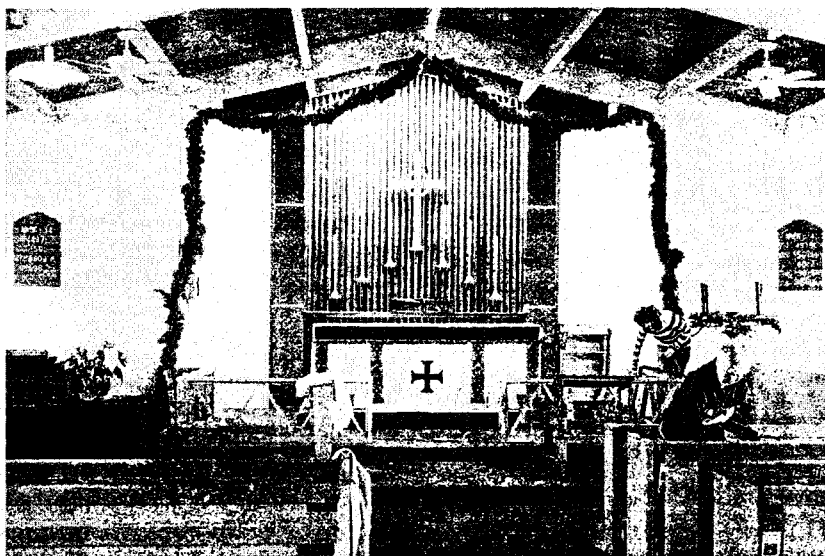


The Rock

of St. Peter's

A publication of
St. Peter's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, Morro Bay,
California



St. Peter's mission is to be a spiritually thriving household for people on their faith journey, radiating Christ's love by bearing witness to our community with hope, compassion, inclusion and service.

December 2008

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All Baptized Persons

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Rector's Letter

Dear People of St. Peter's.,

The new church year has just begun with the First Sunday in Advent. The windows in the Advent Calendar open each day to reveal a picture relating to the preparation for the coming of the Christ Child into our hearts. The candles in the Advent Wreath are lit, purple, purple, pink, purple, until we come to Christmas Eve. Watch, be aware, prepare, repent are all words to heed in this season of preparation.

On December 7, the choir, led by organist and choir director Marti Lindholm, will present the traditional Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols at 5 pm. Always an offering for the parish and the wider community, it helps us to measure the days until Christmas Eve. The lessons of prophecy of the hoped for Messiah culminate in the telling of the nativity of that longed for One. Come, listen with ear and heart for the message that God sends to all of creation, for all time.

One of the St. Peter's traditions is caroling in the community. This year we will gather at 7 pm. on Tuesday, December 23, in the parking lot. Bring your voices, a flashlight, and some friends. We have plenty of songbooks. This is an all ages event. The people we sing to really appreciate this.

Christmas Eve worship will begin with carol singing at 8:45 pm. on Wednesday, December 24. Choral eucharist begins at 9 pm. Christmas Day eucharist is at 10 am. We often have visitors from out of town for both services.

In a world that both changes and remains the same, the time of Advent helps us to live gracefully with each. In a world that may not feel secure, we are assured of God's ever-present love for us. In a world of uncertainty, we know that God is yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Hold the themes of faith, hope, joy, and love in your hearts and your lives this Advent.

Peace and love in Christ,

Hanüt+

MUTUAL MINISTRY REVIEW

Comments from the Congregation – November 16, 2008

As part of the ongoing Mutual Ministry Review, 38 members of St. Peter's Church responded to questions asked during worship on Sunday, November 16. (Although present in worship that morning, 25% of the 8 a.m. congregation, and 20% of the 10:30 a.m. congregation, did not respond to the questions.) Please remember, as you read through the following comments, that a summary cannot reflect the great variety of subjects that were raised. For a complete listing of what was said by the congregation, ask to see the summaries given to the Vestry and Rector.

Thinking about St. Peter's worship, what did you like best about this year?

16 liked the liturgy - the variety of services; the weekly Eucharist; the special worship services at Advent, Christmas and Easter

15 liked the music - the choir's perseverance; their creative responses to the challenges of the past year; appreciation for Marti Lindholm

6 liked the sense of community they experience when worshipping at St. Peter's

5 liked specific preachers

Thinking about St. Peter's worship, what are your hopes for next year?

19 hoped for better attendance and more participation by the congregation – especially as lectors, lay eucharistic ministers, acolytes, and home visitors

13 hoped for a strengthened music program – especially for a permanent, year-round choir director

9 expressed specific hopes for the liturgy

6 expressed specific hopes for sermons

4 hoped for strengthened community life – taking communion to the sick, name tags for 8 o'clockers, fellowship after the 8 a.m. service

3 hoped for education: adult classes; a Sunday school for children; visiting speakers

Thinking about congregational life, what was the best thing that happened this year?

4

19 remembered specific events, especially the barbecue and pancake supper

12 mentioned St. Peter's friendliness and fellowship

5 mentioned the Mutual Ministry Review

3 mentioned outreach such as Prado

Thinking about congregational life, what are your hopes for next year?

12 hoped for more participation by current members

12 hoped for more community outreach and evangelism

11 hoped for growth in numbers

6 hoped for spiritual growth

4 hoped for more fellowship events

2 hoped for better organization

2 hoped for improved finances

2 hoped for tolerance – "that we maintain our patience and tolerance of views and ideas that aren't ours"

Thinking about your own hopes for St. Peter's, what can you do to help achieve them?

32 said they would continue or increase their personal participation

8 said they would help with outreach to the wider community

Thinking about the future, what would you like to say to the Vestry?

13 wanted better parish organization – planning, recruiting, and following through

10 gave thanks to the Vestry

7 wanted better communication – from parish leaders to parishioners, and vice versa

3 wanted the Vestry to be open to change

3 wanted stable finances

2 had ideas for improving buildings and grounds

2 wanted more evangelism

2 said "Keep the faith!"

Thinking about the future, what would you like to say to the Rector?

15 gave the Rector words of encouragement

11 expressed hopes for future sermons

10 expressed hopes for pastoral care

9 expressed hopes for more organization
2 made comments on leadership

Thinking about the future, what would you like to say to the congregation?

11 members said, "Be welcoming – share your faith."

11 said, "Be involved – participate in the life and worship of the congregation."

10 said, "Be encouraged – keep the faith."

4 said, "Be open to change – welcome new people and new ideas."

Thanks to everyone who took the time to participate in this congregational survey. Your observations, your ideas, and your hopes and dreams will help your Rector and Vestry plan more effectively for St. Peter's future.

For more information on St. Peter's Mutual Ministry Review, contact the Rev. Donna Ross, Diocesan Consultant, at donnaross@charter.net

Achievement House Christmas Party

This year's party for the clients of Achievement House will be on Thursday, December 11, at lunchtime. Women of the Estero Bay churches have joined together in this and many other service projects for the past 40 years or more, St. Peter's women being represented in most of them. Once again, we are asked to supply a small amount of food for the party. Dorene has the details, please call her if you can help at 528-4065. Ellen Pool will, as usual, be on the church parking lot at 10 a.m. on December 11 to pick up your gifts of food. Thank you all for your generosity, it is always so much appreciated.

A Walk in God's Creation

Vestry member Jo Johnson has been leading parish members and friends on gentle works here in "God's country." On December 13, Saturday, we'll gather at the 15th Street entrance to the Elfin Forest in Los Osos for a tour on the boardwalk through the pygmy live oaks and many plants. There are a number on interpretive signs to guide us. The walk will last about 60—90 minutes. This is a very gentle walk, and there are many places to rest on the benches and take in the view. Come and bring a friend.



Harriet's 25th Anniversary of Her Ordination Party



Rest in Peace, Virg Valentiner

St. Peter's said good-bye to Virgal "Virg" Valentiner with a Burial Eucharist and reception on November 24. She entered life eternal on November 16, following complications from heart surgery. Many prayers and fine medical care sustained her for two weeks in hospital prior to her death. She is survived by her husband, the Rev. Paul Valentiner, her daughter, two granddaughters, a sister, and four grandchildren. She is also survived by many friends who loved her sparkly eyes and smile, and great sense of humor. In our burial liturgy we say that life has changed, not ended. She knew that, and so do we. We look forward to a joyous reunion in the life to come.

Upcoming Dates

January 10, 10 AM to 3 PM - The Rev Paul Edwards at St Barnabas'. St. Peter's will provide soup or sandwiches.

January 10, 3:15 PM - SLO Deanery

January 25, Annual Meeting



Budgetary Crises Two BIG IF's

The Finance Committee, led by Bill Morley, met on 12/3 and worked out a balanced, \$164,000, 2009 budget with two big IF's. This budget will be presented to the Vestry for approval on December 21st at 12:15PM. Did you realize that it takes \$164,000 to run your church for one year?

IF #1. IF Sprint signs their proposed contract amendment, we will receive \$20,700 in rent during 2009. IF they don't sign the amendment, we will be \$20,700 short of a balanced budget. We have signed the amendment and are awaiting Sprint's signature.

IF #2. IF 17 parishioners, who pledged last year (but have not yet pledged this year) make their pledge in the same amount as last year (total of \$21,000)---this will bring our pledge total to 56 Pledges---\$107,519. This amount plus other budgeted revenues will total \$164,000. IF these additional pledges are not received, any amount short of \$21,000 will be that amount short of a balance budget.

Worst case---we could be \$41,700 short of money needed to run the church in 2009. Excluding fixed expenses, there are a number of expense items that may have to be cut from the \$164,000 budget. The Vestry will prioritize in what order they will be cut. Some of the items---facing the hatchet---follow:

Priority

(Vestry determined)

Line Item #-Description	\$ Amount
530302- Organ & Piano tuning/repair	150
530414- Copyright/licenses	110
510518- Prayer books	400
510008- Campus Ministry	3000
510010- Church Divinity School of Pacific	1640
510101- Rector salary increase	3081
519301- Secretary salary increase	884
539101- Salary-music (organist/pianist)	7800
539410- Salary-janitorial	2067
 Total	 19,132

I will keep you updated.

Walt Schob, Treasurer