

PRINCE OF PEACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
DALLAS, PENNSYLVANIA

WORSHIP

SCHEDULE

SUNDAY

- 9:00 am Holy Eucharist
- 9:00am Sunday School

MONDAY—
FRIDAY

- 8:00 am Morning Prayer (Chapel)

THURSDAY

- 12:00 noon Holy Eucharist with Healing followed by Bible Study

UPCOMING
EVENTS

- Prayer Book Jan 10
Mending
- Vestry Mtg Jan 10
- Thursday Jan 11
Small Group
Begins
- Annual Mtg Jan 21
- U2charist Feb 17
- Ash Feb 21
Wednesday
- Stations of Feb 23
the Cross &
Friday
Evening
Lenten Program begins

The Visitor

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2007

The Three Wise men: The First Post-modern Men

In the last ten or twenty years, much has been made in academic circles about the transition from the modern era to the so-called post-modern era. The modern era began around the late seventeenth century in conjunction with the intellectual phenomenon known as “The Age of Enlightenment” when the role of human reason and scientific inquiry came into its own. In essence, the Enlightenment philosophy held that the statements of science would replace the statements of the church as the primary source of “absolute truth.” The belief in enlightenment circles was that over time, human reason and scientific inquiry would unravel all the mysteries of the universe without resort to religious faith or belief. Even Thomas Jefferson, the most “enlightened” of our nation’s founding fathers, compiled his own version of the gospels which removed all references to the miracles of Jesus. He viewed Jesus as a teacher of ethical and moral truths, albeit a completely human one.

The current debate between the scientific community and more conservative Christians over the theory of the evolutionary development of human beings is being fought on the soil of the modern era which holds that there is one, objective and absolute truth that explains why things are the way they are. Thus, either evolution is true, or the Bible is true; but they can’t both be “true.” Consequently, conservative Christians try to dispute evolutionary theory on its own turf by using science to refute science.

Now enters the “post-modern” period. Post-modernism is at best a slippery concept; at

worst, it is a controversial one. It defies easy explanation. But it has adherents in both the religious and the scientific communities. Post-modernism holds that absolute truth is unobtainable because the universe is inherently mysterious and ultimately beyond completely rational explanation, even through scientific investigation. Recent discoveries in quantum (sub-atomic) physics have contributed to this view among some scientists because the more discoveries they make, the more complicated, even weird the universe seems. Therefore, truth can only be approximated. Ultimate truth then becomes more a matter of faith than of demonstrable certainty. Understandably, this is a controversial position for many scientists as well as Christians.

Post-modern Christians, though, would argue that the Bible is not a book of science and should not be used like one. A person can believe in the Genesis stories of creation without insisting that they are a literal, historical explanation as to what happened “in the beginning.” Instead, they should be viewed more as creedal statements about the “intelligent” or divine origin of creation. Consequently, it is perfectly acceptable for science to fill in the details of how creation occurred.

Now enters the Three Wise men. I like to think of the Wise men as the first “post-modern” men. In Matthew’s gospel, they show up in Jerusalem sometime around the birth of Jesus seeking directions to the location of his birth because they “read” about it in the stars. In Matthew, the Greek word for Wise men is “magi”, which means “magicians” or “astrologers.” Hence, the Wise men were not scientists or even theologians; they were wanderers and seekers who read the stars, fol-

The Reverend M. Peter Harer, Rector The Reverend Mary Lou Divis, Deacon
The Reverend John S Prater, Rector Emeritus

PLEASE,
remember to
inform the
church office
when
someone is
ill or
hospitalized.
We are not
notified by
the hospitals.

The Three Wise men: The First Post-modern Men (continued)

lowed their muse and derived truth more from intuition than from rational investigation. For them, scientific or intellectual inquiry only got them so far on the road to truth; beyond that, they had to rely on less rational, but equally worthwhile means to discover or reveal truth.

We celebrate the arrival of the Wise men at the stable in Bethlehem as the Feast of the Epiphany. An epiphany is a revelation or an unexpected, unanticipated, or sudden realization of insight, meaning or truth. Often such epiphanies can't be confirmed scientifically,

but we accept them as true because they *ring* true. I pray that like the Wise men, we too will be open to epiphanies of insight about birth of the Christ child and that those epiphanies will draw us closer to him and to each other in awe and wonder. Perhaps in this post-modern age we are free again to allow awe and wonder penetrate our hearts, minds and souls.

Your Friend and Rector,
Peter

Did you turn in your 2007 Pledge Card? It's not too late. Cards are available in the Narthex and can be placed in the Offertory Plate or mailed to the church office any time.



Annual Parish Meeting Scheduled for

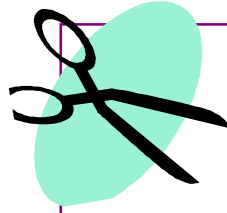
Sunday, January 21st following the Morning Service

Our parish will gather for its annual parish meeting following the 9:00 a.m. service on Sunday, January 21st. At that time, we will elect three new vestry members, review how the last year went, and discuss our vision for the next year and years beyond. Every baptized member of Prince of Peace is encouraged to attend this important meeting. In case of bad weather, the meeting will be held the following Sunday, January 28.

Information for the Annual Report must be in to the church office by Sunday January 7.

***The Time of the
Weekday Service of
Healing and Holy
Eucharist to be
changed to 12:00 noon***

Beginning on Thursday, January 4th, the weekday service of healing and Holy Eucharist will be held at 12:00 Noon rather than 1:00 p.m. This change will be a permanent change.



We need you!

On Wednesday, January 10 at 10am, a group will be gathering to mend Prayer Books at the church. Please come if you are able & bring your scissors! Any questions, please contact Jean Gale (675-2753)
Snow date, Wednesday, 1/17.

***Small Group Study to be Held During the
Season of Epiphany***

In an effort to encourage the development of small groups for prayer and study in our parish, a program will be offered during the Epiphany season focusing on the meaning of the Lord's Prayer titled, "Lord, Teach us to Pray."

12:45 p.m. beginning on January 11th and concluding on February 15th. The study guides will cost \$13.00 plus postage and handling. Please let the rector or parish administrator know if you plan to attend by January 7th.

These sessions will meet on Thursday afternoons following the weekday service of healing and Holy Eucharist. They will meet each week at

Feel free to bring a bag lunch to sustain yourself during the discussion group.

REMINDER: The Vestry meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7pm. EVERYONE is invited to attend!

The next Daughters of the King meeting will be on Tuesday, March 20, at Bev Cushner's house. Any questions, contact Karen Olshefski (283-9360)

The ECW will not be holding regular monthly meetings in January and February

Ash Wednesday Service Scheduled for 7:00 p.m., February 21st

A service of imposition of ashes and Holy Eucharist will be held Ash Wednesday February 21st at 7:00 p.m. in the church..

Lenten Observances to Begin Friday, February 23rd.

A service of Contemplative Evening Prayer, followed by Stations of the Cross, Soup Supper and Study group will be held Friday evenings in Lent, beginning February 23rd.

Contemplative Evening Prayer will begin at 6:00 p.m. followed by Stations of the Cross at approximately 6:30 p.m. A soup supper will follow in the parish hall, followed by a Lenten study group. Our study group this year will be based on the book *Following Francis: The Franciscan Way for Everyone* by Susan Pitchford. The cover of Pitchford's book states:

In a little town in Italy, nearly eight hundred years ago, Francis of Assisi renounced everything he owned to follow Christ with passionate and single-minded abandon. Even today, centuries later, this simple saint draws people around the world to Francis' story of living in humility, love, and joy.

Here in *Following Francis*, Susan Pitchford tells her own story of the Franciscan life, as a member of the Third Order, founded by Francis himself so that people from all walks of life can follow the saint's ideal, without leaving their homes or their occupations. Pitchford learned that the Franciscan tradition isn't the exclusive possession of monks cloistered in a monastery, but a spiritual path for ordinary people living in the twenty-first century.

Organized around the Rule of St. Francis, this book – a wonderful resource for private devotion or group study – shows readers what it means to live out the Christian life with a Franciscan accent.

Please let Fr. Harer or Jennifer Martin know by February 11th if you wish to order the discussion book. The cost is \$15.95 plus shipping.

Remember to visit our website for more information on events and topics covered in the Newsletter.

www.princeofpeaceadallaspa.org

U2 EUCHARIST

Saturday, February 17, 6:00 pm

Prince of Peace will be hosting a U2charist to coincide with World Mission Sunday (Feb 18) and bring awareness to the Millennium Development Goals. Tickets are free and are available by contacting the church office (570-675-1723 or princeofpeace@epix.net). Help is needed for the event, as well as for set-up and clean-up, if you can help please contact the church office.

What is a U2charist?? ..an Episcopal Eucharist featuring the music of the rock band U2 and a message about God's call to rally around the [MDG's \(Millennium Development Goals\)](#). This modern, multimedia service uses the themes of U2 songs about global reconciliation, justice for the poor and oppressed, and the importance of caring for your neighbor.

This will be one of the first offerings of this very unique service in our area, so please join us! For more information or tickets, please contact the church office princeofpeace@epix.net or 675-1723.

ONE EPISCOPALIAN & THE MDGs

ONE Episcopalian is a grassroots partnership between the Episcopal Church and the ONE Campaign to rally Episcopalians—ONE by ONE—to the cause of ending extreme poverty in our world and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Episcopal News Service has provided a 10-part series of Sunday bulletin inserts on the United Nations' eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and ways in which the Episcopal Church is committed to their realization. We will be running these in our Sunday bulletins from January 7 to March 11.

The inserts are a joint project of ENS (Episcopal News Service) and the Episcopal Life newspaper.

First among the mission priorities that the Episcopal Church adopted at its General Convention in June 2006 is justice and peace work, framed by the MDGs -- an eight-prong declaration that has at its core the eradication of extreme poverty by the target date of 2015.

"This church has said that our larger vision will be framed and shaped in the coming years by the vision of shalom embedded in the Millennium Development Goals -- a world where the hungry are fed, the ill are healed, the young educated, women and men treated equally, and where all have access to clean water and adequate sanitation, basic health care, and the promise of development that does not endanger the rest of creation," Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori said during

her November 4 investiture sermon. "That vision of abundant life is achievable in our own day, but only with the passionate commitment of each and every one of us."



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Dallas, Pennsylvania

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TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

WEEKLY DONATIONS FOR BACK MOUNTAIN FOOD PANTRY REQUESTED

An important ministry in our Back Mountain area is performed by the Back Mountain Food Pantry. Weekly distributions of food items are made to low income people to help sustain them through the week. This is especially important during the winter months when heating costs are high. As a member of the Back Mountain Ministerium, our parish is a sponsoring church of the Back Mountain Food Pantry.

We now request your weekly donations of specific food items for distribution by the Food Pantry. We will post what food items we will collect for the month. The donations should be placed in the tubs inside the main entrance to the parish hall.

During the months of January & February we will collect " Pasta Items" .

Thanks for your help and generosity.