

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PETER'S IN ESSEX FELLS

# The Messenger

271 Roseland Avenue, Essex Fells, NJ 07021 • 973.226.6500 • [stpetersef.org](http://stpetersef.org)

JANUARY 2025

FROM THE RECTOR

## The Epiphany of the Epiphany

Dear St. Peter's Family,

THIS PAST THURSDAY, I went to the pharmacy to pick up some items. It was the first day after my holiday break and I needed to get an early start on the day, so I went early in the morning. At first, I didn't notice anyone in the store, but as I went through the candy aisles (my favorite pathway) to make my way back to the pharmacist, I saw a clerk kneeling down with some opened boxes surrounded by empty shelves. The boxes were filled with Valentine's Day chocolates. It was January 2nd. While we are all aware, and we often make fun of, the fact that retailers jump from one holiday to another as quickly as possible, this speaks to something about who we are as human beings. We like to celebrate. And who can blame us? We work hard. We try to do the right thing. We all experience the normal trials of everyday life, so we should make the most of our opportunities to party. Because we need it.



Our faith and our common life speaks to this need. There is no church time that isn't a celebration. Our Christmas Season lasts from December 25 to January 5. Before that, we were in Advent. Before that, Christ the King. But after Christmastide we don't jump to Valentine's Day (Actually, it was removed from the saints' calendar a long time ago.). We dive into a new season, Epiphany, right away on January 6. And our Book of Common Prayer rightly says that the first day of Epiphany is one of the major feasts of the Church, on the same level as All Saints', Christmas, and Easter. So, while the secular world is in a liminal state waiting for cards, cupids, and heart-shaped candies, St. Peter's moves from one joyful feast to another.

The word *epiphany* comes from the Greek word that means "appearance." In the ancient world, this could mean the appearance of sunlight in the morning or an appearance of someone that had been away on a journey, but it primarily meant the appearance of a deity. In our faith, this primarily refers to God's appearance in Jesus Christ. As a liturgical season, we observe this by recalling the visitation of the Magi at Christ's birth, the Baptism of Jesus, and the Wedding at Cana—Jesus' first miracle. In modern parlance, epiphany has also been taken to mean a moment of profound insight, a bit of new information or a new experience. And as it turns out, this is also spot on, too.

We tell and retell the stories of God's Epiphany in Jesus because those are historical moments that have transformed all of creation and continue to make all things new. But we also remember them because Jesus is still with us today, popping up in little epiphanies. Whether it's something as profound as a bolt of lightning or as subtle as the falling snow on a winter night, Jesus is appearing to us. So, we need to be open to those opportunities because these moments can be an epiphany, a new experience, that can change us and the trajectory of our lives. And all those times are opportunities to celebrate.

*As always, I am yours in Christ,*

Nate

## STEWARDSHIP 2025

### *Walk in Love*

This year's theme is *Walk in Love*, taken from the Letter to the Ephesians: "Walk in love as Christ has loved us and gave himself for us, and offering and sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:2).



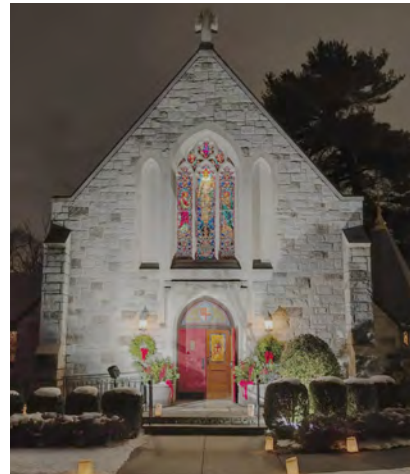
Our budget for 2025 is \$430,000. *Can we count on you?* You can pledge online here: <https://stpetersef.org/donate/pledge-form/> —our budget includes these commitments:

- *Staff Compensation*
- *Family Ministries, including St. Peter's Youth Program (SPY)*
- *Worship and Music, including new Acolyte vestments, Choirs, and more*
- *Parish Utilities and Maintenance of the Church Campus*
- *Special Events, including the VolunPEER Presentation and educational refreshment*
- *Support for the Episcopal Diocese of Newark*
- *And much more!*

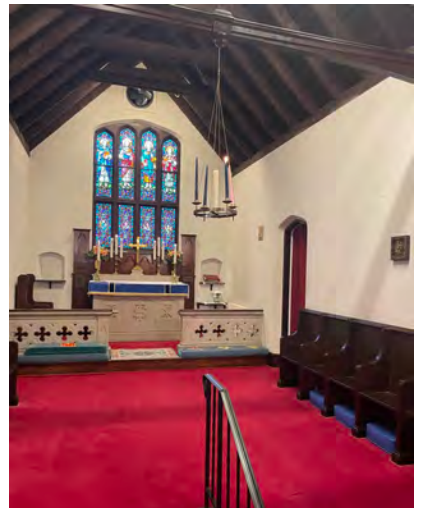
We are truly walking in love when we give offerings and sacrifices to God through St. Peter's Church. And when we give offerings and sacrifices to God through St. Peter's, we will grow together in love more than we could ever possibly imagine. Contact a member of the Vestry or Father Nate to find out more about how you can *Walk in Love* at St. Peter's.

## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS THANKS

- Thanks to the Altar Guild for their hard work throughout the season, and the beautiful decorations in the church and the chapel.
- Thanks to Margot Dockrell for making and donating new bows for the candelabras and wreaths.
- Thanks to Eloise Monzillo Hiris for organizing a beautiful talk and presentation by Brother Ephrem Arcement from Holy Cross Monastery.
- Thanks to Joseph Wohltmann, Kayla Felix, Diane Kazimir, Mark Trautman, Candace Carr, Dana Leach, Mary Shearin, Nancy Connor, and Father Darville for reading at Lessons and Carols; and thanks to Mary Shearin and Liz Irwin for their help with the reception.
- Thanks to our Parish Choir and Handbell Choir for their beautiful music at Lessons and Carols and Christmas—and special thanks to our section leaders Michael Barretti and Giulia Utz for their leadership.
- Thanks to Connor Leach and Vincent Korstein for sharing their musical gifts at the 4 pm Christmas service.
- Thanks to Laura Copeland, Dana Leach, Beth Manfre, and Mark Trautman for their leadership of the Nativity Pageant.
- Thanks to all Acolytes, Lectors, and Ushers for their leadership in all of our Christmas liturgies.
- Thanks to Jim Irwin for setting up the Christmas luminaria on Christmas Eve.
- Thanks to all who gave generously to Christmas Poinsettias and Christmas Music this season.



*Advent and Christmas 2024 at St. Peter's*



## *An Advent Blessing—December 15*

St. Peter's Church had a unique Advent Blessing this year. This blessing featured a visit by Brother Ephrem Arcement, a Benedictine monk of Holy Cross Monastery. Brother Ephrem's visit began with his sermon at the 10 am service, followed by a fellowship coffee hour meet-and-greet mingling, and a presentation on *The Wonder of the Incarnation: Discovering the Radical Nearness of God in our Daily Lives*. All were well received and enjoyed.—*Eloise Monzillo Hiris*



## *Nativity Pageant Update*

It was a joy to hear the ancient story of Jesus' birth told through the fresh voices of our youth. From our proficient readers to our littlest angels and shepherds, these children illustrated the sacred story and celebrate the birth of the Christ Child. Thanks to everyone—children, families, and leaders—who made this a wonderful celebration this year!—*Beth Manfre*

## **CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

### ***NEW ADULT FORUM, JANUARY 12: The Letter to the Philippians***

How did early Christians live their “heavenly citizenship” on earth in an unjust world? What did it mean to call Jesus “Lord” in the Roman Empire? What does it mean for Christians today? What can we learn about leadership roles in the early Church? Are you an adult looking to enrich your knowledge of Scripture in a relevant and challenging way? Join us from 9-9:45 on Sundays for a challenging, enriching, in-depth, exegetical (analyzing verse-by-verse) study of Paul's “letters” to the Philippians. Reach out to leader Jonathan Lace ([jdlace@icloud.com](mailto:jdlace@icloud.com)) for more information.

### *Sunday School*

Continued thanks to our wonderful teachers: Christine Albano, Beth Manfre and Serena Watkinson, *Godly Play*; Laura Copeland, Christina Doyle, Quinn Egan and Christine Mulcahy, *4-6 grade*. Greeters are needed, that is, individuals who can assist as necessary with crafts or bathroom breaks in the Godly Play classroom. Reach out to Dana Leach for more information. Find out more at <https://stpetersef.org/christian-education/>

### *Family Worship, January 12*

We are recruiting three readers, two ushers, and two young people to carry the elements at the offertory on Family Sunday, a time when youth take leadership roles in the liturgy. This ministry is a vital part of our worship on Sunday, and a wonderful opportunity for our youth. If you can serve, email Dana Leach at [leach@stpetersef.org](mailto:leach@stpetersef.org), and please plan to arrive by 9:30 that day. Readings are always available ahead of time online at <https://www.lectionarypage.net> and service bulletins may be found on our website at <https://stpetersef.org/sermons/>.

## **THE WORK OF MINISTRY**

### *Care & Connect Prayer Circle: Second and Fourth Sundays*

Our next gathering will be Sunday, January 12, immediately after the 10 am mass in All Saints' Chapel. This is a brief continuation in prayer as we focus our prayers for ourselves

**SAINT PETER'S YOUTH GROUP**

**SUPERBOWL CHILI**

**FUNDRAISER**



**Pick-up Sunday, Feb 9th from 8:30am-11:30am**

\$20 for 1 quart/cornbread/cookies

Vegetarian or Beef Chili available

Order Must be Placed by Thursday, Feb 6th

Contact Christina Doyle at 301-802-7878

Proceeds to Benefit the Youth Program and Mission Trip at  
St. Peter's Essex Fells

and others both aloud and quietly in our hearts and minds. If you have anyone or anything specific you would like us to name aloud please either come and voice those prayers, reach out to Dana Leach at [leach@stpetersef.org](mailto:leach@stpetersef.org).

### *Men's Shelter, St. Paul's in Paterson*

Thirty hungry men at St. Paul's Men's Shelter in Paterson enjoyed a delicious home-cooked meal of chicken thighs, mashed potatoes, salad, rolls and cookies made by Jim Irwin on December 2.

St. Peter's delivers meals to the Shelter monthly, September through June. Next available dates are April 7, May 5, June 2. This is a fun, simple and meaningful way to help those in need. Team up with a family member or friend. Contact Liz Irwin 973-879-7006 to help and find out more about this rewarding outreach ministry.



## **IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

### *St. Peter's OpShop*

We offer quality clothing, accessories, jewelry, home goods, vintage collectibles, art, books and small furniture—all at incredibly low prices!

The OpShop at St. Peter's Church is open seasonally from mid-September until the end of May each year. Proceeds from OpShop sales support a variety of community outreach programs. Cash or check only:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheOpShop>



### *St. Peter's Nursery School*

Registration is now open for the 2025-2026 school year for our 3.5's and 4's classes at St. Peter's Nursery School!

✦ 3.5's ➡ children turning 3 by December 31, 2025

✦ 4's ➡ children turning 4 by October 1, 2025

Get started by filling out an Intent Form today! For a copy of the form visit [www.stpetersnurseryschool.com](http://www.stpetersnurseryschool.com). Please return a hard copy with the registration fee by January 10.

For more information, contact director Jacquelyn Albietz at [stpeterssexfelsns@gmail.com](mailto:stpeterssexfelsns@gmail.com).



## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING—Sunday, January 19, 2025**

The Annual Meeting of St. Peter's Church will be Sunday, January 19, 2025, following the 10 am Eucharist. Come cast your votes! Those elected to the Vestry, and those elected to represent the parish in Diocesan capacities are expected to be faithful in their attendance at worship and to set an example in stewardship.

### ***The Episcopal Church defines the qualifications of votes and officers to be elected:***

- The voters shall be baptized, at least 16 years of age, domiciled in the Parish, of good moral character, adhering to this Church and to no other religious body, regular attendants at the services of the Church in said Parish, meaning thereby those who are more frequently present than absent, and regular contributors to the current expenses of the Parish in the manner prescribed by the Vestry.
- The qualified voters shall elect such officers who shall be communicants in good standing. The term “communicant” shall be taken to mean a person who has been confirmed by a Bishop of this Church or by a Bishop of a Church in communion with

this Church or has been received into this Church by a Bishop of this Church, and who shall have received the Holy Communion at least once during the preceding year.

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

*All submissions for the Annual Report are due in the Parish Office by Monday, January 13, 2025; email to [info@stpetersef.org](mailto:info@stpetersef.org).*

### **VESTRY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

POSITIONS OPEN INCLUDE: *Five Vestry positions: two for two-year terms; three for three-year terms; Three delegates to Diocesan Convention; Three alternates to Diocesan Convention.*

#### **CALLED TO SERVICE: VESTRY**

##### ***What does the Vestry do?***

It is the legal governing body of the parish. With the rector as its leader, it sets policy and goals and oversees the finances and property. In addition, it has another equally important role: providing leadership to implement the ministries that serve the parish and the wider community. The Vestry actively supports the work and ministry of the parish

##### ***Who can run for Vestry?***

Any baptized member of the Episcopal Church who has been a member of St. Peter's in good standing for at least one year, is at least 16 years old, makes a regular financial contribution to the parish, and worships regularly at St. Peter's.

##### ***Is there an expected time commitment?***

Yes. A standard term is three years. The Vestry meets once each month. And, because every vestry member's voice counts, our goal is for members to allow no more than three unexcused absences from regular meetings in a year.

##### ***What do we look for in a vestry member?***

Someone who is involved in some parish ministry, and preferably (but not necessarily) has shown some leadership ability. They should keep informed about the parish and be willing to contribute to working out solutions to issues that arise. Every Vestry member should work respectfully with other members and participate in discerning the parish's vision and encouraging its ministries. The Vestry affords people the opportunity to share a variety of their own gifts and talents.

##### ***How are Vestry members chosen?***

Candidates are nominated by the Nominating Committee, whose recommendation must be approved by the Vestry, and they are elected at the annual meeting.

##### ***How do I nominate someone?***

You may complete and give this form to Fr. Nate or a member of the Nominating Committee, or put it in the alms basin, or send it to the Parish Office. ([info@stpetersef.org](mailto:info@stpetersef.org)) You may nominate yourself or someone else.

##### ***Here are my suggestions for Vestry and/or Diocesan Convention:***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

##### ***I recommend the following person(s) for:***

Vestry \_\_\_\_\_

Diocesan Convention \_\_\_\_\_

# JANUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <b>The Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ</b>	2 <i>OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm</i>	3	4 <i>Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm</i>
5 <b>Christmas 2</b> <i>HE, 8 am, 4pm, Chapel 10 am, Church SPY Event</i>	6 <b>The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ</b> <i>AA, 7 pm</i>	7	8 <i>No Handbell Choir</i>	9 <i>OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm</i>	10 <i>SPY Lock-in</i>	11 <i>Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm</i>
12 <b>1 Epiphany: Baptism of Our Lord</b> <i>HE, 8 am, 10 am, 4 pm Care-Connect, 11:15</i>	13 <b>Annual Reports due</b> <i>AA, 7 pm</i>	14	15 <i>Handbell Choir, 7 pm</i>	16 <i>OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm</i>	17	18 <i>Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm</i>
19 <b>Confession of St. Peter (tr.)</b> <i>HE, 8 am, 4pm, Chapel 10 am, Church Annual Meeting</i>	20 <b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</b> <i>Office Closed AA, 7 pm</i>	21 <i>Diocese of Newark 150th Anniversary Speaker Series</i>	22 <i>Handbell Choir, 7 pm</i>	23 <i>OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm</i>	24	25 <b>Conversion of St. Paul</b> <i>Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm</i>
26 <b>3 Epiphany</b> <i>HE, 8 am, 4pm, Chapel 10 am, Church C-C, 11:15 Religious Life Sunday</i>	27 <i>AA, 7 pm</i>	28 <i>Diocese of Newark 150th Anniversary Speaker Series</i>	29 <i>Handbell Choir, 7 pm</i>	30 <i>OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm</i>	31	

## How to Make Your Pledge Commitment Online for 2025

- Go to the <https://stpetersef.org/donate/pledge-form/>
- Donate > Pledge Form
- Complete the form
- Click 'Pledge' button



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### STAY CONNECTED!

Webpage: [www.stpetersef.org](http://www.stpetersef.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/St.PetersEssexFells>

OpShop Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheOpShop>

OpShop Instagram: [@opshopstpeters](https://www.instagram.com/opshopstpeters)

The next deadline for the monthly *Messenger* will be January 30. Please feel free to email news and events to [info@stpetersef.org](mailto:info@stpetersef.org)

### ST. PETER'S STAFF

The Rev. Nathaniel Darville, *Rector*, [darville@stpetersef.org](mailto:darville@stpetersef.org)

Mark A. Trautman, *Director of Music and Administrator*, [trautman@stpetersef.org](mailto:trautman@stpetersef.org)

Dana Leach, *Care and Connect*, [leach@stpetersef.org](mailto:leach@stpetersef.org)

DJ Elmore, *Bookkeeper*, [bookkeeper.stpeters@gmail.com](mailto:bookkeeper.stpeters@gmail.com)

### THE VESTRY OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH

Mary Shearin and Wayne Copeland, *Wardens*

Valerie Felix, Jim Irwin, Christine Albano, Eloise Monzillo Hiris, David Cowell, Kurt

Vonderahe, *Vestry Members*

### LITURGY LEADERS

**Altar Guild:** Alice Samuels, [inkyretired@aol.com](mailto:inkyretired@aol.com), Karen Mosher, [looker-mosher@msn.com](mailto:looker-mosher@msn.com)

**Acolytes:** Christine DiGiovanni, [adigio1552@aol.com](mailto:adigio1552@aol.com)

**Eucharistic Ministers/Chalicians:** Father Nate Darville, [darville@stpetersef.org](mailto:darville@stpetersef.org)

**Lectors:** Kathleen McLaughlin, [kathleenmcl27@gmail.com](mailto:kathleenmcl27@gmail.com)

**Music Program:** Mark A. Trautman, [trautman@stpetersef.org](mailto:trautman@stpetersef.org)

**Ushers:** Wayne Copeland, [waynecopeland@keyconsult.com](mailto:waynecopeland@keyconsult.com)

### OUTREACH MINISTRIES

**St. Peter's Opportunity Shop:** Stephanie Kent and Dawn Ruggiero, 973-226-0337

**David St. George Outreach Fund:** Erika Grothues, [davidstgeorge.committee@gmail.com](mailto:davidstgeorge.committee@gmail.com)

**Vacation Bible School:** Jack and Sarah Latson, [spefvbs@gmail.com](mailto:spefvbs@gmail.com)

**St. Peter's Nursery School:** Jacqueline Albietz, [stpetersessexfellsns@gmail.com](mailto:stpetersessexfellsns@gmail.com).

### EPISCOPAL LEADERSHIP

The Most Reverend Sean Rowe, *XXVIII Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church*

The Right Reverend Carlye J. Hughes, *XI Bishop of Newark*

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