

Power to Do

Welcome to St Peter's UCC Livestream Virtual Worship Service! Subscribe to our **YouTube Channel** to catch a new service at 10 am each Sunday! We also share a **podcast** weekly on our website of the scripture readings and sermon. The podcast can also be found on most podcast catchers & platforms, under "The Redheaded Preacher." Give us a like and 5-star rating to help others find us!

Open Holy Communion. We have communion the 1st Sunday of the month and we invite all Christians and seekers after God to partake of the Lord's Supper with us regardless of denominational background. To participate from home, please have a small cup of juice, wine, or other beverage you are comfortable with, and a piece of bread with you. When Rev. Lanford prompts us to "take and eat" (and "drink"), then we will all do so - physically separated, but together in spirit.

Who We Are. St. Peter's is an Open and Affirming congregation. We've been in the heart of downtown Skokie for over 152 years. 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 **welcome all people** to share worship, membership, marriage, baptism, funeral, and fellowship with us.

Attendance. We would like to get to know you better, too! If you are comfortable doing so, please put your first name and last initial in the comments section under the video, and where you are watching us from!

Donations. We have several options for giving, and your donation helps support our church and its various ministries. Now more than ever, every contribution (large or small) is important to keep us going:

- **Text Your Gift.** Text the amount you want to donate to **844-997-2346**.
- **PayPal.** Visit **PayPal.me/stpeteruccskokie** Uncheck the "Paying for Goods or Services" box to not pass on the fees to St Peters.
- **Vanco Give+ App.** Download the Vanco GIVE+ app from **iTunes** or **Google Play**, put in the church's zip code 60077 and select St. Peter's from the drop down. Set up an account with a password (or process as a guest), select your donation frequency, amount, and add payment info. There is also an option here to offset the processing fee.
- **Mail a Check.** We are collecting mail daily, and depositing regularly throughout the week.

Contact Us. You can email us – we are accessing email from home during the Shelter-in-Place order. Or call and leave a voicemail, we are picking up messages regularly while we are not in the building. Follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** for daily updates and messages, and check our website for additional details, weekly announcements, and more.

St. Peter's United Church of Christ

8013 Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL 60077
(Oakton and Laramie)

847-673-8166

www.stpeteruccskokie.org

Rev. Richard Lanford (Pastor): revlanford@gmail.com

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

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

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
Oakton Street and Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL
www.stpeteruccskokie.org
847-673-8166

OUR ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR
Sunday, January 31, 2021 10:00 AM
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Annual Meeting Sunday

WELCOME GUESTS!

* Indicates all who are able are invited to stand

PRELUDE "O For A Thousand Tongues"
arr. Rebe Snyder

THE RINGING OF THE BELLS

THE SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS Jenn Schneider

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 133)

Pastor: "How very good and pleasant it is when
kindred live together in unity!

***Congregation: It is like the precious anointing-oil
on the head, running down upon the
beard, on the beard of Aaron, running
over the collar of his robes.***

P: It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on
the mountains of Zion. For there the Lord
ordained the blessing,

C: *life forevermore!" Let us worship the
God of life.*

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

Lavon Bayler of our own United Church of Christ wrote that we are called to confession if we have distorted God's word, knowingly or unknowingly. We are invited to repent if our freedom in Christ has led others astray. We join in prayer because the church is not yet the perfect body of Christ. Let us seek God's forgiveness and transformation.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Faithful God, we have claimed to have more knowledge than we really possess. We have presumed to judge others on the basis of our limited understanding. We have grasped for freedom without taking full responsibility for our actions. Our witness is weak, and is directed primarily toward those with whom we prefer to associate.

By our actions, some of our sisters and brothers are excluded, some are misled, and some are unjustly accused. If we have violated another's conscience, if we have caused someone to fall, we are deeply sorry. For failing to do all Christ expects of the church, and us as individuals bearing Christ's name, we repent and seek Your forgiveness. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

After the anointing by the Spirit on Pentecost, Simon Peter preached the news about Jesus Christ in the streets of Jerusalem, and Acts 2 says "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him'" (2:37-39).

We are not doing any baptizing today but we have turned back to God and forgiveness is given as promised by this merciful God! Let the congregation wherever and whenever you are join me in claiming this great good news by saying . . .

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, amen.

*HYMN: "Open the Eyes of My Heart"

SSB #25

E⁵ (no 3)

O - pen the eyes of my heart, Lord.

B/D# A²/C#

O - pen the eyes of my heart. I want to see you,

A² B_{sus}/E E Esus

I want to see you.

B_{sus}/E E B

see you. To see you high and lift - ed up,

C#m A² B_{sus}

shin - ing in the light of your glo - ry;

B C#m F#m¹¹

pour out your pow'r and love as we sing "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho -

B_{sus} B_{sus}

- ly." - ly."

E⁵ (no 3) B/D#

O - pen the eyes of my heart, Lord. O - pen the eyes of my heart.

A²/C# A² B_{sus}/E E

I want to see you, I want to see you.

Text: Paul Baloche, b. 1962
 Music: Paul Baloche
 Text and music © 1997 Integrity's Hosanna! Music/ASCAP

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Old Testament:

Beth Lanford
Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Epistle:

I Corinthians 8:1-13

MUSICAL MEDITATION Selected

GOSPEL:

Mark 1:21-28

A CALL TO OFFERING

PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER ('debts')

**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:

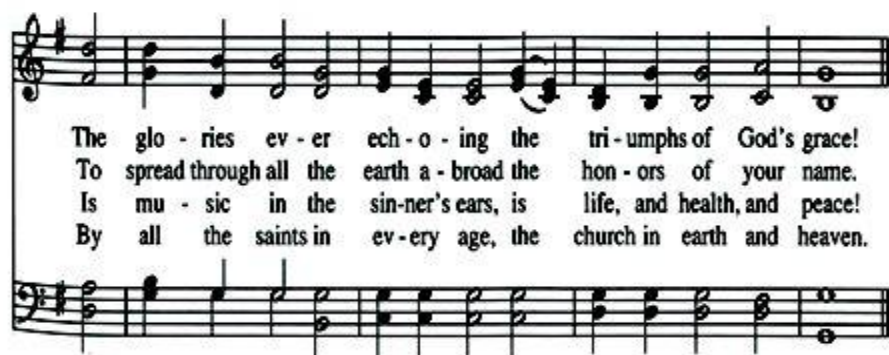
"The Life of Faith: From Whom, For Whom, Through Whom"

HYMN: "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" SSB #6
(As usual we sing all five verses)

CHARGE



1 O for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great Re-deem-er's praise,
2 My gra-cious Sav-ior and my God, as-sist me to pro-claim,
3 Je-sus! the name that calms our fears, that bids our sor-rows cease
4 Glo-ry to God, and love and praise be ev-er, ev-er given



The glo-ries ev-er ech-o-ing the tri-umphs of God's grace!
To spread through all the earth a-broad the hon-ors of your name.
Is mu-sic in the sin-ner's ears, is life, and health, and peace!
By all the saints in ev-ery age, the church in earth and heaven.

The hymn is a cento from a longer poem of eighteen stanzas written by Charles Wesley on the first anniversary of his conversion. The present form of the hymn is one edited by John Wesley for The Wesleyan Hymn Book, 1780.

Tune: AZMON C.M.
Carl G. Gläser, 1828
Adapt. in L. Mason's Modern Psalmody, 1839
Alternate tune: RICHMOND

**5 Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,
Your loosen'd tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Savior come,
And leap, ye lame, for joy.**

P: Go in peace;

C: Keep the faith;

P: Love one another;

C: Serve the Lord!

BENEDICTION

P: May God be beside you to accompany you,
Within you to give you peace and power,

***C: Above you to watch over you,
Beneath you to catch you,***

P: Behind you to encourage you

And in front of you to show you the way. Amen.

C: Amen.

***POSTLUDE:**

"Azmon"

arr. Charles Callahan"

FOR WORSHIP TODAY

MINISTER

Rev. Richard Lanford

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Ben Westphal

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good Morning! We are delighted you've joined us. May God's word today strengthen your faith, inspire curiosity and learning, and motivate your service of others.

Please come back at 11:30 for our Annual Congregational Meeting over Zoom, an historic first for Saint Peter's (and for most churches, we imagine)! The link has been on the Quarantine Weekly and Call to Meeting in email and will also be in this very bulletin. You can log in starting at 11:15 am. Please note that if you have to be away from an internet connection you can call in and participate over the telephone. We need a quorum of active members to be able to conduct the business of your church! Please be part of it! Voting is limited to active members; active members as the Quarantine Quarterly has said, are those who have, over the course of the previous year, either received Holy Communion from the church (or at it), attended worship at least at St. Peter's at least once, and has made at least one financial contribution to the church.

If you are elected to become, or stay on as, a Board Member or Officer, please remember that we'll have a virtual service of installation on Sunday, February 7th -- which is also a Communion Sunday!

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 front cover for details on how to donate.

Yesterday was the fifth Saturday in January, and therefore was our turn to provide the meal for and serve it at the Community Kitchen of A Just Harvest.

Through the generosity of many people, we were able to do the first, and the kitchen staff did the serving via curbside due to COVID restrictions. Thank you!! Our next 5th Saturday is May 29th.

The Soft Goods Drive - We will also be collecting one last time **this MONDAY from 9 AM to 2 PM**, when Laura is in the office. So you still have time this weekend to go through your stuff! As of Wednesday evening we had enough bags to bring in about \$700. Our goal is \$1,000, which means we need about 100 more bags. We are scheduled to drop off the soft goods from the FUNDrive at Unique (a Savers store) at 3748 N Elston the week of Feb 15. Their Covid safety protocols require us to rent a truck to get the donations to the store, rather than having many individuals bring them in vehicles. Also, Savers asks us to let everything sit for a few weeks to be sure any possible risk of Covid contamination is eliminated. They will reimburse the cost of the truck. ***Is there anyone who is comfortable driving a truck into the city?*** I think we rented a 17 foot last time, but I will need to verify that. I need to know ASAP so we can schedule

our exact drop off day and time, so please email me or call to let me know you can drive.

Pastor is going to be looking at possible Lenten Zoom Bible Study topics. Let him know if you have ideas for a 5-week Wednesday night study!

Lenten Devotionals for 2021: We're offering e-copies, Kindle or Nook versions and paper copies mailed. It's especially important as there was no Advent offering to you last season. Please check your email and respond to it no later than this Friday! If you didn't get the email or cannot respond, just call the office and leave a message stating your preference. If you'd like an e-copy, let us know which type. If you'd like it mailed, please provide your address.

NEW St. Peter's Zoom Account! We now have an official Church Zoom account. There are many more benefits we are able to use because of this. If you are having a Zoom meeting, contact Laura in the office and she'll share the username and password so you might host an online meeting using the church account.

Pastor's Podcast is now on all the Podcast platforms- iTunes, Stitcher, Overcast, Spotify, Podcast Addict, Amazon Music and more. Just look up "The Redheaded Preacher" on your podcast catcher or music streaming service then hit subscribe and you'll get the newest editions weekly! Give us a 5-star rating and review if you can, it helps us grow so much

Today's Call to Confession and Prayer of Confession are reprinted by permission of United Church Press from Led by Love by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1996 by United Church Press.

According to the schedule, due to a switch next week's Lector is Annie Noorts.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT	Jenn Schneider
VICE-PRESIDENT	Judy Paige
TREASURER	Mandy Steegmueller
SECRETARY	Carolyn Kuechler
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Marcia Hilliard

January 31, 2021

Mark 1:21-28

Power to Do *Health and Human Service Sunday*

The book of Mark begins with a bang. Jesus is anticipated by John, baptized in the waters of the Jordan, sent into the wilderness for forty days of testing, begins preaching repentance and calls to the fishermen who will become his disciples - all in the first twenty verses.

And now, beginning in verse 21, we hear the story of his first encounter with a suffering person - a man with a so-called "unclean spirit." As Jesus is teaching in the temple, "with authority," the man cries out, naming Jesus as Holy. Jesus, showing the firmness of his authority, rebukes the spirit that is causing the man so much torment.

In this first healing story in the book of Mark, we encounter a person who was suffering as much in spirit as in body. When the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the globe last year, the response to avoid infection was quarantine. While this tactic undoubtedly saved millions of lives, it resulted in another crisis - a spiritual one as many were isolated away from the love and touch of ordinary human interactions.

Health can be thought of as a three-legged stool. Mental, spiritual and physical health work together to support the whole person. The United Church of Christ Council for Health and Human Service Ministries understands this whole-person approach to wellness. So, in addition to providing timely medical and emergency information to clergy and congregations, the Council also provided a corner for tending to spiritual health. For example, The Community Care Space, a YouTube channel and playlist, provided guided meditations and prayers as a way to bring healing to the weary and isolated.

On this Health and Human Service Sunday, we give thanks for the United Church of Christ Council for Health and Human Service Ministries and their work in supporting all the facets of human health.



SCRIPTURES FOR THE CONGREGATION

1/31/2021

DEUTERONOMY 18:15-20

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” Then the LORD replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.”

FIRST CORINTHIANS 8:1-13

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him.

Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords — yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. “Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

The Gospel lesson this morning is Mark 1, verses 21 through 28. Jesus has been baptized by John and the Holy Spirit, tested by Satan

in the desert, and has called at least some of the 12 disciples. Now, right after the passage where the fishermen are called to follow, Jesus continues his public ministry which includes an exorcism.

MARK 1:21-28

They went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.