

The Beacon

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

November 2024

Watch Over Us

by the Rev. Abigail Crozier Nestlehutt

On Wednesday mornings in October we unlocked the historic church and readied it for private prayer. I removed the dust covers from the needlepoint at the altar. Stepped into the pulpit and lectern to adjust the hangings. Lit a candle on a small table placed in front of the altar. Checked the temperature and lighting. Said some prayers. Then went on with my day, hoping someone might come to enjoy the quiet, simple beauty of the space, and believing, even if no one did, someone appreciated it was there.

At 4:15 p.m. on Wednesdays in October we prayed evening prayer. Sometimes three of us. Sometimes two. One week I prayed alone. In each case we used the assigned Daily Office readings. And so it was that one day we prayed Psalm 12, which begins.

- 1 Help me, LORD, for there is no godly one left; *
the faithful have vanished from among us.
- 2 Everyone speaks falsely with his neighbor; *
with a smooth tongue they speak from a double heart.

It was as if the ancient world was sending a message: “What you swing state residents in the midst of a contentious election cycle are experiencing right now is nothing new. People have been mean and duplicitous for centuries.” Which is not exactly helpful, but does put our present reality into perspective and points us to a different line of thinking. People are fallible. We are sure we are right and so whoever disagrees must be wrong. We nurse wounds that have not quite healed and seek to protect them at all costs. We speak more than we listen. We hear without paying attention. We do not intend to be “ungodly,” and sometimes we get it just right, but the fact is sometimes we do not. Just as generations of the faithful before us. And just as our ancestors turned to God, so must we.

In the midst of his lament, the psalmist calls upon the Divine. Later in Psalm 12 we pray,

- 6 The words of the LORD are pure words, *
like silver refined from ore

and purified seven times in the fire.
7 O LORD, watch over us *
and save us from this generation for ever.

From conversations with many of you I know you are finding this to be a difficult time. I understand. Following Jesus requires us to care about the world, and the resulting feelings are complicated. By calling upon God to help us we can live into the words of the baptismal covenant to seek and serve Christ in all people, to respect the dignity of every human being, and to love our neighbor. Keeping those promises is how we do our part to make the world a better place for our having been here. Doing so in community is essential to being a Christian. In the pages that follow you will find a variety of opportunities to be involved at St. Peter's and in the world. Please join us. You will be glad that you did.

November Services

Evensong

The music for Evensong at 4 p.m. on November 3 at 4:00 p.m. in the church will include compositions by two relatively unknown composers: Herbert Murrill and Edgar Bainton. The choirs will sing their "Canticles in E" and the exquisite anthem "And I Saw a New Heaven." Although established in musical circles of their time, Murrill and Bainton today are remembered today primarily for these works, which often are performed often at cathedrals around the world.

Immediately following Evensong, the choirs will offer a brief performance of four motets by Anton Bruckner, whose 200th anniversary we celebrate this year. Bruckner's music employs a sweeping romanticism with dramatic harmonies and intriguing dissonances. His masses and symphonies are standards in the choral and orchestral repertoire.

Please join us for this All Souls' celebration, and bring a friend! Light refreshments will be served following the music.

Election Eve Compline

Our clergy, Abigail and Jeff, will lead Compline via Zoom on Monday, November 4 at 7:15 p.m. Please join them for this contemplative end of day prayer service that will include the opportunity for shared silence.

Thanksgiving Day Morning Prayer via Zoom

You are invited to start your day with grateful prayer and the St. Peter's community at 10 a.m. on Thanksgiving Day. Abigail will lead a simple service of Morning Prayer via Zoom. so put your turkey in the oven and join us in offering thanks to God.

Please remember, one of the benefits of online worship is that we can be together while in different places, so be sure to invite family and friends to attend too. All are welcome. The Zoom link will be in Keynotes.

A Preview of Advent and Christmas Services

December 1

Advent wreath-making workshop
10:20 a.m. (barn)

December 8

Advent Lessons and Carols
4 p.m. (barn)

December 4, 11, 19

Midweek evening Advent programs

December 24

Christmas Eve

Family Eucharist and Christmas Pageant
4 p.m. (barn)

Festal Christmas Eucharist with musical prelude
9 p.m. (historic church); music begins at 8:30

December 25

Christmas Day

Christmas Eucharist
10 a.m. (historic church)

December 29

Services at 8am and 10am

Looking Forward to Advent

The Gifting Tree

There is no better way to show we are “blessed to be blessed” than to support children who are not as fortunate as we are through St. Peter’s annual Gifting Tree! Your generosity will help children served by Darby Mission and the Community Youth and Women’s Alliance and Church Housing residents to experience God’s love and a merrier Christmas. The trees arrive in both gathering spaces on November 17, “decorated” with gift tags with specific wishes to guide your shopping. When you return your gifts to St. Peter’s, please include the gift tag ornament, which also shows the timing and delivery method for your gifts. If you have questions, please contact Brenda Grove.

Holiday Mini-Market

Following the 9 a.m. service on November 24 and the 10 a.m. service on December 1, our needleworkers will sponsor a mini-market featuring handmade shawls, scarves, and caps. The proceeds from this sale will benefit our outreach ministries. If you have questions, please contact Brenda Grove or Betsy Church.

September Financial Snapshot

	Month of June	June Year to Date	Forecast (year-end)	Budget (2024)
Parishioner Contributions	40,231	356,631.57	497,677.57	494,526
*Other Income	20,454	91,795.43	141,317.43	137,615
Total Income	60,685	448,427	638,995	632,141
Total Expense	52,171.93	464,088.85	648,024	632,128
Surplus/(Deficit)	8,513.07	(-15,661.85)	-9,029	13
<i>*Other Income: Interest, Rental, Endowment Distributions</i>				

The Finance Commission and vestry are working to draft the 2025 budget for the parish. Since the amount coming from pledges is the most important component of income for SPGV, it is vital for us to have a clear picture of what we can expect. Please join the stewardship campaign if you have not already done so!

Paige Infortuna and Eric Lien, for the treasurers and Finance Commission.

Pledge of Hope

Reflection on Making an Annual Financial Pledge

By David L. Parkyn

It's easy to understand how an annual financial pledge provides a helpful tool to those responsible for building the parish budget. But knowing how to determine the pledge we make on this card can be something of a mystery.

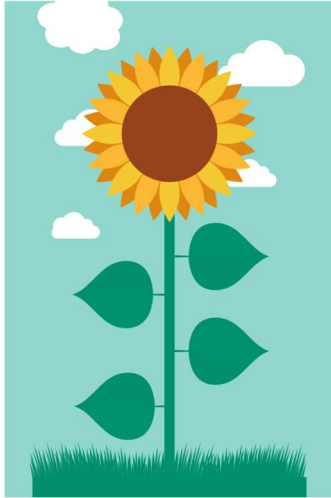
I'm suggesting that this year, in marking our pledge card, we be guided by hope. Adopting the privacy and quiet of your home as a space for a short, silent retreat, take the card in your hand. Wrap the card in thoughtful reflection as you consider what you anticipate for the year to come at St. Peter's—your hope for this parish community. Then, bathe your card in a prayer of guidance for those who lead our parish and a prayer of thanksgiving for all you will experience through the parish over the year ahead. And then mark your card, now as a pledge of hope.

Over the weeks ahead our individual pledge cards—pledges of hope—will be transformed into the means by which this parish is empowered to act. The parish acts, first, as a space for Christian formation, wherein each time we individually set foot on the campus our souls are nourished, our spirits are marked as Christ's own. Subsequently, we act again as a parish, prompted to return to our home communities—in the words of our liturgy—as a people now forgiven, healed, and renewed as we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for the world. At school, at work, in our neighborhood, and far beyond, we act, demonstrating God's love for the world.

So, this is my invitation. This week, find your personal place of quiet. Hold the pledge card in your hand. Wrap the card in thoughtful reflection. Bathe the card in contemplative prayer. And then mark the card, transforming this simple paper rectangle into your pledge of hope. And, with this hope in your heart, whisper a prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving to God.

Barn Kitchen Update

By Paige Infortuna



We're excited to share an update—the Barn Kitchen project, “We See Jesus in the Kitchen,” is moving forward, thanks to the generous contributions of our amazing donors! Your support is making a real difference, and we couldn't do this without you.

We are thrilled to announce we have raised an incredible \$300,000 for the project! With your help, we expect to begin construction January 2025. This funding will build new kitchen facilities to allow us to better serve our community.

As we progress, we have made a slight adjustment to the original design, expanding the storage area for chairs and tables to ensure our kitchen meets all our community's needs. And, we are adding an HVAC heat pump installation to the lower level of the barn, specifically for the choir rehearsal space. This improvement will provide a comfortable environment for our choir members and enhance our community activity spaces.

We also identified a correction needed in the kitchen's HVAC design. The original design was based on plans from when the barn was built, which were found to be incorrect. We are committed to ensuring the kitchen meets all necessary standards for functionality and comfort, so are making necessary changes.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey and for your continued support as we navigate every aspect of this project. Together, we are building something special that will serve our community for years to come!

If you would like to support this initiative, there is still time. Please reach out to Paige Infortuna or make a commitment through Realm. Your support has been instrumental in bringing this project to life, and we can't wait to see the positive impact it will have. Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission!

Stay tuned for more updates as we move forward.

Thank Yous from the Vestry

- Adult Forum speakers: Green Stewards who spoke about actively caring for the native world, focusing on the pollinator garden, native plants and landscaping, as aided by the Bad Boys & Girls for Jesus; The Rev. Paul Reid who presented a two-part series about Christian Nationalism.
 - Linda Holden and Seretha Curry for their work on the Blessing of the Animals; to all who contributed donations for the SPCA.
 - Brenda Grove and Betsy Church for leading the Needlework Open House.
 - Michael Smith, Steve Barthelemy and Melissa Shaner for their support of Jazz Sanctuary and supper.
 - The Rev. Paul Reid for leading Sunday 8 a.m. services on Sunday, October 13.
 - All parishioners who have spoken about their thoughts on stewardship.
 - Laurel Veitch for organizing the resumption of Foyers dinners.
 - Susy Baum, for making delicious crabapple and quince jellies sold to raise funds for the Barn Kitchen.
 - The Rev. Abigail Nestlehutt for speaking to the Women on the Hill about the Philadelphia Eleven, the first women ordained as priests.
-

Choir Residency 2026

St. Peter's Choirs will be privileged again to participate in a British cathedral residency, this time from July 20-26, 2026, at Norwich Cathedral.

Parishioners are invited to join this excursion, attend daily Evensongs, visit pilgrimage sites, and join guided tours in Norfolk and Cambridge, England. More details will be announced in coming months.

Christian Formation

Adult Formation

November 10 – Joe Herbst, Chair of the Finance Commission, leads our annual update on the state of parish funding, pledges, and plans. As we make the transition from our former partnership with Robert Ryan Catering, what strategies must we maintain to support our robust mission and outreach activities?

November 17 - Please join Seretha Curry for a timely discussion of “Daniel and Empire.” Throughout the book of Daniel, themes interweave about the relationship between God's power and God's kingdom, and the power wielded by the kingdoms of the earth. What is the fate of God's people in the midst of unfriendly powers? How are we to live and flourish?

November 24 - We prepare for the holiday with a look at the “Two Sides of Thanksgiving” with Pastor Roy Almquist. Most people consider Thanksgiving a beloved holiday. We cherish this celebration, marked by good food, family time and no gifts. But for Indigenous peoples, it is less than joyous. How do we hold the tradition of Thanksgiving in proper tension with history and our faith as Christians?

Children and Youth Ministry

Christmas Pageant, Coming Soon!

The Christmas Pageant will be on December 24 at the 4 p.m. Family Eucharist. The Pageant is a short production that takes the place of the Gospel reading in the worship service. Practices begin in early Advent, which is coming soon. Dates in the chart below are tentative and will be confirmed in November.

We will start discussing the pageant in Sunday School during November and determining roles for children and youth. Please contact Seretha at slcurry@stpetersgv.org for further details.

Date and Time (Tentative)	Location	Activity
Sunday, December 8 after the 9am service	The Barn worship space	Read over script and find costumes
Sunday, December 15 after the 9am service	The Barn worship space	Practice!
Thursday, December 19 (evening)	The Barn worship space	Final rehearsal (full rehearsal without costumes)

Events Recap

Blessing of the Animals

Serving as a fitting end to the Season of Creation celebrated for the first six weeks of the program year, St. Peter's hosted an event gathering pets and their humans together for a blessing. The 30 pets total included dogs, cats, birds, a speckled Sussex hen, a bunny, and hamsters. [Click here](#) for some biblical animal trivia.

Trunk or Treat

Our Trunk or Treat event gathered children in resplendent costumes from the surrounding area: lots of Spidermen and Taylor Swifts, angels, witches, Darth Vader, and many more! Decorated Trunk locations included Candyland, a haunted

library, Peanuts, the Milky Way Galaxy, and more! Congratulations to the Davis family, winners of the 2024 "Best Trunk." People's Choice Award!



November Events

Needlework Group

Join us at 10 a.m. in the historic church for the needlework group. All parishioners are welcome and encouraged at any time to investigate the contents of the closets holding items created by the needlework ministry team. Please take a shawl, chemo cap, or lap blanket for someone you know needs prayers for healing, comfort, and the presence of God for any illness or grief. You are always welcome, any time. For more information about the needlework group, please contact Brenda Grove.

Election Night Prayers

Everyone is invited to join Election Night Virtual Prayers hosted by The Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations from 8 to 10 p.m. on November 5. Bishop Sean Rowe, who became Presiding Bishop November 1, will offer an opening reflection and prayer. Episcopalians from around the church will hold silence and lead participants in prayers together for peace, the nation, and all people and countries. For more information and to register, please follow the link in Keynotes.

A new date will be announced in the coming weeks. Please email parishadministrator@stpetersgv.org to be placed on a list to receive updates about this event. Thank you for your patience and support!

Chester Children's Chorus Events

Special Jazz Event



Head down to New Orleans for a jazz night with CCC executive and artistic director John Alston on Friday, November 15, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Park Avenue Community Center in Swarthmore. John will transport you to the Big Easy as he discusses Louis Armstrong's influence on jazz and America.

With his "West End Blues," Armstrong gave the world the most extraordinary and influential 12 bars in jazz history. His rhythmic feel and harmonic mastery became the model for jazz musicians in the first half of the 20th century.

The night will begin with a cocktail reception. Admission is free. Register online at ChesterChildrensChorus.org.

Save the Date for the CCC's Winter Wonderland

Experience a Winter Wonderland like never before with the Chester Children's Chorus! More than 110 children will perform Stevie Wonder's greatest hits on December 14 at 7 p.m. and 15 at 4 p.m. at Swarthmore College's Lang Music Building.

Admission is free. Seating is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis.

Painting with a Twist, West Chester: Create Some Colorful Memories

With Women on the Hill on Sunday, November 17

Join us in a painting party from 1:30-4:00 p.m. to share the experience of creating a canvas under the guidance of our own dedicated artist-entertainer who will walk us through painting something we have chosen. The studio will supply the paints, canvases, easels, instruction, and encouragement needed for us to take home artwork and special memories of time spent with members and friends of the St. Peter's church community. We will provide food and drink to enjoy while painting. The cost for this event is \$45 per person, with assistance available. Please email Laurel Veitch at ljeitch@comcast.net to RSVP or if you have any questions. We hope you can join us!

Book Club

Our November 18 book selection is *The Thursday Murder Club*, by Richard Osman, the first book of a series about a group of friends who form a club to solve murders at their retirement village. For further information, please contact Brenda Grove at brendabgrove@gmail.com. We will meet virtually.

"Don't trust anyone, including the four septuagenarian sleuths in Osman's own laugh-out-loud whodunit." — *Parade*.

November Blood Drive

Did you know that a single car accident victim can require as many as 100 units of blood? The November blood drive will be November 20 from 1-6 p.m. in the barn's lower level. Please stop by to participate in this crucial ministry. This is an amazing way to demonstrate your love of neighbor!

Third Wednesday Jazz Sanctuary and Dessert

Please join us for a warm and wonderful evening of sweet treats and jazz in the bank barn on November 20, 7:00-8:30 p.m. All are welcome. This is a great opportunity to bring a friend. Please note, this is a different time frame from past Third Wednesday events.

Longwood Gardens Christmas Music

Steven Patchel will be playing Christmas music in the Ballroom at Longwood Gardens on the evenings of December 15 and 22, then again on January 3 and 11. These concerts are included with Gardens admission. Please speak with him if you are interested in more details.

November Dates

November 2

St. James 5k Walk
Needlework

November 3

Combined Service
Evensong

November 4

Election Eve Compline

November 5

Historic Church Open for
Prayer

November 9

Fall Concert: Wicked
Sycamore
Hayride and Bonfire

November 11

Popcorn Theology

November 18

Book Club

November 20

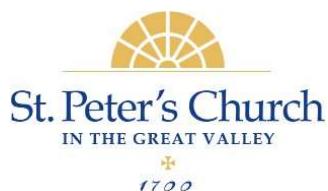
Blood Drive
Jazz Sanctuary

November 24

Holiday Mini-Market

November 28

Thanksgiving Day Morning
Prayer



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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

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

Deadline for the
December *Beacon*:
December 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