



the **NET**

FEBRUARY **2026**

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**THE EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
OF SAINT PETER BY-
THE-LAKE
8433 Fairfield Forest Rd.
Denver, NC 28037
704-483-3460
www.saintpeterbythelake.net**

The month of February presents all of us in the Church with the coming of the Lenten season. This is our annual season where we are encouraged to ‘take stock’ of where we think we are in our walk with Christ, and to reinforce our spiritual strengths as well as admit and work on our spiritual weaknesses.

Our own Episcopal Book of Common Prayer calls us into this season far better than my own words could ever describe:

“Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord’s passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you therefore, in the name of the Church, 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.” (Book of Common Prayer: Ash Wednesday Liturgy, pg. 264)

I underlined some of those words and phrases which always stand out for me this time of year. Repentance reminds us that we are to literally turn around and go in a different direction when we know that we have sinned. Repentance is admitting

FROM
THE
RECTOR



that sin, and then taking steps to move away from that and closer to Jesus. Then we claim the forgiveness and restoration that is already ours by virtue of our baptisms and faith. Lent is then a time of holy observance, of getting serious about our spiritual lives. It's marked by prayer, fasting, and self-denial. And that 'fasting' can be something more than just food. We can decide to take a 'fast' from negativity, from social media, from over-indulgence, etc. And we then move closer to Christ by actively taking the Bible and reading devotional portions and meditating on what those passages mean to us and how they affect us in the here and now. May we all live in to this reality during Lent 2026, and below are some important dates as we take this journey together:

***February 17th, 5:30 – 7pm:**

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper.

***February 18th, 7pm:**

Ash Wednesday service of Holy Eucharist/Imposition of Ashes.

***February 26 -March 26 (Each Thursday at 6pm):**

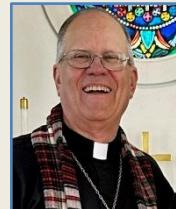
Lenten Supper & Study Series

Faithfully,

Father Ron

Lake Reflections

from Fr. Nick



As On February 24th, we'll celebrate the feast of Saint Matthias. If you don't remember him from The Chosen series, don't feel too bad. You might recall that after the defection and death of Judas Iscariot, "The Twelve" had a vacancy. In the nine days between Jesus' Ascension and the Day of Pentecost, two men were nominated i.e., Joseph Barsabbas a.k.a. "Justus" and Matthias. After prayer, the eleven disciples cast lots and the count favored Matthias.

If you find this election troubling, you're in good company. And what do we make of the calling of bishops by receiving ballots from the clergy and laity of a diocese? Since all of the other disciples had been chosen by Jesus, who did the disciples think they were to hold an election for Judas' successor? Had Simon Peter finally taken his leadership role to heart or was he uncertain that he'd ever have a chance to ask Jesus what His will was in the matter?

Being observant Jews, there's a good possibility that they were just using a time-honored technique to solve a problem: "*The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD*" (Proverbs 16:33). In some Jewish circles, it was believed that God put "the divine finger on the scales" and could control dice, lots, and other games of chance. In other circles, that explanation seemed to emphasize God's authority at the expense of human autonomy.

What might have been going on among the disciples as they prepared to cast lots? As scripture recalls, the disciples were looking at two candidates who had “accompanied [them] during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,” from the Baptism of John through Jesus’ Ascension. Peter put it succinctly: *“One of these men must become with us a witness to His resurrection.”* (Acts 1:21-22).

Both men filled the ministry description. Both men were qualified to join the Eleven. But no disciple was ready to proclaim by fiat that Justus or Matthias would be the Twelfth. All must have agreed that they would never question the outcome through “Monday-morning quarterbacking.”

In fact, after the Day of Pentecost, the disciples never again turned to chance or divination to discern God’s will. As Dr. Leighton Flowers writes, “The wise make decisions, not based on the fatalistic assumptions of philosophy, but based on prayer, fasting, seeking Godly counsel, and waiting on the peace that passes all understanding, which can only come by the guidance of the Holy Spirit within.” So, if this still-new year or the season of Lent provides you with choices of consequence, know that the season and our church community also provide the resources for actively discerning the will of God.

Faithfully, Fr. Nick+



Music Notes



Lent is just around the corner - 40 days set aside for reflection, quiet, and reconnecting with God. Lenten hymns set a tone that is vastly different from the joyous songs of Easter. They guide us into the wilderness with Christ, helping us to slow down and enter fully into this season of self-examination and renewal. The music of Lent reminds us of our frailty, our dependence on God's mercy, and the great love of Christ who bore our sins on the cross.

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded, is a profound 12th century Lenten hymn focusing on the suffering, humiliation, and physical agony of Jesus Christ during his crucifixion. It portrays Christ's wounded, thorn-crowned head as a symbol of sacrificial love, emphasizing that his pain endured for human transgression, inviting personal reflection on redemption.

*O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown;
How pale thou art with anguish with sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish, which once was bright as morn!*

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, written by Isaac Watts in 1707, is based on Galatians 6:14 – "But God forbid that I should boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." It calls for a personal, deep contemplation of the cross, where the "Prince of Glory" died, leading to a shift in perspective where worldly pride and gains are abandoned for devotion to Christ's love.

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my Lord;
All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to his blood.*

*See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Lenten music does not leave us in despair; it draws us deeper into the mystery of Christ's love, preparing us for the triumph of Easter morning. Just as the world rushes past Advent straight into Christmas, it often skips over Lent in favor of the celebration of Easter. There is something deeply transformative about allowing ourselves to dwell in the music of Lent, to sit in the tension, fully engaging with the reality of Christ's suffering, and to prepare our hearts for the full joy of the Resurrection.

Lenten “Playlist” to Enrich Your Season

I want to share a few modern songs that are meaningful to me. Whether you are setting aside time for prayer, reading Scripture, or simply driving in the car, I hope these songs will draw you deeper into the meaning of the season.

Blessings (Laura Story) <https://youtu.be/XQan9L3yXic>

Untitled Hymn (Chris Rice) <https://youtu.be/TQoWoX8mtws>

Yet Not I, But through Christ in Me (Selah)

<https://youtu.be/rNXd0KQaYXg>

Blessings,
David



All You need is love!

What a chilly January it has been! I hope everyone managed to stay safe and warm during the epic ice storm we experienced last month and didn't devour all your storm snacks in one day!

February is packed with holidays, visits, and celebrations. We hope you can join us for some or all of the festivities!

CFEvents and fellowship social/Study circle

Upcoming Events in February

This month, I'm excited to host a one-day Bible study focused on love and Jesus. I invite you to join me for a "Valentine's" themed event titled "All You Need Is Love and Jesus." Together, we will explore the concept that Love Never Fails, just as Jesus's love remains steadfast. Keep an eye out for more details via email,

Facebook, Instagram, and at church. This event is open to EVERYONE—people of all ages are warmly welcomed!

Additionally, we will be preparing for one of my favorite holidays, Easter, with our Lenten Experience! We are also excited to introduce "Fish" Camps for children aged 6 and up, providing them with a fun and safe environment to learn more about Lent. If you know any families looking for a break from cooking while their kids engage in meaningful experiences, please invite them!

Stay tuned for more information about what we will be "experiencing" soon!

WE NEED YOU FOR Kingdom Kids!

REWRITTEN:

❖ Curious about Kingdom Kids? I'm thrilled to spill the beans! It's a lively adventure for kiddos in grades K-5 during our Sunday service, where they scamper downstairs for a Sunday school fiesta. Think fun activities, learning all about God's love, and how to spread that love like confetti! Catch this joy ride every Sunday at 10:30 AM. Plus, we've got our cozy Small Blessings room for the tiniest tots, from infants to 4-year-olds. ❖

❖ Do you love working with little ones? I'm dreaming of our parish blooming not just in spirit but in size, and I can't do it solo! I need a squad to help guide, inspire, and grow our kids' faith. ❖

❖ I'm on the hunt for spirited folks—think fishermen and disciples—ready to help expand God's family. If you're itching to hop on this soul-nurturing train, drop me an email or holla at me in church. Let's embark on this epic journey and embrace our disciple destiny! ❖

Fisher of people
~G

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." *Matthew 4:19*

VISION OF ST. PETER BY-THE-LAKE

IN RESPONSE TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST'S MISSIONAL IMPERATIVE TO BAPTIZE AND TEACH ALL NATIONS....AND TO LOVE GOD AND OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES: WE THE CLERGY, VESTRY, AND PEOPLE OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. PETER BY-THE-LAKE COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

*WALK IN THE WAY (SPIRITUAL GROWTH THROUGH WORSHIP, FORMATION, REPENTANCE & PRAYER)

*WIDEN THE WALLS (PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS BY WORD & EXAMPLE)

*WAKE UP THE WORLD (STRIVING FOR JUSTICE & PEACE. RESPECTING THE DIGNITY OF EVERY PERSON)

MISSION OF ST. PETER BY-THE-LAKE

IN RESPONSE TO OUR PARISH VISION: THE MISSION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. PETER BY-THE-LAKE IS TO: **BE DISCIPLES: ENGAGE THE WORLD**



NOTE FROM THE PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Please be sure to schedule all reservations of the church facilities through the Parish Administrator so your events can be placed on the Church's main calendar. Thank you!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!

OUR WEB ADDRESS IS: WWW.SAINTPETERBYTHELAKE.NET

CENTERING PRAYER

**10AM on Wednesdays in the
Parlor. We hope you will join in to pray
together this "Prayer of the Heart".**

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT ST. PETER BY-THE-LAKE

8:30AM Holy Eucharist
9:30AM Coffee with the Clergy
10:30AM Holy Eucharist

Vestry Minutes December 15, 2025

7:00 pm – Meeting called to order

Vestry Members Present: Tracey Engel, Jessica Gustis, Stephanie Heil, Pat Higbie, Gary Jarvis, Connie Mathis, Bill Reid, Mary Sansbury, Pamela Weed

Clergy Present: Father Ron Taylor

Other Members Present: Jim Heil, Steve Hiney, Michele Moss, John Stewart, Daphne Wagner

Opening Prayer: Father Ron Taylor

Discussion/Decision:

Minutes: Vestry approved November minutes as amended.

November Financials: (Jim Heil)

Jim mentioned this is the best November we have seen in a very long time. We will exceed budget this year. It's also a good pledge season.

As of November 30th

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Total Revenues:	\$53,629	\$39,364	\$14,265
Total Expenses:	\$39,491	\$44,008	\$4,517.30
Net Total:	\$14,138	(\$4,644.37)	(\$18,781.90)

Junior Warden: (Stephanie Heil)

- Stephanie mentioned we have been replacing a lot of light bulbs.
- Integrity Electric came out and hopefully fixed everything with the HVAC system.
- The ballast in the men's bathroom near Furr Hall is not working properly resulting in the lights not working. Jim said he will take care of it.
- There is also one light in the Nave that is way high up that is burned out.

Senior Warden: (Jessica Gustis)

- Jessica commented how the Advent Festival and Lessons and Carols were both very well attended.

Nominations for Jr. and Sr. Wardens for 2026 (Father Ron):

- The following are nominated for the Wardens for 2026; Stephanie Heil for Senior Warden and Mary Sansbury for Junior Warden. A motion was properly moved, seconded, and approved by the vestry members.

Upcoming Events/Schedules: (Father Ron):

- Friday January 16-17th at Valle Crucis, Vestry Retreat. Dinner on your own and home by Saturday afternoon.
- Wednesday, December 24th Christmas Eve services; 4pm Holy Eucharist with Children's Pageant, 11pm Holy Eucharist with candlelight service.
- Sunday December 28th, Father Ron will be taking the day off. Jim Bowden will be doing morning prayer at both services.
- Sunday January 25th had been our annual meeting but is being moved due to the induction of Father Ron into an associate Order of the Convent. Sister Madeline Mary will be our preacher and will be inducting Father Ron. She will also be leading an adult forum.
- Sunday, February 1st, Bishop Jose's annual visit and confirmation of newest confirmed members.
- Sunday, February 8th, our annual meeting with outgoing vestry members appreciated, new vestry members blessed and commissioned only at 10:30 service.

2026 Budget and Stewardship: (Jim Heil)

- The 2026 final pledge budget of \$377,429 was put forward for approval. It was approved, motioned, and seconded by vestry members.
- The 2026 operating budget of \$459,829.13 was put forward for approval. It was approved and seconded by vestry members.
- Rector Housing Allowance of \$31,500 was separately motioned, approved and seconded by vestry members.
- Assistant Rector Housing Allowance of \$20,000.04 was separately motioned, approved and seconded by vestry members.

Closing Prayer: (Father Ron Taylor)

FOCUS ON MISSION - OUTREACH TEAM

Mission



Outreach

*And do not neglect doing good and sharing;
for with such sacrifices God is pleased. Hebrews 13:16*

A monthly highlight of organizations we support with our Time, Talent & Treasure.

Hello from your Mission Outreach team. Many of you know we support in the local community and beyond. We also welcome suggestions for other local, national, and international 501(c)3 organizations and charitable initiatives that are meaningful to our parishioners.

This month we would like to highlight our support for a local organization, **Heartbeats**, located in Maiden, NC.

Heartbeats is a faith-based ministry that serves women, men, and families who are facing unplanned pregnancies or seeking healing and support related to past pregnancy decisions. Their approach is rooted in compassion and dignity, offering practical resources, trustworthy information, and emotional and spiritual care in a nonjudgmental setting.

From their website: “Our ministry exists to assist women experiencing an unplanned pregnancy to carry to term. Most of the people that find our ministry are related to an unplanned pregnancy in some way... Heartbeats is ready to meet them exactly where they are, access their needs and share hope without judgement or condemnation.

By offering referrals for post abortion healing, Heartbeats can serve those impacted by abortion by helping them find forgiveness and peace. If you or someone you know is struggling with a past abortion decision, we are here to help.”

Click here for more information: <https://supportheartbeats.org/>.

Proceeds from the collection plate during Ash Wednesday's service will be distributed to Heartbeats.

You can find hard copies of SPBTL Support Applications in the Mission Outreach mailbox in Fotinos Hall, or you may drop a note in Libby Motto's mailbox and Mission Outreach will reach out to you to see how Mission Outreach may help an organization that you support.

SHROVE TUESDAY

Pancake Supper

FEBRUARY 17TH FROM 5:30 - 7 PM



Ash Wednesday

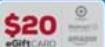
February 18, 2026

7pm HE & Ashes



DONATE BLOOD

Donors Receive



- PLUS -



- PLUS -



ID REQUIRED



Appointments are encouraged, please visit oneblood.org/donate-now and use sponsor code 44502



St. Peter By-The-Lake Episcopal

Wednesday, February 25

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

All donors will receive*:

- **\$20 eGift Card**
- **Long-sleeved T-shirt**
- **Wellness Checkup**

including blood pressure,

**CLICK HERE
TO DONATE**



join us!

St. Peter by-the-Lake is hosting a special

Rescheduled for February 22nd

Sister Madeleine Mary of the Community of St. Mary, Southern Province will be preaching at both services. She will hold a forum in Fotinos Hall between services.



To learn more about the Community of St. Mary, Southern Province before Sister Madeleine Mary's visit at the end of the month visit

<https://www.communityofstmarysouth.org/>

THE STEWARDSHIP CORNER

FEBRUARY – THE MONTH OF LOVE

When February rolls around after the busy Christmas season, for many the focus changes to LOVE maybe because Valentine's Day falls right in the middle of the month. We think about our significant other and wonder what to do or get for them on this special day. This year the emphasis for me, while still LOVE, seems to be a little bit bigger – a passage from the Bible:

Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.

As I consider these words, it occurs to me that when I am participating in various ministries here at St. Peter's, fulfilling these commandments is a done deal. Attending 8:30 worship each Sunday, joining Coffee with the Clergy, attending Supper and the Word sessions twice each year help me to use my time to center on the first part of this message. Setting up for 8:30 coffee hour, filling the backpacks for the children we support at Rock Springs and GE Massey, calling a parishioner I have not seen in church recently to make sure she is okay, visiting our members at Wexford House all again let me use my time to keep focused on the second part.

While it is certainly important to love and care for our spouses, our children, our grandchildren, and yes, even our fur babies, we also have to be mindful of all those around us, known to us or strangers, and what their needs might be so that while we LOVE our God with all our heart, mind, and soul, we will also LOVE our neighbor as ourselves, thus making not just February the month of love, but making every day of the year the day of love.

Diane Johnson - Stewardship Chair

LENTEN SERIES

St. Peter By the Lake Episcopal Church
presents a Lenten Experience



A Bigger Table

Connecting God & Neighbors
to our BAPTISMAL PROMISES

Thursdays starting
February 26th thru April 2nd

SUPPER
@ 6PM

TEACHING
@ 7PM





The East Lincoln Community Chorus

is excited to kick off 2026 with our 2nd Annual Fundraiser Gala, Moonlight & Roses, on Friday, February 20th at Twin Mills Club event center in Trilogy. This elegant evening "black tie" gala will include a delicious dinner, live entertainment by the East Lincoln Chamber Singers, live and silent auctions along with an exciting DJ Brian to spin the tunes for you to hear and to dance the night away. All this, along with ELCC Master of Ceremonies, Dustin Stamey to keep the evening entertaining! For more information go to <https://www.elccsings.com/>

Purchase seats or table by clicking on <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/moonlight-and-roses-gala> or see David Wilcox for tickets!



Preschool

Donate new or gently used toys and supplies. Please reach out to G before making your donation!

We are looking for teachers, assistants, and substitutes. If you're interested or know someone who might be, please contact G.

Explore our wish list for items we need that you could contribute. If you have any questions, feel free to ask Ginia.

gedwards@spbtl.com



Check out our website:

WWW.SAINTPETERBYTHELAKE.NET/PRESCHOOL



Be a part of something special! Help us create a nurturing and creative environment for our new preschool.



FEBRUARY

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- 5 – Jim & Ann Bowden
- 14 – Ronnie & Brandy Rudd
- 29 – Bob and Susan Schuman

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1 – David Plyler	15 – Steve Hiney
3 – Scott Major	15 – Patsy Roosa
6 – Martha Morgan	15 – Brett Schmerge
7 – Marianne Boles	16 – Garry Beam
7 - Carter Little	19 – Maddie Himes
7 – Emily Ortner	20 – Megan Passmore
11 – Adanna Eziri	20 – David Simmons
11 – Gilbert Moore	22 – Donna Brown
12 – Tuck Ridlehoover	22 –Wendy Kelly
12 – Gary Jarvis	25 – Emeka Eziri
12 – Baylor Cartee	26 – Daniel Kosmala
12 – Freida Helmrich	26 – Gloria Reid
13 – Ellie Ortner	27 – Isabella Ann Seminara
13 – Bill Reid	28 – Mark Fairall
14 – Trudy Halley	
14 – Rezan Solmaz	

STAFF

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Jim Heil, Treasurer
jheil164@yahoo.com

VESTRY

Senior Warden – Stephanie Heil
Junior Warden – Mary Sansbury

Tracey Engel

Pat Higbie

Steve Hiney

Gary Jarvis

Connie Mathis

Michele Moss

John Stewart

Clerk of the Vestry: Daphne Wagner