

# ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

## NEWSLETTER

### December, 2008

*Our mission is to share the life, love and joy of Jesus Christ with others.*

Office: 610-828-3098

Fax: 610-828-3232

E-mail: [revtodd@stpeterslh.org](mailto:revtodd@stpeterslh.org) / [info@stpeterslh.org](mailto:info@stpeterslh.org)

3025 Church Road

Lafayette Hill PA

19444-1707

[www.stpeterslh.org](http://www.stpeterslh.org)



#### PASTOR'S CORNER

I recently had the opportunity to go see the Broadway production of "White Christmas". It was designed after the old movie where from which that song was made famous. Those of you have seen it will remember how, when the retired General saw all of his former soldiers return to honor him, he said "Fellas, you have just given me the greatest Christmas gift of all - your time."

Ain't that the truth? What could be more valuable in our face paced world than for someone to give you some of their time? It can be time spent across from a lunch table together, or perhaps in the stream fishing. Riding together up a ski slope or taking a walk along the path on Kelly Drive. Perhaps enjoying art together at the Art Museum, or just sitting together enjoying each other's company. Whatever it may be, time is a precious gift.

Christmas is Jesus' birthday, and let's face it, does he really *need* anything for his birthday? I don't think so. But - does he *want* anything? Yes - our time. Jesus wants our time in worship. Jesus wants our time to be shared with those who are feeling lonely. Jesus wants our time to be used in ministry. Many of us allow Jesus' birthday to come and go and give gifts to everyone - except Jesus. Let's give him the gift of time - one of our most precious gifts.

As I prepare to celebrate this Christmas season, I would like to thank *you* for the time you give to our ministry here at St. Peter's Whether it be in worship, teaching, serving, or sharing, it is a precious and valuable gift. I have been blessed to serve such a faithful congregation and wish each and every one of you a blessed and joyous Christmas Season.

With Christmas Blessings,

The Rev. R. Bruce Todd

## From the Vicar...

The Holiday season is upon us. It seems each year shopping malls and radio stations try to advance the Christmas shopping season with decorations and music earlier and earlier each year. Just last week (second week in November) I heard Christmas carols on the radio! We are bombarded with the joyous sounds of the season; I wonder when Christmas arrives if we will be ready.

A new church year begins November 30 with the season of Advent; a time of preparation for the coming year and the anticipation of the birth of the Christ child. Similar to Lent, Advent calls us to be patient, expectant and reflective of a great event. In our hurriedness to get the shopping done, bake the cookies, plan for Christmas parties, attend Holiday concerts, decorate our homes, our patience will be tested. God calls us to examine the world around us with a new light.

The coming of the baby Jesus is a time to be filled with joy; a joy that gives life to all people. In this trying time of economic strain, may you find the joy of Jesus in all you do, in all people you encounter, in worship and praise. God's love through Jesus comes to you in the simple birth of a child; the joy and delight of a newborn. Praise God for the gift of life!

May your Christmas season be filled with love and happiness. Merry Christmas

Vicar Jim

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My sincere Thank You for the love, prayers and support from the St. Peter's family during my recent medical procedure. Ursula Schwartz

Dear St. Peter's family,  
Thank you for the new handicapped accessible curbing at the crosswalk across from the parking lot. It is a big help for me in my wheelchair, to get into the building.  
Barbara Wirsing

Thank You to Nancy, Martin and Jennifer Bogdon who provided a new Clergy Cape for Pastor Todd to replace the one that was taken from the coat rack. It is given in memory of Alfred Kroll and Richard Kroll.

Thank you to Debbie Graham for her time working as our Youth and Christian Education director. Unfortunately these jobs, along with being Director of the Nursery School, required more time and energy than one person could give. We welcome Linda Wargo who is undertaking the task of being the Director for Christian Education and Danielle O'Brien who will be service as Director of Youth Ministry. Both of these people were installed during the 10:00 service on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**2009 ELCA Youth Gathering**  
**New Orleans, LA**  
**Jesus, Justice, Jazz:**  
**A Theological Statement of the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering**

God's limitless and priceless love will meet youth of the ELCA as it returns to New Orleans in July 2009 to celebrate and participate in the acts of God's love with the people of New Orleans. This city is a context where God's boundless love has been poured out in the past, the present, and will continue to be poured out in years to come. God's love was with those who lost their sisters, brothers, wives, husbands, and children to the raging waters of Hurricane Katrina. God's love was there when the water snaked through the city's canals and knocked down the concrete walls of the levies daring to overcome any and everything in its path. The infinite love of God was also there when thousands of people walked through flood waters to shelter on higher ground. Today God's love continues to manifest in the work and spirit of the citizens of New Orleans and strangers from many lands who come to help rebuild the city. The ELCA Youth Gathering and the people of New Orleans invite young people to join in this effort and to "serve in the manner of Christ" in the Big Easy.

ELCA Youth will enter into God's presence in New Orleans to receive the witness of others and practice their faith through worship, prayer, play, service, and learning. The Gathering holds promise in responding to several questions related to the social mission of the church. How can young people, through their experiences in New Orleans, step into their baptismal vocation as Christians and see themselves within God's narrative of love and justice? What will empower them to leave New Orleans more committed to shaping their congregations into compassionate communities of faith? How will youth discover the joy of holistic living where heart and head are joined together with life-giving Christian practices? How will they discover anew that God in Christ loves all humankind and all of creation unconditionally and shows that love each day through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit? The Gathering's theme – Jesus, Justice, and Jazz – is the catalyst for answer to these and other questions.

For additional information go to [www.elca.org/gathering](http://www.elca.org/gathering)

St. Peter's congregation is supporting four youth and two adult leaders to this life-changing experience. Keep Corey, Kyle, Lauren, Samantha, Ellen and John in prayer.

## St. Peter's Youth Ministry

Where is God leading this congregation with this ministry? How is God working in the people of our congregation to share the life, love and joy of Jesus Christ through our youth in grades 6-12? YOU can be a part of answering these questions by becoming part of the Youth Visioning process for St. Peter's Church.

SEPA Synod Youth Specialist, Molly Beck-Dean will lead us in conversations regarding a vibrant, faith-filled, life changing Youth Ministry. These sessions will be provided as an outreach ministry of the synod, helping congregations discover the empowering love of Jesus Christ through youth. Any person who cares about the youth ministry of the congregation is encouraged to attend. Men, women, single, married, with children, no children, young, old...all are invited to participate in this visioning process.

How can you help? Commit to attend one of two sessions on Saturday January 24 from 9-12 noon or Monday January 26 from 6-9 pm; Participate in the discussions offering your insights and opinions; Pray for those who will lead, attend and grow through this experience.

Register for one of the sessions starting in December. Registration sheets are located in the Muhlenberg Chapel. If you have questions, see Vicar Jim. Together with God's guidance, we can experience a vibrant ministry opportunity.

### **Saint Peter's Youth a.k.a SPY, Grades 6-12**

Hello, my name is Danielle O'Brien and in November I became the Youth Director.

Our youth program includes fun activities, service projects and fundraisers.

Come and sign up, I'd love to meet you.

- On Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup> a youth and parents meeting planned along with any adults who would like to be part of this program. It will be held in the youth room at 11 am. Please come!
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- On December 14<sup>th</sup> after service all SPY kids are encouraged to join us from 11-1 in the youth room. We will learn more about the program, play games, have lunch and hang out.
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- Friday night December 19<sup>th</sup> is our Kid-Sitting Fundraiser with Mrs. Graham at 5pm. Come help baby-sit the nursery school kids (our littlest Spy's) we'll play games, have snack and watch a movie. It's fun!
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- Saturday December 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am we will meet at the church to help with the Sunday School (future SPY's) Christmas Pageant Rehearsal.
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- December 21<sup>st</sup> is the Christmas pageant and party at the 10 am service. SPY will be the stage crew and Santa's helpers for this event.
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- December 28<sup>th</sup> we will go caroling and then come back to church for our SPY Christmas party. Time to be announced.

Questions, comments & suggestions welcomed.

[DanielleOrganizes@msn.com](mailto:DanielleOrganizes@msn.com)

## **Christmas Ornaments**

In December, keep your eyes open for a one time, limited edition of a St Peter's Christmas ornament.  
*Thank you for your continuing support of St Peter's Youth toward their trip to New Orleans.*

## **STEWARDSHIP NOTES**

### *The Legacy Seminar and Beyond*

MANY thanks to those of you who attended our First Legacy Seminar on November 2. Rev. Gregory A. Kramer, Regional Gift Planner, Lutheran Planned Giving, provided both tips and insight about very important topics of wills and bequest planning. We were fortunate to have this resource availed to us.

We all have been blessed with worldly possessions which serve us in our lifetimes and have the ability to become gifts that will benefit loved ones as well as favorite ministries after our earthly days. With a bit of planning, our estate's ability to provide a valuable legacy can be greatly enhanced. You can make ministry happen by leaving a legacy! See the Pastor or any member of the Stewardship Committee for further information.

### *Save the Date Now for Appreciation Sunday!*

While it seems far away now, your Stewardship Committee would like you to page ahead in your calendar all the way up to APRIL 26, 2009. On that Sunday, after the 10 a.m. service, we will be having a substantial luncheon and awards program that will demonstrate appreciation for the tireless work on the part of ALL those who help us share the life, love and joy of Jesus Christ with others. Plan now to join everyone in expressing a formal thank you to the many who strengthen St. Peter's in all of its missions. We will be providing more detail as the day grows closer, but **SAVE THE DATE** now.

## **SOCIAL MINISTRY**

The Social Ministry Committee met on November 6. Upcoming projects include:

- Habitat for Humanity—April or May. Hopefully with better communication and changing the date to the spring, that there will be better attendance. We'll add it to the calendar.
- Soles4Souls – A shoe donation program.
- Souper Bowl Sunday –The Social Ministry Committee will serve and sell homemade soup while the youth sell their hoagies. We need volunteers to make the soup.
- Angel Tree/Giving Tree - the tree is set up in the narthex. Please select a gift recipient and record your name and the number of the recipient on the sheet provided. Wrapped gifts must be turned in by December 10.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** **Sunday - December 21<sup>st</sup> - 10:00 a.m.**

Our Sunday School Children are working hard to share the good news of Christ's Birth to the congregation. There will be shepherds, angels, Inn Keeper, Animals, townspeople and of course Mary & Joseph. The costumes and scenery will make you feel as though you have been transported to Bethlehem.

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## Service of Lessons and Carols

It has been our tradition on the First Sunday after Christmas to have a Service of Lessons & Carols to continue the celebration of the birth of Christ. This will take place at both the 8:30 & 10:00 a.m. service. We will also share the sacrament of Holy Communion as we continue the Christmas Season.

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Community Chorus with Doris Schmauk-Director and the Philadelphia Doctor's Chamber Orchestra, Dr. Fawzi Habboushe - Conductor, will be performing at St. Peter's on **Saturday - Dec. 6, 2008 at 3:00 p.m.** This is a free concert and the public is invited.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Donald Koontz  
123 Blue Heron Drive  
Thorofare, NJ 08086

## St. Peter's Annual Congregational Mtg. Sunday - January 25, 2009 Reports from Committees Approval of 2009 Budget Election of Council Members

There are five positions of on Church Council. The following people have accepted agreed to be nominated by the nominating committee. There is also the option of nominating people form the floor. However, advance nomination gives the opportunity for us to provide biographical information on the candidates. This information will be included in the January Newsletter. The present nominations are: Meg Huber, Vicky Hyczko, Sean McMannus, Ellen Daneke, Gary Rotenbury.

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# **Boar's Head & Yule Log Festival**

**Saturday & Sunday  
January 10 & 11, 2009  
1:00, 4:00 & 7:00 p.m.  
Some tickets are still available.**

**Helpers are still needed behind the scenes and in the production. Sign up in the chapel or contact Jan Gera for information.**

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday  | Saturday  |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <h1>December 2008</h1> <p><i>Birthdays are in italics.</i></p>  |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | <p>1<br/><i>Adrienne Balitza</i><br/><i>Bryn Graver</i><br/><i>Sam Silbiger</i><br/><i>Zoe Halverson</i></p> | <p>2<br/><i>Florrie Greaves</i><br/><i>William Kelley Jr.</i></p> <p>7:00 PM BH Dancers Reh.<br/>7:30 PM Boy Scouts<br/>7:30 PM Bell Choir Reh.</p> | <p>3<br/><i>Terry Schultz</i></p> <p>4:00 PM Children's Choir<br/>7:30 PM Cameron Pipers</p>  | <p>4<br/><i>Joe Rauscher</i><br/><i>Marcia Robinson</i></p> <p>7:00 PM Al. Anon</p>   | <p>5<br/><i>Kathy Turner</i><br/><i>Crissy Stotesbury</i><br/><i>Nathaniel Reichley</i></p>                                     | <p>6<br/>10:00 AM-Noon Eucharistic<br/>Minister's Training</p> <p><i>Eric Brown</i></p> |
| <p>7<br/>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent<br/>8:30 &amp; 10:00 Worship &amp;<br/>Communion<br/>10:00 Sunday School<br/>11:00 AM SPY Everybody<br/><i>Carol Beavers</i><br/><i>Josh Graham</i><br/><i>Madeline Griffin</i></p>        | <p>8<br/><i>Lori Soda</i><br/><i>Kevin Pownall Jr.</i></p> <p>7:30 PM Worship &amp; Music<br/>Mtg.</p>       | <p>9<br/><i>Jan Gera</i></p> <p>7:00 PM BH Dancers Reh.<br/>7:30 PM Church Coun Mtg.<br/>7:30 PM Boy Scouts</p>                                     | <p>10<br/><i>Joyce Miller</i></p> <p>4:00 PM Children's Choir<br/>7:30 PM Cameron Pipers</p>  | <p>11</p> <p>7:00 PM Al. Anon</p>   | <p>12<br/><i>Erna McKeivitt</i><br/><i>Sarah Phillips</i><br/><i>Landon Raupp</i></p>   | <p>13<br/><i>Dick Lownes Sr.</i><br/><i>Jim Totten</i></p>                              |
| <p>14<br/>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent<br/>8:30 Communion<br/>10:00 Worship Service<br/>10:00 Sunday School<br/>11:00 AM SPY Mtg.<br/><i>Pat Miller, Jeanine Gilbert</i><br/><i>Sarah Silbiger</i><br/><i>Kayla Robinson</i></p> | <p>15<br/><i>Brett McGarry</i></p>   | <p>16<br/><i>Lauren Pownall</i></p> <p>7:00 PM BH Dancers Reh.<br/>7:30 PM Boy Scouts<br/>7:30 PM Bell Choir Reh.</p>                               | <p>17<br/><i>Alex Gera</i><br/><i>Natalie Savarese</i></p> <p>11:45 AM Comm Elders Xmas<br/>Lunch at Springhouse Tavern<br/>4:00 PM Children's Choir<br/>7:30 PM Cameron Pipers</p> | <p>18<br/><i>Alice Kundel</i><br/><i>Larry E Wargo</i></p> <p>7:00 PM Al. Anon<br/>7:30 BH Choir Rehearsal<br/>8:15 PM Sr Choir Rehearsal</p> | <p>19<br/><i>Anita Totten</i><br/><i>Patricia O'Hara</i><br/><i>Steven Kiefer</i></p> <p>Deadline January Newsletter</p>        | <p>20<br/><i>Joanne Wilfong</i></p> <p>9:30 AM S.S. &amp; SPY Pageant<br/>Rehearsal</p> |
| <p>21<br/>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent<br/>8:30 Communion<br/>10:00 AM SS Xmas Pageant</p> <p><i>Michael Stingle</i><br/><i>Tyler Guzik</i></p>  | <p>22<br/><i>Marie Stringer</i><br/><i>Chris Hipp</i><br/><i>Laura Culp</i></p>                              | <p>23</p> <p>7:30 PM Boy Scouts<br/>7:30 PM Bell Choir Reh.</p>   | <p>24 Nativity of Our Lord</p> <p>5:00 PM Family Service<br/>Communion<br/>7:00 &amp; 10:00 PM Communion<br/>&amp; Candlelight Service</p>  | <p>25 Christmas Day</p> <p><i>Joyce Dutil</i></p>   | <p>26<br/><i>Art Knowles</i><br/><i>Jean Kroupa</i><br/><i>Rick Robinson</i><br/><i>Abigail Miller</i></p> <p>Office Closed</p> | <p>27<br/><i>Gene Bill</i><br/><i>Jack Shiffert</i><br/><i>Brian Deal</i></p>           |
| <p>28<br/>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas<br/>8:30 &amp; 10:00 Worship &amp;<br/>Communion<br/>6:00 PM SPY Xmas Party</p> <p><i>Albert George</i><br/><i>Kirk Mackey</i></p>  | <p>29</p>  | <p>30<br/><i>Claire Riggs</i><br/><i>Tom Peuser</i><br/><i>Scotty Culp Jr.</i></p> <p>7:30 PM Boy Scouts.</p>                                       | <p>31<br/><i>Elsie Kortrey</i><br/><i>Sandy Molotsky</i><br/><i>Larry Wargo</i></p>   |   |   |   |