

# *The Beacon*

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

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## **August 2024**

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### **Balancing Act**

*by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt*

Shortly before opening day in March I installed the MLB app on my phone. Last season, mostly because it seemed like the thing to do, I began to pay attention to the Phillies around the time they entered into post season play. Lots of people were talking about it so I turned on the game planning to switch over to something else after a few minutes and then never changed the channel. I kept watching games until the Phillies were eliminated but I felt like something of an opportunist, having not tuned into a single regular season match-up. So this season I have been in it since the beginning. I am learning the lingo and current rules, though there remain many things I do not know. I am reading about each player, so far have not yet chosen a favorite. When I cannot watch the game I keep track of the action on my trusty app. Scenes from the ballpark remind me of childhood days spent at Fenway Park with my family. Following Philadelphia's team has helped me get to know the place where I live now. Also, watching baseball is fun and it is something I have a bit more time for this summer when my children are away from home. It is also something I intend to enjoy well into the fall postseason.

August is a summer month in my mind, as well as scientifically. In reality it is a time of transition from vacation mind-sets to classroom preparations. Most schools in our area begin at the end of this month. At St. Peter's August means a quiet calendar and also the excitement of anticipating the start of the program year. It is a time to breathe deeply, continue the good work of recreation and restoration, while also turning our attention to what comes next.

Remaining in the present while also getting ready for the future is challenging. Each summer day is precious and also new joys and tasks will arise. I encourage you to be mindful of the balance. Try to stay grounded where you are even as you look ahead. I expect baseball, among other things, will help me do that. I wonder what it will be for you.

Please read this issue of *The Beacon* keeping my invitation to balance in mind. In the pages that follow you will find information about special summer music on Sunday mornings and a Third Wednesday dinner with activities and a hymn sing. Also, you will find news of Backpack Blessings, Foyer Dinner sign ups, and a preview of this program year's theme, Hope and Act.

Whether you are eagerly awaiting the return of the school bus, cooler weather, changing leaves, or planning to savor the sun and sand of summer as long as possible remember that you and all the people you encounter are beloved of God. Take time each day to begin with that in mind. If you need help remembering or feeling God's love, come to church. If you are particularly aware of all the blessings around you, come to church. No matter what else is going on this season of transitions, all are welcome at St. Peter's—both in person and online.

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## **2024-2025 Program Year**

### **Hope and Act**

The theme for the 2024-2025 program year at St. Peter's will be Hope and Act. As people of faith, our hope is founded in God and that hope moves us to action. We believe in a God who loves extravagantly and who calls us to love in the same way. It is easy to lose hope in the face of modern challenges, yet we know that we can count on the power of the divine. We know that we can join Jesus in making a difference in the world. This is a time to hope and to act as Christians. "Hope and Act" will weave through our programming, events, and worship, connecting with our ministry in a multitude of ways. We start the program year by observing the *Season of Creation*.

### ***Season of Creation***

The Episcopal Church has made an official statement recognizing climate change as "an all-encompassing social crisis and moral emergency that impacts and interconnects every aspect of pastoral concern including health, poverty, employment, racism, social justice, and family life and that can only be addressed by a Great Work involving every sector of society, including the Church." At St. Peter's our Green Stewards offer opportunities and information to help us connect our faith with living in partnership with the natural world. This fall we will join congregations around the world in observing the Season of Creation.

The celebration of the *Season of Creation* is an ecumenical effort that began in 1989 when the Orthodox Church established September 1 as a Day of Prayer for Creation. The World Council of Churches extended the celebration through October 4, the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi. The *Season of Creation* is now observed worldwide and the Episcopal Church has developed denominationally specific resources, which our bishop has authorized us to use.

The theme for 2024 is *To Hope and Act with Creation*, described and introduced in this way by the Episcopal materials:

In the letter of Paul the apostle to the Romans, the biblical image pictures the Earth as a Mother, groaning as in childbirth (Rom 8:22). Francis of Assisi understood this when he referred to the Earth as our sister and our mother in his *Canticle of Creatures*. The times we live in show that we are not relating to the Earth as a gift from our Creator, but rather as a resource to be used.

And yet, there is hope and the expectation for a better future. To hope in a biblical context does not mean to stand still and quiet, but rather groaning, crying, and actively striving for new life amidst the struggles. Just as in childbirth, we go through a period of intense pain, but new life springs forth.

*For Creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, groaning as it suffers together the pains of labor, and not only Creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.* (Romans 8:19-25, <https://newcreationliturgies.org/seasonofcreation/>)

Creation Care theology is multifaceted. For more information, please refer to the “primer” provided by the introductory materials for the *Season of Creation* and posted in both the historic church and the barn. At St. Peter’s what you will notice is that from September 8-October 6 our worship will be creation-focused while maintaining the liturgical structure and elements with which you are familiar.

### Special Music in August

- August 4: Flutist, music of Bach and Telemann
- August 11: Summer Choir, music TBA
- August 18: Tenor soloist, music of Bach and Beethoven

### June Financial Snapshot

	Month of June	June Year to Date	Forecast (year-end)	Budget (2024)
Parishioner Contributions	29,277	242,440	513,135	494,526
*Other Income	15,795	51,613	146,319	137,615
Total Income	45,072	294,054	659,455	632,141
Total Expense	50,492	323,943	651,399	632,128
Surplus/(Deficit)	(-5,420)	(-29,890)	8,055	13

*\*Other Income: Interest, Rental, Endowment Distributions*

Note: Through the first half of the year, expenses are higher than income. We expect this to balance out through the remainder of the year. Thank you for continuing to pay your pledges and supporting all that happens at St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley.

## Outreach News

### “We See Jesus in the Kitchen”: Barn Kitchen Update

Paige Infortuna

Our capital campaign, “We See Jesus in the Kitchen,” launched in May to raise funds to complete the kitchen in the barn. We are well on our way to reaching our goal of \$250,000, but we cannot do it without support from **all** of you.

Our campaign has a financial goal as well as a participation goal. Every dollar counts, and we are eager for every one of you to have a stake in our campus’s transformation. The kitchen project will benefit the entire community of St. Peter’s Church in the Great Valley, so we hope you will find a way to support this initiative.

Over the summer we connected with Warfel, our contractor, who will complete an updated review of the project ahead of the permit process. We anticipate a modest price increase for materials since we initially priced the project a year ago. We will refine our plans through the fall with a tentative build start date of January 2025. The project scope is six to eight weeks to completion.

Our campaign will run through August, with a two-year funding schedule (which means you have two years to complete your pledge). Pledge cards were mailed to all parishioners in late May; extras are available if you did not receive yours. Additionally, pledges can be made through Realm:

<https://onrealm.org/StPetersInGreat/AddPledge/barnkitchen>.

Will you help us feed our sheep and tend our flock? A certified kitchen offers so many possibilities for the future. Please take a leap of faith with us. Make your pledge and see what God has in store! Questions can be directed to Paige Infortuna ([pinfortuna@msn.com](mailto:pinfortuna@msn.com)) or Eileen Klein ([eileenklein1@icloud.com](mailto:eileenklein1@icloud.com)).

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## Christian Formation Updates

### Vacation Bible Study

Holly Hardester

The barn was filled with the joyful voices of 20 children for a full week of Vacation Bible School (VBS) in June. Some of the children were from within the parish and many were from the surrounding community—making new friends is one of the best opportunities VBS offers! The children participated in the telling of lively stories about Jesus with themes of inclusion, hospitality, hunger, and love. They created works of art,

played group games, sang from their hearts, packed CYWA lunches, baked communion bread, and were amazed by the organ in the historic church. We look forward to VBS next summer and hope to see many of our friends before then. We are grateful for the fabulous VBS staff. It could not have happened without them.

The fabulous 2024 VBS Staff:

- Suzanne Briar
- Aiden Bright
- Suzanne Casey
- Skye Dellaria
- Kathy Farren
- Amy Fisher
- Heidi Fowler
- Gail Guthridge
- Abigail Hacker

- Holly Hardester
- Linda Parkyn
- Cassie Shannon
- Heather Sweeney
- Cathy Terlescki

Special thanks also to Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt and Steven Patchel.

## Children and Youth Program Year Kick Off Information

### August 4<sup>th</sup> is Recruitment Sunday

On August 4th, the Children and Youth Ministries are setting apart time to talk with the congregation after the 10am service. We aim to recruit new teachers, assistants, and other roles for the 2024-2025 program year.

Whether you have decades of experience working with children in the classroom or are looking to reconnect with kids and learn how to help, there's a place for you to connect and help St. Peter's develop our faith community.

Please consider [reading this description of responsibilities](#) for the roles on our ministry team. There is room for people who have a lot of time or only a few days over the summer. Please stop by to say hello and learn more about our ministries. You can also sign up [here!](#)



### Keep an Eye Out for Monthly Newsletters from the Christian Formation Team for Parents and Families

Parents of youth and Sunday-School-aged children will receive a monthly email from the Christian formation team. Through these emails, we will stay connected about plans and resources for our young people and their parents. Email [slcurry@stpetersgv.org](mailto:slcurry@stpetersgv.org) to be added to the list.

### Join us on August 25<sup>th</sup> for the Backpack Blessing

Students at all levels and those who teach them will be sent forth into the soon-to-begin school year with God's blessings. If you are a student, a teacher, or someone in any way about to begin a new school year, come to St. Peter's for worship on Sunday, August 25, and bring your backpack, your briefcase, or your device. Consider inviting your neighbors, your grandchildren, or anyone getting ready for the start of the school year. Each participant will receive a colorful backpack tag to carry to remind them that the year began with God's blessings.

## **Sunday School is Back in Session on 9/8**

Save the date! Sunday school is back on 9/8. We look forward to seeing everyone back in the classroom.

## **Adult Formation**

September's adult formation sessions will build on the themes of *Seasons of Creation: Hope and Act* (see Abigail's article on page 1). Abigail, Jeff, Seretha, and the Green Stewards will draw connections between our calling to be God's hands in the world and our responsibility for the earth that we share with all living beings. Details to come in the next Beacon!

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## **Vestry News**

### **Creation Care Update**

In recognition of our call to care for one another through caring for God's creation, St. Peter's vestry adopted the following pledge at its July meeting. For more suggestions on how to take action as an organization or as individuals, please contact any member of the vestry or the Green Stewards.

### **EPISCOPAL COVENANT TO CARE OF CREATION**

"In Jesus, God so loved the whole world. We follow Jesus, so we love the world God loves. Concerned about the global climate emergency, drawing from a range of approaches for our diverse contexts, we commit to form and restore loving, liberating, life-giving relationships with all of Creation.

**LOVING FORMATION** For God's sake, we will grow our love for the Earth and all of life through preaching, teaching, storytelling, and prayer.

**LIBERATING ADVOCACY** For God's sake, standing alongside marginalized, vulnerable peoples, we will advocate and act to repair Creation and seek the liberation and flourishing of all people.

**LIFE-GIVING CONSERVATION** For God's sake, we will adopt practical ways of reducing our climate impact and living more humbly and gently on Earth as individuals, households, congregations, institutions, and dioceses."

St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley pledges to live into this covenant through the work of the Green Stewards and through incorporating climate impact into our decisions about energy use, materials, land stewardship, teaching, and outreach ministry.

We as members of the Saint Peter's Community can support the EPISCOPAL COVENANT TO CARE OF CREATION, by taking the actions below:

*Transportation: Reduce driving by walking, biking, or using public transportation.*

*Diet: Adopt a green diet, such as eating less meat or dairy, or going meat-free at least once a week. Try to eat locally and seasonably to reduce the carbon footprint of your diet. Work to provide access to fresh produce among all communities, particularly those who live in food deserts.*

*Energy and water: Conserve energy and water at home and our other places of work and study.*

*Waste: Reuse and repair items instead of replacing them, and significantly reduce food waste. Whenever possible, avoid the use of plastics, particularly single-use plastic items. Also place appropriate items into a compost bucket—information on what is compostable and drop off point and pick up options are at <https://backtoearthcompost.com/>.*

*Nature: Create a space for nature in your garden, plant a tree, or grow your own fruit or vegetables.*

*Education: Educate and inspire others about the importance of greening their daily actions.*

*Engagement: Get involved in environmental clubs or organizations that promote sustainability, recycling, and conservation efforts.*

*Advocacy: Advocate for sustainability policies at least once a month.*

## **Thank You from the Vestry**

### **June**

- Mary Lou Unruh for organizing a lunch for Altar Guild members.
- Paige Infortuna and Joe Herbst for presenting a deep dive session about the budget to vestry members.
- Mary Ann Tatum and Dave Tatum for comprehensive research to recommend the best air conditioners and value for installing in the Parish house.
- Holly Hardester for directing a very successful Vacation Bible School and the team members mentioned in the article on page 5.
- The choir for their performances through Sunday services and special events through the year just ended in May.
- Stefan Xiu for playing the violin during Sunday service.
- Melissa Shaner, Tim Hepp, and Abigail Crozier Nestlehatt for representing St. Peter's at the Chester County Pride celebration in Phoenixville.
- Sandy Mannix, Melissa Shaner, Seretha Curry, and Sarah Tellefsen for their help in preparing the June/July Beacon in Trudi Graves' absence.

### **July**

- Seretha Curry for hosting a tea to thank the Sunday School teachers.
- Bad Boys and Girls 4 Jesus and church youth for removing the cedar split rail sheep fence (built in 2003) which divided the historic graveyard. The sheep left in 2019, with no plans to return them. The fence divided some historic family plots, and removing it will make it easier to mow and maintain the graveyard, as well as be more welcoming to visitors.

- Jeanne Lockner for her many photos of St Peter’s events and participants through the years for use on our website and social media.
- Melissa Shaner, Sarah Tellefsen, Jeff Moretzsohn, Seretha Curry, and Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt for arranging a Game Night with grilled food and games enjoyed by many of all ages.
- Peter Neu for playing the trumpet on Sunday, July 7, and Adella Brady, mezzo-soprano, for singing on Sunday, July 14.
- The Reverend Paul Reid for leading services on Sunday, July 7.
- Emily Hacker, Youth Group Senior, for writing and delivering her sermon on Sunday, July 14.
- Holly Hardester, Florence Watson, and Bill Keltz for providing delicious ice cream, toppings, and homemade sauce for Sundaes Sunday.
- David Parkyn, Luci Russell, Gail Malcolm, Linda Holden, Melissa Shaner, Shannon Almquist, Sarah Tellefsen, Steve Ockenden, Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt, Tony Wirtel, with later assistance from Pattye Benson, for their work on the Next Steps committee concerning how best to use the Barn.

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## Pastoral Care Meals

By Holly Hardester

It is said again and again because it is true: St. Peter’s is a church with many compassionate and caring parishioners. We celebrate joyful moments. We come through for others when life presents challenges. We pray for one another. Sometimes there are practical ways we can respond that convey both our caring and support. One such way is to provide a meal or even a seasonal bowl of fruit. Anyone can do this at any time in response to any situation.

The Pastoral Care Commission coordinates meal deliveries when Abigail or Jeff becomes aware of a need. There is a team of volunteers, one of whom prepares something simple and makes the delivery. **Would you like to be one of those volunteers?**

Here’s how it works. You receive a phone call requesting that you prepare and deliver a meal. If the timing does not work, you may always decline. You are provided with helpful information (family size, allergies, etc.). You contact the meal recipient and arrive at a mutually agreeable date and time for making the delivery. (This is not a request that you drop everything and deliver a meal to someone tonight.) You prepare the food and make the delivery, which is invariably warmly received. Reimbursements for costs are available. Requests are not frequent. **If you would like to volunteer or would like to know more**, contact Holly Hardester ([hahardester@gmail.com](mailto:hahardester@gmail.com), 484-329-6323).

A note from a recipient said, “Thank you so very much for the wonderful meal that you have provided to me and my family during this difficult time. I also wanted to let you know that I could truly feel your prayers, love and support and these have provided great comfort. I feel so blessed.” When you or someone you are



aware of can benefit from a meal prepared with goodness, love, caring, and prayers, contact Abigail ([abigail@stpetersgv.org](mailto:abigail@stpetersgv.org)) or Jeff ([jeff@stpetersgv.org](mailto:jeff@stpetersgv.org)).

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## August Events

### Love Thy Neighbor Chester County

There is a new ecumenical project in our area called Love Thy Neighbor Chester County. It is a multi-faith alliance of people who live, worship, and vote in Chester County, and who wish to actively support our common values of diversity, democracy, and humanity by being a faith presence at community events when called upon. Please go to [www.lovethythighborchesco.org](http://www.lovethythighborchesco.org) for more information.

### August Third Wednesday Cookout and Hymn Sing

Please join us on August 21st, 6:00-7:30 p.m. for a festive evening of dinner and fun for all ages. We start with dinner. Activities for children begin about 6:45 p.m. Hymn Sing in the choir room begins at 7:00 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m. there will be a shift to some classic choral music for those who wish. We hope to see you and encourage you to invite a friend. To help us with planning, please let Abigail know you plan to attend by emailing [abigail@stpetersgv.org](mailto:abigail@stpetersgv.org), calling 610-644-2261, signing up after a service, or following [this link](#). If you are able to attend at the last minute, please come, regardless of whether you have signed up.

### Lay Worship Assistant Training

We enthusiastically invite you to serve as a lay worship assistant (e.g., ushers, greeters, readers, or Eucharistic ministers) and we warmly thank all who are continuing to serve. There will be two opportunities for training this summer: Thursday, August 15, at 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, August 17, at 9:30 a.m. If neither of those times works for you, we will find another way to be sure you have the information you need. New and continuing volunteers are encouraged to attend. Please contact Abigail at [abigail@stpetersgv.org](mailto:abigail@stpetersgv.org) or 610-644-2261 for more information or to let her know you will be there.



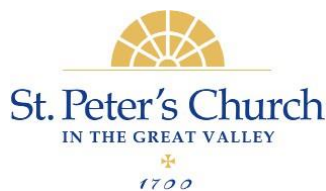
### Flower Guild Luncheon Invitation

Ever thought about joining the Flower Guild? If you are curious about the work of the Flower Guild, you are invited to a luncheon on Thursday, September 5, at 12:30PM in the Parish Hall. Come hear what is involved in creating a Sunday flower arrangement and hanging greens outdoors and decorating the campus with greens for Advent. Please RSVP to Susy Baum at [susybaum@comcast.net](mailto:susybaum@comcast.net) by August 30.



### September Blood Drive

Did you know that every two seconds someone in the United States needs blood or platelets? The September blood drive will be on September 11 from 1-6pm in the Barn. Please stop by and participate in this crucial ministry. This is an amazing way to demonstrate your love of neighbor!



St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley 2475 St.  
 Peter's Road, Malvern, PA 19355  
 Telephone: 610-644-2261  
 E-mail: [parishoffice@stpetersgv.org](mailto:parishoffice@stpetersgv.org)  
 Web site: [www.stpetersgv.org](http://www.stpetersgv.org)

The Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt, Rector  
 The Rev. Jeff Moretzsohn, Deacon  
 Steven Patchel, Organist/Choirmaster  
 Seretha Curry, Assistant for Christian Formation  
 Rachel Martin Swartz, Parish Administrator  
 Erinn White, Preschool Director  
 Gail Malcolm, Event Coordinator  
 Mario Delano, Weekend Facilities Manager

Deadline for the  
 September  
 Beacon: **Aug 21**

**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*

**Weekly Offerings at St. Peter's**

**Sunday (Summer Schedule)**

8:00 AM *Holy Eucharist, Rite I\**  
 10:00 AM *Family Eucharist*  
**First Sunday**  
 10:00 AM *Holy Eucharist, rite 2\*\* Fellowship follows all services*  
**Wednesday**  
 10 AM *Morning Prayer & Bible Study\*\*\**  
**Thursday**  
 10:30 AM *Intercessory Prayer Group\*\*\**  
 7:00 PM *Compline\*\*\**  
**Friday**  
 8:00 AM *Gathering of Men\*\*\**

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

**Parish office hours: 9:00 to 4:30, Monday thru Thursday**

**Foyer Groups Return**

If you have been at St. Peter's for a while, you will remember our Foyer dinners, which Covid brought to a sudden and inglorious halt in March 2020. If you arrived after that date, you have much to look forward to as we revive a popular program that nourished our bodies, souls and relationships with each other. In the *spirit* of the "foyer" (French for "hearth"), these groups offer parishioners the opportunity to welcome each other into their homes over a simple, shared meal, with each month's host providing the entrée and everyone else providing the other courses. Laurel Veitch is finalizing the Foyer signup in the near future. If you know now that you are interested, feel free to contact Laurel at [ljveitch@comcast.net](mailto:ljveitch@comcast.net).