

Rector's Writings

Exodus 20: 6 -but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

God spoke these words to Moses on Mount Sinai. 20:6 is part of the dialogue that Moses heard from the Lord regarding how Israel was to live together and with God. This one verse is part of a larger conversation between God, Moses, and the Hebrew people, as they struggle with their release from slavery in Egypt. God is promising a steadfast, unwavering Love for the people, in return God requires that they Love him and keep the commandments that are forthcoming from Moses.

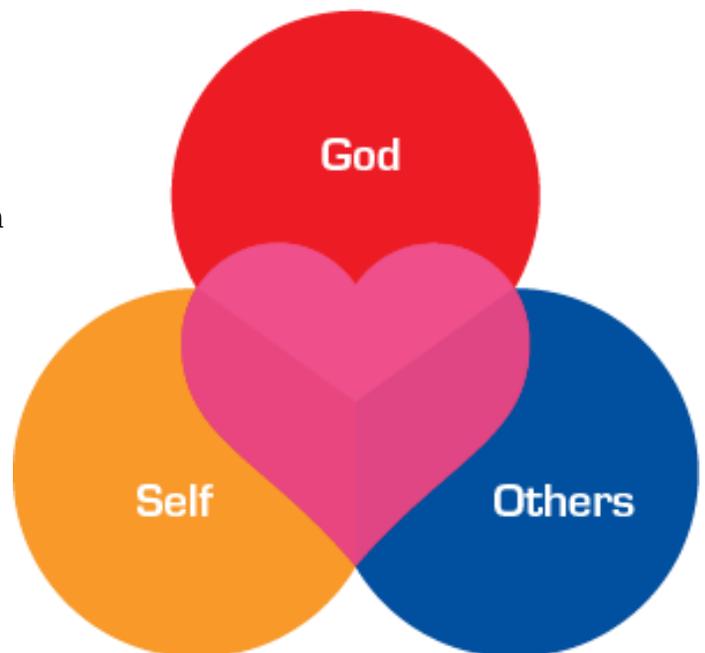
This conventional relationship between God and the world has existed since “the beginning.” In creation God blessed the world, then offered instruction with tools to help us live together, in love. Through God we are to covenant with each other in following these commandments from God.

Humans, at times, struggle with conventional love and relationships, either with God or with one another. The Old Testament Prophets and the New Testament Jesus teach us that at the root of our faith is this covenant relationship with God, one another, and the entirety of creation. God promises to love us, even to the thousandth generation, if only we can keep God's commandments and love God.

Through scripture, sacraments, worship, relationships with each other and with God we

either establish or affirm our bond with God and our neighbor. The triangle of relationship is a never ending flow of the love of God to us and the neighbor. John 3:16 tells us “God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” Jesus gives lessons and examples of how we are to live together, under the commands of God. Our human frailty allows us to fail at this never ending flow of grace and mercy, (the love of God). Jesus' life and death and resurrection gives us the gift of redemption to allow the triangular flow of love between God, us, and our neighbor to be restored.

Let us rejoice and give thanks for the conventional love of God. ~Joel



Unknown Author. *Transformations: God Is Love*. <https://www.accountable-life-coaching.com/god-is-love>

MIKE'S INSIGHT: On Love

This month, the month of Valentine's day, our Crossed Keys theme is love. There are many passages in the Bible that talk about love, and one of my favorites is also a verse that lends itself to memorization. It's from the First Letter of John, chapter 4, verse 19. "We love because God first loved us." Our ability to love comes straight from God. And who we are to love comes straight from Jesus: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:38-39). As Christians, we are directed to love God and love our neighbor.

Remember how in Luke chapter 10 the expert on the law posed a question to Jesus? "And who is my neighbor?" This question gave Jesus the opportunity to tell the story of the Good Samaritan, the man who served a robbery victim by putting him up at his own expense and nursing him back to health. This was after two religious authorities, a priest and a Levite, had walked around the same victim because they did not want to get their hands dirty. Jesus finished the story, and asked the legal expert, "Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" The legal expert answered, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

Some neighbors are easier to love than others, aren't they? Jesus doesn't let us choose who to love; we are to love them all, and that is not an easy task. But John tells us if we love God, then we are to love our brothers and sisters, too (1 John 4:21). Our Valentines are those that are easy to love, but Jesus tells us to love the not so easy to love. But how? Use the attributes that Paul ascribed to love in his first letter to Corinthians (1 Cor 13:4-7)

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, it is not selfish, and it cannot be made angry easily. Love does not remember wrongs done against it. Love is never happy when others do wrong, but it is always happy with the truth. Love never gives up on people. It never stops trusting, never loses hope, and never quits.

The one sentence in this passage that stands out to me is "Love never gives up on people." We (us and the Holy Spirit) can show mercy to our neighbor by not writing people off, by showing people the mercy shown to us by Christ, a "mercy that triumphs over judgement." (James 2:13b) As you go forth this month, spread God's love— enjoy your Valentine, and love your neighbor.



Peace, Mike



Bowen, Margaret. 2023. *Motherly Love*. (left) *Sisterly Love*. (right) Author's Personal Collection.

Juanita's Word
Jesus Loves the Little Children, and So Do We!

It is often said, "Children are the future of the church." The reality is that they are also a real part of the present church. Children bring joy into our lives and often offer profound wisdom as they look at life from a different perspective, a perspective that we all need to see.

But those are not the only reasons we bring our children to church. Church is a great place for kids to grow in the Word of God and the love of God. It might be difficult to see, but they are emersed in the things of God as they color, eat snacks, and squirm around. Bring your children to church, even when it is challenging to get them ready, even as you wonder if they might be a bit restless. Let them see you in worship and prayer, with others worshiping and praying along side you. Help them discover the wonders that come from being a part of God's family.

The world will teach them that church is not a priority. The world says, 'It's okay to skip church as it is a relic of the past and the Bible is not relevant.' The world will try to confuse and misinform them about the priority of having a personal relationship with Jesus. The world will not teach them the truth of living life with Christ and in Christ. You will, with the help of your church family.

Please bring your children to church. We love your kids and are excited to see them!



Bowen, Margaret. 2023. *Some of St. Peter's Beloved Children*. (left and right). Two Photos from Author's Personal Collection.

Vestry Minute

Thank you to those who faithfully served on the vestry over the past 3 years: (left to right as seen in the photo) Tom Schnatterbeck, Laura Galloway, Roger St. Clair, and Lisa Wells.



Bowen, Margaret. 2023. Vestry Members Who Completed Their Terms. Author's Personal Collection.

Congratulations to the new vestry members for 2023: Nathan Sturtevant, Bobby St. John, Sarah Mentock, and Brandi Bilyeu. We look forward to fresh faces and fresh ideas in 2023.

Lenten News:

Shrove Tuesday is February 21st. We will have a **pancake feast** from **5-7 pm in the Parish Hall**. The **youth** of St. Peter's will be having a fundraiser by selling **fresh Pecans** by the pound at the pancake supper.

Ash Wednesday services will be at **Noon and 6 pm** on the **22nd**.

Wednesday March 1st in the parish hall beginning at 5:30 will be soup supper. We will be doing a study on **The Chosen**. Please watch Season 3, Episode 1 before March 1st. We will meet and discuss the episode.

Wednesday afternoons during Lent there will be **Stations of the Cross at 5:00**, in the **sanctuary**.

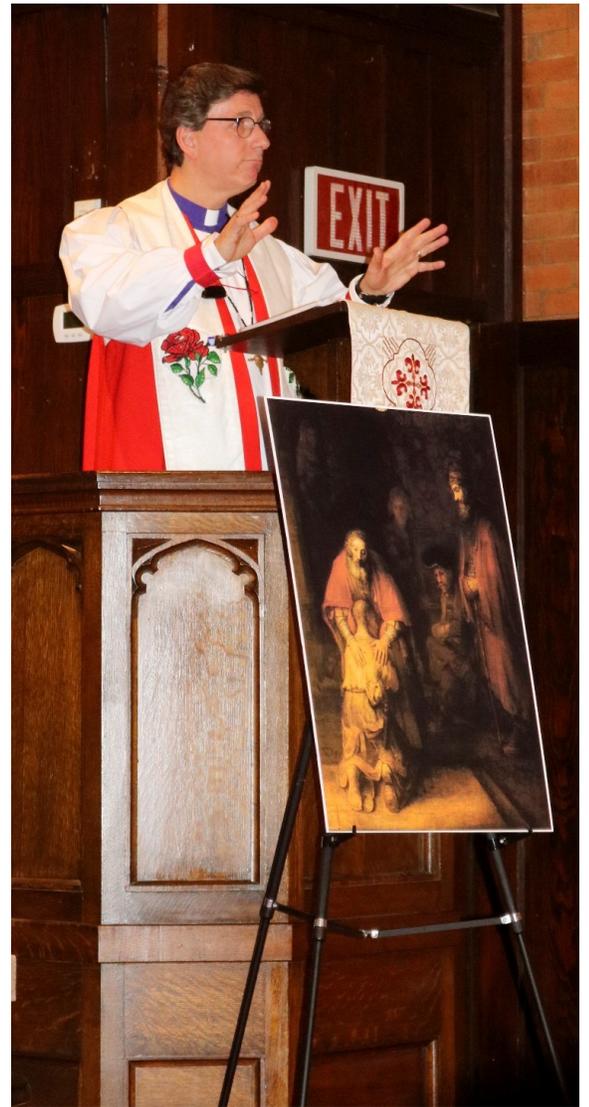
**Could you assist
people who
can't drive?**

**Call the office at 674-7655 to
volunteer**



LOVE is patient
 is kind
does not envy
 does not boast 
  **is not proud**  
 does not dishonor others
 is not self-seeking
 is not easily angered
 keeps no record of wrongs
 does not delight in evil 
rejoices with the truth
 always protects
 always trusts 
 always hopes
 always perseveres
LOVE never fails

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NIV)



Bowen, Margaret. 2023. *Bishop's Message on the Prodigal Son.*
 (above) *Sharing the Love at Lunch Together* (below, left). *Louise*
Sharing Love Through Her Cooking (below, right). Author's Personal
 Collection.



Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Time	Location
Each Wednesday/ Sunday	Bible Study	1:30-3:00 p.m./ 9:00 -9:45 a.m.	Parish Hall/ Library
Every Tuesday	Healing Service	12:10 pm	Chapel
Every Thursday	Choir Practice	5:15 pm	Parish Hall
Wednesday, February 15	Men's Breakfast	6:30 am	Parish Hall
Sunday, February 19	Birney Church Service	3:00 p.m.	The Church in Birney, Montana
Wednesday, February 15	Vestry Meeting	5:30 p.m.	Parish Hall
Monday, February 20	Women's Retreat Planning	5:30 pm	Library
Sunday, February 12	Juanita at Westview	10:00 am	Westview
Sunday , February 26	Mike at Christ Church in Glenrock Juanita at Sugarland	9:30 am 1:30 pm	Glenrock Sugarland
Saturday, February 18	Mug and Muffin	10:00- 11:30 am	Parish Hall
Tuesday, February 21	Pancake Supper	5:00– 7:00 pm	Parish Hall
Wednesday, February 22	Ash Wednesday Services	Noon & 6:00 pm	Sanctuary
Tuesday, February 28	Outreach Committee Meeting	5:00 pm	Library

**WE'RE STARTING A
SUNDAY MORNING
NURSERY @10 AM**

**Please call the office: 674-7655 if
you would like to volunteer**



St. Peter's Contacts

Rector

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Margaret Bowen- Admin Assistant

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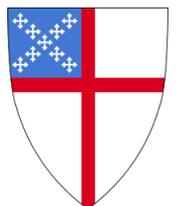
**Church Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday**

Vestry 2023	Contact Information
1 Bishop Michelena, Lacasa <i>Sr. Warden</i>	lacasamichelena@gmail.com
2 Farman, Dane <i>Jr. Warden</i>	danefaman@gmail.com <i>(note: there is intentionally no "r")</i>
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10 Mentock, Sarah	mentock@wyoming.com
11 VanDyke, Jacee	jacee.vandyke@gmail.com
12 Bilyeu, Brandi	bbilyeu16@gmail.com

FINANCIAL INFORMATION: JANUARY 2023

OPERATING INCOME	\$ 49,070.00
OPERATING EXPENSES	- <u>36,975.16</u>
DIFFERENCE	+ \$ 12,614.84

OUTREACH IN JANUARY: LIFE LINK, LODGING, GIFT CARD
FOOD CARD, COMPASSION INT'L
TOTAL OUTREACH \$ 3,445.75





St. Peter's Episcopal Church

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Join Us on YouTube!

The link is on the front page of the website:

www.stpeterssheridan.com