



The Beacon

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

May 2024

Just Do It

by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt

Last month I attended a concert at the Kimmel Center for the first time. While I had attended operas in the center's smaller venue and all kinds of performances in other theaters in the Philadelphia area, in eight years of living in Chester County I had never been to the famous cello-shaped hall. Realizing one Monday that I would have the upcoming day off to myself, I bought a center seat on tier 2 for the Friday matinée. On the appointed day, I boarded a Septa train, along with many other concert goers, including two parishioners who became my serendipitous guides for the excursion. Everything about the day felt perfect, from pleasant companionship and an easy journey to a stirring performance in an inspiring setting.

The effect lingered for days. My world felt lighter than usual and long-forgotten memories began to mingle in my mind. The school bus that ferried somewhat reluctant young me into Boston for Saturday morning youth concerts. The enthusiasm of my grandmother, whose move from New Jersey to Massachusetts late in life was eased by her matinée subscription to the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Fried chicken picnics with my siblings on the lawn at Tanglewood while my parents sat in the Shed. A series of snapshots tied to specific aspects of a particular stage of my younger years emerged.

It is a strange reality that we pass through so many seasons of life without realizing that they have come and gone. "And they tell him take your time it won't be long now/Till you drag your feet to slow the circles down," Joni Mitchell counsels in "The Circle Game." One year, fifth-graders through graduating seniors sang that song at my school's commencement, all of us in varying stages of understanding what those words meant.

With the death of my father and the departure of my youngest child for college, I entered a new season of my life—one in which I can now spend a day off gazing down in awe at a pianist's hands, one that has included stages of grief and periods of reflection. It is a season I am well aware of and want to spend intentionally, which means days off at places like the Kimmel Center, overnight visits from an empty-nested seminary friend, and a conscious review of my faith and rededication to Jesus.

For me that looks like choosing tangible things I can do to care for "this fragile Earth, our island home" rather than merely fret about climate change. Or educating myself about the challenges and joys of the LGBTQIA+ community so that I can be a better ally. Or discerning ways to ensure that our liturgies are accessible for all people. Or taking a more active role in addressing the epidemic of loneliness. The list can go on and on, but at its foundation is our baptismal covenant in which we promise to seek and serve Christ in all people. We pledge to strive for justice and peace and to respect the dignity of every human being. Even more foundational than that, Jesus came to love us and to teach us how to love . . . no matter the season.

"Deep and Wide" is our theme this program year. I invite you to read the pages that follow with that idea in mind. Also, I encourage you to attend the annual parish meeting to hear about what we have done and are planning to do to boldly put our faith into action. Please join me in showing the world what it means to be a Christian.

Pentecost: May 19

We celebrate what is commonly thought of as the birthday of the church. The Holy Spirit rushes in and sends the disciples into the world to continue his ministry. Our usual morning services at 8, 9, and 11:15 a.m. will be especially lively and spirit-filled. Please be sure to join us for this feast day, wearing something red to celebrate the day if possible.



A Multitude of Tongues for Pentecost

Parlez-vous français? Ты говоришь по русски? Sprechen Sie deutsch? Unaongea kiswahili? Hablas español? If you speak a language other than English, we invite you to participate in the multilingual reading of the traditional Pentecost passage from Acts of the Apostles on Sunday, **May 19**. Please contact Abigail (abigail@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261) to let her know of your interest.

Program Year Ends This Month

Our summer worship schedule, with services in the historic church at 8 a.m. (rite 1) and 10 a.m. (rite 2), begins on **May 26**, the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend.

The following week, on **June 2**, we will worship together in the barn at 10 a.m., as we always do on the first Sunday, assisted by the choir.

At 4 o'clock that afternoon, the choir will offer the traditional final evensong of the program year in the barn, before going on summer break. And afterwards, we will all enjoy our annual parishwide cookout, of course!

If you are interested in helping to stage the cookout, please contact Abigail (abigail@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261). Thank you!

3rd Wednesday at our 3rd Place to Begin in June

Last spring we began to talk about the importance of a “third place” and the ways a certified kitchen can expand St. Peter’s ability to serve as one. Different from home, school, or work, a third place is where people can build relationships and find welcome. In our often-polarized society, many people feel lonely, so offering such a space where people can connect with and get to know one another is essential.

This year we want to reprise last summer’s “third Wednesday, third place” series, with events on June 19, July 17, and August 21. But we would like your help, first in planning and then staging them. This month, we welcome volunteers to help plan them; as they come up during the summer, we will ask for volunteers to set up the barn, bring food, and clean up.

If you would like to help make these enjoyable, community-oriented gatherings possible, please contact Abigail (abigail@stpetersgv.org or 610-644-2261), follow the link in Keynotes, or use a sign-up sheet in one of the buildings. Thank you.



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The Beacon is produced monthly by St. Peter’s Church in the Great Valley
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Submit articles to beacon@stpetersgv.org
Publication date: First of month
Deadline: 15th of month preceding
Staff: Trudi Graves (editor), Charlotte Mark, David Graves

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

MAY 5, 2024

The 2024 nominating committee (Kathryn Evans, Linda Holden, Philip Kauffman, Duncan Kraig, Kate Mallon-Day, Steve Ockenden, Luci Russell, and Roger Tellefsen) has named Becky Dempsey, Duncan Kraig, Mike Smith, and Tony Wirtel as candidates for the vestry class of 2027. (Their biographies appear below.)

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

We encourage everyone to attend this important event in our parish life when we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the coming one. After the service and meeting, we will gather in fellowship at a celebratory brunch organized by Sarah Tellefsen. There is much good news to share and celebrate!



Meet the Vestry Nominees

Becky Dempsey

Becky has attended St. Peter’s since moving to Berwyn in 2012. She joined the choir almost immediately and enjoyed participating in choir residencies in England and Ireland. Becky has been active in the food ministry, and served as a shepherd when sheep grazed in the historic graveyard.

A retired attorney, Becky spent forty years representing low-income clients and people experiencing domestic violence. She served on the vestry of her former church and on several boards, including that of a regional healthcare system. She enjoys caring for her toddler granddaughter and hiking with her husband Paul and their dog.

Michael Smith

Michael and his husband Steve have been at St. Peter’s since 2019 after relocating from Florida. New to the Episcopal Church, they were introduced to St. Peter’s by the Comstocks and are grateful for the warm welcome they received from everyone.

Michael, a 40-year television industry veteran, is currently with QVC. He and Steve have lived in London, Dubai, and Tampa, but are happy to call Malvern their home now and St. Peter’s their spiritual home. At St. Peter’s Michael serves as an usher, reader, and intercessor, assists with the Red Cross Blood drives, and cheerfully helps out when asked.

Duncan Kraig

Duncan has literally been a lifelong member of St. Peter’s, having been baptized in the historic church. He grew up near West Chester and graduated from West Chester University. In 2013, after his marriage to Faith in the historic church, they moved to King of Prussia but remained members here, usually attending the 9 o’clock service. Like Duncan, their two daughters were also baptized at the historic font.

Duncan is a stay-at-home Dad during the day, and a swim coach in the evenings. His love of history has always drawn him to St. Peter’s.

Tony Wirtel

Tony and Marsha found St. Peter’s in 2006 after returning to the area from graduate school. Tony served on the property commission, where, working with Peco, he found ways to cut energy costs for the barn by 60%. Later, as chair, he helped get funding from the vestry to do most grounds care in-house. Since 2016 he has been a member of the 9 a.m. choir.

A Malvern resident, Tony manages an innovation group for a local medical device company. Away from the office, he enjoys building things, traveling, volunteering on the battleship *New Jersey*, and flying small planes.

It's Graduation Time

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



So if someone in your family is a 2024 high school, college, or grad school graduate (or graduated since June 2023), please let the *Beacon* editor know (beacon@stpetersgv.org) by **May 24**. In addition to the grad’s name and school, please include a few words about his or her plans for the coming year (e.g., college selected, and major if known); grad school selected or job accepted; a special honor awarded with the diploma. Thank you for your help!

Ultimate Popcorn Theology Bonus Film: Still Crazy

By popular demand, popcorn theology will view one more film in its “Music and the Search for Perfection” series. At the final meeting of the program year on Monday, **May 13**, we will discuss *Still Crazy* (1998), a tale about the fictitious band “Strange Fruit,” which had everything that makes a rock band legendary—money, fame, success, groupies, a singer who dies of drugs, and even a divine ending, a lightning strike on the stage during an outdoor concert. We see them twenty years later, when the erstwhile band members (Bill Nighy, Stephen Rea, Billy Connolly, and Timothy Spall), well into other careers, entertain the idea of a band reunion.



All are invited to join the discussion: just watch the film beforehand and then join us on Zoom from 6 to 7 p.m. (Contacts: Mark Nestlehutt (mark.nestlehutt@gmail.com), Steve Ockenden (steveock@verizon.net)).

Adult formation for this program year concludes with two offerings in May.

- On **May 12**, we will do another round of the ever-popular “Stump the Clergy”!

Do you have questions about the liturgy, scripture, the Episcopal Church’s position on various issues, what the clergy do in their time off? Bring them to adult formation, where Abigail and Jeff will do their best to field anything you throw at them.

- On **May 19**, Maximus Marlowe, a Liberty University senior from Devon who was a summer research intern at St. David’s will talk about his research on Welsh immigration to colonial Pennsylvania (including the history of the Welsh Tract), focusing on the early Welsh settlement and the founding of St. David’s Radnor, whose history meshes with ours.

Programming for fall 2024 will take place over the summer. If you have suggestions about speakers and topics—including a presentation you would like to make—please contact Melissa Shaner (myshaner@verizon.com) or 610-296-7621).



Vacation Bible School



For whom? Rising 1st through 5th-graders

When? June 17 to 21, 9 a.m. to 12 noon

What happens? Each day includes a lively Bible lesson with sets and costumes, a sing-along, a craft, outdoor games and recreation, and a mission-driven activity related to food and giving.

How much? \$20 for one child, \$10 for each additional sibling

Bonus: Younger siblings can attend St. Peter’s Lambs Camp at the preschool’s discounted sibling rate.

For additional information and to register, visit www.stpetersgv.org/vbs/ or send an email to vbs@stpetersgv.org.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MAY 24.

We See Jesus in the Kitchen

For a year, we have been planning, praying, and dreaming about what a full kitchen in the barn can mean for St. Peter's, and have been communicating with the parish through the *Beacon*, adult forum, the annual meeting, a simple meal, and conversations about the "third place" concept. We have met with our food ministry partners in Darby, Phoenixville, and Coatesville, worked with Warfel Construction on layout, design, and pricing, and sought support from outside foundations and organizations. It is now time for our dreams to become reality and our plans to become actions. But we cannot do this without support from all of you.

Jesus commanded Peter to "feed my sheep and tend my flock" (John 21), and by creating the barn kitchen, we honor this command by alleviating the food insecurity faced by so many in our area, providing a place for fellowship and community, and finishing something we envisioned almost twenty years ago. Will you help us "feed the sheep and tend the flock"?

In the coming weeks, you will receive information about our "We See Jesus in the Kitchen" capital campaign to raise the remaining funds needed to create a certified kitchen in the barn. As of this writing, we have received grants and commitments for \$130,000, which is more than half of our \$250,000 goal. Our four-month campaign will run from May through August, with a two-year funding schedule thereafter. If the campaign succeeds in receiving pledge commitments, construction can begin before year's end.

Because many possibilities can open up for us if we have a certified kitchen, please take a leap of faith to see what God has in store for us. (If you have questions, please direct them to Paige Infortuna or Eileen Klein.)

Women on the Hill

On Monday, **May 6**, Suzanne Briar, who is fairly new to St. Peter's and a member of the choir, will talk about how to use the hymnal and read the notes for soprano and alto voices, teach some basic music theory, and thus help us sing to and for God while having fun! With a degree in classical voice performance and experience performing in musical theater productions on Broadway and elsewhere, she is an ideal leader for this. So plan to join us in the parish hall at 7 p.m. for a great program, fellowship, and light refreshments. As always, invite a friend to join you.



This topic was suggested at an earlier gathering of the group, in response to a suggestion that it would be wonderful to spend an evening learning how to sing hymns and use our hymnals. In the conversation that followed, Suzanne—a first-timer at Women on the Hill—offered to lead us in that topic. This sharing of experiences is how the group functions! So bring your ideas, recommendations, and suggestions about topics to this meeting or to email them (womenonthehill@atpetersgv.org) to us over the summer break.

In Case You Missed Abigail's Announcement in Keynotes . . .

With enthusiasm I write to announce that Ms. Seretha Curry has accepted the call to serve as Assistant for Christian Formation and Communications at St. Peter's. This is a half time position.

Seretha's ministry will be focused on Christian formation with children and youth, as well as supporting our adult formation program. Additionally, she will support the ministry of the communications commission. She will begin her ministry at St. Peter's on May 1, and you will have an opportunity to meet her at the May 5th annual parish meeting.

As we begin to get to know one another, Seretha has offered this introduction:

With about a decade of leadership experience, most recently in the business world, I'm excited to return to Christian ministry. I've felt connected to God and interested in God's work in the world since my youth. While an undergraduate, I studied philosophy and theology, and later attended seminary with a focus on systematic theology to flesh out my interest in academic theology and ministry. An enthusiastic and imaginative leader, I enjoy creative endeavors like writing and game-making. I'm eager to bring a fresh perspective and God-centered energy to your Christian Formation program.

Please join me in welcoming Seretha to St. Peter's. As always, please contact me if you have questions.

Outreach News

St. James School Annual Scholarship Benefit

Don't miss the chance to attend this exciting fundraiser on **May 21** at the Fillmore in Philadelphia. You can learn more about this event and the school by visiting its website (st.jamesphila.org).



**May 22
1 to 6 p.m. in the barn.
Register at
stpetersblooddrive.com
or use this QR code.**



Chester Children's Chorus Concert

May 18 and 19

7 p.m.

Lang Music Bldg., Swarthmore College Free admission;
first-come seating. ChesterChildrensChorus.org.

- Steve Ockenden, who led the Lenten “Just War Theory” series, and all who provided food for the soup suppers;
- Gail Guthridge and Sandy Mannix who organized the spring cleaning workday, and all who participated;
- Jeff Moretzsohn for leading Stations of the Cross and editing the companion booklet;
- Mike and Michelle Harman and Erinn White for staging the successful rummage sale to benefit the preschool, and the parish and preschool volunteers helped before, during, and after the sale;
- Susy Baum, for her Women on the Hill presentation about her flower arranging experiences, and Gary Baum and Diane Martineau for helping with the presentation;
- Pastor Karl Krueger, for his adult forum presentation on the historic ties between Lutherans and Anglicans in the Delaware Valley.
- Jeff Moretzsohn for organizing Jazz Vespers and providing refreshments.
- Cliff and Margery Castle and Gail Malcolm for facilitating the John Byrne Irish Band concert that benefited outreach;
- Amy Fisher, Jan Himmelreich, Steve Ockenden, Luci Russell, and Melissa Shaner for reviewing all the parish input about “the Sunday experience”;
- Brenda Grove, for leading the parish book club;
- Judy Jones, for spearheading the revitalized handbell choir;
- *Last, but not least*, all who helped make our Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter programs and services so meaningful, especially Abigail and Jeff, Steven Patchel, the choirs, the readers, and the altar and flower guild members;
 - Palm Sunday instrumentalists Set Rodriguez and Laura Earley (violin), Ashley Vines (viola), Elena Kauffman (cello), and Heather Miller Lardin (double bass), who presented Evensong and the Pergolesi *Stabat Mater*, and Pattye Benson and John Hess for hosting the reception afterwards;
 - Easter instrumentalists Peter Neu and David Orchowsky (trumpet), David Cianci and Brian Pastor (trombone), Jacob Scheidt (timpani), and Nate Zullinger (organ), for enhancing our Easter Sunday worship, Pat Harvey for organizing the Easter sunrise Omelet King breakfast and all who provided sides for the meal, and the youth group for organizing the children's Easter egg hunt.



May 4
Needlework ministry
10 a.m. (parish hall)



May 16
Preschool graduation
9 a.m. (barn)

May 5
Holy Eucharist, Rite II – bank barn
10 a.m. (barn)
Annual meeting followed by lunch
11:30 a.m. (barn)

May 11
Preschool photo shoot
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

May 20
Book club
7 p.m. (Zoom)

May 22
Red Cross blood drive
1 to 6 p.m. (barn)

May 6
Women on the Hill
7 p.m. (parish hall)

May 13
Popcorn theology
6 to 7 p.m. (Zoom)

May 24
VBS sign-up deadline

COMING UP IN EARLY JUNE

June 1
Needlework ministry
10 a.m. church

June 2
Choral Evensong
4 p.m.

June 3
Women on the Hill
7 p.m.

Book Club Selection for May

This month we will discuss Marie Benedict’s *The Only Woman in the Room*, which deals with the unique life of glamorous actress Hedy Lamar. All are invited to join us on Zoom at 7 p.m. on May 20.

A Reminder from the Green Stewards

You can offset your carbon footprint when you travel by air this summer. Some carriers offer this service during the booking process, but if yours is not one of them you can do so directly through **cooleffect.org**, an organization recommended by the national Church. On the home front, adjusting your thermostats before leaving for a trip also saves energy (and money).

March Financial Snapshot

	March 2024	Year to Date March	Year-end Projection	Budget 2024
Parishioner Contributions	\$ 31,830	\$124,296	\$484,056	\$494,526
Other Income*	9,446	11,212	127,387	137,615
Total Income	41,276	135,508	611,443	632,141
Total Expense	63,135	163,080	636,039	632,128
Surplus / (Deficit)	(21,859)	(27,572)	(24,596)	13

**Interest, rentals, endowment distributions*



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E-mail: parishoffice@stpetersgv.org Web site: 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

*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*

Deadline
 for the June *Beacon*:
May 21

Weekly Offerings at St. Peter's

Sunday (thru May 19)

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

First Sunday

10 A.M. ***Holy Eucharist & Sunday School, rite 2*****

Sunday, May 26

8 a.m. ***Holy Eucharist, rite 1****
 10 a.m. ***Holy Eucharist, rite 2****
Fellowship follows all services

Wednesday

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

Thursday

10:30 A.M. ***Intercessory Prayer Group******
 7 P.M. ***Compline******

Friday

8 A.M. ***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'll remember our Foyer dinners—that Covid brought to a sudden and inglorious halt in March 2020. If you arrived here after March 2020, you have much to look forward to as we revive that enjoyable 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 the others providing the other courses.

Laurel Veitch is working out the Foyer sign-up details and will communicate them in the near future, so watch for them in Keynotes, the Sunday leaflets, and the June *Beacon*. If you already know that you are interested, feel free to let her know now.