

## **ALTAR GUILD REFRESHER COURSE – PART 5 – MAY 2020**

### **ST. PETER'S NEEDLEPOINT PROJECT**

There were two changes made to the interior of St. Peter's Church during the nineties. One was the change from all the wooden candlesticks and wooden processional cross to brass ones, which occurred in 1997; and the other was the needlepoint project which took place from 1990 to 1995.

This needlepoint project was introduced by Laurie Fisher, the Altar Guild Director. The project was planned as a 5-year project and was accomplished within 4 years. It was a very large project incorporating making needlepoint covers not only for all the pew kneelers in the nave, but also for the sanctuary and chancel area, including the Bishop's chair, the Priest's chair, the altar bench; even the base of the font was needlepointed.

A great amount of research was done by Laurie to design these needlepoint pieces. She also visited the National Cathedral in Washington, and a great many churches. These needlepoint items were designed specifically for St. Peter's Church.

Great care was taken in incorporating symbols that existed within our church. For example: the design for the pew kneelers includes the symbols carved at the end of each pew; the cushions on the Bishop's chair have the symbols of some of the wooden shields on the walls of the Sanctuary. The Greek Key design was selected to be stitched on all the needlepoint pieces to give continuity to all areas of the church.

This project not only enhanced the beauty of the church but also provided a wonderful time of fellowship for all members. The Altar Guild was delighted with the project, and the whole church was involved. It unified the members of the church.

There were meetings for learning how to do needlepoint. Groups got together for fellowship as they did needlepoint. Those who did not want to do needlepoint could donate the cost of the kneeler and someone else could needlepoint it for them. Members could choose in which pew or area they would like to have their needlepoint installed. People could personalize their kneeler in memory or in thanksgiving. It was good fellowship time – and a beautiful project was accomplished.

When all the needlepoint was installed, there was a service by Father Dan Riggall to bless these items.

I have seen other churches with some needlepoint pew kneelers – with random colors. But I have not seen another Church with an overall, unified, beautiful look, such as we have with the needlepoint at St. Peter's.

**See below photos of our needlepoint at St. Peter's.**

**When we go back to church, please let me know if you have found the church mouse.**



The Bishop's Chair - with symbols matching wooden shields on the wall. Also the ancient Greek Key Design along the edge of the seats - symbolizes infinity or the eternal flow of life.



Sanctuary kneelers – various Greek crosses (Greek crosses have equal size arms)



Altar bench



Altar Rail kneelers



Pew kneeler with matching trefoil design on pew. Trefoil from Latin (trifolium) – was used in Christian symbolism – it fits with Christian imagery associated with the Trinity: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.





Pew kneeler with matching quatrefoil symbol on pew. In Christianity the quatrefoil was adopted to represent the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.



Pew kneeler – with matching pew symbol. This kneeler is in the front pew – it also has signs for the Hearing Impaired members of our church at that time. “Ephphatha” is the Greek form of an Aramaic word meaning “Be opened” said by Christ healing the man who was deaf and dumb.

