



Welcome



ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR

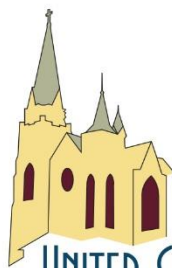
Sunday,
July 23, 2023
10:00 AM

Eighth Sunday
After Pentecost



god
is
love

1 JOHN 4:8



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/merchpot/display/cpPage?merchantid=1234567890)

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

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

Laura Olson (Office Manager): office@stpeteruccskokie.org

Office hours Mon-Fri 9am to 2pm

Ben Westphal (Music Director): bcwestphal@gmail.com

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

Website: 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, July 23, 2023 at 10:00am
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

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

PRELUDE "Dorian Echo Fantasy" by Sweelinck

THE RINGING OF THE BELLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Peggy Reins

Will those who are able please stand up

CALL TO WORSHIP *from Psalm 139*

P: God has searched us and knows us.

God knows when we sit down and when we rise up.

**C: God searches out our path and our lying down,
And is acquainted with all our ways.**

P: Before a word is on our tongue, God knows it.

God's hand is ever available to guide us.

**C: Such knowledge is a wonder to us.
It is beyond anything we can attain.**

P: We cannot escape from God's Spirit.

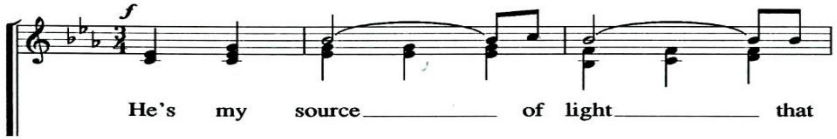
There is nowhere to flee from God's presence.

**C: Darkness is as light to our God.
The Lord illuminates the way before us.
Let us worship God!**

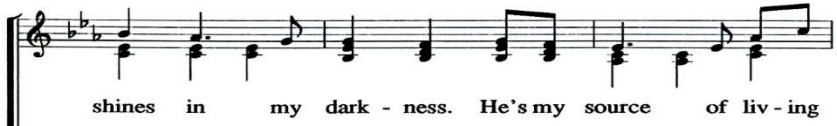
RESPONSE

“He’s My Source”

SSB #17



He's my source _____ of light _____ that



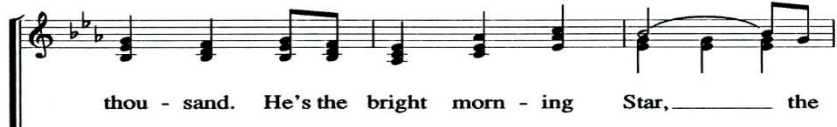
shines in my dark - ness. He's my source of liv - ing



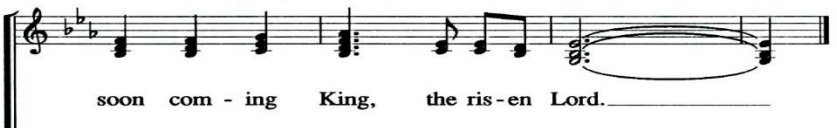
wa - ter that I need ev - 'ry day. He's my



sword and my shield, _____ the fair - est of ten



thou - sand. He's the bright morn - ing Star, _____ the



soon com - ing King, the ris - en Lord. _____

CALL TO CONFESSION

P: God is our Source of Light, but our independent spirit often treads into the paths and ways that are out of the light, confusing God's will with our own logic and desires.

C: **We also come up with all kinds of rationalizations for doing so. "Yes, Lord, I have sinned, but I have several very good excuses." Let us pray.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P: Our hearts are hard, O God –

C: **Soften them with your love.**

P: Our hands are clenched, O God –

C: **Open them with your grace.**

P: Our feet are planted too firmly, O God –

C: **Invite us to dance with you.**

P: Our lives are not our own, we know –

A: **Let us live and move and have our being in you, O God. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

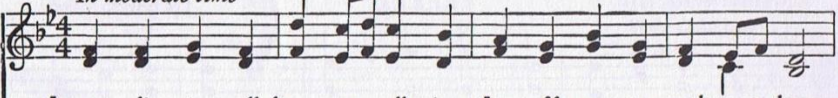
ASSURANCE OF PARDON *John 5:24*

Jesus said, “Very truly I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.”

We fall short and return to God; have we heard the words of Jesus and believe him? Then, he has said, we have passed from death to life; eternal life is given us by the grace of God. It is also God’s grace that pardons us, and brings us this new life. In laying hold of this great good news, let the congregation join me in saying . . .

A: Thanks be to God!

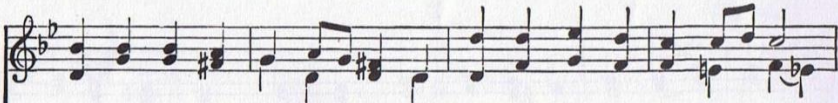
HYMN "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" #272 (vv. 1-3)

In moderate time

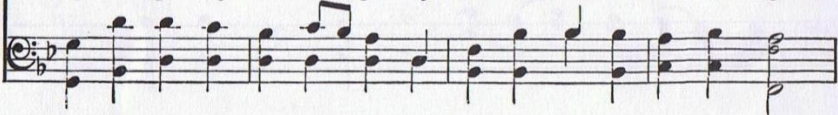
1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cell - ing, Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
2. Breathe, O breathe Thy lov - ing Spir - it In - to ev - ery trou - bled breast;
3. Come, Al - might - y to de - liv - er, Let us all Thy life re - ceive;
4. Fin - ish, then, Thy new cre - a - tion; Pure and spot - less let us be;



Fix in us Thy hum - ble dwell - ing, All Thy faith - ful mer - cies crown:
 Let us all in Thee in - her - it, Let us find the prom - ised rest;
 Gra - cious - ly re - turn, and nev - er, Nev - er - more Thy tem - ples leave.
 Let us see Thy great sal - va - tion Per - fect - ly re - stored in Thee;



Je - sus, Thou art all com - pas - sion, Pure, un - bound - ed love Thou art;
 Take a - way the love of sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be;
 Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing, Serve Thee as Thy hosts a - bove,
 Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, Till in heaven we take our place,



Vis - it us with Thy sal - va - tion, En - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
 End of faith, as its be - gin - ning, Set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 Pray, and praise Thee with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in Thy per - fect love.
 Till we cast our crowns be - fore Thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise. A - MEN.



The congregation may be seated

WORDS ABOUT OFFERINGS

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Beth Sterba

Old Testament:

Proverbs 14:31; 19:17

Epistle:

2nd Corinthians 8:1-7; 9:7-15

MUSICAL MEDITATION Selected

Will those who are able please stand

GOSPEL

Luke 12:13-23, 29-31

RESPONSE

“Alleluia!”

#495

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

“Rich Towards God”

Text: Copyright © 2001 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. Included in Songs of Grace: New Hymns for God and Neighbor (Upper Room Books, 2009). This book includes a permission note for those who own this book, like Pastor Lanford, to use this hymn (along with the 76 other new hymns in the book) in their local church's worship services.

CHARGE and BENEDICTION

P: May the living waters of the Spirit flow through your body;
 May the burning fire of the Spirit warm your heart;
 May the rushing wind of the Spirit fill your lungs,
 Inspiring you to new words and deeds,

A: All in the name of the living Christ! Amen.

POSTLUDE “My Soul, the King of Heaven” arr. Clarke

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	Barb Bailey
LIVESTREAM RECORDING	Beth Sterba
NURSERY ATTENDANT	Heidi Tarzian

News in the Pews

Welcome! The Holy Spirit calls us together as the church to worship and praise God, made known to us in Christ. Peace be with you all.

Thank you to Sharon Johnson for filling in for Laura this week! Laura will return to the office on Monday.

Our AJH Kitchen day is next Saturday and we still need donations! We are being asked to raise the \$500 for groceries and also to designate some of our people to shop for the groceries and deliver them to the Kitchen. This is in addition to needing 5 people or more to serve there from 11 AM to 2:30 PM on Saturday, July 29th. Pastor and Beth won't be there to help this month, so we'll need some newer volunteers! See Chad McCoy for more details.

Your Church Council meets after worship today.

The Micah 6:8 Committee meets via Zoom tonight from 6:30 to 7:30 PM.

VACATION: Pastor Richard leaves on vacation this Tuesday, July 25th. He returns to the study on Wednesday, August 9th. The first service back, Sunday, August 13th, will be one which includes our Service of Healing. During his absence, the Rev. Blair Hull returns to our sanctuary to lead the second halves of worship on July 30th and August 6th, including preaching, and celebrating Holy Communion on the 6th. Our President and Office Manager will have the list of area pastors who are willing to be contacted in case of a pastoral emergency during this time.

RUMMAGE SORTING SCHEDULE: Sorting times this week are Tuesday from 10 AM to noon, Wednesday from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM and Friday from 10 AM to noon. You are welcome to come anytime within those hours and stay as long as you are able.

Our People

Happy Birthday this week to Justin Mitchell, Kaitlin Garcia, and Alice Schaller!

This morning's Call to Worship is reprinted by permission of United Church Press from *Taught by Love* by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1998 United Church Press; Copyright 2002 by The Pilgrim Press. Our Prayer of Confession was written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, 'Hold Fast to What Is Good'. Used with permission.

One way to boost our church's profile on Facebook is by liking or loving our church's posts when you see them on your feed. The more 'hits' we get the more people will get the messages! Also visit our YouTube page and hit the thumbs-up on a service of ours. If you listen to the RedHeaded Preacher podcast, giving a good rating helps too! These things elevate our likelihood of being noticed by others online.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

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

Regular Reminders!

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!

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!



MISSION MOMENTS

July 23, 2023

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Wheat and Weeds Together

When St. John's United Church of Christ, in the southern Illinois town of Belvidere, decided to plant a community garden that would be open to all, they did not go small. In a video on the church's website, the large garden occupies a whole swath of the church's side yard. The plot also has some raised boxes, for folks who don't feel like kneeling when they harvest, and other pots for plants that are important to the garden, but not good for spreading. A share table holds free produce from the church garden, as well as other local gardens throughout the community. And anyone who would like to is invited to come at any time and gather the food that's ready for harvest, so that all might enjoy fresh produce during the harvest season.

Church pastor Rev. Muriel Morley Jahn explains in a video filmed in 2021 and available on the church's Facebook page, "This year, we're working to do a number of partner plantings, so we have the three sisters system with the corn stalk, and the beans growing up it and the gourds covering the root...Another way we're doing partner planting is with our blueberry bushes...in between each blueberry bush we have some herbs growing. Here is some thyme growing between these bushes and down here we have some basil that'll be growing up between the berries. We're trying to get as much food out of our garden as possible and one of the ways we do that is through our partner planting. Thyme especially likes the soil that blueberries like, so we're hoping they pair well together and appreciate each other's company."

By their intentional growing methods, the church is not just feeding the community. It's modeling a system of interdependence and mutual cooperation that helps not just thyme and blueberries but people to flourish.

You can see the whole video tour of the St. John's UCC community garden here:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=235969421622372> or at <https://stjohns401.org/>

Proverbs 14:31

Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him.

Proverbs 19:17

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and will be repaid in full.

2 Corinthians 8:1-7

We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints — and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us, so that we might urge Titus that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking among you. Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.

2 Corinthians 9:7-15

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God.

Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the

surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Luke 12:13-23, 29-31

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."

Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'

"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. . . And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.