



Burlington Convocation with Bishop Chip Stokes

By James Beard

The Burlington Convocation with Bishop-Elect Chip Stokes, October 24, 2013

The second Burlington Convocation for the Diocese of New Jersey was held on Thursday, October 24, 2013 at Christ Episcopal Church at 305 Main Street in River-
ton. St. Peter's was represented by two clergy and ten lay people, a level of support unmatched by other parishes; 14 of the 16 parishes were represented. The Rev. Canon John Sosnowski represented the Diocese as the Canon to the Ordinary. In attendance representing St. Peter's were:

The Rev. Canon Donald Muller, The Rev. Canon Ron Albury, Daryl Albury, James Beard, Ann Charles, Danielle Colaianni, John Colaianni, Leslie Haines, Ben Jones, Michelle Scarpulla, Cynthia Sosnowski, Bob Spalding, Sue Legnani

The main activity at the Burlington Convocation on October 24 was two "conversations" led by Bishop-Elect Stokes. In the first, the attendees submitted one "hope" and one "fear" each and selections were presented for discussion. The "fears" were almost all variations on the theme of decline of the denomination. The "hopes" were primarily for unity, denomination growth, and outreach. *(continued on page 6)*



The new Bishop of the Diocese of New Jersey,
Bishop Chip Stokes.

Photo courtesy of Jim Beard.

December Calendar Highlights

December 8	St. Paul's Breakfast program 7:45 am
December 10	Vestry Meeting 7:30 pm
December 15	Christmas Pageant 10:15 am service
December 18	Blue Christmas, 7:00 pm
December 21	Greening of the Church 1 pm
December 22	"One Room Schoolhouse" Sunday School
December 24	Christmas Eve Services 5, 7:30 and 11 pm
December 25	Christmas Day Choral Holy Eucharist 9 am
December 29	No Sunday School or Chapel
January 1	The Holy Name, Holy Eucharist 10:00 am

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES

WWW.STPETERSMEDFORD.ORG

FROM PULPIT TO PEW

by The Reverend Canon Donald J. Muller

This month we begin the new Church year with the First Sunday of Advent. Advent is a four Sunday season that is rich with imagery and hope. The Collect for the Advent I says it well:

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The early weeks of Advent recognizes the difficulties of life, the crisis, the destruction, yet in the midst of all that we are meant to be hopeful. Hopeful, because God is faithful, God has acted in the past for his people. God is acting now and God will act in the future.

Our emphasis moves during the season God's new way of acting for his people in preparing the way for His Son to come into the world. In doing so, God demonstrates his love for humanity and for the world he created. John the Baptist is raised up to prepare the people to receive Jesus. We are to prepare by repenting of our sins, and getting right with God.

God calls Mary to be the mother of Jesus. It is Mary's human "yes" to God that models our "yes" as well.

Advent is about preparation for three "comings": the coming of Jesus into the world; the second coming of Christ in glory, and the third coming of Christ to each of us.

I pray that we will all heed the call of John the Baptist to repent and prepare the way for Christ to come into our lives. That we will be able to say Mary's yes to God, to be used by God to bring Jesus to the world in which we live. And finally, that we will remain faithful, persevering through this earthly life, knowing that God is faithful to sustain us through the darkness into His light, and "we may rise to the life immortal."

In Christ,

Fr. Don



THIS AND THAT

HEALING SERVICE MOVES TO WEDNESDAY'S AT 10:00 AM

St. Peter's weekly Healing Service is moving from Thursday mornings to Wednesday mornings at 10:00 AM this month. The move coordinates with our chapter of the International Order of St. Luke the Physician (OSL) and their weekly prayer meeting. We hope this change in schedule will be more accommodating to other's schedules.

The Healing Service is a Communion Service with special prayers and the Laying on of Hands and Anointing for Healing. We believe God's healing can come in many ways: the Word of God, prayer, Laying on of Hands, Confession of Sin, Holy Eucharist, etc. Come and join us.

BIBLE STUDY ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Beginning this month (December) on Wednesday mornings from 11:00-12:30, we will begin a study of the Gospel of Matthew (the Gospel used through this year from Advent 2013 to the end of the Church year 2014). In addition to reading the Gospel of Matthew we will be using Tom Wright's book "Matthew for Everyone" as a guide to our study.

Tom (N.T.) Wright is the Bishop of Durham in the Church of England. A prolific author, New Testament scholar, and was named by Christianity Today as one of the top five theologians in the world.

Here is what some have written about this study:

"A rare event: a commentary that is learned without being stuffy, accessible without being reductionist. Tom Wright joins us in our homes and workplaces, our sanctuaries and classrooms, in genial, prayerful conversation over this text that forms our lives, the New Testament scriptures." Eugene Peterson author of The Message.

"Tom Wright is just about the most insightful and incendiary conversation partner for today's preachers." William H. Willimon, Dean of the Chapel, Duke University.

The Christmas Pageant will take place at the 10:15 service on Sunday, December 15th. Dress rehearsal will be Friday, December 14th (time to be announced). Pizza party to follow!



Are you on Facebook? Then take a minute to *Friend* St. Peter's, *Join* the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey and *Friend* Bishop Chip Stokes.



Are you an App Addict? Then try the eCP - the electronic Common Prayer app for iPhone. This app provides the most commonly used worship services and devotional content of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer along with the full lectionary texts in one app.

Blue Christmas

A Service of Remembrance and Hope: If this Christmas you find that you're grieving over the loss of a dream, a job, a goal, or a loved one—

come share with us for a service of solace.

Wednesday, December 18, 2013

7:00 pm

From Saint Nicholas to Santa Claus

By Sue Legnani, Director of Christian Formation

The “Jolly Old Saint Nicholas” that we know as Santa Claus is a Saint of the Christian Church whose life has been an example for Christians through the centuries. His story begins in Asia Minor around the year 270 AD, in the family of prosperous and devout Christians. Like so many couples in the Bible, Nicholas’ parents were childless, and through prayer they were finally given the gift of a son.

The legends that surround the life of Nicholas includes saving three young women from a lives of destitution because they had no dowries for marriage, by secretly providing the money needed. He dropped the money into the stockings they hung by the chimney and so we still hang Christmas stockings on fireplace mantles with the expectation that some gifts will be left there on Christmas morning.

Nicholas’ parents died when he was very young and his uncle encouraged him to travel to the Holy Land. The ship that he sailed on was loaded with grain and during the voyage it was caught in a bad storm. Nicholas prayed that the storm would end and because his prayer was answered the ships crew and the grain were saved. The people who expected this shipment of grain were also grateful because it saved them from starvation. Nicholas was remembered for his intervention and eventually became the patron saint of sailors, farmers, and bakers.

Nicholas is also the patron saint of children for the miracle he is supposed to have performed by saving three little boys who were killed by an evil innkeeper. Nicholas made the sign of the cross over their dismembered bodies and they were miraculously restored to life.

While many of the stories about Saint Nicholas are merely legend, they do remind us of the imperfect people God chooses to use as his servants on earth. The Santa Claus we have come to know in America is an amalgam of these stories and legends as well as Dr. Clement Clarke Moore’s *A Visit from St. Nicholas* in 1848, and the drawings of Thomas Nast (1840-1902) and Louis Prang, the man who introduced Christmas cards to the United States in 1875. St. Nicholas may be known as Santa Claus now, but he still represents the humble, kind Bishop of Myra who was concerned for the well-being of the people of his church, and sought to serve God and Christ through his example of prayer and service to others.

As one writer put it: “It is possible, even probable, that Nicholas rode out storms and tempests, that he ministered to the poor and helpless, that he sat small children upon his knee and surprised them with holiday gifts. But precisely what he did may not be as important as the fact that, whatever he did, he did it in a way that clearly reflected his Lord to those around him. Whatever storms he quieted, he clearly reflected the Prince of Peace. Whatever gifts he gave, he clearly reflected the giver of all good gifts. Whatever status he accorded to children, he clearly reflected one who taught that children are our role models for the kingdom.”

We live in a time when we need more role models so as we celebrate the birth of Christ let us use what gifts we have to show just how much this Saint really means and let God’s light shine through us.

More information about Saint Nicholas can be found on a wonderful website called The Saint Nicholas Center at www.stnicholascenter.org .

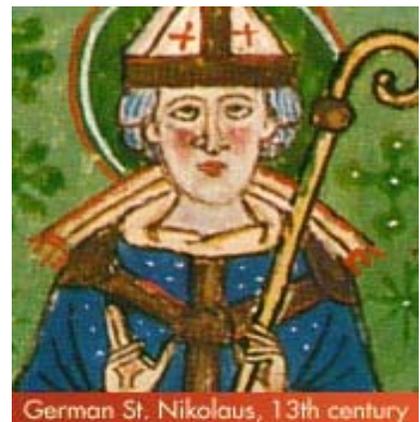
Dates to remember:

12/15: Christmas Pageant **Carriers of Light** at the 10:15 am service.

12/22: One Room School House for Sunday School. This will be a time for some fun and treats for the Advent/Christmas season. There will be no Chapel.

12/29: No Sunday School or Chapel

1/5: Sunday School and Chapel resume.



Who needs Sunday School?

The following article is reprinted from September 2001 at the request of Leslie Haines.

Written by Father Jim Moore and edited by Lisa Miner

As we prepare to begin another season at St. Peter's, I have been reflecting on the many opportunities we have for ministry. If you are not involved, consider being a part of our ministry. We have so many wonderful people involved in really exciting ministries. Read this newsletter and think about joining us, or if we can help you in any way please call us. I look forward to our worship as we celebrate God's love. Regular Schedule of Services: The worship services are at 5:00 pm on Saturday and 7:45 and 10:15 am on Sunday. The 5:00 pm service is Rite II. The 7:45 service is Rite I Holy Eucharist, with one hymn. The 10:15 service is Rite II Choral Eucharist. Sunday School is at 9:00 am including the Adult Class. The classes end at 10:00 am. Note: Here's an opportunity for extremely busy young families who cannot make it for the 7:45 am service, to come to the class at 9:00 am, attend the class while your children are in Sunday School. You will become a part of the St. Peter's Parish Family while your children learn from and enjoy our Sunday School Program. Then, stay for worship at the 10:15 am Holy Eucharist. Chapel (children 3rd grade and under) also begins at 10:15 am.

Who Needs Sunday School? You do, unless you have no more questions about God, or heaven, or this world.

My Kids Don't Want to Go. Consider this before you allow your children not to go Sunday School. In all really important areas, you do not allow a child to make an immature choice. If your child is sick, do you allow him/her to decide whether or not to take his/her medicine? Do you allow your child to stay home and play instead of going to school? If you allow your child to stay home from Sunday School, you are communicating that you do not think religious education is really important. If you stay home, your example is communicating the same thing. Growing in our relationship with God is the only really important thing in life. This is a very important time for your child. It is a great opportunity for Christian nurture. Your support and guidance is Vital. Don't make the tragic mistake of "letting it slide," and then ten years from now say, "What did I do wrong?" This is a crazy world. Give your child the sanity of a Christian Faith. Regular attendance in Sunday School and Church is a Strong Foundation for the faith.

See you in Church?



Burlington Convocation (cont. from page 1)

The first handout concerning the Bishop-Elect and his commitment was an excerpt from the Letter of Understanding from the Standing Committee of the Diocese of New Jersey, which presented the duties and responsibilities of the Bishop:

MINISTRY.

As Bishop and Chief Pastor of the Diocese it is understood that your ministry of oversight will be exercised in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of New Jersey, and the role of Bishop as described in the Book of Common Prayer. It is further understood that your ministry will be exercised in consultation with the Standing Committee and appropriate bodies within the Diocese. Some primary responsibilities entrusted to the bishop are:

- Care and guidance for the spiritual health of the entire diocesan family
- Leadership for ministry development
- Leadership for congregational development
- Leadership for diocesan program life
- Leadership for corporate and institutional dimensions of diocesan life
- Active pastoral care and support of clergy and their families
- Provision for continuing education for clergy and oversight of professional standards
- Episcopal visitations to each congregation
- Guidance and direction for worship and sacramental life throughout the diocese
- Leadership for the proclamation and teaching of the gospel
- Oversight for administration of all diocesan ministry, exercise of responsible stewardship, and full accounting of all financial matters

The Bishop-Elect addressed each item in this excerpt and stated his commitment to each of the points presented there. Bishop-Elect Stokes wrote another handout himself that addressed different activities, goals, and prerogatives of the Diocese, "Guiding Principles for my Ministry in the Diocese of New Jersey." He led off with a theme, 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, which ends "For no one can lay any foundation [for the Church] other than the one that has been laid; that foundation Jesus Christ." The top-level numbered Principles are:

- Principle I The mission of the Church is the primary mission of the Diocese: "To restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."
- Principle II The mission of the Church is carried out through commitment and faithful adherence, both corporately and individually, to the Baptismal Covenant.
- Principle III The life of the Christian parish/mission and individual is shaped by a balanced rhythm of prayer/worship, study, service and fellowship.
- Principle IV The ministry of every parish must have a balanced internal/external mission/focus.
- Principle V Vibrant Christian Faith results from a vital partnership between the institutional church (denomination, diocese, parish/mission) and the home, no matter what that home configuration is.
- Principle VI Growth matters and numbers matter.
- Principle VII The standard for all ministries in the Diocese of New Jersey is one of excellence.
- Principle VIII To forward the Gospel in today's world, technology is to be embraced.
- Principle IX To be a Christian is to be a member of the body of Christ and part of a purposeful community. You cannot be a Church of one.
- Principle X In Today's culture there is a deep hunger for God and a deep hunger for genuine, purposeful community. The ministry of the Church is to meet at this crossroad, address and help satisfy both of these hungers.

(continued on page 8)

Christmas Season



Communion for the Homebound and Hospitalized

During the Christmas season, the clergy of St. Peter's make a special effort to carry Communion to those unable to attend services at St Peter's due to illness or long-term disability. If you, or someone you know, would like to receive Christmas communion at home or in a hospital or other facility, please contact Deacon Helen Orlando at dcnhelen@stpetersmedford.org (856-596-6415) or through the church office.

St. Peter's Gathers for Advent Morning and Evening Prayer

Each Advent, we invite you to join with others in our congregation as we pray Morning and Evening Prayer. Remembering that "when two or three are gathered together in his Name [God] will be in the midst of them," let us gather together in praise as we await the birth of our Lord and the coming of the fullness of God's reign.

Morning Prayer is offered Monday-Friday at 9 am, in Memorial Chapel. Evening Prayer is offered Monday-Friday at 7 pm, also in Memorial Chapel.



BIG BAND EXPRESS CONCERT

Friday, December 13 at 7:30 pm come hear "Big Band Express" play big band jazz. "Big Band Express" is made up of mostly local professional musicians, many who have played with some of the great bands of our time. This is a free concert, a free will offering will be taken. Come join us for some great music, performed by great musicians under the direction of Tony Femi-ano.

Christmas Flower Offerings

Remember a loved one or give thanks to God by making a donation towards Christmas greens and flowers.

Envelopes are included in this issue of St. Peter's Good News. Please place your donation and filled-out envelope in the offering plate or mail or hand deliver it to the church office by Monday, Dec. 16th.



Coin Folders Support MDG's

Advent Coin Folders will be available on the narthex table beginning the First Sunday of Advent, November 27. If you are unable to pick one up, please contact Lisa Miner in the Church Office to have one mailed to you. Our Community Ministries Team has designated the proceeds of this year's Advent Coin Folders to be sent to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education for children
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal Health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Create a global partnership for development

Your support of the MDGs through the use of Advent coin folders will join our parish with the Episcopal Church, the Diocese of New Jersey, and other churches throughout the world seeking to meet these goals. Please help.

DEACON'S BENCH

Are you Ready?

Dear Friends,

I know real people - maybe you are one of them – who have purchased and wrapped all of their gifts by the end of October, and whose Christmas trees and outdoor lights are on display the day after Thanksgiving. Sometimes I envy their readiness – Oh well...

Luckily for me, as Christians, this kind of readiness is not the most important kind. We are called to prepare ourselves to joyously celebrate the incarnation of God among us so many years ago, to recognize Christ incarnate among us now as we reach out to others in care and love, and to live a life in anticipation of the promised Kingdom of God. As Jesus tells us, “Therefore you must...be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.” (Matt. 24:44)

The season of Advent reminds us to “be ready” every day of the year. Each one of us will approach that readiness in different ways, but here are a few ideas: Take part in Morning and or Evening Prayer offered every weekday at St. Peter’s throughout Advent; then continue with Morning Prayer throughout the year. Add Forward Day by Day to your daily prayer time – it’s a good support to daily Bible reading. Add a few extra items to your Christmas grocery or gift shopping to donate to those who cannot provide for themselves and their children. Offer the hospitality of your table for a special Christmas meal, remembering that we are asked to feed the hungry daily, not seasonally. People hunger not only for food, but also for human contact: who on your street is lonely? Could you visit them? Who needs a listening ear? Can you listen? Can you be a part of the coming of the Kingdom of God now?

May you have a blessed Advent and Christmas season and may you be Christ’s blessing to others,

Deacon Helen

Burlington Convocation*(continued from page 6)*

As promised in the program as “a conversation,” Bishop-Elect Stokes went through each of these in detail, first asking us to contribute our views and addressing his own and our responses interactively. In particular, Principle VII is reflected in the Diocese hiring a new Director of Communications, Jonathan Elliott, who is specifically charged with managing the Diocese presence on Twitter, FaceBook, and other social media, and he was at the Burlington Convocation and played a significant part in the proceedings. He was introduced and spoke on his ministry during the discussion on Principle VII. Our Canon to the Ordinary, the Rev. Canon John Sosnowski was introduced at this time, as was our existing Canon for Transition Ministry and Clergy Development, Canon Cecilia Alvarez.

This Convocation was an excellent opportunity for us to get to know Bishop-Elect Stokes and get an understanding of his thinking, approach for the Diocese, and exhibit his approachability as well as both his ability to teach and learn seamlessly and simultaneously. In addition, he used the opportunity to get to know us better and understand the lay and clergy of Burlington County.

PARISH NEWS

Submitted by Krissy Lusk

This winter (Jan. 11-18th) I will be attending an 8-day service trip to build a bilingual school in the rural village of El Progreso, Honduras. This volunteer work is through the organization Students Helping Honduras (SHH). SHH is a non-profit that is fighting poverty and helping children in Honduras receive a proper education.

I am excited about volunteering abroad, but I need your help. Each volunteer must pay \$750 to cover expenses involved with volunteering in addition to airfare. The \$750 covers transportation, lodging, food, security, and construction supplies. I am putting forth money reserved from this summer's paychecks, but that cover it all. This is where you come in.

All donations are tax deductible. If you're interested in supporting my trip (and I hope you are!) please write a check out to Students Helping Honduras and send it to the following address:

Kristen Lusk
Towson University Towson Run Unit #5064
435 Towson Way
Towson, MD 21252

During the trip, I will be building beautiful well equipped classrooms for a school that is in need of aid. Many schools in Honduras operate in makeshift shacks made of rotting wood and tin, and are often overcrowded. Clearly this is a difficult learning environment. I strongly believe in education for all. From my perspective giving children a strong education is the best way to fight poverty.

I will be bringing back pictures and stories to everyone that contributes! If you have any questions my number is (609) 367-5578. I am so thankful for any donation big or small. I promise to work my butt off in Honduras to build this school and hopefully there will be more to come!



Through 10/31/2013

Income: \$278,677.27

Expenses: \$282,376.09

Net: \$-3,698.82

PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISMS

None this month.

WEDDINGS

None this month.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

Lucy Galbraith, November 11, 2013

YOUTH HAPPENINGS

J2A is off to a great start! On October 27th we held a very successful kickoff to the J2A monthly evening sessions (see pictures below).

J2A continues the tradition of cooking for the homeless at St. Paul's church in Camden once per month (see pictures in the next column).

Photos courtesy of Dave Lusk



Trinity Church Cathedral Lock-in

At last year's Cathedral Lock-in the youth of our diocese packed 10,000 meals which were shipped to El Salvador to feed people in need. If you or your son/daughter attends this year, they will worship God with youth from other churches, experience charity, enjoy entertainment, play games, watch movies, relax during free time and can make new friends. The lock-in is 13/14 December and is open to 6th to 12th grades. Cost is \$33 per person. Depart St. Peter's on Friday, 13 Dec at 7:15 pm. Return to St. Peter's early, Saturday, 14 Dec approximately 8 to 9 am.

Bring sleeping bags. More details at www.newjerseyyouth.org/calendar. For more info and to sign-up, contact Dave Lusk, davel149@comcast.net, 856-985-5735.

PARISH PHOTO ALBUM



It takes a lot of volunteers to cook breakfast for 70-100 people!
Yet every 3rd Sunday, volunteers from St. Peter's drive to Camden early in the morning to fire up the stove and make scrambled eggs, pancakes, and ham for the folks who come to St. Paul's Episcopal Church for a warm meal.



Our parishioners who are nurses also provide blood pressure screenings for the folks who come. Volunteers are always welcome. Contact Kelly Trimble or the office for more information.

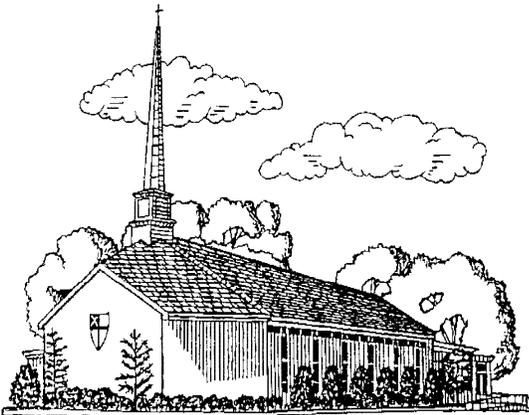
Photos courtesy of Dave Lusk.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

One Hartford Road, Medford, NJ 08055
The Rev. Donald J. Muller, D. Min., Rector
The Rev. Canon Ronald Albury, Associate Priest
The Rev. Helen M. Orlando, Deacon

Lisa Minerd, Parish Administrator Eleanor Meyer, Director of Music Sue Legnani, Director of Christian Formation
Tel: 609-654-2963 Fax: 609-654-0401 <http://www.stpetersmedford.org>
Email: office@stpetersmedford.org Newsletter email: stpetersnewsletter@stpetersmedford.org

Saint Peter's Church is a blessed community of faith, grounded in the power of God's transforming love, where Jesus Christ welcomes all to abundant life. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we follow Him in prayer and praise, study and service.



Service Schedule

Saturday Eucharist.....5 p.m.
Sunday Traditional Eucharist.....7:45 a.m.
Family Eucharist.....10:15 a.m.

Weekdays

Wednesday, Healing Eucharist.....10 a.m.
Morning Prayer (Monday-Friday).....9 a.m.
Evening Prayer (Monday-Friday).....7 p.m.

December 2013

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