

## Praise Notes

By the Rev. Dcn. Karen Mahler

*Come taste and see that the LORD is good. O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven and who has made all of creation? With your right hand and a gracious heart, you rule over all the kingdoms of this world. Power and might are in your hands, and no one can stand against You.*

*Psalm 34:8, 2 Chronicles 20:6*

The Pastoral Prayer and Care Ministry of St. Peter's is happy to introduce *Praise Notes*, with featured messages in each publication of the St. Peter's Newsletter. These articles will be devoted to the celebration of our Lord for His gracious presence and activity among us. The very nature of God is generosity. Because we are one in the Holy Spirit, joined together in Christ, the entire church is blessed in the sharing of answered prayers. May our faith be built up as we share our testimonies, and may our praise and gratitude to the Lord continue to grow strong, shining brightly through our witness to the goodness of God in our midst!

Please contact me at karenm@stpetersbhm.org, or call me at the church if you want to share your answer that God has given through the prayers and intercessions of St. Peter's Anglican Church.

### Testimony of Donna Read's Healing

Almost one year ago, I had surgery that left me without an audible voice. I was grateful that I could speak, but what I was saying was not easily heard. Since I was teaching children ages 7-8 in Level 2 of BSF (Bible Study International) and leading others on Wednesday and Thursday, I wondered what God was teaching me. God graciously provided others to teach Bible study on Wednesday and Thursday, and the children were very attentive whenever I was doing the Bible lesson!

After a visit to an Ear Nose and Throat specialist, I was told that my left vocal cord was not moving. I went to visit the ENT again and received permission for speech therapy. The therapy helped, but the fact remained, my left vocal cord was not moving.

Many people were praying for me and with me! I went for prayer on Sundays after communion; I attended the healing service on Sunday evening, and family and friends continued to pray, as well as encourage me.

In mid-June, Dennis and I left for seven weeks to assist at the Rafiki Village in Uganda. The physical therapy ended, but the prayer didn't. Every day in Uganda was very busy! We were up early and went to bed late. There never seemed to be a regular time to do the speech exercises, but I did a lot of training and teaching at the village. My voice continued to improve. When we returned to Birmingham at the beginning of August, people could hear and understand me!

I praise God for answered prayer. At my last visit to the ENT, instead of dismissing me, he again scheduled an appointment, this time for February 2017. My left vocal cord moved a little. Continue to pray with me for complete restoration of my voice, so that I can sing praises to the Lord God Almighty!

God continues to teach me to persist in prayer!

The January-February issue of the St. Peter's Newsletter will be published on Sunday, December 18th. If you would like to contribute an article, please submit your work along with any accompanying images to the editor, Mrs. Grace Wiley, via email to gewiley38@gmail.com by Friday, December 9th. Articles may be edited for length and content. If you have any questions, contact the church office at (205) 879-7173.

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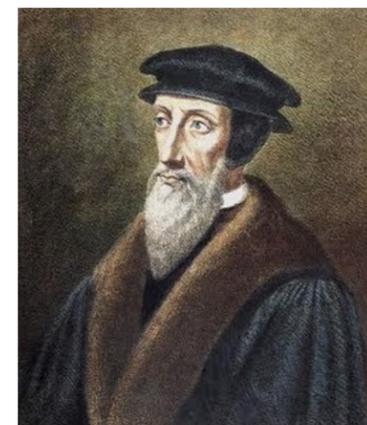
# ST PETER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH Newsletter

November-December, 2016

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## Ministry Architects Renovation: 1 Year Mark

By the Rev. Peter Smith

Last October, we invited a ministry called Ministry Architects to come and perform a 3-day assessment and evaluation of our children's and youth ministries. This turned out to be a wonderful experience for our church. The Ministry Architects consultants created an 18-month renovation process for our family life staff and volunteers to undertake (the process of which can be viewed at [stpetersbhm.org](http://stpetersbhm.org)). For this reason, the Family Life Team (FLT) was created and tasked with implementation of the renovation.

Did you know that the FLT continues to work hard behind the scenes, making our children's and youth ministries stronger with every month? We began implementing the renovation process in December 2015 and haven't stopped meeting and working together since that time. We will bring the renovation to completion in May 2017. We are already seeing great dividends for the work that has been done, and it's largely because of you. You have stepped up to the plate and provided much needed volunteer leadership in the children's and youth ministries. Thank you! We look forward to celebrating our collective accomplishment together with you next year!

## The Liturgical Legacy of Richard Hooker

By the Rev. Dcn. John Bacon

On November 3, Anglicans throughout the world will be celebrating the legacy of Richard Hooker. Richard Hooker (1554-1600) was a steadfast, courageous, and wise priest who helped define Anglicanism at a critical point in history. Surrounded by political intrigue and the continual threat of the church tearing apart at the seams, Hooker expounded the Scriptures faithfully and wrote a three-volume work, *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, in which he defended the Anglican middle-way against the more radical ambition of the Puritans.

Puritans, like many Christians today, had strongly negative feelings against formal liturgy. Many Christians believe that for prayer to be sincere and from the heart, it must originate with the speaker. There is a place for extemporaneous prayer, but there is a place for formal, written prayer as well. Hooker provided two reasonable arguments for the fittingness of liturgical prayer. First, he noted that God gave Israel a liturgy at Mount Sinai, so unless we are willing to doubt the inspiration of the Pentateuch, we must concede that God thought liturgical prayer both pleasing to His majesty and edifying to His beloved people.

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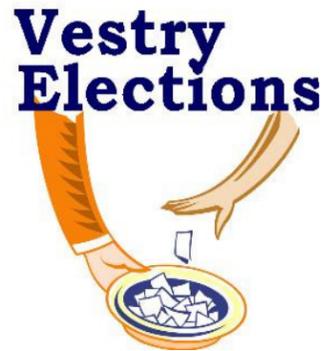
## The Pastor's Corner: Vestry Elections

By the Rev. Dr. Mark Quay

On December 11, immediately after the worship service, St. Peter's will hold its Annual Meeting. All active members of the congregation should attend, if possible. One of the most important tasks at this meeting will be the election of two new members of the Vestry.

In the Anglican Church, the Vestry is the board of directors for the local parish and is responsible for managing the church's finances and facilities and for providing practical support to the Rector in the ministry of the church. It also elects a new Rector when the office becomes vacant.

As of January 1, 2017, St. Peter's Vestry will consist of six elected members and the Rector. Each elected member serves a term of three years and may be reelected to another term. No member of the vestry may serve for more than six consecutive years.



Vacancies on the Vestry due to an expiration of term are filled as follows: The Rector, with the consent of the Vestry, selects a Nominating Committee composed of two vestry members (who may not stand for election that year) and three non-vestry members. For this year's election, the Nominating Committee consists of Vestry members Dennis Read (Committee Chairman) and Rick Shelton, and non-Vestry members George Ladd, Carolina Endert, and Catherine Senko. Should one of the Committee members have to drop out, Buck Cater will serve as an alternate member.

The Rector, again with the consent of the Vestry, also selects a Judge of Elections, who supervises the election. The Judge may also not stand for election.

The Nominating Committee receives recommendations for candidates for election in writing made by active parish members. All recommendations must be made by November 13. They may also include other names in their considerations. The potential candidates will receive an information worksheet which must be returned to the Committee by November 15.

Working with the Rector as its advisor, the Committee prayerfully considers each potential candidate to determine if he/she meets all qualifications for membership on the Vestry. Once their considerations are completed, the Committee will present the congregation a slate of candidates for the Vestry election by November 27. The Committee will make every effort to have the number of nominees equal to or two more than the number of vacancies. Also on the 27<sup>th</sup>, the Judge of Election, on the Rector's behalf, will announce how the election will proceed, including details about absentee ballots. Please note that nominations for election from the floor are not accepted at the Annual Meeting.

At the Annual Meeting, the written ballots cast at the meeting, together with the absentee ballots, will be counted by the Judge Election with an assistant. The vacancies will be filled by those candidates receiving the highest number of votes in order down until all such vacancies are filled. The Judge of Election reports those who are elected, but not the vote tallies. The vote count is held securely until the next Annual Meeting and then destroyed.

In order to be a member of the Vestry, a person must be a member of the parish in good standing and at least 21 years old. He/she must: meet the spiritual, moral, and doctrinal requirements for leadership as described in Acts 6:3, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:5-9; be committed to the Mission, Vision, and Values of this church; and show that he/she is committed to the ministry and welfare of this church by regular attendance at the worship services of the Church, by active involvement in one or more ministries of the Church, and by regular financial contributions to the Church (the biblical tithe being the standard for such consideration). He/she also has to promise in writing that they adhere to the doctrine and discipline of this church as described in the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America, the Anglican Diocese of the South, and the Constitution and Bylaws of St. Peter's Anglican Church.

Please be in prayer for the upcoming Vestry election, and be sure to cast your vote!

## Teaching Our Children the Importance of Corporate Worship, Part 1

By the Rev. Peter Smith

Without a doubt, corporate worship is central to our faith. The whole purpose of salvation history is to rescue fallen human beings from sin and death in order that they might gather together to worship the Triune God for ever and ever. Yet, it is likely infrequent that we take the time to teach our kids how to worship or to emphasize the importance of participation in corporate worship. We may have never even received this kind of teaching ourselves. We may be unsure what to say, how to say it, or at what age to say it. Yet without godly instruction and our good examples to follow, we shouldn't expect that our children will turn into mature worshipers or even consistent church-goers. So, no matter where you are in your journey of parenting or of faith, here are some basics with which to start.

The first truth to teach your children is that *corporate worship is for God*. God desires our worship and he is worthy of it. This means that worship is not about what we can get out of it, but what we can give of ourselves to God. While we may enjoy a certain kind of worship style or a particular genre of music or instrumentation, if it gives Him the glory then God loves it all. Be careful to guard your children from making worship about them by focusing their attention on matters of preference. So long as the means of worship are true and right, help them center their worship on the end of worship, which is God, and not on the means.

Secondly, *corporate worship is for us*. God has designed worship to nourish our souls, your children included. When we sing praises to God, our spirits are lifted. When we pray to the Lord, our hearts are ministered to. When we hear the Word of God preached, our minds, hearts, and wills are changed. When we give, we receive. When we receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, we experience the grace of God. While there are behavioral standards that children should keep within a service of corporate worship, give your children the room to experience a childlike enjoyment in worship.

Third, *corporate worship is a privilege*. Worshiping the God of the Universe is not a right, but a gift. It is only because of Jesus' death and resurrection that we can enter into God's presence. This means that it is not something to be treated flippantly, nor is it something to dread. Rather, it is the beautiful blessing belonging to all children of God: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." (Ps. 122:1). Encourage your kids to have a grateful heart in worship, and when they don't (because they, like me, often won't), pray with them for God's grace to work in their hearts and to change their feelings.

To be continued...

### John Hooker, continued

Lest we relegate such formality to the Old Testament alone, let us remember that when Jesus's disciples asked Him how to pray, He gave them a liturgical prayer: The Lord's Prayer.

Secondly, Hooker pointed out something we would also do well to consider: the unity of liturgy. If one examines the liturgical prayers of ancient Christian communions who have been separated by language and distance, one will notice a shocking amount of theological commonality despite the linguistic and cultural diversity. Whenever multiple, separate streams share a common shape, the most likely explanation is that they have a common source. Hooker rightly argued that the common pattern of liturgy throughout the world owes its origin to the apostolic Church. Though the liturgy we have has developed, it is a development of the early Church's worship, who developed their worship from the Temple and synagogue liturgies, based on the coming of Jesus Christ. In some places the liturgy looks and sounds more Roman, in England it is more Celtic and British; but in all places where it is retained, it is apostolic.

Thanks be to God for a saint like Richard Hooker, who reminds us of the great riches we have received in the Anglican liturgical tradition! This liturgy provides us a vibrant path of worship which has been tread by countless saints before, a path which goes back all the way to biblical times. It is within this broad, godly tradition that we develop our own unique voices, joining them—publicly and privately—to the chorus of many saints, including Richard Hooker, who worship the blessed Trinity, world without end. Amen.