

The Peppercorn

St. Peter's Newsletter

October 2011

Dear Friends in Christ:

It's a spiritual thing. That's what we believe.

So said the vestry of St. Peter's Church when they adopted a Stewardship Statement at the September Vestry meeting. The full statement is provided elsewhere in this copy of the Peppercorn, but for now, I want to draw your attention to one sentence in that statement that speaks to me profoundly: *Stewardship is a spiritual matter, which is centered on within our relationship with God.*

Stewardship, in other words the way we manage all that has been entrusted to us, reflects clearly and directly what we believe about God. To say that we are stewards is to say that we are NOT owners; it is to acknowledge that God, the creator of all, is also the owner of all. Everything we think of as 'ours' -- talents and abilities, family and friends, time for leisure and recreation -- all of these things are not OURS, they are, in fact 'on loan' from God. That is the basic doctrine of Christian Stewardship.

The spiritual dimension has to do with what we do about that, and the attitude we take towards what has been entrusted to us. We can take an attitude of generosity or tightfistedness. We can look for ways to share what we have or seek ways to keep or to hold on to what we have. We can cultivate an attitude of gratitude for what we have (no matter how much or how little) or we can live in fear that we don't have enough, and in worry that we won't have sufficient.

As Christians, of course, our spirituality is grounded in our relationship with God in Jesus Christ, whom we seek to follow in all things. And Jesus was generous. God the Father is a giver: he gave all of creation. He gave us his Son. He gave us the Spirit. Striving to be godly, following in the footsteps of Jesus, trying to be like our Lord, then, is a matter of emulating such generosity. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that we are most like God when we are giving.

In a world where we are so accustomed to hearing (and believing) that 'Everybody's after a buck!' and *Money may not be the most important thing, but it's way ahead of what's in second place*, it is difficult to resist those messages, let alone to reject them. But I had an experience of the UNtruth of those words this past summer when I was in Ghana in West Africa.

I had occasion to eat in various restaurants while I was in Ghana, and enjoyed it particularly when I had the chance to dine with some of my new African friends. When the check arrived at the table, I asked (more than once) what was the customary tip. The answer: "Nothing. They are only doing their jobs."

I tried to explain that in my country, that was not acceptable, and that custom in the US dictates that a server should be tipped between 15 - 20% of the bill. (I also explained that for those who have particular difficulties with arithmetic, often a restaurant in the US will very helpfully supply a calculation of 'suggested' tips of 18% -- right on the receipt. Is that convenient or what?) My Ghanaian friends, none of whom had ever visited this country, were surprised. But they were positively dumbfounded when I explained that it was common practice to tip cab drivers, chambermaids, hairdressers, and other 'service providers.' My African friends very reluctantly agreed that it would be OK to leave one or two cedis (less than one dollar).

So -- everybody is NOT after a buck. In fact, it was my experience that in a place where most people had very little in the way of resources there was a genuine desire to share what they did have. In this country, we seem to endorse the notion that "what's mine is mine." In West Africa, where most had so very little, there was a real willingness to share, and to care for the other.

It was a spiritual thing. That's what they believed.

Do we?

Peace and Blessings,

Frank+

Women of St. Peter's

The next regular meeting of the Women of St. Peter's will be October 5, at 12 noon and we will gather in Classroom A of the Parish House for lunch. Please bring your favorite dish to share.

Keep your eyes on the Asbury Park Press for an article about our cookbook "*Therefore Let Us Keep the Feast*". It should appear on Wednesday, October 19th and will be accompanied by photographs and recipes. If you do not have a copy of the book and want one just speak to Cathy Vedder or Fran Hurley as they are still available. Also still available for purchase is the quintessential Freehold souvenir our Historic Freehold afghan. One hangs on the wall in the parish hall for you to view. In addition to being a very attractive piece they are warm and cozy for those Fall nights not too far ahead. And made in the USA!

We are planning for the *Annual Holiday Bazaar - November 19 and 20*. We will be asking for help to fill the baked goods table with the goodies folks love to buy. Your own specialty, or a family favorite or something seasonal like cranberry bread, pumpkin pie, apple cake or even Christmas cookies that are suitable for freezing will be gratefully received. We are also accepting craft items as donations for a craft table. Hand made aprons, mittens for children, scarves or other handcrafted items.

Please remember all women are welcome at the meetings. Come and join us.

Sunday School

Sunday School officially started on September 18, 2011. At this time we currently have 50 children registered. Last year we had over 80 students registered. These children range from 3 years old to Seniors in High School. This school year will

consist of 30 weeks. The school year is split into 2 fifteen week sessions. This way a teacher has a choice of teaching one half or the whole school year. We still need teachers for the 2nd half of the year which will begin on February 5, 2012. So if you think it is something you might like to do, you still have time to sign up.

We just wanted to take the time to thank the wonderful people who volunteered to help teach our children here at St. Peter's. Sunday School is a very important part of our church, and I know the children and their parents appreciate you. Some of these teachers has been doing it for years, and some are brand new. In either situation, I am sure both the students and teachers will find it a wonderful experience. We sure couldn't do it without you.

Also, if you have not registered your child, you will find yellow registration forms in the Narthex. You may leave the form in the collection plate, mail to the church, or hand deliver to Lori Itinger or Mark Willis.

We are looking forward to a very successful school year.

Lori Itinger & Mark Willis



Put on your walking shoes!

The 2011 Crop Walk is October 16th

The Freehold Area CROP Walk will kick off in the **Parish Hall at 12:30** pm with refreshments for walkers and volunteers from our St. Peter's Family. Afterwards, our team of walkers will meet members of other local congregations outside the rectory where we will help register participants and begin the walk!

Volunteers are needed to staff the registration tables, collect donations of peanut butter and non-perishables food, and to provide information to visitors.

Everyone in the St. Peter's family is invited to walk and encouraged to solicit pledges from family and friends. The pace of the walk is leisurely and route lengths vary. It doesn't matter how fast or how far you walk . . . **what matters is raising funds and awareness in the fight against hunger.**

For more information on walking or volunteering, please email Deacon Catherine at deacon@stpetersfreehold.org.

The # 1 Mission Priority of the Episcopal Church

Did you know that in the year 2000, one hundred, eighty-nine pledged to take specific actions to address the underlying causes of poverty? That plan, called the Millennium Development Goals, (MDGs) is a blueprint for long-term systemic improvement in the lives of the poorest of the poor. The Episcopal Church and Episcopal Relief and Development have embraced the MDGs' we're asked to do the same through our dioceses, churches and individual action and prayer.

The goals are (1) eradicate extreme poverty, (2) achieve universal primary education, (3) promote gender equality and empower women, (4) reduce child mortality, (5) improve maternal health, (6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, (7) ensure environmental sustainability, (8) develop a global partnership for development.

The Monmouth Convocation of the Diocese of New Jersey is hosting an interactive workshop entitled "Living Into the Millennium Development Goals" on Saturday, October 22 from 9 a.m. until 12:00 noon at St. John's Church, Little Silver. We invite you to join us to learn about the MDGs and to explore ways to support this global initiative to fulfill Jesus' call to care for the most vulnerable. Please contact Sarah Paige to register at spaige@newjersey.anglican.org or call 609-394-5281



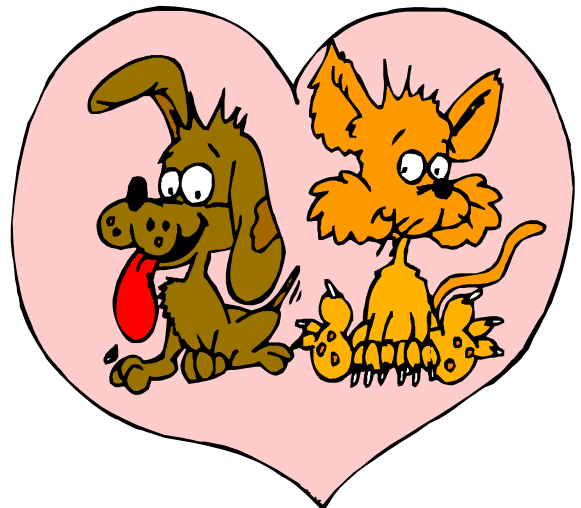
Annual Service:
The Blessing of
Animals

Saturday, October 1

9:30AM

on the Great Lawn

Please: for the sake of the comfort and safety of all attending -- be sure your beloved pet is on a leash, in a cage or otherwise restrained.
Thank You!



Proofreading is such an important skill.

Every Church needs someone (some people!) who can review the Sunday bulletin before it goes to print. The following were taken verbatim from various Church bulletins (not St. Peter's!)

- 1. For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery down stairs.**
- 2. The eighth graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7 pm. The congregation is invited to attend the tragedy.**
- 3. This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Harold to come forward and lay an egg on the alter.**
- 4. The preacher will preach his farewell sermon, after which the choir will sing, "Break Forth Into Joy".**
- 5. Thursday night: Potluck Supper - Prayer and medication will follow.**
- 6. Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.**
- 7. The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.**
- 8. Evening massage - 6 p.m.**
- 9. The Pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday morning.**
- 10. The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.**
- 11. Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Please use the back door.**
- 12. Ushers will eat latecomers.**

Hope you all enjoyed these as much as I did!

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A Stewardship Statement
Adopted by St. Peter's Vestry



Freehold, NJ

We believe that God is the Creator and the Supreme Benefactor from whom all gifts and talents come.

Stewardship is a spiritual matter, which is centered within our relationship with God. In an effort to further our spiritual development and to enhance our faith, we believe that generous and willing giving transforms lives, and that generous giving allows each of us a means of following the actions and ways of our Lord and his Apostles. Stewardship is giving generously of what we have received. Stewardship is at the core of the work of the Church because it is faith in action, and because we put others before ourselves. Christian Stewardship aims to make us reflect on what has been given to us. Stewardship is meaningful and gratifying!

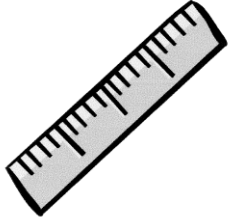
As a church, Stewardship is our collective action of participating directly in the work of Christ in the world.

Therefore

- We affirm that giving transforms lives.
- We affirm that giving is a prayerful consideration.
- We affirm that Christian Stewardship is characterized is by giving that is:
 - **Systematic**, meaning that it is done on a consistent basis;
 - **Sacrificial**, meaning that it will make a noticeable impact on the Christian's lifestyle.
 - **Proportionate**, meaning that those who are blessed with more resources provide according to the blessings and gifts they have received from God.

Adopted by resolution of the Vestry

September 13, 2011.



Golden Rule Fund:

"Do unto others
as you would have them do unto you"

The Golden Rule Fund

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you..."

Rarely do we have so clear an opportunity to demonstrate that we want to live by this dictum as we have had over these last weeks. Hurricane Irene did some real damage to property here in Central New Jersey. One place that suffered serious damage was St. Peter's parish in Spotswood, located about a dozen miles from St. Peter's in Freehold. Floodwaters overwhelmed the brick wall surrounding the church grounds, and over forty feet of fence fell. The basement of the Parish House, where most Church School classes are held, was completely submerged. So was the basement of the Church, which housed the heating system, the hot water heater, as well as the electrical systems. Most unfortunately, none of this damage was covered by insurance.

If our beloved church had suffered such catastrophic damage, we would surely want other Episcopalians to step forward to help. St. Peter's in Freehold and St. Peter's in Spotswood have a special relationship, since the two parishes shared a priest for a time during the 19th century. So it's fitting for us to do as much as we can to help them in their time of difficulty. To this end, our vestry authorized the establishment of the 'Golden Rule Fund,' with the proceeds to go to St. Peter's parish in Spotswood. On September 18, the very first Sunday, the Fund collected over \$600. Envelopes are still available in the narthex, where parishioners may also view photographs cataloguing the damage to the Spotswood parish.



When in our music God is glorified

Hymn Sing at the Cathedral

One annual event that we at St. Peter's look forward to with eagerness every year is our annual hymn sing. This year, for the first time, the Diocese of New Jersey is offering a hymn sing for all members of the Diocese. It will feature well-known and loved hymns from the Hymnal 1982, sung with massed choirs and the cathedral's monumental pipe organ.

It will be a moving, inspiring, exciting, and FUN event. No sermon, no offering, no age limit -- just a chance to lift your voice in praise to God in an inspiring and awesome setting.

The event begins at 3:00PM at Trinity Cathedral, 808 West State St., Trenton, NJ.