

ST. PETER'S NET

St. Peter's by-the-Sea Newsletter



I made a mistake last week. I went to the Mall on a Saturday. I had a feeling that I had made a serious error when I pulled into the parking garage and was instantly thrust into Demolition Derby. The feeling was confirmed when I rode up the escalator and was greeted by the muzak version of "Silver Bells" cheerily blaring from all corners. Every inch of available open space had been tinsel or decorated with some manifestation of Santa and the reindeer. And even the 30 foot-tall fake Christmas trees seemed to be giving off a faint pine odor. I had definitely walked into a trap.

It doesn't take long to recognize that the Church season of Advent is outmatched by the much more stimulating season of Christmas. Do much of anything outside your home over the next few weeks and you will be immediately beset by the saturation-bombing campaign of media and advertising. Society tells us that every minute of the next month should look like something out of a Hallmark card: smiles on every face, songs on all our lips, and packages in every hand. If we're not in the process of buying something,

then we are driving to the store or wrapping the gifts we've already purchased.

One of the traditional passages from Scripture appointed for the season of Advent comes from Isaiah 35: *For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.* Huh. The desert is an interesting metaphor to consider given the typical circumstances of our lives during December. Most of us are so over-exposed, over-commercialized, over-stimulated, that we don't even remember what its like to be thirsty, to be dry as a bone, to be parched to our cores. Our lives may be a lot of things this time of year, but it would be hard to confuse any of them with the barren, empty, dry void of the desert.

Do you remember what its like to be thirsty, to thirst for God? When was the last time you sat still long enough to recognize the way you have been conditioned to fill yourself up with whatever is around you, be it food, work, shopping or alcohol. We have all been taught

how to *not* be thirsty. We have been taught how to fill up. But it is just saltwater in a dry mouth.

When Christ met the Samaritan woman at the well he told her that he had living water to offer the world, water that would quench the deep thirst of humanity. It's the drink to soothe our parched souls, but first we have to stop pouring saltwater into our mouths long enough to realize we're actually thirsty. We won't seek this living water when our mouths are always full, when we're on the go every single minute of the day, when there's not a moment unscheduled.

During Advent, when everything around you is designed to stimulate and intoxicate, I hope you'll take some time to ponder the thirst you can only barely make out. Look inside the interior desert of your soul. Ponder the dryness. Live into the wilderness where God longs to find you. And remember, when the dam breaks on the living God, a flood of new life will break in to quench the burning sand of your own heart.

Casey+
December 2010

*Come,
thou long
expected Jesus*

ADVENT 2010 CALENDAR

November 28	ADVENT WREATH MAKING
December 1	LESSONS AND MUSIC
December 4	ST. PETER'S BAZAAR
December 8	EVENSONG
December 15	CONTEMPLATIVE EUCHARIST
December 18	CAROLING AT NURSING HOMES

Our St. Peter's Family

We celebrate with

- the families of Riley Joseph Durant, Lila Grey Moffitt, Desilucia Angeletti Freidah and Devin William Lague, who were all baptized on All Saints' Sunday, November 7.

Christmas Decor

The church looks its most beautiful at Christmas. Poinsettias, garland and wreaths seem to heighten the joy of the season. It is always appropriate to make a contribution toward the cost of these decorations in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving for a blessing. Simply call the Church Office by Monday, December 13 to learn more about donating and provide information about your gift. These thanksgivings and memorials will be printed in the Christmas bulletins.

Haul Out the Holly *Making an Advent Wreath*



You may still be in a turkey-induced coma, but you won't want to miss church on the first Sunday of Advent, November 28. That's because you and

your family will have a chance to make your very own Advent wreaths in the Parish Hall during the education hour. From 9:00 to 10:00 a.m, boxes of greens, circular forms, and candles will be on hand, along with instructions on how you can make your own Advent wreath. Casey will talk a little about how this tradition became part of the season, and little cards with additional information and prayers will also be available for you to take home.

The Season of Advent

Prepare Ye the Way



The word "advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming." Despite everything the world (and especially the mall) will try to tell you over the next few weeks, Christmas is not here. It is *coming*. Now, of course God already came into the world a long

time ago in the person of Jesus Christ, so in that sense, Christmas already happened. But each year we recall that miracle, the Incarnation, and we prepare for it with fresh hope. This year you are invited to the observance of a holy Advent by attending three distinct worship events on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. They are designed to supplement your personal acts of devotion, and draw you deeper into this season of expectation and preparation.

ADVENT LESSONS AND MUSIC Includes a series of seven readings that tell of God's persistent love, and of God's plans to send a savior into the world to redeem all of Creation. Blended between the readings will be pieces of music — hymns, instrumentals and anthems — that will offer beautiful counterpoints to the readings. *Wednesday, December 1, 7:00 p.m.*

CHORAL EVENSONG Evensong is one of Anglicanism's greatest gifts to the Christian Church. We will join our voices with monks, cathedral choirs, and congregations around the world who sing the service of Evening Prayer. *Wednesday, December 8, 7:00 p.m.*

CONTEMPLATIVE EUCHARIST Drawing heavily on the music of Taizé, and punctuated with periods of quiet, this service will provide a perfect setting to contemplate the Light who came into the world and will do so again. *Wednesday, December 15, 7:00 p.m.*

A Few Other Great Ways to Get Inspired

RHODE ISLAND PHILHARMONIC COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA
A concert by a gifted regional orchestra, including our own Jim Morgan, Katy Tetreault and Becky Johnson. *Sunday, December 12 at 3:00 p.m.*

PRE-SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SERVICE Annual celebration by the children and families of our Pre-School. *Thursday, December 16 at 10:00 a.m.*

LAPLANTE CENTER CONCERT A beloved tradition at St. Peter's, as you have never heard Christmas carols and festive holiday music sung with such joy and heart. Walk away from the concert with a fresh spirit, renewed by the beautiful singing of these wonderful performers. *Friday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m.*

The St. Peter's Bazaar *Fun and Funds*



The St. Peter's Bazaar this year takes place on Saturday, December 4, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This annual event offers a delightful assortment of items for sale, from gift baskets to

used collectibles to decorative greenery to the textiles of Kay Dee designs. Not to mention that the food just seems to get better every year, so you'll want to come hungry. Best of all, the funds generated from the Bazaar go to support the life of St. Peter's in a variety of ways. Last year's proceeds were used for necessary capital improvements, and helped our youth journey on a holy pilgrimage. This year we have more capital improvements and numerous ministry needs to help fund. So mark down December 4 on your calendar and remember to come by to support this



St. Peter's Youth on the pilgrimage to South Dakota funded by the 2009 Bazaar

important fundraiser. *If you have items to donate to the Flea Market, please drop them off beginning November 22. Remember: no clothing or appliances.*

Make a Joyful Noise *Caroling and a Movie*

On Saturday, December 18, the Children and Youth Ministry Council invites you to join them as they bring music and joy to area nursing homes. Meet up at the church at 2:00 p.m, before heading out to visit folks who won't mind if you're a little bit rusty on your "Deck the Halls." It's a day of mutual blessing: you blessing others with your singing, and being blessed along the way by countless smiles and twinkling eyes. Following the caroling trip, everyone is invited back to the Parish Hall for a viewing of *Elf*, the hilarious Christmas flick starring Will Ferrell. Contact Patti Risica for more information: 788-9012.



Adult Forum in Advent *Pausing on the Road to Bethlehem*

One of the central themes of Advent is waiting. We honor our centuries-long wait for the return of Christ by "waiting" during the four weeks of Advent. During this class, we'll blend silence and music, Scriptural study and poetry in order to deepen our experience of this season of watchful anticipation. Sundays in December, 9:15-10:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall.

Joy to the World

Four distinct opportunities to worship the newborn King this Christmas.

5:00 P.M. ON CHRISTMAS EVE: HOLY EUCHARIST WITH PAGEANT

Children help heighten the Christmas joy in a delightful retelling of the story of Jesus' birth. Families with children are especially encouraged to attend, as children and youth will act, read, and play musical instruments.

10:00 P.M. ON CHRISTMAS EVE: FESTAL EUCHARIST

Traditional "Midnight Mass," including incense and a string quartet.

10:00 A.M. ON CHRISTMAS DAY: HOLY EUCHARIST WITH MUSIC

An intimate service with piano-led singing

10:15 A.M. ON FIRST CHRISTMAS: LESSONS AND CAROLS

Readings that tell the story of salvation, blended with your favorite hymns.

However and whenever you choose to worship, we invite you to make St. Peter's a part of your celebration of Immanuel, "God with us."

Christmas Pageant



All kids are invited to play a part in retelling the story of Christ's birth at the

5 o'clock Eucharist. Three rehearsals are scheduled (12/4 @ 10 a.m., 12/12 and 12/19 after the 10:15), and we ask that you try to be present at a minimum of two. There is no memorization, but some staging and costume fitting. This is a lot of fun, and is sure to make memories. Call Mary Ellen Caniglia to sign up your child for the show: 789-4298.

It's Not Too Late...

Hopefully you have given prayerful consideration to how you will support God's kingdom through the work of St. Peter's by-the-Sea in 2011 and have returned your pledge card. If you have not already mailed in your pledge, the season of Advent is a good time to consider the blessings in your life, and how God asks you to offer back a portion of that in thanksgiving. *If you celebrated your 70th birthday before July 1 this year, and you have money invested in traditional IRA, you can donate **tax-free** from your government-mandated IRA distribution directly to St. Peter's. To learn more or get the process started please call the Church Office at 783-4623.*

Adopt a Family Gifts of Love

If you're pretty sure Santa will find all the boys and girls on *your* list, perhaps you will consider also giving presents to children who would otherwise go without. St. Peter's is again participating in Adopt-a-Family sponsored by the Jonnycake Center, which offers clothes and toys to several hundred boys and girls. Visit the special table in the Parish Hall by December 12 to get more information on who to shop for. Then you can either bring the wrapped toys or clothes back to St. Peter's by December 14, or drop them off at St. Francis Church in Wakefield by December 15. For more information, please contact Jennifer Nerbonne at 789-7451.

Making Merry Greening the Church

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19, you are invited to stick around after the 10:15 service to help us get the church ready for Christmas. We'll put up the tree in the Parish Hall, and adorn it with all the ornaments created by our Sunday School children. We'll also begin the work of decorating the church, which is a lengthy but rewarding process. And there will be plenty of food, drink and caroling, too.

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