

A PLACE CALLED HAPPY VALLEY

The Rev'd Wesley Owens | Pastor of Incarnation Anglican Church | State College, Pennsylvania

Charles Simeon Institute Curate for Pastoral Care | 2020-2023

St. Peter's Missions & Evangelism Partnered Evangelism Core Ministry Partner

Nestled among the Appalachian Mountains in Pennsylvania's exact geographic center is the town of State College, nicknamed "Happy Valley." Encompassing Penn State University, it is home to roughly 50,000 students from over 100 different countries and a comparable number of permanent residents. But a name like Happy Valley can be misleading. PSU students face numerous challenges as they navigate a fragmented secular environment brimming with post-Christian assumptions about the world. Among American Christian high school graduates, roughly 70% will walk away from their faith in college.

Across university campuses, rates of anxiety and mental illness are higher than ever—and continuing to rise. I see the fruits firsthand. For Generation Z (*born 1997-2010*), social media and internet overuse have generated an epidemic of loneliness. College-aged adults are not forming relationships as readily as they used to, much less a relationship with God. Without a strong community of faith, students feel spiritually aimless. In this age of TikTok celebrities and social media influencers, there is constant pressure to create an original identity for oneself. Life becomes a desperate grasping after recognition and acceptance. Love feels fragile and elusive. Party life and pleasure-seeking offer temporary numbness but yield no satisfying answers. At PSU, with only a small percentage of students actively following Jesus, our task is urgent.

In July 2023, I became pastor of Incarnation Church, an Anglican church plant meeting on campus at Penn State. Incarnation exists for one purpose: to make disciples of Jesus Christ. As a university church, our setting is of great strategic importance in the Kingdom of God. We are reaching the next generation at the precise time when they are wrestling with questions of faith.

Incarnation is a young, dynamic community. Though most of our parishioners are students in their twenties and thirties, God has blessed us with a growing number of faculty, local residents, and children. We are also a global community with parishioners from Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Iran, Brazil, India, and all over the United States. By God's miraculous grace, PSU gives us access to the beautiful Eisenhower Chapel for our services and an office at their Spiritual Center—all completely rent-free!

Through Bible studies, one-on-one discipleship, hospitality, and peer evangelism—student ministry is the heart and soul of our church. But, we also maintain a small children's ministry and a satellite congregation at Wynwood House, a local nursing home, where the students and I conduct weekly services for homebound seniors. We are pioneering a new ministry to faculty, promoting the integration of faith and scholarship. And in the next season, we hope to expand our ministry by hiring a full-time campus missionary in partnership with the Coalition for Christian Outreach.

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The Lord has richly blessed us! Last spring, our community celebrated the conversions and baptisms of two graduate students—one from a Hindu background and another from a Jewish background. This season, we will have four confirmations, two infants baptized, and two adults beginning baptismal preparation. Other examples of grace abound: One student is beginning to explore overseas missions while another is sharing her faith boldly among her classmates. A victim of spiritual abuse is starting to pray again—for the first time in years. A girl who identifies as ‘queer’ and agnostic is considering Christianity afresh. This is only the beginning...

We are an unconventional church plant—but first and foremost, we are missionaries. As a congregation of young students with little income, we rely on the generosity of our friends and supporters. Please consider donating online to our ministry at STATECOLLEGEANGLICAN.COM. But, most importantly, please pray for us as we proclaim Christ on campus.



MISSIONS & EVANGELISM

PARTNERED EVANGELISM: NEW DESTINY CHURCH YOUTH FUN DAY | St Peter's partner New Destiny Church is hosting a Youth Fun Day on *Saturday, April 27th* at 11AM. New Destiny Christian Church is located in Quincy, FL, a low socioeconomic city located in rural Gadsden County (20 miles west of Tallahassee). They host multiple mission projects each year to serve the families of Gadsden County while sharing Gospel of Jesus Christ with the community.

They would like 10 volunteers to help with games and activities during the Fun Day at *960 East Jefferson Street, Quincy FL*. Please email Susan Burton at THETARMACFOUNDATION@GMAIL.COM if you would like to help.

INTERNATIONAL: SOUTH RWENZORI UPDATE WITH BISHOP NASON | *22 April | 6PM | Parish Hall*
Please join us to hear an update from Bishop Nason Baluku about the impact St. Peter's is making in the South Rwenzori Diocese including the Vulnerable Student Sponsorship program and recent motorcycle purchases.

DISCIPLESHIP

SPRING FAMILY COOKOUT | INVITE FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS! | *Sunday, April 28th | 4-6:30PM* | Join us at the Maclay Gardens Boat Dock Picnic Pavilion for the Annual Spring Family Cookout! We will cookout, play games, and have amazing fellowship. There will be hotdogs, hamburgers, and drinks. Please plan to bring a side, dessert, or both! Please RSVP to Amy Stewart at ASTEWART@STPETERSFL.COM and let her know what you'll bring!

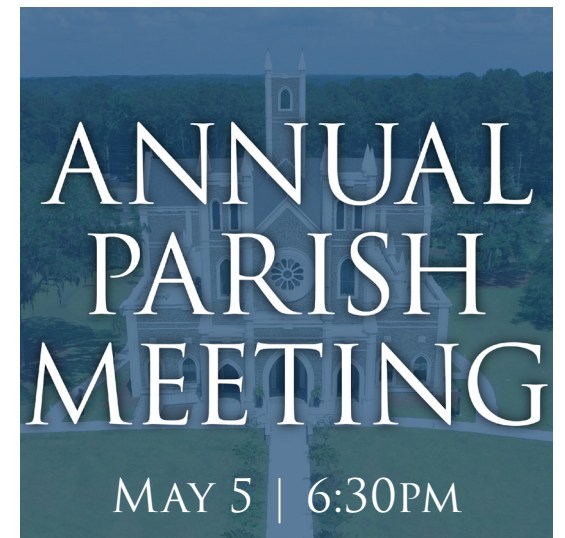
FAMILY BIBLE SCHOOL REGISTRATION IS OPEN! *Tuesday–Thursday, 4–6 June, 5pm–8pm* | We loved 'Family Style' Bible school last year that we are doing it again! We are inviting the whole family to come and participate, learn, and grow in your faith together. Enjoy a boxed picnic each night on the lawn. After dinner, families and volunteers will join together in worship with live music. Families will be grouped together into tribes to play games, make art, and learn about God's Word together.

YOU CAN REGISTER AT STPETERSFL.COM/FBS

MEN'S COOKOUT TONIGHT! | *5-7:30PM*
BBQ, Oysters, and Drinks in a beautiful place with fellow men of St. Peter's! Our speaker is Preston Scott and he will be speaking at 5:15PM so arrive on time! We'll be at Dave Lang's at *6025 Roberts Road*



THE BIG RED BUS IS COMING
Sunday, 5 May | 8AM-1:30PM | Donors will receive a \$20 eGift card, and a OneBlood Donor t-shirt!
Sign up at STPETERSFL.COM/BIGREDBUS



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
MAY 5 | 6:30PM

WORSHIP

VISITING THE CATHEDRAL?

Welcome—we're so glad you're worshipping with us today! Our nursery is available during Sunday morning services for children newborn through Kindergarten. Whether today is your first time or you've been with us for awhile, we're so glad you're here!

CATHEDRAL PRAYER LIST & CARE MINISTRIES



If you have any pastoral needs or know of someone who needs pastoral care and prayer, please contact Care Ministries Coordinator, Alice Sanderson at ASANDERSON@STPETERSFL.COM

TO BE ADDED THE THE CATHEDRAL PRAYER LIST, EMAIL ASANDERSON@STPETERSFL.COM OR SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST OR CARE MINISTRY NEED AT STPETERSFL.COM/PRAYER

Military: Lt. Col. David Chichetti, SSG Corey Daws, Amn Drew Edwards, 1st Lt. Carson Jax, Capt. Griffin Jax, Capt. Savannah B. Jax, Capt. Parker Jax, Capt. Chandler B. Jax, 1st Lt. Rebecca Jax, Col. Burt Newman, Lucas Bell, SSgt Corey Owen, Lt. Col. Daniel Dean, LCpl Sam Henri, Maj. James Dilworth, Capt. John Easterbrook Jr, SrA Hayden Livingston, Sgt. Michael Gaskins, Gabriel Melendez, Major Gen. John Richardson, Capt. Oliver Rushing, Spc. Andrew Sanderson, Lt. Cmdr. Chris Smith, Capt. Parry Thomas, PFC John P. Warren, LT Emily Redmond, Lt. Cmdr. Blake Van Brunt Jr, PFC Noah C. Bielling, SN Benjamin Waddill, 2nd Lt Jack Ubben, Lt. Drew Stockstill, Jose Betancourt, MM2 Tommy VanLandingham

Parishioners, Relatives, and Friends: Tom Sharkey, Pat, Sheila Melton, Dave Lang, Forrest Boone, Vicki, Eva, Lynda McCaleb, Christie Grant, Elizabeth Moore, Jessica Masters, Janet Clemens, Patricia, Pat Barnidge, Bonnie, Marilyn & Steve Hammond, Will Valentine, Carol, Patty, Marsha Hall, Fred *as of 4.15.24*

Banns of Marriage

We publish the Banns of Marriage between Clara Frances McClure and Cole Christopher Dawkins and bid your prayers on their behalf. If any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these persons should not be joined together in Holy Matrimony, you are to declare it.

This is the second time of asking.

STAFF UPDATES

ST. PETER'S BOOKSTORE

Our beloved ANNE WRIGHT, long time St. Peter's Bookstore Manager since 2006, has retired! PLEASE WRITE WELL WISHES TO ANNE AT THE TABLE IN THE NARTHEX. We will celebrate Anne's ministry at a later date when she is able to return to church. Parishioner JULIE O'STEEN has accepted the position of Bookstore Manager as of April 1. She's excited to serve the Cathedral in the Bookstore. Many may know Julie for her work in other ministry areas as a past-Vestry member, Flower Guild Team Leader, and Lay Eucharistic Minister.