



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

January 2013

Dear Friends,

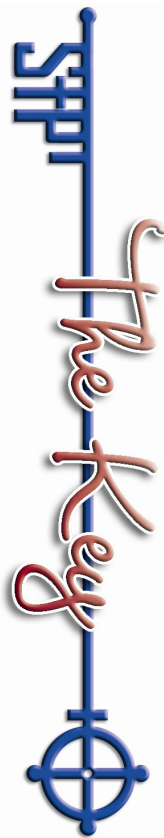
The Tuesday morning before Thanksgiving, Deb Aboud and I were at St. Andrew's in West Manchester assisting parishioners in distributing food from the church's food pantry. As I handed out fresh breads and locally grown squash to people who otherwise would not have had resources to make a Thanksgiving meal, I was struck by the joyous, boisterous air in the fellowship hall. The many members of St. Andrew's present greeted many of the food pantry clients by name, asked about their families, and helped them select foods that would create a well-rounded holiday meal. They clearly enjoyed what they were doing, enjoyed each other, and worked tirelessly to make sure that everyone had what they wanted. I was also moved by the graciousness with which I was greeted, and the many thanks expressed to St. Peter's for helping them provide Thanksgiving meals as well as food throughout the year.

"This church knows its purpose. It clearly knows what it does well; they're committed to a mission of feeding people," I thought. They found a ministry that opened them up to Manchester's West Side, and from the food pantry a thrift shop came into being, and now they are looking to partner with other outreach groups to see what else they may do to build up their neighborhood. St. Andrew's is aware of one thing it does well, and from that other ministries have grown.

There is lots of good energy at St. Peter's, and many newcomers have felt welcomed by it. Outreach is growing, Church School is full of new faces, and there's a youth group for the teenagers in our community. In all of these good things I think it's important to ask the question "What is the one thing that defines St. Peter's? How do we wish to give ourselves away? If there were only one thing, one mission to which we want to commit ourselves, what might it be?"

I sense that this may be the question for this new year. We do many things, and I know that many of you want to do even more – but might there be one thing, something, that we would like to make as the central mission of our

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parish? Granted, it doesn't mean that we can only be about one ministry; there are always multiple expressions of faith and practice in any group. But if you were to single out a particular mission that St. Peter's could embrace, what might it be?

In the coming months the vestry will be reflecting on this question. In February they will take a day of retreat with our new bishop Rob Hirschfeld to explore this question a little deeper. Bishop Hirschfeld has expressed that these are exciting – and creatively chaotic times – for the Church overall. So what kind of creative chaos might the Holy Spirit invite us to explore?

I've heard some of you speak of more focus on outreach projects, more small groups for spiritual development, even providing space for community events. All good ideas. In order to develop them and discern what St. Peter's might do requires prayer and reflection...and a willingness to commit. Often suggestions of possible ministries are mentioned with the expectation that the vestry is responsible for making them come to life. Mission requires the commitment of the community. Each of us, by virtue of our baptism, is fully equipped to create ministries and support a mission. As you've heard me preach many times, ministry is when our greatest joy meets the world's greatest need. So how might we discern the joys of St. Peter's to determine what needs we feel compelled to address? Asking this question with prayer and patience is a start.



## *January Birthdays*

- 7 Anne Davis
- 9 Robert Feinberg  
Scott Feinberg  
Olivia Pierce
- 10 James H. Cooper  
Malen Moeri
- 12 Denise Lada
- 14 Bethany Critchley
- 18 Sally Nelson
- 19 Katie Limongelli
- 22 Geraldine Toop
- 25 Donna Flattery
- 26 Vincent Smith
- 29 Susan Smith



## FOOD PANTRY

As we begin the New Year we are in need of one or two additional drivers. Food is delivered the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month usually between 10:00 AM and 10:30 AM to St. Andrews Church located just off Rte. 293, Exit 5 in Manchester. If you are interested in joining the rotation please let me know ([bsobol@gmail.com](mailto:bsobol@gmail.com)). Currently, there are four people on rotation so you would only need to make deliveries approximately once every two months.

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. All contributions are appreciated and may include food, toiletries, cleaning supplies, and paper goods.

## Get Ready for a Chili Cook-off

St. Peters will be holding a fundraiser to support Habitat for Humanity in Manchester on Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at St. Peters. This will be a dining event and all funds raised will go to support the work being by Habitat for Humanity in Manchester. David Moeri and Lee O'Connor are co-chairing this event. Please contact David or Lee if you are interested in helping host this event. And please mark your calendar. More information will be coming.



## Winter Pot Luck Worship



In the spirit of the summer's picnic worship services that were held on Saturday evenings, we are going to take the informal worship, conversation, and pot luck inside! On **Wednesday, January 9, from 5:30-7:00pm** anyone is welcome to join a Holy Eucharist service that is centered around our evening meal. It's a great way to meet other people, enjoy good company, ask questions, and break bread together. Children are welcome. Even if you can't bring a dish to share, your company will grace the table.

## Youth Group Winter Wonderland January 20, 4:30 -- 6:00PM

The wonderland will all depend on what kind of weather we have that day, but fear not: a bonfire will be lit (okay, that may depend on the weather too) and Sloane will serve up his homemade hot chocolate...a delectable brew that your mother would never take the trouble to make. It's not for the faint of heart but guaranteed to bring good cheer. Come celebrate the bleak midwinter. And if you know what hymn I've just referenced you will get a free prize. Limit of three prizes, one per family.

The adult leaders for the youth are Sloane Franklin and Katie Stuart, along with the rector. If other adults would like to help with the youth group by chaperoning, making snacks, helping to drive places, we welcome you.

## St. Peters and Pleasant Valley Nursing Home:

Our next visit for Bingo will be January 20th,  
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.

## Discretionary Fund

Many of you commented on my article in the November newsletter about the story of Jerome. Just about as many of you said that you were unaware of a fund called the Discretionary Fund, which helped Jerome return to California. Episcopal churches set aside funds for the purpose of almsgiving, and this tradition has existed for centuries. Parishioners who give to this fund do so with the understanding that the priest of the parish will give the funds to those in need. The term discretionary is used since the priest gives the money at his or her discretion, according to need. At St. Peter's you have given me the authority to distribute these alms as I see fit. Given the often delicate situation in which someone asks for financial help, all requests are kept in strict confidence between the priest and the receiver of the alms.

Over the years I have, due to your generosity, been able to help children in need attend summer camps; support a local counseling center that works with people who can't afford the full cost of therapy; paid bills of local residents who faced having their heat and electricity turned off; feed families in between paychecks; buy gas and food for a battered woman who finally had the courage to leave New Hampshire to take refuge at a women's shelter out of state. These are only a few examples of how the Discretionary Fund has been used. It is available to anyone – parishioner or someone who has never been inside a church – as long as the request is legitimate and there are funds in the account.

Where does the money come from? Sometimes people give a special gift; some churches put the Discretionary Fund in the budget as a line item. St. Peter's used to budget \$35/month until it could no longer afford to do so with the budget cut-backs. The Canons of the Episcopal Church declare that the vestry may set aside one Sunday a month when the loose plate offering goes to the Discretionary Fund. St. Peter's vestry has decided to follow church canon, and at their last meeting voted that the loose plate collection on the first Sunday of the month will go to the Rector's Discretionary Fund starting in 2013.

Again and again, thank you for supporting this vital ministry. I am keenly aware that when I give money in the name of the Church, I do so because you have provided it. Without your generosity there would be no Discretionary Fund. If you wish to make a donation to the fund, please make a check out to St. Peter's and write 'discretionary fund' on the memo line.

Thank you.  
Sarah+

## "Green Living Tip of the Month"



Feeling stuck inside this winter?  
So is the air inside your home.

Here are a few green tips to keep your home and family healthy:

**~Clean humidifiers regularly and refill with fresh water daily.** Humidifiers can become breeding grounds for biological contaminants that can cause illnesses.

**~Be careful when you clean.** When you spray cleaners, pollutants are released into the air. Try using natural home cleaners, baking soda, vinegar are good examples. You can make your own cleaners. Check this out on line.

**~Keep your house clean.** House dust mites, pollens, animal dander and other pollutants can be reduced through regular cleaning. Use fans that are vented outside whenever possible.

**Have a wonderful, healthy, and happy new year!**

Blessing to all,  
*Jackie*

### **LITTLE ROSES MINISTRY**

The 2013 sign up sheet for Little Roses Ministry sponsorships is on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please consider a \$20.00 one month sponsorship. Our Little Roses Ministry is a place of hope and opportunity for homeless girls in Honduras. Contributions made by church members are sent to sponsor a specific child. Correspondence and pictures are received by St. Peter's church.

# THANK YOU

## ST. PETER'S FALL PLEDGE CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The latest update on our fall pledge campaign are, as follows: 59 pledges totaling \$113,376, including 5 new pledges. Many thanks go out to those that have made a financial commitment to support St. Peter's and its many ministries. We are still short of our \$185 K goal, and the Vestry is praying over how to move forward.

It is vital for the Church Vestry and Finance Committee to have an accurate assessment of our pledge income to allow for sound financial planning. If you have not yet pledged, you may still do so. Pledge cards are available in the narthex. You may return your pledge by placing it in the collection plate on Sunday morning, by bringing it to the church office during office hours, or by mailing it to the church.

## **Newtown CT – How do we respond?**

Many of us are stunned at what has occurred with the mass shooting at Sandy Hook. I hear people asking in the words of the psalmist, "How long, O Lord, how long?" If you are wondering how you can add your voice to console the residents of that town and/or contact your state and local representatives, here are some suggestions.

- You can google to find the communities of faith in Newtown, and visit their websites to see what they are doing in the wake of the tragedy. Even a quick email encouragement can mean so much.
- Contact Senator Kelly Ayote, Jean Shaheen, Representatives Carol Shea-Porter and Annie Custer and tell them your concern.
- Sign a petition online that asked Congress to look again at Gun Control through SignOn.org
- Go to WhiteHouse.gov. to review and sign similar petitions.
- Recognize that gun control isn't the only symptom we need to address. The lack of mental health resources is another vital matter that has come out of this incident. To learn more about mental health and myths we believe about it, go to NAMI.org
- PRAY. This is mentioned last because it's most important to seek God's guidance as we begin a difficult national discussion.



The final figures are in on the First Annual Greater Londonderry Cropwalk held in October. A total of \$6,182 was raised to support programs to feed hungry people around the globe. Twenty five percent of this total, that's \$1,545, will be going directly to the Sunshine Soup kitchen in Derry! Thanks again to all who participated. We'll be back again next October.

## UPCOMING OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. PETER'S

Habitat for Humanity Cook-off Fundraiser	Saturday, March 9 <sup>th</sup>
Heifer Project	April
Camp Allen Work Day	May
Cropwalk	October

## ONGOING EFFORTS

### **Bingo at Pleasant Valley Nursing Home**

Third Sunday every month, 1:30 PM

### **Food deliveries to St. Andrew's Food Pantry**

1st and 3rd Saturday of each month

### **Purls of Wisdom Knitting Group**

1st Saturday of each month, 9 AM

### **Little Roses Orphanage**

Ongoing/Donations each month

### **Prayer Shawl Ministry**

2nd Monday of the Month

## Reminiscences from Warden, Marilyn

I have had the privilege to serve St. Peter's congregation for the past 5 years: one year as a Vestry member and the past four consecutive years as your warden. I have grown in knowledge about how our Church survives and thrives. The past four years have included an MMR, or Mutual Ministry Review, the Vicar's Refresher Leave, (once known as a Sabbatical), the celebration of St. Peter's becoming a full Parish rather than a Mission, our Vicar becoming a Rector, a celebration for 25 years of community presence as a place of worship., and a new Bishop being elected. It's been exciting and rewarding.

On a more personal note, Dan and I celebrated the Blessing of our Marriage at St. Peter's on May 21, 2011, in the presence of both personal and church family, and friends.

You could say it's been a busy four years, for it has been. Each event produces its own life lessons. We've experienced valued members leave to retire elsewhere, we said "good bye" to dearly loved members and /or their loved ones as we shared in their grief and tried to console those left behind, we wished other members well as they decided to venture elsewhere for reasons of job change or trying new worship experiences, and opened our arms in welcome to new faces and friends. All of these life events expend energy and time.

There are two regularly occurring journeys that I have learned to depend on as markers: one is that Ethel Neusch leaves each December before Christmas to visit one of her sons and his family in Arizona and returns in March. The other occurrence is that Art and Justina travel to Florida at the end of each January and they, too, return in March or early April. . It helps me to think about Advent as I await their return arrival with anticipation to re-join our church community.

As I mentioned in the first paragraph, we recently participated in electing a new Bishop. I attended his pre-election "**Meet and Greet**", and was present at his consecration. I look forward to sharing his vision for our Episcopal life together.

Recently, we've been stunned at learning that innocent children and adults have been shot and killed in a nearby state at a school. It is not the first such happening of the deaths of innocent children and adults, but we always hope it will be the last. What remains the same? God's love remains available to all of us but we must avail ourselves of His love. My personal belief is that it is found in our interactions with one another. We must work together to change these

sad events. There is here, at St. Peter's Church, a family with whom we can express our sorrow and joy, our doubt and faith. I find that comforting and supportive.

It is a joy to see our Church school children as they participate in choir, recite the Lord's Prayer with pride and confidence, show us what visual crafts they've made under the loving guidance of their teachers, and seeing the happiness and pride on their parent's faces.

All I can say is, "Wow!", that's a lot of history in the past 4-5 years. It's not complete as there is the on-going ministries of so many of you which help made St. Peter's a warm and welcoming community. I am honored to have been a part of all these milestone events and many others not listed in writing. I have gotten to know and love you better.

Thank you for your support and trust in me.

With love in Christ,  
*Marilyn Bragg*

## ST. PETER'S ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2013

All members are expected to attend annual meeting, which will occur immediately following our **ONE** liturgy of Holy Eucharist at 9:00 AM.