



**Friends
♥
Together**

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

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(Oakton and Laramie)

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

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
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OUR ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR
Sunday, May 9, 2021, 10:00 AM
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Mother's Day

WELCOME GUESTS!

* Indicates all who are able are invited to stand

PRELUDE

Selected

THE RINGING OF THE BELLS

THE SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jenn Schneider

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: We gather together to worship our loving,
nurturing God, who, like a mother, knows
us intimately,

***Congregation: Loves us unconditionally, teaches us
the way we should go,***

P: And comforts us in times of need.

***C: Praise God, the Source and Sustainer
of life! Amen.***

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

L: From age to age is God's faithfulness.

From day to day is our striving.

Let us confess to our faithful God our sins of thought, word and deed, including those left unthought, undone or unsaid.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Amazing, loving God, we'll hear in Isaiah today how great You are, likening Your benevolence to the gifts of mothers with their children. We confess we can get so down and critical about ourselves or life that we forget to look for the blessings You have given, give in that moment, and which we trust You will provide in the future. It is not always easy to feel and be grateful, and for this we repent. As we often take our mothers for granted, not realizing how they have cared for us, or maybe only remember or focus on the difficult times there, we pray that we also cherish what is holy and honorable, and give thanks. Let us never take You for granted, nor stay stuck in any anger with You, or neglect You as we know You through Your Son Jesus, in whose blessed name we pray. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Isaiah said, "I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord . . . because of all that Yahweh has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that God has shown them according to divine mercy, according to God's steadfast love. For the Lord said, "Surely they are my people . . . and he became their savior in all their distress . . . in his love and his pity he redeemed them; God lifted them up and carried them all the days of old" (Isaiah 63:7-9).

God was remembering his love for Israel, but they were to rebel afterward. Although God did reclaim and forgive Israel, in Christ we see the ultimate length our tender, intimately-caring and carrying God went to bring God's people back, forgiven and transformed by grace. In the name and by the works of Jesus Christ crucified and risen, our sins are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen!

***RESPONSE:** "Gathered Here in the Mystery of this Hour" x2
by Phillip Porter

Text and music: Phil Porter, 1990



Gath-ered here in the mys-tery of this hour, gath-ered here in one strong



bod - y, gath-ered here in the strug-gle and the power, Spir - it draw near.

This chant may be sung as a round.

WORDS ABOUT OFFERINGS

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

The Prophet:

Jenn Schneider

Isaiah 66:10-14

The Epistle:

I John 5:1-6

MUSICAL MEDITATION Selected

***GOSPEL:**

Luke 1: 26-38

PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYERS

THE 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**

HOMILY: "A Mother's Prayers, A Church that Shares"

HYMN: "God of the Women"
(Sing to the tune of "Be Thou My Vision")

**God of the women who answered your call,
Trusting your promises, giving their all,
Women like Sarah and Hannah and Ruth —
Give us their courage to live in your truth.**

**God of the women who walked Jesus' Way,
Giving their resources, learning to pray,
Mary, Joanna, Susanna, and more —
May we give freely as they did before.**

**God of the women long put to the test,
Left out of stories, forgotten, oppressed,
Quietly asking: "Who smiled at my birth?" —
In Jesus' dying you show us our worth.**

**God of the women who ran from the tomb,
Prayed with the others in that upper room,
Then felt your Spirit on Pentecost Day —
May we so gladly proclaim you today.**

**O God of Phoebe and ministers all,
May we be joyful in answering your call.
Give us the strength of your Spirit so near
That we may share in your ministry here.**

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by permission).

CHARGE & BENEDICTION

C: Amen.

***POSTLUDE:** Selected

FOR WORSHIP TODAY

MINISTER
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Rev. Richard Lanford
Ben Westphal

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good Morning! Happy Mother's Day to all mothers and women! Welcome to worship, as we praise the God who calls forth love in all relationships.

The chancel flowers are given today to all the Mothers of St. Peter's United Church of Christ from the Women's Guild. Thank you to them!

Thanks to everyone who helped make today's live stream worship on YouTube possible, and thanks to everyone who watches and encourages others to watch!

We are always grateful for any and all offerings to the church. Thank you very much for giving!

The Board of Elders have a 4 PM meeting over Zoom (to which an Elder can telephone into) this Thursday the 13th.

Pastor returns to the office this week! This Wednesday will be 2 weeks since Pastor got his 2nd shot so he'll be resuming his hours at the church, from 10 AM to 3 PM Wednesday. If you'd like to see him call or send him an email to schedule an appointment.

The UNDY 500 is back all of May!! Start your shopping carts now, we are collecting new pairs of ladies and men's underwear color only in all sizes including PLUS sizes. You can leave your donations in the narthex on Sundays during in-person worship, or drop them off by the office doors during the week once Pastor is back in the office.

Village Inn Food Fundraiser! May 23rd is your next chance to give yourself a cooking break and help two beloved Skokie staples! All you have to do is mention us when ordering anytime on May 23rd and we get 20% of your total.

Church Council via Zoom is next Sunday! If you are responsible for a report, please prepare it and submit it to the Council Drop box for May as soon as you can, giving other members time to read the reports ahead of time.

Carol Burmeister is back at Elevate St. Andrews! She has made regular progress in her physical therapy from her stroke, and she continues it there. Little Harry Kuras II is also out of the hospital, recovering! Thanks for your prayers. Ongoing prayers for the family are still much appreciated.

Pastor's "The Redheaded Preacher," can be found anywhere you listen to podcasts! Filled with prayer, thoughts, Sunday's scripture reading and sermon, this podcast is a great way to reinforce what you're learning weekly, and help you pass the time when doing chores, or walking, or taking a drive. If people don't have time to sit before a screen for most of an hour, the podcast gives you the Scriptures by the lector and message. Check it out!

Having birthdays this week are: Maya Lundeen, Gianna Iannotti, Jake Ryan, and having a wedding anniversary are Mandy (Taheny) and Michael McDonald. We wish God's blessings on all of them!

According to the schedule, next Sunday's lector is Peter Svenson.

It's our turn to serve the dinner this month at A Just Harvest Kitchen (virtually). Good news! At last check, we have the \$500 needed to meet our covenant with our partner there! Thank you thank you very much all who donated this month!

Office Manager/Custodian Laura Olson will be out of the office Friday May 21st, Monday May 24th & Tuesday May 25th.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT	Jenn Schneider
VICE-PRESIDENT	Judy Paige
TREASURER	Chad McCoy
SECRETARY	Carolyn Kuechler
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Marcia Hilliard

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 9, 2021

John 15:9-17

Friends Together ***Rural Life Sunday / Mother's Day***

Church coffee hour is as important a weekly ritual as church worship. On this Rural Life Sunday, consider how your church community is intentional about making relationships with the farmers who produce the treats you enjoy each Sunday morning. Through Equal Exchange coffee, your church can celebrate its relationship with farmers every day, not just on Rural Life Sunday.

*“Started in 2004, the UCC Fair Trade Project allows your congregation to partner with the United Church of Christ and Equal Exchange in building fair trade for small farming communities by serving fairly traded coffee, tea and cocoa, and chocolate, snacks, and olive oil for justice at fellowship hour on Sundays.

This project is a way for your congregation to join hands with communities in the developing world. As Christians we can address a consumer dilemma by buying coffee and other commodities that are fairly traded. Through the project, small farmers and their families gain more control over their lives, earn a fairer share of income, have access to credit and technical support, and gain a trading partner they can trust. Members of your congregation can learn about consumption habits that support small scale farmers and workers throughout the world and encourage careful stewardship of God's creation. At fellowship hour, you will be taking action in a spirit of love.

Through the UCC Fair Trade Project, you get access to Organic, fairly-traded products at discounted wholesale case prices, ensuring that more of the money you spend on coffee and other products reaches the hardworking farmers who actually grow them.” *(<https://equalexchange.coop/ucc>)

Find out more about how your church community can partner with Equal Exchange at <https://equalexchange.coop/ucc>.



SCRIPTURES FOR THE CONGREGATION

May 9th, 2021

Coming at the end of the Book of Isaiah, the prophet is talking about a rebirth of Jerusalem after the exile in Babylon and its rebuild. There is a vision of the city's prosperity and health.

Isaiah 66:10-14

Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,
all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy,
all you who mourn over her—
that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast;
that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom.

For thus says the LORD:

I will extend prosperity to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream; and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm, and dandled on her knees.

As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;
your bodies shall flourish like the grass;
and it shall be known that the hand of the LORD is with his servants,
and his indignation is against his enemies.

1 John 5:1-6

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for

whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called 'son of god.' and now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.