

**The Episcopal Church
in
Gettysburg, PA**

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The Episcopal Epistle

From the Priest In Charge
The Rev. Jim Strader-Sasser



*The Parable of the Mustard Seed –
Kelly Latimore (2023)*

Have you moved any mountains on your own lately? Like, really. Answering that question seems rather “irrational.” Taken to its literal extreme, I’m not aware of any follower of Jesus – past, present, or future who thinks that she or he can physically unroot a big tree and plant it in a large body of water. Dare I say, it seems sorta ridiculous, from one perspective, to ask Jesus for such a miracle. It may be helpful to take a closer look at what type of “faith” Jesus and his disciples are discussing and seeking to obtain. Such a discussion should likewise include the nature and necessity of God’s Grace.

The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” The Lord replied, “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you. (Luke 17: 5-6)

The Greek term Luke’s Jesus uses in this passage is *pistis* (Πίστις). The author(s) of Luke and The Acts of The Apostles use this term “religiously” (30 times or more depending upon the English translation). The authors of the (Deutero)-Pauline texts use “Faith” dozens of times in their Epistles. There are other, perhaps better definitions to consider, including belief, conviction, and trust. Basically, faith in the Christian tradition, is a devoted confidence (faith in) God’s providence and grace. To my way of thinking, and, of course, I could be wrong, the disciples’ request for more faith (hope?) is their honest aspiration to become live more fruitfully into Christ’s Gospel. Perhaps that’s too optimistic. Various commentators understand Jesus’

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harsh response to his disciples from different viewpoints. Some suggest that Jesus is informing the disciples that they have all the faith they need. They just aren't acting upon it as resiliently as they should (Carroll, 2025). Others, such as A.J. Levine, teach that a faithful person devoted to God's work should not expect rewards. (Levine/Witherington, 2018). I believe the Post Communion Prayer we recite every Sunday hits the mark quite well.



Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord . Amen

We recently hosted a parochial sibling retreat with neighbors from St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church - Douglasville and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church – Shippensburg. The retreat's primary theme was how we as Episcopal parishes can seek contemplative, purposeful, and collaborative methods and steps to find peace during upheaval. Bishop Scanlan spent time mentioning how important it is to surrender our desires and needs to God. Such "letting go" probably means focusing on what a faith community historically has undertaken and is undertaking in its in-reach and outreach efforts. I mentioned at one point that Prince of Peace, from its very beginning,

has placed the pursuit of peace and reconciliation at the core of its Christian life. The theme of being faithful followers of the divine Prince of Peace is truly in this congregation's DNA. Peace is crafted into the belltower's walls. Peace is the central theme on the parish's banner. The parish's archives document many liturgical and ministerial events that took place here in the 20th Century. Offering shelter and food to refugees and hungry people were designated as important efforts when the parish was a Jubilee Center.

Now, as Prince of Peace continues its pilgrimage, the realities of living in uncertain times beckons us to (re)discover how we can, once again, be instruments of God's Peace. The metaphor of being a mustard seed in God's garden isn't just about its minute size. We can also discern that mustard seeds, like almost any other plant can produce a great deal of mustard bushes if they are planted in good soil, receive plenty of sunlight and water, and the farmer appropriately fertilizes them. Maybe zucchini or apples are better metaphors in Adams County, PA.

I digress.

Being a Christian, at least in our Episcopal tradition as I understand it, means acting upon our values. The ways in which we worship, pray, and commune provide impetus for how we show up in the world. We are recipients of God's Grace especially when we strive to live our human lives from places of humility, gratitude, and compassion. The degree that we trust in God's presence and the people and communities around us is critically important, especially in these times of chaos. A recent psychological research study indicates that:

"Trust is the glue that holds relationships, communities and societies together. ... supportive,

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healthy relationships are key to well-being—and trust plays a central role in building and maintaining those connections.” (Catrin Finkenauer, 2025)

May we continue to take many tiny steps together in our shared pilgrimage as trustworthy, devoted plants and planters in God’s vineyard, here and now.

Blessings along The Way, Jim+

Stewardship Committee

The celebration of our Stewardship season at Prince of Peace begins on Sunday, October 5th with the first distribution of pledge cards at both services and a special coffee hour after both services. We hope this year’s theme – ***Show Love, Shine Light*** – will guide us as we move forward with our campaign goal of \$185,000 in pledges. Through visual representations, special events, and fellowship, we want to build a sense of community and commitment as we work to maintain the financial security of our parish.

Stewardship, of course, is about much more than pledging financial support to Prince of Peace for the coming year. It is also a time to offer thanks for God’s many gifts and to reflect on how we can use them to grow in service to our beloved parish and to the broader community. Let us find ways to *show love and shine light* in the days ahead!

Here are a few important stewardship dates to keep in mind:

(Details will be announced at services and in Sunday bulletins)

<p>October 5th – First distribution of pledge cards at both services, opportunity to meet with the treasurer, and special coffee hour</p> <p>October 5th – November 9th – Love and Light Photo Sharing</p> <p>October 12th – Second distribution of pledge cards at both services</p> <p>October 13th – November 16th – Stewardship Committee members will distribute and collect remaining pledge cards</p> <p>October 19th – Rock painting activity after both services</p> <p>November 2nd – Ministries Fair and Church Supper (details to follow!)</p> <p>November 16th – Blessing of the Pledge Cards</p> <p>January 2026 – Silent Auction to support the campaign (specific dates TBD)</p>	<p>Throughout this period, we will also be inviting parishioners to participate in conversations and activities related to our theme! In the spirit of fun, please let us know if you have any ideas for incentives along the way to our goal of \$185,000.</p>
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Stewardship Committee Members: Sarah Bair (co-chair), Don D’Annunzio, Joe Donolli, Olive Donolli, Eve English, Sandra Keyser, Charles Saltzman, Cornelia Saltzman, Ed Sonnenberg (co-chair), Heather Swope, and Ken Williams.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions or suggestions.

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Franklin Friends Program

Beginning in September, Prince of Peace will join an initiative previously established by Flohr's Evangelical Lutheran Church to provide food assistance for children and families at Franklin Township Elementary School. The school, located in Cashtown, is part of the Gettysburg Area School District. Each Friday during the school year, Flohr's Church contributes non-perishable food items to *Franklin Friends*, a group who provides meals and snacks to children who may not have access to sufficient food over the weekend.

Throughout the 2025-2026 school year, our church will be collecting items to lend our support to this important program. Using the food list included here, we have committed to gathering donations and dropping them off on the 4th Thursday of each month (with some alterations to accommodate holidays). The specific dates for the 2025-2026 school year are as follows: **(9/25, 10/23, 11/20, 12/18, 1/22, 2/26, 3/26, 4/23). Please look for the donation box in the back of the church beginning, Sunday, September 7th.**

This new community outreach effort at Prince of Peace emerged from a vestry retreat held in March of this year. Many parishioners, during the past year or two, have expressed a desire for our church to reinvigorate its focus on helping our neighbors as Christ calls us to do. This is a first step in what we hope will be an ongoing relationship with Franklin Township Elementary School and the children it serves.

If you would prefer to make a monetary donation you can make a check out to Franklin Friends and can be dropped off with your monthly drop off or mailed to

Franklin Friends
C/O Flohrs Church
PO Box 32
McKnightstown, PA
17343

Food Items to support the *Franklin Friends Program*

There will be boxes in the back of the church for donations. Contributions can be made at any time, but we will deliver what we have collected on the 4th Thursday of each month.

Entrees (Individually Packed)

Beans & Franks

Chicken and Tuna Salad

Chef Boyardee Individual Cups

Mac and Cheese Individual Cups

Lipton Cup Soup/Crackers

Jif to Go with Deli rounds

Individual Servings of:

Fruit Cups

Vegetables

Applesauce

Small Boxes of Raisins

Snack Foods (Individually Packed)

Pretzels

Goldfish

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Fruit Snacks

Granola Bars

Pudding Cups

Breakfast Items (Individually Packed)

Cold Cereal

Shelf Stable Milk

Oatmeal

Drinks (Individually Packed)

Juice

Hot Chocolate Packets

Cat and Dog Product Donations



We continue our monthly ingathering of products for the two no kill shelters in the area we are supporting: Forever Love in Gettysburg and the Helen Krause Animal Foundation in Dillsburg. When

you go to the grocery store think about "God's Little Ones" and pick up a can or two or a bag of cat or dog food to help these shelters feed, rehabilitate and find good loving homes, "Forever Homes". We thank everyone for the very generous outpouring of support on Sunday, September 28th. The bin was filled once again and Lee has picked the products up for delivery to the shelters. He expresses his sincere thanks to everyone who donated. The bin will be in place for the next scheduled intake date, October 26th.

Blessing of the Animals

On Sunday, Oct. 5th @2 PM -we'll celebrate the companionship and love we share with the pets and animals in and around our homes. Our Blessing of the Animals - Saint Francis Day gathering will take place (weather Permitting) in the parish garden or on the parish grounds depending upon the number of pets and their family/friends. I'd welcome you to invite your neighbors, family members, and friends (especially children) to come and share in the fun with their furry, fishy, crawly friends. This "service" is unthreatening and its cool to bless cats and dogs along with ferrets, horses, sheep, whatever (well maybe not spiders). We look forward to seeing all of you!

Craft Swap



Craft Swap: Oct 18 2025 11:00-2:00 in the undercroft. A Craft Swap is an exchange of craft supplies, textiles, and art supplies you may no longer be using or no longer need for something you would enjoy. Are you thrifty?

Would you like to try a new hobby with free materials?

Bring your brown bag lunch and your gently used crafts. If your donations are still there at the end of the day, we will share them, with your consent, to Transitions Health.

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Holy Strollers

Join the Prince of Peace Holy Strollers on Saturday, October 11 for their next walk. We will be walking in Pine Grove State Forest from Fuller Lake to Laurel Lake, an approximately 3 mile round-trip route on a shady, level path. Along the way there is a natural spring with potable water. As always, bring a picnic lunch if you wish.

We will meet here at the church at 9 AM to depart for the site. You can also meet us at Fuller Lake in Pine Grove State Forest at around 10 AM to join us there.



Building Use

As parish groups begin to gravitate to a more regular use of the building, with groups being able to gather and meet in the building, it is important that the parish office be contacted and the meetings be placed on the calendar to avoid conflicts with other groups meeting in the building.

SERVICE SCHEDULE SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist

WEDNESDAY
12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist



Mark Your Calendars

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming events at Prince of Peace:

Sunday, Oct 5th: Distribution of Pledge Cards at both services.

Blessing of the Animals

Saturday, Oct 11th- Holy Stroller- Pine Grove State Forrest 9:00 AM

Monday, Oct. 13th: Office Closed
5:00 Vestry Meeting

Friday-Saturday, Oct. 17th-18th: Diocesan Convention

Saturday, Oct. 18th- Ladies Craft Swap
11:00 AM

Sunday, Oct 19th: Rock Painting after both services.

Sunday, Nov 2nd: Ministries Fair & Church Supper

Help us keep our records up to date.

Have we missed listing your birthday or anniversary in the past?

We may not have the information in our database. Please contact Marrie at the office



October 5

Pentecost 17

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4

Psalm 37:1-10

2 Timothy 1:1-14

Luke 17:5-10

October 12

Pentecost 18

2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c

Psalm 111

2 Timothy 2:8-15

Luke 17:11-19



October 19

Pentecost 19

Genesis 32:22-31

Psalm 121

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Luke 18:1-8

October 26

Pentecost 20

Sirach 35:12-17

Psalm 84:1-6

2 Timothy 4:6-8,16-18

Luke 18:9-14

The Memorial Church of the Prince of Peace

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**The Rev. James Strader-Sasser
Priest In Charge**

**The Rev. Richard A. Ginnever
Priest Associate**

**The Rev. Pamela Cooper White Ph.D
Priest Associate**

**Marrie Sanders
Parish Administrator**
princeofpeace@gettysburgepiscopal.org

Office Hours:

**Monday-Thursday
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**