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St. Peter's Episcopal Church

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Sheridan, WY 82801



The Crossed Keys
October 2015

Why we care for the House of God

Occasionally this is a topic that I need to revisit in this space since it is not the most glamorous of topics but it is necessary – building upgrades. We have a beautiful 100 year old church and that means there is maintenance. If we do not look at preventative maintenance then we have worse to deal with down the road. Currently there are discussions for two parts of the church and I want to let you know about that.

The Narthex (the entrance area of the church)

– At the beginning of the year the Vestry formed a subcommittee – The Hospitality Committee – with the sole purpose of looking at the church through fresh eyes. The darkness of the narthex struck everyone, conversations with visitors confirmed this. This is the space that makes our first impression in the church. Recently the lighting in the church was upgraded and it was a good thing, but it also exacerbated the darkness of the narthex. Currently plans are underway to make it brighter and warmer as the lighting is being looked at and little touches are being taken. You may have noticed the beautiful floral arrangement Mary Carson made or the welcoming sign Suzie Schatz Benson put up. Better lighting along with these little touches will make a huge difference.

The Red Door – Discussions are also being had concerning the Red Door. Since I came to St. Peter's the volunteers at the Red Door have not considered their area a priority for building

improvements but were hoping one day they might be able to have some new carpet, fresh paint, and a spruced up bathroom. This is important as it is another space where the church and community meet. A subgroup of the building committee is getting estimates. This will most likely be an early 2016 project once the scope of work is settled.

On the topic of building maintenance let me say one thing as your priest about the rationale and reasoning for these things. Often times I hear that a church should not spend money on its building but on outreach. Please understand I do not mean it is ok to neglect outreach, by no means am I saying that. What I am saying is that in addition to handling these concerns now so as to not pass them to a future generation: **We have a biblical mandate to maintain the house of God to a level that is comparable to our own homes.**

See Haggai chapter 1 for a full explanation of this. In the chapter the Israelites are returning from exile in Babylon and rebuilding Jerusalem. After 15 years things are not moving as swift as they hoped and inquire of the prophet Haggai why. The Lord tells Haggai it is because everyone is consumed with their own homes and neglect his. *“Is it time for you to dwell in paneled houses while this house (the temple) lies in ruins?” (Haggai 1:4)* The biblical expectation is neither for the church building to be palatial nor to be destitute but to be comparable to what the community would tolerate in their own homes. As we maintain our building, we seek to do that to the best of our ability.

Continued on Page 4...



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Some Notes on What on Earth Am I Here For?

I hope you've been able to read along as we have been studying Rick Warren's book as a church. (It isn't too late to begin!) I have really enjoyed the discussions during the week. The book has been effective in raising lots of important issues in a way that is making people stop and think. As I have listened to the conversations, I have noticed some places in the book that seem to give people trouble. One of those has been chapter two, "You are not an accident." I thought it might be worthwhile to explore a bit more what he says there in the hope of clearing up some worries.

First, what is his basic claim in this chapter? It is that our lives are not accidents but were intended and planned by God. He expands upon this basic point by claiming that literally every detail (including our physical features, our parents, our place of birth, our gifts, etc.) was planned for a purpose. His support for this in scripture is mostly Psalm 139 (if you haven't read it in a while, go check it out and come back). The way he puts this raises two very natural objections.

(1) *If it's all planned out already, why bother?* From Rick's description it is easy to conclude that our lives are already predestined in every respect. If so, our freedom is an illusion. We will do what we will do and there is no use trying to resist. That makes us sound like robots. In response to this objection, I would note a couple of things. First, though scripture does claim God knows about us before our birth, it does not claim that he has *planned* all the details of our life (such as the choices we will make). Scripture makes clear throughout that our choices are real and have consequences. We aren't robots. Second, there is a big difference between saying God *knows* every detail about our lives (including the future) and that he has *planned* these details. If the latter were the case, freedom seems necessarily excluded. If the former is true, we can still make real choices. (Though it remains mysterious, admittedly, how God can know about free choices we haven't made yet. The theologians will tell us this is because God is outside of time as we experience it.) The basic point is supposed to be a source of comfort. God has designed and intended us and has a purpose for our lives.

(2) *What about the bad stuff? Did God plan that?* Once we read that God designed us and knows all the days of our lives we start to wonder about the bad stuff. What about the boy who is born blind? Or the life that ends in tragedy? Did God plan or foresee these things? If he is good, why does he do stuff like that? I think a distinction I made above helps here, too. God foresees but does not necessarily plan these things. He always at least *allows* them, since he could prevent them if he so willed.



Remember the Song...

'O Lord, It's Hard to be Humble When You're Perfect in Everyway' ?

We all strive to be humble but many of us still equate being humble with self-hatred, self-disgust and being weak or passive. In our society the opposite behavior is promoted: You can't get ahead unless you promote yourself, take center stage and claim all the credit for success. The challenge is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less often.

The picture of humility is one of a strong person who loves others not someone who is of a strong person who loves others not someone who is a wimp. We can defuse conflict when we are humble. We don't need to stand up for ourselves in an angry manner. *"A gentle answer turns away wrath but a harsh word stirs up anger."* **Proverbs 15:1**

We can handle unfair treatment without becoming bitter. Godly humility means we don't feel a need for vengeance or revenge. *"Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."* **Ephesians 4: 31-32**

A man asked, *"Why people couldn't see the face of God?"* We can't see the face of God because there are so few who can stoop that low. Learn to bend, to bow, to kneel and stoop and you will be able to see God face-to-face. The door to the Kingdom of God is exactly as high as you are when you walk on your knees. If you are standing tall, you cannot get through.

Walk lightly upon the earth. The words 'humility' and 'human' both come from 'humus' or earth. With humility we accept our place as one among many others. When we recognize that we are no more than our small share. We accept that we are only here to be of service to God's great creation.

True humility is synonymous with confidence. If you want to be better, own your talent. Acknowledge that what you bring to the table is worth something. True humility does not hide its gifts.

Liz Swanson



Just One

Poet Unknown

One song can spark a moment,
One flower can wake the dream.

One step must start each journey,
One word must start each prayer.

One tree can start a forest,
One bird can herald spring.

One hope will raise our spirits,
One touch can show you care.

One smile begins a friendship,
One handclasp lifts a soul.

One voice can speak with wisdom,
One heart can know what's true.

One star can guide a ship at sea,
One word can frame the goal.

One life can make a difference,
You see, it's up to you!

One vote can change a nation,
One sunbeam lights a room.

One candle wipes out darkness,
One laugh will conquer gloom.



Inspirational Words of Wisdom

A motivational poem about how one life can make a difference. We hope the poetry reminds you that even though you may be only one person, you can make a difference.

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

Dr. John Milliken's Article Continued...

We might wonder why he allows such things. Here again the theologians have something useful to say. Because he desires his creatures to love him freely, it must be possible for them to turn away from him. They have a real choice. But people who have real choices don't always choose the good, and the choices for evil that humans have made have created a broken world on many levels. Here, though, is what God does do: he stands ready to redeem the evils of this world by bringing good from them. The supreme example here is the death of Jesus, the greatest tragedy that was turned to the greatest triumph. God is able to do this in our tragedies, too, if we are willing to let him.

....Fr. John Inserra's Article continued

How we take care of the House of God is the first message we send the community of how the people of St. Peter's feel about God. You may not think that is fair, and maybe it is not, but it is true. It is the first impression we make.

I understand the talk of change can sometimes be worrisome and my door is always open to talk about any concerns. Please feel free to email frjohn@stpeterssheridan.com or call 763-3220 with any questions. I'd be happy to buy you a cup of coffee or a sandwich and discuss.

Your priest,



John+

I just received an email from a friend in Russia who described the death this summer of a child born prematurely in her church community. He only made it a month. Yet she says he brought the church together in prayer and a spirit of dependence upon God in a way they had never experienced before. Though their hearts were broken in the experience, it had profound redeeming value. She sums it up this way, "I don't think that it's the best way to put it, but that was a highlight of the summer: the sense of community, loss and very real presence of God made that period special for us. It did change me." That isn't an easy message, but it is an important one. God knows what is down the road for us and is able to work for our good even in the midst of life's hardest moments.

I hope these reflections help a bit and look forward to the remaining weeks of our study together.



Have you been over-whelmed with chores or tasks in or around your home or have health or family concerns and need assistance with shopping or transportation? St. Peter’s has two areas of ministry that would help lighten your load. See the information below.

ECHO - Episcopalians Connect by Helping Others - Service

1 Peter 4:10 “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”

Mission Statement: *A group of St. Peter’s volunteers have prayerfully come together to assist other members of St. Peter’s with occasional needs.*

The purpose of **ECHO Service** is to offer ‘handyman’ services to members of the congregation which could include anything from changing a light bulb to small carpenter projects, running errands or grocery shopping. This could also include needed meals due to illness or unusual circumstances.



ECHO - Episcopalians Connect by Helping Others - Prayers

Philippians 4:6-7 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Mission Statement:

A group of St. Peter’s Prayer Warriors have prayerfully come together to offer intercessory prayers for members of St. Peter’s as needs arise and when requested.

The purpose of **ECHO Prayers** is to offer prayers for parishioners as needed or requested; to include emergency, long-term, published weekly (bulletin) prayers and other prayers including those of thanksgiving or joy for individuals and others in our St. Peter’s Family Community.

If you need assistance or have prayer needs, please utilize one of both of these ministries. The church office is able to make connections for you. Or, if you are interested in becoming a volunteer you may contact the church office at: **674-7655 ...Episcopalians Connect by Helping Others**



If you are interested in having your contact information in a new On-Line Church Directory, contact.... Sandy Tharaldson at stharaldson@yahoo.com or the church office at stpeterssheridan.com. Thank you!



St. Peter's Ministry Schedule • October's Greeter ~ Liz Swanson

PENTECOST	October 4	October 11	October 18	October 25
LEMS	A: J. Smith B: D. Kuehne C: J. Smith D: D. Kuehne	A: None B: J. McKnight C: J. Smith D: J. Smith	A: None B: J. McKnight C: J. Smith D: J. McKnight	A: None B: J. Smith C: J. Smith D: P. Dorsch
LAY READERS	7:30 F. & S. Asmus 10:00 M. & M. Evers	7:30 L. Galloway 10:00 S. & S. Peddicord	7:30 S. Bedard 10:00 P. Haworth L. Helvery	7:30 H. Duell 10:00 D. & A. Vaughan
USHERS	F. & G. Boley R. & J. Prusak	J. & B. Benepe M. Dailey S. Mentock	C. Haworth C. Nicholls S. Wheelock	C. & L. Galloway M. Stopka S. Tharaldson
ACOLYTE	J. Eisenach B. St. John M. Fritz	K. Alsup J. Eisenach L. Alsup	N. Haworth J. Eisenach M. Fritz	N. Haworth Q. Heynemann A. Heynemann

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

**October 2015
Operation Christmas Child**



This month we will be receiving: Yoyo's, jump ropes, hacky sacks, bean bags, paddle balls, marbles & drawstring bags.

Thank you for your support towards this outreach!

 **Handbell practice - 6:30 on Mondays**

**Choir practice
6:30 pm
on Thursdays**



The United Thank Offering... is a personal and family devotional program of the Episcopal Church. UTO represents our daily thanks for the blessing in our everyday lives — for good weather, happy times, job opportunity, and unexpected visits— there are so many things for which we can be thankful. At the very least, we can be thankful to God for blessings and take action by putting coins in the Blue Box. Twice a year we are asked to bring the amount of our daily thanksgiving for an ingathering, where it is combined with the offerings of hundreds of thousands of other Episcopalians to become the United Thank Offering.



St. Peter's Ingathering Day will be Sunday, November 1.





Calendar Of Events for October 2015

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice	2 Book Study Noon-1pm	3 October 1-3 Diocese Convention Week
4 7:30 HE 10:00 HE Book Study 9:00 am 19 Pentecost	5 Handbells 6:30	6 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	7 Women's Council 9:00 Book Study 5:30 pm	8 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice 6:30	9 Book Study Noon-1pm	10
11 7:30 HE Book Study 9:00 am 10:00 HE 20 Pentecost	12 Handbells 6:30	13 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	14 St. Nick's Crafters 9:00 am Book Study 5:30 pm S. Carabetta Organ Concert 7:00 PM	15 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice 6:30	16 Book Study Noon-1pm	17
18 7:30 HE Book Study 9:00 am 10:00 HE 21 Pentecost	19 Handbells 6:30	20 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	21 St. Nick's Crafters 9:00 am Book Study 5:30 pm Vestry-6pm	22 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice 6:30	23 Book Study Noon-1pm	24
23 Altar Guild 7:30 HE Book Study 9:00 am 10:00 HE 22 Pentecost	26 Handbells 6:30	27 10:00 HS 1:00 SRS	28 St. Nick's Crafters 9:00 am Book Study 5:30 pm	29 Red Door 10-3 Choir Practice 6:30	30 Book Study Noon-1pm	31

October



10-1 Robert Beckwith
Cassidy Enloe
10-4 Sally Eaton
10-6 Cheryl Farman
10-7 Christina Haworth
10-8 Betty Olson
Sandy Asmus
Kevin Wimmer
10-9 Sue Beckwith
10-10 Nan Fogel

10-10 Jim Trott
Marica Brown
10-11 Frank Eaton
10-12 Fritz Doyle
10-13 Megan Buchanan
10-14 Kendie Hartman
Roger St. Clair
10-15 Robert Kauffman
Thomas Asmus
10-16 Dorothy Goodwin
John Hornbeck

10-17 Ian Gale
10-19 Blair Gustafson
10-20 Sara Gustafson
Rosina Inserra
10-21 Aaron Campbell
10-23 Alsup William
Kellen Mentock
10-24 Jim Benepe, III
10-26 James King
10-27 Kathy Patton
10-31 Mary Carson

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 1 SOUTH TSCHIRGI STREET
 SHERIDAN, WY 82801



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Sr. Warden-Lynne Outland
 email: garylynn@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

NEW CHURCH WEBSITE!

*We have recently re-designed our church website.
 You can find information about activities, digital
 copies of the Crossed Keys and sermon audio.
 Log on this site at
<http://www.stpeterssheridan.com>*

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