

Crossed Keys



April, 2008

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Dear Families and Friends of St. Peter's,

April is the month of the grandchild! As of this writing we are still expecting, and by God's grace we have welcomed a new child to our family by the time you have received this! I will be visiting Jamie, Jeremy, and child for my "appointed grandpa week" in mid April, and I can't wait to spend time with these special people! For my article space this month I bring you a thoughtful piece written by Tomas Asmus, who did a university exchange program in Japan last year, and found his link to his home church to be vital and life-sustaining. We communicated with Tom often during his stay and study in Japan, and we found that the St. Peter's website (stpeterssheridan.com) was a great outreach to those who are far away. I hope you enjoy his thoughts. Happy Easter. David+

Facing the Fact of Few Fellow Followers in the Far East.

By Thomas Asmus

Tokyo, Japan, is a city of 13 million in a nation of 130 million people, occupying about the same land area as the State of California. Out of these 130 million souls only 0.7% (910,000) are Christians. In Tokyo, where I lived, the figure of Christians amount to no more than 0.3%(36,000). There were some English Language churches but while there I naturally sought out and found the only English Anglican church in the city. I regret to state that it was populated by a 60% migrant congregation of traveling business people and a Priest I couldn't really relate to. That being a strike out, I proceeded to find alternate body life. Through a 3rd degree connection I started going to another church that a friend of my mother put me onto. Aside from this church, which was over a 2 hour round trip away on the expensive Japanese rail system, I knew exactly *one* native English speaker Christian, and we never really did anything together. This resulted in the fact that I had *zero* peer fellowship and the only fellowship I was getting at all didn't involve much in the way of deep interaction spiritually with any peers.

Aside from this once weekly excursion I was cut off. To counter this absolute dearth of Christian fellowship I was truly blessed to have available the sermon's of St. Peter's, as posted on the church's web page. In addition to being a blessing, often the

messages had some supremely providentially timed presentations on issues of note to the events going on in my life.

For example, a sermon by Fr. Kevin just prior to Christmas about the "holiday blues" came after nearly 3 months of spiritual isolation in Tokyo and I was at a significantly low ebb. I listened to this kindred message from a voice I knew so well at a particularly rough time during my initial stay. Kevin's sermon said all the right things and came at perfect timing.

A second example of this came during several weeks of sermons on reconciliation. They came dead on when I was having some very difficult things going on with my apartment "cohabitor". If you know much about Japan and Tokyo in particular, you know that it is very cramped. I'm 6 feet 4 inches and some partial inches. My apartment including my room, my roommate's room, our bathroom and kitchen amounted to no more than the entrance foyer of St. Peter's on the North-West side of the church. In such cramped living space various problems occurred when my roommate embarked on a lifestyle of various activities that created vast tension between the two of us. Having this vast series of messages about working through such problems enabled me to talk to my roommate about this matter. I'm sure I didn't really convince him of what was wrong with the way he was living, but I'm sure he's never encountered a reaction such as the one I presented to him. Following this discussion the event wasn't repeated in our apartment anyway. On occasion I maintain contact with him through various electronic means.

In the spiritual desert of the planes of Tokyo the words of Fr. Duprey extolling the virtues of spending time in the Word as he has done ever since I've known him, finally kicked me off into daily reading rather than semi-annually. In the lack of physical fellowship the electronic extension of the words of our church cannot be underrated.

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KEVIN'S CORNER...

Dear St. Peter's Church Family,

Alleluia! Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Even as we continue to celebrate the death of our own sin and death that was accomplished for us by Jesus' willingness to lay down his life for us, we continue to live in the life that Jesus offers to us as a result of his own resurrection from the dead. The apostle Paul writes,

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

During the coming Sundays we will discuss what that resurrected life that we now have been promised in Christ Jesus looks like. How we go about "counting ourselves alive to God in Christ Jesus" has profound implications for how we now choose to live our lives, as well as how others are going to interpret the fact that we call ourselves followers of Christ. And it should. Our hope is to conduct ourselves in a manner that explicitly reveals the grace of God which we have received and to which we beckon the rest of our community to consider. As we model and live out the grace we have received by God, so others will have their concept of Jesus and his followers shaped and challenged. Paul writes again:

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. (Eph :1-6)

This month a group of 20 or so of us from St. Peter's will climb into the church vans and begin the long drive south to Juarez, Mexico. While there we will build two houses through the ministry of Casas por Cristo (www.casasporcristo.org for more info) for families who are presently living in houses made of pallets. This is a great opportunity for us to live out the gospel message of God's provision to us through grace, as well as a chance for us to grow in our understanding of what it

means to sacrificially serve others who are less fortunate than ourselves. We covet your prayers for safety as we travel, for our hearts to be open to the ways in which God is hoping to change us throughout this experience, for our relationships as we strive to treat one another with love while under sometimes stressful conditions and for the families who will receive the homes which will be built (that these new buildings would be signs to them of God's love for them.) Thank you for praying.

Now I know that not everyone who was hoping to come or who may have considered coming is going to be able to do so. Don't fear, there will be more trips in the future, but there are also needs and opportunities for us to live out the resurrected life right here in our own community. The apostle James writes, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (James 1:27). We may not have many orphans to watch out for here in Sheridan, but the way in which we respond to the needs and concerns of our widows is worth considering.

Recently, one of the men in our church approached me about putting together a **Men's Work Day** to help assist with some of the home maintenance needs our widows might have. I thought this was an excellent idea in that it allows us to grow in our practice of serving one another, as well as in meeting practical needs in our community. We are proposing a work day in June to get us going. We thought the weekend of Father's Day might be a good time for us to pitch in because it will allow us to fulfill the role a Father would have taken in the lives of these ladies who are without husbands or fathers. We'll likely try to work both Friday and Saturday (June 13th and 14th). We'll be announcing this in church as the date draws closer, but I'm writing this now, so you can consider your summer schedules and hopefully set at least a portion of one of those days aside.

I'm grateful to be considering what it means to live out the resurrected life in this community with you. Let us continue to glorify the risen Lord with all of our selves. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

By Grace,

Kevin Jones

Our 2008 Vestry Members

Tina Mediate
Sr. Warden

Marcus York
Jr. Warden

- Gary Benson
- Maria Black
- John Chase
- Debbie Ebia
- Mike Evers
- Jack Fritz
- Penny Hoffman
- Theresa Miller
- Cara Nicholls
- Randy Stout

Please pray daily for our Vestry and for their ministry to St. Peter's.

Continued from page 1

Over Christmas vacation, in a bid to escape Tokyo, I decided to visit my Christian friend from UW living in Korea. This brought me from knowing nearly nothing of South Korea to loving it more than I'd ever imagined. This had a role in a seemingly random act of asking a Korean girl, whom I'd spoken to only once, to go with her to her church. She was also attending the same university as myself. In our single conversation somehow it came up that she was a Christian. Another part of this decision had something to do with the fact that I was spending \$16 equivalent every Sunday and 2 and a half hours on a train to get to church. But I'm certain that the Holy Ghost had a role in that as well. About this time Fr. Dave was talking extensively about the role of the Holy Spirit as real and imperative in the Church. I think that there was definitely some connection in this event.

The church that Imisong took me to was exactly 2 train stops from my suitcase sized apartment, on the line that my school rail commuter pass gave me access to. This meant I could go to church for free instead of for 1800 yen a week. Further and much more importantly, the Tokyo Love Church was an impressive spiritual community, in addition to being full of purpose and the Love of God. They did the affair in proper Korean style: unlike American churches where Fr. Dave seems to be constantly apologizing for "overrunning" some ethereal time limit that I certainly didn't impose on him; the Koreans literally went to church for 2 hours...then descended a flight of stairs...had a full wonderful Korean lunch for about an hour then we all went back upstairs for another 2-3 hours of sermon and then back downstairs for other activities of just general fellowship. Often we'd stay well until after the sun had set and quite frequently had dinner either at the church or nearby. Now if only America had something similar...

In any case I'm truly grateful for all the wonderful sermons Frs. Dave, Kevin, John and Bishop Vernon gave last year that I was able to listen to thanks to the efforts of those involved in recording them and posting them to the internet.

Peace of the Lord.



RELAY FOR LIFE! On June 27th, St. Peter's and friends will be walking for the cure on Normative Services' track. If you are interested in joining a team, let the church office know or call Gail @672-9298. We will have a meeting April 13th after the 2nd service to sign up runners and organize teams. Talk to your friends and neighbors about this event and get them to sponsor or walk with you and your team members. It will be a great weekend for a great cause.



Reminder— St. Peter's 7-Up Club members and all other interested student singers are practicing for their singing debut on Sunday mornings during the 2nd service from now until Mother's Day. On May 11th, these stars will be honoring moms everywhere. Thank you Theo, Fritz and Bert for assisting these great kids.



Prayer Shawl Ministry— There are approximately 12 shawls in the making! Thank you all so much for your support. Please feel free to leave your completed work in the church office.



We offer our sincere thanks and appreciation to Mary Paquet for her volunteer ministry of establishing and maintaining our church website. If you haven't seen this site yet, go to stpeterssheridan.com.

E-mail Addresses

AERATING FUNDRAISER— Once again this year we will be aerating yards to raise money for the mission's trip to Juarez. If you are interested in having your yard aerated, please call the office 674-7655 or Kevin at 461-0237 by Monday, April 7th. You may donate whatever amount you would like and we will plan on aerating on Saturday, April 12th. Call soon so we can be sure to work you into our lineup!

Here's what's happening!

Wow... It is almost here. Your fifth grader will soon be heading off to Jr. High.

April 23rd St. Peter's youth group is inviting all graduating fifth graders to youth group. We like to start early with the upcoming class for two reasons. One, is to let the new students see what youth group is like before summer starts. Two, they will have a head start getting to know each other before they start sixth grade. If your student is ready or you know someone who might be interested please give me (AnDy) a call.

For many of the same reasons we will be graduating our eight graders into our Sr. High program on April 27th.

Below is a schedule of our program:

Jr. High-Wednesday Nights

6:15-7:00pm Hang out time

7:00-8:30pm Jr. High EYC

Sr. High-Sunday Nights

6:15-7:00pm Hang out time

7:00-9:00pm Sr. High EYC

If you have any questions about your student starting or moving to a new time please give me (AnDy) a call at 751-5625 or write me a note at andy@fiberpipe.net

You can also check out our youth website at eycrocks.com

God bless,

AnDy

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

This is the house of God!
Welcome in the name of Christ.
We gather to worship our Creator
who is our refuge and strength.



To the family and friends of Evelyn
"Evie" Hoxsey and Sally Witzel.

"The strength of a
country is the strength
of its religious
convictions."

Calvin Coolidge

St. Peter's Educational Fund

**Interest free loans
are available for members of St.
Peter's pursuing college or
trade-school attendance.
Applications are in the church**

The Crossed Keys

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St. Peter's Episcopal Church.

**Articles and ads are
due by the 15th of the month.**

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Grace



Grace is like getting two more days to complete an assignment even though you've goofed off for six weeks and missed the deadline. Grace is getting another chance even though you haven't earned it or deserved it. Grace is God's unmerited favor, mercy and love, by which we are justified freely.

Fritz Ridenour

Building a Church



Computer programmer Amy Hughes found a unique way to express her faith. The Lego enthusiast built a church out of 75,000 Lego pieces. The church is about 7' x 5 1/2' and seats 1,372 little Lego people. The building has almost 4,000 windows, mosaics, an altar and crucifix, a pulpit, a detailed pipe organ, a narthex, bathrooms, stairs and a balcony that seats an 80-member choir. Photos are posted at www.amyhughes.org/lego/church.

Hughes, who once dreamed of being an architect, spent a year and a half on her project, dubbed the Abston Church of Christ. ("Abston" is a fictional name derived from ABS, the type of plastic used to make Legos.)

She also used the Lego church as an exercise in sermon-writing. Pondering why people seek refuge in a house of God, Hughes writes, "The Lord is here because we are here, not because we built a beautiful building." "For where two or more are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20, NRSV).

Office Hours

**9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. —4:00 p.m.**

VESTRY

**MEETINGS
4th TUESDAY OF
THE MONTH**

Bible Quiz

An Old Testament book reveals some lessons that King Lemuel learned from his mother. One was the following: "Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."

Which book contains that quote?

- A. Psalms
- B. Jeremiah
- C. 2 Kings
- D. Proverbs

***** First person to call the office with the correct answer and exact bible location wins 2—\$5 gift certificates at Dairy Queen. *****



IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ON THE CALENDAR, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE. 307-674-7655

Holy Eucharist- HE
 Healing Service- H
 Sunday School- SS
 Youth Group- EYC
 Daughters of the King- DOK
 Morning Prayer- MP
 Adult Education- AE



2008

Sunday *Monday* *Tuesday* *Wednesday* *Thursday* *Friday* *Saturday*

		1 7:00 am HE Annunciation (Memorial Chapel) 10:00 am HE Healing Service (Memorial Chapel)	2 9:00 St. Nick/ Women's Council 7:00 pm Jr. EYC	3 8:00 am DOK 10:00—3:00 pm RED DOOR 7:00 pm Choir Practice	4	5
6 7:30 am HE 9:00 am SS/AE 10:00 am HE 7:00 pm Sr. EYC	7	8 10:00 am HE Healing Service (Memorial Chapel)	9 9:00 St. Nick 7:00 pm Jr. EYC	10 10:00—3:00 pm RED DOOR 7:00 pm Choir Practice	11	12
13 7:30 am HE 9:00 am SS/AE 10:00 am HE 7:00 pm Sr. EYC	14	15 10:00 am HE Healing Service (Memorial Chapel)	16 9:00 St. Nick 7:00 pm Jr. EYC/ St. Margaret's	17 10:00—3:00 pm RED DOOR 7:00 pm Choir Practice	18	19
20 7:30 am HE 9:00 SS/AE 10:00 am HE 7:00 pm Sr. EYC	21	22 10:00 am HE Healing Service (Memorial Chapel) 5:00 pm VESTRY	23 9:00 St. Nick 7:00 pm Jr. EYC	24 10:00—3:00 pm RED DOOR 7:00 pm Choir Practice	25 7:00 am HE St. Mark (Memorial Chapel)	26
27 7:30 am HE 9:00 am SS/AE 10:00 am HE 7:00 pm Sr. EYC	28	29 10:00 am HE Healing Service (Memorial Chapel)	30 9:00 St. Nick 7:00 pm Jr. EYC			

May 2008						
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We have the opportunity once again to join a construction expedition to help the people of Juarez, Mexico. Juarez is part of the Greater El Paso– Ciudad Juarez Metropolitan Area, population 2,380,785 in 2006. The slum population of Juarez is huge, to say the least.

Matthew 25:

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’

Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation is an Episcopal grassroots movement of connection and collaboration to seek and serve Christ in the extreme poor around the world. The following prayer forms a specific foundation for this movement, and it is very appropriate to our Juarez Mission. The prayer was written by one of its founders, the Rt. Rev. Jeffery Rowthorn...

Most loving God,

As your desire for mercy for the poor is unrelenting,
May we be unrelenting in our pursuit of mercy for all;
As your compassion for the suffering of the poor knows no limit,
May our hearts overflow with compassion for all;
As you long for justice for the poor,
May we strive for justice for all.

Open our eyes to the structures of oppression from which we benefit,
And give us courage to accept our responsibility,
Wisdom to chart a sound course amid complexity,
And perseverance to continue our work until it is finished.
Breathe your life-giving Spirit afresh into your Church
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Randy Stout, Vestry Member