

## SECTION ONE: OUR HISTORY

In 1968, seminary students assisting local clergymen completed a survey begun by the Diocese of Upper South Carolina. Out of this grew St Peter's Episcopal Church. The Rev. Rogers Harris became the priest-in-charge on January 1, 1969, and the congregation began meeting at Mitchell Road Elementary School. On August 3, 1969, the Rev. Henry L. Heath, from Alabama, became the next priest-in-charge.

The congregation took on new growth and was organized as St Peter's Episcopal Church on October 24, 1969, with Bishop John A. Pinckney present. Early in its history St. Peter's purchased a large parcel of land at the intersection of Hudson and Devenger Roads with the aid and cooperation of the diocese and Christ Church in particular. Ground was broken for a new church at this location on February 10, 1975, The Rt. Rev. George Alexander, Bishop, and the Ven. William A. Beckham, Archdeacon, dedicated the church building in a service of Thanksgiving on September 7<sup>th</sup> of that year. In February 1984, St Peter's received Parish status and called Rev. Marshall O. James as its first rector.

In October 1985, the Rev. Eric Schnaufer of Dublin, GA was called to be its second rector. On April 29, 2010, Rev. Eric Schnaufer retired after an almost twenty-five year tenure of service to St. Peter's.

In the fall of 1987, the Church undertook an expansion which almost doubled our worship area and added a classroom wing, full kitchen, and nursery. The congregation had increased to 160 members. By September 1992, a new sanctuary and offices were constructed and placed into service. Our original altar has now become the centerpiece for the Chapel of the Holy Family, renovated and rededicated in 2009.

Our congregation includes multi-generational families as well as parishioners who were charter members. Retention, recruitment and diversity are continuing goals for St Peter's. As our congregation ages, the need to grow and attract new members becomes a priority.

St Peter's has several staff positions, including Director of Music, Parish Administrator, Parish Office Assistant and Nursery Coordinator.

St Peter's complex sits on an almost six acre site. The nave and sanctuary are situated on the north side of the facility and can seat three hundred people. Our sanctuary is built of wood and masonry which rises to a height of sixty-three feet above the altar in devotion to the Glory of God. We have interior and exterior columbariums and a memorial garden for scattering ashes.

## SECTION TWO: OUR AREA

Within Greenville County there are eight Episcopal churches including St. Peter's. We are located in an unincorporated part of Greenville County, and are surrounded by the cities/communities of Greenville, Travelers Rest, Greer, Simpsonville, Mauldin and Taylors. Within a ten mile radius of St Peter's the population is a little more than 380,000. Within a three mile radius, the average annual household income is between \$75,000-\$90,000 with a high density of professionals.

Our climate spans all four seasons, and we are within a reasonable car ride to both the Smoky Mountains on one end and the excellent beaches of South Carolina on the other. The Greater Greenville area is home to the Governors School of the Fine Arts, a residential high school for exceptional students of the performing and graphic arts from across the state, as well as excellent colleges and universities, large and small, including Clemson University, University of South Carolina Upstate, Furman University, Wofford College, Greenville Technical College, Converse College, Bob Jones University, and North Greenville University.

The City of Greenville is home to much cultural diversity, from the popular Peace Center for the Performing Arts to Heritage Green where the Main Public Library along with the recently opened Children's Museum, Upcountry History Museum, Greenville Little Theatre, Upstate Museum and the Bob Jones Museum are all within walking distance of each other. Our annual *Artisphere* is ranked as one of the top ten art venues in the United States. The USA Cycling Championships are also hosted in Greenville. We also have the "Green" in Greenville County from great parks such as Falls Park in downtown Greenville to wonderful state parks along the edge of the mountain range. Greenville is home to minor league baseball and hockey franchises and is a growing area for competitive club soccer, volleyball and other sports. Our area encourages numerous outdoor activities, with a variety of parks, walking trails, and cycling routes.

Our greater metropolitan area's major employer is Greenville Hospital System. Major manufacturing companies such as General Electric, BMW, Michelin, Mitsubishi, and the new International Center for Automotive Research (ICAR), to name a few, help keep our unemployment record below the national average.

### SECTION THREE: OUR WORSHIP

*Seeking the blending of Episcopal tradition with contemporary ideas.  
Providing spiritual strength and joy.  
Believing that prayer can change our lives and our world.  
Centered on sharing our unity and communion as one Body in Christ.*

St. Peter's offers two regular Sunday services: a Rite-One service at 8:30 a.m. and a Rite-Two service at 10:30 a.m. Our services give parishioners a variety of opportunities to participate. We have a rotating lector, chalice bearer, acolyte program and Altar Guild for youth and adults. At the conclusion of each service, we send forth our Lay Eucharistic Ministers to share the sacrament of Communion with those who cannot attend the services.

The sacrament of Baptism holds a special place for the communicants of St. Peter's. Baptism is offered several times during the year, including the Feast of our Lord's Baptism, the Easter Vigil, the Feast of Pentecost, All Saint's Sunday, and during the annual visitation of our Bishop. The newly baptized are welcomed into the body of Christ with special candles and home-made banners that accompany them during the processional hymn.

Confirmation is an occasion for a baptized person to make a mature and public affirmation of their faith. Confirmation is available to teens over 16 and adults who would like to be confirmed or received into the Episcopal church.

Sunday mornings are the foundation of our worship but are by no means the ends to it. In 2010, St. Peter's added our labyrinth to our Church grounds. Members and guests are free to walk the labyrinth in their own time of spiritual focus and we also offer numerous group worship times within the labyrinth throughout the year. Our labyrinth is registered with the Labyrinth Society Worldwide Labyrinth Locator.

Parishioners birthdays and wedding anniversaries are noted and celebrated at the altar rail during Sunday services. As school begins each fall, children and their backpacks are blessed; crops from the community garden, and tithed to the needy in the area, are celebrated in the fall, and family pets get special attention near the feast day of St. Francis. In both big and small ways, we weave relationships with all members of the St. Peter's family, finding ways to make our congregation joyfully unique.

Many of the services and other occasions are enhanced by the music of our choir and organist. These committed musicians, many of whom have been making music at St. Peter's for a number of years, are a vital part of the church.

## SECTION FOUR: OUR FAMILY AND FELLOWSHIP

*Believing that acceptance of everyone is our tradition, extending our hospitality to all.*

*A community of love, comfort, care, fun and forgiveness.*

*Respecting the differences of every individual.*

*Sharing one table to break bread together.*

From the Sunday morning coffee hour to Saturday night Fellowship group, St. Peter's offers a large variety of social opportunities. Bread Breakers meet the first Saturday of each month for shared dinner. We have monthly adult fellowship gatherings rotating among the homes of parishioners on the last Saturday of each month.

Greeters welcome our Sunday visitors. Informal tours of the church are offered to our guests. We hold regular newcomer dinners that include parishioners who can answer questions and make connections for new members. Our "Glue Crew" (the parish incorporation committee) assists newcomers in many ways.

Cookouts are a regular part of our parish life. In 2000, the Segars Pavilion was constructed for parish picnics, as well as other youth and family events. The men of the Church take to the grill for numerous church activities throughout the year, and the Pavilion is open for parish and non-parish alike for their own gatherings and celebrations.

Our Men's Fellowship group began in the 1990's with the intent of combining fellowship and assistance to parish members as needed. Each monthly meeting begins with a hearty breakfast, after which the Men of our church work together to assist with the maintenance of the buildings and grounds for the enjoyment of the whole parish. All men over eighteen are welcome to participate. The Men's Group recently hosted two new gatherings: a father/daughter, grandfather/granddaughter breakfast and a father/son, grandfather/grandson breakfast. Attendance was excellent at both, and a repeat is planned for next year.

The women of St. Peter's have numerous fellowship opportunities – each with its own unique purpose and ministry. Our ECW offers not only regular fellowship but also service opportunities with our annual fund raisers and other projects throughout the year.

St. Peter's recognizes that so many of its members come to our community from different backgrounds and locations. For those who come without family nearby or for those who seek additional family support, St. Peter's offers a warm, friendly and inclusive family atmosphere for its parish community.

## SECTION FIVE: OUR YOUTH AND CHILDREN.

*Cultivating our legacy by who we are and what we do, through the One Body of Christ.*

*Welcoming and encouraging all ages to grow in the love of Christ.*

*Experiencing with them the excitement of holy play.*

*Celebrating their ministry as they grow into their faith and visibly serve Christ.*

As our church grows, St. Peter's continues to emphasize its commitment to the Christian formation of its youth. They are intentionally included in our liturgical service in many roles including participation as lectors, chalice bearers, readers for the Prayers of the People among others.

Preschoolers and kindergarteners begin their commitment to Christ with Godly Play. Each Sunday morning, our children explore the church calendar, the Old and New Testaments, even their own service project.

From there, first and second graders begin a "Journey with Jesus." The class introduces our youth to the Sacraments and to the life works of Jesus. Third, fourth and fifth graders celebrate "Faith and Friends" as they learn about the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer while beginning to think about their own faith and beliefs.

Our middle school Sunday School class focuses on Biblical studies and the Episcopal Church. Our high school Sunday School class explores various subjects critical to youth in modern society. Both classes follow the Virginia Theological Seminary Episcopal Curriculum for Youth.

Sunday evenings are SPY nights – that's St. Peter's Youth nights. This gives the middle and high school kids the chance not only for fellowship with their peers but also time for spiritual growth. The group will take journeys throughout the year – from bowling excursions to Eucharist by the dumpster at Christmas time "because there was no room in the inn."

Our youth have had many doors opened to them on a local, diocesan, provincial and national level. Through recent years, we have had numerous youth serve on the Diocesan Youth Leadership Committee and be in charge of designing many youth events around the diocese. We have also had many youth participate in the Provincial Youth Event and Episcopal Youth Event and they have traveled cross country for these events. We have sent our youth on many mission trips to places such as Tennessee, Minnesota, Louisiana, Columbia, John's Island, and Ecuador.

We regularly offer a Sunday afternoon service for children and families. This service is short and focused on a Feast or concept of the season. In addition to giving children a more intimate worship experience, the service also gives younger families a chance to socialize.

## SECTION SIX: OUR CHRISTIAN FORMATION

*Fostering growth in spirit, mind and body through tradition, scripture and reason.*

*Cultivating a safe environment to challenge and grow in the faith.*

*Knowing that worship, education and ministry are rooted in discovery.*

*Encouraging all to discover their personal talents and ministry.*

As our parish has grown more diverse, St. Peter's has expanded its Adult Christian formation programs. Those new to the Church – and to the Episcopal Church – are invited to a unique Sunday morning class to welcome them to the St. Peter's and Episcopal experience. We offer an adult Sunday school program focusing on the “three-legged stool” of Episcopal formation: scripture, tradition and reason.

Our formation goes beyond Sunday mornings. We have begun an Education for Ministry program – a four year program designed which offers an opportunity for personal discovery and ministry development, as well as to create leaders among the parish in Christian Formation. Our annual women's retreat is in its 12<sup>th</sup> year. In 2012 the theme is “What does God Require of Me?”. A weekly Bible Study group meets year round, and an Evening prayer service is held in the Chapel.

Further, in accordance with national and diocesan canons and to exemplify our commitment to our church family, St. Peter's has responded to a broad-based training initiative to raise awareness across the congregation of the kinds of best practices that will keep our children and youth safe. Members of the congregation who work directly or indirectly with children, those who hold specific parish roles, and those who work with members considered “at risk” complete the Diocesan Safe Church program.

## SEVEN: OUR MISSION AND SERVICE

*Fulfilling our own baptismal covenant, seeking and serving Christ.  
Loving our neighbors, home and abroad, as ourselves.  
Reaching out to show God's love through our works.  
Translating our silent faith into dynamic action.*

From its earliest days the congregation always found ways to contribute to the improvement of the world outside its walls.

In 2010, we opened our Community Garden. It offers space to those parishioners who might not have room for their own gardens to grow fresh vegetables. It is also a unique outreach, as all “owners” in the garden give ten percent of their “bounty” to the needy.

Several times each year, our drama ministry – the St. Peter’s Players – invites our community to participate in and enjoy watching quality theatre. The Players select plays with significant messages that help – in their own ways – spread God’s message of love, peace, and understanding. Past productions include Our Town, The Music Man, The Crucible, and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat.

For many years, St. Peter’s has assisted with the Buddy Club – a local organization for young people who have experienced a loss of a loved one or close friend. We sponsor the Buddy Garden as a reminder and a symbol of these relationships.

St. Peter’s sets aside a portion of its annual operating budget to support specific charitable organizations including Project Host, Haiti Children's Scholarship, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, Greenville Free Medical Clinic, and others. Through bazaars, silent auctions and other fund-raisers, we are able to provide monies and goods for a variety of needs, but we also provide talent and “person-power.” Our members have served on the staff and boards of local charities, we have traveled to Haiti on work and mission teams, and we participate in the annual United Ministries Walk for the Homeless.

St. Peter’s provides an established Stephen's Ministry program. Our parish has twelve team members to meet the needs of our parishioners who are going through a difficult time in their lives. In 2007 we also established a Daughters of the King chapter whose mission is prayer and service our parish.

We at St. Peter’s recognize that Youth Formation isn’t just Sunday school – it’s about implementing our lessons to make our world better. Each grade level has its own service project – younger groups collect diapers and canned goods for the needy, while older youth work at mission trips inside and outside of South Carolina.

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SECTION EIGHT: OUR FINANCES & DEMOGRAPHICS

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Revenue:	\$352,101	\$361,230
Expenses:	\$335,736	\$347,396
Net Income:	\$16,365	\$13,834
Assets (checking & Investments):	\$245,705	\$216,352
Mortgage Balance:	\$71,194	\$54,462
Total Active Members		395
Average Sunday Attendance		214
Sunday School Enrollment		57
Sunday School Average Attendance		27

Please see 2012 Parochial Report following this section for more information

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## SECTION NINE: WHOM WE SEEK.

We at St. Peter's have been truly blessed with the Rectors who have served God through this Parish. As we move forward to the next chapter of our Parish, we seek someone dedicated to the continued growth of this Parish – in viability and in vibrancy. We look to find someone interested in the long-term, as we know this will be a wonderful work and amazing spiritual experience but also that it will take time.

We seek a teacher. We want someone to encourage and support our families, youth and children but also one who will engage us in on-going Christian formation. One who knows our rich tradition but will carry on his or her own traditions equally as faithfully.

We seek a spiritual leader. One who will promote independent committees and ministries to fulfill goals and who will also serve with compassion and openness to creativity and new forms of worship and ministry; one who will be engaging in a community broader than just our Parish.

We seek to move forward. We are growing as a Parish and as a community, and we seek a Rector to assist us along our path and move us forward with new ideas, new discoveries, and new programs.