



Fr. "Skip" Reeves
Rector

The Vision

The Church of St. Peter, Apostle and Confessor
201 Lakeshore Dr. Cheyenne, WY 82009
Services at LCCC, Center for Conferences and Institutes, Room 130
9 AM Bible Study, Youth Program, Sunday School, Nursery
10 AM Holy Eucharist



www.stpeterschevyenne.org
635-6868

January 2007

From the Rector:



As I sat down to write this on New Year's Day I found myself thinking about St. Peter's and the turmoil in the Anglican Church – and the beginning of our fourth year. Life has certainly been different, hasn't it!

Four years ago no one could have convinced me that I would have left the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming and St. Mark's, Cheyenne, and joined with you to open St. Peter's. And I would never have entertained the idea that I would be a priest affiliated with the Archbishop of Nigeria. No, these concepts weren't on my radar. I wasn't happy with the way the church was headed, but I still thought that I could find a way to live with it. After all, our Sunday services still looked the same, and I wasn't going to change anything. St. Mark's could continue as a little island of traditional Episcopal tradition, and life would go on.

I thought that I could find a way to live with all this because of my quirky make up. Many of my former friends and even members of my own family think of me as a homophobe. There is little truth in that. Actually, I am an emotional and intellectual liberal; however, I am also a theological conservative, and this is difficult for some to understand.

Before St. Peter's, every church I served included both open and closeted gay members. I have had staff that were gay (assisting clergy, organists and choirmasters), and I have chosen them to be Sr. Warden's. Also, I have had congregations elect them to serve as Jr. Warden's. Their sexual orientation was not a problem to me, or the congregation. These were known to be good and decent people who were better at keeping their impulses under control than most of us. No, homophobia wasn't the

problem. The problem was my conservative theology.

When I was in seminary one of the older professors looked out over our young, liberal faces and told us that we were preparing ourselves to become part of the most conservative establishment on earth. At its best, the Church is the conservator of the teachings and traditions our Lord Jesus Christ passed on to the Apostles. St. Paul showed us that the Church could adapt itself to reach out to people in different cultures without compromising its theology. There are areas of Christian theology and tradition that are unclear or may be only a matter of personal preference, and then there is the "core" of Christian belief, those things that all Christians, everywhere, believe and cherish. Among the core beliefs of the Church is the supremacy of Holy Scripture as the source of orthodox teaching. It is the "Word" of God written.

Some years ago I heard someone ask a humanist theologian where he could find the "face of God." He answered with a parable about someone looking into a well and finding God's face. Of course, when we look into a well we see only ourselves. This seems to have been what the Episcopal Church began doing some years ago. This is a comforting position to take. You look at the world around you, and bless what you see as the work of the Holy Spirit. But, the Holy Scriptures won't let us do that.

Emotionally and intellectually I often find myself at odds with what I find in Scripture, but that puts me in good company. Most of the prophets and apostles found themselves wrestling with God. You won't find what God's will for you is by looking into a well, but you can find it by opening yourself to God's judgment in Holy Scripture.

So, here I am at the beginning of a new year. Here I am, looking back at what was, and

lamenting much of what I had to leave behind. I also have thought that there are other churches I could attend with good pastors and people. Yet, here I am, facing another year of being dislocated and wandering in the wilderness. On one level I don't like this – not one bit. On another level, it is comforting. It is comforting because I see things being restored. It is comforting because I see St. Peter's shining as a beacon that won't be dimmed in the storm that swirls around it. It is comforting because I strongly feel that God is present in this struggle. We are the people God has chosen to make this witness, in this place, at this time. It is not where I want to be, but I am convinced that it is where God wants me to be.

God bless you in the New Year.

Fr. Skip+

FROM THE SR WARDEN



It's hard for me to believe that 3 years have passed since we started our journey as a new Anglican church planted in Wyoming. Being your senior warden has been an honor and I feel good about many things we have done. While it has been an interesting time, I feel a calling now to shift the focus of my service. In accordance with our bylaws for vestry service, a new senior warden will soon be taking over. I will however not cease my efforts to support St. Peter's, but rather enter a discernment period for potential ordination to the diaconate. I do not take this step lightly and am not certain what the outcome will be, but I do feel called to initiate this process. I have felt the stirrings of this calling for some time and feel now is the time to focus more clearly on it to find out what God has in store for me next.

In addition to my 40 plus years in the Episcopal Church and experience with Anglican communities in the United Kingdom, Belgium and Italy, my recent studies in the Education For Ministry (EFM) program give me a sound background in traditional Anglican theology and the current state of the Episcopal Church. In fact, that background played a large role in my decision to become part of St. Peter's. It became quite evident to me in reading the EFM curriculum and participating in its guided discussions that the Episcopal Church has wandered far from its Anglican roots. Gone is its previous foundation on Holy Scriptures; gone

are its historic concepts of sin, repentance and redemption; and gone are its traditional beliefs concerning the uniqueness of Jesus and the saving grace provided through his death and resurrection. A significant part of the calling I feel is becoming better able to tell that story in a way that clarifies the gospel for those who have never heard it in this way; or who have forgotten it; or who have been lulled into a state of apathy, thinking that in time "everything will be OK." A sub-committee of the vestry has been formed to help me through the discernment process and I welcome prayers from all of you as we proceed.

Now, back to the present, I am greatly encouraged by the progress we have made through our recent association with the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA). The impending arrival of Bishop Minns is a milestone many of us have looked forward to for years. I know that our vestry will spend some focused time with him later this month as together we look at the vision St. Peter's has for the future and determine how we can best serve God from this outpost on CANA's western frontier. While in many respects we have been leaders in this work, it has become clear to me that having a bishop to actively guide and support us is an important part of the Anglican tradition that we have lacked. I think it is a wonderful thing that we at long last have that kind of support readily available to us.

One final thought before I sign off, while our numbers have dwindled a bit since our inception, I am encouraged by the commitment I see among those of us who have remained to toil in this, the Lord's vineyard. I sense that there is great potential for growth at this juncture. I entreat you all to keep the faith. As Roger recently counseled our adult education class, "Become the change you would like to see at St. Peter's" and above all prepare yourselves to share God's promise with those outside our parish who need to hear it. Be reminded that today as in ancient times, the harvest is plenty and the laborers are few. Join with me, Fr Skip and Bishop Minns in becoming fully a part of God's ministry at St. Peter's, in the city of Cheyenne and in the global Anglican Communion.

Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord!

Dan

VESTRY NOTES

December's Vestry Meeting was held at the Westgate Clubhouse.

TREASURER'S REPORT. Ken Flack reported that \$239 was collected for the vandalized church. All our accounts are operating in the black and balances have been adjusted for end-of-year accounting. Pledges and other anticipated income seem right on target to match the upcoming budget.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT. No current developments.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT. Dan Clark presented information about the Vestry selection process he is undertaking with Jim Krouch and Roger Ludwig, all serving as the Nominating Committee. They are optimistic about filling the large number of slots coming vacant for the next term, as several persons have agreed to serve. Dan has been in contact with Tim Davies, his counterpart at St. Andrew's, about our joining them for the upcoming Christmas Caroling and Chili Supper. They are quite pleased about this joint venture, as are we.

RECTOR'S REPORT. All items are to be covered under other business.

OLD BUSINESS. Land / Facility Purchase / or Lease. Jim Mitchell informed us of a contractor / developer / attorney who is interested in working with us on property acquisition. We will follow-up on how he may be able to assist us. Dan told us about the Miracle Valley Pentecostal Church (north of Burger King on Lincolnway) which is coming up for sale

Vestry Retreat. This team building event was scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 2006, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Westgate Clubhouse. The importance of attendance was stressed for both current and new Vestry members.

Annual Parish Meeting. The proposed budget will be presented and new Vestry members will be elected. This will take place on Friday evening, January 19, 2006, at the Westgate Clubhouse and will be preceded by a Potluck Dinner. We are excited to have our new Bishop Minns with us for this gathering and on through the weekend.

Vandalized Church (Ernie Fitzhugh, Minister). In addition to funds collected on Sunday, Father Skip will add \$100 from his discretionary account. The Vestry voted to make the total an even \$500, taking the balance from Outreach.

Purchase Property or Use Money to Call Full-Time Priest. Roger led a discussion weighing the merits of using our accumulated funds to acquire property or to call a full-time priest

when Father Skip retires. Though a location of our own would give us a sense of stability and permanence, it may not be so beneficial if we are unable to then afford to pay a full-time priest after Father Skip leaves. Both of these concerns would be directly linked to either growing or shrinking numbers within the church as time goes on. We need to keep in mind that Father Skip is not taking a full-time salary, nor are we paying retirement and housing, which would be expenses to add in at such time that a new priest would be hired. Though this transition is not imminent, it is food for thought. Renting a more permanent facility is another consideration. Conversation about this matter will continue.

NEW BUSINESS. Deacon Process. Dan Clark is seeking to become an ordained deacon. A Discernment Committee was selected, consisting of Chairwoman Shari Henney, Roger Ludwig, and Marge Marcewicz. We will try to have this put together by the time Bishop Minns arrives.

Vestry Meeting with Bishop. Jim Mitchell requested that we arrange for the Vestry to be able to meet with Bishop Minns when he visits St. Peter's in January. Dan will talk to Father Skip about setting it up.

The meeting was followed by a Christmas get-together at the Reeves'.

Blessings to all,
Susan Oyler,
Secretary / Clerk of the Vestry

MEN'S BREAKFAST This month we have invited the men of St. Andrew's to join with us for our breakfast. The breakfast is Saturday, Jan 13th, 8am at the Westgate Clubhouse. Food and fellowship provided!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY As many of you are aware, there is a group of St. Peter's women who knit prayer shawls to be given to those who may need them. This began with a gift to us by another church.

The shawls are knitted in prayer by the 'knitting crew', not knowing who may receive them. They are then cleaned, put in bags with a sheet explaining the ministry and are then blessed at the altar by Fr. Skip. They are then ready to be chosen by members of our congregation to be given to someone in need of healing or other problems.

We have received many testimonies from those who received our prayer shawls as to their

healing properties. This is truly the work of the Holy Spirit in what is being done.

Lu Hart is the coordinator of the Prayer Shawl Ministry. In her absence, she has given the box of shawls to Stephanie Reeves. She is bringing 3 or 4 shawls to church on Sunday in case someone needs to pick one up. If you do, we are keeping track of them, so please complete the sheet that goes with that shawl.

The PSM is another outreach ministry of St. Peter's. We give thanks to our knitters and

to those who let us know how the shawls have affected their lives.

ONLY 353 DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS!!!!

Plan ahead – Get your ACW Cookbook while supplies last.

ROTA SCHEDULE WITH PRAYER TEAM

January 2007

To preview the lessons, you may go to www.biblegateway.com.

	OT LESSON	PSALM	NT LESSON	PRAYERS	CHALICE	PRAYER TEAM
Jan 7	Marjie Klebe Isa 43:1-7	Dan Clark (C) Psa. 29	Jim Jensen Acts 8:14-17	Barb Clark	Dan Clark Jim Jensen Roger Ludwig	Matty Ludwig Marge Marcewicz LEM: Matty Ludwig
Jan 14	Barb Clark Isa. 62:1-5	Susan Oyler Psa. 36:5-10	Marjie Klebe I Cor. 12:1-11	Roger Ludwig	Marge Marcewicz Susan Oyler Stephanie R.	Caryl Marion Matty Ludwig LEM: Lamar Gordon
Jan 21	Stephanie Reeves Acts 4:4-13	Dan Clark (C) Psa. 23	Matty Ludwig I Pet.5:1-4	Marge Marcewicz	Dan Clark Jim Jensen Roger Ludwig	Stephanie R. Marge Marcewicz LEM: Dan Clark
Jan 28	Barb Clark Jer. 1:4-10	Jim Jensen Psa. 71:1-6	Marjie Klebe I Cor. 13:1-13	Susan Oyler	Marge Marcewicz Susan Oyler Stephanie R.	Gaye Flack Caryl Marion LEM: Marge Marcewicz

If you need to make a change, please try to find a substitute. If you are unable to find a substitute, please let the Rota Coordinator, Matty Ludwig know, 775-0675 leave a message, or at mattyludwig@bresnan.net