

# A Chosen Generation

Quarterly Newsletter | St. Peter's By-The-River Episcopal Church



5042 Timuquana Rd.  
Jacksonville FL 32210  
904-778-1434  
[stpejax.org](http://stpejax.org)

## Worship Schedule

**Sunday:** 9:30am English | 12:00pm Spanish  
**Bible Study:** 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday - 6:00pm

Connect with us:



## Upcoming Events, and more

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**January 1**  
NO Services

### FROM THE RECTOR

*See Pg. 2*

### EPIPHANY SERVICE

*See Pgs. 2 & 3*

### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING (APM)

*See Pg. 5*

### WOMEN'S CIRCLES

*See Pg. 5*

### YARD SALE FUNDRAISER

*See Pg. 5*

### SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

*See Pg. 6*

### ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

*See Pg. 6*

### ANNUAL REGATTA SCHEDULE

*See Pg. 7*

### CHO PANTRY UPDATE

*See Pg. 7*

### STEWARSHIP CAMPAIGN

*See Pg. 8*

### 2025 THANKSGIVING

*See Pg. 8*

### 2025 SEASON OF ADVENT

*See Pg. 9*

### 2025 CORE OUTREACH

*See Pgs. 10 & 11*

### SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP

*See Pg. 12*

### WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY

*See Pg. 13*

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

*See Pg. 14*

### 2025 ROSE SUNDAY

*See Pg. 16*

### CHURCH CALENDARS

*See Pgs. 18 & 19*

### 2025 HOMECOMING

*See Pgs. 20 thru 24*

### MILES OF DIAPERS DRIVE

*See Pg. 25*

### RAKAD DANCE CAMP

*See Pg. 25*

### THANK-YOU-NOTES

*See Pgs. 26 & 27*

### ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS

*See Pg. 27*

### From Our Rector

Happy New Year, 2026!

I always feel like a new year is a chance for a new beginning and a fresh perspective. For me, it is also a time to organize myself better and to think about how I can be a better contributor to the world, to my church and to my family. I find that it is a hope-filled season in my life and the time when my creativity flows more freely. I pray that you also have that experience in your own lives, this new year.

In the spirit of creativity and doing new things, this year I would like to start a new tradition at St. Peter's. Actually - it isn't very creative or particularly new – only new to most of you. On Tuesday, January 6, we will celebrate the Feast Day of the Epiphany with a church service. The service will begin outside, at 10:30am with the chalking of the doors. Before I explain the ancient tradition of chalking doors for Epiphany, let's talk about the day itself.

Most people believe that Christmas ends on December 25<sup>th</sup>. In actuality - Christmas Day is the first day of the Christmas season, which lasts a total of twelve (12) days, hence the “Twelve Days of Christmas.” The thirteenth day, January 6<sup>th</sup>, is the Feast Day of the Epiphany and the first day of the season of Epiphany. It is also known as “Three Kings’ Day.”

We know of the Three Kings only through the Gospel according to Matthew, where they are called Magi and never identified as kings. They travelled from somewhere in the East, following a star, to witness the birth of the Messiah. It's important to recognize that these Magi were not Jewish and were not necessarily familiar with the Biblical prophecies of the coming of a Messiah, that we find in the Old Testament. They followed the star because they were guided by God himself to discover the importance of it all. Most depictions of the Nativity show the Magi arriving shortly after the birth of Jesus but all that we know is that they encountered a small child with his mother, Mary. Their arrival probably occurred some time later, up to two years after the birth, given that Herod “gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.” (Matthew 2:16).

The word “Epiphany” means “manifestation”. Therefore, the Feast Day of the Epiphany commemorates the day in which the birth of our Lord and Savior was manifested to the Gentile World. Through the visit of these Magi, all the world was blessed with the

*(Continued on page 3)*

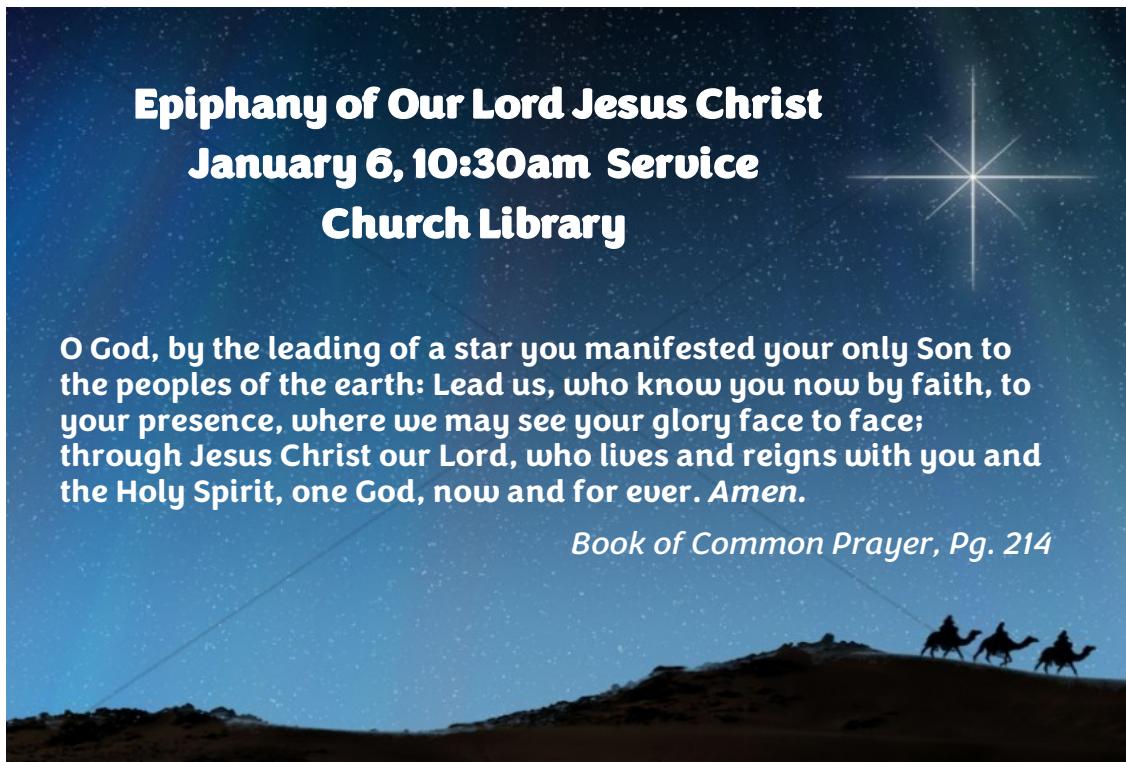
## From Our Rector

(Continued from page 2)

knowledge that had previously been prophesied only to the Jews. The ancient tradition of chalking the doors is a sign of this blessing and a way for us to set our homes apart as places of Christian hospitality, as safe and peaceful outposts of the Kingdom of God in the world.

At the beginning of our service, on the Feast Day of Epiphany, we will mark our doors with chalk with the following inscription: 20+C+M+B+26. The 20 and the 26, together, mark the current year and the C+M+B stand for the Latin words “Christus Mansionem Benedicat”, which translates to “May Christ Bless This Home.” They can also stand for the initials of the Magi: C for Caspar, M for Melchior, and B for Balthazar (names which are not Biblical and only surfaced in later Christian traditions). We will also bless chalk so that all of you can take some home and mark your own doors, if you wish.

May this new year bring an abundance of blessings into your life and that of your loved ones. I also pray that St. Peter's may continue to be a blessing to the lives of many in this community. You are an integral part of that and, for that, I give thanks.



# Glory Circle 2025

The Glory Circle had thirteen ladies who gathered for a Christmas hymn sing and luncheon on December 9 at the home of Marilyn Whiddon. We brought gifts for some of our shut-ins and sent cards to others.

We were blessed to have Sally Jackson join us along with former member, Mona Masters, who provided Sally Jackson's transportation. It was a special time of fellowship and good food as well as ministry to those who cannot get to our church services. This is a long-time tradition to meet at Marilyn's home and she is a most gracious hostess.



Standing L-R: Jeanne Wright, Sally Jackson, Mona Masters, Betty Owens,  
Mary Bowley, Lori Prevatt, Jayne Bickerstaff, Linda Boyd

Sitting: L-R: Katharine Boyd, Ann Weeks, Patricia Wright, and Terry Ruberti

# Annual Parish Meeting

Please mark your calendar for our Annual Parish Meeting scheduled Sunday, **January 25**, after the 9:30am service with a potluck lunch in Weeks Hall. Our meeting agenda will involve new Vestry selection, St. Peter's convention delegates, financial report and budget, Senior and Junior Warden reports, and the results of election of new Vestry members and delegates.



## St. Peter's Annual Yard Sale

Our annual yard sale fundraiser is scheduled on Friday and Saturday, **February 6 and 7**, from **7:00am to 12:00pm**. We need items to sell, so please bring your items to the Church during the month of January.

Volunteers are needed. If you can help, please add your name to the Yard Sale Sign Up sheet or contact Jeanne Wright, 904-514-2572



### Glory Circle

Join us for Bible Study and prayer on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday** each month at 10:30am in Room 100, Discussion on *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Dates as follows:

**January 13**

**February 10**

**March 10**

Leader, Ann Weeks

### Grace Circle

Join us for Bible Study and lunch after on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday** each month at 11:30am. Lessons on the "I Am" statements of Jesus, in the Gospel of John.

**January 15**

**February 19**

**March 19**

Leader, Tina Griffin

### Virtual Prayer Circle

Join us for intercessory prayer, via conference call, on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Monday** each month at 6:30pm., as follows:

**January 19**

**February 16**

**March 16**

Coordinator, Ann Weeks



## CHO Food Pantry Update

Because the Regattas will be held on February 28, March 27 and 28, the CHO Food Pantry will not be able to provide food service to the community on February 28 or March 28. St. Peter's will provide volunteer help to run the Food Pantry on Sunday, **March 1**, and Sunday, **March 29**. The hours of service at the Food Pantry, to set up for service and provide service, are from 6 am until 9 am.

We need at least 12 volunteers for this and training for the volunteers will be held on Saturday, **February 21 from 6 to 9 am**. Volunteers can be all shapes, sizes, and ages, though we will need some who are strong.

We will have our Palm Sunday outdoor service after at 9:30 am. For more information, contact Virginia Pillsbury, [srwarden@stpejax.org](mailto:srwarden@stpejax.org) or call/text 904-307-6808.

## Regatta Races High School Rowing



Sponsored by Episcopal School of Jacksonville and held here at St. Peter's on **February 28, March 27 and 28**, from 7:00am to 4:00pm. Please know that there will not be any parking available on site.

**NO Church parking available on these days.**



Daylight Saving Time begins  
**SUNDAY, MARCH 8**  
Remember to set your clocks  
**FORWARD**  
one hour at bedtime on  
**Saturday, March 7**  
so you won't be late for church.

# Stewardship Campaign

Dance With Us, the 2026 Stewardship Campaign was fun and successful. Thanks to our committee, Angie Seymour, Tina Marie Greene, and Marlene Miller. Thanks also to those who shared their heart to the congregation during the campaign. Marlene Miller, Angie Seymour, and Chere Dale spoke with compassion and love as they shared their individual journeys of faith.



Marlene Miller kept us on our toes with dances each Sunday. Dancing to The Hokey Pokey and Alvira kept us laughing and filled us with joy.

If you haven't submitted your pledge card, please do as this will help us plan our 2026 budget.

# Thanksgiving 2025

We had a beautiful Thanksgiving service on Thanksgiving Day, followed by a St. Peter's Family Thanksgiving for all. Mtr. Natalie and her family provided the turkey and ham, and parishioners brought other festive dishes. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship in Weeks Hall. After the dinner, we played games and chatted. Thanksgiving at St. Peter's is one of the best reminders that we are united as a family of believers here.



## Season of Advent 2025



*The First Sunday of Advent*  
November 29: Michael Brown  
Lighting the Candle of **HOPE**



*The Second Sunday of Advent*  
December 7: Peacock Family  
Lighting the Candle of **PEACE**



*The Third Sunday of Advent*  
December 14: Vincent & Dorotea Forth  
Lighting the Candle of **JOY**



*The Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
December 21: Bill Bowley  
Lighting the candle of **LOVE**

### Core Outreach

Our 2025 end-of-year Core Outreach village was held on November 29. Our monthly Core Outreach ministry is held on the **last Saturday** of the month, starting at 8:00 am, weather permitting, otherwise held inside Weeks Hall. We provide a light breakfast, community resources, and the opportunity to build relationships with our neighbors. All that is required is to show up and love like Jesus.

Thanks to our ministry partners, Positive Family Pivot, Inspire to Rise, Rebel Recovery, and for the bread donation given by Saved2Serve. If you can volunteer for an hour or two, please contact Virginia Pillsbury at 904-307-6808 or email [srwarden@stpejax.org](mailto:srwarden@stpejax.org)



Behind the scenes - Our wonderful parishioners make Core Outreach a success!  
L-R: Vincente Forth, Tony Buehler, Bill Bowley, Terry Ruberti and Marina Peacock

#### CORE OUTREACH 2026 SCHEDULE

January 31, NO February /March, April 25, May 30

(NO June or July due to vacations) August 29, September 26, October 31, November 28



Rebel Recovery Jacksonville  
For more information, visit <https://jax.rebelrco.org>



Inspire to Rise  
For more information, visit [www.weinspiretorise.org](http://www.weinspiretorise.org)

## *After Church Fellowship*

One of the many things we do at St. Peter's that binds us together as a family, is our Sunday fellowship time after our morning service. Tony Buehler arrives early to make his delicious coffee. Margie and David Mena prepare wonderful breakfast treats from pumpkin pancakes to English muffin breakfast sandwiches. Martha Fooshee helps in all ways with the meals. And on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month, we celebrate birthdays with a beautiful and delicious cake made by Mary Bowley. We all appreciate the chance to sit and visit (and sometimes dance) during this fellowship time and we are grateful to all who make it happen!



November 2025 Birthdays

L-R: Alelia Marshall (Dorotea's sister), Michael Brown, Laverne O'Hara, and Virginia Pillsbury

## Wonderful Wednesday

We had our first Wonderful Wednesday on December 3, 2025, when a group of us went downtown and toured Rethreaded, a local nonprofit that helps women who've been able to leave human trafficking and receive training required to step into the professional world.

After a tour, we shopped, and then finished the morning with lunch at Panera.

Have a Wonderful Wednesday idea? Please let us know. It can also be a Sensational Saturday for those who might prefer a weekend outing.



St. Peter's Women's Ministry L-R: Martha Fooshee, (Asia Vincelli of Rethreaded),  
Mary Bowley, Virginia Pillsbury, Tina Marie Greene,  
Marlene Miller and Betty Owens

# 2025 Christmas Party & Cookie Exchange

Wonderful lunch and Christmas cookie exchange!

Thank you Mtr. Natalie and Tony for a delicious time of fellowship!



Seasonal décor shared by The Reverend Natalie Blasco's personal collection.





## Rose Sunday 2025

On December 14, we blessed the gifts for families of our local elementary school and the baby blankets we collected for the non-profit organization, Positive Family Pivot housed here at St. Peter's.



## Church Workday 2025

On Saturday, December 6, we held a work day and cleaned out the lower level of the Sanctuary in preparation for leasing. We trashed anything that was damaged and saved items for our annual yard sale fundraiser (see page 5), as well as donating to other churches and non-profits, as needed. We had a wonderful group of volunteers and lots of man power for the heavy lifting of file cabinets, desks, bookshelves, and more.

We give thanks to Tony Buehler, Mtr. Natalie Blasco, Bill and Mary Bowley; Martha Fooshee, Vincent Forth, Tina Marie Greene; Sue Hillerich, David, Michael, and Margie Mena; Collin O'Hara, John and JoAnne Rodriguez, and Aleeza Tecson.



Margie Mena hard at work



Former Nursery and Positive Family Pivot

## JANUARY CALENDAR

1	<i>The Holy Name of Our Lord</i> Happy New Year! NO Services
4	9:30am English Service 11:00am Church De-greening 12:00pm Spanish Service
6	<i>The Epiphany of Our Lord</i> Church Office OPEN 10:30am Epiphany Service
7	NO Bible Study - We will resume on January 28
11	<i>The Baptism of Our Lord</i> 9:30am English Service 12:00pm Spanish Service
13	10:30am Glory Circle
15	11:30am Grace Circle
18	9:30am English Service 11:00pm Vestry Meeting 12:00pm Spanish Service
19	MLK, Jr. Holiday 6:30pm Virtual Prayer Circle
21	NO Bible Study - We will resume on January 28
25	9:30am English Service 11:00pm Annual Meeting and Potluck Lunch 12:00pm Spanish Service
28	6:00pm Bible Study - <i>The Chosen Season 5, Episode 1</i>

## FEBRUARY CALENDAR

1	9:30am English Service 12:00pm Spanish Service,
4	6:00pm Bible Study, <i>The Chosen, Season 5, Episode 2</i>
6	7:00am Yard Sale
7	7:00am Yard Sale
8	9:30am English Service 12:00pm Spanish Service
10	10:30am Glory Circle
14	<b>VALENTINE'S DAY</b>
15	9:30am English Service 11:00am Vestry Meeting 12:00pm Spanish Service
16	<b>PRESIDENTS' DAY</b> 6:30pm Virtual Prayer Circle
17	<b>SHROVE TUESDAY</b> 6:00pm Pancake Supper
18	<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b> 12 noon Eucharist & Ashes 7:00pm Eucharist & Ashes NO Bible Study
19	11:30am Grace Circle
22	<i>Lent 1</i> 9:30am English Service 11:00am Potluck Lunch 12:00pm Spanish Service
28	7:00am Regatta Rowing Races

# ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH CALENDAR

## March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1 Lent 2</b> 9:30AM English Service 12:00PM Spanish Service	<b>2</b> 3	<b>4</b> 6:00PM Bible Study The Chosen: Season 5, Episode 3	<b>5</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 7:30AM Food Pantry OPEN
<b>8 Lent 3</b> 9:30AM English Service 12:00PM Spanish Service	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 10:30AM Glory Circle	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 7:30AM Food Pantry OPEN
<b>15 Lent 4</b> 9:30AM English Service 11:00AM Vestry Meeting 12:00PM Spanish Service	<b>16</b> 17		<b>18</b> 6:00PM Bible Study The Chosen: Season 5, Episode 4	<b>19</b> 11:30 am Grace Circle	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 7:30AM Food Pantry OPEN
<b>22 Lent 5</b> 9:30AM English Service 12:00PM Spanish Service 11:00AM Potluck Lunch	<b>23</b> 24		<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 7:00am Regatta	<b>28</b> 7:00am Regatta Food Pantry CLOSED NO Core Outreach
<b>29 PASSION SUNDAY</b> 7:30AM Food Pantry OPEN 9:30AM Outdoor Service	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> NO Bible Study	<b>2</b> Holy Thursday 7:00pm Foot washing service	<b>3</b> Good Friday 12 noon Stations of the Cross 2:00pm Spanish Service	<b>4</b> Holy Saturday 7:00pm Easter Vigil Service
<b>H O L Y</b>	<b>W E E K</b>					

January - February - March 2026

# St. Peter's 2025 Homecoming Recap

A wonderful group of volunteers started planning St. Peter's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in April to ensure it would be a fun, successful, and memorable event.

Our committee met regularly to decide on invitations, menu, program, and decor.

Special thanks to Bettyanne Owens and Jeanne Wright for navigating the big job of compiling the guest list! Thanks to Leslie Oxford for designing the beautiful invitations, and to Martha Fooshee and Dorothy Fennell for designing the decor for the evening.

The Homecoming started with a dinner on Saturday, September 27. The meal, graciously donated by Golden Corral of Orange Park, was served in Weeks Hall. We also had a raffle of a quilt and two beautiful wreaths, and there was an envelope wall available for donations. A timeline on the wall gave a visual history of our church.

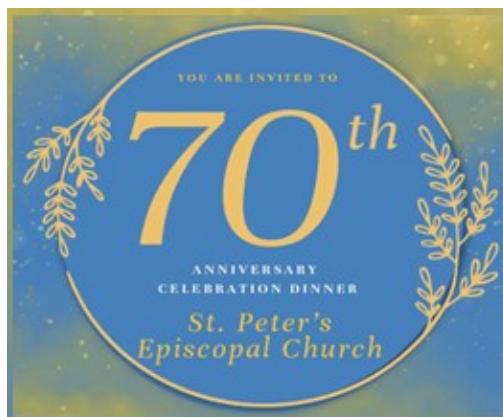
We had more than 100 parishioners and former parishioners attend the dinner, with some coming from as far as North Carolina, and some who attended St. Peter's in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Since we could not fit all of the wonderful photos in this issue, please visit our Facebook page, St. Peter's Episcopal Church - Jacksonville.

We charged a modest price for the dinner, and also received funds from the raffle and envelope wall. In all, St. Peter's raised about \$2,000.00

On Sunday morning we greeted many former parishioners and were delighted to have Fr. James and Donna Barnhill, Cheryl Fulton (Fr. Charles' daughter), and Mrs. Lowell (whose husband Marshall was a priest here in the 1980s). The weekend ended with a brunch in Weeks Hall after the service.

Thanks to Marlene Miller, Angie Seymour, Faye Glover, Tina Marie Greene, Bettyanne Owens, Jeanne Wright, Marina Peacock, Martha Fooshee, Tony Buehler, and Virginia Pillsbury for bringing their dedication and love for St. Peter's to the planning and execution of this event. We also appreciate the time and service from JoAnne Rodriguez and Mtr. Natalie Blasco.

Time to start planning our 75<sup>th</sup>!





St. Peter's Rector  
The Reverend Natalie Blasco  
Opening with Welcome  
and Introduction

Opening Prayer  
Ann Weeks, St. Peter's  
Lay Eucharistic Minister



## A Chosen Generation



L-R: Jayne & Charles Bickerstaff, Linda Kaiser, Sally & Kurt Jackson, and Mona & Ernie Masters



L-R: Mary & Bill Bowley, Mark & Carol Enge, Dee Crowe, and Jill McPherson



L-R: Patricia Wright, Tom & Nancy Lambert, Terry Ruberti,  
Susan Willis, and Teresa Yancey



The Reverend Natalie Blasco and her family

## A Chosen Generation



Dinner Time! Buffet sponsored by Golden Corral

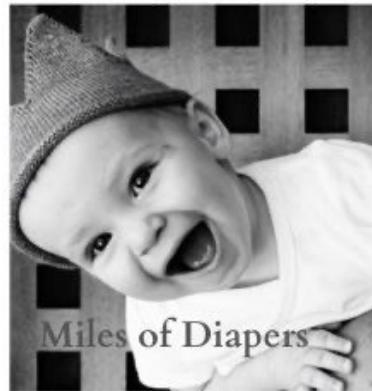


St. Peter's Kitchen Team and Greeters - L-R: Marlene Miller, Virginia Pillsbury, Martha Fooshee, Betty Owens, Tina Marie Greene, Jeanne Wright, Angie Seymore, Marina Peacock, Faye Glover, Mary Bowley, Patricia Wright, and Bill Bowley

## Miles of Diapers Ministry

We always accept diapers and baby wipes and appreciate your continued help with this program. Most common sizes needed are **5, 6, 7, and Pull-Ups**. Our neighborhood babies and families need our support. Half of all families in the country struggle with diaper need. Your diaper donations are distributed during our monthly Core Outreach held on the last Saturday of the month starting at 8 am.

Please bring your diapers and/or wipes to church with you on Sunday and place in the marked box/basket, or to the Church Office during normal business hours: Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday, 9:15am to 2:00pm.



## Rakad Dance Camp 2026

Rakad Dance Camp has had a busy year and is happy to report plans to expand our camps and locations in 2026.

We ended 2025 with an after Christmas Camp on December 29, 30, and 31. During the fall, we introduced an after school program in conjunction with Inspire to Rise.

Our Easter Camp will be held at Riverside Park United Methodist Church on Monday, March 23, 24, and 25, from 9 am to 12 noon. Registration will be announced.

Plans are also underway for several Summer Mini Camps, one dedicated to preteens only, and they will be held at St. Peter's and other locations to be determined.

Also, save the date for our Rakad Evening with the Stars Gala on September 19, 2026 at the Orange Park Women's Club.

Want to join the movement and volunteer at Rakad? Please let us know!

For more information on our camps, visit [rakaddancecamp.com](http://rakaddancecamp.com), or call/text 904-704-6364.





Thank you to Tina Griffin for her talent with the beautiful floral arrangements in our Sanctuary vestibule for each church season.

*Mtr. Natalie Blasco, Rector*

## Thank-You-Notes

Thank you everyone for the continuing prayers of healing for Richard and I, the many cards sent, and for the wonderful food dropped off at our home. It all meant so very much and was a great help.

*Lori Prevatt, Parishioner*

Thank you Reverend Natalie and to everyone at St. Peter's for providing Christmas gifts for our children—your love made this season brighter! Yours and the church's love for this school and community is the best that I have ever experienced in a school setting. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Patricia Yon, School Counselor,  
Timucuan Elementary School*

A great big THANK YOU to both Virginia Pillsbury and Jeanne Wright for their tremendous help with our quarterly newsletter. In addition, for taking the time to prepare the boxes to be shipped to First Steps Ministries, Inc. We are also thankful to Laverne O'Hara, Jeanne Wright, and Jayne Bickerstaff for their faithfulness in assisting us in the Church Office.

*Mtr. Natalie Blasco, Rector and  
JoAnne Rodriguez, Church Administrator*

## Anniversaries & Birthdays

### JANUARY

#### ANNIVERSARIES

NONE

#### BIRTHDAYS

Angie Seymore ..... 9

Kurt Jackson ..... 17

Michael Mena ..... 17

Walter Pillsbury ..... 22

### FEBRUARY

#### ANNIVERSARIES

NONE

#### BIRTHDAYS

Vanessa Griffin ..... 2

Sally Jackson ..... 4

Jeanne Wright ..... 16

Sara Arnold ..... 26

### MARCH

#### ANNIVERSARIES

NONE

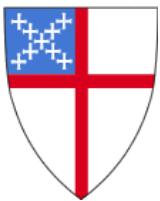
#### BIRTHDAYS

Collin O'Hara ..... 5

Linda Boyd ..... 8

Andy Whiddon ..... 21

David Mena ..... 28



## St. Peter's By-The-River Episcopal Church

5042 Timuquana Road  
Jacksonville, Florida 32210  
Phone: 904.778.1434  
Website: stpejax.org

**Return Address Requested**



## A Chosen Generation

**LENT BEGINS  
FEBRUARY 18**

12 noon Service  
and  
7:00pm Service

*Held in St. Peter's Chapel*



**DAYLIGHT SAVING  
TIME BEGINS  
Sunday, March 8**

Remember to set your clocks **forward**, one hour, before going to bed Saturday, **March 7**, so you won't be late for church.

## St. Peter's Service Schedule

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE:**

**9:30 am English and 12:00 pm Spanish**

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Potluck Lunch*

*Children's Ministry available*

**MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY**

**1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday**

*Starting with dinner at 6:00PM.*

## St. Peter's Office Hours

Tue/Wed/Thurs | 9:15 am to 2:00 pm  
Closed Weekends and All Federal Holidays

**904.778.1434, ext. 100**

[stpejax.org](http://stpejax.org)

