

# St. Peter's CONNECT

*A newsletter from St. Peter's Community in Hebron, Ct.*

## Message from Father Ron

As I have shared with you, Art and I have made an important decision about our future. At the end of this year, I will be retiring as your Rector. Needless to say, to share this with you, comes with all kinds of emotions for me. However, St. Peter's is an amazing little parish, and this year will be a glorious year in the history of our parish community. I am calling it a year of **Celebration, Thanksgiving, and Transition**.

the Annual Meeting, during my report which will be given at our one combined service on February 1, I will unpack this further.

**Celebration:** With the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our historic church building in October 2026, we will have ample time to celebrate what we've all accomplished in recent years.

**Thanksgiving:** It of course is also a time of giving thanks for our time together and for me as your Rector. As I repeatedly say, being your Rector is among the great joys of my life. I have rarely seen a faith community with so many gifts and people ready to share those gifts for our common life.

**Transitions:** We are in a season of change with our beloved Claire facing illness as well as my departure. What I want to stress to you all is we are a strong healthy faith community. We have a vestry with a deep bench of experience with clergy transitions and will put in place processes that will guide the parish with care and skill.

At the **Annual Meeting**, we will ask in real time who has the skills and the energy for each of these three areas of Celebration, Thanksgiving and Transitions. Please mark your calendar to be with us on **February 1** for our 10am service followed by a potluck and our annual meeting.

Blessings in this New Year,

Father Ron

### **Moravian Star**

During Epiphany, a beautiful Moravian Star graces our altar. The star, with its 26 points, represents the Star of Bethlehem, guiding us towards our Lord Jesus, the "light of the world".



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## Why are Annual Meetings Important?

The **annual meeting in the Episcopal Church** is an important tradition within our church and within our St. Peter's community.

- ❖ It provides an opportunity for us to come together to express gratitude, to reflect and to recommit to our parish's ministries and to our parish family.
- ❖ It enables us to celebrate our life together and to collectively make decisions that affect our common life.
- ❖ It is a time to recognize leadership and volunteerism, celebrating all those who make everything happen.
- ❖ It is a time to learn about our important community engagement efforts, major plans, and hear new ideas. It give us a platform to discuss issues of concern and new opportunities.
- ❖ And it is when we elect the leadership of the parish; our officers, our vestry and our delegates to the Episcopal convention in Connecticut.

The Annual Meeting gives us an open forum to foster community, ensure governance and support spiritual growth.

➔ **Annual Meeting and Potluck Luncheon will be Feb 1 after 10am service.**

### In this Issue:

Father Ron's Message	1
Annual Meeting	2
Craft-a-Month	3
Amaryllis at Christmas	3
Annual Report	4
Finances at St. Peter's	4
Light Shines Over Evil	5
Connect Committee	5
From the Altar Guild	6
Seen Around St. Peter's	7
Book Club Begin Feb 2	8
Calendar	8

### Weekly Meetings

Sunday School:	Sun at 10am
Balance Class:	Mon at 10:30 am
Weekly Weeders:	Starts in spring
Connect:	Mon at 2pm
Choir Practice:	Wed at 6pm
Weekly Virtual Coffee Hour:	Wed at 10am

### Monthly Meetings

Building/Grounds	1 <sup>st</sup> Tues at 7pm
Finance	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs at 11am
Vestry	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs at 6pm

### Announcement

An updated parish directory is being sent via email. Need a paper copy? contact the office.

St. Peter's Connect is published by St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Hebron, Ct **860-228-3244**  
 By the St. Peter's Connect Committee and frequent contributors: Gayle Katja, Kathy Kniep, Cathie Litwin, John Loge, Candace O'Shea, Kath Talbot and Steve Wells. **Let us hear your thoughts!**

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## Craft-a-Month with the Women's Club: January 25

There is nothing like fellowship, laughter, welcoming friends and crafting. Clearly a recipe for fun! Each year, the Women's Club contributes handmade items for sale at the St. Nicholas Fair.

This year, we are starting early. Each month (well maybe most months...), we will meet on a Sunday afternoon to create unique and sellable items for the St. Nicholas Fair. In January, we will be making fun computer mouse pads and reusable popcorn bags. Have an idea for a craft? Don't be shy about sharing it. We are always looking for new crafts to try.

Join us at our next "Craft-a-Month": January 25, 1:30pm Phelps Hall . All women (and girls) are welcome!!!! Not on the email list? Kathy Kniep can add you!

## Grief Ministry: Amaryllis Gifts at Christmas



Each year, families in our parish community feel the painful loss of having a loved one pass. As a way to honor their grief and to remember those who have passed, St. Peter's has the tradition of gifting a potted amaryllis plant to each grieving family at Christmas. It is a small way that we can say that we care and that our hearts and prayers are with them over the holidays. And often, the plants bloom just in time for Christmas Day!

In 2026, 12 families received a Christmas amaryllis. We embrace each family and pray that they find comfort in their caring friends at St. Peter's. If you have any questions or feedback about this important ministry, please reach out to Marcia Eaton.

Butterflies can't see their wings. They can't see how beautiful they are, but everyone else can.  
People are like that.

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## The Annual Report

Every year, in January, our parish publishes an Annual Report before our Annual Meeting.

Essentially, this report is a primer for “everything you would want to know “ about the operations, finance and direction of our church community”. It’s lengthy (typically 30-40+ pages) but within those pages, there is a wealth of information.

Father Ron’s annual message to us, our financial position and budget, our ministry reports and our leadership slate- all can be found in the annual report. It’s a great overview of who we are and what we do.

Take a read. Ask questions. ***Your input is always welcome!***



## Finances at St. Peter's

Did you know that all of the expenses of St. Peter's are covered by members of the parish? There is no ‘outside’ source of funding. And just as we carefully manage our finances at home, so to must we be as careful with our parish finances. *Confidentiality and diligent oversight are essential.*

St. Peter's annual budget runs about \$260,000. Our expenses include salaries for the rector, administrative assistant, organist/ choir director, and the bookkeeper. It also includes office administration costs (such as copier expenses, postage and office supplies), utilities (phones, internet, heat, electricity, etc.) and building and grounds expenses (snow plowing, fire systems expenses, insurance, maintenance, etc.).

Income to cover these expenses comes from pledges, non-pledge offerings, and event income. We have a Stewardship campaign each fall to determine the level of pledging for the coming year. Currently, we rely on income from our fundraising events to cover a large part of the church expenses. This past year, the events committee raised about \$30,000 via the community dinners, plant and tag sales, Christmas Fair and many other events.

Ultimately, the Vestry is accountable for making financial decisions. These include the approval of our annual budget, approval of large expenditures, management of investments and oversight of financial practices. At the beginning of every year, the treasurer, rector and finance committee develop a detailed budget outlining estimates for each expense type. Then based on the results of the stewardship campaign, the budget is tuned to address affordability and the Vestry makes the final budget determination.

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## Light Shines over Evil

Just before Christmas there was yet, another mass shooting on a college campus, this time Brown University. Two students were killed and nine others injured while taking their final exams. University officials cancelled all subsequent exams for the semester and students were dismissed home ahead of schedule. This meant some did not have arranged flights or transportation, and many did not have the funds to travel at all unexpectedly, during this break, many being from other countries.

Of course, given the trauma and stress of the event, students had a strong desire and need to be home with their families. Without hesitation, parent after parent of other students, stepped in to purchase tickets to transport all students home that wanted to go!

**In the face of darkness, a light shines.**



## The Connect Committee

This past summer, a new committee was formed with the mission to engage our parish community in faith, fellowship and the missions of St. Peter's and to reach out to the wider community.

Our focus is to:

- Nurture communications within the parish (and the community) regarding our parish operations, events, ministries, history, major decisions, and opportunities to use your time, talent and treasure.
- Work to maintain our parish records to facilitate communications.
- Identify opportunities for the parish to come together in fellowship.

Some of our accomplishments include:

- CONNECT Newsletter,
- The Young Adult Care Package Ministry,
- Weekly Rivereast submissions
- The Founder's dinner

There is more to come in 2026!

The committee meets on Mondays at 2pm.

However, please reach out to anyone of us at any time. We look forward to hearing from you!

Gayle Kataja, Kath Talbot,  
John Loge



Kathy Kniep, Steve Wells,  
Candace O'Shea

***Everyone is welcome to join our meetings and share their ideas.***

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## From the Altar Guild

### What are the colors of our worship?

In the Anglican Tradition, Liturgical colors are used to signify the different seasons and themes within the church year, each with its own specific meanings. One can observe the change in these colors by noticing the different altar frontals, chalice vestments, and priest vestments. The various colors used are green, red, purple, and white with other hints of rose or pink, blue, and gold or brocade which falls into the white category. Let's break down the different colors.

*In this article, we are looking at the Liturgical colors associated with Epiphany, Lent and Easter. In a later article we will share the colors of Pentecost and Advent.*

#### GREEN:

The green color represents growth and life, used during "Ordinary Time". It symbolizes the revelation of God and humanity and is associated with the feasts of Epiphany and Pentecost. Epiphany or the Manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Gentiles begins on January 6, so watch for that change of vestment colors this January!

#### PURPLE:

The purple color symbolizes penance and preparation used during Advent and Lent. It reflects solemnity and need for self-reflection and repentance as believers anticipate the coming of Christ. This also encourages hope and expectation. You will see purple on February 22 and the first Sunday of Lent.

#### WHITE:

(Also **Gold** or Brocade) These colors are used during the seasons of Christmas and Easter, as well as major feasts days, Baptisms and Burials. White represents purity, joy, and the glory of Resurrection.

*Submitted by Cathie Litwin*

God speaks: "Can't sleep? Counting sheep?  
Talk to the Shepherd".

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## Seen around our community...

**A very happy birthday to Claire!**



A big thank you to Erika Baez, and all those who helped her produce our Christmas pageant. It was filled with joy and love! And the children had fun!



Parishioners gathered for a surprise Christmas caroling to Claire. Lino Rodegher gave us all a special treat when he serenaded Claire with a traditional Italian carol. Carolers returned to Phelps Hall for cocoa!



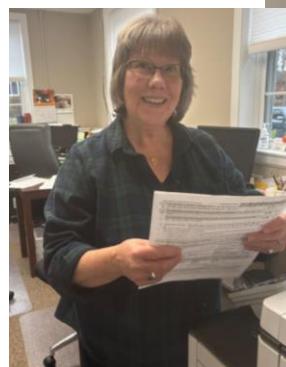
Claire guiding  
Kathy Kniep  
through office  
procedures



Alberta Pompropowicz and  
Georgette Conrad fold our Sunday  
bulletins each week. *Thank you!!*



Thank you to **Music Moves Hartford** for  
such a delightful performance!

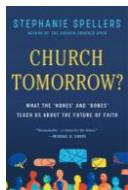


Our parish treasurer,  
Barb Parkyn

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St. Peter's Episcopal Church  
 30 Church Street, Hebron, Ct  
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***A newsletter from St. Peter's Hebron, Ct. All are welcome at St. Peter's!***



## **Book Club Begins Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Join us as we read and explore Stephanie Spellers' book "Church Tomorrow?" All are welcome to participate in our discussions. We meet on Mondays at 11:30am in Phelps Hall. See Donna Gray or Father Ron for more information and to sign-up. Hope to see you!

## **St. Peter's Jan/Feb Calendar**

- Jan 17: Project Hope Dinner Assembly
- Jan 18: Day of Tears -Martin Luther King Commemoration rescheduled to April 11
- Jan 22: Community Events Annual Planning 7pm Phelps Hall
- Jan 25: Women's Club "Craft-a-month" 1:30pm Phelps Hall All are welcome!!!
- Feb 1: One combined service at 10am with Father Ron's Annual Message
- Feb 1: 292<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting and Potluck Luncheon 11:30am
- Feb 2: Book Club (Church Tomorrow? By Stephanie Spellers) meeting at 11:30am
- Feb 9: Book Club Meeting at 11:30am
- Feb 15: 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Valentine's Day Concert by Jason Castonguay
- Feb 16 Book Club Meeting at 11:30am
- Feb 17: Shrove Tuesday Parish Community Pancake Supper
- Feb 21: Project Hope Dinner Assembly
- Feb 22: Women's Club "Craft-a-month" 1pm Phelps Hall All are welcome!!!

----- Love Is The Way -----