

ST. PETER'S NET

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ➤ 654 N. EASTON ROAD ➤ GLENSIDE, PA 19038 ➤ (215) 887-1765

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany to the Second Sunday in Lent

February 2010

Where Two or Three are Gathered

"So tell me, how do you all argue?" This is one of the first questions I ask couples in pre-marital counseling sessions. I get nervous when I hear the response, "What do you mean argue? We never argue." I spend an entire pre-marital counseling session on communication. I believe that learning how to practice healthy communication with your partner will strengthen your fidelity and commitment to one another. This includes learning how to argue and disagree, learning how to listen to each other and to express your feelings with authenticity. In any relationship, engaging in practices of healthy communication engenders deeper trust and understanding.

I am writing this article on the heels of our parish meeting. As I reflect on our holy conversation, what I am most proud about is that we listened to one another with great care and love and that we created a safe and sacred space to share whatever was on our hearts. In challenging times within a community, communication can be one of the first things to break down. We can be tempted to engage only in "church parking lot conversations," those gatherings with a small group of individuals that take place after the meeting. If we are only willing to communicate with a certain individual or group out back in the parking lot, then we lose not only the opportunity to share our own experience, but to hear another's experience. We end up hearing just one piece of the story.

As much as our new forms of electronic communication have revolutionized the way we are connected to one another, they also have created more opportunities for misunderstanding and pain. It is so easy to write an e-mail and click the send button without considering the ramifications of our words. I realize that some individuals need to get their thoughts down in writing and so e-mail can be a useful tool. I appreciate such

correspondence. However, my own personal rule is that if I feel a conversation needs to take place I will not do so over e-mail. I am a strong believer that face to face encounters must occur in order to create such trust and mutual understanding. I've been reflecting lately on Jesus' style of communication. One thing is for certain, Jesus communicated in many different ways: in telling stories to large crowds, in listening and responding to the pain of an individual, in sharing conversation over a meal with his closest friends, in speaking with authority to his adversaries, and in his own private prayer with his heavenly Father. Jesus had no difficulty sharing his feelings of anger, pain, sorrow or joy. He also knew how to speak the truth in love. He was authentic because he spoke from the heart and encouraged others to do the same.

I hope that in this time of transition in our life together we can follow the example of our Lord. I hope that we can continue to find ways to keep communicating with one another with openness and honesty, that we can feel safe to share our hearts and allow others to share their hearts with us. Please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I welcome the opportunity to sit down and hear your story and to be given the gift to share mine. Remember the words of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am with them." May we keep talking to one another. May we keep listening to one another. May we keep engaging in practices that lead us deeper into relationship with one another and with our God. And most importantly may we believe that when we have the courage to encounter the other in our midst, we are encountering Jesus, himself.

Faithfully Yours,
Emily+

Vestry News

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Tim McDermott,
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Please send articles, photos,
suggestions by the 15th of
each month for the
following month's NET

The Future of Christian Education at St. Peter's

A strong Christian education program has been a cornerstone of St. Peter's for a long time. I recently heard stories of the energy and vision that Elizabeth Miller had when she was Christian education leader many years ago. In our profile that was created during our search for a new rector, education was very high in our priorities, and one of the reasons that Emily was drawn to us, and we to her.

We have entered into an exciting time of renewal at St. Peter's. Emily's infectious spirit and uplifting words inspire us all. Her ability to lead us into a future filled with the hope of good things to come is evident. However, there is not an "easy button" for change. Much thought and hard work must be put into helping that change come about. The Education Steering Team, the wardens, and Emily have begun the visioning work of how our Christian education will move forward. This will include hiring a part time Christian Formation Director. Having received your vestry's approval, there will be two teams formed, a discernment team, and a transition team. Emily will form these teams and choose the chairpersons, who will communicate closely with her. She will be our spiritual guide through these steps in laying the groundwork for our future education program.

The discernment team will begin meeting as soon as possible to determine what we have in our current education program, and what we need; write a mission statement; create a job description; develop a plan for structuring the program; advertise and interview candidates for this call; as well as communicate to the parish.

The transition team will work with the current teachers and leaders, plan the end-of-the year celebration and recognition of leaders; assist the new leader in planning a calendar of events for next year, reviewing and recommending curriculum, recruiting volunteers for September, and training for all; and they will support the newly called Christian Formation Director through the first year.

During this transition, our present education steering team, Dave Kipphut, Laurel Mosteller, and Melissa Olson, will remain available for guidance and advice.

We are asking for parish support and prayers as we look to our future.

— Audrey Kipphut, People's Warden

DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS?

This Holy Season of Lent

Opportunities for Prayer, Fellowship, and Study

Ash Wednesday Services on February 17th

- 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Healing in the chapel
- 5 p.m. Evening Prayer in the chapel
- 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist in the church

All of these services will include the imposition of ashes.

Evening Prayer

Evening Prayer returns in Lent. It will take place every *Monday through Friday at 5 p.m.* in the chapel. Come join Emily and your fellow parishioners for this 25 minute service of prayer, scripture reading, and quiet contemplation. Make Evening Prayer a part of your Lenten discipline this year.

Tuesday Evenings

February 23 through March 23

On Tuesdays in the season of Lent no committees will meet. Time will be set aside for us to engage in prayer, fellowship, and study. All are welcome: families, individuals, children, and friends. Come

for the entire evening or stay for one or more event.

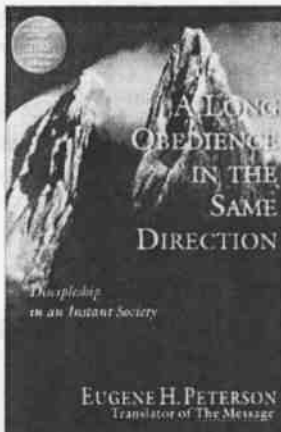
- 5 p.m. *Evening Prayer* in the chapel.
- 5:30–7 p.m. *Simple Soup Supper* in the Parish Hall. Bring your families and friends and share in a potluck supper of soup, salad and bread. Look for sign-up sheets on one of the bulletin boards in the Parish Hall.
- 7-8:30 p.m. *Book Study on the Psalms* in the library. Rick Pearce will be leading another one of his wonderful book studies. Look for more details about the study below.

Seder Meal

6 p.m. on Tuesday evening, March 30th

Our own Debbie DeKalb will lead us in a traditional Seder meal. We will learn about this very important ritual for our Jewish sisters and brothers and how it is a part of our story as Christians. All are welcome to this event! Look for a sign-up sheet on one of the bulletin boards in the Parish Hall.

— Emily+



Lenten Book Study (Five Tuesdays in Lent)

February 23 through March 23

The selection for the book study is: ***A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society*** by Eugene Peterson. It is a look at Psalms 120 to 134, traditionally used in a pilgrimage, with application to our lives today. Participants need to get the book themselves before the class. If you have questions, please contact Rick Pearce.

