



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

The Messenger

271 Roseland Avenue, Essex Fells, NJ 07021 • 973.226.6500 • stpetersef.org

FEBRUARY 2025

FROM THE RECTOR

In the Not-So Bleak Midwinter

Dear St. Peter's Family,

I LOVE SPRING. There are many reasons for this—the warmer weather, the flowers blooming, the return of McDonald's Shamrock Shake. Most of all, I love to listen to as many college commencement speeches as possible. There's something about their hopeful energy that draws me in. If done well, a commencement speech speaks to the best qualities of human life. But they are not all winners. There aren't really any terrible ones, but many drop into cliché and most end up just okay. Nevertheless, I do appreciate them all because I love communicating through the spoken word, and I am always trying to learn, from good examples and not-so-good examples, how I can improve my oratory skills. I take sermon-craft seriously, and commencement speeches help me in this effort.



Once in a while, I hear one that not only provides good tips, but I find it truly inspirational. Hamdi Ulukaya's 2022 speech to the graduating class of Northeastern University is one of these. Mr. Ulukaya is the founder and CEO of Chobani, one of the world's largest producers of Greek yogurt. He's from Turkey and is of Kurdish ethnicity. On his father's advice, he started a small yogurt factory in 2002 but left Turkey a few years later because of its oppression of the Kurdish minority. A few years later, he opened a larger factory in upstate New York, and it became a billion dollar company in less than five years. But Mr. Ulukaya didn't just sit on his fortune. He has spent the better part of the last decade working for human rights and donating 10 percent of his company's profits to charity. As soon as Mr. Ulukaya took the stage, I was hooked. He was laughing, full of joy, and humbled by the loud chants of "Chobani" from the students. As soon as the crowd settled down, Mr. Ulukaya began his speech. "Over the last few years, I think we all know the world has been through an awful lot," he said. "[But] I have found in my experience, the richest life, the most beautiful life, is the life dedicated to helping others...you get rewards that you can't imagine."

It's hard to believe that we are already into February 2025. Yet in our Church *Kalendar* (yes, it's *kalendar* with a "k"), we are still in the same season of Epiphany and will continue to be through the next 30-plus days. If you recall, this is the time in which we think about God appearing to us in the Epiphany of Jesus Christ and how we are "little epiphanies" charged with bringing Jesus' presence and love into our communities and beyond. That's why a few weeks into the season we switch from white (the Christ-is-here color) to green (the Church-must-grow color). This is really the liturgical dance we make throughout the entire Church year—Jesus to us, to Jesus to us, to Jesus to us, again and again. So, this raises a very important question: what does Epiphanytide mean about what we are called to do and to be?

We get a clue in one of the Church's most overlooked feasts—Candlemas, which falls on February 2 and takes precedence over a Sunday. Its full name is the Feast of the

Presentation of our Lord, the time when we commemorate Jesus being presented in the temple by his parents as a 40-day-old child. When they arrive, the Holy Family is met by Simeon, a devout man, who was waiting for the Jewish nation to be restored by the Messiah. According to Luke, when Simeon sees Jesus, he scoops him up and sings,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
A light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

In part due to this beautiful hymn, Candlemas is the day where we really think about Jesus as the Light of the World. And in these dark times, this is a powerful image. What’s more, as followers of Jesus, we carry this Light in us, so we can bring light to others as well. We can find more meaning for this in the word Candlemas itself. Not only the “candle” part—Jesus is a Candle, and we are candles, too—but also the “mas,” short for *mass*. We don’t really know the exact origin of this ancient name for the feast, but there are two explanations that are worth noting. The first is that mass comes from the Middle English word *missae*, which is from the Latin *missa* meaning to be dismissed. This is the same word used in Simeon’s song—“Master, you are now dismissing your servant in peace.” So, in a sense, we come to Holy Eucharist to be dismissed into our neighborhoods to care for others, especially ones in need. But there’s another, older idea as to the meaning of mass. It may come from the Hebrew word, *matzah*, which means oblation, an offering, or better yet, a gift. I think both of those meanings are helpful to keep in mind. As little candles, we are dismissed into the world to bring the Candlelight of Jesus. And, as we live into this, what a gift we are.

By all measures, Hamdi Ulakaya’s speech was exceptional from beginning to end. His closing statement was particularly moving. “So, I hope you use the fire within you to change a lot of lives for the better...I promise you that there’s nothing more rewarding than showing up in the world for other people...because you are the greatest gift you can give.” And that, dear ones, is the Gospel truth.

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).

The results so far: 58 pledge units for a total of \$167,270. These include 6 new pledges, 24 increased pledges, and 31 at the same level. Three pledges decreased. The average pledge is \$2,884. You can pledge online here: <https://stpetersef.org/donate/pledge-form/>

Contact a member of the Vestry or Father Nate to find out more about how you can *Walk in Love* at St. Peter’s.

Street Fair

There will be an informational meeting on Sunday, February 2 at coffee hour, and a Zoom meeting on February 4 at 7 pm Reach out to Mary Shearin for any questions and to find out more about how you can be a part of this exciting ministry.



Choral Evensong **Sunday February 2**

Choirs from St. Peter's; Holy Innocents, West Orange; and the Choir Schools of Grace Church in Newark and St. Paul's in Englewood will present Evensong for the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord on Sunday, February 2 at 4 pm.

About Evensong

Episcopalians celebrate services called “offices” at the beginning and the ending of the day. These daily services of prayer and praise are rooted in the Jewish and early Christian traditions of saying prayers at fixed hours of the day (Acts 10:9, 16:25). Many cathedrals, monastic houses, and collegiate chapels throughout the world celebrate these services daily, and choral Evensong is one of the most distinctive parts of the Episcopal/Anglican musical tradition. Settings of the *Magnificat* (The Song of Mary) and *Nunc dimittis* (The Song of Simeon) have formed the foundation of our choral literature since the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. The pairing of these canticles at Evensong is meant to illustrate that God's promise and fulfillment of salvation are a never-ending circle, just as the regular celebration of Evensong is a liturgical conversation that was begun long before we were here and will continue long after we are gone.

This is a great opportunity to support the Music Ministry of St. Peter's—everyone is welcome, and please bring a friend!



Handbell Choir

Our Handbell Choir will play for the Opening Voluntary (pre-service prelude) on Sunday, February 2. This will be the third time this year the Handbell Choir has played for services at St. Peter's. We are very fortunate to have three octaves of handbells made by the Malmark and Schulmerich companies of Pennsylvania.



A Handbell Choir performs music on a set of handheld bells made of bronze and tuned to the chromatic scale. The Choir is itself a single instrument, with a musician responsible for only one or a very few select notes that, when played together with other musicians, forms beautiful melodies and harmonies. This is unlike other ensembles, where an individual musician is responsible for a continuous line of music. Anyone can learn to play—handbells develop concentration and the community and camaraderie that follows makes it fun!

The Handbell Choir meets on Wednesdays at 7 pm in the South Transept of the Church—We are always looking to welcome new members. Reach out to Mark Trautman (trautman@stpetersef.org) to find out more.

Acolytes

We are recruiting persons young and old who would like to serve at the Altar as acolytes. An acolyte assists in worship by carrying a torch, a processional cross, assisting the Presider at mass, and more. Confirmation is not a requirement to be an acolyte, but it is something an acolyte should strive for in the very near future. Contact Christine DiGiovanni (adigio1562@aol.com) and Father Nate (darville@stpetersef.org).



The Altar Guild Welcomes You!

Looking for a way to serve St. Peter's that is do-able and rewarding and doesn't take a lot of time? How about considering Altar Guild? Altar Guild is a quiet ministry of the church, but this quiet ministry offers a big contribution. Consider this:

- *Membership in Altar Guild offers flexibility in time commitment;*
- *Membership in Altar Guild can be done as a couple or even a family;*
- *Membership in Altar Guild is an avenue to introduce people to stewardship at St. Peter's;*
- *Membership in Altar Guild can be your introduction to church ministry.*

Congratulations to Sheila Valenti, our newest member! To find out more, contact Alice Samuels (inkyretired@aol.com) or Karen Mosher (looker-mosher@msn.com), or the Parish Office at info@stpetersef.org.



CHRISTIAN FORMATION

ADULT FORUM, 9-9:45 SUNDAYS

In two weeks, we've made it through the history, biblical, and manuscript tradition of Philippians as well as the first two verses of the letter(s). We are fortunate to have a dedicated time to listen with ears to hear what the Apostle Paul wrote almost 2,000 years ago and to discern how Philippians still speaks to us today. Please join us as we continue our journey. Reach out to Jonathan Lace (jdlace@icloud.com) to find out more.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School meets in the two rooms in the Undercroft (directly below the Narthex) during the first part of the 10 am service during the school year. Thanks to our teachers: Christine Albano, Beth Manfre and Serena Watkinson, *Godly Play (grades K-3)*; Laura Copeland, Christina Doyle, Quinn Egan and Christine Mulcahy, *4-6 grade*. Reach out to Father Nate (darville@stpetersef.org) and check out www.stpetersef.org/christian-education/

FAMILY EUCHARIST, FEBRUARY 9

Family Eucharist, a time when youth take leadership roles in the liturgy, takes place one Sunday every month; upcoming dates

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. Peters Essex Fells



St. Peter's Youth—SPY
Mark your calendars
February 8, SPY chili making
February 9, Chili Fundraiser
March 4, Pancake Supper
March 16, Regular Meeting
Reach out to Father Nate for more information

are February 9 and March 16. Youths serve as *lay readers* (reading the lessons), *ushers*, and *oblationers* (bringing the elements forward at the offertory). This ministry is a vital part of our worship on Sunday, and a wonderful opportunity for our youth. Reach out to Father Nate (darville@stpetersef.org) to find out how your children can be a part of this exciting ministry. Readings are always available ahead of time online at www.lectionarypage.net and service bulletins may be found on our website at www.stpetersef.org/sermons/.

THE WORK OF MINISTRY

Care & Connect: Second and Fourth Sundays

Our next gathering will be Sunday, February 9, immediately after the 10 am service in All Saints' Chapel. This is a brief continuation in prayer as we focus our prayers for ourselves 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.

IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

St. Peter's OpShop

Happy Lunar New Year! Come in and celebrate with us by buying some new winter clothes or lovely home goods. Did you know we have a huge rack full of new with tags items!?

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

Make Dinner Count! Mark your calendars for Monday, February 3 when you can order Chipotle (749 Bloomfield Avenue, West Caldwell) between 4-8 pm and support the St. Peter's Nursery School.

Twenty-five percent of sales will be donated to SPNS when you order online using code **WMFT8G2** at pickup. Skip cooking, enjoy a yummy meal, and support our school! Contact director Jacquelyn Albietz at stpeterssexsxfellsns@gmail.com to find out more about this important ministry.



Help Us Make Our Classrooms Brighter!

Our teachers have put together *Amazon Wish Lists* filled with items to help enrich their classrooms and keep the learning fun and engaging for our students. From creative playtime materials to educational tools, every item on these lists supports our curriculum and help make sure our children's unique interests are being met.

If you'd like to contribute, you can easily shop from our "Wish List" highlight on Instagram or via the links below. Every purchase, big or small, makes a difference and is deeply appreciated. Feel free to share with family and friends—everyone can be a part of making this year (and years to come) special for our preschool community!

3's Wish List: <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/61JVP12ZOSYB>

3.5's Wish List: <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/OAZWD60BVTYW>

4's Wish List: <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/116STFY18EGUM>

AROUND ST. PETER'S

Religious Life Sunday

We observed Episcopal Religious Life Sunday on January 26. It was a joy to welcome Sister Linda Clare and a new postulant, Niambi Mercado from the Convent of St. John Baptist in Mendham. The sisters shared their stories, their work, and vocation at a special coffee hour following the 10 am mass. Find out more about the sisters at www.csjb.org.



New Choir Section Leaders

KEVIN JOHNSON, *bass*, is a native of Hackensack. He has performed with the Repertory Opera Theater of Washington, Atlanta Opera, DaCorneta Opera, Maryland Lyric Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, HUB opera, Center for Contemporary Opera and Bel Cantanti Opera. He earned degrees in music at Morehouse College, The Chicago Conservatory of the Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, and a Doctor of Musical Arts from The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.



MEGHAN TANELLA, *soprano*, studied double bass/Jazz and audio engineering at Five Towns College in New York, and music education with a concentration in voice and piano at the Aaron Copland School of Music in Queens. She most recently served as the Cantor of Grace Church in Newark.

Absalom Jones Sunday

We will remember the life, ministry, and witness of Blessed Absalom Jones on the Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 16, during Black History Month.

Absalom Jones was the first Black man ordained to the Episcopal priesthood. Together with Bishop Richard Allen, they formed the *Free African Society*, in 1787 the first organized Afro-American society; Jones and Richard Allen were elected overseers. In 1792, the Society began to build a church, which was dedicated on July 17, 1794. In October 1794 the church was admitted as St. Thomas African Episcopal Church (<http://www.aecst.org>) and still thrives to this day. Bishop William White ordained Jones as deacon in 1795 and as priest on September 21, 1802. Known as “the Black Bishop of the Episcopal Church,” Jones was an example of persistent faith in God and in the Church as God’s instrument.



LENT 2025

Ash Wednesday: The First Day of Lent, March 5

Ashes and Holy Eucharist at 7 am, 4 pm, 7 pm

The First Sunday in Lent, March 9

The Great Litany and Holy Eucharist at 8 am and 4 pm

The Great Litany in Procession and Choral Eucharist at 10 am

The Second Sunday in Lent, March 16

Holy Eucharist at 8 am and 4 pm

Family Eucharist, 10 am

Palm Sunday is April 13; Easter Day is April 20

FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm
2 Presentation of our Lord HE, 8 am, 4pm, Chapel 10 am, Church 4 pm, Evensong	3 AA, 7 pm	4	5 Handbell Choir, 7 pm	6 OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm	7	8 Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm SPY Chili making
9 5 Epiphany HE, 8 am, 10 am, 4 pm Care-Connect, 11:15 SPY Fundraiser Vestry meeting	10 AA, 7 pm	11	12 Handbell Choir, 7 pm	13 Absolom Jones, Priest OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm	14	15 Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm
16 6 Epiphany HE, 8 am, 4pm, Chapel 10 am, Church	17 AA, 7 pm <i>Diocesan Clergy Retreat</i>	18 <i>Diocesan Clergy Retreat</i>	19 Handbell Choir, 7 pm <i>Diocesan Clergy Retreat</i>	20 OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm <i>Diocesan Clergy Retreat</i>	21	22 Altar Guild, 10 am OpShop, 10 am-2 pm
23 7 Epiphany HE, 8 am, 4pm, Chapel 10 am, Church Care-Connect, 11:15	24 St. Matthias the Apostle AA, 7 pm	25	26 Handbell Choir, 7 pm	27 OpShop, 11 am-2 pm Parish Choir, 7:30 pm	28	

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



STAY CONNECTED!

Webpage: 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 February 24. Please feel free to email news and events to info@stpetersef.org

ST. PETER'S STAFF

The Rev. Nathaniel Darville, *Rector*, darville@stpetersef.org

Mark A. Trautman, *Director of Music and Administrator*, trautman@stpetersef.org

Dana Leach, *Care and Connect*, leach@stpetersef.org

DJ Elmore, *Bookkeeper*, bookkeeper.stpeters@gmail.com

THE VESTRY OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH

Jim Irwin and Mary Shearin, *Wardens*

Christine Albano, David Cowell, Barbara Gargiulo, Erika Grothues, Sarah Latson, Kurt

Vonderahe, *Vestry Members*

LITURGY & FORMATION LEADERS

Altar Guild: Alice Samuels, inkyretired@aol.com, Karen Mosher, looker-mosher@msn.com

Acolytes: Christine DiGiovanni, adigio1552@aol.com

Eucharistic Ministers/Chalichists: Father Nate Darville, darville@stpetersef.org

Lectors: Kathleen McLaughlin, kathleenmcl27@gmail.com

Music Program: Mark A. Trautman, trautman@stpetersef.org

Ushers: Wayne Copeland, waynecopeland@keyconsult.com

St. Peter's Youth (SPY): Father Nate Darville, darville@stpetersef.org

Christian Youth Formation: Father Nate Darville, darville@stpetersef.org

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

St. Paul's Shelter: Liz Irwin, lizcirwin@comcast.net

Christine's Kitchen: Jennifer and Kurt Vonderahe, jcvonderahe@gmail.com

Vacation Bible School: Jack and Sarah Latson, spfvbs@gmail.com

St. Peter's Nursery School: Jacqueline Albietz, 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*

St. Peter's Episcopal Church • 271 Roseland Avenue, Essex Fells, NJ 07021 • 973.226.6500