



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.stpeterscheyenne.org  
635-6868

**JUNE 2005**

"Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

Numbers 14:3b

**From the Rector:**



About a month ago I began to hear rumblings of how tired some of us are of setting up and taking down our worship area every Sunday. At the same time I heard people talk about their desire to see us grow "like Cheyenne Hill

Church."

Shortly before Rev. Dick Young retired as the founding pastor of Cheyenne Hills I had a chance to talk to him about how this all came about. Dick had been the pastor of a Baptist church in Lingle, Wyoming for many years when he felt God calling him to begin a new church in Cheyenne on the "mega church model." This meant that he would not be setting up another Baptist church for Baptist people. No, instead his focus was entirely upon people seeking a relationship with Jesus Christ and a church home. As a "seeker church" they resisted the temptation to make things comfortable for themselves and worship in their traditional way with a strong emphasis upon preaching, teaching, and music from a Baptist Hymn Book. Instead they sang the contemporary praise music that a new generation of people are listening to on the radio. Dick did preach sermons, but they were not the focus of the service. Instead they used drama and skits to teach Biblical moral values. Also, everyone was expected to become a member of a small Bible study group that would meet in homes. This is where the real teaching and discipling took place.

Cheyenne Hill met in the same room that we are now using at LCCC for six years before moving to their current location on Highway 30, and some people couldn't take it. Oh, everyone wants to be involved in a "successful" growing church, but Dick was asking too much of some

folks. So, some people lost interest in "his vision," and returned that to a church didn't

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require as much involvement - a more comfortable church that felt more like "home" to them. Dick found this to be one of the most painful aspects of starting this new church, but he stayed the course, and today there are more people worshiping on Sunday morning at Cheyenne Hills than any church in Cheyenne.

Last night I sat down and reread the last two pages of our service booklet - our **Mission Statement** and our **Common Confession of the Gospel**. A year and a half ago we clearly stated that our focus was on making disciples that would be taught the historic truths of Christianity.

I think that we have done a pretty good job of identifying the historic truths of Christianity, and we have paid dearly to maintain them. Like many of you, this has cost me friends, family, income, status in a prestigious denomination, a comfortable home and the comfort of worshiping in a grand historic church building. For me, it has been worth it. I rarely look back, and I am never tempted to go back. So yes, we have done a pretty good job of standing for the truth, but what about making disciples?

Like Dick Young, Jesus had a heart for making disciples, for reaching the lost, and he had no interest in preserving the old when it got in the way of the new work his Father sent him to do. He talked about it like this in Matthew's Gospel:

*<sup>9:16</sup> "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. <sup>17</sup>Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."*

The temple and synagogue system of Judaism, along with its theology, was not going to be able to hold the new teachings of Jesus Christ. It couldn't be patched and mended in order for people to be comfortable with the implications of

Jesus' message. No, it was going to require an entirely new structure (wineskin) that would be capable of expanding with this Gospel. This made a lot of people uncomfortable, and they stopped following Jesus.

So, what about us – are we really interested in “making disciples,” and if so, what price are we willing to pay? What are some of the superficial aspects of our worship that can be changed to reach a new generation of unchurched people?

I know that some of us are not willing to pay any price, make any accommodations. Certainly this was the stance of the Episcopal Church we all left. By any measure it was a failed wineskin. It could not reach out to a new generation, nor even retain its own children. Instead it chose to settle for picking up the angry or wounded from other denominations. I hope that this does not become our stance.

I pray that this new Anglican Church that is emerging, and especially our congregation, becomes a new wineskin. I pray that God gives each one of us a heart for the lost and unchurched in Cheyenne, and that we forget about growing at the expense of the Episcopal Church or any other denomination. And I pray that we will be willing to pay whatever price it takes to make disciples for Jesus' sake.

And ... should we decide we don't want to do what is needed to make disciples ... I pray that we will stop whining about growth. I will then begin to pray more earnestly for renewal.

*God bless you*  
**Fr. Skip**

#### **FROM THE SR WARDEN**



This month I have decided to focus on the growth of St Peter's - both in spirit and in number. I see our recent Faith Alive weekend as the basis for the Spirit part and the number part I will leave in God's hands - and yours. First a few statistics. We had 44 parishioners sign up for the Faith Alive weekend and there were 16 team members who visited us to make the weekend happen. We had a variety of activities, all focused on finding the Spirit working in our lives. The food was great, the fellowship was great and the Spirit was often felt among us.

We received 21 feedback surveys from parishioners on the closing Sunday of the weekend and of those, 18 indicated an interest in

participating in some kind of Bible study or prayer group. As the Follow-Up Chair for the weekend, it is my job to help facilitate the formation of those groups. In coming days, there will be sign up lists at church so both Faith Alive participants and others interested can join a group at a convenient time and location.

These group meetings are where I think the real value of the Faith Alive weekend will bear fruit. I am convinced that it is in such small groups that the Spirit is most effective and where we can best help each other in learning and using the tools that make us truly effective Christians - tools such as prayer, witnessing, mutual support, encouragement, nurturing and shared celebration. From the earliest days of our church, such small gatherings have been pivotal parts of both spiritual growth and growth in numbers.

We have had and continue to have some group activities among us at St Peter's. The Anglican Church Women have a very active program including both fellowship and spiritual growth events. Our parish social activities - special dinners such as the milk can affair at Schraders, the Valentine's Day celebration at Westgate, etc. - all contribute to our shared sense of family. We have also had groups working with the Purpose Driven Church material and another using the Renovare materials. There is also an active group focused on the healing ministry. In looking at the literature about church growth, one common theme is that drawing people into such group activities is key to bringing new people into the church family.

It is my fervent hope and the focus of my prayers that the groups which will grow out of our Faith Alive weekend become the seeds of numerical growth for our church. It is not uncommon for some among us to note the lack of numerical growth in our church and wonder what we should do about it. From where I sit today, the key to bringing others into the family is to actively include new people in small group settings. This means that first we need to establish those groups and put in place the tools needed for Christian growth. Then we each need to invite people to join in those groups. While it may feel awkward for some of us to invite friends to join us at church, it is easier for many to invite an acquaintance to join us for a time of fellowship and sharing. Some food doesn't hurt either.

I call on each of you to seriously consider being part of such a group and then to pray and act in order to bring others into the process. Start now to seek God's guidance on which group to join - or perhaps lead. In your prayers, focus on specific people you will invite to join you. Be bold in your faith and God will reward your efforts. It is Him who we serve and we must not be timid in sharing his Word.

The closing part of this thought is that we are preparing to make a decision on purchasing property to build a permanent church for our family. We have sufficient funds on account to make a down payment on a very desirable piece of property and a projected income sufficient to make monthly payments for several years into the future. The next step in building our church is increasing our numbers to a level that will support construction of a church. I feel led to move toward this goal, but I cannot do it by myself. Each of us needs to be a part of the growth necessary to make this happen. I call on each of you to spend some time in prayer for guidance on what God is calling you to do to further his kingdom. At a minimum, make a commitment to join a group and to invite someone else to join with you. Such groups will bring new people to St Peter's and we will all be blessed both by the sharing and by the growth.

Pray - and then act. God will bless what you do.

IHS,  
Dan

**VESTRY NOTES** May's Vestry Meeting was held at the home of Chuck Seniawski and opened by prayer. Following a short bible study, informal sharing included considerable discussion about the "state of the church," both nationally and locally. There is significant activity occurring in Wyoming which will be coming to fruition within the next month or two. We are pleased to be offering support and encouragement to those who are seeking to follow traditional teachings, but are unable to do so within the current confines of the Episcopal Church.

More around Wyoming -- an interim priest is currently in place at St. Mark's in Casper. The Bishop instructed him to shake things up when he arrived. Evidently he has achieved results. Their attendance has gone from approximately 200 to 35 at the early service and 55 at the late service, so it has decreased by over 50%. St.

Mark's - Cheyenne has called a new priest. He is to be there near the end of July.

In connection with recent action by the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church has seemed to "finesse" the Anglican Communion into accepting a position of not doing anything pending resolution of the issue at hand. ECUSA still has the "official franchise" in the United States to dictate policy, except to churches like us. It is pretty much all politics now. The Episcopal and Canadian Churches have been told to meet certain conditions by June. When June comes, they will be asked if they have complied. It is generally believed they will request postponement by saying they haven't had time to respond properly and they need to bring it before the next two General Conventions to give the matter 2 readings. That would be in 2006 and 2009.

It is suspected the Anglican Communion will force them (ECUSA) out if it comes to that. The American Church is trying to play power politics by asking for more leeway. The prevailing attitude would indicate it will not be given to them. We are starting to see some momentum suggesting that ECUSA could conceivably be removed from the Anglican Communion. More churches are beginning to work out legal deals to separate from ECUSA and retain their property. The break is becoming more imminent all the time. The most recent church to leave is in Midland, Texas. Though they were not able to keep their building, they are a very large congregation and have made a statement in a big way by their exit from the Episcopal Church.

In the meantime, this has thrown roadblocks in the way of the visitation of our Canadian Bishop Anderson, due to the prohibition of crossing jurisdictional boundaries. If he remains under too much pressure to offer significant pastoral oversight to us, we may have to consider some alternatives, one of which is aligning with Anglican Mission in America (AMiA). Among other things, we would then have access to a Bishop to do our confirmations. Father Skip is also contemplating bringing in a retired Bishop out of Texas to conduct confirmations here. This bishop has already gone to Ohio for like functions.

AMiA is growing at a fast pace. Because they are not recognized at this time by the Anglican Communion, they are not bound by the restrictions of crossing boundaries and can

operate freely throughout the country. They have their oversight through Archbishops in Rwanda and Southeast Asia. The Bishop for this area is Sandy Greene in Denver. It is anticipated that AMiA will be brought into the restructured American church that is expected to emerge through American Anglican Council (AAC) and Anglican Communion Network (ACN) as efforts continue to break down to bring ECUSA back to traditional teachings.

**ACW / PARISH LIFE.** The Women's Retreat in April at the Abbey of St. Walburga at Virginia Dale, Colorado, went wonderfully and was so well received that 2 more events have been scheduled: a one-day affair on September 24, 2005, and another overnight trip May 5-6, 2006.

Donna Burgess has been heading up ACW since it began, and having filled a similar position at St. Mark's prior to that, she is ready to step down. She announced that a new leader, Molly Feemster (Donna's daughter) has stepped up to take the reins. Becky Burney agreed to serve as Co-Chair. They will bring great ideas and enthusiasm to the group.

**TREASURER'S REPORT.** Ken Flack reported that, for the first time, we spent slightly more than we took in last month. No budget accounts are experiencing any problems, however. More bills just fell due last month, so it is essentially only a matter of timing. Our financial picture remains healthy.

**JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT.** Jim Krouch reported on the Sunday where we were confined to only one room for our church services and coffee hour, as another group rented the side where we normally conduct Adult Education and share hospitality after church. We got along fine and feel fortunate this is the first time this has happened to us, but feel that if these circumstances tend to occur with some frequency, we may want to consider renting the entire space.

**SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT.** None, as Dan Clark was out of town.

**RECTOR'S REPORT.** Father Skip highlighted the Calendar of upcoming events, including last service with Choir before summer vacation (May 15); Faith Alive Weekend (May 20-22); Parish Picnic / St. Peter & St. Paul's Day (June 29) to be held either at Westgate Clubhouse or the park; and vacation dates for Father Skip, Shari Henney (Music Director), and Ken & Gaye Flack (Set-up and Altar Guild). Layreaders will conduct services and administer Communion during

Father Skip's absences. June Bowser will provide music while Shari is away when she is available, and Jim Krouch will arrange for set-up to cover for Flacks when they are traveling. Tim Bowser will assist with the projection program. Sunday School for the children during the summer may be combined into the time when church is in session.

**OLD BUSINESS. Faith Alive.** Planning is on track. We confirmed that the church will provide all meals, in that we do not want anyone to feel reluctance to participate because of cost. We are looking forward to a very meaningful and uplifting weekend.

**Land Acquisition.** We have located a desirable parcel and will be making an offer to the owners. Dan Clark and Chuck Seniawski have explored some financing options. This looks like a "doable" proposition for us, should we receive a favorable response to our proposal. Ken commented there are 2 giving units contributing to the Building Fund, but there is still not much giving for this purpose. We have money in our Contingency Account, which we have had in mind for the Building Fund, that will likely make our down payment. At that time we will take steps to raise more money to further fund the purchase. We are bringing in enough income to proceed with this acquisition.

**Award - Lamar Gordon.** Father Skip has commissioned the carving of a rock to symbolize the "rock of St. Peter" to honor Lamar for his many contributions to our church. It will have the emblem of St. Peter and his name. Dan is working on arranging a time to present this tribute to him when his wife, Dot, can be in attendance.

**NEW BUSINESS. The "Gathering Music."** Varying opinions were expressed regarding the contemporary / praise music prelude at our worship service. Some folks find it uplifting, others do not find it to their liking. It was observed that some people came at the beginning who are no longer with us. They left because we did not have the energized and modern worship that many young people seek. If we want to draw younger folks to St. Peter's, we need to include music they want to hear. It was concluded that the contemporary / praise music prelude would be scheduled for 9:55 a.m., with the service to begin at 10:05 a.m. Those who do not wish to take part may remain in the Christian Education / Coffee Hour section; those who want

to participate may join in by coming in to the church area.

**Adult Education.** It will continue through the summer months.

**Next Meeting.** Shari graciously offered to host the June Vestry Meeting, scheduled for the second Tuesday, June 14, 2005, at 7 p.m. The meeting was closed by prayer.

If you have any questions, concerns, ideas, etc., about anything connected with St. Peter's, please do not hesitate to share them with any Vestry member or Father Skip. We would all love to hear your thoughts. Here are the folks to contact: Father Skip, Senior Warden Dan Clark, Junior Warden Jim Krouch, Jack Allis, Tim Bowser, Donna Burgess, Ken Flack, Shari Henney, Roger Ludwig, Marge Marcewicz, Susan Oyler, and Chuck Seniawski.

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

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Secretary/Clerk of the Vestry

**COFFEE CORNER** Many thanks to those who provided the delicious Sunday treats during coffee hour in May. Shirley Jones, Donna Burgess, Sue Seniawski, Becky Burney, and Celia Mahue. They were yummy and much appreciated!

The Two Sues, K. & S.

**ACW** The ACW gals will be meeting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month. I am aware this is something new, however, it will be extremely exciting to watch all the new ideas that will stem from this change. Coffee hour will stay the same as always, and will blend nicely with our bake sale. Again this is only once a month (2<sup>nd</sup> Sun.) that all the ladies of the church will donate baked goods to sell that day. Further, our meeting will be accompanied with home made soup, bread & beverage. We hope to include Mothers with thier wee ones and anyone else to join us! Any Husband's of ACW wives are also encouraged to perhaps start thier own group while we are in meeting or we would happily deliver any wife home! I look forward to meeting with all of you during this time (and always).

Molly Feemster, ACW chairwoman

### Rota Schedule with Prayer Team June 2005

Each Sunday's readings will be in the blue binder at the Lectern. To preview the NIV readings, you may go to [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com). This site includes both the printed texts and an audio reading.

Date	OT Lesson	PS Cantor	NT Lesson	Prayers	Chalice	Prayer Team
6/5	Susan Seniawski	TBA	Marge Marcewicz	Barb Clark	Tim Bowser Roger Ludwig Marge Marcewicz	Lu Hart, Susan Oyler Matty Ludwig - LEM
6/12	Marjie Klebe	TBA	Chuck Seniawski	Susan Oyler	Lu Hart Shirley Jones Bob Schrader	Gaye Flack Stephanie Reeves Lamar Gordon - LEM
6/19	June Bowser	TBA	Matty Ludwig	Stephanie Reeves	Dan Clark Stephanie Reeves Marlin Walter	Lu Hart Marge Marcewicz Dan Clark - LEM
6/26	Stephanie Reeves	TBA	Barb Clark	Roger Ludwig	Roger Ludwig Marge Marcewicz Susan Oyler	Matty Ludwig Sue Seniawski Marge-LEM

Psalms will be chanted from the Portland Psalter. First Lesson Readers do not need to read the Psalm unless we have no cantor for a Sunday.

If you need to make a change, please try to find a substitute. If you are unable to find a substitute, please let me know. --Tim Bowser (307) 634-8545 [tbowser@wyoming.com](mailto:tbowser@wyoming.com)

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