



## NICHES NOW AVAILABLE IN ST. PETER'S MEMORIAL GARDEN

Several years ago, St. Peter's Vestry saw the need to expand the capacity of the Memorial Garden for the interment of the cremains of members of the parish. Research was conducted on how to expand capacity and beautify the existing Garden. It was decided to purchase a freestanding columbarium with a large capacity (96 niches), matching the stones on the wall in the Garden.

The new columbarium is here. Niches are available to be reserved for \$2,000. Each niche can contain two sets of ashes (depending on the urn used). Plans are underway to re-landscape the garden this spring. The cost of the niche includes the opening and closing, as well as the engraving on the stone. An endowment for the maintenance and improvement of the memorial garden is anticipated once costs of the columbarium and landscaping are satisfied.

The advantages of utilizing our Columbarium and Memorial Garden are: being able to be in a quiet garden setting when remembering loved ones; available 24/7; a location dedicated to God and God's people; and at the same place you have worshiped for years. Planning for one's funeral and final resting place is a gift we give to our loved ones. By planning ahead we allow them more space to grieve without having to make important decisions when they

are not at their best.

Reservation forms are available from Lisa in the Church Office. Feel free to talk to Fr. Don about a niche and/or funeral planning.



*Photo courtesy of Father Don Muller.*

### January Calendar Highlights

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Jan. 1  | The Holy Name, Holy Eucharist 10 a.m.              |
| Jan. 12 | St. Paul's Breakfast Program, 7:45 a.m.            |
| Jan. 12 | Vacation Bible School planning meeting             |
| Jan. 14 | Vestry Meeting, 7:30 p.m.                          |
| Jan. 19 | Welcome to Communion after 10:15 service           |
| Jan. 20 | MLK Day of Service 9:30 am                         |
| Jan. 26 | Finance Meeting, Williams Hall, 9:00 a.m.          |
| Jan. 26 | Sunday School Teachers Meeting after 10:15 service |
| Jan. 27 | Caps & Laps, 1:00 p.m.                             |

# FROM PULPIT TO PEW

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*by The Reverend Canon Donald J. Muller*

The Proper Preface for All Saints Day says this: For in the multitude of your saints you have surrounded us with a great cloud of witnesses, that we might rejoice in their fellowship, and run with endurance the race that is set before us; and, together with them, receive the crown of glory that never fades away.

As we begin a new year, I think it appropriate that we think about those witnesses who have gone on before us in the Lord and cheer us on in our race that is the Christian life in this world. A little over 16 years ago, while I was Rector of St. Stephen's Pro-Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre, PA I was fortunate enough to baptize our first grandchild, Jake, here at St. Peter's. We were grateful that the past members of St. Peter's had seen fit to become a congregation of the Episcopal Church in Medford, had built a church building for the worship of God and the celebrating of the sacraments, and that the then membership of the parish had given to the current ministry so that the church was in good shape, hymnals and prayer books were provided, heat, lights, etc. Years later when I came to St. Peter's as your Rector, our family was blessed by those who were here before us and current, when my mother-in-law Marion Van Duzer died, and her funeral took place in the Church.

Perhaps you have stories too, of coming to St. Peter's and finding a church already here: for a family baptism, Sunday school, Confirmation, marriage, healing, comfort, burial, and more. We are blessed by God through those who have gone before us here at St. Peter's. Let us give thanks for all that they did and contributed financially for St. Peter's to be the kind of congregation we wanted for ourselves and our family. In Genesis 12, the Lord said to Abram: "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing." Just as Abram was blessed by God to be a blessing, so are you and I. We are blessed to be a blessing to each other, to our community and beyond, and to those who will come after us. The same certainly can be said for those who came before us, they were blessed, and became a blessing to you and me, through their ministry and contribution to St. Peter's.

As we begin this new year I want to encourage you to count the blessings you receive (d) from God through St. Peter's and turn them into blessings for others.

May you have a blessed New Year and be a blessing to those you encounter.

In Christ,

*Fr. Don*

*"O God our Creator, you have divided our life into days and seasons, and called us to acknowledge your providence year after year: Accept your people who come to offer their praises, and, in your mercy, receive their prayers; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

January 6 through March 2 is the Season of Epiphany, and it is tradition to do House Blessings. Please contact the office and schedule Fr. Don to bless your home.

# BODY AND SOUL

*By Edith Green, RN*

## Reflections on Volunteering in Costa Rica

YES, you can drink the water. NO, you can't flush toilet paper down the toilet. Of all the cities I've visited both foreign and domestic, I found the Costa Rican people to be the most warm, caring and friendly. Always willing to help a stranger, even one with limited Spanish.

Costa Rica (rich coast) lies between Panama to the South and Nicaragua to the North. On the map, it is small but in reality because of the twisting winding roads built on a mountain, it takes a fair amount of time to go from one coast to the other. I spent my time in San Pedro a suburb of San Jose, the capital. The country has a strong middle class with a 97% literacy rate. Their main export now is coffee. Coffee plantations can be seen for miles and the crop offers a stable economy for the residents.

While I was there, I lived with a family in a small home surrounded by a tall iron fence. I had three keys to 'my' house. One for the outside fence, one for the sliding fence right inside the first fence and one for the front door. The area between the outdoor fences is a small patio where plants and flowers flourish. The mother of Maria, the owner, is wheelchair bound so the patio gives her a nice way to get outside and people watch. Most everyone traveling down the street stops to chat and to share gossip.

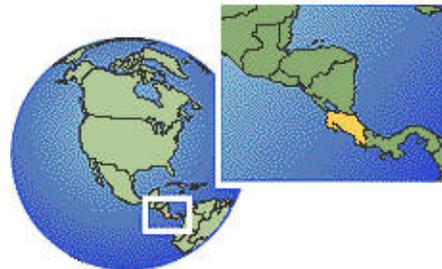
I shared a bedroom with another volunteer for one day, then, she left for another volunteering opportunity. The food Maria provided was typical Tico food; mostly a combination of beans and rice with some meat added. Breakfast was usually coffee, cut up fruit and bread or a roll with jam. Papayas are plentiful so it was offered every day. Costa Ricans don't waste electricity unlike some of us, so lighting was low. Also, no TV in the house.

Everyday I walked to the corner and took a bus to downtown San Pedro. I then stopped in the building where the agency, who sponsor the volunteers, is located. I gave the woman at the snack bar my lunch (usually leftovers from last night's dinner) to put in their refrigerator. (When I returned from work, she would heat it up for me in the microwave.) From there I took a bus to Guardia Bebitos, the day-care center where I worked. The facility was clean,

bright and cheerful. A mother and daughter run the facility. It is open from 6AM to 6PM. Most of the children come from single parent households and are on a lower economic scale; some are subsidized by the government. The families provide the snacks and lunches. A few of the families cannot afford to send food for their children, so the center provides them with something to eat. All of the children were dressed in clean clothing appropriate for their ages, which was from 3 months to 7 years.

Their day was structured into play-time in an outdoor play yard (Actually the play yard was enclosed with cement walls brightened with murals but the ceiling was open to the air) time for learning in groups, meal times and arts and crafts. My job was to play with them and do some learning activities. Everyday we had English lessons, which they liked. We'd sing songs in Spanish then English and in between times, they wanted hugs and to be noticed. Just like all children all over the world.

All in all, it was a gratifying experience and I'm already planning my next trip to the Rich Coast in Central America



## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY - JANUARY 18 - 25

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place each year from the Feast the Confession of St. Peter the Apostle on January 18 through the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on January 25. Please keep all Christian churches in your prayers that we may be united in our mission to serve Jesus Christ in the world.

# KIDS' CORNER

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By Sue Legnani

## Epiphany Is A Time to Say “Thank You”

Now that Christmas and all the business and preparations for that holiday are over, it's a good time to say “thank you” for what has been. We were excited for all of the planning, preparation, and finally the festivities of Christmas Day. Sometimes we feel a let down and we wish the joy of Christmas would go on forever, but we know we have to get back to our daily lives.

While a holiday like Christmas means so much to us, it's meaningful to look back and share that thankfulness with those who gave us so much pleasure. There are the intangible things like laughter, Christmas tree smells, and happy spirits. We are also grateful for the gifts we received and all that goes into making or selecting just the right gift.

Here is a family “Thank You” prayer to say as we go back to our daily schedules now that the Christmas season is over:

*Thank you, O Lord, for this Christmas season.*

*For the laughter and joy of gift-giving,*

*For the tears of tired children,*

*For our weariness of shopping, late hours, and*

*wrapping parcels for mailing.*

*Thanks, Lord, for our seeing family and friends who*

*came a long way to be with us.*

*Thanks for the secrets we kept and for those we didn't keep.*

*But most of all, thank you for the enchantment that*

*Christmas brings.*

*Help us to share the spirit of Christmas with other.*

*Amen.* (from *The Gift of Time*, Morehouse-Barlow Company, Inc. 1977)

You may have some special ways of thanking people for their generosity, but here some more suggestions:

- Use your old Christmas cards to make your own thank you cards. With some construction paper and glue you can make a very personal card.
- Send a family “thank you” by phone, email with a picture of you and the gift you received, or by some other techy way.

Plan a low key Epiphany party or Star Party for your friends with cookies and hot chocolate to show how much you appreciate them, and just wind down from the holidays. Go outside and look at the stars and see what constellations you can find. Encourage your guests to take a different route home like the Wise Men who had to leave by another way to avoid King Herod after they visited the baby Jesus.

A resource, Epiphany – The Season from Candle Press, will be available in print in the Narthex and through the Sunday School, and by email the beginning of January. The material will guide you through Epiphany in your home.

## Christian Formation Dates to Remember

### Jan. 12: Planning meeting for Vacation Bible School

Yes, it's time to think about VBS for this coming summer! We will spend some time considering the program we want to use and start dividing up the work and planning. Anyone who is interested in helping is welcome to come, but if you can't come to this meeting there will be a few more scheduled through the winter.

**Jan. 19: "Welcome to Communion"** parent meeting will be held on Sunday, Jan. 12 after the 10:15 service. This will be a program for parents and their children who have not yet received Communion and those who already do, but have not had any formal instruction. The suggested age for this program is 7-10 years old. At this meeting, parents will receive material that they will do with their children at home. A Saturday morning workshop will be held for families on February 22 when they will have some hands-on time at learning stations about Holy Communion. The children will then participate in the Sunday morning 10:15 Eucharist on February 23, and receive Communion together along with their family. Please use the sign up sheet in the Narthex or contact Sue Legnani at [slegnani@stpetersmedford.org](mailto:slegnani@stpetersmedford.org) or 609-654-2963 to register for this program so that enough materials will be available to those for those want to participate.

### Jan. 20: Martin Luther King Morning of Service, 9:30 am - 11:30 am

Our project will be to make utensil packets, decorate placemats and make centerpieces for **Cathedral Kitchen** in Camden. These will help brighten the dining area that serves 10,000 full meals each month at their site, as well as to other agencies and programs. Rather than ask St. Peter's parishioners to donate items for this project please consider donating money that we can use to purchase the items we need to make our creations. Please look for the donation jar in the Narthex. Thank you.

### Jan. 26: St. Peter's Sunday School Teachers meeting

Our quarterly meeting will be held after the 10:15 service. Light refreshments will be served. This is a time to review the calendar for the rest of the year, as well as plans for the Christian Formation program.

### Jan. 31: The Annual Bishop's Ball

This annual event is held at Trinity Cathedral in Trenton beginning at 8:00 pm. All congregations are invited to come for this Diocesan wide tradition of gathering for music, dancing, food and fellowship, and this year to welcome our new Bishop and his wife to the diocese. The cost is \$20.00 per person.

## Parish Dates to Remember

### Annual Finance Meeting

9 a.m.

January 26

This official meeting is being held in order to inform parishioners of our current financial status and proposed 2014 budget. Watch your bulletins for further information and plan to attend this important meeting.

### NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE FOR HOLY NAME

Begin the New Year right with the worship of God for the Holy Name of Jesus at 10:00 am in Moore Chapel.

**January 6 - The Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord**  
Holy Eucharist in Moore Chapel at 7:00 pm

### BIBLE STUDY ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

A new Bible Study began in December studying the Gospel of St. Matthew. We will begin again on Wednesday, January 8 at 11 am studying the visit of the magi to the Christ child. Join us in the Library each Wednesday.



# DEACON'S BENCH

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## Awaiting the Star that Lasts Forever

Gazing at the many exhibits related to space exploration displayed at the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral, Anita Beard, artist, was astounded by the awesome intelligence of God who created the earth and all that is in it. She reflected upon his gift to us, his creatures, of the intelligence that enables us to conceive of and accomplish the tasks necessary to look beyond our world into outer space. These thoughts led her to create the Advent banners gracing our sanctuary this year.

“During life’s journey, I discovered a star that lasts forever...and His name is Jesus.”

These words beginning at the top the left-hand banner and continuing to the right-hand banner, provide a framework for viewing and meditating upon [8] beautiful photographs of stars taken by the Hubble Telescope at the Kennedy Space Center. The stars shown are but a few of the hundreds of thousands of stars in millions of galaxies. And, each of them is dying. The beauty that we see will end in explosion and then, in nothingness. (The science here may be incorrect, but this description fits the thoughts that led to Anita’s meditation.)

Meditating on this beauty, Anita found herself reflecting on God’s gift of Jesus, his Son, to us. Jesus, whose birth we await during the season of Advent, is so much more magnificent than the stars of any of the millions of galaxies, and so much more wonderful, complicated, and awesome than anything we can imagine. Anita prayed about beauty born in death, as well as in birth, and found that, while all stars have an end, Jesus has no end...Jesus is “[the] a star that lasts forever.”

If you were to speak with Anita about the banners, she might tell you about months spent with the raw materials for the long banners spread out in her hallway. She might describe her use of purple, blue, red, and gold to depict outer space, star-shine, glory, and royalty. She might point out that the one word clearly seen is the name, “Jesus”, which shines out from its surroundings. Or, she might simply invite you to spend some quiet time reflecting upon what you see...to sit quietly in silence before the altar, gazing at the stars, thinking about the words, and finding not her meaning, but your own meaning in them.

*Note: By the time you read this article, the Advent banners will have been taken down, to be refurbished for Advent 2014. But, we invite you to spend time with any of the banners, which are planned not just to beautify the church, but to become aids to your own thoughts and prayer.*

Deacon Helen



# CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

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Much thanks to Kristine Adler for leading the children of the parish in another wonderful Christmas Pageant entitled “Carriers of the Light”. Those in attendance were treated to a delightful performance reminding us about the true meaning of the season. Kudos to all of the children who participated as narrators, actors, and musicians and many thanks to all of the adults who helped to make it all happen!



**PARISH NEWS**



*Thank you....to Stephen Haines and his family and all the volunteers for Greening the Church for Christmas.*



*As usual, St. Peter's parishioners showed much generosity this Christmas season by purchasing gifts for the Christian Caring Center families, and transforming the Giving Tree to a Jesse Tree.*

**OUR CHURCH'S  
FINANCIAL  
HEALTH**

As of 11/30/13:

Income: 312,925.08

Expenses: 314,350.94

Net: -1,425.86

**PARISH REGISTER**

**BAPTISMS**

None this month.

**WEDDINGS**

None this month.

**MEMORIAL SERVICES**

None this month.

THE EARTH INSTITUTE  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

November 1, 2013

Deacon Helen Orlando  
Saint Peter's Episcopal Church  
1 Hartford Road  
Medford, NJ 08055

Dear Deacon Orlando,

Thank you so much for the generous gift from Saint Peter's Episcopal Church to the Millennium Villages Project. Your contributions have gone a long way towards supporting our efforts to create innovative solutions that are inspiring a global shift to sustainable development.

With an interdisciplinary community of scientists, researchers and students dedicated to cutting-edge research, the Earth Institute and the Millennium Villages Project aim to address the interconnected nature of the challenges facing our world and Africa in particular. Your gift is a valuable source of aid for our proven sustainability practices, and we are sincerely grateful for all of your support over the years.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,



Gregory Fienhold  
Interim Director, Funding Initiatives

The Earth Institute, Hogan Hall, MC 3277, 2910 Broadway, NY, NY 10025 | 212.854.3830 f. 212.854.0274 | earth.columbia.edu



# THIS AND THAT

## Coffee Hour Hosts

Fellowship is so important for personal and spiritual growth and something we often put off in today's busy world. A great way to spend time with each other is at coffee hour. With Trudy's retirement, we are asking for volunteers to take turns hosting coffee hour. As a host, you will bring food for the service you are attending as well as making sure that there is enough creamers, food, etc. as people fellowship. All of the coffee supplies will be provided as well as written instructions for hosting. You will not be responsible for making the coffee, just plugging in the pots in the morning. This is a great opportunity for everyone to get involved.

As our Sunday morning coffee hour continues to transition we appreciate all of those who have volunteered to host. As with any transition we are learning and appreciate your feedback as we move forward. Many thanks to the following individuals who have volunteered their time and talent in the kitchen this past month: Jennifer Buzby, John and Danielle Colaianni, Ann Charles, Dave Smith, Delores Nay, Barbara LaRue, Peggy and Joanna Thatcher, Betty and Ben Jones and Trudy McArthur.

Please sign up in the narthex to host a Sunday. If you have any questions, contact Laurel Smith at [zoeyismom1@gmail.com](mailto:zoeyismom1@gmail.com). Or (609) 714-0091.



*A special thank you to the following people who assisted with coffee hour since our last newsletter: The LaRue Family, Lisa Miner, Beckie McCammitt, Maureen Joos, Josie Nealis, Delores Nay, Jennifer Buzby, Doris Heintz, Betty Jones, Deacon Helen and Mike Orlando.*

## Litany of the Magi

As the Wise Men of old followed the star:  
*Help us, O God, to follow the leading of your Spirit.*

As they were led to the Savior:  
*Lead us, O God, to him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.*

As they brought treasures to the King:  
*Empower us, O God, to bring his gifts of faith and hope and love to the world.*

As they fell down and worshiped the Child:  
*Inspire us, O God, to serve him every moment of our lives.*

As Herod was kept from doing him harm:  
*Keep us, O God, from doing violence to his Name by thought or word or deed.*

As Mary kept all things and pondered them in her heart:  
*Enable us, O God, to remember and to love.*

As your Son shines forever as the Light of the world:  
*Shine forth in us, O God, that we may be lights of the world in our generation.*

Holy Jesus, come from God:  
*Fill us now and always with your light. Amen.*

Elmer N. Witt, *Help It All Make Sense, Lord*, quoted in *The Wideness of God's Mercy: Litanies to Enlarge our Prayer*, Jeffrey W. Rothorn, editor.

# PARISH PHOTO ALBUM



Families joined together for dinner and fellowship and then made Advent Calendars to help count down the days to Christmas. Thank you to Sue Legnani for planning this fun workshop!



Five of our J2A students attended the Lock-In at the Cathedral on December 13-14th (and they brought along 3 friends). There was not much sleep, but a lot of fun! And hair nets. Lots of hair nets. If you want to know what they were doing, you'll have to ask one of them. (Hair nets modeled below by Logan Worsdell, Grace Castiglia and Tim Montgomery. *Photos courtesy of Dave Lusk.*)

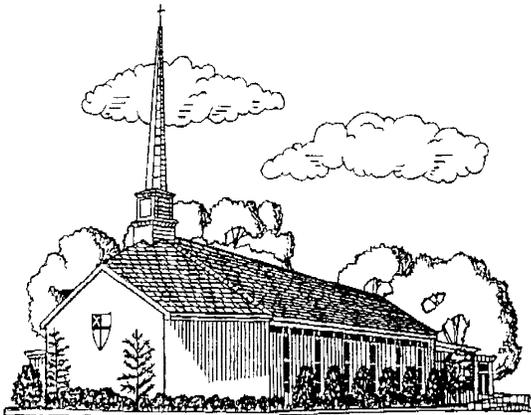


# St. Peter's Episcopal Church

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  
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*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.

### January 2014

<i>Columbarium</i> .....	1
<i>Pulpit to Pew</i> .....	2
<i>Body and Soul</i> .....	3
<i>Kids' Corner</i> .....	4
<i>Dates to Remember</i> .....	5
<i>Deacon's Bench</i> ....	6
<i>Christmas Pageant</i> .....	7
<i>Parish News</i> .....	8
<i>Millenium Villages</i> .....	9
<i>This and That</i> .....	10
<i>Parish Photo Album</i> .....	11

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