



ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH • 3 PEABODY ROW • LONDONDERRY, NH.03053 • 603-437-8333

April 2013

Dear Friends,

While I was out in the Sonoran Desert this past month doing coursework in Spiritual Direction at the Hesychia School, I would wake up every morning at 6:30, shower and dress, and go out into the desert to watch the sun rise over the Santa Catalina Mountains. I would sit on a rock in the midst of all the desert plant life – most of it unnamable to me, a New Englander. The only cactus I knew for sure was the Saguaro, the tall, tree trunk-like plant that might have an “arm” or two, or three, growing out upward toward the sky. Saquaros are easy to recognize: my earliest memory of them come from Warner Bros. cartoons with Road Runner and the poor Coyote who was always outwitted by that annoying bird. Plenty of caricatures of saguaros advertise Mexican restaurants and other Southwestern-themed establishments.

To sit – or stand – amidst Saquaros is humbling. They can rise up to 30 feet in the air, and the pattern of their ribs and spikes gnarl upward and around to the sky. These aren't cartoon plants, these are powerful, mysterious beings that dwarf even the tallest human. The first human inhabitants of the Sonoran Desert, the Hohokam People, regarded the saguaros as their ancestors. Sitting amidst them in the quiet of the morning I could easily understand such a relationship: a saguaro may have arms slanting downward and out, looking like a parent reaching down to pick up a child; another might be pointing awkwardly at a neighboring saguaro, as if in animated conversation. One on top of a rocky promontory had two arms offered into the air, as if praying to the Creator. The sense that these plants are beings, sentinels, watching over those who inhabit the desert and standing witness to all creatures.

In regarding saguaros as ancestors, the Hohokam people created a relationship with themselves and the desert. They will not take advantage of it, they will not pollute it, abuse it, disregard it, or attempt to subdue it. After all, would you do that to any relative of yours? To do so means that one doesn't live in relationship with the land. A person is out of relationship, out of sorts, isolated, if one cannot live within the community of earth. I find this spiritual

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sensibility fully Christian, even though it has not been a part of culturally Christian Western sensibility where humans believe that we've been given a divine mandate to have dominion over creation and use it for our benefit, regardless of how destructive our actions. The Desert Mothers and Fathers, those early Christians who lived in the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria in the 3rd and 4th centuries, sought this environment to experience communion with earth as well as communion with God. They were not romantics, looking to "get away from it all" and have personal mystical experiences. They went to experience humility, to live with God in a manner that meant living amidst a beautifully fierce landscape that they could not control. Their aim was a sense of detachment: to realize that they were nothing, much like the sand of the desert that surrounded them. Detachment also implies a sense of becoming one with the environment. This may be a hard idea for us 21st century Americans to embrace. We do not want to think of ourselves as nothing!

We certainly are not nothing. We are precious in God's eyes, and made in God's image. To be nothing like the sand of the desert is to realize that we are part of a greater whole; we are one bit of the created order and we are called to live interdependently with creation. That suggests that we are not "everything," or even the center of our world. Detachment meant, for the Desert Ammas and Abbas as well as the Hohokam, that we become one with the environment. Again, this may be a challenge to our modern sensibilities, but it is spiritually sound and fully Christian. To recognize the worth of others, of creation, is to live in relationship with God and understand that our wholeness comes when we seek the wholeness of others. To me this is a message of Resurrection: that all life is honored and we learn how dependent we are on the living, dying, and rebirth of our world and all creatures in it.

I may be so used to elms and maples and pine trees that I don't think of them as the kind of beings I experienced with the saguaros. But that's my own familiarity overlooking the power of the large plant beings that surround me. As a spiritual director once told me, the created order has experienced resurrection along with us. It too shows us the face of God. We just have a hard time seeing it.



April is National Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of New Hampshire is a statewide non-profit organization that recruits and trains volunteers to advocate for abused and neglected children in the courts. CASA's primary goal is to ensure that each and every child in the state is permitted to grow up in a safe and permanent home. In our overburdened and understaffed child welfare system it is too easy for children to fall through the cracks. CASA of NH currently has over 400 volunteers statewide who are appointed by judges to serve in the role of guardian ad litem (GAL) for over 1,000 of NH children. The volunteers work to ensure that these children have a voice in court and move through the system to safe, permanent homes. CASA of NH envisions the day when a CASA/GAL volunteer is available for every child in the state who needs one. But the need is great: approximately 150 additional volunteers are needed for children who are waiting for a CASA/GAL, especially in the more rural areas of NH. Right now, CASA can only accept about 75% of the cases referred to the agency.

Would you like to help? CASA trains concerned citizens to advocate for abused and neglected children in the courts. There are children waiting for someone to speak on their behalf. Your common sense, commitment to children, and a contribution of 10-12 hours a month will help ensure a child grows up in a safe, permanent home. To become a CASA/GAL volunteer and help children in your community, please call 800/626-0622, or log onto www.casanh.org for more information or to download a volunteer application.

Early Spring Pot Luck Worship

Prayer and Potluck has taken off! We gather around the table and have dinner like a family while we read and discuss a passage of scripture. Kids are welcome. The food is always good. Most of all, it's a blessing to get to know each other while breaking bread together. Please join us for our next gathering.



The next Prayer and Potluck will be Wednesday, April 10th,
5:30 - 7:00pm. Bring a side dish, dessert, or beverage to share.
Main dishes will be provided.

NEW WEBSITE FOR ST. PETER'S

St. Peter's has launched its new website! Check us out: stpeterslondonderry.org. Any questions, suggestions, or possible blog posts are welcome. Please contact Sabina at sabina.chen.clark@gmail.com or cell: 415-572-7738.

A Prayer in Spring

Robert Frost

Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers in the flowers today;

And give us not to think so far away
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
All simply in the springing of the year.

Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white,
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;
And make us happy in the happy bees,
The swarm dilating round the perfect trees.

And make us happy in the darting bird
That suddenly above the bees is heard,
The meteor that thrusts with needle bill,
And off a blossom in mid-air stands still.

For this is love and nothing else is love,
The which it is reserved for God above
To sanctify to what far ends He will,
But which it only needs that we fulfill.



SPRING CLEAN UP

St. Peter's is planning another spring work day on Saturday, April 27th, at Camp Allen in Bedford, NH to help prepare it for its camp season. Camp Allen provides opportunities for growth, friendship, and fun for children and adults with cognitive and/or physical challenges. Camp Allen welcomes about 600 campers each summer, people of all ages with special needs and extraordinary challenges, including cerebral palsy, autism, muscular dystrophy, Down syndrome, and other intellectual and developmental disabilities. Stay tuned for details. Contact Marilyn Deluca for more information, by email at madeluca@mitre.org or by phone M-F daytime @ 781-271-7236.

April Birthdays

- 1 Patricia Cooper
- 2 Beverley Shaw
Wright Smith
- 4 Laura Reinhold
- 5 William Kelley
- 9 Charles Whitehead
- 10 Paul Stuart
- 16 Barry Musco
- 20 Nina Ford
- 21 Wayne Peters
- 23 Sandi Critchley
- 26 Amy Pitts
Mary Smith
- 27 Blake Clark
Brian Gallagher
John Limongelli



SCRIP PROGRAM

Many thanks to all of you who used the Scrip Program over the holidays. The additional contributions help so much with the tight budget and the best thing is, it doesn't cost any one anything extra. This past week two orders were placed and the profit was over \$27! It is easy to use, just fill in the order form found on the Narthex table, write a check for the amount purchased with "Scrip" in the message line and place them both in the offertory plate on Sunday. Your cards will be ready for you the following Sunday. There are so many different stores, restaurants etc.. to choose from. Please take the time to look. You will be surprised and some cards start as low as \$10.

Remember too, we are still supporting New Jersey parishes and cards can be purchased through the Scrip Program.

If you have any questions please contact any member of the Vestry, Eric Parthum or Penny Sullivan.

I look forward to submitting your orders!
Respectfully,
Penny

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you have a need for a prayer shawl? Please contact Justina Trevorrow at 437-2521.

Our next meeting will be on **Monday, April 8th at 7:00 PM**, at the home of Janice Carlson/Windham. All are welcome – beginners and experienced knitters alike! We will be working on prayer shawls, but other project ideas are welcome. If you have any questions please call Karen in the church office at 437-8333.

We hope you can join us!

"Green Living Tip of the Month"



Did you know:

The Walt Disney Company, one of the world's largest publishers of children's books, has vowed to use only responsibly sourced or recycled paper and to minimize its paper use overall.

Go Mickey and Minnie!!!!

God's Blessings to all,
Jackie

St. Peters and Pleasant Valley Nursing Home:

Our next visit for Bingo will be April 21st,
from 1:30-2:30 PM.

Please come and enjoy a fun hour.

Wish List for the Pleasant Valley Nursing Center

PVNC, where our friend and fellow parishioner Joan Fisk lives, is always looking for little trinkets and games for the residents. Here are some things that they would like to collect:

Prizes for giveaways: jewelry, toiletries, men's items
Gift cards, Manicure supplies, Large print books and puzzles,
Board games, Playing cards, Individually wrapped candies,
Magazines (in good condition, please), Straw hats,
Sunglasses

A box will be placed under the food pantry collection table in the fellowship hall, clearly marked "PVNC". Please place your donations in the box, and we will deliver the goods once a month.

NEW RED CHASUBLE

The red chasuble was finished just in time for Palm Sunday. It will also be used in the season of Pentecost. Red is the color for Passion (and blood); the reason it is worn during Palm Sunday and Pentecost. The appliquéd motifs represent flames and feathers, both of which refer to the Holy Spirit as exemplified in the flames that come down on the disciples' heads on Pentecost; and the feathers in the wings that comfort us and bring messages to us from the Holy Spirit. The appliquéd fabrics are in metallic colors (gold, copper, bronze) inspired by the book of Malachi Chapter 3, Verse 2: "For he is like a refiner's fire"—we are refined through the Passion story as metal is refined by very hot fires.

The embroideries in the center bronze appliquéd flames as well as on the stole illustrate the lotus flower with tiny feathers or flames growing from it. The lotus has many symbolic meanings and these embroideries draw on these: purity, spontaneity, an unfolding and new awakening to the spirit—the lotus grows in muddy water yet, when it finally blooms, it is completely clean and pure; because the lotus waits in the mud to bloom it represents one who does his duty without expecting any awards.

--Ginny Guaraldi



There will be a festive Newcomer Brunch following the 10 am service on Sunday, May 5. This brunch is co-hosted by the Fellowship committee and the Newcomer Committee. This will be a perfect opportunity to meet and greet new parishioners who have joined us within the past year.

See you all there!

**Jackie Thesse
Newcomer Committee Chair**

Craft Fair News...

Attention: Crafty Parishioners! Since the St. Peter's Craft Table was a big success last year, we are bringing it back for the Spring Craft Fair. If you make a craft(s) and would like to donate your craft to the St. Peter's Craft Table - please let one of the Craft Fair Coordinators know. The Spring Fair is on May 18 - so you have plenty of time to get crafting....

Also, we are looking for several folks to chair St. Peter's tables - **The Coffee Table and the St. Peter's Craft Table** (you don't have to be crafty to chair the craft table).

Used Books Wanted for the Used Book Table - bring your books to the church and leave them in the coat closet. Mary S. will pick them up and store them at home until the fair.

Finally, if you or someone you know is aware of a juried crafter that may want to join the fair, please let one of us know. We are always looking for variety and high quality handmade crafts.

Thanks so much for your support as we prepare for another successful Craft Fair!!

Your Craft Fair Committee:
Debbie Aboud, Diana LaGasse, Mary Ann Moeri, Mary Sobelewski

ST. ANDREW'S FOOD PANTRY

Thank you for your continued support of St. Andrew's Food Pantry. Food donations may be left on the table in the back of the fellowship hall and are delivered to St. Andrew's every two weeks. All contributions are appreciated and may include food, toiletries, cleaning supplies, and paper goods. The "food of the month" is posted on the table and usually changes each month.