

The Beacon

In thy light shall we see light.

Psalm 36:9



August 2021

In Awe and Wonder

by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt

Scientists tell us that awe reduces stress and increases joy. As reported in the *New York Times*, "In one study, a group of 60 participants, 60 to 90 years old, were asked to go on 15-minute 'awe walks' each week and take pictures . . . [And] relative to a control group, the awe-oriented participants reported greater joy and prosocial positive emotions. They also tended to smile more over time." Experiences of awe take us outside of ourselves. When we are captivated by wonder, our worries are not only momentarily suspended but also rendered just a bit less dire. The Grand Canyon at sunrise or the Pacific Ocean at sunset are famously awe-inspiring, but the good news from the researchers is that what they call "mircoadventures" can be just as beneficial as such big impact experiences and can easily punctuate our everyday life. We need not travel far; we need only pay attention to the world we inhabit.

I am reminded of a friend's project called "Pilgrimage-in-place." More than three hundred days ago he began posting striking images on Instagram with captions like: "Budding clover," "Hummingbird sits through heavy rain," "Rescued plant keeps growing," "A slug's trails." "A spiderweb," and "Summer squall." Accompanying each post was the same series of hashtags: "#beautyinsmallthings,

#whatdidyounotice, #200feetfromhome, #onesquareacre."

This friend happens to live in a particularly picturesque spot, but you and I are similarly surrounded by awesomeness. Whether or not the remainder of your summer includes travel beyond your own yard, you can create an adventure, dwell in wonder, find a charming detail that makes you feel joy. You can call these





sacred moments. You can see them as opportunities to experience the abundance of God and to give God glory. It might feel like going on a mini-retreat, or be a chance to breathe deeply or to encounter something anew. In these three images you can see that I have been practicing throughout the summer, and I encourage you to try your hand at this as well.

Thanks both to the ministry of the Bad Boys and Girls for Jesus and to the generosity of many generations

of parishioners, the campus of St. Peter's is a perfect place to cultivate awe. Also, please read the pages that follow especially attentively, and you will find beauty in the ways we are responding to God's call to love and serve.



Looking Ahead to Fall

The Choir to Return, Live and in Person!

For eighteen months, St. Peter's choir members have performed and recorded virtual hymns, anthems, service music, and special music—two hundred and twenty pieces in all! They have done an excellent job of keeping the music going during these difficult times. Fortunately, the choirs are planning to return *live* in September. There is no substitute for an ensemble experience, and they have missed singing together in person.

They will, however, function a bit differently, in the interest of safety. To protect the children of the parish who can't be vaccinated yet, the choir decided to wear special singing masks (roomier around the nose and mouth than ordinary ones), that alto Luci Russell designed and is assembling for all choir members. The singers will also maintain a safe distance both from each other and from the congregation, and rehearsals will be shorter and in a larger space than before.

One final alert for everyone—the choir will have a surprise for the people of St. Peter's in September, so please watch Keynotes for the unveiling of this musical surprise!



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The Beacon is produced monthly by St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley 2475 St. Peter's Road, Malvern, PA 19355 Phone: 610-644-2261 Fax: 610-644-7967 E-mail: parishoffice@stpetersgv.org

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Back to the "Old Normal"

On **September 12**, the start of the program year, our usual three-service schedule will resume. We will hold a simple Rite 1 Eucharist at 8 a.m. in the historic church; family Eucharist at 9 a.m. in the barn; and a Rite 2 Eucharist with choir at 11:15 in the historic church.

Please watch for detailed information about the kickoff of the new program year in upcoming Keynotes and Sunday leaflets, and in the September *Beacon*.

New—First Sundays at St. Peter's

Beginning in September, on the first Sunday of each month we will hold only one morning service. On September 5, October 3, November 7, and December 5, we will worship together at 10 a.m. Please note this new schedule on your calendar now.

By way of a little preview, on **September 5**, a special coffee hour will mark the end of our summer schedule; on **October 3**, we will observe St. Francis Day with the Blessing of the Animals; on **November 7** we will hold a special All Saints' Day service at 10 a.m., particularly remembering those who died when pandemic restrictions kept us from gathering as a community, and at 4 p.m. the choir will offer a poignantly glorious All Saints evensong. We are still working on the details of the 10 a.m. service on December 5, but can say with certainty that we will observe the season with Advent Lessons and Carols at 4 p.m. that day.

Awe Walk

Join Abigail at 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, **August 31**, for an awe-inspiring walk around the campus of St. Peter's. We will meet on the patio behind the barn for a prayer, then walk on our own, and rejoin each other on the patio to share what we discovered. We will provide light refreshments, and we will finish by 6:15 p.m. Everyone who wishes to walk the labyrinth is invited to remain to do so. To assist Abigail with planning, please let her know (abigail@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261) you wish to participate.

Thank You, St. Peter's

by the Rev. Chris Exley

Words cannot do justice to our gratitude for the way that the people of St. Peter's came out in force to make the "first annual" summer Youth Jam such a fantastic success. You all showed up, through the planning stages, the set-up, and the clean-up, and many of you who came to help had not formally signed up to do so. The response was beautiful and reflects the deep commitment this parish has to serving its younger members. I can't begin to name everyone who worked on the event and my record-keeping was spotty. The diocese and the bishop join me in extending their gratitude for a great job! I am so grateful for your presence and can assure you that planning for next summer's second annual Youth Jam is already under way!



Time, Talent and Treasure: The Components of Stewardship

Time, talent, and treasure were all on full display at the July 10th Youth Jam! And the young people and diocesan leaders certainly appreciated everyone from St. Peter's and all the "rising and shining" of our parishioners "to give God glory." If you're from the "Show me" state, just compare the size of the whole group—youth attendees *plus* adult helpers—pictured above with the photo of just the young people with the bishop on the next page!

That familiar refrain about rising, shining and giving God your glory is our stewardship theme this year, and we are thrilled to highlight how we participate all the time. But we may not always recognize that the many things we do are part of stewardship, so the stewardship commission has been working on ways to expand our understanding and focus to help us recognize all of our stewardship contributions.

Watch for the new mobile app that we intend to roll out in September and for a plan that will empower all of us to be year-round stewards as we share our blessings both within the parish and in the greater community. The commission members are excited about their progress so far and look forward to sharing much more information with everyone at the end of the summer. At this point, they are asking to hear from anyone who has

Coming Soon
A mobile app, and
we need your input.

experience with a mobile app for churches, so please email Jan Himmelreich (himmeljk@gmail.com) if you can supply some experience in this area.

Have a wonderful and safe August and remember:

Rise and Shine and Give God Your Glory, Glory!

Fun Moments at the "First Annual" Diocesan Youth Jam!









Meetings Update

Unfortunately the weather forced us to reschedule our first movie night at the end of June, so we will now watch *Captain America* on Friday, **August 6**, beginning at 8:45 p.m. Bring your chairs, food, beverages, and any and all friends! Use this link to sign up: **Youth Group: Captain America – Movie on the Grove (signupgenius.com)**.



This month's youth group get-togethers will take place via Zoom at 5 p.m., on **Sundays August 1 and 15**. In September our regular program year meetings, when we explore our faith, plan our fundraisers, and our fun activities, will resume in the youth room (or outside) after the 9 a.m. service. Ideas for fun so far include an axe-throwing outing and a visit to Treehouse World Adventure Park in West Chester.

Car Wash Fundraiser Coming Up

Our first mission trip fundraiser of the year will be a car wash in the parking lot on Sunday, **September 19**. We will need all of our young people plus some adults to pull off this event, so please sign up to help at **signupgenius.com/go/8050B4EACA62EA1FE3-youth3**.



2022 Youth Mission Trip

Chris and Canon Betsy Ivey of the diocese have already begun to plan next summer's youth mission trip to Navajoland. If you are interested in helping with the planning and execution of this mission trip in the Southwest, please contact Chris (chris@stpetersgv.org). Watch for more information as it becomes available in the coming months, and please continue to support the youth in their fundraising efforts.

Sunday School Schedule to Change in 2021-22

In their responses to the Sunday school survey we circulated last month, an overwhelming twentynine volunteers committed to helping with Sunday school this year! We are incredibly thankful for this act of stewardship and the depth of parish commitment to the responsibility to support our youngest members in their faith.

One of the things we learned from the survey is that having Sunday school meet during the 9 a.m. service rather than after it would help families participate most fully in the life of the parish. Starting in September, therefore, the children will process to Sunday school during the opening hymn and will return to the worship space at the Peace, so that everyone will be together for the Eucharist. We will email detailed information to Sunday school families and will also provide more information in the September *Beacon*.



Holly Hardester will continue to serve as Sunday school director for one more year, during which time we will refine the role and ensure a smooth transition for the new director. The survey process enabled us to identify the director's many former responsibilities and delegate some of them to others. This move in turn will free the director to focus on the overall organization of the Sunday morning experience for the young members of our congregation. We invite you to discern prayerfully whether you are called to this vital and fulfilling ministry. For more information, please contact Chris (chris@stpetersgv.org).



Christian formation for all ages is a tripartite undertaking, each segment with its own leader.

- Sunday school is where the youngest children grow in their experience of Jesus' love for each of them and also where they form enduring friendships with other children. (Holly Hardester)
- The purpose and promise of Christian formation for our parish youth embrace tackling hard questions about life and faith, creating community, serving others, and having fun. (Chris Exley)
- Adult formation aims to deepen our understanding of our faith, build relationships that sustain the parish and inspire new ideas, and offer ways for people to reflect on and apply some of our long-held beliefs as well as unfamiliar perspectives. (Melissa Shaner)

Preschool Update

by Denise Nuttall

Greetings from the preschool by way of summer camp! We have had so much fun at summer camp, especially on "water day," our perennial favorite!

As summer winds down, the teachers and I are looking forward to the start of the 2021-22 school year. The pre-Kindergarten class is full, but space is still available in our two- and four-day programs. If you know people who are looking for a play-based, nurturing preschool program, please invite them to contact me (preschool@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261).

One final housekeeping note—we need to hire an aide for our four-day class, so if anyone is interested, please contact me (see above).

Outreach



Thank you, St. Peter's, for sharing your time and your baking talents with St. James School's "welcome table"! in July. These are just some of the four hundred packages of treats that you created for the folks in the West Allegheny area of Philadelphia.

Another chance to bake cookies and mini-loaves for the welcome table is coming up in September—watch for details in next month's *Beacon*.



August 1 Youth group 5 p.m. (Zoom)

August 6 Youth movie night 8:45 p.m.

August 7 Needlework ministry 10 a.m. (Zoom)

August 15 Youth group 5 p.m. (Zoom)

August 31 Awe walk 5:15 p.m.

Vacation Bible School Canceled

In case you are wondering why VBS doesn't appear on this month's calendar, here's why. It turns out that the week we selected for this summer, August 16 to 20, put VBS too close to the beginning of the regular school year. So, with regret, we decided that we would cancel this summer's VBS.

For the summer of 2022, we are already looking at dates in June or July—well in advance of the start of the school year—so that we can once again offer VBS to our parish children and the community. If you are interested in helping plan and orchestrate next summer's VBS, please let Chris know (chris@stpetersgv.org).

June Financial Snapshot

| | June 2021 | Year to date June | Year-end Projection | Budget 2021 |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Parishioner Contributions | \$ 40,760 | \$347,068 | \$611,373 | \$555,000 |
| Other Income* | 8,707 | 70,683 | 143,670 | 123,150 |
| Total Income | 49,467 | 377,752 | 738,020 | 678,150 |
| Total Expense | 64,479 | 362,212 | 686,193 | 678,150 |
| Surplus/ (Deficit) | (15,013) | 15,540 | 68,850 | 0 |

^{*}Interest, rentals, endowment distributions, fundraiser, PPP funds

St. Peter's June income remained strong, and we are most grateful to the many parishioners who maintain their pledge payments, especially during summer vacation. The finance commission wishes all in the parish a pleasant remainder of summer. — *Eric Lien for the finance commission*



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The Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt, Rector The Rev. Christopher W. Exley, Assistant Rector Dr. Bruce Glenny, Organist/Choirmaster Rachel Martin Swartz, Parish Administrator Denise Nuttall, 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 September *Beacon* is **August 15**.

Weekly Summer Offerings at St. Peter's

Sunday

8 A.M. Sunday Eucharist*
10 A.M. Sunday Eucharist**
11 A.M. Lemonade on the Lawn*

Youth Group (as announced)

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*/*** (alternately)

* In person

** In person and virtual

*** Virtual

The parish office is open Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please note that it is closed on Friday. If you need assistance when the office is closed, please contact the rector via cell.

Help Wanted

Our "Episcopal Church welcomes you" sign on southbound 252 (just before the corner of Swedesford Road) needs some help! Thanks to some kind of traffic mishap and also to the lush weed growth around it, the sign, which is bent at a 45° degree angle, is both invisible and illegible and cannot welcome anyone to St. Peter's.

It is in dire need of a few volunteers to return the signpost to its more or less upright position and to clear away the brush now enshrouding the welcoming words. If you would literally like to help St. Peter's welcome drivers traveling on route 252, please let Chris know (chris@stpetersgv. org).