



THE COURIER

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bethlehem, PA

FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Because of the late date of Easter 2011, we are in the midst one of the longest Epiphany Seasons that many of us will experience. In fact, 2038 will be the year in which the Church will celebrate another extended Epiphany Season – and then it will be one day longer.

Throughout the Epiphany Season, we focus on the Light of Christ. The Crèche remains in the Chancel to remind us of the Epiphany story. The Magi or Wise Men followed the light of a star to find the Light of the World. One of the significant aspects of this story is that these travelers who brought gifts to the infant Jesus were the first Gentiles to acknowledge Jesus as "King." It is a proclamation that Jesus entered the world to share God's love with all people, human beings of all nations, all races, all backgrounds, all walks of life. The work of God in the world is not to be limited to only a few.

Because of this reality, the Epiphany Season is an opportunity for us to deepen our commitment to the mission of the Church, to reach out to others to reveal Jesus Christ as the Savior of all people. It is a time to focus on Christian love and care, especially in healing the divisions caused by hate and prejudice. In the Epiphany story, the rich and the poor, people from different cultures and

speaking different languages come together for a combined celebration – in a foretaste of the feast to come. In God's kingdom there are no divisions. Nothing separates one child of God from another. All are bound together through God's amazing grace. It is here, in God's kingdom, that we experience God's shalom, that peace which passes all understanding.

As we continue to celebrate the Epiphany story, may you be inspired to bring peace into the places in which you live out your days. As we allow our faith to overwhelm our daily lives, we can help to heal divisions. We can bear witness to the light of Christ in the midst of a world than can sometimes feel cold and dark. We can help others experience what it means to respond to God's love with joy and thanksgiving.

Through the Epiphany story, we have been given a gift – a glimpse of God's eternal promise. May you celebrate that promise as you live in the Light.

Blessings!

In Christ,

The Rev. Edith B. Roberts
Senior Pastor

February Worship Highlights

Wednesday, February 2 10:30 AM – Holy Communion and Healing in the Chapel

Sunday, February 6



Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Reconciling in Christ Sunday

8:15 & 11:00 AM – Holy Communion in the Nave

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Wednesday, February 9

10:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Sunday, February 13

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

8:15 & 11:00 AM – Holy Communion in the Nave

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Wednesday, February 16

10:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Sunday, February 20



Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

8:15 & 11:00 AM – Holy Communion in the Nave

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Wednesday, February 23

10:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Sunday, February 27

Eighth Sunday after Epiphany

8:15 & 11:00 AM – Holy Communion in the Nave

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

The Courier of St. Peter's Evangelical
Lutheran Church

The Courier is published eleven times a year by St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 474 Vine Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 (a non-profit organization). The Senior Pastor is the Rev. Edith B. Roberts. All questions about the publication can be addressed to the editor at the Church Office, telephone 610-867-0519.

Rebecca's Reflections

"Lights in the darkness, oh God, help us be."

While I was in undergraduate at West Virginia University, I was involved in Kappa Phi, a Christian service organization. As we began our weekly meetings, we would light a candle and say these words to remind ourselves that we were to be light throughout our campus. It seemed like everything wanted to pull us away from what truly mattered. Hall meetings scheduled all day on Sunday, bright lights that flickered downtown on weekends, and the never-shrinking pile of papers were all ever-present reminders that there were many other things in our lives that were demanding to take first place.

During my senior year, tragedy struck another college campus: Virginia Tech. Students were glued to the screens of televisions in the student union and computers in the library trying to get the entire story. Students pulled together and forgot about everything else pulling at us to light candles and pray for those affected by this tragedy. That same night at our meeting, as we lit our candle and prayed, "lights in the darkness, oh God, help us be," the words took on a new meaning and a new impact. Virginia Tech's campus and student body wasn't all that different from ours – could this happen here? If it did, what would we want others to do for us?

As lights in the darkness, we did what we could. We prayed together for peace, healing, and forgiveness. We organized an interfaith prayer vigil that was televised across the region as a way to help others pray if they couldn't find the words themselves. We sent letters of comfort to students of Virginia Tech.

When tragedies happen in our world, it is important for us to remember that we are called to be light in the midst of darkness. Some days this is easier than others. Some days you may be light to others. Some days you may need others to be light to you. But what is important is that we are God's chosen and beloved children and, with God's help, are light in this world.

Peace,
Intern Rebecca



January Council Highlights

The January Council meeting was postponed until January 25 due to the inclement weather.

Women of the ELCA

Morning Bible Study - Tuesdays, February 1 and 15, from 9 to 10:30 AM. The group gathers in the Trauger Room. All women are welcome to come and share in the Bible Study and prayer support this group enjoys. "Can two walk together except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3) is the theme verse for this year's study. Together the women are exploring their different perspectives and are realizing how they can still be united in their faith community. All women are welcome any time they are able to attend.

Bach Ministry of Hospitality Weekends are May 6 & 7 and May 13 & 14. Be sure to mark your calendar. Volunteers will be needed to set up, serve, and clean up. Contact Connie Wirth or Harriet Tonkins to volunteer!



No Offering Envelopes?

Everything we have is a gift from God. We are blessed so that we can give back and be a blessing to others. St. Peter's Stewardship Committee provides three options for giving our weekly offerings. First, each confirmed member may receive a box of offering envelopes. Second, those who don't use envelopes may receive a number and place their offerings in a plain envelope marked with that number. Then Financial Secretary Dot Nagy records them. Third, a member may choose to sign up for the "Simply Giving" program, through which offerings are electronically transferred from the person's bank account into St. Peter's checking account and then recorded. This method is very convenient. Remember – God gives us everything! Financial offerings are one of the ways we can show that we are grateful.





Reconciling in Christ Sunday

On Sunday, February 6, St. Peter's will celebrate being a congregation where all God's people are truly welcome.

Energy Needs

Fuel costs are rising. Please prayerfully consider generous gifts in each of the "Energy Needs" envelopes in the offering envelopes, or use a pew envelope and mark it "energy needs." It is important that each member consider a \$5 or \$10 gift in the energy envelope so we can keep St. Peter's a warm place to worship.



Hold One Another in Prayer

At every worship service, the Prayers of the Church are lifted up. We thank God for our blessings and share our needs. Our Sunday morning prayers include the names of parishioners, who will celebrate birthdays that week, one of the congregations of the Bethlehem/Easton Mission District, our Partner Congregation in Tanzania, our missionaries, and a variety of other needs and concerns. You are invited to stop at the Prayer Book before Sunday morning worship to add your own joys and concerns. A new prayer list is started on the first Sunday of each month. At Sunday evening and Wednesday morning worship services, the Pastor will ask for names to be included in the prayers at the start of the service.



Join the crowd from St. Peter's on Friday, June 10th, to see the IronPigs play the Durham Bulls. A large group went to a game last year and had a great time. Bruce Billiard has again ordered a block of seats at \$9 per ticket. Bring your ticket money to the Church Office by March 1st to reserve a seat. Plan to come along, to see St.

Peter's name up in lights on the scoreboard, and to have fun cheering on our hometown team.

St. Peter's Mission Statement

Our mission is to be a Christ-centered worshipping family of faith witnessing to God's inclusive love for individuals, for our community, and for the world.



St. Peter's is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation

Weather-Related Cancellations

If it is necessary to cancel worship or another St. Peter's event due to bad weather, the cancellation notice will be listed on St. Peter's voicemail. Call the Church Office and let the phone ring about ten times until the voicemail picks up. If you receive the normal message, there are no cancellations.



Souper Bowl of Caring

St. Peter's youth invite each member of St. Peter's to participate in Souper Bowl of Caring 2011. The challenge is to bring non-perishable food items for the Food Bank and put some \$ in the Soup Tureen for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. These offerings will be collected on Youth Sunday, January 30, and Super Bowl Sunday, February 6.

Souper Bowl of Caring 2010 raised \$10 million to help feed hungry people. You can help to make this year's donations even greater!

"Whatever Wednesdays" 2011

"Whatever Wednesdays" continues to be a great gathering of youth and young adults with 'Miss' Liz and Intern Rebecca each Wednesday afternoon from 3:30 to 6 PM! The time together includes: homework time, music, lively conversation, projects, games, time to reflect with devotions, and a light supper. All youth who are Confirmation age and older are welcome to come and bring friends. Rides are provided for youth who need one.

Reminder: There will be NO "Whatever Wednesdays" on February 2 ~ the Staff will be at the Bishop's Conference.

Sunday Church School Staff to Meet

All members of the Sunday Church School Staff will be meeting on Tuesday, February 8, at 6:30 PM. It will be a time to review how the new SPARK curriculum is working in the classrooms. There will be time to check in with how SCS is going. Please be in touch with 'Miss' Liz by Sunday, February 6, if you cannot attend.

Time to Hide the "Alleluias"

The Sunday Church School students will be preparing for Lent by hiding away the "Alleluias" for the season. During February, the children and youth will make their "Alleluia" items in their SCS classrooms. On Sunday, March 6, Transfiguration Sunday, those items will be hidden away in the cocoon, not to be opened until Easter Sunday, April 24th.



YOU are INVITED!

The youth who are planning to attend the 2012 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans invite you to a Spaghetti Dinner on Sunday, March 6, at 12:15 PM in the Social Room. Tickets for the dinner will be available in the Reception Area each Sunday and from the Church Office during the week until February 28th. Please put the date on your calendar today and then invite some family members and friends to worship with you that day and come to the dinner together.

The menu will include spaghetti, with or without meatballs, and with or without sauce, a salad bar, bread/rolls, a wonderful dessert buffet, and beverages. Come to share the dinner and to support St. Peter's youth!



Congratulations!

Each year the Bethlehem Housing Authority recognizes a person who gets housing assistance for their commitment to give their time and talent to volunteer work. St. Peter's member Donna Boyle is this year's recipient of the award. This is a celebration of Ministry in Daily Life.



Look Who's Having a Birthday

Please remember, with notes and cards, the following homebound members who are celebrating their birthdays this month:

Marjorie Weiss – February 24

Irene Smith – February 28

From the Parish Record

FUNERAL:

Margaret J. (Margie) Bunderla – January 8, 2011

MEMORIAL SERVICE:

Jeanette M. Gross – January 15, 2011



With Many Thanks!

From daughter Associate in Ministry Barbara Taylor, sisters Evelyn Smith and Virginia Bersch, and other family members to the St. Peter's community "for all the prayers, love, and support during Jeanette Gross' illness and at the time of her death. Special thanks to Pastor Roberts and the Staff for the amazing celebration worship service and to Funeral Reception Coordinator Gina DeAngelis and the 'crew' for the wonderful reception. We are so thankful to be part of such a caring congregation."

To the Hawk family for tending a flame from the Peacelight flame which was brought from the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Israel, to Austria and then distributed to countries

in Europe and North America through the Boy Scouts. The flame was used to light the candles at St. Peter's on Christmas Eve, connecting worshippers with the grotto in which Jesus is believed to have been born.

From Pastor Julie Tillberg, her husband John Pederson, and their son John Luke for the Christmas cookies baked by St. Peter's youth: "Thank you once again for the care package!! The cookies are now a memory – but were greatly enjoyed!!"

From Stacy Lauer-Scovanner: "Thank you so much for the wonderful Christmas cookies. As soon as I saw the return address, I was excited because I knew what they were. They arrived right in the middle of final papers being due and gave me some much needed energy to keep writing. I miss you all so much and find myself thinking of you often. Last year was one of the best years, and I thank you. Ryan and I hope that you all have a blessed Christmas and New Year."

From Pastor Drew and Megan Goodson "for the Christmas cookie package from St. Peter's! We enjoyed the cookies for several nights! I can still remember the youth "rolling" balls of dough. We are grateful you remembered us."

From Pastor Jon Niketh to St. Peter's Family for the Christmas cookies: "I think of you fondly and often and celebrate the many gifts you have brought and continue to bring to my life and ministry. God bless you and the ones you love with the joy and peace of Jesus' birth."

From Pastor Judy Brennan, husband Dan, and daughters Becky and Heidi: "Thanks for the Christmas cookie treats! It's something we look forward to. Blessings!"

From Karen VanGorden to St. Peter's Church Family for all the calls and cards. "I so appreciate and love you all."

From Roma Ziegler to the Sunday Church School Children for the Christmas decoration and card which they made for her: "It was so caring of you to remember the Home-Bound church members. I appreciate very much your thoughtfulness. You brightened up my day! God bless you all."

From 90 Special Olympics athletes to St. Peter's congregation for the use of the Social Room for their Christmas party.

From the Staff of Meals on Wheels to St. Peter's congregation "for your kind donation of holiday gifts for seniors served by Meals on

Wheels. Your thoughtful remembrance of our seniors is very much appreciated and reflective of your care and concern for those we serve. These gifts will certainly bring a smile and be enjoyed by our seniors during the holidays!"

From Mia and Charles Clements to Pastor Roberts and the members of St. Peter's for their support at the time of the death of Mia's father, Pastor Arvo Beck.

From the Lehigh Valley Chinese Christian Church for the use of St. Peter's facilities: "We really appreciate your partnering with us to spread the Good News to the new Chinese students every year. May God continue to bless your ministries as you walk in obedience to Him."

From Donna Dauernheim and her family to Pastor Roberts for visiting her mother, Carol Groman, with Holy Communion and to everyone at St. Peter's who sends her mother cards.

From Debbie, Sammy, and Elizabeth Alborn to Pastor Roberts and the Staff of St. Peter's: "Thank you for all of your thoughts and prayers this year. We appreciate it so much!"

From Bill Cope to all for the monetary gift upon his retirement.

From Joyce Harmony to "Pastor Roberts and my St. Peter's family for their prayers and concern during my brother's long illness. Your comforting and supportive prayers and expressions of sympathy were deeply appreciated at the time of his death. Thanks for being there when I needed you."

From the families at New Bethany for the gifts donated by St. Peter's members. Here is a sampling of their expressions of gratitude: "You have blessed many lives, may God fill your new year with joy and blessing. . . You really made my Christmas the best. . . Can't thank you enough for our precious Christmas gifts you have blessed us with. . . You helped give us an awesome Christmas."

From Lisa & Dave Kolman and family for "your hospitality and generosity over the holidays. We greatly appreciate your love and kindness for our family."

From Richard Hero, following the death of his aunt, Margie Bunderla, to Pastor Roberts and members of St. Peter's Women of the ELCA Bible Study Group: "Your thoughts and prayers mean so much."



From Roma Ziegler to “the members of the church who so kindly gave of their time to take me to doctor appointments, provided monthly Holy Communion and delivered the beautiful poinsettia at Christmas. I thank you for the prayers, phone calls, cards and notes I received and especially for the recent birthday greetings. I am especially grateful for the prayers and concern of Pastor Roberts and Pastor Spieker through the past year.”

AARP Tax Aide

From February 2 through April 13, St. Peter’s will serve as host for AARP Tax Aide. Each Wednesday, certified volunteers will prepare federal, state, and local tax returns, file property tax rebates, and provide tax counsel for anyone in need of help.

The volunteers will work in the Social Room on Wednesdays from 1 to 5 PM. St. Peter’s own Bob Helman is working with this group. Please contact the Church Office for more information. Providing room for AARP Tax Aide is another way in which St. Peter’s can keep our commitment to be “In the City for God, In the City for Good,” as we share our space with our neighbors.

New Bethany Food Bank

Thanks to all who brought food to the “manger” on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and to Art and Grace Faust, who delivered the food to New Bethany Food Bank, many parents were able to feed their children during the Christmas school break. However, the shelves at the Food Bank are now almost bare. Please consider adding extra non-perishable food items to your shopping cart, and bring those items to the food baskets at St. Peter’s to help feed our hungry neighbors.

The Hunger Site



During 2010, thehungersite.com provided 58.6 million cups of food to hungry people around the world. All costs are paid by site sponsors. All we need to do is click once a day. Visit thehungersite.com each day. In less than a minute, you will provide the cost of 1.1 cups of food. It’s a simple way to share food with others at no cost to you.

Hospital Admissions

Due to privacy laws, hospitals no longer always call St. Peter’s when one of our members is admitted. If you or another St. Peter’s member is admitted to a hospital, please call the Church Office so our Pastors and Intern can stop by and check in!

Turning Point

Turning Point is the local agency that helps victims to rebuild their lives after experiencing domestic abuse. Their mission is to eliminate domestic violence, to increase community awareness of the problem, and to empower the victims by providing shelter and support services. No one should be threatened or harmed at home. If you need help, call the Turning Point hotline at 610-437-3369. All calls are confidential.



Save a Life

Blood is needed every day to save the lives of people injured in accidents or those having surgeries. Blood is also needed by both adults and children who are under-going cancer treatments. To give a blood donation, call the Miller-Keystone Blood Center at 610-691-5850. Your donation will take only about an hour, and that includes free juice and cookies! Call today and give the gift of life!

Pastor’s Discretionary Fund

Now that winter is here and we find ourselves turning up the thermostat to heat our homes, we need to keep in mind those among us without enough money to pay the fuel bill to heat their home, pay rent for a dry place to live, buy warm clothing for their children, or place a warm meal on the table for their family. From time to time, Pastor Roberts is asked to assist individuals and families experiencing difficulties of a wide variety. Contributions may be made by placing your donations in a pew envelope and marking it “Pastor’s Fund.” Won’t you reach out to help a neighbor in need?

March Courier Deadline

the editor's mailbox or email them to her at courier_editor@yahoo.com.

The deadline for the March Courier is Sunday, February 13. Please place your articles in

2011 American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days



The daffodil is the symbol of hope and renewal. To the American Cancer Society, daffodils represent hope for a world with less cancer and more birthdays - one where cancer never steals another day from anyone's life.

Members of St. Peter's have been touched by cancer, either personally having been diagnosed or knowing someone who has been. By taking part in the annual Daffodil Days, we will be sharing hope for a future free of cancer by raising funds and awareness to beat the disease. The American Cancer Society offers a variety of services including helping people stay well with tips, tools, and resources so they can take steps to reduce their cancer risk or find it early, when it's most treatable, and by funding and conducting groundbreaking research to find cures.

St. Peter's will again take part in the Daffodil Days program. If you wish to take part, please complete and return the form below to the Church Office no later than February 13. All flowers must be pre-ordered. Flowers will be available for pick-up on Sunday, March 20.

For more information on the services offered by the American Cancer Society, as a result of the dollars raised through Daffodil Days, please go to their website www.cancer.org.



**American Cancer Society's
2011 Daffodil Days
Order Form**



The following items are available as part of this year's Daffodil Days: bunches of 10 daffodils; Daffodil Days Vase with 10 daffodils {vases will be randomly selected from a collection of vases previously offered}; a Boyds Bear (named Liv N. Hope) along with 10 daffodils; and Potted Mini Daffodils (a 4" pot with 3-4 daffodil bulbs).

Orders must be received in the Church Office no later than **Sunday, February 13**.

NAME: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____

I would like to order the following item(s):

_____ bunch(es) of 10 daffodils @ \$10 a bunch = \$ _____

_____ Vintage Daffodil Days Vase(s) @ \$15 = \$ _____

_____ Liv N. Hope Bear @ \$25 = \$ _____

_____ Potted Mini Daffodils @ \$12 = \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF ORDER = \$ _____



I have enclosed payment with my order.

I will pay for my order when I pick it up.

Payment may be made by cash or check. Please make checks payable to St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Orders will be available for pick-up at St. Peter's on **Sunday, March 20**.



Celebrating Black History Month

Everyone is invited to attend "Divine Spirit," an event to be held on Saturday, February 19, at 4 PM in the Nave to celebrate Black History Month. St. John's AME Church in Bethlehem is sponsoring the event in conjunction with St. Peter's. The program will feature dance, readings, and local choirs presenting African-American spirituals. There is no cost to attend. A freewill offering will be received.

This is a great opportunity to celebrate together with our sisters and brothers in Christ! Mark your calendar and watch the Sunday bulletin for details.



Letter from Tanzania

Patrick Ngumba is a member of St. Peter's Partner Congregation, Madihani Lutheran Church. He has been attending University, studying to be a Lutheran Pastor. When Pastor Roberts and Kathy Thomforde were in Madihani in September of 2009, Patrick was on break from his studies and served as a translator and guide. He is a dedicated and intelligent young man who will be a strong Pastor of the Church. During this academic year, Patrick is serving in an Internship. Patrick is able to communicate via email and normally does so with Pastor Roberts and Kathy. On January 12, he sent the following email to the members of St. Peter's.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is my hope that you enjoyed Christmas and New Year well. We thank our Almighty God for his immeasurable cares for us.

By the way, it is my pleasure to write this letter to you as we are joined by the death of Jesus Christ on the CROSS.

The most important is to thank you for your Great Efforts in helping our Parish. We have not much money. Only God will do this. I am also among those who are benefiting from your effort; therefore it is my responsibility to say thank as our African tradition.

In short, we are looking forward to meet you some day and to share ideas, as we are now one family.

I also have a warmly greetings from Madihani People.

Concerning me, I am a training Pastor, this is my Internship study year.

I will always keep you in my Prayers.

*In Christ,
BLESSINGS.*

*Pastor to be,
Patrick Ngumba.*



SSM Better Buy Thrift Shop

The Southside Ministries Better Buy Thrift Shop has donated coats for the adults in the shelter. Now the shop is in need of coats for men and women who are coming into the shop looking for ways to keep warm. Please check your closets and bring men's and women's coats. See Barbara Taylor if you need more information.

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church 474 Vine Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 610-867-0519



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STAFF

The Rev. Edith B. Roberts - Senior Pastor
The Rev. George F. Spieker - Visitation Pastor
Elizabeth McKee Elterich - AIM for Education /Youth/
Outreach
Barbara-Anne G. Taylor - AIM for Parish
Administration
Rebecca Grate - Pastoral Intern
Marisa H. Deshler - Organist
Wendy E. Borst - Vocal Choir Director
Anthony DeAngelis, Sr. - Bell Choir Director
Carol A. Frankenfield - Parish Secretary

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday: 8:15 & 11:00 AM Worship in Nave
9:30 AM Sunday Church School
6:30 PM Holy Communion in Chapel
Wednesday: 10:30 AM Holy Communion in Chapel

Child care is available in the Nursery on Sunday mornings for children up to five years of age.

Sharon Ann Burns – Courier Editor

