



ST. PETER'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI

A seasonal newsletter.



A Message from the Rector

Are you looking to make a more formal connection to the community at St. Peter's? If so, our diocesan bishop, the Rt. Rev. Brian Seage, will make his annual visitation on Sunday, April 14, and will offer confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation as ways to reaffirm your faith and strengthen your participation.

A word about these offerings:

I should first make clear that the rite of baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into the fellowship of Christ's body, the church (i.e. baptism = membership). Accordingly, while there is considerable diversity of understanding and practice when it comes to confirmation, it should not be understood as a rite of completion for baptism, nor should it be a prerequisite for receiving communion. However, the rite of confirmation does provide people who were baptized at an early age with the important opportunity to make a mature, public proclamation of faith, so the grace of the Holy Spirit can be conveyed in a new way, through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

Reception provides those who have made a mature Christian commitment and received the laying on of hands by a bishop from another denomination recognized as a member of the one holy catholic and apostolic church, with the opportunity to be publicly received into the fellowship of the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion. Reaffirmation provides those who have already been confirmed in this tradition but have returned from a time of religious inactivity to an active practice of faith, with the opportunity to publicly reaffirm their baptismal vows and renew their Christian commitment.

If any of these options seems like your next good step in faith, or if you just want to learn more about who we are as a church, we will begin offering confirmation prep classes on February 11 that will focus on the unique history and identity of the Episcopal tradition.

Peace,
Jody+



Weekly Worship Schedule

Sunday

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II (with music, nursery, and Children's Liturgy)

10:00 a.m. Formation (for all ages, with nursery)

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II (with music and nursery)

5:30 p.m. Jr. & Sr. High EYC (6th-12th grade)

6:00 p.m. Oración Vespertina (Evening Prayer in Spanish)

Monday

7:00 a.m. Rise & Shine Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer: Rite II

2:30 p.m. Writing in the Spirit

4:00 p.m. Spanish Class

Tuesday

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer: Rite II

10:00 a.m. Bible Study

Wednesday

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer: Rite II

12:00 p.m. Centering Prayer

4:45 p.m. Children's Choir (2nd-6th grade)

5:30 p.m. Healing Service with Eucharist



Wednesday (continued)

5:30 p.m. EKC (Pre-K - 5th grade)

5:30 p.m. Adult Formation

6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

6:30 p.m. Parish Dinner

Thursday

7:00 a.m. Rise & Shine Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer: Rite II

9:30 a.m. Centering Prayer

10:00 a.m. Contemplative Study Group

10:00 a.m. Everyday Sisters

Friday

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer: Rite II

Monthly & Bi-Monthly Meetings

1st & 3rd Sundays at 12:30 p.m.

Lay Eucharistic Visitors

1st Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.

Recovery Communion & Dinner at St. Peter's

3rd Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

Pastoral Care Team

2nd & 5th Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Haven House Ministry

2nd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

Women's Book Club

3rd Tuesday at 3:30 p.m.

Holy Eucharist at Elison of Oxford

2nd Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.

Holy Eucharist at the Pinnacle

3rd Wednesday at 7:00 a.m.

Men's Breakfast at the Beacon

3rd Saturday at 9:00 a.m.

Brotherhood of St. Peter

3rd Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

Prayer Shawl Ministry



Ash Wednesday

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

February 14

Services at 7:30 a.m., 12:00 noon, and 6:00 p.m.

We will offer Children's Liturgy and nursery care for the 6:00 p.m. service.

Please note there will be no other programs, choir rehearsals, or dinner on Ash Wednesday.



Lenten Offerings

Lenten Holy Eucharist Services

Tuesdays mornings, February 20 through March 19, at 7:30 a.m.

Wilderness Lenten Formation

Sundays in Lent February 18 - March 17 (except March 10) at 10:00 a.m. in Room 203

Join us for a time of devotion and meditation with hymns, poetry, and prayer as we reflect on the season of Lent with intention.

"The Chosen" Season 2 Discussion

Mondays in Lent (February 19-March 25) at 5:30 p.m. in Room 201

Join the Rev. Jennifer Southall to talk about the 2nd season of the TV series "The Chosen," which follows Jesus as he teaches, heals, and exorcises. One or two episodes will be discussed each week, and will be announced beforehand. The Chosen is available on several streaming platforms and for free at watch.thechosen.tv.

Dwell in the Word

Wednesdays during Lent (February 21 & 28, March 6 & 20) at 5:30 pm. in Room 201

Join us on Wednesday nights during Lent to consider how God is speaking to us through scripture. Open to everyone and no preparation necessary!

Lent, Defined.



Early Christians observed "a season of penitence and fasting" in preparation for the Paschal feast, or Pascha (Book of Common Prayer, pp. 264-265). The season now known as Lent (from an Old English word meaning "spring," the time of lengthening days) has a long history. Originally, in places where Pascha was celebrated on a Sunday, the Paschal feast followed a fast of up to two days. In the third century this fast was lengthened to six days. Eventually this fast became attached to, or overlapped, another fast of forty days, in imitation of Christ's fasting in the wilderness. The forty-day fast was especially important for converts to the faith who were preparing for baptism, and for those guilty of notorious sins who were being restored to the

Christian assembly. In the western church the forty days of Lent extends from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, omitting Sundays. The last three days of Lent are the sacred Triduum of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Today Lent has reacquired its significance as the final preparation of adult candidates for baptism. Joining with them, all Christians are invited "to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word" (BCP, p. 265).

-From An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church, available at episcopalchurch.org/glossary

Holy Week

Holy Week Holy Eucharist Services

Monday-Wednesday of Holy Week, March 25-27, at 7:30 a.m.

Palm Sunday, March 24

10:00 a.m. Making of Palm Crosses in the Parish Hall

*The 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services begin on the church's north lawn (weather permitting) with the procession of palms.

Agape Meal, Wednesday, March 27

5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall

Maundy Thursday, March 28

6:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II with Foot Washing and Stripping of the Altar (w/Children's Liturgy and Nursery)



Good Friday, March 29

12:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross with Musical Meditations in the Parish Hall (w/Children's Liturgy and Nursery)

6:00 p.m. Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday (w/Nursery)

Holy Saturday, March 30

10:00 a.m. Holy Saturday Liturgy

7:30 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter with Holy Baptism and the First Eucharist of Easter

*The Great Vigil begins on the church's north lawn (weather permitting) for the kindling of the new fire.

Easter Day

The Feast of the Resurrection

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II with Children's Choir and Brass in the Parish Hall (w/Children's Liturgy and Nursery)

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II with the Parish Choir and Brass in the Parish Hall (w/Nursery)



St. Peter's Children

St. Peter's has a vibrant and active children's ministry program, which includes a rich variety of formation, fellowship, and service opportunities for children. We strive to teach our youngest parishioners to walk with the Gospel by gathering in intentional community, learning to relate scripture to our daily lives, and supporting others. Below are some ways your child can become involved.

Nursery

Our nursery is available every Sunday morning for the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services. We also offer childcare for those attending adult formation on Sunday morning and Wednesday night.

Children's Liturgy

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Children's Liturgy is a great way to help your child learn about what we Episcopalians do and why. Children are exposed to our lectionary years and seasons, customs and colors, Gospels and prayers all to teach them how to fully participate and understand the Liturgy of the Word and Table. Children in PreK-5th grades can be dropped off before the 9:00 a.m. service in the children's area. We will return your children to the Nave during the Peace for them to participate in Holy Communion with their families.

Formation

Sunday mornings following the 9:00 a.m. service

Throughout the school year, children in PreK-5th grades are grouped by ages for interactive lessons in our children's wing.



E.piscopal K.ids C.ommunity

Episcopal Kids Community meets Wednesdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Children's Wing during the school year. PreK-5th grades join together to learn about God's love for us and for community building. This semester we will continue learning about the Fruit of the Spirit, what Lent means to us, and how we are Easter people. We will burn palms for Ash Wednesday, have an Easter Extravaganza during the 50 days of Easter, continue to support our Adopted Grandparents, and much more. Join us as we grow in Christ together on Wednesday nights!



Save the Date:

the Very Big Story - VBS

When: June 3-7 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Who: 4 year olds - Rising 5th Graders

What: "Do the Desert!"

Join us as we travel through the desert in search of the Promised Land. We will celebrate our escape from Pharaoh, and Moses will sing for the Lord. We will be hungry, tired, thirsty, and we will complain. God will feed and care for us. Moses will bring the 10 Commandments. We will be led by the pillar of cloud and fire as we get closer to our destination. Moses dies after seeing the Promised Land from afar but Joshua takes charge and leads us through the Jordan River to the Promised Land!



"Happeners" at St. Peter's Happening #90

What is "Happening"?

By Harper Gray and Lulu Jackson

Happening is a spiritual weekend retreat hosted biannually, at various Episcopal churches. While Happening is hosted by the Episcopal Diocese, it is not limited to one denomination, or even to one religion. This is because of its intention, which is for Happeners to grow in their own individual being, free of stress and outside pressure.

A unique way this is done is by offering an element of surprise to Happeners. In a world so dominated by technology, Happeners are encouraged to turn in their devices at the beginning of the weekend. With no access to phones or watches, Happeners submit themselves to a timeless weekend that enables them to be truly present. Prior to arriving, Happeners have no expectations of how the weekend will progress. This allows first-time Happeners to experience the surprises and joys that Happening brings. One of the main goals is for Happeners to focus on themselves and the services they receive throughout the weekend. There are many moments for Happeners to reflect on their own lives, and their role in the world. There are also opportunities for Happeners to strengthen their relationship with God as they reflect on who or what God is to them.

On many occasions I have heard Happeners mention how the weekend was something they didn't know they needed, but are incredibly grateful for. The entire weekend, Happeners are served in every way, whether that be physical needs, emotional, or spiritual. Happening is a rare and beautiful event that affects each individual differently, but it is nearly guaranteed that every person will leave Happening feeling changed in some way. This retreat truly has something to offer to everyone, whether one makes new friends, reconciles their relationship with Christianity, or just has a good time.

Happening is targeted towards high school students, ranging from 10th to 12th graders, but there are adult groups for college students and those who are older. High school students and the adult group are separated in small groups and sleeping spaces, but spend time together for meals, music, and large group discussion. This offers perspectives from a variety of groups, further adding to the learning aspect.

Happening #96 will be hosted in our very own St. Peter's Episcopal Church, March 8th-10th. The last Happening pre-Covid was hosted in Oxford, so after four years we are thrilled to welcome back this life changing event into our space. For any questions concerning the upcoming Happening please turn towards one of the following: Lulu Jackson (eljackson1349@gmail.com), Corinne Jackson (corrine79@gmail.com), Harper Gray (harpereregray@gmail.com), or Amber Gray (ambertgray@gmail.com).

E.piscopal Y.outh C.ommunity

Spring Semester EYC (6th-12th Grades):

Sunday evenings 5:30-7:15 p.m.

An Order for Compline 7:15-7:30 p.m. (if you would like your youth to attend)

EYC Volunteer Meals:

We are thankful to all who have provided meals for EYC! We regularly feed around 20 students. If you would like to volunteer to provide dinner to our youth on a Sunday evening this spring, please reach out to hayden@stpetersoxford.org. A sign-up link is in the weekly email.

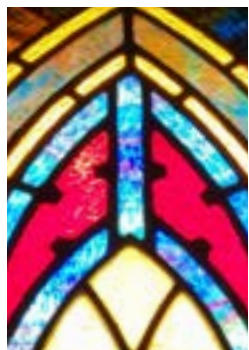
Spring Semester DOY Weekends:

DOY (Division of Youth) weekends are at Camp Bratton Green in Canton, MS. They are a fun retreat weekend for grades 5-12 from Friday evening through Sunday morning. Hayden will be taking the St. Peter's bus to serve as transportation. We leave from the parking lot at St. Peter's at 4:30 p.m. Friday of each DOY weekend. If you would like to attend or want more information, contact Hayden (hayden@stpetersoxford.org).

Sr. High DOY (9th-12th grades)
April 5-7

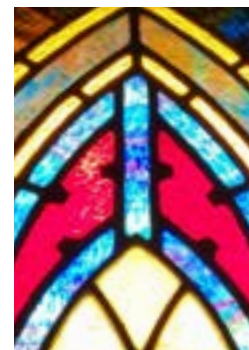
Jr. High DOY (5th-8th grades)
February 16-18





ECOM

EPISCOPAL CHURCH *at* OLE MISS



We welcome university students to worship with us here at St. Peter's on Sundays and Wednesdays and we encourage fellowship with each other here, on campus, and in Oxford. If you are a student and want to get connected with the group, please contact Merritt Tompkins at mtompkin@go.olemiss.edu. Any other questions about ECOM can be directed to Danica Boyd at danica@stpetersoxford.org.



Sunday Dinner and Discussion beginning February 4

Gather on Sunday evenings from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. to enjoy dinner and have authentic discussion on biblical topics. Game night Sundays are every third meeting. We meet at the home of Jason and Danica Boyd and at the church. For more information, contact Danica at danica@stpetersoxford.org.

ECOM Lunch Bunch

February 5, February 22, March 4, March 21, April 1, April 18, and April 29 from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Those on the UM campus are invited to gather with others from St. Peter's at Paris-Yates Chapel for Noonday Prayer then (at 12:10 p.m.) proceed together to the Rebel Market for lunch. For more information, contact Merritt Tompkins: mtompkin@go.olemiss.edu.

Wednesday Gathering

Every Wednesday, meet fellow ECOM students for free dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Stay tuned for other activities planned for Wednesdays this semester!

Save the Date: Young Adult Commission Retreat on Friday, March 1 - Sunday, March 3

A spiritual retreat called Faithful: Work, Play, Life for ages 18-30. There will be time for reflection, prayer, and fun! The retreat will be located at Gray Center in Canton, MS. The cost is \$25 which includes lodging, meals, and a T-shirt. All are welcome!! If you are interested in signing up, please contact Merritt Tompkins.

Worship

Choir

For adults and older youth; members sing at 9:00 and/or 11:00 a.m. services

Altar Guild

Cares for worship linens and vessels; sets up for and cleans up after services

Flower Guild

Designs and cares for altar and narthex arrangements

Liturgical Ministries

Acolytes, Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors, Lectors, and Ushers



Licensed Lay Ministries of the Diocese of Mississippi

By The Rev. Deacon Penny Sisson

Since the early 1980's and the adoption of The Book of Common Prayer (1979), lay persons have shared a more responsible and vibrant role in the offerings of the church, especially in the worship services. The Episcopal Church's Canons, Title III, Canon 4, give to the bishop of each diocese permission to license laypersons for specialized lay liturgical ministry including Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEM) and Lay Eucharistic Visitors (LEV).

A Lay Eucharistic Minister is authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister acts under the direction of the parish deacon. A period of training is required followed with licensing by the bishop. A Eucharistic Minister generally serves once or twice a month as needed.

A Eucharistic Visitor is authorized to take the Consecrated Elements following the Holy Eucharist to members of the congregation who were unable to be present such as the sick and homebound. The Eucharistic Visitor acts under the direction of the parish deacon. Eucharistic Visitors are sent out twice a month, the first and third Sundays of the month. Contact The Rev. Deacon Penny Sisson (psisson@olemiss.edu) if you are interested in this ministry.



Save the Dates

Confirmation 2024 & Bishop's Visitation - Sunday, April 14

Make plans to join us on this special Sunday when Bishop Seage will be at St. Peter's to preach and offer the sacrament of Confirmation at our morning services. If you or your child would like to be confirmed, please contact Kara Howland at kara@stpetersoxford.org.

High School Graduating Senior Recognition - Sunday, May 5

We will honor those graduating from high school. A special luncheon is provided for seniors and their families.

Formation

Sunday

10:00 a.m. Formation

Children and Youth

Pre-K–12th grades in the Children's Wing in age-specific classes, using topical and Lectionary-based curriculums

Nursery (birth through 2 years old) childcare available for parents attending worship and church programming.

Adult

Tychicus Adult Bible Study in the Upstairs Parlor
Seasonal Parish-wide Rector's Forums

5:30 p.m.

EYC (6th– 12th grades) in the Parish Hall

Wednesday

4:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

St. Peter's Junior Choir (2nd–6th grades) in the Choir Room

5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Nursery (birth through 2 years old) for those attending programs or worship

EKC - Episcopal Kids Community (3 year olds through 5th grade)

A Service of Holy Eucharist and Healing in the Nave

Connections in the Upstairs Parlor
Studying the lives of the saints and commemorated persons.

Guys' Group in Room 203
Reading and Discussion on *The Universal Christ*

6:30 p.m.

Dinner and Fellowship for everyone in the Parish Hall

6:30 p.m. (3rd Wednesday each month)

Pastoral Care Teams in Room 204



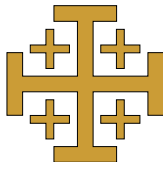
Confirmation Classes

Sundays, February 11 – March 17 (except March 10), following the 9 a.m. service. Adults will meet in Room 203; youth (8th -grade and up) will meet in the High School Room. Rehearsal for Confirmation will be held on April 7, and Confirmations with the Bishop will take place on April 14. Please see the weekly email to register.

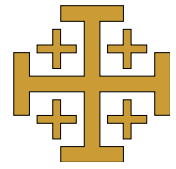
Contemplative Study Group Meets Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the writings of Richard Rohr and other contemplatives. Both men and women are encouraged to come!

Everyday Sisters Meets Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. to discuss various spiritual books. Women of all ages are invited!

Tuesday Morning Bible Study Clergy-led study that meets Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m.



A Deeper Look into Our Wednesday Night Offerings



Connections Women's Group

By Amber Gray

Wow! I just realized that for 10 years, women have been gathering together in the Connections women's small group. What a blessing it has been to be a part of a place of belonging. In 2014, I was a mom of three young children and a new-ish member of St. Peter's, and while I felt so loved in the parish, I craved more intimate friendships within my church family. Out of that longing to know and be known, and with the help and prayers of many, Connections was born. We meet on Wednesday evenings to clear away space and noise and pay attention to one another. We tell our stories and listen to others. We pray and laugh and cry. Some women are there for a season and others are constants, and all are welcome. This semester we will be learning about the lives of saints and commemorated persons and what we can learn from them. We will save you a seat!

Healing Service

By The Rev. Penny Sisson

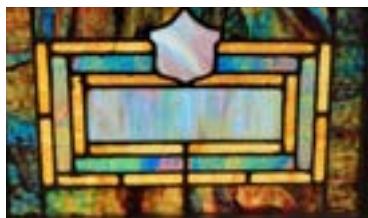
When we moved to Oxford in 1979, St. Peter's offered a Healing service once a week at noon with the Rev. John Michael van Dyke officiating. A small group of parishioners gathered in the Choir area and found the experience very moving. Later in the 1980's, the Rev. Duncan M. Gray III moved the service to Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. along with several formation offerings. The worship service included the Eucharist and Healing. Music was offered and included a combination of traditional hymns and renewal songs. This opportunity for healing and spiritual growth continues today and is especially meaningful worship which leads us to wholeness.

We believe that God's power for healing affects the whole person, spirit, body, mind, and memories. Physicians, nurses, therapists, clergy and lay persons all are valued instruments of God's loving work of healing. We leave the service of Healing and Holy Eucharist renewed and strengthened and blessed by our loving God. One of the prayers we use as we begin the service is: Gracious God, we commend to your loving care all who suffer, especially those who come [here] seeking your healing grace [for themselves or others]. Give them patience and hope in their distress; strengthen and uphold them in mind and body; and grant, by your intervention, that all your people may be made whole according to your desire, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen. We meet (almost) every Wednesday evening and would love for you to join us.

Wednesday Night Guys' Group

By Christopher Lomax

There really is nothing special about Wednesday Night Guys' Group. There were a handful of guys who came with their families to bring their kids to Wednesday Night with Kara. The women had 'Connections' as an established option. When 'Connections' chose to work through *The Way of Love* for one semester, I was jealous as I had nearly started that program though it never came to be because of COVID. This was an opportunity. It was easy enough to start, and when we put our blurb in the bulletin some guys even showed up! They kept coming even when I gave them responsibility for leading a Wednesday night session. The collaboration brought in awesome and diverse points of view, whether family, business, life, or pop culture oriented. The next semester was led by Zach Bonner who has us delve into Jungian Analytics. Last semester we took a look into how church liturgy brushes up with our everyday lives. Wednesday Night Guys group is not exactly a Bible study, and not exactly a simple hangout session. It's somewhere in the middle. While we generally go through some sort of text or program, it has never been something you can't stop in one Wednesday and miss the next. It's come and go, get what you need. No pressure. Usually no homework! Talk a lot or a little. If any of that sounds interesting or intriguing, come give us a go as we get going on *The Universal Christ* by Richard Rohr for this semester. We hope to see you there!



Fellowship



Brotherhood of St. Peter

The Brotherhood of St. Peter is a ministry of men dedicated to the spread of Christ's kingdom here on earth by means of regular prayer, study, and personal service. Members visit the State Penitentiary at Parchman, run a library service along with prayer and study groups for the inmates at Lafayette County Detention Center, help with Christmas gift buying and delivery for the inmates, help at the local food pantry, assist in sending youth to summer camp, and more. Contact Louis Nash at lnash@oxfordsd.org for further information.

Foyers Supper Club - meeting monthly from February - May

Foyers is a unique way to meet or get to know parishioners better. Foyers groups are comprised of singles or couples (usually 6-8 participants) and meet once a month in homes to share a meal. Participants rotate hosting and providing different parts of the meal. They use the Litany of Reconciliation in lieu of grace. If you are interested in more information about this ministry, please contact Dianne Fergusson (662-816-4670, sdsferg@bellsouth.net).

Honoring Widows and Widowers

Our newly formed ministry to those who've lost spouses kicked off with a well attended October luncheon. Since then, the Honoring Widows and Widowers ministry team has been busy forging relationships and planning for further activities and events this spring, including a Valentine-themed luncheon on Monday, February 12, and a Widowers Cookout on Thursday, March 14. If you are interested in joining this ministry, either as a volunteer or someone who is a widow(er), or if you have ideas for this ministry, please contact Annette or Jeff Rogers at jeffbrogers20@gmail.com or nettie12954@aol.com.



Fellowship Spotlight



Sacred Ground

By Amber Gray and Kirk Lovejoy

For the third consecutive spring the St. Peter's community and our neighbors are invited to take part in Sacred Ground, a film-and readings-based dialogue series on race and faith which is offered by our national church. A few years ago, Kirk Lovejoy, a vestry member from 2019-2022, felt a nudge from the Holy Spirit to dive deeper into the history of our church and its relationship to social justice. He quickly found Sacred Ground, and with Jody's blessing he began to offer it to the congregation as well as to anyone in the area who wants to walk the journey. Over the last two years, approximately 45 people have studied and grown together in our call to faith, hope, and love. Participants meet every two weeks to process assigned films and readings and tell their own stories to one another. Longtime parishioner Wanda Dean joined the Sacred Ground class primarily because of her interest in the impact of racism on children. She said, "During my long tenure as a school administrator, I observed the negative impact of racism on many students of varying races and socio-economic status." Olivia Dale entered Sacred Ground a little skeptical but ultimately came to understand history in a way not previously considered. Hank Dunn was often moved to tears watching videos or reading accounts of abuses of Native Americans and African Americans, but he was "encouraged by the stories of the positive steps the Episcopal Church has taken to speak the truth about how Christians conspired with governments to oppress both indigenous and Black people." We encourage you to explore this piece of the Episcopal Church's Becoming Beloved Community with us in a safe and judgement free zone where we will wrestle with you, grounded in our call to faith, hope, and love.

Meetings will be held every other Thursday beginning January 25 through May 30 from 5:30-6:45 p.m.



Fellowship

Men's Breakfast

Fellowship for men of all ages meeting on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 a.m. at the Beacon

Parish Picnic

May 19 from 12:30 p.m.-2 p.m.

Please make plans to join us for this fun annual parish-wide event! We will gather at the Old Armory Pavilion and enjoy a potluck lunch. Meat and drinks will be provided but we welcome you to bring a side or dessert to share. Bring a lawn chair or blanket for seating. There will be a Bouncy House for children!



Recovery Communion

St. Peter's partners with OU Methodist to offer several opportunities for worship and fellowship for the recovery community. During the school year we host an ecumenical communion service on the first Tuesday of every month. This year, we were at OU Methodist for our fall services and moved over to St. Peter's in January. Our next service (also here) will be February 6th at 6PM and will be followed by ones on March 2nd and April 9th. The service is always followed by a delicious, free meal and casual fellowship time in the parish hall. We hold two recovery-oriented courses of Christian education during the year. All who struggle with any sort of addiction are welcome, including Al-Anons (family members of alcoholics and addicts). We are church, not anonymous, but no one will ask you to qualify your presence. Neither do we make assumptions about those who attend. We have found this service to be a wonderful addition to our recovery. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Julie Fanton at juliekayef@yahoo.com or 323-240-7577.

Sacrament of the Present Moment: A Contemplative Weekend Retreat

Friday & Saturday, February 23-24

St. Peter's is excited to kick off the series *Pathways to Discover* with a two-day retreat guided by the Rev. Lowell Grisham. In addition to sessions with Lowell, there will be delicious food, as well as introductions to the labyrinth, the Anglican Rosary, writing Haiku, and interesting discussions with fellow attendees. Registration includes a copy of Father Lowell's book. Register [here](#) or forms can be found in the church offices. The deadline to register is February 10, 2024. For more information, contact Kaye Bryant at khb37@att.net.

Shrove Tuesday Mardi Gras Parade & Pancake Dinner

Tuesday, February 13

The Mardi Gras parade begins at 5:30 p.m. in our parking lot (assemble at 5:15 p.m.). Decorate your wagons, strollers, bikes, scooters, and yourself, and join in the parade as we march around the Square. After the parade, we will have a short liturgy and enjoy pancakes in the Parish Hall.



Opportunities to Serve

Funeral Guild

Ministry that coordinates refreshments and hospitality for funerals

Haven House Ministry

On the 2nd and 5th Sundays of each month, this ministry provides worship at the residential treatment facility at 10:00 a.m.



Hospitality Committee

Ministry that coordinates and provides food for various parish functions. Members have an opportunity to sign up for any of the events scheduled. Either the chair of the committee or someone from the church organizes prior to the event. Specific events for this semester are: Pancake Supper on Shrove Tuesday, Agape Meal, Bishop's Visit, Senior Sunday Luncheon, and VBS. Hospitality is a broad committee and anyone with a desire to help can be a part, whether that involves cooking, setting up before events, picking up needed supplies, or helping others feel welcome at events! If you'd like to join this committee or learn more about it, please contact Corrine Jackson at corrine79@gmail.com.

Lafayette County Detention Center

St. Peter's has two active ministries at the Lafayette County Detention Center (LCDC). The library service for the inmates is provided by the Brotherhood of St. Peter, and they maintain a library that includes approximately 1,000 books, both fiction and nonfiction. Every Thursday afternoon at 1:45 p.m., a crew of St. Peter's members delivers books on carts to each of the pods in which inmates are housed. St. Peter's members may help the library ministry by donating paperback books through the church office.

St. Peter's also worships, prays, and studies scripture with the men and women housed at LCDC. A service for the men takes place at 1:45 p.m. each Wednesday, with Holy Communion provided every other week. A weekly Bible study, Mondays at 3 p.m., is offered for the women at LCDC.

Men at St. Peter's wishing to participate with the library or the men's worship at LCDC should contact Lee Dean (662-801-0205, dean6406@bellsouth.net) or Ken Rutherford (662-816-8105, kenrutherfordhome@gmail.com). Women of St. Peter's interested in ministering to the women at LCDC should contact the Rev. Jennifer Southall (jennifer@stpetersoxford.org).

Please note that visitation at the LCDC is highly regulated (the sheriff's department is strict about the number of visitors allowed in at one time). Anyone wishing to participate in ministry to those at LCDC will need to be processed and trained at the detention center, and then will be called on as needed.

Ministry Spotlight: Little Dresses and Shorts

This ministry involves hand-sewing children's dresses and shorts, which are then blessed by one of the parish priests, and sent to young girls and boys in need in various countries. Contact Kitty Smith at 662-832-0451 with any inquiries.



Thoughts from Little Dresses Members

By Kitty Smith

In 2009, I heard that volunteers were needed to sew little dresses to be taken on the church medical mission trip to Honduras. This was right down my alley.

A lot of ladies showed up and some brought portable sewing machines, which I didn't have, so my job was to help iron the dresses. I went to several work days and loved helping. I was approaching my 60th birthday and my family asked what I wanted. I told them I wanted a Bernina portable sewing machine to be able to sew little dresses. I received my new Bernina "Bernie" and I've never been happier.

I've met some really great ladies while sewing. Before we knew it, our supply of dresses was growing fast so we acquired a portable hanging rack to display our collection. This rack, along with our donated fabric, sheets, thread, lace, ricrac, and other notions were housed in Deacon Penny Sisson's office. Each time we'd gain a stack of dresses, we would have one of the priests bless them at a service.

Over the years, the dresses have been sent to Honduras, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Puerto Rico, New Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mexico, Cuba, and other areas of need around the globe. We also donate dresses to poor, needy, and devastated areas in Mississippi and right here at home in Lafayette County through Interfaith Compassion Ministries and Tutwiler, Mississippi.

The dresses have been made from old tablecloths, bed skirts, bed sheets, ladies dresses, men's shirts, shirt sleeves, and even pillow cases! I've been told and seen pictures of little girls modeling the dresses. How excited and pretty they look in their beautiful new dresses! The feeling of pride and enjoyment I get each time I finish a little dress and hang it onto a hanger is like none other. So, as long as I'm able to iron and sew dresses, that's what I plan to do in my spare time!

In 2023 we decided to expand our inventory. We began making little boy's shorts. When the medical team travels to Honduras in February, they will be taking dresses and shorts for the children. We always welcome new members to our "Little Dresses and Shorts" team - we'll even teach you to sew! If you are interested in helping in other ways, we take donations of fabric, ricrac, thread, and the like, as well as monetary donations. It is a blessing and joy to serve children of the world in this way. As Jesus said in Matthew 25, "I needed clothes and you clothed me..."

By Patty Lewis

As a child, I often sat with my mother as she sewed a party dress for me. During those sessions I learned the basics of operating the machine. In high school Home Ec, I improved my skills and have been sewing over the years on the same Singer machine. Each time I make a *little dress*, it reminds me of my mother and the many hours she spent deep in the night making something pretty for me to wear.

Ministry Spotlight: Little Dresses and Shorts

Thoughts from Little Dresses Members

By Wanda Dean

I got involved with the Little Dresses Ministry because I saw a way I could combine my interest in sewing with helping little girls who were in need of clothing. I remember how excited I was, as a young child, when I got a new dress. I wanted to use my skills and interests to help little girls feel valued.

As I have remained involved with the ministry, I have enjoyed spending time with friends, fellow parishioners, and members of other churches as we expanded the ministry and had joyful fellowship.



By Leslie Showalter

It all started with cleaning out my sewing room closet, my “secret” stash of fabric. And, I had so much fabric! Anyone who sews understands what I am describing. Sewists accumulate lots of fabric and rarely throw any scraps away. What to do with my stash? I had recently joined a small group of sewists in Tupelo to make simple dresses for little girls who needed clothes. I thought we might do something similar at St. Peter’s.

I met with Penny and Rev. Ann Whitaker to pitch the idea. I had put together 50+ little dress kits and a few samples. Penny and Ann loved the idea, and the Little Dresses ministry was created.

We had a wonderful response from parishioners, and we began to meet once a month on Saturday mornings to sew dresses. In addition to folks comfortable using a sewing machine, we had volunteers who pressed fabric, attached trims and buttons, and made more dress kits. Soon our little dresses were being delivered all over the world and to communities in Mississippi. Children who had never had a new piece of clothing, had beautiful dresses to wear.

Eventually, we began making simple shorts for little boys, and we began sewing dresses at home instead of meeting at the church. We also received fabric donations from various community members including the Ole Miss Theatre department and Lydia Jones, first lady of the University. In addition to fabric, we received trims, buttons, ribbons, and laces. We added pockets and ricrac and eyelet to little dresses. Those who delivered the dresses took pictures of happy children twirling in their new clothes and reported back such heartwarming stories of how much our dresses were appreciated. Cleaning out a closet can lead to amazing things!

Opportunities to Serve

Pastoral Care Team

Our Pastoral Care Team meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. to discuss needs within the parish, as well as how to recognize those celebrating milestones. Team members send cards, make phone calls, and sometimes visit homes and hospital rooms. The team is designed to complement the ministry of the clergy and of so many other parishioners who informally care so well for their brothers and sisters in Christ at St. Peter's. If you are interested in joining the Pastoral Care Team, please contact the Rev. Jennifer Southall at jennifer@stpetersoxford.org.



Parchman Visits

Parchman ministries entail two activities. Our annual Christmas Lessons and Carols resumed on 12/7/23 with 17 participants going to the senior/disability unit and the hospital. It was a memorable, singing bunch of folks joined by hearty inmate singing. We distributed 150 gift bags to inmates and staff. It is not too early to mark calendars for 12/7/24 and pay attention to parish announcements. For further information contact The Rev. Jennifer Southall at jennifer@stpetersoxford.org or Don Newlin at dfnewlin@brucetelephone.com.

The other ministry is a monthly visit currently to Unit 30 on the second Tuesday each month. Contemplative prayer and communion are offered by clerical staff Jennifer Southall, Jack Rogers, and Tina Frizzell and lay persons Lee Dean, Ken Rutherford, Hank Dunn, Marc Showalter, and Don Newlin. Any of these persons can be contacted for further information but new participants must go through Lee Dean (dean6406@bellsouth.net) for processing.

All participants in either ministry must either be carded through MDOC or submit a security clearance form.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

This ministry is involved in knitting or crocheting shawls, lap robes, and caps for infants and for those receiving chemotherapy. These items are blessed by a parish priest and given to those in need. Those who do not know how to knit or crochet are encouraged to join and learn (including children). Meetings are held the second Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m. Contact Rev. Deacon Penny Sisson at 662-801-1269 or psisson@olemiss.edu or Kitty Smith at 662-832-0451.



Rise and Shine Breakfast Ministry

St. Peter's Rise and Shine Free Community Breakfast is served each Monday and Thursday morning from 6:45 to 8:15 a.m. in the Parish Hall. This ministry, which began during Lent in 2017, served over 1,000 meals to people in the Oxford community in its first year. We expanded the ministry to continue year round, and we need your help! Please consider volunteering this spring and invite friends and newcomers to St. Peter's to join you.

We have several different ways to volunteer. Currently, we need several more people for set-up, cooks/cooks' helpers, servers, and clean-up. We need substitutes for all positions as well. Perhaps, you might like to become a "Friend of Rise and Shine," and provide homemade muffins, breakfast casseroles, and/or fruit (other than apples and oranges, which we buy in bulk) on an occasional basis. This allows us to expand our offerings and everyone enjoys treats!

Contact Diane Lindley (dianewhitelindley@gmail.com or 662.832.3051) with questions.



The Pantry of Oxford

The Pantry, located on Molly Bar Road, went through a much needed and wonderful renovation last summer. Renovations included expanded food and storage space, new refrigerators and freezers, a new ramp for food recipients, and a reorientation of the loading dock. The upgrade comes at a good time. The number of Pantry client visits in 2021 was 12,400. That number increased to 16,400 in 2022. This represents a 32 percent increase in food distribution in one year, and demand growth is likely to continue with Lafayette County's increasing population. Donations can be sent to The Pantry at P.O. Box 588, Oxford, MS, 38655.



Honduras Medical Mission



By Dr. William Strickland

Since 1997 when I embarked on my first, almost annual, Honduras Medical Mission (HMM) to this wonderful Central American country and the village of San Joaquin in particular, it has become one of the highlights of the year for me. The villagers are warm, kind and very accepting and appreciative of our weeklong presence in their small village of 300 people. Without their vital assistance throughout the mission trip, we could not perform the various services we provide, including medical, dental, pharmaceutical and optometric care. It truly is a joint venture of both the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi and the Honduras Episcopal Church. The latter provides interpreters, local knowledge, transportation, crowd control and incredibly delicious fresh food daily, equally important for the HMM success.

My designated purpose for going is to help those in need of visual assistance with some occasional limited medical eye care as well. This includes determining the eyeglass prescription for each individual who comes by our rudimentary eye clinic during the week, which can number over a thousand! We supply them with donated Lion's Club glasses, if needed, thanks to the recycling center in North Carolina and give them purchased readers through donations for near vision use if they are over 40 years of age. Unfortunately, it is impossible to treat the chronic eye diseases we see in this remote and very poor part of the world. Just being able to explain to my patients that their eye problem cannot be completely solved by eyeglasses alone (conditions such as glaucoma, cataracts, pterygia and macular degeneration), does give them a sense of relief and some useful knowledge, if not a cure, to go forward.

My reason for returning each year is for the spiritual experience of sharing my talents with people who genuinely appreciate any help they receive, and to bask in their kindness, smiles, camaraderie and genuine good nature that they all seem to have for us and each other. The feeling is almost like that of a festival, often with a band and dancing at the end of our time in San Joaquin. It is also joyous to rejoin with villagers I have seen grow up right before my eyes and to reunite with missionaries who have come on the trip sometimes longer than I have. In addition, it is fun to share with "newbies" the experience and to see their reactions to being there. Almost always, each person leaves for home with a great sense of satisfaction, love, and a new look on life beyond their daily routine back in the US.

The need is great and never ending. In the early years, San Joaquin had leaky thatched roofs, no lights or electricity, and no potable water. Medical issues ranged from malnutrition and chronic diseases, to the need for full dental extractions. Trauma from Hurricane Mitch and its aftermath contributed to the loss of quality of life. This beautiful village has come a long way and is being transformed each and every year. This year we aim to build on these successes and meet new challenges head on. The assistance of our parish, being the host and organizer for the HMM the next two years, is vital to its continued growth and success. We need volunteers who feel the call. We need donations. We need parishioners back home to help with logistics and organizations. Please consider being part of our team, whether it is in Honduras or back home... God's love and guidance will make it work through you.

