

SEPTEMBER 2006

THE ROCK



THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

On a brilliantly clear Tuesday morning five years ago the peace and security many of us took for granted were suddenly shattered. Even as the tragic events of September 11, 2001 ended the way we had looked at the world, they challenged us to see ourselves in a new way.

That afternoon, as streams of stunned New Yorkers made their way uptown past the Church Center heading north, and as far away as they could walk from the devastation, I sat at my desk and wrote a word to the church. I said our responsibility was to “engage with all our hearts and minds and strength in God’s project of transforming the world into a place of peace — where swords can become plowshares and spears are changed into pruning hooks.”

I said that our challenge was to claim our participation in the Risen Christ’s work of casting out fear, and proclaiming to all people the peace that the world cannot give.

Now, five difficult years have passed, and our nation and our world are beset by fear and wracked by violence of almost unimaginable proportions. The war in Iraq is well into its third year and a peaceful resolution seems more distant than ever. Over the past two months violence in the Middle East has escalated. A growing divide separates rich from poor, both within this nation and in the nations of the world, a dynamic that breeds further conflict and instability.

We remain threatened — as last month’s foiled airline plot reminded us — by a well-organized and unpredictable network of human beings whose goal is to inflict slaughter and destruction.

And, very sadly: religion is being used not to reconcile, but to divide.

I can think of no better way to observe the passage of five years since the horrific events of September 11, 2001 than to commit ourselves, individually, as a church and as a nation to looking for new ways to pursue healing and restoration in the world God so loves. I can think of no better way to honor the memory of those who died on September 11 five years ago than by committing ourselves to working for a future in which the events of that day will not be repeated.

What, specifically, does this mean for the United States today?

I continue to be guided by the words of our House of Bishops in the weeks following 9/11. Challenging us to “wage reconciliation” in the world, the bishops urged us to “bear one another’s burdens across the divides of culture, religion, and differing views of the world.”

To accomplish this, I believe our nation first must reclaim its historic identity as a champion of peace in the world. At the present moment, this is nowhere more necessary than in the Middle East. Our nation must play the role not just of a superpower but also of a super-servant — willing to work in a sustained and focused way for lasting peace. This means examining our own nation’s relationship to the Muslim world as recommended by the 9/11 Commission. It means understanding how the U.S. is perceived abroad. It means and working to foster mutual understanding — within our own nation and between nations — among all who share a common heritage as the children of Abraham.

Presiding Bishop’s Message on the Fifth Anniversary of September 11th

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Presiding Bishop's Message



Photo by Marilyn Smith

THE BELLS TOLLED ON SEPTEMBER 11

Marking the Fifth Anniversary of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, 25 people gathered at St. Peter's throughout the day of September 11, first tolling the bell between 8:40 and 9:20 AM, Bob Earle offering Faure's "Pie Jesu" on the organ, and at 12:15 and 6 PM offering prayers and the interfaith litany, "Ashes, Stones and Flowers." There is an abundance of helpful material for reading and meditation available in the narthex. The office can mail it to you upon request.

Second, I believe it is more urgent than ever that the United States address the vast disparity between the wealth of nations such as our own and the extreme poverty of nearly half of the world's people. The United Nations' Millennium Development Goals give to the governments of the world a clear and workable plan for how this can be achieved. I could not be more gratified that the Episcopal Church's recent General Convention identified the Millennium Development Goals as a mission priority. Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and I will soon be releasing a joint pastoral letter on the MDGs that describes how individual Christians can work for United States leadership in the fight against poverty.

Finally, I believe this nation must walk humbly before our God. As the House of Bishops observed in September 2001, such willingness to change course "opens our hearts and gives room to God's compassion as it seeks to bind up, to heal, and to make all things new and whole."

Particularly in working for resolution to the war in Iraq, I pray that hubris not provoke our nation to stay a course that does not appear to be working, and that pride not blind our eyes to alternative strategies. I pray that in the Middle East we will be willing to try — knowing in all humility how great the task — to bring the parties together to find the peace that has so long eluded the suffering people of Israel and Palestine.

Though the challenges facing our world seem even more daunting than they did five years ago, we can place our faith in the power of the Holy Spirit to draw us always into God's work of reconciling the world to himself "by making peace through the blood of the cross." For me, the power of the Cross was never more evident than when I stood at Ground Zero on September 14, 2001. It was the Feast of the Holy Cross, and I had just presided at the Eucharist at the Seaman's Church Institute, which had already begun the task of giving respite to rescue workers and volunteers.

As I was returning from the site of the fallen World Trade Center, I entered a deserted and silent St. Paul's Chapel, an Episcopal Church where George Washington, our nation's first President once prayed.

Though the chapel is just next to Ground Zero, in eerie contrast to the chaos and devastation outside the door, everything was in its place and looked just as it should — except for a fine gray dust which lay everywhere like a blanket. As I stood there, trying to let the experiences and sights of the morning settle within me, I looked toward the altar and my eyes came to rest upon the brass crucifix that hung above it.

Suddenly Jesus' words from the gospel I had just proclaimed at the Eucharist came to me: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all people — all things — to myself." In that moment I knew with the full force of my being that the tiny brass arms of the crucifix could contain in their embrace all the horror and destruction and grief and rage occasioned by what had happened.

Five years later, I still know the truth of this. In the power of the Cross lies our hope for today, and tomorrow, and our future. For in baptism Christ's work of reconciliation, achieved upon the Cross, becomes our own. It is costly and demanding work. It is work we cannot carry out on our own. Christ at work in us, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, supplies us with his own strength, endurance and love. And it is Christ who makes it possible for us to withstand the forces of pessimism and despair, and to be ministers of reconciliation and instruments of his peace. My brothers and sisters in Christ: in the days ahead may we be such ministers and instruments.

"Glory to God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine."

Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold

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Episcopal News Service

We continue reading in John's gospel Jesus' reflections about "the real bread," his sense of sacrifice and the new faith community. The early Christians had very concrete experiences in which all of this had instant and lively meaning. For these words to have meaning for us we must find relevant contexts in our experiences today. I am drawn to those years that Bridget, my wife, and I were in Central America, 1985-1990. Certain people and events still vividly connect with Jesus' teachings about "the real bread."

Thirty years ago Central America experienced terrorism every day in most places. There was mass poverty and the wealthy politicians and business leaders had the support of the military forces. Any threat to the status quo was instantly repressed violently either directly by the army or indirectly by secret death squads approved by the army. Church people were especially frightened, because whenever any one attempted to work for human rights and justice for the poor they were tortured or killed. In Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador grass-roots revolt eventually broke out and the churches especially suffered in the conflict between the cause of justice and the threat of repression.

In 1977, in the midst of this terror, a fifty-year-old priest was named Roman Catholic archbishop of San Salvador. Oscar Romero was known as pious but rigidly conservative. The political establishment was delighted. The grass-roots workers in services for the poor were disappointed. There was nothing in his background to suggest that he would ever challenge the status quo. Within a few weeks of his consecration he found himself officiating at the funeral of a friend, a Jesuit priest who had been active in a center for helping the poor and was assassinated. Romero was deeply shaken by this. Following his friend's death Romero began to change. His weekly sermons, broadcast by radio throughout the country, began to feature violations of human rights and his focus of the gospel on the realities of the day. Within months it was being muttered that Romero was talking like a subversive. But for Bishop Romero, the church's option for the poor was both a matter of pastoral priorities and a defining characteristic of Christian faith. He said, "A church that does not unite itself to the poor in order to denounce from the place of the poor the injustice committed against them is not truly the Church of Jesus Christ....On this point there is no possible neutrality. We either serve the life of /the suffering/ or we are accomplices in their death....We either believe in a God of life or we serve the idols of death."

Threats against him and other clergy and lay people increased. Coups, countercoups, and fraudulent elections left the military and the death squads free to suppress the popular demand for justice. Full-scale civil war became inevitable. During these days Bishop Romero uttered his astonishing definition of resurrection. He said, "I have frequently been threatened with death. I must say that, as a Christian, I do not believe in death but in the resurrection. If they kill me, I shall rise again in the Salvadoran people."

In early 1980, Bishop Romero sent a letter to President Jimmy Carter appealing for a halt to U.S. military assistance to the Salvadoran military. On March 23, 1980, he appealed directly to the members of the military. "We are your people. The peasants you kill are your own brothers and sisters. When you hear the voice of the man commanding you to kill, remember instead the voice of God. Thou Shalt Not Kill....In the name of God, in the name of our tormented people whose cries rise up to heaven, I beseech you, I beg you, I command you, stop the repression." The very next day, as he was celebrating the Eucharist in the chapel of the Carmelite Sisters' cancer hospital where he lived, a single rifle shot was fired from the rear of the chapel. He was struck in the heart and died within minutes. (Robert Ellsberg. All Saints. NY: Crossroad, 1997. 131-133)

Jesus says, "I am the living bread — straight from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live life without end and without limit. The bread that I'm



WINDOW OF THE SPIRIT *views into the souls of St. Peter's*

The Real Bread

Homily of August 20, 2006
by the Rev. Ralph Moore, Rector
St. Peter's Episcopal Church,
Rockland, Maine
Proper 15 (year B)
Revised Common Lectionary—
Proverbs 9.1-6, Psalm 43.9-14,
Ephesians 5.15-20, John 6.51-58



WINDOW OF THE SPIRIT *views into the souls of St. Peter's*

offering is my own flesh, and I give it for the life of the world.” (John 6.51-58) The mystery of our faith is that: (1) each of us is fed through the sacrifice of someone else, and (2) eternal life grows in us as we in turn sacrifice ourselves for the feeding of yet others. Bishop Romero is one in whom we can see this distinctly. Around him in El Salvador are thousands of others—including the Lutheran and Episcopal bishops and clergy, evangelicals, Pentecostals. It's always this way, beginning with Jesus. Being “church” is a daily martyrdom in which eternal life is received, eaten, and passed on for others. Jesus says: “Let me set you straight on this. Unless you swallow the New Human — consume him flesh and blood — you'll be lifeless. Those who do consume me are nourished, flesh and blood, by me and have life without limit. I'll be there for them on the last day, raising them to new life. You see, my flesh and blood are the real stuff — true food and drink. What you eat and drink becomes a part of you, but when you consume my flesh and blood, not only will I become a part of you, but you'll find yourself in me, becoming a part of me....I will be the source of life for whoever digests me....This is the real bread....Those who eat this bread will live life without end and without limit.” (Paraphrase from Laughing Bird Liturgical Resources. www.laughingbird.net)

Daily martyrdom—and daily conversion, daily re-evaluation of values and motives, biases and points of view, checking our selfish clinging and rigid belief. God is not captured by our visions of God, nor are we ever complete and fulfilled and redeemed by any of the visions we have of ourselves. Being “church” is the daily death to present things that we think we've got to have and to keep.

An ancient biblical voice comes from Wisdom, Sophia, a part of the Creator God, who has set a table, laid out food, mixed rich wine and invites us to come: “You who are simple, turn in here! (“Stop, don't pass by, come on in, repent.”) Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.” (Proverbs 9.1-6) I can't help feel that this is the invitation of Jesus as mother: nourishment, body and blood. Several years ago art historians revived interest in the human Jesus in Renaissance art and we saw many wonderful paintings of Jesus' mother breast-feeding him, in public. (Such public display is rarely accepted in our day, especially at ice hockey games!)

“Be careful how you live,” cautions the Letter to the Ephesians. “Not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time....Don't be foolish...but be filled with the Spirit.” (Eph 5.15-20) Being “church” is daring to seek to be mature, not petty; wise, not foolish; alive, not dead. Concretely put, it is your and my sincerity and honesty as we take any step. And we see this, we hold this up, we receive this, in this ritual of bread and wine that we do. A lot of scoffing goes on about this: what nonsense is this eating of a man's flesh? For us this is the road sign of our lives. It tells us where we are going: we are headed toward our own martyrdom, our own conversion, our own death and the resurrection of our own lives. And then we are headed toward feeding others. We are headed toward showing everyone in the world that God is alive in the changing of lives, that Christ is alive in the conversion of people, that the Spirit is alive as people are impelled to act, to sacrifice, to give, to do works of mercy, to witness to resurrection.

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Gallery of the Spirit

This past summer, friends and members of St. Peter's had the opportunity to view work by Connie Chandler-Ward, Episcopal priest and co-founder of the Greenfire Retreat Center in Tenants Harbor, and by Annie Mahoney, a member of St. Peter's. Connie's work was on display in June and July. Annie's will be on exhibit through September.

In October, Kay Brown will share original works of special meaning which she and her husband purchased at Pompeii. In November, we hope to hang photographs by Andrew Reichline, local therapist and photographer. Then in December, a work donated to St. Peter's by Marc and Clare Raymond, will be on display.

Connie Chandler-Ward's piece was "Untitled #14" (Connie reported that typically, she does not title her works, but allows them to "simply represent what they are."). In describing this work, she noted: "I picked up these pieces on the shore because they were striking. They had been tossed by the ocean and therefore are a mix of earth (tree) and water (sea). Moving air and sun dried them, bringing us to the four elements of earth, air, fire and water. My work has been to assemble them while honoring their implicit integrity. In moderate ways, I change them to remove rotting places and deepen the natural flow of shape. Putting them in relation to each other is the creative work. My hope is that it (the sculpture) will lead the viewer into the awesome mystery of the wild world; for if we can look deeply, without imposing words or labels, it is way back to God."

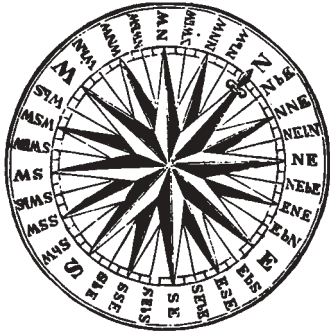
Annie Mahoney, who studied art at University of Pittsburgh, Pratt, Institute, the Instituto in San Miguel Allende, and at MECA, reports she is currently working on memoir paintings. Her painting on exhibit is a colorful and evocative painting of Pittsburgh, where she grew up. She writes that "in childhood I was trapped in a city housing project in Pittsburgh, trapped in poverty, in ignorance, and encased geographically. The city was locked in by hills and rivers and covered with the grime from the steel mills and factories.

The housing project (painted in violet in the work on display) was on a steep hillside. Every day I walked down streets and steps that overlooked the city and led to school, to church, and to the Saturday afternoon movies that fed my plans of escape up the steps and over the hillsides to unknown places." Of the work itself, Annie comments that "Time has softened memory. Now when I think of Pittsburgh, I remember the dramatic swirl from the ill, the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers that form the great Ohio, and the colorful hillsides of winding streets and houses. I see a rich and colorful landscape that shaped my childhood and became the springboard for the life that followed."

The Gallery of Spirit features visual or written works of the imagination that invite others to share the creator's spiritual journey. No distinction is made between adults, children, amateurs, or professionals— with the belief that each individual has a creative journey worthy of sharing. Persons interested in sharing their own work or works of others that echo one's own journey are encouraged to contact Mary Alice Bird (current coordinator) at mab-jab@midcoast.com or 696-6276.



WAYPOINTS
Activities and notices
on our journey
together



As of September 9, 2006 a total of \$73,180 has been pledged. Thanks to:

Christy and Joan Alex
 James and Patricia Algrant
 Anonymous
 John and Mary Alice Bird
 James and Felecity Bowditch
 Katharine Brown
 Thomas and Clara Buescher
 Joyce Cannon
 Douglas Curtis Sr.
 Douglas and Ferolyn Curtis Jr.
 James and Gayle Curtis
 Richard and Doree Fisher
 Barbara Grossbaum
 Frances Hitchcock
 Maren Houghton
 Don and Liz Hunt
 Mary Hunter
 Spence & Anne Hurtt
 Albert and Eleanor Hutchinson
 Jane Jordan
 Ted and Susan Kanellakis
 Linda Mann
 Jo McAlary
 Thomas McBride
 William, Nelda and Kate McClellan
 Chris McLarty
 James and Lloyd Mitchell
 Ralph Moore and Bridget Buck
 Judy Mullins and Neil MacMillan
 Fred and JoAnne Murphy
 Margaret Neeson
 Ruth "Woofie" Parker
 Thomas and Barbara Putnam
 Sarah Reynolds
 Paul and Martha Rogers
 Jack and Lyn Snow
 Patricia Snow
 Kristen Staples
 and Harold Van Lonkhuyzen
 Ion Vardavoulis
 Barbara Yatsevitch

Forward with Faith Fund is off to a good start

In June, the Vestry sponsored three informational forums both to 1) acquaint the parish with plans for Ralph Moore's retirement in July 2007 and 2) inform every one of the financial needs associated with the search for a new rector. John and Mary Alice Bird, who chaired the 2001 Capital Campaign Committee, are chairing the Forward with Faith Fund Committee. Committee members include: Jim Bowditch, Thom Buescher, Chris McLarty, Mac Deford, Liz Hunt, Anne and Spence Hurtt, Lolly Mitchell, Ralph Moore, JoAnne Murphy, Isabel Polk, and Marty Rogers.

As explained at the June meetings and in a subsequent mailing, the purpose of the fund is to put St. Peter's in a sound financial position to attract strong future leadership. In 2001, St. Peter's had an extremely successful capital campaign, raising well over \$600,000 through pledges, which far exceeded the original feasibility study projection of \$450,000. An additional \$150,000 was received from the Halsey Adams bequest. However, it became clear that an additional \$100,000 was needed to fund all the expenses related to the project. The Vestry decided to "move forward with faith" and borrow the funds, believing that completion of the undercroft and narthex were necessary and more economical if done within the overall construction then occurring. Their plan was to retire this mortgage with a mini-campaign following the end of the pledge payment period for the Capital Campaign in 2006.

It is the strong belief of the Vestry that retirement of the \$100,000 building debt will better position the parish to attract strong new leadership — and that up to \$50,000 are needed to make a parish contribution to the diocesan capital campaign and to fund transition expense to new leadership. Transition expenses will include search travel and communication needs, assistance with moving costs for a new rector, and other expenses during the interim period. Ten percent of all funds raised through this drive will be given by the parish to the diocesan capital campaign.

The Forward with Faith Fund is in addition to the regular fall Stewardship Drive to support the operating budget. It was initiated in June and will be completed by early October 2006. If possible, donors to the original Capital Campaign are asked to consider an additional two-to-three year pledge that totals about 25% of their original campaign gift. Those who did not support the original campaign are asked, if possible, to consider three annual pledges that represent either 25% – 50% or 100% of their annual stewardship pledge. These considerations are only guides — and gifts at all levels are both needed and will be appreciated. However, the Committee recognizes that the closer everyone can come to meeting these guides, the more likely it is that the target of \$150,000 can be achieved.

If you have not completed a pledge or gift, please do so as soon as possible, so your name can be added to the following list of those who have made gifts or pledges as of September 11.

With gratitude,
 John and Mary Alice Bird
Co-chairs Forward with Faith Fund

Successful Summer Tag and Book Sale

Thanks to everyone who helped make the July Tag and Book Sale a success — those who helped shape plans; moved, sorted, and priced goods; worked the sale; made contributions; and bought things. Our apology that we neglected to keep a comprehensive record of all your names so we can't thank you personally — but we certainly personally appreciated each and everyone of you. A special thanks to Sharyn and Taylor Pollman who donated a lot of the furnishings of two places they were closing out — and to Deborah Oliver and Asger Bagge for the “Herculean packing up” of the contents and to Joe Patten, Rhonda and John Hart for “ferrying it” to the church from storage. Also special thanks to Jerre at The Second Read, who donated books and also purchased a sizable number from us. Stone Soup Books in Camden also reviewed our books, made recommendations on pricing and bought some.

When all was said and done — and the final round of books were cleared from the parlor in mid August and the snowplow sold (thanks to the sustained effort of Jim and Gayle Curtis) we have grossed \$3010. This, along with the success of the spring Basket Auction and the projected success of an upcoming Le Petit Noel Christmas Fair, suggests that the projected 2006 budget revenue for benefit fund-raising will be met — thanks to the volunteer efforts and generosity of St Peter's friends and members.

And if you wonder what happened to the plant sale this year, we just couldn't find a suitable “right” date in the spring. But hopefully, we will be back on course next year. So, come spring — think plants.

Mary Alice Bird and Chris McLarty, *Co-Chairs of Tag and Book Sale*

Wanted: Your thoughts

St. Peter's, as you all know is nearing a new chapter in its history, with our present Rector leaving and the search for a new one beginning.

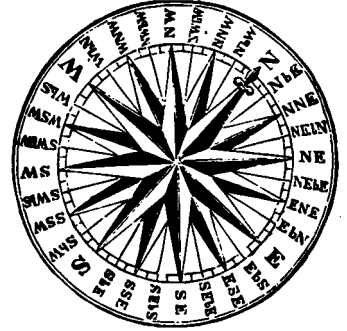
Wonderful things have happened during the time of Ralph Moore's tenure as our Rector and now, we must begin to think about St. Peter's future, what we would like to see as our Church grows in a new dimension. Yet, we are also facing budget deficits and spending our endowment such that it will be totally exhausted within the next few years. To deal with this, the Vestry has formed a committee, led by Harold Van Lonkhuyzen with Mac Deford, Jack Carpenter, Senior Warden of St. John's Church in Thomaston, Jake Thomas and Ruth (Woofie) Parker.

The committee has been asked to recommend to the Vestry budgetary changes and also to make organizational and spiritual recommendations. As part of the charge, the committee is revisiting our overall mission and our strengths, weaknesses and needs.

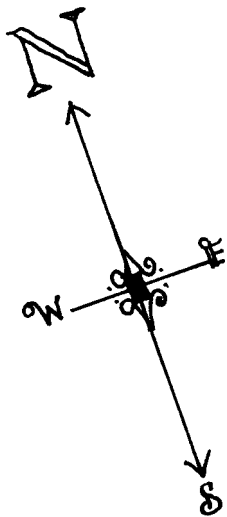
The congregation's input, both positive and negative, its real gut feelings are crucial to the future of the Parish. With the call to a new Rector a little over a year away, it's none too soon for us to evaluate ourselves and what we see as the future for St. Peter's. Hopefully, this process can help with that.

Please send any specific thoughts you may have by e-mail or note to “St. Peter's Soul Searching Committee” or talk with a committee member in person. e-mail: www.stpetersrockland.org Mail: St. Peter's Church, 11 White Street, Rockland, ME 04841

WAYPOINTS *Activities and notices on our journey together*



ON THE HORIZON Upcoming events



Lee Karker to be Ordained October 22

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Maine has recommended that the Bishop proceed with ordaining Lee Karker as Transitional Deacon. This grand event will take place at St. Peter's on Sunday, October 22, at 6:00 PM. Keep that time open for celebration and joy!

Christian Education — The Children's Program

Dear Friends,

I hope you had as great a summer as I did, and now I am looking forward to the new Sunday School Season and rejoining all of you. I am already planning something spectacular for Christmas and hope I can include all of you in upcoming presentations. We will continue with the very successful curriculum we started last year and I look forward to more great ideas from you. Here's to seeing you all soon. Please call me if you would like to help-596-0717.

In Christ,
Valerie Wells
Director of Christian Education

Le Petit Noel set for December 9th

St. Peter's fabulous and famous Christmas Fair, "Le Petit Noel" will be held on **Saturday, 9 December from 8 a.m. to Noon** in the parish hall. After carefully evaluating last year's event the planning committee recommended a return to a date in December rather than November —so you have more time to prepare and plan for your Christmas shopping!

Returning by popular demand will be your favorite booths & activities: Balsam wreaths and wreaths of beautiful dried flowers, baked goods and the Polar Department (frozen delights courtesy of St. Peter's chefs par excellence), ECW crafts, a silent auction of special treasures, extraordinary jewelry by Maridadi, Star Dance and Beadin' Babes, unique custom clothing for children & adults by Mary Alice Bird, pony cart rides, Santa will appear and be available for children & family photographs by professional photographer, Amy Wilton, and our popular Breakfast Menu will be served throughout the morning.

We'd love to have you join us in the planning and doing of Le Petit Noel. There are ways to help from the comfort of your home as well as at the event itself. To offer help, call or e-mail Marty Rogers committee chair at 236-8922 or mlr@midcoast.com. Many thanks in advance!

Foyer Groups to resume

This will be our fourth year of gathering together in small groups for friendship and fellowship, and usually food. Our numbers increased last year and we hope we can include you too, this year. We will try to re-mix people but you may also be able to refresh acquaintances from previous years. The new season will start as we have in the past with a potluck supper on **Sunday, 15 October at 5:30 p.m.** in the parish hall. Bring a favorite food for this true potluck. If you can't commit to a group for the full season but want to come to the potluck, please do. See you there! For more information call Marty Rogers (236-8922) or Jim Bowditch (236-2272).

**The Seventh Annual
Diocesan Ministry Fair
will be held Saturday, 30 September
from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Bangor**

This year's theme is "Celebrating Our Baptism — Ministering Christ's Love in the World". The Rev. Stephen J. White, Chair of the Commission on Ministry writes, "You are invited! The Ministry Fair is an annual celebration of the variety of ministries engaged in by the people of God in the Diocese of Maine. As baptized Christians, each of us is on a unique journey of discerning, equipping, empowering and participating in ministry. Come to the Ministry Fair and experience new dimensions of ministry among us and new ideas to revitalize your ministry."

Ellie Hutchinson is one of the morning speakers. As you may know she is the Community Educator for New Hope for Women in Belfast, has been the diocesan United Thank Offering (UTO) coordinator and is a licensed lay reader and chalice bearer here at St. Peter's. She will speak about how Education For Ministry (EFM) and diocesan discernment experiences brought her to her present job.

For a full description of the Ministry Fair & a registration form, go to www.diomaine.org/documents/minfair.pdf.

Speaking of EFM . . .

Many of you may have heard Isabel Polk and Chris McLarty searching for people interested in making the next serious step in equipping yourself for life in the Christian lane. If you want to learn about the Bible and its history, Christianity's birth and permutations, how to determine your own theology and how to have more intelligent, informed discourse — well, dis course could be just the thing for you.

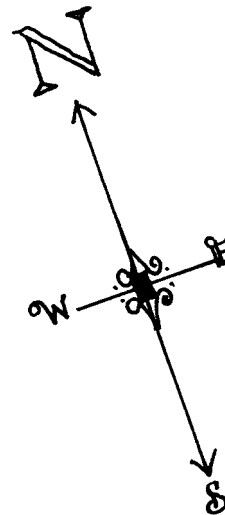
Transform grief into joyful living by Walking the Mourner's Path

Walking the Mourner's Path is a Christ-centered bereavement, grief and training support program. With the guidance of two trained facilitators and a member of the clergy, our goal is to help those who have faced death of a loved one transform their grief into joyful living.

We are encouraging people to learn about Walking the Mourner's Path by signing up for this support program. This eight-week program will be held at St Peter's on Tuesdays beginning October 17th, 2006. Tuition is \$75.00, which includes workbook materials.

For more information please call:
Deborah McKean – 354-8198
Jude Thomas – 354-0028
Isabel Polk – 596-0003

ON THE HORIZON *Upcoming events*



There are three Education for Ministry groups right here in our area.

Monday 6:00 to 8:30
at St. Peter's, Rockland
Isabel Polk (596-0003)
and Sarah Reynolds Co-Mentors
Starts September 18th

Wednesday 3:30 to 6:00
at St. Thomas', Camden
Rosalee Glass 236-0656 &
Emily Rotch Co-Mentors
Cut-off date Sept. 20th

Friday 12:00 to 2:30
at St. John Baptist, Thomaston
Chris McLarty (236-4244)
and Emily Rotch Co-Mentors
Starts September 29th

From the Rector



We find all sorts of symbolic meaning in the Labor Day observance—the dignity of work, the value of labor, the end of summer, the beginning of the school year, etc. For my family it marks a peculiar anniversary. I began my service in St. Peter's on September 1, so each fall this is the start-up of a new year of my ministry. This year is extra special. September 1, 2006 was the tenth year anniversary of my service in St. Peter's.

I reflect not on the past ten years, however. However unique and beautiful to me they have been, I ponder the next ten months, during which time I will be concluding my ministry here. Some have wondered why I have chosen to retire at this time. There is a simple answer to that question. Except in unusual and critical circumstances, the Episcopal Church does not permit clergy to serve in full-time church positions beyond their seventy-second birthday. July 1, 2007 falls just ten months shy of my reaching age 72. Danji's graduation from high school next spring seems a break-off point more natural to our family patterns and most probably to parish life than May, 2008.

Most important, we have this natural block of our parish life together, the program year that roughly follows the calendars of school activity and many work schedules, the one that begins with the Labor Day weekend and runs until the following June. So, here are a few thoughts.

1 This can be a time of planning parish work with the assumption that lay leadership will really be responsible for it. A common characteristic of small congregations is that the rector is assumed to be the center of everything and therefore even though lots of things easily get spoken about the assumption still is that the rector will see to it that everything gets done. And although we have not made formal agreements that this is the way it should be, all too often this has turned out to be the way things have gone. A huge challenge to me has been to resist falling into this pattern. I've ended up doing it anyway a few times, but things haven't held together very well in much of the work we have committed ourselves to. Many of us are over-extended. I have not tried to do some things that someone else was supposed to do. When I have tried it comes off badly either because I am over-extended and do it badly or even not at all. Within a year there will be no rector of St. Peter's, so now is a very fine time to design our work with each other without making that deadly assumption that the rector will be there to take care of whatever it is that we think up.

2 This can be a time of asking everyone in the parish to commit to really close cooperation on tasks that need to be done with other parishioners. Even though we are not a large congregation, we nonetheless still do not know each other as well as we might. It's not just the difference between 8 o'clockers and 10:30ers; it's our geographical and social diversity, too. We live in many different circles of interest, style and custom. They intersect briefly at St. Peter's—sometimes in worship, sometimes in parish activities. But our next challenge and opportunity is for more of us to take initiative to cross over some of the boundaries and invite each other into fuller participation.

3 This can be a time for everyone to learn effective working definitions of the functions served by the wardens, officers, vestry members and others who do specific tasks. According to our traditions and canons it is the vestry—not the rector—that carries the legal responsibility for “oversight” of the mission and ministry of the congregation. The clergy serve by agreement with and in concert with the vestry. This is why the bishop’s primary contact with the congregation is legally through the vestry. We remember that in the scriptures the Greek word for bishop is “epi-scopos,” meaning “over-seer.” (So, our peculiar name, Episcopal, focuses on this style of organizing ourselves.) Thus, bishop and vestry are a natural partnership. Our congregation is not immune to the tendency of things getting done by enthusiastic people who decide that they’ll do them on their own, when and how. This style has succeeded in producing amazing progress in our mission and ministry. But this will not be as effective as it must be in the future. Resources are scarcer and our responsibilities are heavier for the larger complicated facilities and the more demanding call upon us for ministry in the center of Rockland. These pressures require that we plan every step together, do it, evaluate it and grow together, in real working relationship with each other. In other words, the vestry will grow stronger into its role as overseer of a maturing faith community as more people participate more fully in the whole life of the parish.

From the Rector



4 This can be a time of deepening faith and renewed spiritual life. When a congregation finds its focus and then dedicates itself to objectives and goals of mission and ministry, the lives of prayer and the inner awakenings of people take off, expand and blossom. Someone tells me, “I’m not sure I believe.” Or “My faith is lacking these days.” Or other things like that. I know what is meant. It is very difficult to just believe, have blind faith, in a time when religion itself seems so conflicted and even violent. I cannot reassure anyone in such a conversation by a simple religious cliché or Bible quotation. But I know that I am on solid ground when I invite someone into relationships with others. When I define the church that lives in my heart I envision people serving those beyond themselves in many different ways, working together in relationships, building an actual community, and through this growth experiencing blessing, love, forgiveness, reconciliation and saving grace. Church is not in the building; it is in the people serving. And this can be touched, felt, eaten and drunk — and this is sacrament — and this is more important, and real, than lots of words that answer big questions that have easily-forgotten answers. When those folks do their thing in the church building, then it’s all pretty fantastically real. You can feel it. You can’t wait to want someone else to share it with you.

So, this can be a very wonderful, fruitful time, this patch of the calendar that has just begun. I’ll do what I can to contribute to its excitement, and I long to share it with all of you in a unique wonder of sacrament and joy.

In Christ,

Ralph

St. Peter's Episcopal Church seeks to serve God's mission of restoring all people to unity with him. We open wide our doors and say, in the name of Jesus Christ, "Welcome."

Worship

Sunday 8:00 and 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist
Wednesday 7:00 AM Taizé Holy Eucharist

Office hours

Tuesday–Thursday 8 AM to 4 PM

The Rev. Ralph Moore, Rector
(home 596-0421, rector@stpetersrockland.org)

The Rev. Isabel Polk, Deacon
(home 596-0003; deacon@stpetersrockland.org)

Deborah Watson, Administrative Secretary

Robert Earle, Organist

Malcolm Brooks, Composer and Choir Director

Valerie Wells, Director of Christian Education

The Rt. Rev. Chilton R. Knudsen, Bishop of Maine

Officers

Senior Wardens

John Bird 596-6276

Jim Bowditch 236-2272

JoAnne Murphy, Junior Warden, 594-4023

Mac Deford, Treasurer

Jake Thomas, Assistant Treasurer

Sarah Reynolds, Clerk

Vestry members

Elizabeth Biddle, Katherine Brown, Ferolyn Curtis,
Jim Curtis, Bruce Davis, Spencer Hurtt, Thomas O'Brien,
Joanne Smith, Pat Snow, Harold van Lonkhuyzen

THE ROCK

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**You are welcome to contribute to our next newsletter.
Submission deadline is noon October 26th.**



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