

SAINT PETER'S NET

JESUS SAID TO PETER, "FOLLOW ME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISH FOR PEOPLE."
MATTHEW 4:19

From the Rector

Dear Members and Friends,

For many, 'Oikos' is a popular brand of yogurt. However, biblically and theologically, 'Oikos' is an important and all-encompassing Greek word meaning household, which, for the ancient Greeks, is way more than the modern concept of a nuclear family. It includes not just the immediate family but also the extended family, neighbors, friends, co-workers, and all those whom we come into regular contact. Etymologically, the English prefix – Eco is derived from this word, to form such words as ecology, economics, and ecumenism. In the New Testament times, baptisms were held on household basis, not individually.

This past Sunday in Church, we welcomed Bindu, born and brought up Hindu, into the church after her adult baptism saying, "We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood" from our Book of Common Prayer. Being received into the household of God after one's baptism is very significant. The members of the household of God are related to each other through the waters of baptism as opposed to the blood of familial relationship.

To know that we are a family and are members of the household of God is indeed a blessing. Such a time as now when our country is going through so much stress and strife, the concept of the household of God, despite the differences of our skin color, race, ethnicity, language, gender, orientation, etc., is indeed meaningful and healing.

After the summer recess, on September 10, once again we will be back in our lovely church in full strength for worship at our regular time. On this rally Sunday, children will be registered for Children's Chapel, Godly Play, and Youth Group. All these ministries along with occasional Family Sunday services are now organized under Youth and Family Ministry headed by Michelle Engle. Children are encouraged to bring their school backpacks on this Sunday for a special blessing. Soon after the beginning of the program year, the current Confirmation Class will begin final preparations for their Confirmation by Bishop Gutierrez on November 19. In anticipation of Bishop's visit, there will be classes for those who wish to be received into the Episcopal Church. Adult Formation classes will be offered on Sunday morning between services by Deacon Joe Dietz, and on Tuesdays following the mid-week services by Fr. Dan Ogden using the same curriculum. Meditation will start on October 1st.

As a household of God, St. Peter's should respond to our call to be a voice in creating a better world for all God's people, without racism, prejudice, hatred, and violence, but living in peace, unity, and harmony. Our household of God should serve as a model for others in being a multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-racial worshipping and serving community.

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Mission Statement: We are an inclusive, forward-looking Episcopal parish that seeks to grow in Christ through worship, education and fellowship, serves Christ by ministering to local and global communities and shares Christ in following His command to "Love one another as I have loved you."

Vision Statement: Our vision at St. Peter's is to be an inclusive, vibrant Christian community honoring our Episcopal heritage by achieving excellence in worship, mission, education and fellowship.

Staff

Very Rev. Dr. Koshy Mathews, Rector
Rev. Joseph Dietz, Deacon
Retta Sparano, Liturgical Coordinator
Karen Greene, Music Director
Judith M. Dougherty, Parish Secretary
Maria Yanez, Sexton

Vestry

2018 Frank Rothenberger
Retta Sparano
Jan Wier
2019 Raymond Forester
Karen Martz
2020 Judi Hans
Vincent Giancaterino
Julia Sharpe

How to contact St. Peter's

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What's Happening At St. Peter's

September 2017

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This is how we respond to the polarizing forces that are at work in our country and in the world. Perhaps we can organize and give leadership for another peace vigil in the near future.

I look forward to seeing you all, God’s beloved, soon in our church praising and celebrating our Risen Lord, Jesus.

Peace and Love, *Fr. Koshy*

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Deacon’s Roundtable

Our July-August column dealt with intercessory prayer. This month I would like to discuss Sacramentals. “What in the world are sacramentals?” you ask. One definition states, “Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church. They prepare people to receive the fruits of the sacraments....” Among the sacramental, blessings occupy an important place. They include both praise of God for his works and gifts, and the Church’s intercession for people that may be able to use God’s gifts according to the spirit of the Gospel.

We utilize two sacramentals in our worship space here at St. Peter’s. There are Holy Water stoups at the main entrances of our worship space. A stoup is a small reservoir for holding Holy Water. This is water that has been blessed and used for baptisms or specially blessed for the particular purpose of blessing ourselves.

Many of us, when we enter the church or our pew bless ourselves by genuflecting and making the sign of the cross. The making of the sign of the cross (tracing our right hand from forehead to breast, from left to right shoulder) expresses our belief in the mystery of our redemption. By adding Holy Water to this action each time we bless ourselves entering or exiting the church, we renew for ourselves our Baptismal vows.

Water is a sign of cleansing. God himself prescribed its use for his people as a rite of purification (Numbers 19). The Jews purified

themselves with water before entering the Temple. The Church initiated this ceremony by placing water at the church doors so that the faithful could wash their hands and faces before Mass. As early as the fourth century, this water was blessed. Therefore, each time we utilize this sacramental it reminds us of our purification from sin through baptism.

The second sacramental is the votive candle stand which stands to the right of the altar in Our Lady’s Chapel. Candles or lamps have been a symbol of the Light of Christ since the first century. Jesus himself reminded us that a light should not be hidden under a bushel but placed on a lamp stand where it will give light to the whole room. The sanctuary lamp that burns in our chancel over the altar indicates that Christ is present in the reserved sacrament that has been placed in the tabernacle. Votive candles give light to the world as we pray for the needs of others or in thanksgiving for answered prayer. The lighted votive candle symbolizes for us the Light of Christ illuminating our concerns for the needs and hurts of our loved ones.

A third sacramental is used only on Good Friday. This sacramental is the ashes from the previous years blessed palms from Palm Sunday. The tracing of the sign of the cross on our foreheads with these ashes reminds us of our mortality and our need for God’s mercy and grace.

I pray God will richly bless you as your faith grows through the use of these sacramentals.

Deacon Joe

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Introduction To The New Testament

The New Testament is the most imperfect book in the history of Western Civilization! How well do you know the message it teaches believers?

Can you name all 27 Books/Letters, tell accurately the meaning of what Jesus proclaimed? What is Paul's message to the churches in the first and second century as well as to us in the 21st century? What was God's best kept secret about Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ that changed the course of Western Civilization?

This September Deacon Joseph Dietz and Father David Ogden, invite you to attend a half hour video presentation by a New Testament professor, followed by important questions and always lively discussion.

We will examine the entire New Testament from a historical perspective, explore theological truth so that we might gain a richer and deeper knowledge of these documents and what and why we believe as follower of Jesus Christ.

Beginning Tuesday evening, September 10th, 7:00 p.m. [**SHARP**], we will gather in the Sanctuary to share a brief but meaningful celebration of the Holy Communion/Eucharist. The service will be immediately followed by the presentation of the video lecture and discussion led by Father Dan Ogden [843-422-9956]. On the following Sunday, September 17, at 9:00 a.m. until 9:40 a.m. [**SHARP**] Deacon Joe Dietz will share the same presentation. You get an opportunity to not miss out!

If you are interested, curious, or seeking, this is where you belong on your Faith Journey with other seekers. What do you need to bring? Your whole self and of course, a version of the New Testament. Please mark September 12 and September 17 on your calendars and plan to attend one of these sessions.

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Sunday, September 10

**Return to Worship times of
8:00 and 10:00 a.m.**

AND

Blessing of School Back Packs



A special prayer and blessing will be offered for the new school year as our children start back to school. Children are encouraged to bring their back packs to Church on the 10th and come forward to the altar for prayer and blessing.

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Church Street Block Party

BLOCK PARTY!

Saint Peter's Church will participate in the second annual Church Street Block Party on Saturday, September 30. The family centered event will be held between 11:00 am and 3:00 pm in the area of the Senior Center parking lot. The block party will have free events for children, music, and food available for all. There will also be a raffle with the grand prize of \$1,000.00. More than 30 vendors and nonprofits (including our church) will have information available. Saint Peter's is sponsoring a neighborhood clean-up, organized by our Environmental Committee. Please plan to attend.

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Can Stewardship Be Fun?



As our children return to school, the weather cools, and the leaves begin their glorious color change the leaders of St. Peter's Church begin their annual work to determine how, in the new year, the church will serve its congregation, its neighbors in Phoenixville, and its friends far and wide around the world. To assist the church leaders in these plans the Stewardship

Committee thinks about ways to bring a message of giving to the congregation.

While reading about Stewardship as it relates to the committee process we found a list of ideas a committee might consider in putting together a good message. A few follow:

1. Stewardship should entail joyous acts of thanksgiving in response to all that God has given us.
2. Stewardship is about changing lives.
3. Stewardship programs must be guided by grace and not guilt.
4. Stewardship is fun.

The St. Peter’s Church Stewardship Committee hopes to bring to you, in a meaningful way, some of these ideas. We hope you will be able to worship at St. Peter’s especially during the weeks beginning Sunday, September 24, Kick-off Sunday, and through November 12, In-gathering Sunday. You will hear informative and interesting messages from the clergy, from your fellow parishioners; and we are planning some fun!

Please join us on September 24 for a meaningful service, a delicious brunch and a fun project for each member of the family.

The Committee, *Marty Bloem, David Brennfleck, Mona Chylack, Leo Guen, Kay Hooper, Diane Hope, Frank Rothenberger, Retta Sparano*

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Mission News



The Pilgrimage to El Salvador

Don’t think of the time in El Salvador as a mission, think of it as a pilgrimage, advised Deacon Dennis several days before our group set out on the trip to Central America. He

continued, “We go to walk in solidarity with the incredible people there and we come back with a new perspective for our lives and the world.” I still owe Dennis a great deal of thanks because his guidance continues to help me as I’ve tried to piece together the transformative experience I’ve been through.

“El Salvador is a land of contrast,” informed Elba, our wise ambassador and mentor from Cristosal who traveled with us and became a treasured friend by the week’s end. This statement resonated within me throughout the week as I experienced several feelings at once in this place. El Salvador was strange and new to me, but at the same time, familiar and comfortable, like a favorite blanket. Oddly, I felt as though I’d been making this pilgrimage for years like several others in our group.

At first, the contrasts Elba spoke of were visual. On the first morning, we traveled down a modern but congested city highway. As we looked out the window, we passed a mile-long squatter village of homes all patched together with ragged rusty corrugated tin. Everyone seemed to be hiding behind splintered window sills with no glass, everyone but the meriad of skinny stray dogs that paced nervously along the periphery. We only needed to turn our heads 180 degrees to gasp at the grand modern mall, not unlike King of Prussia, that towered above. What a contrast.

A coffee farmer showed us a patch of his beautiful shade-grown coffee trees on hike within an ecological mountain preserve. The trees stood green and straight from afar, but up close the farmer pointed out the coffee rust that crept up the coffee plant leaves and would damage some of his crop this fall. Contrast.

At the Iglesia El Rosario Church (please google images of this church - the visual is astounding) we walked on the floor of a five-story domed church filled with the most magnificent stained glass I’ve ever seen. This spectacular church also boasted a shower of bullet holes shot from military guns toward peaceful protesters as they sought refuge inside. Contrast.

Father Koshy had kindly given Gary some money to treat the American and Salvadoran youth to ice cream. The desserts stood tall and delicious on our cones. At the door of this brightly lit and sparkling clean dessert shop an austere guard in military gear stood, reminding me that while things were sweet inside, a step outside could be altogether different. More contrast.

On the magnificent coast a glittering volcanic beach gave way to sparkling waves that cooled our feet but as we climbed in to our waists, the seemingly cheerful waves began buffeting and knocking us down. Continuing contrast.

But then there were the human contrasts as well. Many Americans may think of El Salvador as a place filled with people who are poor in spirit, education and wealth. It is true that there is a scary aspect to the streets beyond our gated community. But from those very streets traveled the most beautiful intelligent youth who came to sit with us. These students were filled with spirit, hope and ideas. They generously inspired us with their unique creative perspectives regarding their lives and what we could do in ours. Sandra's goal is to meet the US Ambassador who she believes can make positive changes at a government level. Jonathan strives to empower youth so that they can feel safe and enjoy their young lives. Blaidey stands up for women who suffer abuse in this society and Jessie cares for her local environment which is being hit hard because of climate change.

We had been learning about Father Romeiro, the Archbishop of the Catholic Church throughout the week. Though he is revered by many because he sacrificed his life and courageously spoke out against the human cruelties inflicted by the government during the unrest that led to the country's civil war in the 1980's, even his story was filled with contrast. Elba admitted that for many years Romeiro did not have the courage to speak. He actually gained his high position because the government felt he was benign and would never be capable of empowering the Salvadorans to rise up. And, at

first Romeiro was afraid of losing his life in the defense of the civilians. He hid under his bed at night in fear of being killed. He turned down those under fire who sought his help. He had to go through many experiences before he could demonstrate the true hero he was inside. Contrast. Contrast. Contrast.

When I began applying the lessons I was learning I wondered, "Does El Salvador represent rawly, honestly and blatantly, the contrast that is in all of us?"

In his sermon today, Father Koshy talked about the rubicon experiences of one's life. He defined these as the notable times when an occurrence in life changes one's path. I have had a few of these: Singing Mozart's "Alleluia" for the first time as a child, seeing my husband for the first time, the unique experiences of rearing each of our children, the last conversation I had with my father before his death, coming to Saint Peters. Though to me, God is a complete mystery, He has been a constant, especially and thankfully perceivable during these rubicon times and if I am truthful with myself, he has always loved me, even when I am a person of contrast. Even when I haven't loved myself.

This is the lesson I confirmed in the contrasts of the rubicon experience in El Salvador. This is the message that I know can be brought back to everyone at Saint Peters. God loves us all always - when we are spiritually bankrupt or when we are at our best. Amidst their struggles, the people I encountered in El Salvador have grasped the concept and though they face trials far beyond what I could have imagined, the people I met are using their knowledge of God's love to live full and beautiful lives and do much for others.

We can do this too. No matter what, don't be afraid to accept God's gifts of love and in that grace, don't be afraid to pass it on to others. The people I met in El Salvador are able to do this with such grace. While there may be contrast in their lives and in their land, this seems to be something that they hold on to. Something I believe will not be changed.

Financial Update – July, 2017
from Frank Rothenberger, Accounting Warden

The financial position of St. Peter's through July, 2017 is outlined below.

- Income
 - Total open plate donations through July were \$12,134, which is slightly below budget, and pledge income was \$157,784, which is slightly above budget.
 - Total operating income was \$196,699 after removal of pass-through income of \$29,886, which continues to be higher than expected. This income includes a \$5,000 donation from the Ford family that was not expected. The money was used in the Capital Campaign to complete the feasibility study.
 - Total income was \$226,585 through July.
- Expense
 - Total operating expenses were \$177,179 after removal of pass-through expenses of \$34,954.
 - Operating expenses are slightly below budgeted expenses of \$180,506 and include some long-term building repairs and maintenance expensed in 2017.
 - Operating expenses through July were sufficiently covered by operating income with a surplus of \$19,520.
 - Total expenses were \$212,133.
- Total expenses were sufficiently covered by total income with a surplus of \$14,452.

Additional detail on income and expenses is available upon request.

Account Balances (as of 7/31/17):

- Checking: \$26,589
- Savings: \$9,067
- Certificates of Deposit: \$42,490
- Youth Group: \$1,136
- Pantry/Outreach: \$4,797
- Mission: \$1,638
- Building Maintenance: \$45,345
- Concert Series: \$3,988
- Capital Campaign: \$37,480
- Ecumenical Meal Program: \$1,474
- Petty Cash: \$200
 - **Total Cash: \$165,850**

Thank you all for your continued and generous support of St. Peter's.

September Worship Participants

Greeters - 8:00 am

- 3 Glenn Murray
 10 Lisa Scott
 17 TBA
 24 Joan Grunwell

Lectors - 8:00 am

- 3 Alexis Radouane
 Lisa Scott *chaliceist*
 10 Anne Holbrook
 17 Henry Young
 24 Lisa Scott

Greeters – 10:00 am

- 3 Anne Andrews, Lady Rennie
 10:10:00 Vernet Spence-Brown, Judi Hans
 17:10:00 Rosemarie and Michael O'Rourke
 24:10:00 Anne Atlee, Kim Thornton

Acolytes

- 3 Vernet Spence-Brown
 Isaac Nagy, M.J. Kiernan
 10:10:00 Frank Rothenberger
 Mali Warren, Emma Martz
 17:10:00 Ryan Sutter
 Colin Parker, Katie Parker
 24:10:00 Michael Logar
 Sean Magee, Trey Foerster

Lectors – 10:00 am

- 3 Jolie Chylack, Mona Chylack
 Beverly Burkhardt *intercessor*
 Joyce Paster, Ron Druckenmiller *chaliceists*
 10:10:00 Carol Russell, Jan Wier
 Karen Martz *intercessor*
 Vernet Spence-Brown *chaliceist*
 17:10:00 Marty Bloem, Vernet Spence-Brown
 Asha George-Guiser *intercessor*
 Peter Druckenmiller *chaliceist*
 24:10:00 Shelly Brennfleck, Jolie Chylack
 Michel Logar *intercessor*
 Ron Druckenmiller *chaliceist*

Ushers

- 3 Clem Young, Sam Smith
 10:10:00 Vincent Giancaterino, Robert Parker
 17:10:00 Curt Quaintance, Carl Rennie
 24:10:00 Bruce Alling, Jim Tackett

September Celebrations



- [1] Barnes Jacobs
 [7] Beverly Burkhardt, Finn Sutter
 [8] Glenn Murray, Vincent Giancaterino
 [9] Fred Park, Minita Hivale,
 Asha George-Guiser
 [10] Christopher Wilson
 [11] Megan Wilson
 [12] Daniel Coleman, Jr.
 [13] Katie Druckenmiller, Reece Farnum
 [14] Tom Weiss, Colin Parker
 [16] Georgette Druckenmiller, Kavita Hivale;
 [17] John Young
 [19] Raymond K. Forester, Jr.
 [20] Colin Craig
 [26] Joan Grunwell
 [28] James Tackett, Dahlia Boone
 [29] Cathy Sullens, Kenneth Henry



- [4] David and Shelly Brennfleck
 [8] David and Lisa Scott
 [9] Steve and Jan Eddowes
 [17] Frank and Nancy Giampietro
 [18] Ben and Sarah Ohanesian;
 [24] Donald and Lisa Brock
 [30] Clem and Marva Young