

# Welcome

**BE THE CHURCH**

*Protect the environment.*

Care for the poor.

Forgive often.

**Reject racism.**

**Fight for the powerless.**

*Share earthly and spiritual resources.*

Embrace diversity.

Love God.

Enjoy this life.



ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR

**Sunday,**

**June 25, 2023**

**10:00 AM**

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**Fourth Sunday**

**After Pentecost**

**Open and Affirming  
Sunday**



**ST. PETER'S**  
**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION IN SKOKIE, IL



# Welcome to Worship!

**SUNDAYS @ 10:00AM**

**In-person Worship.** Masks and distance recommended, not required

**Livestream on YouTube.** Live at 10am then available on our channel

**"The Redheaded Preacher" Podcast.** Available wherever you get your podcasts, includes sermon and scriptures only, posted weekly by Tuesday



## Ways to Give

**Text Your Gift.** Text your gift to [844-977-2346](tel:844-977-2346)

After a short set-up the first time, simply text your gift amount

**Use PayPal.** [PayPal.me/stpeteruccskokie](https://www.paypal.com/merchot/?x=1&from=seller=&to=stpeteruccskokie)

**Send a Check.** Mail to the address below ... this way still works fine

**Set up Vanco.** Contact the church office to enroll in regular giving



## Open Communion

**All Christians** and seekers after God are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper with us the **first Sunday of every month** and special Holy Days (Christmas, Maundy Thursday, and Easter). **At-home Communion** participants are invited to provide their own elements and join when Pastor bids you, "take, eat, and drink."



## About St. Peter's UCC

We've been in the heart of downtown Skokie since 1867. We are a part of the United Church of Christ, which means we are passionate about our faith and open in our thinking. We believe in a Triune God who **loves everyone**, regardless of gender identity, orientation, race, status, or physical or mental ability, and we **joyously welcome all people** to share worship, membership, marriage, baptism, funeral, and fellowship with us.



## Contact, Follow, or Talk to Us

**Rev. Richard Lanford (Pastor):** [revlanford@gmail.com](mailto:revlanford@gmail.com)

In the office Wed-Sat (times vary) and Sundays

**Laura Olson (Office Manager):** [office@stpeteruccskokie.org](mailto:office@stpeteruccskokie.org)

Office hours Mon-Fri 9am to 2pm

**Ben Westphal (Music Director):** [bcwestphal@gmail.com](mailto:bcwestphal@gmail.com)

**Facebook/Instagram/YouTube:** [stpeteruccskokie](https://www.facebook.com/stpeteruccskokie)

**Website:** [www.stpeteruccskokie.org](http://www.stpeteruccskokie.org)

*Like, follow, or join our email list for up-to-date info about events and activities!*



**8013 Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL 60077 | 847-673-8166**

**St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Skokie**  
**Order of Worship for**  
**Sunday, June 25, 2023 at 10:00am**  
**Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Pride Sunday**  
**66<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UCC**

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*Welcome to worship. The music before the service is intended as a time of silent prayer and preparation.*

**PRELUDE**                      "Passacaglia in G"                      by R. Moore

**THE RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**    Peggy Reins

*Will those who are able please stand up*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

- P: We come this morning to worship together;  
C: Different people, different lives, different histories,  
P: Yet we are all children of the same God,  
C: Created lovingly by the Source of all life.  
A: Different people, different lives, different histories;  
P: Yet we all have one Teacher,  
C: Jesus, who is so close to God that he is said to be the living Word that God spoke.  
A: Different people, different lives, different histories;  
P: Yet one Lord, one faith, one baptism.  
A: Let us open ourselves to the Word of God, which is at work in us!

**RESPONSE**                      “Lift Up Your Heads”                      SSB #9 (v.1)”


- 1 Lift up your heads, O might-y gates; be-hold the glo - rious Rul - er waits!
- 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a tem - ple, set a - part
- 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to you; here, Christ, a - bide!
- 4 So come, my Sov - ereign; en - ter in! Let new and no - bler life be - gin;



The Sov - ereign One is draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.  
 From earth - ly use for heaven's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.  
 Let me your in - ner pres - ence feel; your grace and love in me re - veal.  
 Your Ho - ly Spir - it guide us on, un - til the glo - rious crown be won.



**PRAYER OF CONFESSION/FOR TRANSFORMATION**

Loving God, in whom we live and move and have our being – You call us to journey with You as You journeyed on this earth – in love, in power, in healing, in conflict, in boldness, speaking truth to the powers that be – even the powers that threaten our very lives.

Yet we are often afraid for our lives and reputations. Fear is a big, buried factor in our lives. We are often afraid of those who would bully us spiritually, emotionally, and even physically. We are often afraid to identify with You because Your name has been used to justify harm to those who are the marginalized and oppression of those you refer to as “the least of these” and we don’t want to be identified with such things. We are often afraid to be singled out as the different ones – the unusual or queer or allies-of-the-same Christ-followers who have a message to proclaim that can impact the world to become the ‘beloved community’ You desire for all Your creation.

We forget that You have promised to watch over and care for us as much as and more than You care for the sparrows. We forget that You will never deny us and will be with us throughout our earthly lives into our life eternal. Forgive us our fear – Forgive us our forgetfulness – Forgive us our hiding and turning from your path. Forgive us our unbelief and heal us by your peace and your presence. In Jesus’ name we pray!  
Amen.

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON** *Acts 3:17-20*

P: In Acts, Peter preached, "And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. . . Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."

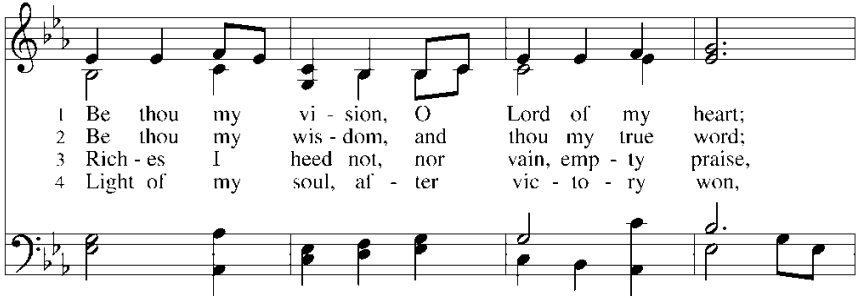
Having returned to God in the spirit of turning away from our sins of omission and commission, often driven by fear, let us trust the Word: that our sins are wiped out and that times of refreshing will, indeed, come from the presence of the Lord. This is unbelievable news we run the risk of taking for granted. Please join me then in laying hold of this astounding good news by saying . . .

**C: Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.**

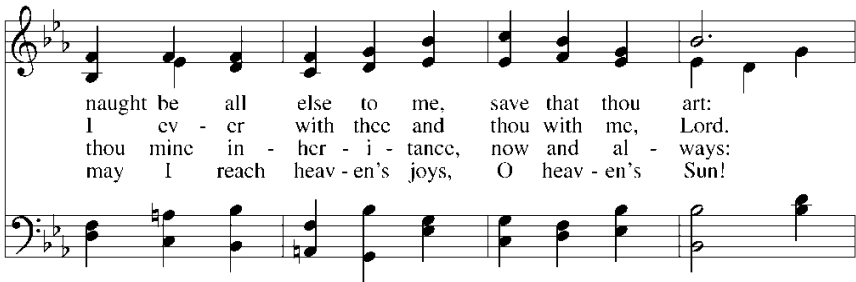
## HYMN

## "Be Thou My Vision"

## SSB #20



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,  
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
 I ev - cr with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:  
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought by day and by night,  
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, thou my high tow'r,  
 thou, and thou on - ly, first in my heart,  
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.  
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

*The congregation may be seated*

**CALL TO OFFERING**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

David Iannotti

The Prophet

Ezekiel 34:1-2, 4-5, 11-16

Epistle Lessons

I Corinthians 12:4-7, 12-13, 27-31

I John 4:7-16

**MUSICAL MEDITATION** “Loving Shepherd of Thy Sheep”

*Will those who are able please stand*

**GOSPEL**

John 3:13-17

**RESPONSE**

“Alleluia!”

Tune #495



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**AFFIRMATION OF OUR OPEN AND AFFIRMING  
COVENANT**

Passed June 24, 2018

**We the parishioners of St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Skokie, make before God and ourselves, a promise to live our daily lives with love, honor and respect, believing that since we're all made in God's image, all people are created equal. And thus, all people are to be treated, loved and welcomed equally, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, creed, color, race, economic status, or physical/mental ability.**

**We therefore welcome all people to share our Church for the purposes of worship, marriage, baptism, funeral and fellowship, with full participation in the life and ministries of the Church, asking that those who come have no intent to do harm and welcome others to our church as well. People shall be embraced with love and the knowledge that we are all one in the eyes of God. Amen!**

## HYMN "They'll Know We Are Christians" SSB #14 (v.1)


*Unison* *Em*



1. We are one in the Spir - it, we are one in the Lord,  
 2. We will walk with each oth - er, we will walk hand in hand,  
 3. We will work with each oth - er, we will work side by side,  
 4. All praise to the Fa - ther, from whom all things come,



we are one in the Spir - it, we are one in the Lord,  
 we will walk with each oth - er, we will walk hand in hand,  
 we will work with each oth - er, we will work side by side,  
 and all praise to Christ Je - sus, God's on - ly Son,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored:  
 and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land:  
 and we'll guard each one's dig - ni - ty and save each one's pride:  
 and all praise to the Spir - it, who makes us one:

*Refrain* C G C G Em Am



And they'll know we are Chris - tians by our love, by our love,

Em Am Bm Em



yes, they'll know we are Chris - tians by our love.

*The congregation may be seated*

**PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYERS**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

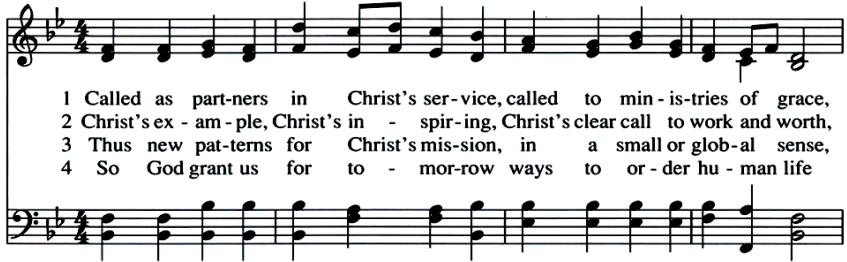
**A: Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil;  
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory forever. Amen**

**SERMON**

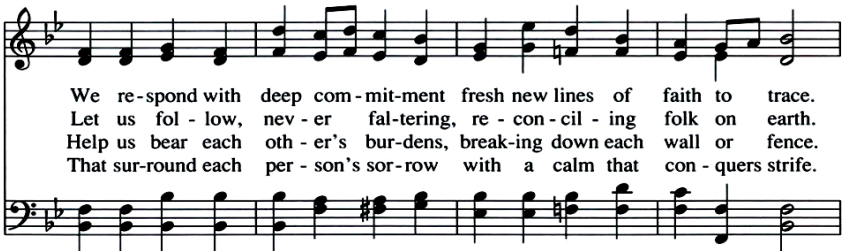
“And Affirming”

*Would the congregation please rise*

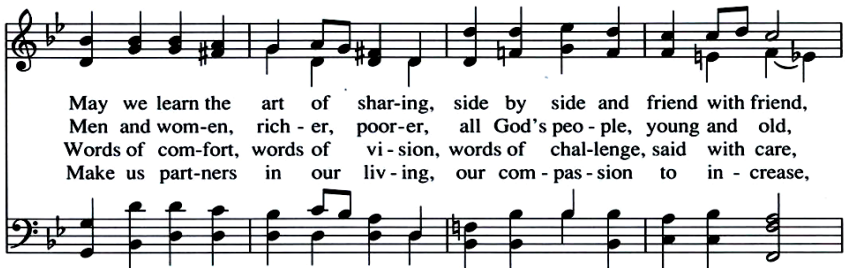
## HYMN “Called As Partners In Christ’s Service” SSB #13



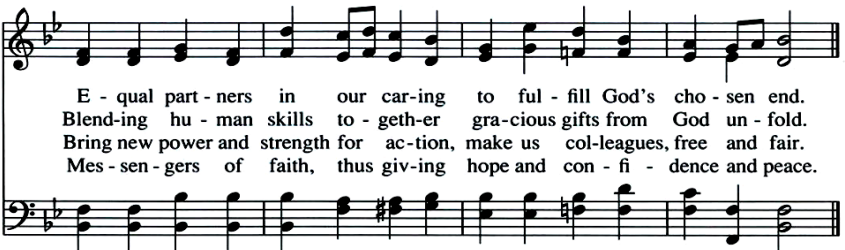
1 Called as part-ners in Christ’s ser-vice, called to min-is-tries of grace,  
 2 Christ’s ex-am-ple, Christ’s in-spir-ing, Christ’s clear call to work and worth,  
 3 Thus new pat-terns for Christ’s mis-sion, in a small or glob-al sense,  
 4 So God grant us for to-mor-row ways to or-der hu-man life



We re-pond with deep com-mit-ment fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
 Let us fol-low, nev-er fal-tering, re-con-cil-ing folk on earth.  
 Help us bear each oth-er’s bur-dens, break-ing down each wall or fence.  
 That sur-round each per-son’s sor-row with a calm that con-quests strife.



May we learn the art of shar-ing, side by side and friend with friend,  
 Men and wom-en, rich-er, poor-er, all God’s peo-ple, young and old,  
 Words of com-fort, words of vi-sion, words of chal-lenge, said with care,  
 Make us part-ners in our liv-ing, our com-pas-sion to in-crease,



E-qual part-ners in our car-ing to ful-fill God’s cho-sen end.  
 Blend-ing hu-man skills to-geth-er gra-cious gifts from God un-fold.  
 Bring new power and strength for ac-tion, make us col-leagues, free and fair.  
 Mes-sen-gers of faith, thus giv-ing hope and con-fi-dence and peace.

**CHARGE AND BENEDICTION** *by the Rev. William Sloane Coffin*

P: May the Lord bless you and keep you. May God’s face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

**C: May God give you the grace never to sell yourself short,**

P: Grace to risk something big for something good,

**C: Grace to remember that the world is too dangerous for anything but truth,**

P: And too small for anything but love.

So may God take your minds and think through them.

**C: May God take your lips and speak through them.**

P: May God take your hearts, and

**A: SET THEM ON FIRE! Amen.**

**POSTLUDE**

“Fugue in C”

by Telemann

*The music after the service is intended as a time of reflection. Pastor will be pleased to greet you at the Sanctuary doors as soon as the postlude has concluded, and our livestream has stopped.*

**FOR WORSHIP TODAY**

MINISTER	Rev. Richard Lanford
MUSIC DIRECTOR	Ben Westphal
DEACON	Peter Svenson
LIVESTREAM RECORDING	Beth Sterba
NURSERY ATTENDANT	Rita McMahon

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# News in the Pews

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Welcome to worship and Christian fellowship this summer morning! May we learn what Jesus truly means by calling us to “take up the cross and follow [him]” (Matthew 10:38, NRSV).

The St. Peter’s special coffee hour to discuss the UCC’s “All Church Read” of **How to be an Anti-Racist by Ibram Kendi is today!** This event is sponsored by your Micah 6:8 Committee. Please plan to stay and enjoy coffee hour and the discussion, even if you have not read the book.

**RUMMAGE SORTING has begun for sure!** There is a big load of new stuff already so we can really benefit from any and all helpers who can come to help. Sorting hours are Tuesday starting at 10 AM and again on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

**Thank you to everyone who helped St. Peter’s U.C.C. “represent” at the Skokie Pride Family event last Sunday afternoon!** We connected with more community people and organizations, and it was successful from our perspective from start to finish.

**No July Announcer this year. Due to a lack of events next month,** it was decided to skip July and instead rely

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on our weekly emails and bulletins to communicate important things like the A Just Harvest Kitchen, vacation dates, guest preachers, Church Council and more. *The deadline for the August newsletter will be July 17th.*

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**Speaking of supporting St. Peter's**, one way to boost our profile on Facebook is by liking or loving our posts when you see them on your feed. The more 'hits' we get, the more often our posts will show up, and more people will get the messages! It is also a good digital profile when on-line worshipers can enter through their Google account, visit our YouTube page, and hit the thumbs-up on a service of ours.

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# Our People

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**Happy birthdays and anniversaries!** Having birthdays this week are Ron Schuhrke's grandson Alexander Martinek, Gena Zelenka, Kristine Hoellerich, Randy Altmayer and Ralph's granddaughter Mia Speicher. Celebrating their wedding anniversaries are Adrianna and Ken Paige and Eric and Aaliyah Svenson. May God bless them on their days!

**The Board of Elders meets next Sunday, July 2nd.** As of this writing, Rev. Lanford is thinking of preaching on aspects of Christian liberty that Sunday – but you've got to show up or tune in to find out!

According to the schedule, next Sunday's Nursery Attendant will be Kathy Z.; the scheduled Lector is Karen Christianson.

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## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

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PRESIDENT	Peggy Reins
VICE-PRESIDENT	Beth Lanford
TREASURER	Chad McCoy
SECRETARY	Annie Noorts
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Maria Altmayer

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## Regular Reminders!

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**We are always grateful for any and all offerings** to the church. No amount is too small! So many thanks to everyone who's been keeping us going with your donations! See inside the bulletin's front cover for details on how to donate.

**Let us know you were here!** Please fill out the black pew pads when you arrive and pass them to the center aisle during the service. Thank you!

**Please remember that we can always use food contributions for the Mini-Pantry!** There are now copies of a list of suggestions and items by the narthex and on the shelves where the food is kept by the offices. Take one home! Demand has increased considerably since it was first installed last September. We always appreciate what is brought in, and the need does not go away. Perhaps if you are employed you could ask about doing a collection at your job. Thank you!

**Pastor's podcast is available wherever you listen to podcasts!** Just type in "The Redheaded Preacher" and you'll find us! Pastor's weekly podcasts include the prior Sunday's scriptures and sermon, and some words and prayer from Pastor just for the listeners of the podcast!

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UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

## **MISSION MOMENTS**

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**June 25, 2023**

**Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Matthew 10:24-39**

**Daring Discipleship**

**Open and Affirming Sunday**

[Jesus said:] What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops.

On this Open and Affirming Sunday, you are invited to take a moment to give thanks in your prayers for the life and ministry of the Rev. Anne Holmes. In April 1982, the Rev. Anne Holmes was ordained at her home church, Emmaus UCC in Vienna, Virginia. Rev. Holmes was the first open lesbian to be ordained in the United Church of Christ.

At the time, forty-one years ago, her ordination made national news. The Washington Post wrote a long story\* about Rev. Holmes, who was ordained into a chaplaincy role. The paper reported,

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“In the statement of the spiritual journey that brought her to seek ordination -- a personal and theological biography required of all candidates -- Holmes dealt forthrightly with the homosexuality issue: How she had become aware of her sexual orientation as a college student in Tennessee, her struggles with self-hatred, how she rebelled against the advice to keep her lesbian orientation a secret because that would contradict ‘the openness with which we are called to live our lives’, she said.”

The article ends with Rev. Holmes musing that although she would like to serve a church, she did not think it would be possible for her as an out lesbian. The United Church of Christ has come a long way in the past four decades. It no longer makes the news when a gay or lesbian person is ordained. That is why today, on this Open and Affirming Sunday, we give thanks for Rev. Holmes and her pioneering courage and faith. As Jesus said in today’s scripture, what was once whispered in secret will in these days be made public and proud. Thanks be to God!

To learn more about the pioneers of the Open and Affirming movement, visit: <https://openandaffirming.org/about/history/>.

\*Hyer, Marjorie. “United Church of Christ Will Ordain a Lesbian to Ministry on Sunday.” The Washington Post, WP Company, 24 Apr. 1982, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1982/04/24/unit-ed-church-of-christ-will-ordain-a-lesbian-to-ministry-on-sunday/df39bcc0-4032-4026-89ee-19042bc27280/>.

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*Our first reading is from the Book of the prophet Ezekiel. It is Chapter 34, verses 1 and 2, 4 and 5, and then 11 through 16. Ezekiel gives voice to the Lord's anger against the shepherds of the day, and then God's pledge to be the true Shepherd to make up for their failings. In those days the word 'shepherd' can mean the priests of Israel, but the word can also mean 'ruler,' as in the kings of Israel not taking care of their common people.*

**Ezekiel 34:1-2, 4-5, 11-16**

The word of the LORD came to me: Mortal, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel: prophesy, and say to them—to the shepherds: Thus says the Lord God: Ah, you shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You have not strengthened the weak, you have not healed the sick, you have not bound up the injured, you have not brought back the strayed, you have not sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled them. So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd; and scattered, they became food for all the wild animals.

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

**1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 12-13, 27-31**

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

**1 John 4:7-16**

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we

loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

**John 3:13-17**

Jesus said, "No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."