



THE COURIER

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

FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Partners in Ministry,

This year we will have the opportunity to celebrate the Festival of Epiphany on a Sunday. On January 6th, we will move from the Christmas Season into the Season of Epiphany.

The Gospel of Matthew tells us:

“Wise men from the East...set out; and there ahead of them, went the star...until it stopped over the place where the child was. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

During Advent, we brought our own gifts in the name of the Babe of Bethlehem. We provided Christmas presents for children living in the New Bethany Ministries shelter, for our Headstart children, and for Meals on Wheels clients. We brought cereal and peanut butter and jelly and a variety of other food to fill the shelves of the South Bethlehem Neighborhood Center Food Bank. We gave to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, as healthy, well-nourished

St. Peter's children and youth passed baskets to help feed other

young people who are not as fortunate.

As we move into the Season of Epiphany, we are reminded that God continues to challenge us to follow the star and to bring our gifts. Those who came before us have passed this important ministry on to us. We are called to be witnesses to the love of God, made real in that small child. We are called to worship the One who has created us to live in relationship with our Creator and with one another.

May 2008 be a year to deepen our commitment to worship and to give. May we share the joy of God's love within our community of faith and out into our neighborhood communities. May our lives be shining stars which lead others to worship and experience the wonder of faith, hope, and love.

God's blessings be with you and all whom you love.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Roberts".

The Rev. Edith B. Roberts
Senior Pastor

January Worship Highlights

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

Sunday, January 6



Epiphany of Our Lord

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

Installation of Congregation Council

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Wednesday, January 9

10:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Sunday, January 13



Baptism of Our Lord

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

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Wednesday, January 16

10:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Sunday, January 20

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

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

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Wednesday, January 23

10:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Sunday, January 27



3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Youth Sunday

9:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Nave

6:30 PM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

Wednesday, January 30

10:30 AM – Holy Communion in the Chapel

3 The Courier

January 2008

From Drew's Desk

“There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?” (John 6:9).

Do you remember a friend or a mentor who noticed a gift you have? Your gift may not have been loaves and fish—but an authentic way of listening, or skills with math, or creative energy. When I was in the 9th grade, I delivered my first sermon during a youth-led Easter Sunrise Service. Afterwards, a member of my congregation thanked me. He lifted up my gift.

On Sunday, January 27, worship at St. Peter's will be led by the youth. Our youth include hard-working students, talented musicians, and dedicated athletes. They enrich the St. Peter's community throughout the year in a variety of ways. Some of the gifts of our youth are still in formation. Other gifts—including passion, energy, and a sense of humor—are primed and available for the church to use now.

Mighty problems in the world call for extraordinary gifts. Hungry crowds call for an abundance of food. Or do they? The Evangelist John says that the crowds who followed Jesus became hungry. Out in the desert, there was no market close by for people to purchase food. The only food available belonged to a youth—five barley loaves and two fish (probably his lunch).

When the disciple Andrew saw the boy, he recognized his gifts. Still, he questioned whether they could really make a difference: “What are they among so many people?” In the hands of Jesus, however, the gifts took on an extraordinary nature. The hungry crowds were fed, with basketfuls left over. “Youth Sunday” is an opportunity for our youth to feed us with their gifts. May we let our youth know how much we appreciate them, while we also thank God!

Out of ordinary gifts come extraordinary things. Here is just a short example...

In 1990, a pastoral Intern serving in Columbia, South Carolina, said a prayer that launched a national movement. As two teams from the National Football League prepared to play for the championship, this Intern prayed: “Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat.” Guided by this prayer, the Intern and teenagers at his congregation collected donations for the needy.

The idea to raise money for the needy on Super Bowl Sunday spread. Senior high youth from this congregation invited other congregations to participate in the effort. Since 1990, “ordinary young people have generated an extraordinary \$41 million for soup kitchens, food banks and other charities in communities across the country” (www.souperbowl.org).

On two Sundays, January 27th and February 3rd, youth from St. Peter's will participate in the “Souper Bowl of Caring” by inviting worshipers to give for those in need. What an amazing way to celebrate the love of Christ!



With peace,
Drew Goodson
Pastoral Intern

December Council Highlights

A motion was approved to:

- appoint Dot Nagy to a one-year-term as Financial Secretary.
- appoint Adam King to a one-year-term as Assistant to the Treasurer.

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.

4 The Courier

December Council Highlights (continued)

-- authorize the Treasurer and Finance Committee members working on the end of the year finances to use the remaining Trust Fund interest and/or growth income to pay our financial commitments should there be a deficit.

-- present a slate of nominees for the 2008 Nominating Committee at the January 27, 2008, Congregational Meeting.

Election of Officers:

President – Sharon Wiles-Young

Vice-President – Lee Rayden

Secretary – Sharon Ann Burns

Treasurer – Joe Bleier



Women of the ELCA

Morning Bible Study - Tuesdays, January 8 and 22, from 9 to 10:30 AM in the Trauger Room. All women of the congregation are encouraged to start the new calendar year by becoming a part of this group whose members support each other in their journeys of faith.

Lutheran Men in Mission

Our next meeting of LMM will be on Saturday, January 12, at 8:30 AM for breakfast in the Social Room. Lee Rayden will lead devotions. We will then continue our study of the Book of Acts. We hope you will attend.

Annual Congregational Meeting

St. Peter's Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, January 27, immediately following the 9:30 AM worship service. We will gather in the Social Room to plan for St. Peter's future and to see the annual "Year in Review" PowerPoint presentation. Please bring a finger food to share and your copy of the Annual Report. Be part of the St. Peter's family meeting!

January 2008

Reminders as We Start 2008

It's a new year, and with it come several reminders for the adult members of St. Peter. Have you:

- ✓ picked up your 2008 offering envelope box?
- ✓ turned in your 2008 commitment card?
- ✓ completed a record card when you received Holy Communion?

St. Peter's by-laws define an active member as one who has both made a contribution of record and received Holy Communion at St. Peter's, including filling out a Communion card, at least once during the year. Let us each do our part to keep St. Peter's records up-to-date and our financial commitments current. With God's help we can accomplish great things as we work together.

2008 Offering Envelopes

Boxes are available for pick-up in the lower narthex. Please consider a gift of \$5 in the "Initial Offering" envelope to cover the cost of the offering envelopes.

21st Century Update

The good news is that there are only two years left until St. Peter's mortgage is paid off! The challenging news is that we all need to work together to meet the monthly payment of \$4,750 in order to make the payoff date a reality.

May 2008 be a year when members of St. Peter's renew their commitment to make the congregation debt free and able to focus on new ministries!



5 The Courier Reconciling in Christ

As a part of his Internship Project, former Intern Jon Niketh developed a schedule of speakers to help St. Peter's members better understand what it means to be a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. On Sunday, January 13, one of St. Peter's newer members, the Rev. Dr. Christopher Thomforde, will speak at the 9:45 AM gathering of Adults Learning Together. Pastor Thomforde is an ELCA pastor who serves as President of Moravian College and Theological Seminary. He served previously as President of St. Olaf College, a Lutheran institution located in Northfield, Minnesota. Pastor Thomforde will share some of his experiences in higher education. All adults are invited to the Trauger Room on January 13 to share in this learning experience.

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.

Heating Costs

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.



January 2008

Pastor's Discretionary Fund

As the weather outside grows colder, there are those among us without enough money to pay for 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?

Parishioner of the Week

In each Sunday bulletin you will find the name of one of St. Peter's homebound members, listed as the "Parishioner of the Week." He or she will be lifted up in the Prayers of the Church during worship. Please remember our Parishioners of the Week in your own prayers and send cards or notes to let them know that you remember them as a part of the St. Peter's family.

Homemade Items Needed

Now is a good time to start making sewing and needlework items for the May 2008 Bach Ministry of Hospitality. During these cold months, please share your talents to produce one or several of your "creations." Aprons, baby sweater sets (white is most popular), afghans, doilies, placemats, bibs, slippers, pashima scarves, mittens, hats, handbags, and other garments are desired. There will be Bach Festival patrons looking for handmade items. We need your help to support St. Peter's ministry of hospitality.



6 The Courier Church Office News

January 2008

Weekdays from January 14 through February 5, St. Peter's Church Office will be staffed by a volunteer from 9 AM – noon while our Parish Secretary is on vacation. Please plan to call or visit during those hours to be sure someone is present to help you. Other staff members will be coming and going as usual for meetings, appointments, etc. If you call the office and no one is available, let the phone ring about 10 times until the voicemail picks up to provide the names and phone numbers of staff members on call.

SCS Epiphany Celebration



St. Peter's Sunday Church School students will celebrate the arrival of the Magi on Sunday, January 6. After their opening singing times, the students will "wander" through a variety of classrooms and church spaces to celebrate the birth of Jesus through projects and activities. Stars will guide their way as they consider what gifts they have to give Jesus.

Everyone is welcome to be part of this celebration. Parents are encouraged to "wander" with their children and experience the beauty of the light of Christ!

If you and your child(ren) haven't been to Sunday Church School in a while, this is a great Sunday to return! Come, as the Magi did after long travel, to experience Jesus' light and love in the midst of life.

St. Peter's Youth Sunday

January 27, 2008

Plan now to attend the 9:30 AM worship service as our youth assist with worship and provide the music for the day. The theme will be "We Are Fishers for

People." ALL Sunday Church School students will be singing and leading worship. St. Peter's is blessed to have many caring children and young people participating in the life of the congregation. This is a special opportunity to celebrate with them. Come and share in the celebration. Thanks Be to God!

Souper Bowl Sundays

The Youth of St. Peter's challenge you to be part of the *Souper Bowl of Caring*. Each year, during the excitement of the Super Bowl football game, youth in congregations all over the United States make this challenge. Our Souper Bowl is the opportunity to contribute money, non-perishable food items, or community service time to address the growing issue of hunger here in Bethlehem, in our nation, and around the world. The basic challenge is for each person to contribute \$1.00 and/or some canned goods. Some people even consider tithing the cost of their Super Bowl parties! Imagine the money that thousands of people will spend on travel, tickets, food, and fun that weekend and what a difference could be made if everyone gave a portion of that to feed the hungry.

A soup tureen will be in St. Peter's Upper Narthex on Sundays, January 27, and February 3, to receive Souper Bowl donations. Non-perishable food items for the South Bethlehem Neighborhood Center Food Bank can be placed in the baskets near the Food Bank baskets.

St. Peter's youth decide how and where the offerings collected will be donated. In the past, monies have gone to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and the SBNC Food Bank.

Watch the February Courier to see how much our youth collected and a report of the national Souper Bowl of Caring returns.

Learning Ministries Day

Saturday, January 26, 2008, is the date for the Synod’s annual Learning Ministries Day. This is a day of learning and sharing for SCS teachers, lay catechists, Education Team members, and anyone interested in Christian Education.

Learning Ministries Day will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Robesonia. The group going from St. Peter’s will leave from the parking lot at 8 AM. The theme for the Learning Ministries Day is “Hearts Ignited with Prayer.” This full day of learning will include 13 different workshops, worship, and presentations by the Keynote speaker, Diane Monroe, the Director of Christian Education for the ELCA. Learning Ministries Day is always a long day, but a day well-spent in sharing and learning.

See Elizabeth Elterich by Sunday, January 6, if you want to register for this worthwhile event. St. Peter’s will cover the cost of the day for those who register.

Youth and Families – Save These Dates

⇒ A Senior High Lock-In is planned from 9 PM on Friday, February 1, until around 11 AM on Saturday, February 2.

⇒ Junior and Middler LYO will meet on Friday, February 15, from 6 – 8 PM. We will share a light supper together and then play games and have time in the gym. Bring along your favorite game to play with your friends.

⇒ SYMDANO, the Synod Youth Event for grades 3-12, parents, SCS staff, and youth leaders, will be held on Saturday, April 19. Keep your calendars open so you can be part of this fun day of learning, sharing, singing, and making new friends.



⇒ Mailings will be sent out when ice skating and snow tubing dates are planned. Watch the Sunday bulletin for details, as well.

Campus Ministry News

The Lehigh and Moravian students who call St. Peter’s their home away from home are on break for most of January. We will miss their presence with us in worship and other activities.

The first gathering of 2008 will be for lunch on Thursday, January 24. We will gather in the Reception Area at Noon for a light lunch and great conversation, followed by devotions led by Intern Drew Goodson.

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!



Feed a Family

Every day, many of us overeat. Every day, millions go hungry. Jesus calls us to love all people and to work for justice. Here’s a single way to do so:

Each time you grocery shop, set aside \$1.50 – the cost of a loaf of bread. Place your donation in an envelope, and mark it “World Hunger Appeal.” Place the envelope in the offering plate, or mail it to the Church Office. As all the people of St. Peter’s work together, we can help overcome hunger in the United States and the world.

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.

From the Parish Record

FUNERALS:

Leon Litz, Sr. – November 26, 2007
(funeral done by Pastor George F. Spieker)

Marion Heacock – December 15, 2007

*Look Who's Having a
Birthday*

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

Doris Simons – January 18
Country Meadows #221
4007 Green Pond Road
Bethlehem, PA 18020



Gizella Wescoe – January 24
Holy Family Manor #119
1200 Spring Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

With Many Thanks!

From Molly Weaver and family to Pastor Roberts, Pastor Spieker, Intern Drew Goodson, the staff, and members of St. Peter's for their prayers, calls, cards, and visits, received during husband Jim's hospital stay and at his death. "The church service was beautiful and so very meaningful! St. Peter's family has, again, demonstrated true Christian love!"

From Javier Toro, Executive Director of the South Bethlehem Neighborhood Center, for the turkeys and food donated by the congregation. "We are especially grateful for the \$500 check which was used to buy much-needed food for the food pantry. St. Peter's has played a big role in SBNC's history. You are there for us time and time again; for this we are eternally grateful."



From Jim Hogg, Operations Manager of Victory House, for St. Peter's food donations. "Your gifts allow these men to continue to work on training in life skills, drug and alcohol abuse support, and job training."

From Jessica Easton to St. Peter's: "I'm keeping busy in York with my new job and new home. I miss St. Peter's!"

From Judy Ihle for all the cards, calls, prayers, and visits, and for the delicious soup. "I hope to see everyone in church on Christmas Eve."

From Pastor Michael Jannett and his family "for the Advent Blessings, cards, and the yummy cookies. My time at St. Peter's was truly a blessing and it has helped me tremendously in preparation for parish ministry. Many thanks for the love and care. Peace and Merry Christmas!"

To 'Miss' Liz and the St. Peter's Family from Andrew Stathos: "Thank you so much for all the yummy cookies you sent for the holidays. It could not have come at a more perfect time, while I was studying for my only final exam of the term. Some of those cookies must have had special powers because I got an A on my exam. Thanks again for all the treats and blessings. See you soon."

Big News!

Beginning January 2, 2008, the Southside Ministries Better Buy Boutique will be open extended hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. You will now be able to shop from 10 AM to 3:30 PM! Friday hours will be from 10:30 AM to 1 PM. Stop in to see what's new in 2008!

February Courier
Deadline

The deadline for the February Courier is Sunday, January 13. Please place your articles in the editor's mailbox or email them to her at courier_editor@yahoo.com.

9 The Courier

January 2008

St. Peter's Designated Gifts List

50 Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnals
each \$22.00

Furniture for Bride's Room:
2 sofas \$2,000.00
9 Arm Chairs for Reception Room and Social
Room each \$150.00
ADF \$1,000.00
200 cushioned folding chairs each \$50.00

Additional Designated Giving Opportunities:

21st Century Fund Any Amount
Youth Gathering Any Amount
Bear Creek Camperships Any Amount

NOTE: 1. Prices are approximate.
2. Where a range of prices is indicated, more specific information is available from the Church Office.
3. A memorial Plaque may be purchased separately for mounting on Memorial Board in the Narthex. Approximate cost is \$20.00-\$30.00.

CUNA Continues Organizing



A Bethlehem group of clergy and lay people continue to meet to discuss concerns about our community. The goal is to facilitate the improvement of neighborhoods, one issue at a time.

CUNA – Congregations United for Neighborhood Action – began in Allentown several years ago as a group working to empower neighborhood people to make changes and improvements in their neighborhoods. For a few years, conversation has been happening here in Bethlehem. The basis of much of the work of CUNA is to get to know our neighbors and each other better through one-to-one conversations. Listening to each other's concerns, hopes, and dreams brings people closer together, and then common concerns and goals can be determined. Change

happens when people work together on an issue, engaging others in the solution.

Pastor Roberts, Elizabeth Elterich, Intern Drew Goodson, Sharon and Brian Wiles-Young, and Karen and Cami VanGorden have been part of the CUNA group. The group could use the addition of more people concerned about the St. Peter's neighborhood. Please speak with any of the above people if this interests you. The CUNA Bethlehem group meets the 2nd Thursday evening of each month for one hour.



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

CARELINE: A Spiritual Message: 610-868-CARE

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday
8 AM to 3 PM

Friday: 9 AM to NOON

FAX: 610-867-1249

E-mail: church@stpetersbethlehem.org

www.stpetersbethlehem.org

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

Andrew D. Goodson - Intern Pastor

Jean E. Ocker - Director of Music

Marisa H. Deshler - Organist

Anthony DeAngelis, Sr. - Bell Director

Linda M. Zrinski - 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

