



St. Peter's Church
IN THE GREAT VALLEY

✠
1700

The Beacon

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

October 2020

Squirreling Away

by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt

An appliance manufacturer reported that the company sold more freezers on two days in March 2020 than in all of 2019! Like squirrels gathering acorns to prepare for the approaching winter, consumers began to stock up on food early in the pandemic, and current news reports suggest that people are starting to do so again in anticipation of a long winter marked by the risk of flu as well as of Covid. As long as such preparations do not turn into hoarding, they are a good idea. The Boy Scouts understand this; their goal is always to “be prepared.”

Like you perhaps, I am reveling in a particularly beautiful autumn, but I have begun to think about the months ahead. What will we do when the weather becomes too cold to enjoy visiting with someone outdoors? How will we feel when the days become shorter and darker, as they always do at this time of year? These questions have led me to wonder if we can stockpile human interaction now to help us through the almost inevitable, increased isolation that lies ahead. If we can pack a freezer full of food, can we likewise pack a heart full of connection? I think the answer is, “Not really,” since quality time with loved ones is not to us humans what acorns are to squirrels. But we can still ready ourselves for what is to come.

It will help if we begin by acknowledging that many of us are tired, wearied by the various troubles of our times. At the end of “For One Who Is Exhausted,” Irish poet and teacher John O’Donohue suggests,

Draw alongside the silence of stone
Until its calmness can claim you.
Be excessively gentle with yourself.
Stay clear of those vexed in spirit.
Learn to linger around someone of ease
Who feels they have all the time in the world.
Gradually, you will return to yourself,
Having learned a new respect for your heart
And the joy that dwells far within slow time.

It is wise to take some time now to breathe. To try, even in small ways, to restore balance. Discern what you need – maybe more time with friends, less time on social media, a new book to read, an enlivened prayer practice, a way to make your voice heard. You will know. Little

[Cont. on p. 2]

Blessing of the Animals



Everyone is invited to join us on the lawn in front of the historic church at 4 p.m. on **Sunday, October 4**, the day we honor St. Francis. The tradition of blessing the animals in a special service arose because St. Francis is associated with animals and the natural world and is often depicted in art amidst woodland creatures.

We continue this custom at St. Peter's, and invite you to bring your furry, fuzzy, scaly, or stuffed friends – appropriately restrained for everyone's comfort, please – to receive a blessing on St. Francis' feast day. Signing up for this outdoor event is optional (although helpful for us in planning). Wearing a mask, however, is required for two-legged attendees. Likewise, while pandemic rules allow us to provide treats for the animals, at this time they still prevent us from offering refreshments to humans.

And remember, this informal outdoor event on the first Sunday in October is a great opportunity to bring a friend to St. Peter's, with or without a pet. All are welcome!

Popcorn Theology

There's not much to this – just watch a movie at your convenience and then join in a lively discussion of it led by our own Mark Nestlehurst. The theme for October's movies, both of which come from “down under,” is exclusion and inclusion. The movie for **October 12** is *Rabbit Proof Fence* from Australia (2002), and for **October 26** it is *Whale Rider*, a 2002 release from New Zealand. Please contact Abigail (abigail@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261) to sign up so that you are sure to receive the Zoom information or if you have any questions.



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

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["Squirreling Away," cont. from p. 1]

by little, you will find your way back to a place of strength. Invite God to join you, or make a point of joining Jesus, or simply remember that you are not alone.

At St. Peter's we will help by continuing to expand our in-person and online offerings. In the pages that follow you will find opportunities to help others, learn, worship, and have fun. Some are new, others are ongoing, but all are opportunities for you to connect and make a difference. Together and with God, we are and will be prepared for today, tomorrow, and beyond.

Stewardship in the Time of Covid-19

Covid-19 is changing the way the world interacts, and churches are not immune to those changes. Because of the need for social distancing, St. Peter's has moved to a mostly virtual form of worship. But St. Peter's continues to do the most important things that a church can do, serving the Lord and loving its neighbors. Our clergy are correct in focusing on worship and taking care of people; they are working to support and care for our most vulnerable members. It is in times like these that the church shows its true strength as a community of faith that loves neighbors and glorifies God.

We need to remember that for St. Peter's to weather the pandemic crisis and continue to serve both parishioners and the community in the coming year, it needs the financial support of its members. Our 2021 pledge goal is \$461,000. Please consider making an annual pledge by mailing the pledge card you received earlier this week to St. Peter's or by pledging online, simply by going to our website, www.stpetersgv.org, and clicking on "Giving." Thank you.

Something Old, Something New: Two Ways the Food Ministry Feeds the Hungry

A New Way, A Pop-up Food Pantry

As a different way of reaching out to families in our local community, on three Sundays this fall we are setting up an outdoor "pop-up pantry" in of the barn parking lot. By the time you read this, the first one will have already taken place, but two more are scheduled for October 4 and October 11. Needless to say, we are following all safety measures such as masks and distancing when we distribute bags of non-perishable groceries, canned food, and fresh fruits and veggies to assist local families during this difficult time.

This trial run of the idea to offer a food pantry at St. Peter's was conceived jointly by our outreach food ministry, the Chester County food bank, several local food vendors, and the Great Valley School District, which offered to distribute flyers about the pantry to community members in distress. Our joint expectation is that these three fall Sundays will help us gather information about the need to offer "pop-up pantries" to supplement established local pantries in the spring, summer, and fall of 2021.

The Old Way, with a New Twist

Throughout the spring and summer, our food ministry collected the non-perishable groceries and produce that you brought to the porch of the parish house. Thank you for continuing to be so generous! Church Housing and Alianzas in Phoenixville, St. James School in Philadelphia, and the Community Youth and Women's Alliance (CYWA) in Coatesville greatly appreciate your support.

In September the outreach commission began to add protein to the non-perishables and produce we provide to Alianzas, which serves Phoenixville's diverse Latino community, and to the CYWA, our newest ministry. Our donation enables Alianzas to include a dozen eggs in the grocery bags of thirty grateful families, and also enables CYWA to add a dozen eggs to the food it distributes weekly to a hundred and twenty hungry families.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Pilgrimage: The Adult Formation Topic in October

Our pandemically-rescheduled Wednesday evening adult formation program got off to a lively, well-attended start last month with a presentation on multi-ethnic portrayals of Jesus in art. This month, we turn our attention to the ancient tradition of pilgrimage. Our own Jeff Conway, a parishioner who served as a Presbyterian pastor for thirty-five years, will lead both October forums, sharing his pilgrimage experiences and reflecting on what pilgrimage is all about. On **October 7**, his topic will be "What Is a Pilgrimage?" and he will discuss his time on Iona and the Celtic spirituality he experienced there. Two weeks later, on **October 22**, he will talk about his past and future journeys along the famed *Camino de Santiago* pilgrimage route in the Pyrenees, and about today's renewed interest in pilgrimage.



Do join us virtually at 6 p.m. for either or both of these forums. As always, all are welcome, as are all questions and insights. Be sure let Abigail know that you plan to attend, so that she

Try Your Luck on Bingo Night

Since you're never too old or even too young to play bingo, from 7 to 9 on **Saturday evening, October 24**, St. Peter's will give you a chance to have some old-fashioned family fun in the "new-fashioned" Zoom way, as well as to socialize with your parish family. We will award prizes to winners as well! But the big winner of this parish-wide fund-raiser event is St. Peter's, since the proceeds will benefit the parish, its outreach ministries, and the work of maintaining our beautiful campus.

So please join us for an evening of fun on Zoom and invite friends as well. Signing up for this event is easy: just visit Ticket Leap at stpetersgreatvalley.ticketleap.com/bingo/). Be sure to register **no later than midnight, Wednesday, October 21**, so that we can email you your electronic bingo cards and the Zoom information by Friday night. If you wish to participate by telephone only, please sign up by calling Laurel Veitch (610-647-2957) by October 21, and she will arrange to deliver the cards to your home and give you the connection information you will need. For a donation of \$20, you will get a set of four cards; for \$30 you will get a family pack of twelve cards. You will find more information about this event in this month's Keynotes, including an electronic sign-up link.

If you have questions, feel free to contact Laurel Veitch (ljveitch@comcast.net or 610-647-2957).



Gathering of Women

Following September's successful Zoom meeting, the women of St. Peter's are planning to meet again via Zoom at 6 p.m. on **October 14**. We are working on this month's topic and will announce it via Keynotes and emails soon. We look forward to seeing our women friends and invite all women of the parish to join us. Please contact Lynn Mander (lsmander@gmail.com, or 610-613-5358) if you have questions.

“Trunk or Treat” and All Hallows’ Eve Service

For the second year in a row, St. Peter’s is hosting an on-campus “trunk-or-treat” event from 5 to 6 p.m. on **October 25**. Trunk-or-treating is a contemporary variation of the old tradition of going door to door to collect candy – children move safely from one parked car to the next and collect treats for each trunk. And, thankfully, they have their fun and amass their goodies far from traffic *and* in a Covid-safe setting as well!

To make this event a rousing success, we need people to host a trunk! Last year many participants enjoyed dressing up their trunk in its own Halloween costume, so feel free to let the decorator in you emerge if you wish. This year, someone will win a trophy for the best trunk decoration, have custody of it for a year, return it next year . . . and try to win it again! So come dressed in your best Halloween costume, decorate a trunk, and have some fun. This event is a great way to bring our parish community together for fun (and treats) and also an opportunity to invite our neighbors to join us!



After trunk-or-treating ends (around 5:45), everyone is invited to stay for an All Hallows Eve service in the cemetery and hear scripture stories about the Witch of Endor and Ezekiel’s “dry bones.” If you have questions about any aspect of this event, please contact Chris (chris@stpetersgv.org).

A NOTE ABOUT COVID SAFETY MEASURES

We will implement the following procedures to ensure the safety of everyone who comes:

- A mask must be worn at all times during the event.
- Each car will be parked two spaces away from any other car.
- We ask trunk hosts to bring prepackaged treats and place them on a blanket six feet from the trunk, taking care to handle them as little as possible.
- There will be a designated entrance to and exit from the truck-or treat area, and everyone will move in the same direction, indicated by arrows on the pavement.
- We will provide hand sanitizer at the entry to the trunk-or-treat area, and we ask all participants to bring a personal supply to sanitize hands after each treat they take.
- We ask all trunk-or-treaters to keep moving and not linger in front of a trunk.
- Parents and caregivers must stay with their children; families wishing to congregate with other pods must observe social distancing.

Can You Help Fill Our Manger?

Christmas at St. Peter’s will certainly be different this year. Last year we were fortunate to have a newborn parishioner take baby Jesus’s place in our roomy manger for the Christmas pageant.



This year we would like to set the manger up outdoors, straw and all, and place a large, nearly life-sized infant doll wrapped in swaddling clothes in it.

Do you have such a doll that you would be willing to let us use? We will return it after the holidays, but we want to alert you that for several weeks it will be outdoors (perhaps on the parish house porch) and subject to the weather. If you have such a doll to lend us, or if you can suggest where we might track one down, please contact Holly Hardester (hahardester@gmail.com or 484-319-6323).



- Paige Infortuna for arranging Fall Fest and for creating the wine and cheese trays;
- Ian Alexander for sharing his technical expertise with us in the installation of the video streaming equipment;
- Mark Nestlehutt for leading our popcorn theology movie discussions;
- Jenny Disque, Bruce Glenny, David Graves, Holly Hardester, Linda Holden, Eileen Klein, and Steve Mark for serving faithfully on the post-pandemic planning committee that is working with our clergy in navigating these uncharted waters;
- Sunday school teachers Katie Franz, Holly Hardester, and Sharon Holt for nurturing our parish children even while distancing this fall;
- Cathy Terlescki for helping Mark Clark following his surgery;
- Shannon Mannon, Lindsey Mosvick, and Trudi Graves for their work on the September conversation on race;
- Peter Kreek and Paige Infortuna for their diligent work on our finances, and for presenting it as needed;
- Callie Stoltz, Mark Clark, and Dave Tatum for the Adirondack chairs on campus;
- David Graves and Ian Alexander for troubleshooting problems with one of the video cameras;
- Eileen Klein for helping orient our new vestry member;
- Susy Baum, Jan Himmelreich, Paige Infortuna, Gail Malcolm, Honor and Abigail Nestlehutt, Sarah and Roger Tellefsen, and Laurel Veitch for participating in the practice bingo session;
- Abigail and Chris for going the extra mile during the pandemic and supporting parishioners both with Covid-safe home and hospital pastoral care visits and also with creative programming like outdoor Eucharists, outdoor movie nights and kite-flying, and virtual pub theology evenings.

August Financial Snapshot

	August 2020	Year to Date August	Year-end Projection	Budget 2020
Parishioner Contributions	\$ 32,348	\$375,094	\$576,627	\$611,305
Other Income*	2,891	131,836	149,774	135,190
Total Income	35,239	506,930	726,401	746,495
Total Expense	54,776	473,099	697,463	746,495
Surplus/ (Deficit)	(19,537)	33,831	28,938	0

*Interest, rentals, endowment distributions, fundraiser, PPP loan proceeds

The August financial snapshot reveals a sizeable deficit for the month, with expenses totaling \$19,500 more than income. But even though pledge income was relatively low in August, earlier in the year payments on pledges were substantially higher than expected. So between this fact and the Payroll Protection funds we have received, our year-to-date income through August remains greater than our expenses. At this point, we anticipate having a modest budget surplus at year's end, which in turn will help ensure a balanced budget in 2021, when the pandemic will still have the potential to affect our rental income adversely. – Eric Lien for the finance commission



October 3
Needlework ministry
10 a.m.

October 4
Pop-up pantry
1 p.m.
Blessing of the animals
4 p.m.

October 5
Pub theology (Zoom)
6 p.m.

October 7
Adult forum (Zoom)
6 p.m.

October 11
Pop-up pantry
1 p.m.

October 12
Popcorn Theology (Zoom)
6 p.m.

October 14
Gathering of Women (Zoom)
6 p.m.

October 21
Adult Forum (Zoom)
6 p.m.

October 24
Virtual Bingo (Zoom)
7 to 9 p.m.

October 25
Trunk or Treat
5 p.m.

October 26
Popcorn Theology (Zoom)
6 p.m.

October 28
Conversation Hour (Zoom)
6 p.m.

Our regular weekly offerings appear on page 8.

A Virtual All Saints' Choral Evensong

Although the first day of November seems far away right now, our choir members have been hard at work rehearsing the music for our traditional All Saints' choral evensong in their Covid-safe homes. Among the works they are preparing are *Preces and Responses* by Richard Ayleward (1626-1669), *Evening Canticles* by Sir Charles V. Stanford (1852-1924), and the beautiful anthem "And I Saw a New Heaven" by Edgar Bainton (1880-1956).

Not only are the singers practicing and recording evensong in the safety of their homes, but parishioners will also be able to "attend" choral evensong on All Saints' Day without having to leave their homes. Using their technological gifts, choir members Michael Trycieckyj and Liam Reid will create a video that will be posted on St. Peter's website, so everyone will be able not just to hear the choir singing but also to see the singers on **Sunday afternoon, November 1**. This video, by the way, will be a "first" – because since the arrival of Covid-19, no one has made a recording of evensong that incorporates an entire virtual choir. Ours will be the groundbreaker!

So please join us at 4 p.m. on **Sunday, November 1** to both see and hear the choir members as they offer perform our annual All Saints' Day Choral evensong. And consider inviting friends and neighbors to join us by sharing the website information with them.





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The Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt, Rector
 The Rev. Christopher W. Exley, Assistant Rector
 Dr. Bruce Glenny, Organist/Choirmaster
 Susan House, Parish Administrator
 Elizabeth R. Dwyer, Parish Secretary
 Leigh Pavoni, Preschool Director
 Gail Malcolm, Event Coordinator
 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
 November Beacon
 is **October 18.**

Weekly Virtual Offerings at St. Peter's

Sunday
 10 A.M. Morning Prayer*
 Coffee hour**
 5 P.M. Youth Group**

Monday thru Thursday
 12 NOON Noonday Prayer*

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

Thursday
 1:15 P.M. Intercessory Prayer Group**

Friday
 8 A.M. Gathering of Men**

* Facebook Live or Website
 ** Zoom

To reach the staff, please call the office; if no one answers, leave a message or send an email. We are working from home as much as possible but we check for messages often. Thank you for your patience as we work from home, and please know that we love to hear from you.



Sunday Services in September

**8 a.m., Holy Eucharist, Rite One
 Outdoors**

*Masks required
 Please pre-register
 Bring your own seating*

**10 a.m. , Morning Prayer, Rite Two
 Online**

Coffee hour afterwards on Zoom

Recommendations from the Chester County Health Department as well as the results of our parish survey in August indicate that it is not yet time for us to move indoors. We will continue to monitor the science and gauge the interest of the parish. Please join us for worship and programs outdoors and online.