

CALENDAR**January 1**

Eucharist

Sunday School at 9:30

"The Holy Name of
Jesus"Acolytes: Elliot Florack &
Jack Borsch

Child Care by Amy

Rev. Cam celebrating and
preaching**January 8**

Sunday School with

Marie and Rev. Cam

"Jesus' Baptism"

Acolyte: Emmeline

Heaney

Child Care by Amy

January 15

Sunday School

"The Lamb of God"

Acolytes: Elliot Florack

and Tassilo Adams

Child Care by Amy

Rev. Cam celebrating and

preaching

January 22

Sunday School

"The Disciples"

Acolytes: Jack Borsch

and Max Gundlach

Child Care by Amy

January 29

Sunday School

Youth Education with

Rev. Cam

"The Beatitudes"

Acolytes: Abigail Crisp

and Augie Larson

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**Aco-Lights**

You may have noted the torches on either side of the lectern. Fr. Albert resurrected them from the parish hall basement and commissioned Brian Johnston to build stands for each. That you can hardly notice the stands is a testament to how beautifully they were designed and built to look like they had always been there. Though the torches are new to us at St. Peter's, they are commonly used in Episcopal Churches. Harkening back to a time when the assembled or *ecclesia* as the early church was called, gathered in secret in catacombs, torches were used to illuminate the scrolls read, or simply to shed light on the people gathered. Those who carried the torches were the bearers of light, now called acolytes. Our team of acolytes continues to grow, too. Now we can give real responsibility to our students who are privileged and excited by their role as light-bearers.

**Quick Links...**

<http://stpeterslithgow.org/>

"This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Even though our children are adults and out of the house, I hold onto holiday traditions, like celebrating the full twelve days of Christmas. I don't take the tree down until the Epiphany and I keep out the little crèche that my mother brought back from Oaxaca. Throughout the 12 days, I move the three Wise Men a little closer to the manger until on January 6<sup>th</sup>, they surround the baby Jesus with their gifts. And I listen to my collection of Christmas CDs, in spite of my husband's grumblings. For the first time this year, I listened carefully to the lyrics to Bing Crosby's version of "It's Beginning to Look A lot Like Christmas" and was struck by a line in the third verse: "*And Mom and Dad can hardly wait for school to start again.*" Since childhood, I had thought of the song as romanticizing decorations, happy home fires, and family singing carols *right within our hearts*. True, but there is a little bit of unexpected social commentary going on in the song that I found puzzling and refreshing at the same time. I think the intent of the song is to emphasize the spirit of Christmas, really found in our hearts, and to make a light-hearted critique of the materialism that can get in the way of the true joy of Christmas. After Bernie and Jen have opened their hop-a-long boots and doll that talks, they tire of each other, get restless, start to argue, do the normal kid stuff. But are Mom and Dad's only response to eagerly await the return to a routine and getting the kids out of the house? I say, no. It is one response, and can be kept in the back of our minds. I think that the holidays, and I mean the full twelve days of Christmas, can include the romanticism and the true spirit both. Take some time after December 25<sup>th</sup>, after the presents have been opened and played with and put away, to look at the tree and the lights that still shines brightly in the darkness, and watch the Wise Men finally make it to Bethlehem. Consider the commitment it took them and Mary and Joseph, to find their way there. Consider the commitment of our God to be born to us, to show us what it means to be beloved, what it means to shed light in the darkness and cold, what it means for God to be well pleased. And then consider what it might mean to your own children, after opening the presents you and Santa gave them, after singing together the carols, after the decorations you put up together are stored, well beyond these days of Christmas, without anything attached to it, to hear from you that "you are our children, beloved, and with you we are well pleased."

Rev. Cam

**Classes with Rev. Cam**

Starting this month, through the end of the school year, I will teach a class during Sunday School geared for students aged 9-12. The content of the class will include a more in depth look at the lectionary readings and will include time for students to ask some of the "bigger questions" of faith, Anglican Church tradition and liturgy, world religions, life cycles, science and religion-whatever may come to mind. I'm excited to dedicate this time for this age group and to continue to engage the students recently confirmed. The dates for these "big kid" classes are:

January 29

February 19

April 2

April 30

May 7

June 11