doug Jones, Gail Malcolm, Abigail Nestlehutt, Sarah Tellefsen, and Ross Unruh) that selected Robert Ryan Caterers to hold an exclusive contract with us to market and manage the High Point;
- The Rev. Elizabeth Eisenstadt-Evans for filling in for Abigail while she was away for the weekend;
- Marsha Wirtel for her ministry with Women on the Hill and their recent axe-throwing outing;
- Suzanne Casey for leading the youth in their Valentine cookie sale to raise funds toward the youth mission trip this summer;
- All who pledged and helped us raise \$448,000 in pledges for 2019.



Going "Green" at St. Peter's

Do you want to help St. Peter's become a greener place? If so, please contact Brenda Grove (brenda.grove@villanova.edu) to learn more about how you can be part of this effort, which came about after Brenda's "Faith and the Environment" presentation at adult forum. At that point a number of parishioners expressed interest in forming a group to educate ourselves and to take constructive action, for example by improving our recycling and purchasing practices. This "green" group is now in its formative stages, and Brenda will be happy to outline its possibilities, potential actions, and ideas about meetings (most likely evening ones).

January Financial Snapshot

| | January 2019 | Year-end Projection | Budget 2019 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Parishioner Contributions | \$ 80,217 | \$484,170 | \$482,449 |
| Total Income | 84,552 | 638,389 | 634,485 |
| Total Expense | 52,979 | 636,317 | 634,485 |
| Surplus/ (Deficit) | 31,573 | 2,072 | 0 |

*[The finance commission has reviewed this snapshot.
Please direct any questions to its chair, Joe Herbst.]*





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The Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt, Rector
 Dr. Bruce Glenny, Organist/Choirmaster
 Susan House, Parish Administrator
 Elizabeth Dwyer, Parish Secretary
 Leigh Pavoni, Preschool Director
 Gail Malcolm, Marketing and Event Manager
 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
 April Beacon
 is **March 15.**

Every Week at St. Peter's

Sunday

8 A.M. *Holy Eucharist**
 9 A.M. *Holy Eucharist***
*(Nursery care available**)*
 10:10 A.M. *Christian formation***
 11:15 A.M. *Holy Eucharist**

Wednesday

9:30 A.M. *Moms' Group ***
 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



**Support
 St. Peter's Preschool!**

SAT., MARCH 9

8 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

**DONATIONS ACCEPTED
 MARCH 3 TO 7, 11:15 to 1:15**