

The



Rock

St. Peter Episcopal Church

February 2023

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear People of God,

We'll be continuing in the Season of Epiphany almost throughout this month of February, with Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent falling on February 22nd. We'll be offering "Ashes to Go" again this year, but instead of the parking lot, we'll have a sign directing people to our front door facing Springville Avenue, where they can pull up for ashes to be imposed. We will also celebrate Eucharist on Ash Wednesday at 7 p.m.

In the blessed rhythms of the Church Year, Lent will mark something of a "turning inward" for us—a period of self-examination and reflection, not to replace active ministry but to firm up our foundation for it. Before that, though, during Epiphany, our focus should be turning *outward*: shining the light of Christ in our lives as much as we can, pointing others toward the presence and the work of Christ in the world.



"Epiphany," as you probably know, is from a Greek word that means "manifestation, revelation." This is the season when we celebrate the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God, the Light of the whole world. And the manifestation is ongoing. Sure, it began with the Wise Men, with the miracle at the wedding in Cana, with the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain, but it continues as we persist, in the spirit of our Baptismal Covenant, to "seek and serve Christ in all persons." As Joan Chittister writes in her book, *The Rule of St. Benedict: A Spirituality for the 21st Century*, "It

is so easy to love the God we do not see but it is so much more sanctifying to serve the God we learn to see in others."

When I first read that, I thought Chittister was going to say, "so much more *satisfying*," but that's not her point, and it's not *the* point. However, satisfying we may find it to be, serving God in others is also *sanctifying*—it deepens our holiness. That's because, of course, it is how the Holy One loves, in service to others. And the miracle is, the more we learn to see and serve God in others, the more they can see God at work in us.

That's kind of where Lent comes in. We need to learn to see God at work in us, too. And you may be thinking, "But isn't Lent about confessing our sins, repentance, forgiveness? Isn't it more about how 'bad' we are than how good we are?" Well, sure, confession and repentance and forgiveness are central to Lent. But by practicing them we find God at work in us. It's the Holy Spirit in us who moves us to recognize and confess our sins, the Spirit who helps us turn from them, the Spirit who helps us know that God's forgiveness is for me, for you, for all, and for real.

May Almighty God, who led the Wise Men by the shining of a star to find the Christ, the Light from Light, lead you also, in your pilgrimage, to find God—anywhere and everywhere He may be, not least at work in you!

Fr. Dan+



Deacon's Corner



I recently turned 76 years of age, and just read a Richard Rohr talk called **Two Halves of Life**. I found that it accurately described my own life with God, which I suspect many of us “veterans” of the same vintage share. Please allow me to briefly summarize.

The first half of life deals with getting an education, making money, raising children, paying a mortgage. It's about why I'm significant, why I'm important, why I matter, why I'm good, etc. It's mostly about ME and my survival.

Rohr's implication is that so many Christians are struck in this first half “ego rut” that we cannot easily find and enter the second half of life, at least in a timely rate. If the first half could be labeled our “survival dance”, the second should be called our “sacred dance.” My personal Epiphany, which allowed me to join the sacred dance, happened almost exactly half my life ago. I started moving from ego questions to questions of my soul. Wow. I wish I could have moved there sooner.

When the soul moves beyond questions of security and importance; when it has discovered that it is absolutely important; that is the most peaceful, satisfying dance of all.

Thank you, Richard and contributors, you bring such clarity to our lives. Thanks be to God.

Peace and Blessings
Deacon Tom

Chili Cook-off



Sunday February 12th is the Annual Parish Chili Cook-off after the 10am service. Cooks check your recipes. Among the frequent winners are Sharon Hill and Ed Hill. We need chili to challenges theirs, If you do not want to make chili, you can bring a desert or salad to share. Come vote for the 2023 winner. It could be your chili that is the best.

We have been singing Taizé music for many years at St. Peter's. While “Ubi Caritas” is one of our favorites, “Jesus Remember Me”, “Oh Lord Hear Our Prayer”, “Bless the Lord My Soul”, and “In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful” are a few others that we sing frequently. This music is simple, repetitive, meditative, and a form of centering prayer.

Before World War II, Roger Schutz, a native of Switzerland had a dream to live in a community that would offer reconciliation and hope in a world divided by war. In 1940 he was led to Taizé, a small hamlet in southeastern France, where a community of brothers from around the globe of various denominations was eventually formed. They helped the poor, sheltered Jews, and ministered to German prisoners of war. By 1949, seven young men committed to joining this community. Their prayer services consisted of singing, reading, and quiet reflection.

Throughout the years, more men joined the community and the numbers of young people visiting Taizé grew nearly 100,000 per year. To accommodate the needs of these young pilgrims of various faith traditions from around the world, the prayer service was adapted to include more singing and less speaking. The words to the music could be sung easily in many languages.

Today many churches around the globe offer Taizé services or include Taizé music in their weekly worship services. This rich, reflective music in its simplicity has the potential to reach the worshiper at the deepest level

ASH WEDNESDAY
Worship

February 22nd

7am-9am Ashes to Go – In front of the church on Springville Ave.

7pm In-Person Church Service only

Linen Pantry Update

In January we served 24 families from 5 agencies. We did receive several large donations which included items we were in need of.



With cold weather upon us we are in need of gently used queen or twin blankets and comforters. We can always use queen and twin sheets. Each bed in a client's household gets 2 sets of sheets (one on the bed and the other in the wash). That is a lot of sheets to give away if it is for a large family. Bedding and other household goods can be put on the front porch of the Mission House (house on the corner next to the church).

Sometime in February we will be sending another round of hats, mittens, socks and scarves to the 3 Food Pantries. Please look around to see if you have any of these items to donate. If so, put these gently used items on the "Mitten Tree" in the Narthex (back of the church).

Merrie Hill

Hearts for the Homeless

There is a red bin in the church parking lot and many red bins like it through-out Western New York. That bin has been there for many years. But what do you know about that organization?



That is for Hearts for the Homeless located on Tonawanda Street in the Riverside section of Buffalo since 1990. They have a thrift store which funds their various out-reach ministries. The mobile soup kitchen serves food to the homeless 7 days a week at 2 locations in downtown Buffalo. They also maintain a food pantry and a dining hall. In addition, a mobile food pantry provides fresh food to the residents of the Riverside area once a month.

The Linen Pantry does not have room to house gently used clothes. Therefore, we send clothes to Hearts and other items we don't need. Any stained bedding and towels, etc are also sent as "Penny a pound". Hearts sell these items to a company that turns them in to rags. This is a case of one charity helping another one with its ministry.

Through relationships, the ministry staff and volunteers at Hearts for the Homeless are able to make personal connections with their neighbors. They believe in "Nourishing the Community through Dignified Service."

Merrie Hill



At the Annual Parish meeting on January 22th, Michael Taube was elected as Warden and the newly elected Vestry members are Scott Millar and Lee McElhinny. Thank you to Katia Sanchez and Missy Lopat for all their work on the vestry.

The 2023 Vestry consists of Elizabeth Ann Schascheck and Mike Taube are Wardens. The Vestry members are Katie Hileke, Dawn Rezabek, Scott Millar Lee McElhinny Merrie Hill and MJ Campus.

The elected delegates to the Diocesan Convention in Erie, Pa in October are Sharon Hill, Lois Tripp and Elizabeth Ann Schascheck. The alternates are Al Price and Ed Hill.

We may have
different religions,
Different languages,
different colored skin,
but we all belong to
one human race.
- Kofi Annan

The Cool Shady Tree

To The Recreational Bakers And Note-Writers of St. Peters:

Collins Christian Ministries (CCM) will be officially functioning again for the weekend of April 28-30 at Collins Correctional Facility near Gowanda. We're baaaccckkk!

That means I will again be asking all the faithful prison ministry supporters prior to the pandemic breakout to think about baking cookies and muffins once again, and/or writing supportive note cards for the individual inmates.

Look for updated messages in the next months to come. We hope to have your support.

Deacon Tom & Missy Lopat

Blessing Box

The winter season has NOT shown a decline in the neighborhood's use of the food, toiletries paper products, and pet food. In fact, I feel there is more need. Can you help by purchasing an item or two? Cereals, tuna, mayo, beans, soups, Chef Boyardee, spaghetti sauce and spaghetti, peanut butter, and Jelly. Toilet paper, deodorants, razors, soap, dish liquid, laundry detergent, diapers, toothpaste, and toothbrushes are also greatly needed. Dog and cat food are always needed and welcome. I have been following coupon sales in the grocery stores and picking up those items.

Thank you for any help you can give and have already given. We still are looking for some additional helpers to fill the blessing box on a Wed or Friday. It should take you less than an hour to gather the items from the undercroft and place them in the box. Please pray about it and call Gary Donhauser or me.

Many thanks.

Gary Donhauser, Lois Tripp and Alison Mohr.



Morning Prayer

Let our thoughts, our words and deeds, ever be pure, kind and good. Let us live peacefully with each other, respecting one another in love. Let us see the good in our fellow man, that we may love our neighbors as ourselves.

An Amish Prayer

Brain cells die, skin cells die, even hair cells die.

But FAT CELLS... must have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior because they seem to have eternal life.

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 degrade all nationalities.

Franklyn D. Roosevelt

No matter how stressed you are, remember how Blessed you are.



Prayers of the People

Long Term: Becky, Jim G, Kristie P, Ron B, Gino L, Alfred, Lee & Jessica M, Judy E, Joanne U, Beth, Sue & Dave S, Ron and Susan W, Lynda C, Dominic, Lindsey V, Jason, Bill, Finnegan, Tami G, Nicole, Dan & Sue H



Short Term: Joyce J, Kris, Jeffery, Adam N, Brenda B, Lori W, Marianne & family, Chris G, Michelle H, Joanne F, Marilyn S, Diane G, Damar H and family, Michael M, Larry, Emma B and Kimm

Military: Ben, Brandon and Rickie

Departed: Tyre

Thanksgiving: Iain

Please contact me with any additions, updates or corrections, God Bless!

Sue Gunn



02/03 Megan Smith
02/04 Steve Frake
02/04 Suzi Coury Ferreire
02/05 Jane Cushman
02/13 Michael Kankiewicz
02./24 Edward Hill III

02/14 Conroy Clarke and Maria Sanchez-Clarke

If we could spread
love as quickly as we
spread hate and
negativity, what an
amazing world we
would live in.



