

St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley

# The Beacon

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

December 2009 — January 2010

## FROM THE RECTOR . . .

### What Are You Waiting For?

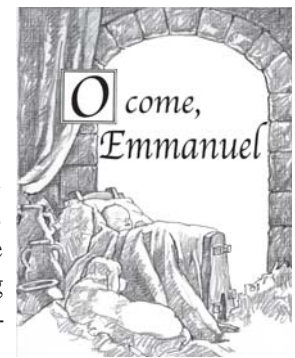
"So what are you waiting for?" my friend asked. The question came toward the end of our prolonged conversation. I was startled by it—both by the frankness of the question and the excellent theology the question implied.

We wait all the time, do we not? We wait for the light at the intersection to change (especially that wonky one at the corner of . . .; every burg has a traffic light that takes eons to cycle through). We wait for test results, we wait for loved ones to return from war zones, we wait for a letter or a phone call bringing an apology, we wait for the train while we wait for the courage to ask someone else's forgiveness. Waiting, like so much else of our spirituality, requires emotional energy. Waiting, contrary to appearance, is not a passive activity. Waiting invites our attention.

The season of Advent is upon us. We count down the days until Christmas. And even though for some the countdown began while Halloween décor still cluttered the shelves, we as people of faith count things differently. We do not count down—we count on! We count on the One who comes again and again. "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," we sing during this holy season as countless folk have sung for centuries. The text of this hauntingly beautiful hymn helps us wait. Making and lighting Advent wreaths in our homes, thoughtfully purchasing just the right item, suggested by the Gifting Tree tag, for an impoverished senior in our community, supporting the ministries represented at our Alternative Christmas "market," taking the time to offer a long overdue apology or accepting someone else's apology help us wait too.

Advent waiting is not about "killing time" until December 25. Advent waiting is about "waiting for the Lord." Advent waiting is greeting each new moment of each new day with hope, expecting the One who loves us beyond all imagining to show up and to be present—even while we wait.

So come on. Join me. What are *you* waiting for?



Blessings,  
Anne +

### Epiphany Pageant!

Our youngsters will once again reenact the Visit of the Wise Men to the Infant Jesus, this year at the 9 o'clock family service on **Sunday, January 3**.

Kate Mallon-Day is seeking several enthusiastic young actors to bring this story to life. Participants (Kindergarteners and older) must attend the one and only rehearsal on **Saturday, January 2** from 10 A.M. to noon. Please contact Kate in person at church, or by e-mail ([kantakate@aol.com](mailto:kantakate@aol.com)) or phone (610-613-8965) if your child wishes to join the "Pick-up Players" for this once-a-year performance!



## Game Night 2010

by Linda Holden

The fourth annual St. Peter's Game Night is coming up on **Saturday, February 13**, the week after Superbowl.

Here's our sequence. We will *kick off* at 5:30 with the quiz, which generally *spirals out of control* early on, and then *roll out* a light soup-and sandwich supper (anyone looking for *turn-overs* may be disappointed). After that, we *scramble* for the game tables—Loaded Questions, Scrabble, bridge, and many others await your *draft selection*.



Some competitors will experience *the thrill of victory*, others *the agony of defeat*, but anyone displaying *unsportsmanlike conduct* will be subject to a *time-out!* The *big takeaway* for everyone is a night of fun getting to know fellow parishioners—no one goes home *down and out*.

Everyone age 13 and over is welcome. We need a *quick count* so *drop back* to the sign-up sheet near the coffee areas in the church and barn during January. Let us know how many are coming and whether you plan to bring soup, salad or bread. If bad weather *blindsides* us, there will be a slight *delay of game* until the following evening, **February 14**, same time and place.

If you're a *rookie* with questions about the event, email Linda Holden (utraquist@comcast.net).

St. Peter's in the Great Valley

### The Beacon



*"In thy light shall we see light."*

The Beacon is produced monthly by St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley  
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Submissions are invited and are subject to editing. Submit articles by e-mail (preferred) to beacon@stpetersgv.org or by fax: 610-644-7967 or leave in *Beacon* file in church office  
Publication date: First of month  
Deadline: 15th of month preceding

Staff: Trudi Graves (editor), Bonnie Michael, Molly Hardy, Char Mark, David Graves

## Giftng Tree and Aerie House Ingathering

Please deliver all gifts for the Gifting Tree and Aerie House to the church or the barn on or before **Sunday, December 6**. Please place presents, which should not be gift-wrapped, in a bag with the nametag attached. Aerie House gift bags should likewise have the child's nametag attached.



## Sunday School Teachers

Many thanks to fall teachers Meg and Ted Blecker, Kate Hargrove, Tammy Kraig, Becky Bondi, Pegi Davidson, Anne Caterino, and Kerry Isberg.

And a big welcome to winter teachers Marsha Wirtel and Penny Stanger (preK/K), Sue Andrews and Steve Hartman (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade), Liz DiStefano and Jamie McArdle (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade), Steve Downs and Kerry Lynch (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade)

Two Sunday school teachers are still needed for the 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade class in the spring session (March 14 to June 6). Contact Debi Lynch (484-320-8299 or lynchkg2@comcast.net) if you can help with this wonderful ministry.

## Children's Chapel Volunteer Opportunity

We are thrilled to see so many new cherubic faces in children's chapel on Sunday mornings. Holly Hardester and Jen Farmer lead chapel on most Sunday mornings but they need assistance for crowd control! Assisting in children's chapel is an easy way to get involved, meet new friends, and check out all the fun your child is having. If you are willing to assist on a Sunday or two, please contact Jen Farmer (jen.farmer@comcast.net or 610-363-1506).

## Christmas Eve Pageant

All children attending the 4 P.M. Christmas Eve service are welcome to participate as part of the "heavenly host." Participation is easy, and the best part is that there are no rehearsals! All children who want to join in the fun will be given a prop when they enter church, and parents will be told when their children should go up to the altar.

## Children's Formation Christmas Schedule

There will be no Sunday school on December 27 and January 3, but children's chapel and nursery care will be available on both days.

## ***FROM THE TRANSITIONAL DEACON . . .***

### ***What Difference Does It Make?***

*by the Rev. Paul Reid*

On December 12, in the season of Advent, when we are to contemplate both the darkness of our lives without God and the dawning light of the coming birth of our savior, I am to be ordained to the holy order of priests. I will stand on the grounds of the church where I grew up from the age of twelve, where I sang in the choir for decades, where I was married, and where my father is buried, and on that day will become an ordained priest.

What difference does it make? I already wear a collar backwards and get odd stares when I stop at the gas station on the way home. What is the difference in becoming a priest? Why do we Episcopalians persist in this pomp and ceremony and place so much weight on what the outside world merely sees as a job change? After all, some parishioners remember my getting into trouble in Sunday school and sneaking cigarettes with the youth group. Why will they come on that December day when the child they remember stands before a bishop and promises, at a rather late age, to do better? The answer of course is that this event is not about me at all.

In the opening words of the examination portion of the ordination service, Bishop Shand will remind us of what many in our church call the priesthood of the laity: “All baptized people are called to make Christ known as Savior and Lord, and to share in the renewing of his world.” He will then tell us the difference it will make to all of us when I am ordained: “In all that you do, you are to nourish Christ’s people *from the riches of his grace*, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.” As an ordained priest, I will be called upon every second of the day to get the heck out of the way of myself, so that God’s grace can be at work among God’s people.

We Episcopal parishes and our bishops are called to look for people who we hope are best able to get themselves out of the way of God, and we send them to seminaries so that they can prayerfully practice that task and learn how others have done so since the days of the apostles. For those whom God has kept to the path, we call upon all the great riches of our liturgy in words and music; bishops and priests from near and far gather in a worship service of great beauty and we ask them to lay hands on those who will from then on try, like their predecessors, to stay at all times out of the way of God. This takes place not because of the hands of the priests and bishop but because we as the whole body of Christ ask the Holy Spirit to act through them and their hands that are so practiced at getting out of God’s way.

This is why we Episcopalians reserve the celebration of Baptism and the Eucharist to ordained priests. When we look to the font and the holy table, when we seek personal counsel and reconciliation of relationships, we look to see the work of God, not the personality of the priest. No human being can do this, of course; only with God’s grace and the constant help of the parish body of Christ does an ordained priest have a hope of constantly keeping out of the way of himself.

The service of ordination is your service, and it is my fondest hope that I will see as many of you there as possible. This will be my last letter in *The Beacon* as your transitional deacon and my time here as a newly ordained priest will end on December 31. But over the years I have learned that God has always found ways of bringing me back, and so I will not say farewell. We who have been blessed to be members of the body of Christ at St. Peter’s Church in the Great Valley know that a very large part of us never leaves.

### ***A Word about Fulfilling 2009 Pledges***

If for any reason you believe you will be unable to fulfill your pledge this year, it would be a big help if you let Peter Kreek, our treasurer, know as soon as possible so that the vestry can properly manage our end-of-year finances. Peter can be reached at 610-687-8048 or [peterkreek@verizon.net](mailto:peterkreek@verizon.net). All communications will of course be kept in strict confidence.

## *Another Good Works Success Story*

*by Catherine Kerrison*

After almost a year, St. Peter's Good Works team is close to wrapping up its monthly ministry in the narrow, four-story, Phoenixville row home of Willie Hampton and his grandmother Eula May Hampton. When Good Works arrived, the close, winding staircases lacked railings; the entire bathroom, plumbing, floor, and all, needed to be replaced; and a safe electrical system needed to be installed throughout the house. (Willie had devised an elaborate—and dangerous—network of extension cords to provide lighting on each floor.)



The transformation is extensive: the home has a new front door and storm door, and outdoor lighting in front and back; the electrical work is almost complete and the extension cords have all but disappeared; the bathroom is completely redone; the stairway has a railing; the exterior stucco and attic ceiling have both been repaired.

In November, St. Peter's youth added their muscle to the work: Matt Fabius (a Good Works regular) and Aaron Hartman helped Dave Eddy upgrade electric service in the living room while Rob Hutton and Jamie Alexander helped prepare the kitchen walls for painting (that job filled two garbage pails and raised clouds of dust!), and Caroline Eddy painted the second-floor hallway.

The first year of our very successful lunch ministry is also coming to a close. Pairs of parishioners have generously provided simple sandwiches, chips, fruit, cookies, and drinks each month to our seven- to twelve-person work crew on the second Saturday of the month. Would you like to serve in 2010? Choose the month most convenient for you! Please contact Catherine Kerrison (610-240-9875 or [catherine.kerrison@villanova.edu](mailto:catherine.kerrison@villanova.edu)) to sign up for the lunch ministry. To volunteer for a workday, please call Mark Carkhuff (610-935-1623 or [mtcarkhuff1@juno.com](mailto:mtcarkhuff1@juno.com)).

## *My VIM Mission to Mozambique*

*by Martha Nelson*

In October I made my fourth trip to Mozambique with the Volunteers in Mission (VIM) program of the United Methodist Church, aided by a \$500 grant from St. Peter's Outreach Commission in support of our work. VIMs often hear statements like this: "You have been to Mozambique several times. Why is it important for you to return? Why don't you just send money?" The answer is simple: we return in person because the relationship with our brothers and sisters is the real project and we develop that relationship as we work together to build God's kingdom through each year's projects. I used St. Peter's donation to contribute to three projects in which I was particularly involved.

Four years ago, United Methodist Bishop Partners in Mission funds were used to begin the Lichinga Farm Project, to teach best agricultural practices, raise food for the community, and help fund the Lichinga church. This project is consistent with current thinking about enabling Africa to be self-sustaining in food production without dependence on foreign aid. Despite some initial problems in the project, what we saw this year gave us great hope that our goals will soon be met: banana trees have been planted and church members will soon plant beans and corn. The funds raised from these crops will allow the people to construct a pigpen and purchase pigs.

Three years ago, a VIM was inspired by young Mozambicans who wanted to teach their fellows English. Classes began at the English school (financed in part by a congregation in Warwick, NY), led by teachers stipends are applied to their college costs. The program has been successful. This year I was able to augment the English as a Second Language materials I had supplied in 2008, and we also bought a CD player so the students can hear English pronunciation.

I also worked with our friends to coordinate the new Beira Computer Internet Center. With funds from an American donor, this three-year pilot program encourages pastors, students and church members to connect to the Internet with their own computers, or with laptops supplied over the years by VIM teams, over a high-speed line. A part-time staff member will manage the computers and help those unfamiliar with computers. Students and staff are excited about having greater computer access.

## *From Darkness to Light: Advent Lessons and Carols*

*by Martha Johnson*

Advent has a way of sneaking up on us. Even before Halloween is over, Christmas decorations already appear in windows and stores. But what about these four wonderful weeks of preparation called “Advent,” when we prepare for the coming of Christ? Where are the quiet waiting and joyous expectation that will make Christmas so special? I suggest we start with the salvation story as presented in readings and music at the annual Service of Lessons and Carols, presented this year at 4 P.M. on **December 6**, the second Sunday in Advent. Following the service, all are invited to enjoy the food and fellowship of our annual “crock-pot-luck supper” in the undercroft of the barn.

Once again this year, the St. Peter’s choirs and readers of all ages will present this service of Lessons and Carols for Advent in the barn. Celebrating this service there offers a wonderful opportunity to experience the candles and greens against the winter dusk, as we are enveloped by the songs and stories of Christ’s coming among us. The service gives us the chance to pause amid our busy-ness and remember Christ’s gift to us.

Many years ago, Archbishop Edward Benson of Truro Cathedral in England designed this beautiful service of scripture and music, basing it on a medieval vigil service. Later it was modified for King’s College, Cambridge, where it has since been presented annually and popularized through recordings and radio and television broadcasts. The service includes a procession with bells, lessons relating the story of God’s plan for salvation, along with congregational carols and hymns and choir carols and anthems. The music ranges from Gregorian chant (such as the favorite “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”), to traditional works like “The Cherry Tree Carol,” to recent works like Benjamin Britten’s wondrous “Hymn to the Virgin.”

In difficult times like our own, when we are searching for answers, there is no better way to begin a season of joy and preparation for the coming of the Christchild than a quiet, candlelit service of lessons and music. Since the Service of Advent Lessons and Carols is also an excellent introduction to the traditions of the Episcopal Church, why not bring a neighbor or friend with you on December 6?



**LESSONS  
& CAROLS**

### *Spread the Joy of Christ This Christmas!*

As Christmas approaches, you may soon be hard-pressed to find the perfect gift for loved ones or friends who already have everything they need. Once again this year, instead of buying someone another superfluous sweater or fruit cake, you can give a gift of hope in someone’s name by participating in St. Peter’s Alternative Christmas “market.” The Outreach Commission encourages everyone to participate in Alternative Christmas by making a donation to any of our focus outreach ministries and will be on hand during coffee hour in the barn and church on three Sundays, **December 6, 13, and 20**, to help you share the joy of Christmas with someone special in your life and with others less blessed with abundance than you.



#### ***The Clinic***

*Providing medical care for those in need*

#### ***Seamen’s Church Institute***

*Caring for the seafarers who visit our shores*

#### ***Good Works***

*Repairing substandard housing*

#### ***Home of the Sparrow***

*Housing homeless women and their children*

#### ***Chester Children’s Chorus***

*Offering talented children opportunity*

#### ***Aerie House Orphanage, Ethiopia***

*Providing love and care for orphans*



## *Advent Schedule*

### ***An Evening with Luke—Wednesday, December 2, 6:30 to 8:30***



Give yourself a gift this Advent season! Join fellow parishioners in the parish hall on **December 2** to enjoy a homemade chili supper and then to read the entire Gospel of Luke. This gospel is the focus of the new church year that begins on the first Sunday of Advent. The evening promises to be memorable and one that truly sets the stage for a holy Advent season and for the entire church year! Please RSVP ([rector@stpetersgv.org](mailto:rector@stpetersgv.org)) so we can have enough homemade cornbread muffins on hand!

### ***A Visit from St. Nick—Saturday, December 5, 10 A.M.***

St. Nick is the patron saint of children, and to honor St. Nicholas on his feast day, **December 5**, all children and grandchildren of the parish are invited to come to the parish hall to enjoy homemade cookies, hot chocolate and a visit from St. Nick! Bring your friends, and since St. Nicholas is also the patron saint of sailors, please bring new men's socks for us to distribute to the Seaman's Church Institute.



### ***Advent Lessons and Carols—December 6, 4 P.M.***



In the late afternoon as winter darkness descends, we will gather in the lovely candle lit space of the Barn to hear the prophecies and rich music of Advent. Based on the traditional service from Kings College, Cambridge, St. Peter's adds its own touches with readers of all ages, choirs and hand bells. This moving service on **December 6** will be followed by a "crock-pot-luck" supper in the lower level of the Barn as we continue to celebrate the Coming of the Lord. Please bring a dish for six or more, friends, and neighbors for a very special evening. *Nursery care will be available during the service for infants through 4-year-olds.* (See p. 5 for a full article about this service.)

### ***Advent Rector's Forum—December 6, 13, and 20, 10:10 A.M.***

#### ***Rock-a-Bye Baby: A Look at the Infancy Narratives***

Join us as we explore the birth announcements found in each of the four Gospels, with four completely different versions of the coming of Christ. Grab a cup of coffee and be part of this often surprising discussion of the Biblical perspective.



### ***Alternative Christmas: A Return to the True Spirit of Christmas—December 6, 13, 20***



This Christmas, honor the gift of love among your family, business associates and friends with a donation to one of St. Peter's outreach ministries: The Clinic, Home of the Sparrow, Good Works, the Seaman's Church Institute, Chester Children's Chorus and our global outreach ministry, Aerie House Orphanage in Ethiopia. For your gift to one of our outreach partners, you will receive a lovely gift card to present to the person you are honoring with your gift of love. The Alternative Christmas Market will be open during coffee hours on **December 6, 13, and 20.** (See p. 5 for more information about this opportunity to spread the true spirit of Christmas.)



***Family Christmas Eve Service—December 24, 4 P.M. (Barn)***

Come and celebrate Christ's birth in this early evening service of Holy Eucharist filled with carols and candlelight. The Christmas gospel is retold in song and action by the children of the parish, with parts for everyone!

*Help us prepare the manger for the Holy Babe by bringing cradle gifts—new baby items (size newborn to 12 months) to be distributed to area women's shelters.*

***Music for Christmas Eve—7:30 P.M. —and Festal Choral Eucharist—8 P.M. (Church)***

Join us for the full festival Christmas Eve liturgy with the St. Peter's 9 o'clock choir, harp, and the magnificent Bigelow pipe organ. Arrive early for the music before the service and still be home before midnight!

***Music for Christmas Eve—10:30 P.M. —and Festal Choral Eucharist at 11 P.M. (Church)***

The late full festival Christmas Eve liturgy combines the magnificent music of the Gallery Choir, harp and organ for a service that renews the awe and joy of Christmas. Please plan to arrive early since the music before this glorious service truly sets the tone of this most holy night.

***Christmas Day—December 25, The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ***

***Instrumental Music & Carols at 10:45 A.M., and Festal Holy Eucharist at 11 A.M. (Church)***

On Christmas morn the distinctive liturgy of the day, combined with lovely spirituals and recorder and lute music for the season, invites us to truly celebrate God with us, Emmanuel.

***The First Sunday after Christmas—December 27, Holy Eucharist at 8, 9 and 11 A.M.***

We follow our regular Sunday worship schedule. Children's chapel and nursery care will be available, but Sunday school will not be held.



***Epiphany***

***Sunday, January 3—We Three Kings***

We follow our regular Sunday worship schedule with Christian Formation for all ages . . . plus a visit from the Three Wise Men at the 9 and 11 A.M. services of Holy Eucharist, kings' cake, and more!

***Sunday, January 10—Baptism of Our Lord***

We observe Jesus' baptism at all three services and encourage this feast day as an appropriate day for baptisms within the parish. *Please contact the rector to schedule a baptism on this day.*

*Advent &  
Christmastide  
Readings*



**December 6**  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Sun. of Advent*

Baruch 5:1-9  
Canticle 16  
Philippians 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

**December 13**  
*3<sup>rd</sup> Sun. of Advent*

Zephaniah 3:14-20  
Canticle 9  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:7-18

**December 20**  
*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent*

Micah 5:2-5a  
Canticle 15  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

**December 24**  
*Christmas Eve*

Isaiah 9:2-4, 6-7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 3:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

**December 25**  
*Christmas Day*

Isaiah 52:7-10  
Psalm 98  
Hebrews 1:1-12  
John 1:1-14

**December 27**  
*1<sup>st</sup> Sun. after Christmas*

Isaiah 61:10-62:3  
Psalm 147  
Galatians 3:23-25;4:4-7  
John 1:1-18

**January 3**  
*The Epiphany*

Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalm 72:1-7,10-14  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

**January 10**  
*The Baptism of our Lord*

Isaiah 43:1-7  
Psalm 29  
Acts 8:14-17  
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**January 17**  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Sun. after Epiphany*

Isaiah 62:1-5  
Psalm 36:5-10  
1 Corinthians 12:1-11  
John 2:1-11

**January 24**  
*The Confession of St. Peter  
(transferred)*

Acts 4:8-13  
Psalm 23  
1 Peter 5:1-4  
Matthew 16:13-19

**January 31**  
*4<sup>th</sup> Sun. after Epiphany*

Jeremiah 1:4-10  
Psalm 71:1-6  
1 Corinthians 13:1-13  
Luke 4:21-30

**Thanks and Appreciations**

- A special thank you to all of our faithful parishioners for their continuing support of the mission of St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley.
- For the lunchtime organ recitals and especially to Martha Johnson for her wonderful recital on November 17.
- To all the volunteers at Good Works and the parishioners who deliver lunch to the workers. It is very moving to watch the hard work, being carried out in small spaces.
- For the November 8 Evensong which brought many new faces to our holy hill. Including the choir and strings, about 130 people heard the wonderful music in our magnificent church.
- To St. Peter's Preschool. Because of their success in attracting new students, they did not need the church's financial support and have returned \$1,000 to St. Peter's.
- And a very special thank you to the family who stepped forward with the challenge gift to help the parish balance the budget for 2009. And we are thankful for the response of the parishioners who have taken up the challenge.



**Vestry Update**

At the November vestry meeting, we focused on St. Peter's current financial situation. To inform the parish of our situation, we have included a narrative along with the financial information this month (see p. 10). While finances are a concern, the broader consideration is the well-being of parishioners and providing spiritual support.

## On Your Mark, Get Set . . .

by Jamie McArdle

It's hard to believe that the preschool year will be half over after Christmas vacation! What have we accomplished so far? Most importantly, we have taught, encouraged, and loved thirty-one preschoolers from twenty-six families—seven of the children are from St. Peter's parish families, the other twenty-four are not, and thirteen of the thirty-one children are new to us this year. We believe we have made a difference in their lives by being a preschool where play is celebrated and encouraged for the learning opportunities it offers, and where children's development is not hurried but is instead carefully fostered. We believe we have made a difference in the lives of their families by being a place where parents can take a deep breath and relax because the Main Line mostly doesn't intrude, traffic noise fades, and children can run far and fast without seeing a chain-link fence or a road.

We have hopped for dollars to help the Preschool pay its way, generously supported by preschool and parish families despite the Hop-a-Thon's move from last spring 2009 to this fall. We're collecting children's books for The Clinic's young patients and food for the hungry. We have invited grandparents and "grand friends" to share homemade treats and have shared a finger-food Thanksgiving with one another and the St. Peter's office staff. It's a great start!



So what's next? The Preschool rummage sale! Now in its third year, the rummage sale is coming up on March 20, from 9 to noon, and you know what that means: *we want your stuff*. As you look over your Christmas goodies and wonder how you're ever going to store them all, as you mull over why you need *three* versions of Monopoly and yet another coffee maker, or as you replace that set of seven plates (the eighth having become a kitchen fatality!), please store what you don't want to keep for just a little longer. The Preschool will soon take it off your hands!

In February, our planning and publicity will kick into high gear, and if you have talent in either of those areas—or in the equally important areas of "product placement," floor-walking, baking, or cash management—and want to spend a morning in the company of avid rummage-sale enthusiasts (a breed apart), we'd love to have you. If you are involved in outreach at St. Peter's or elsewhere and want to take some of our inevitable leftovers (usually a goodly amount of household items, books, and clothing, including good-quality business and interview clothes) for the ministry in which you're involved, please let me know, since the rummage sale remnants must be cleared out of the barn by late Saturday afternoon to prepare for Sunday worship.

As I look ahead to the hard work ahead for all the rummage sale volunteers, I remind myself of two things. First, this is the Preschool's one fundraiser that draws largely from the "outside" world—bringing in money from other pockets than ours. And second, each year in greeting rummage-salers, I repeatedly hear, "I never even knew this church was here!" This means new people are coming to our holy hill. Both are good for St. Peter's!

So, in addition to saving stuff for the rummage sale, I ask you to pray for this effort. I am not asking for prayers for us to rake in big bucks—that will or will not happen, as God wills it and our hands help it. Please pray, instead, that some of those new people who climb this hill will see through the rummage to the light within—will find God here and be found by Him. Thank you, and a joyous Christmas and New Year to you all!

Choir section leader **Kate Mallon-Day** will be the alto soloist in the Pottstown Symphony and Coventry Singers' annual "Messiah Sing-In" at 3 P.M. on December 13. Bring a score to at Trinity Reformed United Church of Christ, Hanover & King Sts., Pottstown, and join in the singing of this masterpiece.



Parish  
Family  
Milestones

Two works by choir section leader and composer in residence **Daniel Shapiro** had their première at the Curtis Institute in November. He is currently working on a setting of George Herbert's "Church-Musick" for Paul Reid's ordination to the priesthood on December 12.

Longtime parishioner **Leonore (Nora) Wetherill**, beloved sister of **Katy Place**, passed away on November 4.

**Angela Hitomi Skye Crandall, Gwen Aryn Devenney, Norah Hansen Phelan, and Marley Rees Rambo** were baptized at St. Peter's on All Saints' Day, Sunday, November 1.

## *2009 Financial Results*

	<b>October 2009</b>	<b>Year to date thru Oct.</b>	<b>Year to date Budget</b>	<b>Budget 2009</b>	<b>Year-end Forecast</b>
Pledge Income	\$ 26,056	\$ 345,285	\$ 385,931	\$ 531,000	\$ 485,354
Total Income	42,986	441,105	483,679	668,162	623,744
Total Expense	49,959	538,913	552,138	674,165	653,049
Surplus/(deficit)	-6,973	-97,808	-68,459	-6,003	-29,305

In January of 2009 the Finance Commission began posting the monthly parish financial overview in *The Beacon* in an effort to fully disclose the parish finances. Rather than give an explanation with these postings, the commission included a tag line that read, "If you have any questions or comments about this financial information, please talk to the treasurer, Peter Kreek, or a member of the Vestry or Finance Commission."

In August 2009, two new columns were added to the overview: the 2009 budget and a year-end forecast; a fourth line, surplus/deficit, was also added. If you have been reading this section of *The Beacon*, you will have noticed that in June the parish began to show a rather sizeable deficit for the year, one that continued through July, August, and September. Historically, it is not unusual for St. Peter's to show a deficit during the summer, as receipts tend to fall during vacation months, and the deficit generally begins to turn around in October and November, before December, the month we receive our largest revenue.

As you will see in the October report above, however, our numbers currently show a deficit of \$97,808, and receipts did not increase as expected. This situation has the parish leadership concerned. Recognizing that this has been a financially challenging year, the vestry is evaluating the impact a deficit could have as St. Peter's moves into the coming year.

What can you do to help your St. Peter's family? Here are some ideas.

- Catching up on your 2009 pledge is a great way to alleviate this situation.
- Making an additional gift for the remaining months of this year will also help.
- Making a pledge for 2010 will enable us to begin the year with a solid budget.
- Informing the treasurer, Peter Kreek (610-687-8048 or peterkreek@verizon.net) if you believe that you cannot fulfill the pledge you made for this year.

Making a pledge for the coming year is something each of us must prayerfully consider. How God calls us to give is a matter between each of us and Him. Please reflect faithfully on the abundance you enjoy and determine what you have to share with God.

## *A Great Year for The High Point*

*by Linda Holden*

Anyone new to our congregation may not have heard that St. Peter's Church often takes on a second identity, that of "The High Point," a venue for hosting a non-St. Peter's event on "the holy hill." Through Donna Shreiner markets our campus by networking with caterers, local vendors, e-marketers, and parishioners, we rent out the barn, common room and fellowship hall—and in some happy cases the entire campus—for wedding receptions, baby showers and other family events, as well as for retreats for area churches, music performances and recording sessions, and even a trade show. We can and do share our campus with others in ways that help us reap both outreach rewards and some funds for our general operating budget.

Like any heavily used facility, ours occasionally incurs extra maintenance costs. While our parish spruce-up days help The High Point present its best face to visitors, we engage professionals to clean before and after events and to rearrange furniture after late-night events (a job parishioners and the "barn brigade" cannot be expected to do). But the "barn brigade" can always use a helping hand to ready our spaces for events; every chair or platform section that a parishioner moves saves St. Peter's and The High Point some money.

The Marketing Commission is grateful to the many people (too many to name) who help us along the way, especially the Altar Guild members who graciously work around rental events, and parishioners and Mother Anne who move furniture, do landscaping, wash windows, and help with legal issues. And we thank Donna Shreiner who not only markets our space enthusiastically and skillfully but also supervises events and promotes an understanding of how The High Point works. We're looking forward to 2010!



# December

## December 2

\*Evening with Luke (p. 6)  
6 to 8:30 P.M.

## December 5

\*St. Nicholas Day (p. 6)  
10 A.M.  
Prayer shawl knitters  
10 A.M.  
Murder mystery book group  
12:30 P.M.

## December 6

\*Alternative Christmas Market (p. 5)  
\*Gifting Tree and Aerie House in-gathering (p. 2)  
Retirement party for Randy White  
following 11 A.M. service  
\*Advent Lessons & Carols (p. 5)  
4 P.M.  
followed by crock-pot-luck supper

## December 9

\*Gathering of Women (p. 11)  
7:15 P.M.

## December 12

Ordination of Paul Reid to the priesthood  
11 A.M.

## December 13

\*Alternative Christmas Market (p. 5)

## December 19

Christmas greens workshop

## December 20

\*Alternative Christmas Market (p. 5)

## December 24 Christmas Eve

\*Holy Eucharist with pageant (p. 7)  
4 P.M.  
\*Preparatory Service and Holy Eucharist (p.7)  
7:30 P.M. & 10:30 P.M.

## December 25 Christmas Day

\*Holy Eucharist (p. 7)  
11 A.M.

\*(see related article)



# January

## January 8 & 9

Vestry retreat

## January 13

\* Gathering of Women (p. 11)  
7:15 P.M.

\*(see related article)

## Gathering of Women

### Christmas Angels

At the Gathering of Women on **Wednesday, December 9**, Susan Schriver will lead a program on "Christmas Angels," beginning at 7:15 in the parish hall. We will learn about the works of angels and how we can become closer to our Guardian Angel. Bring your favorite angel ornament and share stories of angel encounters, and also bring a heavenly snack (angel cookies, angel food cake...) or beverage to share at this angelic and joyous occasion.

### It's All about Resolutions!

In the New Year we take time to reflect and hope, and many of us make resolve to do, be, or experience something different. Sometimes that includes a resolution to care for our bodies by exercising and losing weight. All St. Peter's women are invited to the Gathering of Women on **Wednesday, January 20**, when Dr. Lorna Stuart will present a program about how to change habits—including eating habits—with her characteristic gentle, graceful touch. Come join us in the parish hall at 7:15 that evening. Bring something to eat (I plan to err on the healthy side) or drink!

If you have questions about either of these programs or about the group, or if you need a ride, contact Bonnie Michael (610-937-5677) or Shannon Almquist (610-436-0302).

NOTE: This *Beacon* covers both December and January at St. Peter's. The next issue will appear at the beginning of February.



**St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley**

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The Reverend Anne Bridgers, Rector  
The Reverend Paul DeWitt Reid, Transitional Deacon  
Dr. Martha N. Johnson, Organist/Choirmaster  
Dr. Bruce Glenny, Associate Organist/Choirmaster  
Susan House, Parish Administrator  
Kathleen Herbster, Parish Secretary  
Jamie McArdle, Preschool Director  
Donna Shreiner, Marketing Director  
Randy White, Sexton

***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  
February *Beacon* is  
**January 15**

***Every Week at St. Peter's***

**Sunday**

8 A.M. Holy Eucharist, Rite I\*

9 A.M. Family Eucharist\*\*

10:10 A.M. Christian Formation\*\*

11 A.M. Holy Eucharist, Rite II\*

**Wednesday**

12 NOON Brown Bag Bible Study\*\*\*

**Thursday**

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

**Friday**

7 A.M. Gathering of Men\*\*\*\*

\*Church

\*\*Barn

\*\*\*Parish Hall

\*\*\*\*Parish House

O come,  
let us  
adore  
him

