



The Beacon

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

May 2023

Dear people of St. Peter's,

Although you may think that St. Peter's first experiences with Lutheran pastors were with the Rev. Roy Almquist and the Rev. Karl Krueger, if your spiritual ancestors buried in the churchyard could speak, they would politely tell you that you are wrong. St. Peter's first experience with Lutheran pastors dates back to 1748, when the parish interacted with the Rev. Henry Melchior Mühlenberg (1711-87), who was sent to British North America in 1742 by the Francke Foundations in Halle, Germany, to care for three congregations: Philadelphia, Trappe, and New Hanover.

Mühlenberg's pastoral devotion to his parishioners and to a ministry of Word and Sacrament spread quickly throughout the Delaware Valley. As German settlements west of the Schuylkill River grew, they turned to Mühlenberg for pastoral care. Even though these settlements were not included in his "call," this dedicated pastor crossed the river on horseback to hold services in Yellow Springs, Spring City, and Chester Springs.

In the journal he kept of his ministry in the Delaware Valley, he noted, in January 1748, that the summer of 1747 had been hot, the autumn warm, and the winter mild. Those conditions gave rise to a fatal epidemic in January 1748 that Mühlenberg called "pleurisy." In one area, Mühlenberg noted, fifty women became widows within a few weeks. Naturally, requests for funerals increased, and the dedicated Mühlenberg conducted services for German Lutherans and members of the German Reformed church.

In January 1748, he crossed the Schuylkill and rode to Yellow Springs to conduct a funeral for a man who belonged to the German Reformed church whose family asked Mühlenberg to preside at his funeral, because their pastor was tending to the needs of his church in the city. On his return home after the funeral, Mühlenberg noted in his journal, "At the burial, there were many German, English, Welsh, and Irish people of all persuasions. They were all very eager to listen because they were in fear and terror because of the raging sickness The English, Irish, and Welsh people also entreated me to give them a lesson in their language because they were so sorely in need of it in these sad and perilous times. So, standing in the snow, I preached to them for about a half hour on Job 1:25." It is safe to assume that members of St. Peter's Episcopal would have been among the mourners on that day who asked Mühlenberg to preach.

Another encounter with members of St. Peter's occurred in November 1772 when Mühlenberg rode to Chester Springs ["Peikland"] to dedicate the newly constructed St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

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His traveling companion was the Reverend Göransson, pastor of Gloria Dei Swedish Lutheran Church in center city (which joined the Episcopal Church in 1845). After the Service of Dedication in German on Sunday morning, November 8, Mühlenberg and Göransson conducted an English service in the afternoon, during which, he says in his journal, “Pastor Göransson preached in English on the weighty text, Ephesians 2:19-22.” At the request of the English, another service was held the next day, Monday, November 9, at which, Mühlenberg notes, “I delivered an English sermon on Luke 24:29 . . . After this, we sang Psalm 1 in English.” So, again, I feel it is safe to assume that members of St. Peter’s were among the worshippers on those two days.

Reflecting on Mühlenberg’s entries, I like to think of my time at St. Peter’s as a continuation of a relationship begun in 1748. Thank you for allowing me to follow in the footsteps of Henry Melchior Mühlenberg these past three months. It has been an honor, and I will never forget your warm welcome and patience as I navigated how you do things at St. Peter’s. Please know that I have shared my thanks with your spiritual ancestors buried in the churchyard every time I walk to and from the historic church. They are happy that colonial St. Peter’s welcoming tradition is alive and well in the twenty-first century.

Blessings,
Pastor Karl

Back by Popular Demand—Play Ball!



Our St Francis-in-the-Field brothers and sisters have again invited us to join them on the pitcher’s mound on Saturday, June 17, to lead the “fightn’ [Reading] Phillies” fans in singing the national anthem. We will have a short rehearsal before the game starts at 6:45 p.m.

Tickets for the event are \$13 but, as we learned last year, the fun and fellowship will be priceless. Please note that you must reserve your spot with Deacon Jeff by **May 13** at the latest. For more information or to make a reservation, please contact Jeff (jeff@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261).



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The Sunday school children are busy, both learning about sharing God’s love and doing just that by creating birthday cards for our Echo Lake neighbors (who are thrilled to receive them). We will continue this outreach effort through the summer, to ensure that we greet every resident.

So each summer Sunday, blank cards, supplies, and directions will be set out for the children. whom we invite to create a birthday greeting or two either during or after the service. Near the supplies, there will be a basket where they can deposit their finished cards. Another alternative is to make a card at home— perhaps on a rainy day! If the at-home alternative appeals to you, please let Judy Jones know (moms_taxi950@hotmail.com) and she will supply you with the materials.



- **May 14—What’s cooking in the barn kitchen?** Well, nothing right now, and that needs to be changed! When designing the barn almost two decades ago, we included space for a kitchen to create a place where parishioners can work on outreach activities with our community partners. But its unfinished, rudimentary state limits our ability to welcome and serve the community creatively and caringly. Come learn about how we can move ahead and finish the kitchen now that we have a grant from the Pew Foundation.
- **May 21—Let’s end the program year with a rousing game of Bible Jeopardy!** Brush up on your biblical trivia and enjoy some friendly faith-based competition and prizes.



Adult formation will resume in mid-September. If you have ideas for next year’s topics, please contact Melissa Shaner (myshaner@verizon.net).



Help us celebrate our graduates!

The season of mortarboards and strains of “Pomp and Circumstance” is fast approaching, and that means it will soon be time for us to celebrate all the newly minted graduates in our parish family! But to keep up this long-time St. Peter’s tradition and congratulate them in the June-July Beacon, we need everyone’s help.

So if there’s a 2023 high school, college, or grad school graduate in your family, or someone who graduated after June 2022, please let the *Beacon* editor know (beacon@stpetersgv.org) by **May 24**. In addition to the grad’s name and school, please include information about his or her plans for the coming year (e.g., college selected, prospective major, if known; grad school selected; job accepted; a special honor awarded with the diploma). Thank you for your input!

Reminder—Annual Meeting
May 7

Be sure to come to the 10 a.m. first-Sunday service on May 7 and then the 2023 annual meeting and fellowship luncheon that follow. At the meeting we will hear about the program year just ended, plans for the program year to come, and elect the vestry class of 2026 and our diocesan representatives.

According to the parish by-laws, “all confirmed persons of the age of eighteen years or upwards who shall have been worshipers in this Church as their usual place of worship for at least one year” are eligible to vote. The bylaws also require members to be present to vote, unless they have submitted an absentee ballot beforehand. If you have any questions about your eligibility to vote, or if you need an absentee ballot, please contact our parish administrator, Rachel Martin Swartz.

This important event in our parish life gives us the opportunity to share and celebrate much good news—and also, this year, to welcome Abigail back from sabbatical.

Meet the Vestry Nominees

Liz Andersen

Liz came to St. Peter’s in 1990, when her growing family moved to Charlestown and helped teach Sunday school through the ‘90’s. After her family started a community-supported farm and the Phoenixville Farmers’ Market, the time and energy involved kept her from being active in the church, but she felt that her work still served God. During the pandemic, Liz reconnected with St. Peter’s online, and when in-person services resumed, she joyfully returned. She was thrilled to see so many members she knew as well as new ones and looks forward to supporting the work of St. Peter’s if elected.

Amy Fisher

Amy and Greg found St. Peter’s in January 2015 while expecting their first child and looking for a church. Having grown up at St. Thomas Episcopal (Pittstown NJ), Amy wanted their family to have a similar experience and immediately felt comfortable in this welcoming small parish and beautiful historical setting. She enjoys serving as a reader at St. Peter’s and as a member of the stewardship commission; before the pandemic she volunteered in children’s chapel. Amy, whose hobbies are exercising, baking, and the Phillies, works part time for a family-owned industrial company where she wears many hats.

Tim Hepp

Tim, who worships at either early morning service, joined St. Peter’s in the fall of 2019. He grew up Roman Catholic and served as an usher at St Colman’s (Ardmore) for 35 years. Tim discovered St. Peter’s while looking for a church that would welcome and accept an LGBTQ family member. Tim recently joined St. Peter’s newcomers commission and was also called to serve as secretary of the diocesan LGBTQIA+ committee. During working hours, he is a mid-Atlantic area sales representative for a major publisher of children’s and adult books.

Dave Tatum

Dave and MaryAnn have attended St. Peter’s for 20 years. From 2010 to 2012, he served on the vestry, including a stint as vestry warden, charged with overseeing repairs to the historic church. Since then, he has chaired the property commission and as a Bad Boy has been maintaining and manicuring the grounds and engaging the youth of the parish in this work during the summer. Indoors, Dave has served as a sound technician, usher, and Eucharistic minister; as a retired teacher and St. Peter’s “unofficial historian,” he has led adult forums on its history. He is honored to be nominated to serve on the vestry again.

Outreach News

April and May Food Ministry at Darby Mission

A SUCCESSFUL SOCIALLY DISTANCED EASTER DINNER

When our St. Peter's volunteers arrived in cars filled with the makings for forty Easter dinners, they received a warm welcome from several Darby Mission individuals and families. After unloading the food, everyone gathered to share in reading *Everyone's Way of the Cross*, led by Vicar Doris Rajagopol and Deacon Joseph German.

The food ministry and the forty recipients of the bounty are ever so thankful for the many parishioners who filled colorful shopping bags with the prescribed non-perishable groceries and some Easter candy treats. (Gifts to the food ministry at Alternative Christmas paid for the large roasting chicken and potted daffodils that completed each bag.)

IN-PERSON DARBY DINNERS RESUME

On **May 2**, just a bit before *Cinquo de Maio*, we will resume serving an in-person Darby dinner, after more than three years. For this celebratory dinner, the food ministry team chose a Mexican theme, since our Darby friends at Darby have enjoyed taco beef and taco vegetarian bean salads, toppings, and sides in the past.

We will, however, serve the meal a bit differently than in the past, using a post-pandemic adaptation that Vicar Doris devised in the interest of safety. We will serve the meal through a large pass-through window between the kitchen and the basketball court, where tables will be set for about eighty-five Darby residents. If you haven't already signed up to join the fun, please contact Eileen Klein.

Red Cross Blood Drive This Month

**When: Wednesday, May 24
1 to 6 p.m.
Where: The barn**

To register as a donor,
visit stpetersblooddrive.com
or use this QR code:



*Christ shed His Blood for us, we share
our blood or Him. Please donate or
invite others to give the gift of life.*

Swing with the CCC!

Get ready to swing this spring with the Chester Children's Chorus at their 7:30 p.m. concert on **May 12 and 13** on the Swarthmore College campus. More than a hundred talented Chester children will perform some favorite jazz hits, including "It Don't Mean a Thing," "Cheek to Cheek," and "Sing, Sing, Sing." This year, the younger children will perform two original songs, "Beautiful Night," based on Langston Hughes' poem "My People," and "I Will Be There," based on a poem written by Ava, a CCC fifth-grader.

Admission to the concert in the Lang music building is free. But since seating is unreserved, it is wise to plan to arrive early. For more information, including livestream details, please visit ChesterChildrensChorus.org.

- Marcia McIlvain for baking and decorating delicious cakes for Palm Sunday fellowship;
- Martin McElroy for organizing the American Red Cross blood drives;
- The parishioners who donated, filled, and delivered the Darby Mission Easter dinners, and Holly Hardester and Cathy Terlescki for organizing the project;
- The flower and altar guilds, trumpeters Peter Neu and David Orehowsky, trombonists David Cianci and Brian Pastor, timpanist Sofia Dillon, and the clergy, choir, and parishioners who made all of the events and services through Easter week so special;
- Pat Harvey for arranging the Easter breakfast prepared by the Omelette King and augmented by Terry Michael's sticky buns for sixty sunrise worshippers;
- The youth group, led by Aleta Ross and Debi Harrison, for staging the successful Easter egg hunt;
- The Bad Boys and Girls for Jesus who keep the grounds looking spectacular;
- Brenda Grove for helping us to be eco-friendly, both through her Earth Week adult forum presentation and the well-stocked book swap;
- Eric Lien, who is stepping down after his many years of serving as chair of the finance commission.



A Message from the Green Stewards



Do you want to help the planet and save some money too? PECO has set aside time to come to St. Peter's to give us some energy-saving tips and to also invite everyone at the presentation to request a free home energy audit. When PECO meets with us will depend on your choice of a time for the visit—a weekday evening, after a 9 or 10 a.m. Sunday service, or a lunch-and-learn session after the 11:15 service. So, if you are interested, please use the form in either gathering space to tell us your time preference.

There is little question that our consumption of fossil fuels is the largest driver of climate change, so our energy choices make a difference. Information about how to reduce your carbon consumption is always available at www.papowerswitch.com (but be aware that the prices shown may or may not be locked in). You can also offset your carbon footprint simply by funding projects at cooleffects.org.

If you have questions or suggestions about St. Peter's "Green Stewards" network, please contact Brenda Grove.

Easter Sunday, 2023





May 6
Needlework ministry
10 a.m.

May 7
First Sunday single service
10 a.m.

Annual meeting and fellowship lunch follow
(also Abigail's first Sunday back with us)

May 8
Monday Atwater walks resume
9:30 a.m.

May 18
Preschool graduation
9:30 a.m.

May 24
Red Cross Blood Drive
1 to 6 p.m.

May 28
Pentecost Sunday
Wear red!

March Financial Snapshot

	March 2023	Year to Date March	Year-end Forecast	Budget 2024
Parishioner Contributions	\$ 56,394	\$141,023	\$528,817	\$530,504
Other Income*	6,190	24,929	194,220	208,637
Total Income	62,584	165,953	723,038	739,141
Total Expense	63,309	169,569	714,684	739,141
Surplus / (Deficit)	(726)	(3,616)	8,354	0

**Interest, rentals, endowment distributions*

As of March, both total income and total expenses are **on course** to be lower than projected in the 2023 budget. But it is difficult to predict year-end financial results accurately with only three months of information available. Currently we think there may be a modest shortfall in rental income, but this drop is offset by lower expenses than projected, thanks to a warm winter with no snow removal costs, along with some other savings. —Eric Lien for the finance commission



After the 9 a.m. service, the youngest worshipers were off and running to hunt for the Easter eggs so carefully placed by the youth group!



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The Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt, Rector
 The Ven. Jeff Moretzsohn, Deacon
 Dr. Bruce Glenny, Organist/Choirmaster
 Deby Harrison & Aleta Ross, Interim Youth Co-ministers
 Rachel Martin Swartz, Parish Administrator
 Erinn White, Preschool Director
 Gail Malcolm, Event Coordinator
 Mario Delano, 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
 June Beacon
 is **May 15.**

Weekly Offerings at St. Peter's

Sunday

- 8 A.M.** ***Holy Eucharist, Rite 1****
- 9 A.M.** ***Family Eucharist & Sunday School*****
- 10:15 a.m.** ***Adult Formation*****
- 11:15 P.M.** ***Holy Eucharist, Rite 2****

First Sunday

- 10 a.m.** ***Holy Eucharist, Rite 2*****
Fellowship follows all services

Monday thru Thursday

- 12 NOON** ***Noonday Prayer******

Wednesday

- 10 A.M.** ***Morning Prayer & Bible Study******

Thursday

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

Friday

- 8 A.M.** ***Gathering of Men******

- * Church
- ** Barn
- *** Virtual

Parish office open Mon. thru Thurs., 9 A.M. to 4 :30 P.M.

Alleluia!
He is Risen!

