

St. Peter's Episcopal Church  
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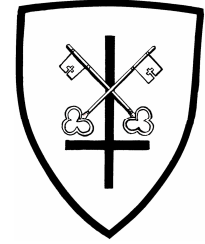
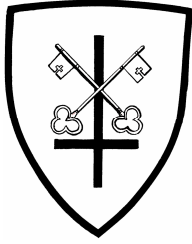
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## DECEMBER PARISH MEMBER SERVICE SCHEDULE

**December is Usher Team 3:** Gary C., Margaret C., Bob H., Andy O., Mark M., Jack S., Sharon S., Bill S.

	December 6	December 13	December 20	December 27
<b><u>Acolytes</u></b>				
<b>8:00</b>	Neil G.	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
<b>9:00</b>	Kirsten K., Emily L., Robert F.	Alison B., Michael F., Linus S.	Corey K., Ward L., Will L.	Meredith R., Megan Z., Tommy M.
<b>11:00</b>	Erin G., Micaela G., Alex G.	Elsie G., Caroline M., John Pierce D.	Grace R., Angel H., Sarah L.	Faith C., Claire C., Sarah C.
<b><u>Chalicians</u></b>				
<b>8:00</b>	Tootie K.	Mike L.	Bill M.	Ed W.
<b>9:00</b>	Sue B. Georganne Jo.	Thad K. Sharon S.	Sue B. Georganne J.	Kathi A. Georganne J.
<b>11:00</b>	Judith L. Paul S.	Larry S. Bob W.	Alan B. Jeff C.	Keith A. Andy O.
<b><u>Lay Readers</u></b>				
<b>8:00</b>	Erika S. Lee M.	Tom B. Suzanne B.	Chris A. Bill M.	Sally H. Sharon S.
<b>9:00</b>	M. Harris Emily L.	Sunday School P.	Kirsten K. Audrey V.	Megan Z. Eric S.
<b>11:00</b>	Don W. Jack S.	Keith A. Vikkey A.	Lessons and Carols	Bettie J. Bob S.
<b><u>Altar Guild</u></b>				
<b>Weekly Team</b>	Nan W. Pat M. Fran D.	Karen S. Anne J. Jennifer B.	Pam P. Kathryn H. Diane C.	Katie E. Legare H. Fernanda F.
<b><u>Greeters</u></b>				
<b>9:00</b>	Francine R.	Kathryn H.	Jim & Joyce R.	Katie E.
<b>11:00</b>	Taffy G.	John M.	Leslie & Richard W.	Ward & Debbie L.

# ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



## THE KEY

DECEMBER 2009

*"Called together in Christ, Transformed by God's grace, Sent out to serve."*

### FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

### DATES TO NOTE:

Dear Friends,

There are not many truly universal phenomena. Birth and death come to mind. And, yes, change! Come to think of it, births and deaths are changes. Change is something we can count on. Change is something most of us dislike, and most of us do not accommodate change very well at all—strange when you think about it, since change is a near constant factor in our lives. Think of all the changes you've had throughout your life. I expect you've moved. Perhaps married, had children. You probably didn't attend the same school for your entire life. Maybe you changed one of your holiday traditions this year—or tried to, only to find massive resistance! Change can be a result of something good—a new birth, a promotion, a child going off to college, or a new job. Change can also be a result of something bad—an illness, an accident, a job loss, or a death. The choir, in particular, is undergoing great change right now as a result of the death of Ruth Peters. Things will be shaky for them for a while and when they eventually smooth out, the choir will be a different choir than it was before Ruth's death.

St. Peter's is about to undergo a significant change with the departure of the Rev. Mary Demmler. You may be saddened by her departure. You may still be in shock that she is leaving, and haven't felt that sadness yet. Youth group members may walk around shell-shocked for a while, or sad, or even angry. They are about to experience a significant loss. I am sad she is leaving. In the midst of all of this change, my mother popped into my head recently. I can remember being devastated at the departure of one of my close friends and

my mother telling me that every gray cloud has a silver lining. While that may sound trite, it is true and we'll find silver linings in the gray clouds following Mary's departure. As with the other changes in your life, when we look back on this one, we'll find some good things have come out of it.

Think of a sports team. When the star player goes down with an injury, there is of course concern over the well-being of the player. First, we need to make sure the player will be OK. Then there comes concern for the team. *What will we do? There goes our season! We had hopes of going to the playoffs, but those hopes are over.* But nine times out of ten, a player who may have gone unnoticed before rises to the occasion. All of a sudden the player comes out of nowhere and starts scoring. This player who was never noticed becomes a leader—encouraging others, working hard, building up the team. We see gifts in someone we never knew were there. The season we thought had gone down the tubes is suddenly salvaged. The team re-forms, grows, and changes.

Well, when Mary announced she was leaving, first there was concern for her well-being. There is no need for concern. Mary has accepted a call to be rector in an area of the country where she wants to live. St. Matthias' Episcopal Church in Toccoa, Georgia, is about to be blessed with a gifted, energetic and loving priest. Next there was concern for the team—for St. Peter's. *What will happen to us? There go all our programs! We're not going to make it.* But just like with sports teams, we will find there will be people who will come out of seemingly nowhere to step up and take the lead. People we have not noticed will

- 1 - 1st Tuesday Meetings
- 2 - Godzilla
- 2,9,16,23,30 - Handbell Choir Practice
- 2,9,16,23,30 - Adult Choir Practice
- 3 - SOME
- 3,10,17 - The Thursday Ears
- 4,11,18 - Women's Bible Study
- 5 - Trivium Christmas Party
- 5,12,19,26 - Icon Writing
- 6 - *Messiah* Sing-Along
- 7 - Finance Committee Meeting
- 8 - 2nd Tuesday Meetings
- 9 - Christian Formation Meeting
- 10 - Trivium Bare Bible Study
- 11 - Meals on Wheels
- 12 - Sunday School Pageant Rehearsal
- 13 - Sunday School Christmas Pageant
- 13 - Children's Choir Practice
- 14 - Vestry
- 14,28 - Prayer Group
- 15 - Third Tuesday Lunch
- 15 - St. Peter's Movie Night (Tyson's)
- 20 - Lessons and Carols
- 20 - Greening of the Church
- 20 - Godzilla Family Christmas Xtravaganza
- 24 - Christmas Eve - HE, Rite II Services at 5pm, 8pm, and 11pm
- 25 - Christmas Day - HE, Rite II Service at 10am

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become involved and we'll wonder how we ever managed without them. The lay youth group leaders will have a chance to come into their own. Programs that matter will continue and thrive. Programs that don't have as much meaning will drop off to make room for others. We will discover surprising gifts in ourselves and one another. Others of us will simply decide it is time for us to be involved.

Through all of this change, we will grieve. You are probably familiar with the stages of the grieving process as developed by Elizabeth Kübler-Ross. These stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Most of us go through these stages when we grieve. (I do want to note we don't go through them in a linear fashion, but we may move, for example, into bargaining and then backtrack to anger for a while and then jump to depression, and so forth.) We most commonly think of these stages when we grieve a death. But we go through these stages when we grieve any loss. Mary's departure is one such loss. So be gentle with yourselves and your children. Talk to one another. Cry with one another.

Support one another. It is OK to be sad or angry. We will all eventually get to acceptance, in our own time. There is no timetable for grief.

Yes, Mary's departure is a big change for St. Peter's. As with all change, this big change will provide for big opportunities. This is not the only change St. Peter's has successfully endured, nor will it be the last. We will grow and become a new St. Peter's. We don't know what this new St. Peter's will look like, but I bet it will be something fabulous. St. Peter's will be different—not better or worse, just a different fabulous from the fabulous we are now.

Yes, we will miss Mary. But Mary will be fine and so will we.

In faith,



The Rev. Ann Martens

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## MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN —

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As I write, the Rev. Mary Demmler is preparing to go on to lead a new parish and St. Peter's is starting the search for a new assistant rector. Mary has been a tremendous asset to St. Peter's over the last three years, and I am sorry to see her leave.

St. Peter's, despite the homey, family-like feel remarked upon by both visitors and regulars, is a large parish. At the end of 2006 we entered a new chapter in our history with three full-time clergy on the staff. We added staff not so that we could maintain things the way they were but so that we could continue to grow and flourish as a parish. The addition of clergy staff with the expansion of our programs and ministries has resulted in a steady growth of new persons and families joining us at St. Peter's.

The new assistant rector will lead our parish youth programs as well as programs that specifically reach out to families with young children. He or she will also participate in Trivium, the regional young adult ministry in the Diocese of Virginia.

All three of our clergy are actively engaged in pastoral care, preaching, worship, Christian education, and in the work and mission of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia. Each has particular areas of oversight. Until the new assistant can be found and hired, Mary's workload will be redistributed among Craig, Ann, and a variety of lay volunteers. The period between Mary's departure and the hiring of another assistant rector offers an opportunity for the rest of us to try out some new roles at church—after all, as Steve Kuhn was fond of reminding us, “many hands make light work.”

Faithfully,  
Catharine, Senior Warden

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## PARISH NEWS —

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To: The Rev. Craig Phillips and the Vestry and Congregation of St. Peter's Episcopal Church

November 4, 2009

Dear Craig, Members of the Vestry, and St. Peter's Family,

I am filled with both joy and sadness as I share with you that I have accepted a call to be the rector of St. Matthias' Episcopal Church in Toccoa, Georgia. After an expedited discernment process, the search committee at St. Matthias' and I have discerned a mutual call to ministry and they have asked that I start before Christmas. My last Sunday at St. Peter's will be November 29 and my last event will be Nicholasfest on Friday, December 4. My last official day will be Wednesday, December 11, but we will spend from December 4 to 11 packing and moving.

## PARISH NEWS (CONT.) —

It is fitting that November 29 will be my last Sunday as that was my first Sunday at St. Peter's three years ago. We first broke bread with all of you the Sunday after Thanksgiving and it will be our last day to share communion with you as well. The first Sunday we spent in thanksgiving for our new ministry here and the last Sunday we will spend in thanksgiving for the fulfillment of that ministry; perfect bookends to a great three years.

I have appreciated my time at St. Peter's and have learned much as you have allowed me to sojourn with you. Together we have seen the church grow, both in programming and numbers. We have celebrated major feasts and mourned major losses and, through it all, shown others what it means to be a church. Through my experience here I have learned about the joys and challenges of working with a large parish. We have formed lasting relationships and have felt loved and supported. In our time at St. Peter's, Derek started his vocation as a teacher and we welcomed our first child, Hannah, and you helped us prepare and celebrate.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your lives over the past three years. We have done a little bit of everything—from laying tile in a house in New Orleans to tubing down the Shenandoah with the youth group to running an obstacle course with our youngest members on our Parish Retreat at Shrine Mont. Through it all we have laughed and cried with you, sharing the blessings and grace of God that come through being a part of a church family.

I want to thank Craig and Ann for being such gifted and supportive colleagues. Working with them has made me a better priest and prepared me for the next step of the journey. I am confident that through their leadership and that of our gifted lay leaders that these programs will continue to expand and thrive. I also wish to thank Nikol and Chris for all they do to make our work possible. Without the two of them the ministries with which I work would not have been nearly as successful.

We will miss our friends and family at St. Peter's but look forward to expanding our family at St. Matthias'. With the church you never sever ties, just stretch the thread a little further. We look forward to hearing about the continued progress and growth of St. Peter's and our prayers will continue to be with you as you do the work God calls you to do. Please hold us in your prayers as we step forward onto the next stage of our journey in the service of Christ.

If you ever find yourself in north Georgia, please know our door will be open and we would love to see you!

With much love and thanks,  
The Rev. Mary R. H. Demmler, Assistant Rector

## FAREWELL FROM THE DEMMLERS

Dear Parishioners of St. Peter's,

By now, the boxes are about to be packed and loaded for their trip to Georgia. And we are busy wrapping up loose ends, trying to keep the stress down, and looking forward to warm "hellos" as well as making sad "goodbyes." Since I announced my departure from St. Peter's, you all have been wonderful in wishing us well, letting us know we'll be missed, and offering your assistance. We thank you for helping to make this transition as smooth as possible. And we also thank you for allowing us to serve among you these past three years. I will not repeat my letter of resignation here, but please know how much we have learned from our time here and the gift you have given us in that formation. We would love to hear from all of you and if you are ever in Georgia, please look us up! Our new mailing address is 3675 White Sulphur Road, Gainesville, Georgia 30507. Also, the church I will be serving and its address are: St. Matthias' Episcopal Church, 995 East Tugalo Street, Toccoa, Georgia 30577-1938.

Much love,  
Mary, Derek, Hannah, and (soon!) Bailey

## TRIVIUM CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Arlington Area Young Adult Ministry will hold its annual Christmas party on Saturday, December 5, at the home of the Rev. Anne Turner, assistant rector at St. Mary's. Festivities begin at 7 p.m., including our traditional Ugly Christmas Sweater Competition and Ugly Santa Gift Exchange. Please bring a snack or drink to share and a wrapped gift worth no more than \$5 (the stranger the gift, the better!). The Rev. Turner's address is 5814 19th Street North, Arlington, and her phone number is 703-241-2028.

## PARISH NEWS (CONT.)—

### GODZILLA DATE CHANGES!

Parents and Godzill-ians! Please note the changes in dates for our December events. Our first Godzilla of the month will be Wednesday, December 2, at 7 p.m. This is a week earlier than regularly scheduled because that is Mary's last week at St. Peter's and she wanted to spend one more Godzilla with our youth. The second Godzilla gathering will be our Godzilla All-Family Christmas Xtravaganza on Sunday, December 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. This is a yearly tradition when our youth group members bring their friends and family to see what Godzilla is all about. We'll begin with a potluck dinner at 7: (please bring a dish to share!) then continue with lots of fun and games a la Godzilla style! Our regular leader, Margaret Prior, will be joined by a special guest host, Laura D. Please join us for this night of fun!

### CHRISTMAS PAGEANT REHEARSAL DECEMBER 12

The Christmas Pageant is coming! There will be rehearsal for everyone in the pageant (pre-K through grade 6) on Saturday, December 12, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.. The pageant will be December 13 at the 9:00 a.m. service.

### DECEMBER TRIVIUM BARE BIBLE STUDY

We conclude our fall focus on the Revelation of John by discussing some modern interpretations of this apocalyptic book and by watching Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* on Thursday, December 10, at the home of Katelyn and Jared M. Please bring a dish to share.

### DECEMBER 15 IS ST. PETER'S MOVIE NIGHT

Please join us for a wonderful evening of fellowship and the opportunity to see the movie *Invictus* at AMC Movie Theater at Tyson's Corner (I). Directed by Clint Eastwood and starring Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon, *Invictus* tells the true story of how Nelson Mandela used the underdog South African rugby team to unite his country as they made a run for the World Cup finals in South Africa. Proceeds from the ticket sales (please purchase the tickets from us) will go to help build a home for orphans in South Africa. If you have questions please contact Anna F.

### THIRD TUESDAY'S LUNCHEON: NOON, DECEMBER 15

Join us for a very special Christmas luncheon! We are blessed to have Debbie LeHardy and Gretchen G. as our hosts this month. They hosted our first two luncheons nearly a year ago and both events were wonderful. We thank them in advance for providing our holiday celebration. December's luncheon will be at noon on December 15 in the chapel. Please R.S.V.P. by Wednesday, December 9. You can do so by signing up on the sheet provided in the narthex, calling the church office, or e-mailing Carol K. Please do not forget to sign up to host a luncheon after Christmas. You can partner with another member, provide lunch yourself, or have it catered. However you choose to host, please speak with Carol about submitting your receipts for reimbursement.

### GODZILLA ALL-FAMILY CHRISTMAS XTRAVAGANZA

The entire parish is invited to come get a taste for what our youth group does on a regular basis! Join us Sunday, December 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. for a night of fun and games. We'll begin with a potluck dinner at 7, then continue on with much craziness, songs, and madness. Be there or be where?

### EPIPHANY PAJAMA PARTY, SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 6 TO 7 P.M.

Once again this year we will mark the feast of Epiphany with a pajama party in our chapel. Bring your favorite stuffed animals and blankets and wear your PJs to come and hear traditional stories of Epiphany. Please bring cookies to share. Milk will be provided.

### THANK YOU MARY

November 29 was Mary Demmler's last Sunday at St. Peter's. Mary began her work with us three years ago on the same Sunday after Thanksgiving. As Mary departs from us to become the rector of her new parish in Georgia, I would like publicly to thank her for all that she has done for me and for the clergy, staff, and people of St. Peter's. I also would like to thank her personally for the help, guidance, and support she has given me during the time she has been here at St. Peter's.

Mary became a part of our staff when we decided to increase the programming we offered to our youth, families with young children, and young adults. In the time she has been with us Mary has developed quality programs in each of these areas.

## PARISH NEWS (CONT.) —

Let us give thanks for the vitality and enthusiasm Mary brought to her work in this place and for the love she shared with us, the people of St. Peter's.

I will miss Mary, as I know you also will. As Mary moves on to the next chapter of her ministry we give thanks for her ministry here and wish her Godspeed. May God continue to bless Mary, Derek, Hannah, and their child yet to be born throughout the years to come.

The Rev. Craig Phillips

## COMMISSION NEWS —

### 2010 EVERY MEMBER COMMITMENT

As of November 17, we have received pledge commitments in the amount of \$678,090. To those who have turned in your pledges, I offer sincere thanks on behalf of our parish family. However, there are a good number of folks who currently pledge who have not turned in a card for 2010—and if we can get all those returned by the first week of December it would be greatly appreciated. I am happy to say that we currently have 15 pledges from folks who did not make a pledge in 2009, so I am very hopeful of making our goal of 20 new pledges for 2010. If for some reason you did not receive a pledge card in the mail, it's never too late! There are extra cards on the hunt board in the Narthex as well as in the church office. Should you like more information, such as copies of the materials that went out in the mailing, just let me know and I will be happy to get them to you.

Lisa L., Stewardship Chair

## MISSION COMMISSION NEWS

Christmas mission projects will be our main focus in December. One drive this year is for toys for children living in Arlington's publicly assisted housing units run by the Arlington Housing Corporation. A second drive will collect hats and gloves for homeless men served by the Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless. Mary Jane Saunders and Sheridan C. are organizing these drives.

As always, there is a Parish Christmas Card for you to sign in the Narthex. Instead of buying Christmas cards to send to St. Peter's parishioners you can sign the Parish Christmas Card and make a donation (cash or checks written to St. Peter's with "Parish Christmas Card" in the memo line). This year your generous donations for the Christmas card will be given to the Jackson-Feild Homes near Richmond. The homes were founded by Virginia Episcopal churches in the 19th century and have been supported by many in the Episcopal community, particularly Episcopal Church Women (ECW) chapters around Virginia. Originally, the purpose of the homes was to care for children orphaned by outbreaks of yellow fever in Norfolk. Eventually, the homes developed into facilities to care for young women coming from abusive homes. Our very own Tillie Smithers is currently a trustee for the J-F Homes Foundation Board.

Fundraising for a mission trip to South Africa and to assist in developing a home for children orphaned by AIDS near Cape Town, South Africa, is off to a great start. Our youth groups will help by collecting money for wrapping gifts. They will wrap gifts brought to Nicholasfest (December 4) and wrap at a local mall as well. We are also sponsoring a St. Peter's Movie Night at the AMC Tysons Corner on Tuesday, December 15, to see *Invictus*, which dramatizes the story of Nelson Mandela's efforts at reconciliation through sports after apartheid ended in South Africa. You can buy a movie pass for \$15—good for this event or for any movie any time at any AMC Theater. Contact Anna F. or Jayne S. if you'd like to be a part of this effort.

In mid-December you will have an opportunity to bring the Christmas spirit to a needy Arlington family by participating in the tree donation and set-up ministry. This year we are buying some extra trees from our North Carolina supplier, and on December 13 we will send our volunteers to take the trees, tree stands, and decorations to homes that don't have a Christmas tree. Please contact Gary or Diane C. if you'd like to participate.

The Thanksgiving Food Drive, coordinated by Jan Gnadt, was very successful. Our generous parishioners filled up over 40 "baskets" with all the fixings for a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner. The food, plus gift cards for fresh items such as turkeys or hams, was donated to clients of Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington. Many struggling families and individuals were helped by this ministry.

Don't forget the many sign-up sheets in the Narthex for the ongoing ministries such as SOME, AFAC, Meals-On-Wheels and the Emergency Winter Shelter.

## VESTRY NEWS —

### Vestry Highlights—November 17, 2009

#### At a busy November meeting, St. Peter's Vestry:

- Heard from Stewardship Chair Lisa L. that the 2009 Every Member Commitment had reached \$678,000, on track for our goal of \$800,000 if 51 of last year's pledging families repeat for the 2010 budget year.
- Voted to pledge \$60,000 to the Diocese of Virginia for 2010—7.5 percent of the \$800,000 we hope will be pledged for the year.
- Voted to establish a temporary restricted budget fund to hold funds raised for the parish's planned 2011 mission trip to South Africa. Such a fund is needed to allow money to carry forward on the books after the end of 2010.
- Voted by e-mail the week before to establish a "purse" to receive funds for Mary Demmler's going-away.
- Authorized Trey D. to sign invoices for the Building and Grounds Committee.
- Referred to Building and Grounds to examine possible changes to the Memorial Garden to address parishioners' concerns that the current circle of stones feels cold.
- Authorized a new pictorial directory using Olan Mills Portrait Studio's call center to handle photography scheduling. Olan Mills has guaranteed strict confidentiality.
- Appointed Catharine G. to be the vestry member on the Personnel Committee for 2010.
- Authorized rector the Rev. Dr. Craig Phillips to proceed with a search to find an assistant rector to fill the position of minister to Youth and Families with Young Children being vacated by the Rev. Mary Demmler.

## ADULT FORUM —

### Adult Forum December 2009

Adult Forum sessions on Sundays at 10 a.m. are designed to serve our community by stimulating our thinking and actions in the Christian faith, exploring timely issues in our church and the world, and as an occasion for feedback from the ongoing activities in missions, worship, education and stewardship at St. Peter's. Topics range from books of the Bible and figures in Christian history to ethical dilemmas and contemporary issues of interest to our community. Discussion leaders come from within our parish community or sometimes are specially invited outside guest speakers, and we try to have two complementary forums to choose from each Sunday. The Adult Forums are open to anyone who would like to share. Please contact Jonathan Sullivan with ideas, feedback or to volunteer.

#### December 6—Second Sunday of Advent

##### **Option I: Science and Faith, Part III: Religion and the Brain: A Psychologist's Perspective—Led by Professor Mary Lindahl**

A number of news articles that appeared in 2007 about the human brain and spirituality prompted considerable discussion in churches across the country. Recent research in neuroscience suggests that many people are "hard-wired" for faith while others are not, based on a new understanding of how the human brain works. St. Peter's parishioner Mary Lindahl is a professor of forensic psychology at Marymount University. She is also a therapist and counselor in private practice and a frequent expert witness in court cases in the Washington, D.C., area. We invite you to join us and bring your own insights and experiences to share.

##### **Option II: Inquirer's Class: Theology—Led by the Rev. Dr. Craig Phillips**

This is one in a series of sessions for newcomers and longtimers alike covering the basics of our church and worship. The focus of this session will be on the theological underpinnings of the Episcopal Church.

#### December 13—Third Sunday of Advent

##### **Plenary Session: Inquirer's Class: The Sacramental Rites—Led by the Rev. Dr. Craig Phillips**

Part of a continuing series for newcomers and longtimers alike, this forum will cover the five sacramental rites of the Episcopal Church, with a focus on Unction and Penance.

## ADULT FORUM (CONT.) —

### December 20—Fourth Sunday of Advent

#### Option I: Teach Us to Pray: Part I—Led by the Prayer Group

The St. Peter's Prayer Group will lead a discussion of prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and adoration based on a preaching series by the Anglican Brothers of the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The focus will be on Christmas, with time for practicing some special prayers. The second half of this series will take place on January 17.

#### Option II: TBD

### December 27—First Sunday after Christmas

#### Plenary Session: Inquirer's Class: Polity—Led by the Rev. Dr. Craig Phillips

One of a continuing series on the basics of our church and worship for newcomers and longtimers alike, this forum will focus on the political organization of the Episcopal Church in the United States.

## MUSIC AT ST. PETER'S —

### Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1739

*Then the angel said to them, Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people." Luke 2:10*

Upon his conversion, Charles Wesley immediately began writing hymns, each one packed with doctrine, all of them exhibiting strength and sensitivity, both beauty and theological brawn. He wrote constantly, and even on horseback his mind was flooded with new songs; he often stopped at houses along the road and ran in asking for "pen and ink."

He wrote over 6,000 hymns during his life and he didn't like people tinkering with his words. In one of his hymnals, he wrote: "I beg leave to mention a thought which has been long my mind, and which I should long ago have insert in the public papers, had I not been unwilling to stir up a nest of hornets. Many gentlemen have done my brother and me (through without naming us) the honor to reprint many of our hymns. Now they are perfectly welcome to do so, provided they print them just as they are. But I desire they would not attempt to mend them, for they really are not able. None of them is able to mend either the sense or the verse. Therefore, I must beg of them these two favors: either to let them stand just as they are, to take things for better or worse, or to add the true reading the margin, or at the bottom of the page, that we may no longer be accountable either for the nonsense of for the doggerel of other men."

But one man did the church a great favor by polishing up one of Wesley's best-loved hymns. When Charles was 32, he wrote a Christmas hymn that began:

*Hark, how all the welkin rings;  
"Glory to the King of kings;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
Universal nature say,  
"Christ the Lord is born to-day!"*

The word "welkin" was an old English term for "the vault of heaven." It was Wesley's friend, evangelist George Whitefield, who, when he published this carol in his collection of hymns in 1753, changed the words to the now-beloved, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."

Excerpted from: *Then Sings My Soul* (Robert J. Morgan, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2003, pg. 49)

## MUSIC AT ST. PETER'S (CONT.) —

### IT'S SING-ALONG TIME!

It's that time of year once again! A parish Advent tradition will continue on Sunday, December 6, at 7:30 p.m. when the adult choir, with soloists and orchestra, presents the 19th annual St. Peter's *Messiah* Sing-Along.

The choir invites all parishioners, and your friends and neighbors, to join in this presentation of the Christmas portion of Handel's *Messiah*. Bring your *Messiah* score, or borrow or purchase a score at the door. Admission to the sing-along is free, although donations are gratefully accepted. Once again this year, sing-along participants are encouraged to contribute nonperishable food items for the food bank.

The sing-along is an event for all ages and generations. With its length (the presentation of the Christmas portion of the *Messiah* lasts about one hour and twenty minutes), informality, and holiday theme, it is also a very family-friendly event, and children often attend with their families. For the youngest members of the St. Peter's community, child care is available during the sing-along beginning at 7 p.m.

## OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST —

### UPDATE FROM LAURA (DOUD) COCHRAN

Greetings from the Hill!

It is hard to believe that a few months ago St. Peter's sent me off to seminary with a copy of the *Priest's Handbook*, Throckmorton's *Gospel Parallels*, and a beautiful icon of St. Peter. Both texts have already come in handy and the icon has been a wonderful way of remembering my roots when I need to most. Life has been very busy for me since leaving my St. Peter's parish family this summer to follow God's call to Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS). In addition to going back to school, I was married this past June, left my job of nearly ten years, and settled in to living across I-395 in Alexandria, Virginia. There have certainly been a lot of changes in my life, but I am so grateful for these and the many other blessings God has given me this year.

In this season of thanksgiving, reflection, and new beginnings, I find it most appropriate to pause and give thanks to God for the blessings of my new marriage and the new vocation to which God is calling me to live. I am particularly grateful for the role St. Peter's has played in my journey to seminary and toward ordination. I give thanks to all of the youth for sharing their words of encouragement when I expressed anxiety about returning to school. I give thanks to the countless parishioners who, with discerning hearts, affirmed my call to seminary by sharing their thoughts and observations with me through conversations, personal notes, and prayers. I also give thanks for the many parishioners who generously contributed monetarily to my education (your financial assistance is greatly needed and appreciated!); please know that I pray daily for God's help in being a good steward of your gifts at VTS. Finally, I am thankful for the invaluable guidance from Craig, Mary, and Ann, and their excellent example of ordained leadership. Thank you, St. Peter's!

At VTS, there is a strongly held belief in the importance of this threefold tenet: "chapel—class—lunch." As a community, we are called to worship together (chapel); read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest Scripture and broaden our theological edges (class); and break bread together as an entire community—seminarians, faculty, and staff—every weekday (lunch). Our Christian formation happens as we worship, study, and dine together, and it is enriched when we include each of these three elements in our daily routines. There are three opportunities for corporate worship each weekday: Morning Prayer, Noon Eucharist, and Evening Worship. Since beginning in August, some of the courses I have taken include: introductory courses on the New Testament and Old Testament, church history from the time of Christ's ministry on earth to the Reformation, Biblical Greek, and youth ministry (yes—there is much to learn in this area!). In preparation for future seminary and diocesan requirements, I am in the process of researching sites in which to do my Clinical Pastoral Education this summer and parishes for my Field Education, in which I will serve as Seminarian during my Middler (second) and Senior (third) years of seminary.

If you find yourself on Seminary Road in Alexandria, please drop by the campus and join me for worship or lunch. I would love to introduce you to Virginia Theological Seminary.

And thank you for your continued thoughts, calls, e-mails, notes, and, most especially, your prayers. Please know that you are in mine!

God's Peace,  
Laura Cochran

**St. Peter's Episcopal Church**

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**Staff:**

The Reverend Craig A. Phillips, Ph.D., *Rector*  
The Reverend Mary Demmler, *Assistant Rector*  
The Reverend Ann Martens, *Assistant Rector*  
Don Witman, *Director of Music*  
Emily Koons, *Youth and Junior Choir Director, Organist*  
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**Vestry:**

Chair: The Reverend Craig A. Phillips, Ph.D.  
Senior Warden: Catharine (2010)  
Junior Warden: Gretchen (2009)  
Register: Paul (2010)  
Kathi (2009)  
Sue (2011)  
Suzanne (2010)  
Jim (2009)  
Margaret (2011)  
Gary (2011)  
Barret (2011)  
Ward (2009)  
Jack (2010)

**Volunteers:**

Treasurer: Mira Brown  
Key Editor: Rob Gibson

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>DECEMBER 2009</b>		<b>1</b> 7:15pm - 1st Tuesday Meetings	<b>2</b> 6:30pm - Handbell Choir Practice 7:00pm - Godzilla 7:30pm - Adult Choir Practice	<b>3</b> 6:00am - SOME 10:15am - Thursday Ears	<b>4</b> 7:30am - Women's Bible Study	<b>5</b> 12:00pm - Icon Writing 7pm - Trivium Christmas Party
<b>6</b> 8:00am - HE, Rite I 9:00am - HE, Rite II 10:00am - Sunday School, The 10 Spot, Adult Forum 11:00am - HE, Rite II 7:30pm - Messiah Sing-Along	<b>7</b> 7:30pm - Finance Committee Meeting	<b>8</b> 7:15pm - 2nd Tuesday Meetings	<b>9</b> 6:30pm - Handbell Choir Practice 7:30pm - Adult Choir Practice 7:30pm - Christian Formation Meeting	<b>10</b> 10:15am - Thursday Ears 7:00pm - Trivium Bare Bible Study	<b>11</b> 7:30am - Women's Bible Study 11:00am - Meals on Wheels	<b>12</b> 9:00am - Pageant Practice 12:00pm - Icon Writing
<b>13</b> 8:00am - HE, Rite I 9:00am - HE, Rite II - Christmas Pageant 10:00am - Sunday School, The 10 Spot, Adult Forum 11:00am - HE, Rite II 11am - Children's Choir Practice	<b>14</b> 7:00pm - Vestry 7:30pm - Prayer Group	<b>15</b> 12:00pm - Third Tuesday Lunch	<b>16</b> 6:30pm - Handbell Choir Practice 7:30pm - Adult Choir Practice	<b>17</b> 10:15am - Thursday Ears	<b>18</b> 7:30am - Women's Bible Study	<b>19</b> 12:00pm - Icon Writing
<b>20</b> 8:00am - HE, Rite I 9:00am - HE, Rite II 10:00am - Sunday School, The 10 Spot, Adult Forum 11:00am - Lessons and Carols 12:15pm - Greening of the Church 7:00pm - Godzilla Family Christmas Xtravaganza	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 6:30pm - Handbell Choir Practice 7:30pm - Adult Choir Practice	<b>24</b> <i>Christmas Eve</i> 5:00pm - HE, Rite II - Family Service 8:00pm - HE, Rite II - Candlelight Service 11:00pm - HE, Rite II - Candlelight Service	<b>25</b> <i>Christmas Day</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 10:00am - HE, Rite II	<b>26</b> 12:00pm - Icon Writing
<b>27</b> 8:00am - HE, Rite I 9:00am - HE, Rite II 10:00am - Sunday School, The 10 Spot, Adult Forum 11:00am - HE, Rite II	<b>28</b> 7:30pm - Prayer Group	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 6:30pm - Handbell Choir Practice 7:30pm - Adult Choir Practice	<b>31</b>		