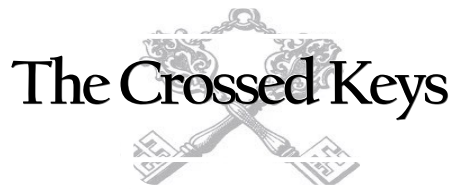




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December 2015

**What time was Jesus born?
 (or why Christmas service is at
 4pm and 9pm this year)**

Honestly I am not sure. We have always thought it was sometime at night due to the shepherd's hearing word at night. The Magi also were guided by a star, although they arrived many days (or possible months) after Jesus was born. Whatever the reason we have always associated Jesus birth with being late at night; maybe that has to do with our own experience of when babies are born. When Sarah went into labor with Rosie at 5pm (who was born at 5am the next day) I asked the nurses if anyone ever has went into labor at 9am and had the baby by 5pm, they just looked at me and said, "Nope."

Whatever the reason we associate Jesus birth with late at night and have had late night services for quite some time. Midnight mass was a tradition for a long period of time in the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Church. Frankly it is a great tradition but every year I find myself looking about at people who are exhausted at the start of the late service. Night time does not necessarily need to be midnight or any specific time, as a matter of fact it could be 5pm in December in this part of the world. So here is what I propose (I know for some of you this is your least favorite sentence coming out of my mouth) can we try having the late service at 9pm rather than 10pm this year? I don't think 10 pm is any more "Christmassy" than 9pm.

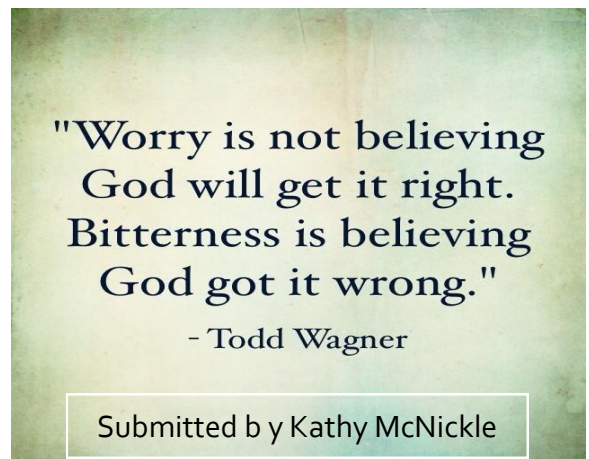
If you want to know my reasoning, here it is – this gives us time to have the 4pm service, followed by enough time to eat dinner for clergy, choir, handbellers, and anyone else who has obligations at both services, and we can wrap up the late service by 10:30pm so everyone can get home and sleep. I asked the choir and altar guild about this and each group had no objection.

I hope you know me well enough to know that if this proves to be a problem, we can assess it after this year to see how it went. So what time was Jesus born? Well for St. Peter's this year, let's say 4pm and 9pm.

A blessed Advent and Christmas to you all,

Your priest,

John+





Dr. John Milliken-Family Minister
 drjohn@stpeterssheridan.com
 307-461-1924

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One of my favorite passages associated with Advent is Isaiah 11. The prophet begins by declaring that “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.” Jesse was David’s father so the reference here is to the royal house of David. A stump isn’t a very promising thing. It is a token of something that was but has ceased to be. There is a huge stump in a park here in town and every time I see it I wish that the tree it represents was still here. It must have been glorious in its time. Similarly, by the time Isaiah is speaking God’s word to the Israelites the glory days of David’s kingdom are past and before long it will cease to exist altogether. Generations passed and the people of Israel, in exile and on home soil but under foreign domination, would continue to hope in the words of the prophet that some day something would grow again from the stump of the line of David.

In hindsight, we can see two things. First, the promise took a long time to be fulfilled. The last king of Judah (the southern part of the divided kingdom of Israel) went into exile in 587 BC. The shoot that comes from the stump of Jesse is, of course, Jesus. The people would have to wait around 600 years.

Second, the promise was fulfilled in a way that was significantly different (and better) than what the people expected. Most thought the promised king in the line of David would be another human king who would do the sorts of things kings do: conquer enemies, establish laws, etc. But of course Jesus was God incarnate, who would establish a kingdom of an entirely different sort that wasn’t about conquering territory but reclaiming human hearts. He was going to get to the true root of humanity’s problems.

This hopeful story of the stump and the shoot is our story, too. For scripture tells us that we are all stumps, in a sense: the dead remains of what once was. In the beginning we were made for intimate fellowship with God and cooperative rule in his world. Our sin has separated us from God and thwarted these purposes in a thoroughgoing way. Paul says we are “dead” in our sins (Eph 2:1). Yet the shoot who represented new life came to give us new life, also. When we open our lives to Jesus there is, indeed, “new creation.” (2 Cor 5:17) God can begin building in us what was always meant to be there.

This hope of new life takes on a very personal dimension. It is not only true that God solves the general problem of spiritual death by giving us new life. He is also able to bring forth growth from the particular stumps that represent the wounds and disappointments of our lives. There are stumps of failed relationships and failed jobs; stumps also of dashed dreams and wasted opportunities. But God is a God of second chances, of redemption. He specializes in bringing forth new life from dead remains. Our part is to invite Him to do this and to trust him as he leads us forward, clinging to the assurance that “in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28)

Advent is a time of hope. Let us recall what God has done and look expectantly for what he will do in our lives in the days ahead.



Members

Lynne Outland

(Sr. Warden)

Liz Swanson

(Jr. Warden)

Linda St. Clair

(Secretary)

Patrick Henderson

Donna Kuehne

Suzie Schatz-Benson

Rick Thompson

Billie Chapman

Paul Haworth

Holland Duell

Karen Ferguson

Phil Dorsch

Dave Nicolarsen



If you are interested in having your contact information in a new On-Line Church Directory, contact....

Sandy Tharaldson at stharaldson@yahoo.com

or

Karon Keahey

karon@stpeterssheridan.com

Thank you!



Join the Women of St. Peter's on Wednesday, December 9, for a Christmas party, hosted by St. Margaret's Guild.

This party will be held at the home of Sandy Pilch. Address: (31 Scott Circle)

For information call: Gail Boyer at 674-7655 or Roberta Thompson at 674-8578 or 751-5744 RSVP's are appreciated!

The main dish will be provided. Side dishes and desserts are welcomed.

This is for all women, of all ages!!! See you there!!!

A Prayer from St. Benedict

Gracious and Holy God, please give me:

intellect to understand you;

diligence to seek you;

wisdom to find you;

a spirit to know you;

a heart to meditate upon you;

ears to hear you;

eyes to see you;

a tongue to proclaim you;

a way of life pleasing to you;

and perseverance to look for you.

Grant me:

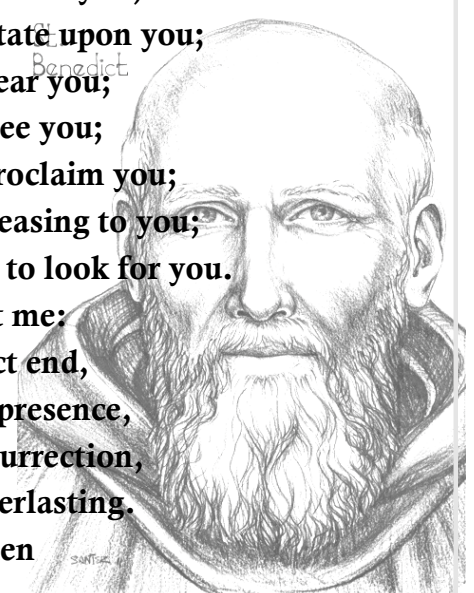
a perfect end,

your holy presence,

a blessed resurrection,

and life everlasting.

Amen



Submitted by Juanita Smith

Go Deeper with the Gospel of Luke

Parish study for 2016

I thoroughly enjoyed the time we spent as a parish going through The Story. It was an opportunity to get a big picture overview of the Scriptures. Now I want us to have the opportunity to spend some time in depth with the Gospel of Luke. Luke will be the Gospel featured in our readings for the year 2016 and this is an ideal opportunity to Go Deeper with the Gospel of Luke during the 9am hour on Sunday or at 4:30pm on Thursday afternoon.

We will be using a guide by NT Wright – the retired Episcopal Bishop of Durham, England – to help foster discussion. This is exciting as NT Wright is not only an Episcopalian but one of the foremost Bible scholars in the world. You do not need the guide to participate as the primary discussion will be on the Scripture text.

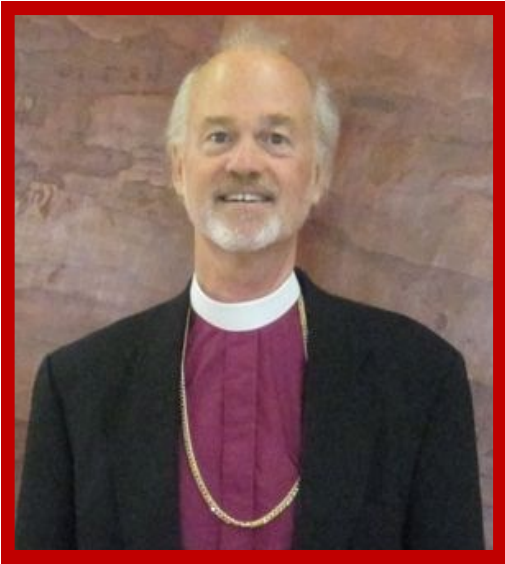
Books are \$8 and can be ordered through the church office. They are also available on Kindle for less.

The schedule for January will be as follows:

Sunday at 9am	Thursday at 4:30pm	Scripture	Chapter in NT Wright guide
Jan. 10	Jan. 14	Luke 1:1-38	1 – Announcing the Births
Jan 17	Jan 21	Luke 1:39-80	2 – Songs of Praise
Jan 24	Jan 28	Luke 2	3 – The Birth of Jesus
Jan 31 – Annual Meeting Sunday. One service at 9am.	Feb 4		No meetings due to Annual Meeting



The Children's Christmas Pageant will be at the 4:00 service on Christmas Eve. We will be practicing for the pageant the next four Sunday's during the 10:00 service. All children (3 and over) are invited to be a part of the pageant, regardless of whether they are a part of St. Peter's or not. If you have grandchildren coming to visit that will be at the 4:00 service, just let me know as soon as possible and I can work them into the Angel Choir.



Rev. John Smylie, the residing bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming will be coming for his annual visit to St. Peter's on Sunday, December 13th .

There will be one service at 9am.

Come join us for this special time together.

All loose-cash offering will go to the Bishop's Discretionary Fund.

Open to everyone!

Handbell Practice
Mondays at 6:30 PM



Choir Practices are held on Thursday's at 6:30 PM. If you love to sing and would like to be a part of these vital ministries, contact Suzie Schatz-Benson at 672-2140



**Are you interested in
Cake Decorating?**



Marci Immell is offering a cake decorating class. This will be a basic class for beginners. You will learn how to make pipe roses and borders with buttercream. If you are interested please let Marci know and she will form a class. The class should consist of people that are twelve years of age and older. She will have the class when the most people can attend and possibly schedule a second class for different hours if there is enough interest. Email: delmar67@yahoo.com



St. Peter's Ministry Schedule • December's Greeter-Billie Chapman

Advent	December 6	December 13	December 20	December 27
LEMS	A: J. Smith B: J. McKnight C: J. Smith D: D. Kuehne	A: None B: J. McKnight C: J. Smith D: J. Smith	A: None B: P. Sorvik C: J. Smith D: P. Sorvik	A: None B: P. Dorsch C: J. Smith D: J. McKnight
LAY READERS	7:30 F. & S. Asmus 10:00 Instructed: Evers Reader: L. Galloway	9:00– One Service R. Thompson P. Haworth Bishop Smylie Visit	7:30 S. Bedard 10:00 D. & A. Vaughan	7:30 P. & C. Clark 10:00 L. Greenough I. Wallop
USHERS	S. Mentock K. Ferguson S. & S. Peddicord	9:00-One Service C. Haworth S. Wheelock D. & A. Vaughan	F. Smedley J. & B. Benepe D. Goodwin	R. & J. Prusak R. & L. Rossa
ACOLYTE	A. B. St. John B: J. Eisenach Q. N. Haworth Training: C. Mentock B. Mentock	M. Fritz N. Haworth J. Eisenach	J. Eisenach L. Alsup K. Alsup Training: B. & C. Mentock	J. Eisenach Q. Heyneman A. Heyneman Westview: P. Dorsch

12/24/15 Christmas Eve Services: Lay Readers (4pm - L. Outland & R. Thompson)

(9pm - H. Duell & P. Dorsch)

Ushers

(4pm - S. Mentock, F. Smedley, C. Nicholls)

(9pm - TBA)

Acolytes

(4pm - N. Haworth, Q. Heyneman, M. Fritz)

(9pm - K. Eisenach, J. Eisenach, A. Campbell)



12/25/15 Christmas Day Service: Lay Reader (10:30 am - J. Smith)

For any questions or changes for the ministry schedule contact ~ Juanita Smith at 673-4928


We are receiving Christmas Poinsettia Memorials at this time. If you are interests in ordering a Poinsesttia(s) for Christmas, contact Karon at the church office or Vesta Gale who oversees the Altar Flower memorials.





St. Peter's December 2015 Calendar

HE: Holy Eucharist * HS: Healing Service * SRS: Sugarland Ridge

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	2 Women's Council 9 AM	3 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice	4	5
6 7:30 HE 10:00 HE 2 Advent	7 Handbells 6:30	8 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	9 St. Magaret's Christmas Party -5:30pm at the home of Sandy Pilch	10 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice 6:30	11	12 Special Vestry Mtg with Bishop Smylie
13 One Service Bishop Smylie Annual visit 3 Advent-9am	14 Handbells 6:30	15 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	16 No Vestry Meeting	17 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice 6:30	18	19
20 7:30 HE 10:00 HE 4 Advent	21 Handbells 6:30	22 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	23	24 Red Door Closed Christmas Eve Services 4:00 & 9:00pm	25 	26 Christmas Service at 10:30am
27 7:30 HE 10:00 HE 5 Advent Altar Guild-8:30	28 Handbells 6:30	29 No 10am-Service today	30	31 Red Door Closed Choir Practice 6:30		

- 12/01 Stephanie Kendrick
Pamela Woodward
Quinn Heyneman
- 12/02 Shirly Wimmer
Kacey Outland
- 12/04 Shane Karajanis
- 12/05 Rick Thompson
- 12/06 Jaci Fritz
Jodene Prusak
- 12/07 Tobie Alsup
- 12/08 Brayton Fox
- 12/08 Peter Kaminsky
- 12/09 Stan Peddicord
- 12/11 John Inserra



December Birthdays!



- 12/11 PJ Treide
- 12/12 Jadyann Outland
- 12/13 Donna Kuehne
- 12/14 Lorenen Smedley
- 12/15 Jacqueline Harrod
Vesta Gale
David Kiester
Wendy St. John
- 12/15 Jenny Berens
- 12/16 Craig Luplow
Jacomien Mars

- 12/16 Rick Dowdy
Isaac Fritz
- 12/18 Holly Belus
Kelsey Chamberlain
- 12/19 Barbara Benepe
Ethan Odom
- 12/20 Joyce Carroll
Kate Alsup
- 12/21 David Hackert
Emma Enloe
- 12/26 Dee Meyer

- 12/26 Lynne Outland
- 12/27 Peggy Sorvik
- 12/28 Mary King
Sarah Inserra
Brian King
- 12/30 Sally LaBore
Rob Connor
- 12/31 Matthew Henderson





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Sr. Warden-Lynne Outland
 email: garylynne@vcn.com
 Phone: 752-1918

Jr. Warden-Liz Swanson
 email: swanson238@bresnan.net
 Phone: 674-6662

St. Peter's Office Hours
 9:00 am to 2:00 pm (Monday - Friday)
 Office Phone: 674-7655

St. Peter's Office and Music Staff
 Gail Boyer: Parish Administrator (674-7655)
 Karon Keahey: Parish Secretary (674-7655)
 Suzie Schatz-Benson:
 Music Coordinator (763-0525)
 Jeannene Mc Knight: Organist