



ST. PETER'S NET

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

Third Sunday in Lent to Palm Sunday

March 2010

Modeling Jesus' Ministry of Inclusion

You've been hearing me talk a lot lately about all these teams, committees and individuals who are being invited to engage in our parish's transition work. You may be thinking, "Why so many jobs and roles?" "Why so many new committees?" "Why so much work?" Trust me. There is a method to the madness. For the most obvious and practical reasons, as we restructure the day-to-day operations of the parish by diminishing the hours and roles of paid staff, more volunteers are going to be needed to help out.

However, there are also theological and spiritual implications for this new level of engagement and involvement by members of the community. I believe that we are being called to embrace in creative ways the idea of mutual ministry which is modeled on Jesus' own ministry of inclusion and involvement. Modeling Jesus' way, I believe, will lead us to greater spiritual growth and vitality as a church. I was inspired to think of our call to mutual ministry in relation to Jesus' own ministry because of a meditation I recently read at a staff meeting. The meditation is entitled, *Include Others in Ministry* and reflects on Jesus' style of leadership and his willingness to involve others in his work.

The author of the meditation Susan Beebe writes, "*Jesus involved other people in his earthly ministry—people whose ability you or I might have questioned—and God established the church through those very people ... We, too, are called to enter into Jesus' way of inclusion, a model of ministry that makes room for those who might not seem ideally equipped. We must allow and even*

encourage others to fill meaningful roles in the church—knowing full well they will make mistakes, just as we do sometimes. At times, living the gospel means involving other people in job decisions ... If you're goal oriented, this inclusive approach to ministry may be intensely frustrating ... If it is simply a matter of accomplishing something more rapidly if you just did it by yourself rather than involve a few more people, or if it is a matter of getting things done the way you like them, maybe it is time to consider Jesus' model of involvement. Our true goal is not necessarily to get things done in the most efficient manner possible. It is helping others learn to be fishers of men and women by including them in our ministry."

During this time of transition in our life together, things are not always going to get done in the most efficient manner possible or in the way in which we'd like them to be done. I am going to make mistakes. Your Vestry is going to make mistakes. You are going to make mistakes. However, if we continue to invite each other into this work, utilizing all of our gifts and talents and abilities, and if we continue to broaden the circle to include more people in the pews to share in the ministry of this community, then together we will be living out our baptismal promises more faithfully and more fully. So, let us live the gospel by inviting and involving and including as our Lord did.

Remember, we're all in this together!

— Emily+

Vestry News and Transition Times

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

A Note from the Rector's Warden

As I write this, we are about to enter the Lenten Season with Ash Wednesday a few days away. It feels to me like we just celebrated Christmas. Whether it is the multiple snowstorms or the general busyness of life, time is moving quickly. Perhaps Lent will give each of us an opportunity to slow down a little and become more meditative about our lives.

The last several months have been very busy at St. Peter's. The Vestry has dealt with a difficult budgetary situation, which has impacted us in many ways. The most challenging, of course, is the change in our staffing. We are in the transition time now, and the staff changes will occur at the end of April. The Vestry is very appreciative of the contributions of Michael Sayer and Dianne Barnes.

One of the Vestry goals is to support the committee system in the management of church affairs. Two committees I have been most involved with are Finance and Personnel. The Finance Committee is in the process of reorganizing our finances by installing a QuickBooks accounting system. The first report was presented to the Vestry in the February meeting, and we are attaining greater clarity in our financial affairs. The Personnel Committee has worked hard on job descriptions for the transition period between now and April 30th and has also drafted the details of the new Church Secretary position.

I continue to be amazed at all the activities occurring at St. Peter's. This is a wonderful community. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact me or Emily or any Vestry member.

— George Luskus, Rector's Warden



Introducing the Education Discernment Team

A wonderful team of people have come together to work with the parish in evaluating our current education programs, visioning a new faith formation structure, and making the call to someone who will help us realize that new structure. Our team members are Hannah Collins, Lisa Donahue, Jarrod Gibson, Audrey Kipphut, Laurel Mosteller, Darrin Reazor, Danelle Sloan, and Rob Stackhouse. Sincere thanks to all of you for stepping up to serve in this important ministry.

Our first meeting was held on Saturday, February 13. Also joining us at the meeting were our Rector Emily and Andrew Kellner, the Diocesan Youth Minister. This meeting laid the groundwork for the tasks ahead as we look at all aspects of Christian formation from Godly Play through Adult Forum, midweek studies, and EFM.

On February 20th the team, along with the Education Steering Team (Dave Kipphut, Melissa Olson, and Laurel Mosteller) held the **Big Circle Conversation** on Education.

(Continued on next page)

Sample Comments from the

Big Circle Conversation on Education at St. Peter's

Things we do well include:

Godly Play, Adult Education opportunities, providing a safe space to explore questions of faith, relating faith to daily life.

Where we fall short includes:

Preparation for Confirmation, providing training support for our teachers, curriculum for Younger and Older Elementary, scheduling education times, communicating our programs to the wider community.

Some gaps include:

Providing space for adult education, using web communications such as blogs effectively, accessibility to the classrooms, hands-on outreach as part of our education programs, class in How to Become an Episcopalian, making the exterior of the church more inviting.

Some dreams include:

More singing and games for the younger kids, more class time, a closer-to-home Pilgrimage, more help for busy families, more social activities for couples, an Adult Café, more training in child development for teachers.

It's not too late to add your voice to the conversation. Contact Audrey Kipphut with your comments.

(*"Education Discernment Team"* continued from previous page)

We wish to thank the 27 people who came out to lend their voices to this project. The Education teams will review the ideas and suggestions from the Big Circle Conversation as well as the responses you have sent (and may still send) to us by e-mail. We encourage everyone's input. Early impressions from the Big Circle Conversation confirm that education at St. Peter's is an integral part of our lifelong journey in which we are always exploring our relationship to God. To improve what we have here, we need to stay open, flexible, and willing to be surprised by the Holy Spirit. *Please refer to the sidebar for a taste of the Big Circle Conversation.* Stay tuned for more in future communications.

The Education Discernment Team will be commissioned on March 14. We will also meet with Andrew Kellner again to receive further direction. Our goal is to be intentional about keeping the parish informed by updates in the NET and announcements in church. We invite the entire parish to participate with your ideas, prayers, and support. We are all in this together.

— Audrey Kipphut, Chair

Office Transition Team Up and Running

Sherry Butterworth, Debbie DeKalb, Carmen Gelinas and Linda Matt have accepted my invitation to become the Office Transition Team. After Mike and I discussed having him update the office manual, I decided it might also be helpful to have a group of parishioners who could learn from him the inner workings of the parish office. Each member of the team will be given the responsibility for overseeing different aspects of the parish's daily operations. My hope is that, once we hire a parish secretary, that individual will not only have the office manual to go to for help, but these parishioners as well. They will also help me determine what tasks need to be done by our staff and what can be accomplished by volunteer parishioners. Please thank Sherry, Debbie, Carmen, and Linda for their willingness to help out in the office during our transition.

Also, I am still looking for volunteers to be in the office Monday through Friday mornings to answer the phones, fold leaflets, stuff envelopes, etc. If you have some time during the week to give, please let me know!

— Emily+

"a person who has an ear to the people."

Transition Ombudsmen Continue to Serve

During the search for Emily, the parish voted for three people to form a transition team that would serve by listening to peoples' concerns and communicating to the Vestry. Kate Boyce, Peter Gottemoller and I are available again during this time of financial and emotional strain for our church family. We will listen to your concerns, and to your joys, and communicate them to the Vestry and to Emily. We are all in this together.

— Rick Pearce

Ombudsman (from Swedish for agent or representative)
n. originally an official appointed to deal with individual complaints against government acts.

Any organizational official who serves to channel any outside or inside complaints or questions concerning an organization.

