



Welcome Our New Dean, the Rev. Stephen B. Morris

The minute he set foot on the grounds of St. Peter's, "I knew I was standing on holy ground," the Rev. Stephen B. Morris says.

"Then I met the people. For me it's always about the people. My ministry is built on relationships with people," he said. "I understood how holy and special the place is to them. I understood that sense of sacredness and wonder."

In mid-December Father Morris will become the Cathedral's sixth dean. He comes to us from from St. James Episcopal Church and School in Ormond Beach, the parish where Bishop Smith's father, the Rev. Dorsey Smith, was the rector for 25 years. This is a congregation of 900 members with an affiliated 250-student day school.

The work that lies ahead at St. Peter's, says Father Morris — he likes to be called Stephen — "is work that I like to do and feel

called to. Part of it is healing, part of it is building on the wonderful ministry of the past. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before, honoring all that is precious and special. Yet at the same time we are thinking ahead: What do we need to do to one day hand the Cathedral over to those who are coming



up in leadership in the next generation? Being the one who helps to bridge and build that is exciting."

Father Morris, 43 years old, earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Loyola University in 1988. He worked for three years in the Boston office of a Wall Street bank before he recognized the call to ordained ministry. He graduated in 1993 from the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin.

He and his wife, Jayne, are the parents of four children: daughters Ellen, 14, and Holly, 9, and sons Henry, 13, and Lee, 10. Ellen's sports are volleyball and basketball; she was just named to the AAU developmental volleyball team. The other three all play in the Central Florida competitive soccer league.

Jayne and the children will remain in Ormond Beach until the end of the school year next spring. Father Morris promised Ellen she could graduate from middle school with her class. "My heart and mind will be fully engaged at St. Peter's, and my heart and mind will be fully engaged with my family," Father Morris said. "I need to take good care of them, and I hope you — my new Cathedral family — will help me do that." Jayne and the children will be here as many weekends as possible, and Stephen will do some commuting to spend time with his family.

Susan Churuti, co-chair of the Discernment Committee that recommended Father Morris as our next dean, said, "The team was very impressed with

The Morris File

Our new dean: Stephen B. Morris

About Stephen: 43 years old . . . native of Alexandria, La. . . . 6 feet 5 inches tall.

Family: Wife, Jayne, an occupational therapist; daughters Ellen, 14, and Holly, 9; sons Henry, 13, and Lee, 10.

Previous congregations: Rector, St. Luke's, Salisbury, N.C.; priest-in-charge, Episcopal Churches of the Upper Yellowstone in Livingston, Montana; chaplain, admissions director, teacher, and coach, Episcopal School of Acadiana in Cade, La., and adjunct priest and interim rector, Church of the Ascension, Lafayette, La.; vicar at Church of the Good Shepherd in Vidalia, La; chaplain, teacher and coach at the Episcopal School of Dallas.

Hobbies: Running, fishing, playing music with his children, spending as much time as possible at their summer home in the Yellowstone River Valley of Montana.

How to reach the Morris: Home address, 35 Shadow Creek Way, Ormond Beach, FL 32174; family e-mail (for Stephen, Jayne, and the children): jsmorris@bellsouth.net.

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Crosswinds

At worship services December 6-7, you'll have a chance to pick your "**Krist Kindl.**" You'll find a card in your worship bulletin on which you can fill in your name and address. Drop it in the basket as you go to Communion and pick out someone else's card. That person is your Krist Kindl — your Christ Child, your secret prayer partner. You are asked to pray for that person daily until Christmas. You may want to send an anonymous card or two with an encouraging note. Plan to identify yourself to your Krist Kindl on Christmas Eve. You may want to give a small gift, but the real gift is your daily prayer. And remember: While you are praying for someone, another person is praying for you.

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The **church office will close** at noon Wednesday, December 24, and will reopen Monday, December 29. It will close at noon December 31 and reopen Monday, January 5.

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On New Year's Eve, St. Peter's will host **Blind Willie and the Allen Moffatt Blues Allstar Revue featuring Raiford Starke.** This is part of the city's First Night celebration, a family-friendly event with performances, activities and fun all over downtown. See the schedule at www.firstnightstpete.com. Buy a button for \$10/adults, \$5 children that grants admission to all the venues.

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Between the morning services on Sunday, December 7, we'll host an **Alternative Gifts Market** at St. Peter's Central. Through Episcopal Relief and Development, you can honor someone on your Christmas list through the gift of mosquito netting, medicine, livestock, seedlings, or many other items for people in need in developing nations. You'll get a gift card you can send to the recipient to announce your gift. Preview online at

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Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

Worship services and musical performances are in the Cathedral.

Wednesdays in Advent (December 3, 10 and 17) at 6 p.m.
Compline for Advent. Lay-Clerks sing this end-of-the-day service.

Saturday, December 6, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.: A Visit with St. Nicholas. The young and young at heart are invited to enjoy finger foods and games. We'll make ornaments to hang on the tree at St. Peter's Central, plus one to take home. Bring canned goods for our collection for the Free Clinic. We'll end with two stories: Susan Stewart will read "Mr. Wiloughby's Tree" and Bill Barnett will read "The Night Before Christmas." Please RSVP to the office: (727) 822-4173.

Sunday, December 7, between morning services: Alternative Gift Market Buy gifts to benefit Episcopal Relief and Development.

Friday, December 12, at 6 p.m.: Richard and Shirley Earle open their home for **our annual holiday pot-luck party.** Bring food to share — main dish, sides, salads, desserts, drinks. This is the place to wear those jingle bells, Santa caps and reindeer antlers! Some of Canon Neal's most memorable musical performances have taken place as we gather around the piano. You won't want to miss this one. All are welcome at the Earles', 555 13th Ave. NE.

Sunday, December 14, at 4 p.m. Concert: "An All-American Christmas" Director of Music Edward Barbieri plays a variety of Christmas music with the Festival Orchestra. Bring your friends! Free.

Sunday, December 21, at 6 p.m (during the CAYA service). **A Memorial for the Homeless** We remember the homeless who have died during the last year. Downtown clergy / churches / agencies helping the homeless will participate. All are welcome.

Sunday, December 21, at 7:30 p.m. Concert: "Carols by Candlelight" Lessons and carols of the season, sung by the congregation and by the Schola Cantorum. A candlelight holiday celebration. Free.

Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Eve

4 p.m. Young and Young at Heart Service. Good for children who can't stay up late and adults who prefer not to drive after dark.

6 p.m. Choral Eucharist. Music starts at 5:30 p.m. Preacher: Bishop Smith.

11 p.m. Festal Choral Eucharist. Music starts at 10:30 p.m. Preacher: Dean Morris.

Thursday, December 25: Christmas Day 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist. Preacher: Canon Conner.

Sunday, December 28: TWO MORNING SERVICES, at 8 and 10 a.m. After the 10 a.m. service: **Farewell potluck lunch for Canon Neal.** Details, back of calendar page.

Sunday, January 4, at 4 p.m. Epiphany Procession with Carols The Christmas season ends as we join the Magi on their journey to follow the star. The Schola Cantorum performs.

Welcome Our New Dean

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Stephen's deep spirituality, wonderful preaching, and proven track record of increasing membership and financial resources. His love of teaching and experience with schools and building youth programs will also serve St. Peter's well." Father Morris led a successful \$4-million capital campaign for St. James' church and school and increased average Sunday attendance from 300 to 425.

Father Morris asks for our prayers at this time of transition in his and his family's life. "I also ask your prayers for the good people of St. James," among whom he has ministered the last five years.

"My ministry is built first and foremost on my relationship with Christ and how that relationship informs and forms the relationship we will build," he said. "I'm reminded of the old hymn, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus.' I want to be your friend, and I want your friendship."



Not the Cheapest Gift, but the Best

The Rev. Canon Millard Neal, Vicar

Early in my ministry at St. Mark's, Carrollwood, as I was concluding a lesson on Christian behavior, I said: "Now, Billy, tell me what we must do before we can expect to be forgiven for our sins."

Without hesitation, Billy answered, "First we gotta sin." I thought to myself, "I think we got that part down pretty good."

But, like Billy, maybe we haven't taken the time lately to know, or be aware, that we have already sinned. As I have written in an earlier article, we have unavoidably grown so accustomed to thinking of ourselves as a part of the Christian West — living in a "Christian nation" — that it is hard to distinguish the Christian way from the secular way.

Many of us have become so anxious, so entangled in culture that it gets harder and harder to know our faults or change them. James Stewart, in *1001 Great Stories*, writes: "Every time we sin, we make ourselves less capable of realizing what sin is, less likely to realize that we are sinners. For the ugly thing — the really diabolical thing about sin — is that it perverts judgment. It stops us from seeing straight."

Sins, known or unknown, can be cleansed only by the Grace of God. We must be ever mindful that this grace is not cheap. It was bought for us through great sacrifice.

It was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, of whom I have frequently spoken, who put it this way: "Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipline, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."

If we are truly repentant as we enter this Advent time — if we know that we have already sinned and expect to be forgiven — if we search ourselves and admit that we have erred and strayed from God's ways, we will receive God's Grace, and we will be prepared for the coming of Jesus at Christmas.

Crosswinds, from page 2

www.er-d.org, click on "Online Store."

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The **Friends of St. Aelred** will meet at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 10, at St. Peter's Central for discussion and dessert. The meeting includes prayer, sharing comments on current events, discussion ("What's next after Amendment 2?"), song, and potluck dessert. All are welcome. Information: Rick Waterman, (727) 577-0902 or tbhockeyfan@gmail.com.

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Here's the **movie lineup for December**. We gather at 7 p.m. Fridays at St. Peter's Central. Free movies, free popcorn! See the web site (www.spcathedral.net) or the bulletin boards for details about the films.

December 5: *The Earrings of Madame de . . .* (France, 1953).

December 12: No movie.

December 19: *La Bûche de Noël* (*The Christmas Log*, France, 1999).

December 26: No movie.

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Celebrate Outreach, a ministry of St. Peter's and seven other downtown churches, invites you to our next meeting: 10 a.m. Saturday, December 13, at St. Peter's Central.

Among the items we'll discuss is the possibility of sponsoring a homeless family through the national nonprofit organization Family Promise (www.nihn.org). Other actions we're considering: organized meals for the homeless and needy; day care; and general services on weekends, when many helping agencies are closed. There is far more we can do working together than we can accomplish alone. Details: www.spcathedral.net.

We invite you to bring in new, clean socks for men or women by Saturday, December 20 (drop them at the Welcome Cart). These will be given to those who lack permanent housing at the Memorial for the Homeless during the CAYA service Sunday, December 21, at 6 p.m. (details, Page 2).

St. Peter's: A Guide

With God's help, we will welcome all people.

Weekend Worship

Saturday

5 p.m.: Holy Communion and Homily
A traditional service, no music

Sunday

7:30 a.m.: Holy Communion and Homily
A traditional service, no music

9 a.m.: Holy Communion (child-friendly) and Homily
A spirit-filled celebration, with hymns and choir

11:15 a.m.: Choral Holy Communion and Homily
A sung service with choir

6 p.m.: CAYA (Come As You Are)
*Holy Communion in the round, followed by a shared supper.
Celtic prayers and music from around the world.*



Visiting/getting in touch

Office/Parish Center: 201 Fourth St. N. (33701). Church entrance:
On Second Ave. N just west of Fourth St.

Mailing address:

P.O. Box 1581, St. Petersburg, FL 33731-1581

Telephone:

(727) 822-4173

Fax:

(727) 823-2205

E-mail:

stpetersplace@spcathedral.com

Web Site:

www.spcathedral.net

Our clergy and senior staff:

The Rev. Canon Millard Neal, Vicar —
mneal@spcathedral.com

The Rev. Canon Georgene Conner, Canon Evangelist —
canongigi@spcathedral.com

The Rev. Lynde E. "Ted" May IV, assisting priest

The Rev. Clyde Nabe, assisting priest

The Rev. Herbert E. Rowe, assisting priest

The Rev. Richard T. Earle III, Deacon — rearle@fishersauls.com

Edward Barbieri, Director of Music (Organist/Choirmaster) —
music@spcathedral.com

Pamela J. League, Administrator — pam@spcathedral.com

Monday-Friday

Morning Prayer, 9 a.m. ☞ Evening Prayer, Monday and Friday, 6 p.m.

Wednesday

Service of Healing, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Choral Evensong, 6 p.m.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Holy Communion, 12:05 p.m.

At any time after hours you have a **pastoral emergency**, please call Vicar Neal on his cell phone: (727) 742-8519.

Crosstown is the newsletter of the people of St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral, published monthly for members, friends, and supporters. Editor, Judy Stark (judy Stark@yahoo.com); Associate Editor, Mary W. Matthews (mothermary@extremelysmart.com). Next deadline: January 15, 2009.

St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral
The Episcopal Seat of the Diocese of Southwest Florida
The Rt. Rev. Dr. Dabney T. Smith, Bishop

December Transitions

Birthdays

1 Christy Fryer Jerry Miller Doug Swain	11 Virgil Feltner Natalie Irwin Sharon Miller Rick Neefe	22 Charles Plummer
2 John Hoover Rob Sepulveda	13 John McCoy Claudia Moore Dolores Scales Kevin Tighe	23 Jean Curtis Gail McCoy
3 Judd Chapin Cary Gums	14 Karin Martin Helen Weissberg	24 Carole Cowan
4 Helen Galletly	15 Chris Nielsen Louisa Thomas	25 Harry Sauers
5 Gary Haines Betty Witko	16 Gretchen Brierley Luke Goodwill	26 Natalie Paul
7 Becky Andrews Tom Chase Jessie Hulbert	17 Catina Gordon Diane May	27 Tony Gecan Barry Singleton
8 Ron Gallucci Mark Rowe	18 David Andrews	28 Eric Beard Sarah Gecan Dorothy Snidow Caitlin Tighe
9 Frank Turner	20 Jan Curtis	29 Kelsey Johnson
10 Sheree Graves Chay McCarthy	21 Paul Natale	30 Connor Crosby Nancy Thomas
		31 Barbara Abbott Brittney Bacon

Anniversaries

1 Don and Doris Jenkins	20 Mary Matthews and Jerry Merchant
2 Virgil and Carolyn Feltner	27 Bill and Kally Harvard Bill and Mary Lou Keeler
4 Gene and Holly Haines	30 Ralph and Kathy Hancock
7 Eddy and Penny Burns	Darrow and Pam Neves
19 Peter and Mary Watts	31 Ric and Carolyn Randall

Baptized

Ava Lynn McCoy
Nolan Alexander Ross
Nicole and John Hamilton
Liam Jonathan Fernandez

New Members

Ron Gallucci and Bill Madison
John and Marina Hamilton

Death

Beverly Bennett

Help Fill Up the Holiday Food Barrel

This holiday season you can feed people who are really hungry by contributing nonperishable items to the barrel at St. Peter's Central.

What to contribute? Peanut butter, jelly, pasta, spaghetti sauce, canned meats, jarred or canned gravy, powdered milk, packaged cereals and crackers, beans, rice, juice, condiments (ketchup, mustard, salsa, mayo, pickles). We're seeking family-size or industrial-size cans rather than single-serving pop-tops.

The food will be delivered to the St. Petersburg Free Clinic. Family-size contributions will be distributed through We Help, which offers families assistance with basic needs. There are more such families this year than ever, executive director Jane Egbert says, families for whom there is month left at the end of the money and an empty pantry. Large-size donations will go to Beacon House, which serves dinner Sunday through Friday to anyone who's hungry. Last year it served 24,000 meals.

The food drive is sponsored by our Outreach Ministry and the Young Episcopal Stewards. The barrel will be there until just before Christmas. Here's an opportunity to give a great, much-needed Christmas gift to people in our community — people you pass on the street, maybe even people you work with. That's a gift that keeps on giving.

Farewell to Vicar Neal

Canon Millard Neal, who has been serving as vicar, will retire as of December 31.

Everyone is invited to give a hearty and loving farewell to Canon Neal on Sunday, December 28. That day we will have TWO SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES, at 8 and 10 a.m. After the 10 o'clock service we will honor Canon Neal at a pot-luck lunch at St. Peter's Central. The Cathedral will provide spiral-cut hams. You are invited to bring everything else: side dishes, salads, rolls, desserts. It will be a festive and happy time, and we can probably persuade Canon Neal to sing for us one more time!

Canon Neal came to the Cathedral in 1999 and never really left. Between deans, he served as priest-in-charge in 2002 and 2004 and as vicar in 2008. He tried retirement once before, in 2006, but came back when we needed him.