

St. Peter's United Methodist Church

Near the Crossroads where North meets South and East meets West

THE KEYS

"To bring people to a personal relationship with God through Christ and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to minister to the world."

Mission Statement of St. Peter's UMC

Devotional thought for December....

Unlike Narnia in C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, placed under the spell of the White Witch, where it is "always winter and never Christmas," the seasons of Advent and Christmastide are upon us. We prepare for Christmas by giving ourselves to the days of Advent preparation that announce that our "redemption is drawing near." Days of preparation and arrival remind me of "twilight time," what Celtic spirituality refers to as the time between the times, which seems to be enchanted moments at dusk and dawn when the veil between this world and the world beyond us is "thin," and we breathe its air.



Our weekly spiritual practices at St. Peter's – ***Sunday's service of public worship at 10:30 AM, Monday's "Food for Body and Soul" study group at noon, Wednesday's workshops and study groups at 7:00 PM (youth gather at 4:00 PM), Friday's Indian Fellowship Worship at 7:30 PM, and Saturday's Frankincense experiential worship at 5:00 PM*** – will remind us that we live in the time between the times, between what is dying and what is being born, between the "already" of Christ's reign and the "not yet" of Advent. I invite you to observe a holy and intentional season of Advent so that Christmas and the days that follow will reveal to us the mystery and meaning of Emmanuel, God with us.

Walter Brueggemann, in *The Prophetic Imagination*, says that God coming to us in Jesus "takes place between the clinging and the yearning." During the upcoming days of wonder and celebration, I pray that we will rediscover what we must relinquish and to what we must open our hands. May we truly experience twilight time and hear the Holy call to us from the world beyond.

Until next month, Tom

Ed Is On His Way Home!

Ed Peterson has completed his trip to Nepal and it was a resounding success in all respects. Ed was able to have some time with **Rev. Devi Bhujel** in Katmandu as well as getting to know local people in a more rural part of Nepal. Ed spent time teaching in a five grade school in Nepal where, seeing that they had only one teacher, committed to funding an additional teacher. He also committed to sponsoring some of the best students to continue on for further education. During his spare time, Ed visited families, ate with them and really got to know them.

Before Ed left Nepal he did a trek to the 18,000 foot level of Mount Everest. His guide planned the trip to take 16 days to get up to and back from the base camp and trek over to the highest lake but Ed didn't require the two planned rest days so the trek was done in 14 days. We are delighted that Ed had the opportunity and resources to

complete this trip and we look forward to hearing about his adventures.

(photo is not of Ed)



Pastoral Partners—Who Are They & What Do They Do?

Pastoral Partners is a care team made up of members from our congregation, with **Rev. Tom** as the primary leader. The main purpose of the care team is to individually visit, write notes and cards and phone those who are sick and/or recovering from illness (especially when the recovery is extended rather than brief), those who are lonely or homebound.

The Pastoral Partners meet three to four times a year to share their experiences and thoughts and give each other support. Respecting an individual's wishes and maintaining strict confidentiality are essential requirements of this group.

Anyone interested may join by contacting Rev. Tom or co-chairs, **Vasantha Daniel** or **Beth Eng**.

Pledge Update (as of Nov. 23rd)

Total pledged so far: \$161,830
Total pledges received so far: 58
(including 5 new)

If you have not returned your pledge card, please do so as soon as possible so our budget can be finalized by Dec. 1st.

The M&M's Corner

Submitted by Roger Allington

Well, the November 5th gathering of the M&M's at Tam O'Shanter Golf and Country Club was a little different. Twenty-one M&M's helped **Reva** and **Roger Allington** celebrate the 8th anniversary of their Bellevue wedding reception, which was held on Nov. 4, 2001 at Tam O'Shanter! Reva and Roger exchanged marriage vows on October 28, 2001, at Northern Light United Church in Juneau followed by a reception at that location. A week later, on November 4, 2001, they held another reception for their Bellevue friends at Tam O'Shanter. It's been eight happy years but as Reva's Aunt Emma said; "They thought it wouldn't last but here it is Thursday already." To which **Tom Steffen** added; "But Wednesday night was a little rough!"

On Thursday, December 3rd, the M&M's will gather at The Olive Garden, 11325 NE 124th St in Kirkland. The Mature Methodists (aka M&M's) are a group of St Peter's members and guests who gather for food, fun and fellowship. All are invited to come and get to know your fellow congregants with "their hair down"! We have no charter, no bylaws, no officers and the only business conducted at a gathering is to determine where to gather next month! Please contact Reva or Roger Allington at 425-373-1370 or rogerallington@yahoo.com for additional information, a head count for reservations and assistance in ridesharing. Y'all come!





By Carol Jones

On October 15th we welcomed new members into our congregation. They are **Jane Sogge** and **Juli Steffen**.

Jane is one of those rare people—a Seattle native. She grew up on Mercer Island and studied nursing at the University of Washington. Jane earned her MBA and works as a project manager for Hewlett-Packard. She has been married to husband, **Steve**, for 24 years and they have two children, a son who graduated from the UW in June and is currently job hunting, and a daughter who is a sophomore at Willamette. Jane enjoys snow skiing, reading, crafts and cooking.

Juli loves living in the Northwest. It has felt like “coming home” given her parents are originally from Oregon. Juli enjoys frequent walks with **Tom** and Sydney, their one-year old Goldendoodle. Exercise and gardening are also important activities. She loves going to good movies, attending concerts and the theater. Most of her reading involves professional materials and the daily Seattle Times. As a therapist, Juli utilizes hypnotherapy and regressive work to help clients identify, explore and heal the emotional, physical, and spiritual wounds that emanate from the prenatal and perinatal periods. She perceives that her work with clients is a sacred experience and a holy calling. Juli says that she has been warmly received since arriving at St. Peter’s, and that becoming a member has now made it “official.”



Holiday Bake Sale is a Sweet Deal!

Here’s the perfect solution for those who don’t have the time or don’t like to bake. On Sunday, Dec. 13th, we are holding a bake sale after our 10:30 a.m. Children’s Christmas Pageant. For those who *do* love to bake during the holidays, please bring your homemade goodies (wrapped and priced to sell) on Thursday evening (Dec. 10th) during choir rehearsal, or on Sunday morning. We are also looking for jams and jellies, holiday decorations or small gifts. Questions? Please talk with **Sue Cullor** or **Edie Ritchey**. All proceeds will benefit the General Fund.

Choir Prepares for Advent & Christmas

By Janet Moore

The Chancel Choir is deep into rehearsals to prepare for Advent and Christmas which is coming up very quickly, indeed! Among the music being practiced is a “Celtic Advent Carol” written by Joseph M. Martin, “A Messiah Suite” by Handel (arranged by Tom Fettke), and a wide assortment of various other tunes that are readily recognizable by singers and congregation alike.

One anthem we have scheduled for January 3rd is a piece called, “I Ponder” by Craig Courtney. It’s a thoughtful work whose text is written from the viewpoint of Mary, Jesus’ mother. I would like to quote from the ending of that song:

“I ponder the wonders I carry inside: the thunder of wings from the angels on high, The sight of the manger, the scent of the hay, the Christ smiling up at the creatures He made.”

Seems this song always gives us pause and we can’t quite get around the significance of God becoming Man through a tiny baby!

Our rehearsal time has been altered to 7-8:30 p.m. on Thursdays. Perhaps you would like to sing in the choir for a short period? This could be the time for you to join us and help us sing praises and glorify God and Christ during this highly anticipated season of the year!

The choir has been reflecting about last Christmas and how so many of us were snowed in! We hope the weather will hold this year and we’ll all be together for this Christmas Eve Service, as well as all the Sundays leading up to and following.

Hope to see you in church!



**Sermon Series
Advent & Christmastide
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.
Rev. Tom Steffen, preaching**

November 29
"What Christmas Tells Us About Ourselves"
December 6
"What Christmas Tells Us About the Bible"
December 20
"What Christmas Tells Us About God"
December 27
"What Christmas Tells Us About Jesus"
January 3
"What Christmas Tells Us About History"

The annual Children's Pageant will be held on Sunday, Dec. 13th at 10:30 a.m.
The 8:30 a.m. Word and Table Communion Service will not be offered during Advent and Christmastide. It will resume on Jan. 10th, the Baptism of Our Lord Sunday.

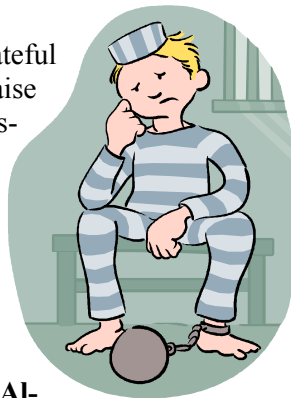
Thanks for bailing me out of jail!

Juli and I are grateful to those who helped us raise money for the recent Muscular Dystrophy Association fundraiser: **Russ and Sue Wiseman, Lea and Robert Martin, Helen and Clare Engbretson, Dottie Calvert, Cathy Relyea and Scott Ruble, Reva and Roger Alington, Jim and Judy Ellis, Edie and Harv Ritchey, Becky Woodworth, Lou and Dick Spady, Mary and Don Duncan, Marilynn Stevens, Juli Steffen, Stephen Dewalt**, and a couple of anonymous donors.

With your help, a number of friends from Culver Academies, and my parents, we raised nearly \$1,100.

Thanks for your generosity!

Tom



What to do in December?

If you're looking for concerts and holiday activities, you don't have to go any further than the church bulletin board.

- **"A Festival of Lessons and Carols"** performed by the Northwest Boys' Choir will be in several locations throughout the month, including St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Medina on Dec. 13th and a special event at Benaroya Hall on Dec. 21st & Dec. 22.
- The Bellevue Chamber Chorus will perform **"A Child Is Born"** on Dec. 5th at 6th at Bothell UMC and First Congregational Church, respectively.
- George Frideric Handel's **Messiah** with the Bellevue Philharmonic Orchestra will perform on Dec. 20th at Westminster Chapel in Bellevue.
- **The Argosy Christmas Ship** departs from Kirkland Marina on Dec. 21st. This is a special family holiday cruise with the Bellevue Chamber Chorus.
- **"The Lights of Christmas"** at Warm Beach Camp includes live theater, dinner, and overnight packages as well as general admission to come tour the light display.
- **Group Health Ice Arena in Bellevue** is open through Jan. 10th (if you mention you're with St. Peter's UMC you receive free skate rentals on special UMC days). See the flyer for days/times and admission prices.
- **Snowflake Lane & Celebration Lane** runs through Dec. 31 with nightly live entertainment and a dazzling light show.
- **The Theatre at Meydenbauer Center** hosts a magical holiday series performed by regional and local groups (see flyer on the bulletin board for a list of performances)
- **Garden d'lights at the Bellevue Botanical Garden** is a breathtaking display of more than 500,000 lights forming fairytale like flowers, arbors and magical scenes.
- **The Season of Wonder at The Bravern** is a festival of lights, music and lights, transforming this European-inspired village into an elegant winter wonderland.

Information on all the above events can be found on the narthex bulletin board

- **The Country Store is back....just in time for Christmas!** Need a last minute holiday gift? Check out The Country Store on Sunday mornings! Having company coming and no time to bake? Check out the goodies at The Country Store! Through Dec. 20th, the store is back in business, making money for the general fund with your donations of jams, jellies, crafts, holiday decorations and such. As in the past, you're in charge of bringing your items to sell Sunday morning, turning in the money and taking with you those things that don't sell.
- **Need a gift for someone but unsure** of their likes or needs? Why not purchase a Safeway gift card on Nov. 29th or Dec. 6th from **Sue Cullor** (they'll be ready for pickup on Dec. 13th). The recipient can use the card for groceries or gas OR exchange it for one of many gift cards Safeway offers...everything from retail to restaurants! The choices are almost limitless! Choose a \$25, \$50 or \$100 gift card or a combination. A percentage of each sale benefits the general fund.
- **Save the date! The Agape Breakfast** will be held from 9 a.m.—12 noon on Saturday, February 3rd. More information will be in next month's *Keys* and upcoming Sunday announcements.
- **Our Boy Scout Troop #618, will be selling holiday wreaths** after church in Dec. These fresh wreaths are wonderfully aromatic and will last well after Christmas, if placed outdoors. More information on dates and prices will be listed in the Sunday bulletins.
- **If you were unable to attend the All Church Conference** in November, and would like a copy of our 2009 Report, they are available from the table outside the office.
- **The church van is heading to Seattle 1st UMC** on Sunday, Dec. 27th to help serve breakfast to some of Seattle's homeless. If you would like to join them, please call **Pat King**. The van leaves at 6:45 a.m. and returns in time for our worship service.

Celebrating Birthdays

- 4 Bob Bailey
Margaret Pratt
- 5 Lou Spady
- 6 Peg Dyer
- 11 Anne Beishline
- 15 Sherry Magnuson
- 18 Stuart Kenney
Mia Scherich
- 19 Kathy Kinch
- 22 Jia Wen Chan
- 23 Margaret Lindberg
- 28 Rosemary Clark
Sue Wiseman



Celebrating Marriage

- 11 Ed & Nancy Peterson, 45 yrs.
- 20 Arul & Vasantha Daniel, 41 yrs.
- 22 Bob & Lea Martin, 53 yrs.
- 23 Max & Donna Dodd, 50 yrs.

If we have forgotten your birthday or wedding anniversary, please contact the office so we may correct our records. We celebrate birthdays the third Sunday of each month.

Please Keep in Your Prayers.....

- ♥ **Eileen & Janet Kouba**
- ♥ **Margaret Pratt**
- ♥ **Becky Woodworth**, whose mother passed away on Nov. 10th.
- ♥ Our military personnel, both here & overseas. Prayers for **Bob Martin Jr.** (private sector), and **Dan and Elba Raven's** nephew, **Andrew**. Our missionary leaders, volunteers and those who are working to make the world a better place in which to live and worship, including **Rev. Devi Bhujel** and **Julie Dahl**.



If you would like to be part of St. Peter's Prayer Team and receive the Prayer Letter via email each Thursday, please contact the church office. If you don't have email access, a letter will be mailed to you each week.



NEWS FROM
FAMILY
MINISTRIES

December, 2009

Christmas Bells! Christmas Bells! Pageant Retells Christ's Birth!

Christmas bells will peal with Christmas joy this December 13 at our morning worship service as the children perform **The Bells of Glocken**, a delightfully imaginative Christmas pageant that retells the story of our Savior's birth and shows how only His redeeming love can change our evil world.

Set in a magical Medieval village somewhere in time, the pageant tells how a peaceful, loving king provided a set of beautiful tower bells for his people, how the bells got destroyed, and how by the miracle of love they were restored and peace returned to the village.

Do attend this charming performance. You will be delighted by the lovely music, costumes, and set; and will come away with the spirit of Christmas "ringing" in your hearts.

Youth to Carol December 16

Join St Peter's children and youth Wednesday, December 16 for a fun caroling party! We will meet at the church at 6:00 PM for hot chocolate and a chance to practice playing the chimes along with our carols, then load into the van to carol for our St Peter's shut-ins and a local nursing home. Handcrafted gifts for our St Peter's shut-ins will be distributed. Children and youth will be returned home and adults returned to the church between 8:00 and 8:30.

Family Calendar

BELLS OF GLOCKEN PAGEANT REHEARSALS

- ~ Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 4:00 PM
(before Kids' Club, Youth Group)
- ~ Saturday, Dec. 5 from
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
- ~ Sunday, Dec. 6 at 9:30 AM
(full hour's rehearsal)
- ~ Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 4:00 PM
(before Kids' Club, Youth Group)
- ~ Saturday, Dec. 12 from
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

CAROLING PARTY

Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 6:00 PM
(following Kids' Club and Youth
Group activities)

FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SVC

Thursday, Dec. 24 at 5 PM

NEW YEARS' EVE PARTY AND HOLY COMMUNION

Thursday, Dec. 31 at 7:00 PM
Communion Service at 11:30 PM



December with Family Ministries

Our Christmas pageant this year really bothered me at first. It is total fiction. It's at the completely wrong time in history. It doesn't take place anywhere near Bethlehem. Bells bring peace and justice: how unbiblical! Gotta be a sin to make a silly story out of the Greatest Story Ever Told.

But now I like it very much. After all, **we** are in the wrong time in history. **We** don't live anywhere near Bethlehem. **We** seek the Infant Who by His great redeeming love brings peace and justice

~ at any time ~ in any place ~
to any heart who is open
to His love

Ring in the New Year with Games, Movie, Holy Communion

Come party this New Year's Eve with a people who know what joy is all about: your St Peter's Church Family! We will gather downstairs in the Youth Room around 7 p.m. for socializing, board games, "munchies," and a movie for the younger set. Then at 11:30 we will progress to the Sanctuary for a service of Holy Communion. Do join us for this happy way to ring in the New Year: with God's blessing and our commitment to **serve him in newness of life** this happy New Year.

Four Things Children Really Want for Christmas

from **Unplug the Christmas Machine**, by Robinson and Staeheli

- ~ A relaxed and loving time with family
- ~ Realistic expectations about gifts
- ~ Reliable family traditions
- ~ An evenly-paced holiday season

~ Submitted by Anne Beishline

Family Christmas Eve to feature Candles, Incense

Our new Saturday evening worship group, **Frankincense**, will be joining **Family Ministries** in hosting St Peter's traditional candlelit Family Christmas Eve service Thursday, December 24 at 5 PM. Come join us for this family-friendly evening of Scripture and song, candles and incense. And be home in time to leave milk and cookies for Santa!

PS: Thanks to the Frankincense worship team for bringing real incense to add a "sweet scent" to the evening!

TEENS MAKE GIFTS FOR SHUT-INS

Thanks to **Beth Eng and Vasantha Daniel** from Pastoral Partners for designing gifts for our youth to make and then to give to our shut-ins when they go caroling December 16.

St. Peter's UMC Calendar for December, 2009

Sunday Schedule: No 8:30A Communion Service in Dec., 10 a.m. Creating For Christ, 10:30 a.m. Worship.

Frankincense Service: 5 p.m. each Saturday of the month except Communion Sunday weekend.

Food for the Body and Soul Bible Study: Mondays from 12-1 p.m., Bible Study with Rev. Tom;

Word 'n' Workshops: Wednesdays, all ages, 4-8:30 p.m. programs, dinner 6-7 p.m. (childcare available)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9A-12:30P Childcare 6:15P Kindering 6:30P BSA 7P Church Council	2 9A-12:30P Childcare 4-8:30P WnW 7P SPR Mtg.	3 9A-12:30P Childcare 11:45A M&M's 6P Bells 7P Choir	4 7:30P PNWCF	5 4-10P TCF Sanctuary/ Fellowship— Contact: Vasantha & Arul Daniel
6 <i>Communion</i> 7-8P BSA Parent Planning	7 9P TOPS 12P Bible Study 7P Info. Gathering Mtg. 7P UMW Board	8 9A-12:30P Childcare 6:30P BSA 7P Investment 7P Youth Chamber Music Recital	9 9A-12:30P Childcare 4-8:30P WnW	10 9A-12:30P Childcare 6P Bells 7P Choir	11 7:30P PNWCF	12 10A-4P Children's Rehearsal 5P Frankincense
13 10:30A Children's Pageant & Bake Sale 4P Sunrise Asst. Living Service	14 9P TOPS 12P Bible Study UMM Xrds Meal 7P Rte 66 7P Strategic Plan. Mtg. Keys Articles Due	15 9A-12:30P Childcare 6:15P Kindering 6:30P BSA 7P Finance	16 9A-12:30P Childcare 4-8:30P WnW	17 9A-12:30P Childcare 6P Bells 7P Choir	18 7:30P PNWCF	19 5P Frankincense Christmas Caroling
20 <i>Birthdays Handbells Play</i> 10:45A Crossroads Retirement Service	21 9P TOPS 12P Bible Study 7P Rte 66	22 9A-12:30P Childcare 6:30P BSA	23	24 Christmas Eve Services 5P Family Srvc 8P Traditional	25 Merry Christmas! 	26
27 6:45A Breakfast to the Homeless—Seattle 1st UMC	28	29	30	31 7P-12A New Year's Eve Party & Service	There will not be an 8:30 a.m. Communion service during December. The Word and Table service will begin again on Sunday, January 10th.	
Church Office Closed through Jan. 1st						

Fellowship Families for December:*Dec. 6th—Group E**Dec. 13th—Group A**Dec. 20th—Group B**Dec. 27th—Group C*

Christmas Eve: Group leaders and families wishing to provide Fellowship after the 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Christmas Eve services should contact each other to make plans and assign duties.

*Special Sundays in Dec.:**Children's Pageant—Dec. 13th**Birthday Sunday—Dec. 20th***Worship Opportunities:****Sunday morning—****No 8:30A Communion Svc. in Dec.****10A—Creating for Christ (children)****10:30A—Worship****Saturday evening—****5P Frankincense (every Saturday but Communion Sunday weekend)****We Love Our Volunteers!!****LITURGISTS:**

Dec. 6 Mia Scherich

Dec. 13

Dec. 20 Children's Pageant—Dianne Lambert

Dec. 24

Dec. 27

USHERS:

Dec. 6 Jim Ellis & Patty Bowen

Dec. 13 Bobby Ng

Dec. 20

Dec. 24 5P & 8P Services

Dec. 27 Jim Ellis

**OUR ACOLYTES: (Mia Scherich)**

Marissa Gaston, Natalie Ng, Ali Nicholson, Alex Osborne, J.P. Peterson and Zach Ruble

We still have holes in our Liturgist and Usher Schedules. Please check your schedules and consider volunteering for a Sunday during the month of December.

Sign up sheets are in the narthex.

OUR STAFF**Ministers:** Congregation**Pastor:** Thomas G. Steffen Email: tgsteffen@gmail.com**Dir. Of Family Ministries:** Mia Scherich (voice mail: 206-517-1043) Email: mia.stpeters@gmail.com**Church Admin. Asst.:** Sue Wiseman (stpeters1@msn.com)**Music Director:** Janet Moore**Organist:** Bob Bailey**Substitute Organist:** Rich Rucker**Handbell Director:** Lea Martin**Worship Team Director:** Trista Wynne**Nursery Coordinator:** Joan Nicholson**Child Care Director:** Jane Sessions (email: jane-sessions@hotmail.com)**Child Care Reservations Line:** 206-517-7073**Janitorial Team:** Teresa and Oscar Avalos

All KEYS articles must be in by **Monday, December 14th** for the **January** newsletter. The *Keys* is posted to the website each month. If you would prefer the *Keys* mailed to your home, please call the church office to arrange for postage.

Church Telephone: 425-747-3210 FAX: 425-747-3789

Website: www.stpetersumc.net—the website calendar is updated each Friday.

