

The



Rock

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

October 2022

From the Priest Desk

Dear People of God,

So, let's start this month with a wee bit of science. There are about 30 trillion human cells in your body. And about 39 trillion bacteria—single-celled organisms. In other words, physically speaking, what I think of as “my body” isn't *my* body. Half of “me” isn't *me*.

I imagine some of you might be thinking, “Why, oh why, Father Dan, would you want to begin this issue of *The Rock* with such an unsettling fact?”

Two reasons. First because in October we will once again be celebrating Creation Season in our liturgies, and secondly because I often think that the root of all the problems humanity has created with the natural world is the conviction that *we* are not of *it*. That there is some distance between us and nature. That, in relation to humanity, nature is “out there” and “other than.”

The Book of Genesis reminds us that this is a fallacy when we read that “the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground” (2:7). That man is significantly called in Hebrew “*adam*” (Adam), because in Hebrew “*adamah*” means “soil, ground.” Yes, God breathes the Breath of Life into Adam, animating the “stuff” out of which he is made, but, as Adam's own name suggests, there's no separation, no distance, between being human and being interconnected with the natural world at the most fundamental level, being part of creation, being part of *all* that God has made and blessed.



There's a brief parable in a book called *Tales of a Magic Monastery* by Theophane the Monk in which someone asks one of the monks “What great blunder have you made?” His answer is, “There was a stone in my room, and I did not love it.” The monk was not “humble bragging,” and he wasn't being ridiculous. He was saying he failed to see the stone as God sees it. He'd insisted on seeing the rest of creation—including something so humble as a stone on the dirt floor of his monastic cell—as something not worth loving. And the point is, while there's much that *humans* make that's not worth loving, there's nothing that God makes that isn't. Not our fellow human beings, and not creation, all of which are one.

I don't want this to sound naïve or easy. Jesus said, “love your neighbor as yourself,” and we know that's hard. And I'm suggesting that “neighbor”—the one near to us whom we are called to love—includes even that stone on the ground. And I'll be reminding myself, as the season turns and the weather cools and the wolf spiders keep finding their way out of the cold and into my house, that my call to love, our call to love, is ever-unfolding. It isn't easy. But it's what we must strive for if we're going to begin to stall climate change, and reduce the frequency of devastating storms and wildfires and drought, and halt animal cruelty.

We often think about protecting the environment, caring for creation, as a matter of caring for God's gift to us. Fair enough. But it is just as much a matter of caring for one another. And caring for

ourselves. There just can be no real distance between us and creation, and when we begin to think there is, we go off track. I mean, 39 trillion bacteria can't be wrong.

Peace and blessings to you all this Creation Season!

Yours in Christ,

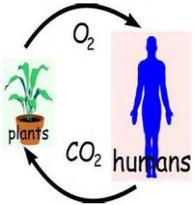
Fr. Dan+



Conserve the Oxygen!

We're now in Creation Season, so we need to focus on this groaning Earth of ours.

I recently watched our Presiding Bishop give his sermon from the National Cathedral, on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's passing. In it, he mentioned a reprimanding statement his father used on him when he found the future bishop seemingly doing nothing. It goes something like this: "Do something more than just using up the oxygen in this room!"



Bishop Curry then went on to give a little science lesson to the crowd about the Oxygen-Carbon Dioxide cycle that is necessary for most life on our planet. Though his point was that the Queen did much more than just use up oxygen, that little lesson stirred some Creation application in me.

Fact: the human population of the Earth is around 8 billion, and they all need oxygen, materials like wood for shelter, food, and water.

Fact: humans must inhale enough oxygen and exhale enough carbon dioxide to live. It is called the respiratory cycle.

Fact: trees and other plants take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen to complete their respiratory cycle.

If too many people exist and add too much of their myriad of carbon dioxide-producing sources to the environment (exhalation, motor vehicles, fires, fuel sources, plastic production, asphalt usage, etc.), AND CUT DOWN MILLIONS OF TREES AND PLANTS WITHOUT REPLACEMENT, the oxygen/carbon dioxide becomes skewed in the favor of carbon dioxide, much to our detriment

Fact: too much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere traps heat in the troposphere (that which we and weather dwell in), raising the earth's temperature and wreaking havoc on the balance of life therein.

Don't just use up oxygen....be mindful of what you export from your everyday living, and the effect you may have on the environment. Make good contributions to this Creation of God.





The Feast of St. Francis (the Patron Saint of Animals) is October 4. Our pet blessing is at the **10:00 am service this Sunday**. SO – Bring your pets, real or stuffed, to St. Peter's. They are all welcomed to join the human worshippers. Also bring a donation for the Blessing Box Pet Pantry. Animals need our help also.

Great Weekday Dinner Opportunity!



St. Peter's friends and family, a couple months ago the Blessing Box committee announced that we were going to promote a dinner fundraiser. Alison Mohr is now in the process of finalizing details.

It will take place at the TGIFridays at 1209 Niagara Falls Blvd at the Boulevard Mall. It will either be on Tuesday, October 18th or 25th. We will receive 20% of the total sale and it's for take-out or dine in. We will share the final date and time frame shortly and explain how to participate.

*Gary Donhauser, Lee and Fran McElhinny,
Alison Mohr and Lois Tripp*

Welcoming the Stranger - In a New Direction

Kateryna is a nurse at ECMC who works with Diana Leiker's daughter Kristin. She was born in the Ukraine, immigrated to the U.S., then stayed. She is married with a family of her own, and lives in Lancaster.



Once the Russians invaded the Ukraine and created such destruction of homes and loss of life, "Kat" dreamed of somehow getting her brother and his family over here to safety. At much personal expense and time, her dream came true when her brother Serhi, his wife Halyna, and their daughters Daryna, Mariya, and Olga, arrived on U.S. soil on September 9, 2022.

Familial love can be powerful. Kat found an apartment for them all and paid the first month's rent and security deposit. She found a residence fairly close by so that she could help them. She also managed to get the three girls into the Lancaster school system. Diana found some donated money from her church in Batavia (St. James), to help defray start-of-school costs.

And that is when the Holy Spirit stepped in. Kateryna's situation was relayed to Diana. Diana relayed it to me (I had been alerted to Ukrainian refugee aid through Jewish Family Services), and we decided to bring an idea to Father Dan. And so was born our decision to form a **Ukrainian Sponsor Circle** in conjunction with Jewish Family Services, and St. James Episcopal of Batavia. We are back in the business of living the Gospel.

The work of "Kat" has provided us a great start to this venture, and we will try to do as much as we can, in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, to welcome and love our new neighbors. The members of this

Sponsor Circle to date include our two deacons, plus Ed and Sharon Hill, Merry Jeffers, Dawn Rezabek, Elizabeth Ann Shascheck, Al Price, Carolyn Bonggi, and Lois Tripp from St. Peter's. Joann Bestine and hopefully others will join us from St. James.

We expect the Sponsor Circle to help the family with rent costs (from our Refugee Account), furniture and household items, transportation needs to job applications, health visits, shopping, social service appointments, and other "getting around town" needs. We also will try to provide some ESL teaching and mentoring. JFS will also be available to assist us in the employment and social service areas.

If you are not able to join the circle, you may still contribute on a regular basis to the St. Peter's Refugee Account. We intend to assist them monetarily until the parents can secure some employment and become self-sufficient.



Meanwhile, pray for this new and important venture, and for the Darmograi and Balanovych families as they navigate through unfamiliar waters, and assimilate into our society.

Peace and Blessings,
Deacon Tom

"They paved paradise, and put up a parking lot." Joni Mitchell

We are a nation of many nationalities, many races, many religions bound together by a single unity, the unity of freedom and equality. Whoever seeks to set one nationality against another, seeks to degrade all nationalities.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Welcome to Creation Season at the Bazaar

October is Creation season in our church, a time when, through Scripture, worship and prayer, we focus more closely on stewardship of the wonderful natural world that our Creator God has provided for us. The majesty of a mountain, the coolness of a forest, the tinkling of a brook, sun on our faces, a starry night but a few of God's wondrous gifts. Preserving these resources for future generations is an important aspect of our responsibility for our environment. Repair, Repurpose Recycle needs to become second nature for all of us if the important diversity of living things on our planet is to survive and better yet, to thrive. In this way, our children and grandchildren can enjoy these same benefits.



Earlier this year, The Bazaar, a fund-raising project for our refugee ministry through the sale of crafts and greeting cards, decided to actively encourage conservation efforts by introducing a new section: Creation Station. All items offered for sale, from cards to crafts and beyond, are constructed from recycled materials. Some repaired and renovated home goods, clothing and jewelry will also be available.

During October, we are stocking a number of additional items to sell in Creation Station along with our popular waxed bowl cover sets and recycled greeting cards. Stop in and have a look. Each item will have a "Good for You/ Good for the Earth" gift tag to help spread awareness that our resources

are finite but I hope that, with dedication to conservation principles. each one of us can join in leaving a lasting "green Earth" legacy.

Your Bazaar Merchants:

Deacon Joanne and Marcia Scime.



Stewardship

Over the past three years we have experienced many changes in our lives. The way we shop, gather, move about our daily lives and how we Worship. One thing has not changed, the strength of St. Peter's, If anything we are stronger.

I would like to thank all the parishioners for their faithful and financial support during these changing times. In the next month we will be kicking off our annual Stewardship Campaign. The Vestry was given a draft budget at the last meeting. The main item required to fill the budget in is the pledge number. You will be receiving a stewardship letter in October. Your response will help us complete the budget. We have added the Blessing Box, organ maintenance and AED support to the budget.

The Blessing Box is our newest outreach ministry. It has proved to be very successful in reaching those in need. I don't think we realized how many people needed this support. While this is not a food pantry it helps fill in when truly needed. Organ maintenance has been lacking. With the refurbishing of the air reservoir this past spring it brought to our attention that this is something we need to follow up on. The AED just requires a small bit of maintenance annually, it is a great safety net.

Thank you for your support
Ed Hill, Treasurer



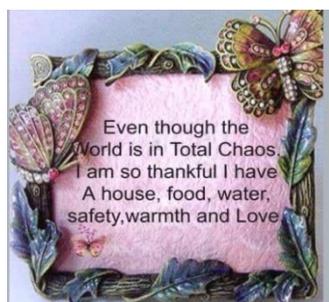
Linen Pantry Update



Each month I report we are busy in the Linen Pantry and the following month we are even busier. In September we provided household items for 18 families from 10 different agencies. This also included items for the 5 member Ukrainian refugee family we will be assisting in many ways.

Would like to thank the St. Peter's family for your donations of household goods, money or Dashes; register tapes. We would not be able to do the good works we do without your support. We just received a check from Dashes' thanks to the grocery receipts you turn in. Your efforts on our behalf are greatly appreciated.

Merrie Hill



Prayers of the People



Long Term: Becky, Jim G , Marty D and Gary, Kristie P, Ann Marie, Ron B, Suzanne and family, Gino L, Alfred, Bob R , Lucy, Lee & Jessica M, Judy E, Florence K, Amy P, Ray B, Dave L, Tim M, Wayne J, Joanne U, Cathy, Paula, Rick and Kristen, Tom and Joyce, Sharon H, Marilyn and Bob S, Jim M, Dan T, Brady, Trevor, Renee B, Joe P, Bob M, Beth, Frank B, Dillon, Joe M, Dorothy G, Dori, Beth, Sue & Dave S, Amy D, Ron W, Gary K, Megan M, Lynda C, Father Jerre, Dominic, Lindsey V, Jason, Bill and Finnegan

Short Term: Bob P, Don W, Nancy C, Dennis, Kevin K ,Barbara C, Catelynn and family, Linda P, Chris, Jim and Jackie C, Steve P and the people effected by hurricane Ian.

Military: Ben M, Brandon G and Richie

Departures: Alyssa, Theodore C. and Sue W,

Thanksgivings: Ministry grants, attendance at flu clinic and all who helped

Please call, text or email with any corrections, updates or thanksgivings.

God Bless!

Sue Gunn



10/02 John Pinti
10/02 Rachel Pinti
10/02 Elizabeth Schascheck
10/05 Steve Hardy
10/06 Dan Pinti
10/09 Dillon Lopat
10/14 Sara Gunn
10/14 Amy Heineman
10/15 Scott Frake
10/17 Natalie Campas
10/20 Marty Donhauser
10/23 Daniel Thibodeau
10/26 Michael Taube
10/20 Donovan Benning



10/95 Sam and Marcia Scime
10/07 Rev.Terry and Cindi Bull

