

## FROM THE DESK OF SARAH . . .

This year our annual meeting of the Diocesan Altar Guild will take place at St. Peter's Cathedral in St. Petersburg on February 23, 2019. Be prepared for a very special day as we share a program offered that day that features the premier of the **How2charist Digital Instructed Eucharist** film. Imagine the altar guild going digital! This beautiful, informative computer program has been created by **The Rev. Callie Swanlund** who is a friend of **The Rev. Katie Churchwell**. It is a wonderful new teaching tool for the whole Episcopal Church.



Callie is eager to present this program to us and others who will be interested. The day is entitled **Wholehearted Worship** and there will be other offerings all centered on the beauty of Episcopal worship. We will be able to participate in her presentation that day and meet her. We will also have our usual business meeting and time for our own altar guild fellowship. You will be receiving more details on the timing with the registration packets. We expect to begin registration and coffee at 9 and the program day is scheduled from 10-3. We will all have lunch together and share worship questions and ideas. Please plan to come.

Easter is later this year with Ash Wednesday falling on March 6. How many of you will be burning palm crosses from last year to make your own ashes? If you want instructions, we will include them at the annual meeting. We encourage you to make your own palm crosses using our beautiful, native palms available right in our own back yards! It is an excellent way to encourage participation and a feeling of belonging to the worship services prior to Easter.

### **Sarah Hill**

Diocesan Directress  
[sarahhill.fl@gmail.com](mailto:sarahhill.fl@gmail.com)  
(727) 525-8340

## CHURCHES AROUND THE DIOCESE . . .

**The Cathedral Church of St. Peter [St. Petersburg Deanery]  
140 Fourth Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
(727) 822-4173  
[www.spcathedral.org/](http://www.spcathedral.org/)**

*Thanks to Sarah Hill, AG Director, and to the Cathedral website, for the following article and pictures:*

Since 1894, the Cathedral Church of St. Peter has been at the corner of Fourth Street and Second Avenue North in downtown St. Petersburg. During that time, our buildings have expanded and changed, but our mission has remained the same: to bring the love of Christ to St. Petersburg and to be a place where people are drawn together by faith in God's love.



The mission church that became St. Peter's was established in 1889 a few blocks west of the current location. In 1894, the small wooden chapel that housed the mission as moved to the corner of Fourth Street and Second Avenue North. A new sanctuary was completed and consecrated on this site in 1889. It was quite a bit smaller than what you see today. In 1926, the church was expanded to its present size, and the space that later became St. Mary's Chapel was added on the south side of the sanctuary. The end of World War I in 1918 heralded the start of the "boom years" in St. Petersburg as a war-weary nation headed South for warm weather and recreation and the legendary wild property speculation that characterized the Roaring '20s. By 1922, so many people were attending the Easter service at St. Peter's that the regular members couldn't get seats. But by 1931 the full effects of the Great Depression were taking hold: The church had to borrow money to meet expenses and the rector took a salary cut. In the city, bank deposits plummeted (four banks closed), building permits dried up and population growth dwindled.

Happier days returned by 1936. Vestry minutes record a discussion of the need for more ushers to alleviate the "immense crowds" at Communion, and 100 new Prayer Books were ordered. By the end of the decade a new Parish House had been completed (it was demolished in 2007), St. Peter's was out of debt, and the city had regained its reputation as a popular tourist destination. That would change abruptly after Pearl Harbor, when the grand hotels in Pinellas County were turned into barracks to house troops being trained here. St. Peter's welcomed the troops to worship services, contributed to war relief, opened its doors to the Red Cross and created a "Writing and Recreation" room where as many as 500 letters were written each week by members of the military. When the war ended, St. Petersburg experienced a third boom era. Tourists returned, and soldiers and sailors who had trained here returned to settle down, get jobs, and start families. By 1947 the Sunday school superintendent was complaining about the lack of space to accommodate children. The first conversations began about starting a church-sponsored primary school, which eventually became the Canterbury School. From the 1960s through the '80s, St. Peter's saw a period of great growth with full pews and a packed Sunday school, magnificent adult and children's choirs, a busy youth program and active social clubs.

By 1969, population growth had made the huge Episcopal Diocese of South Florida -- effectively everything from I-4 south to the Keys -- too large for one bishop. It was divided into three dioceses -- Southeast Florida, Central Florida and Southwest Florida. St. Peter's became the Cathedral -- the bishop's seat -- for the Diocese of Southwest Florida, which stretches from Marco Island north to Spring Hill and from the Gulf of Mexico east to Plant City.

In recent years St. Peter's has established itself as a resource for the diocese, hosting the annual Acolyte Festival and diocesan ordinations. We have been recognized as a Jubilee Center for the ministries we have incubated here, including Resurrection House, a faith-based program that provides housing and life skills for single mothers with children. When the Episcopal Church approved same-sex blessings in 2012, the Cathedral conducted a series of conversations that offered a model to the rest of the diocese for how to engage a sensitive subject with respect and love.

We continue our tradition of excellence in liturgy, arts and music, attracting worshipers and concertgoers from across the entire Tampa Bay area. The Cathedral currently has about 800 active baptized members, and average attendance at the three weekend services is around 350. Our major outreach efforts include Project 33701, in which we strive to connect with, welcome and serve our neighbors. St. Peter's has partnered with Campbell Park Elementary School and provides support for the teachers and children who attend this school. We offer backpacks, Christmas gifts and clothes as well as sprucing up facilities for the teachers. It has proved to be a very successful interaction. From time to time we engage the wider community in conversations on compelling topics: racism, respect, the role of Christianity in the public square. And once again we are seeing a period of growth: young families with children, millennials, older singles and couples, all seeking to connect with Jesus in a place where they know they belong.

St. Peter's Altar Guild currently has 23 members who provide coverage for 9 Eucharists each week plus all the special services that come with being the Bishop's seat. Nearly 500 Eucharists are celebrated a year and these are made possible by the loving service of our Altar Guild members. We are looking forward to a total remodel of our 50+ year old sacristy this Spring. Two rooms will be totally refitted with cabinetry and sinks plus new lighting.



## WHOLEHEARTED WORSHIP

A day featuring the work of Dr. Brené Brown and premiering the *How2charist: Digital Instructed Eucharist* film.

**Saturday, February 23, 2019**

**10:00 am – 3:00 pm**

Doors open at 9:00 am for coffee and conversation; lunch provided.

**Cost: \$15 a person**

**NOTE:** Space is limited, so register as soon as you receive the registration packets! Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity.

**The Rev. Callie E. Swanlund**, creator of the *How2charist: Digital Instructed Eucharist* and Certified Daring Way Facilitator, will guide us through a day of nourishing our hearts, engaging our senses in the rich beauty of Episcopal worship. *How2charist* is a film that deepens our experience of the liturgy and invites others into the Episcopal Church, and *The Daring Way* follows the work of **Dr. Brené Brown** on vulnerability and courage. Callie will combine these to help us reflect on who we are called to be as beloved children created in the image of God, and how that impacts our engagement in the Eucharist and other elements of Episcopal life. Come prepared to have your hearts opened and your souls fed. We'll break midday for lunch and close with a brief Eucharist.



**The Rev. Callie E. Swanlund**

Who should attend? Anyone seeking a deeper understanding of Episcopal worship and how to live one's life fully and authentically as God's beloved.

**DIOCESE OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ALTAR GUILD**



## TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

### PAY YOUR 2019 DUES

**Dues notices for 2019 have been mailed and payment should be remitted as soon as possible.** The dues are used to pay for miscellaneous office supplies, postage, newsletter production, and other operating expenses. Dues for a church are \$20.00; dues for a mission are \$10.00. Make check payable to: Altar Guild, Diocese of SWFL and put **"2019 Altar Guild Dues"** on the "FOR" line. Send payment to:

Susan Regan  
1350 Snell Isle Blvd NE #1  
St. Petersburg, FL 33704  
ATTN: SWFL Diocesan Altar Guild

In addition to dues, churches or individual altar guilds may consider making a **"Love Offering"** in any amount their members may want to contribute. This Love Offering is used to assist with the care of St. Thomas Chapel at DaySpring, to help offset the costs of our annual meeting, and to fund a scholarship for someone who could not otherwise afford it to attend the annual Province IV Altar Guild meeting at Kanuga in North Carolina and to attend the National Altar Guild Association meeting that's held every three years in conjunction with the Episcopal Church Convention. Make check payable to: Altar Guild, Diocese of SWFL and put **"2019 Love Offering"** on the "FOR" line. Send payment to Susan Regan.

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### JOIN THE PROVINCE IV ALTAR GUILD

**The Province IV Altar Guild** is comprised of members from the nine states in our geographic area: Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and part of Louisiana. Membership in the P-IV AG gives you an opportunity to network with wonderful altar guild members from the southeast. P-IV AG dues (\$20 a year) include a subscription to their twice-yearly newsletter, **Sacristy Sense**. Make check payable to P-IV AG and send to Treasurer **Phyllis Bruce**, 402 Circle Drive, Fairhope, AL 36532-2603.



### JOIN THE NATIONAL ALTAR GUILD

The **National Altar Guild Association** ([www.nationalaltarguildassociation.org](http://www.nationalaltarguildassociation.org)) serves Episcopal altar groups and individual members of altar guilds. Among other things, NAGA is responsible for all the logistics involving Eucharists at General Convention, for making and providing stoles to military chaplains, for providing or assisting dioceses with providing disaster communion kits, and for being a source of information for "all things altar guild". Membership in NAGA (\$35 a year) includes a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, **Epistle**. Make check payable to NAGA and send to Treasurer **Marcia Himes**, 45 Farview Circle, Riverton, WY 82501-9760

#### DAG OFFICERS & BOARD

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**Susan Regan**, Treasurer

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**Venice - VACANT**

**HELP WANTED: Secretary; Deanery Directors for the St. Petersburg, and Venice areas; Editor of AltarGram.**  
*If you love Altar Guild and enjoy sharing ideas, there are plenty of (unpaid) opportunities for you!*  
**Secretary** keeps minutes of Board meetings and Annual meeting.  
**Deanery Directors** are members of the DAG Board and are encouraged to attend the quarterly Board meetings at DaySpring. Primary responsibility is to maintain phone or email contact with the altar guilds of the churches in your Deanery to let each other know what is going on.  
**Editor of AltarGram** collects news from around the Diocese and shares it in newsletter – basic computer skills very helpful!  
**If interested, contact Sarah at 727-525-8340.**

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Saturday Feb. 23, 2019**  
**DAG Annual Meeting & Eucharist**  
St. Peter's Cathedral  
140 - 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
St. Petersburg FL 33701

**Sunday June 2 – Wednesday, June 5, 2019**  
**Province IV Annual Conference Retreat**  
Kanuga Conference Center  
Hendersonville NC