

Welcome

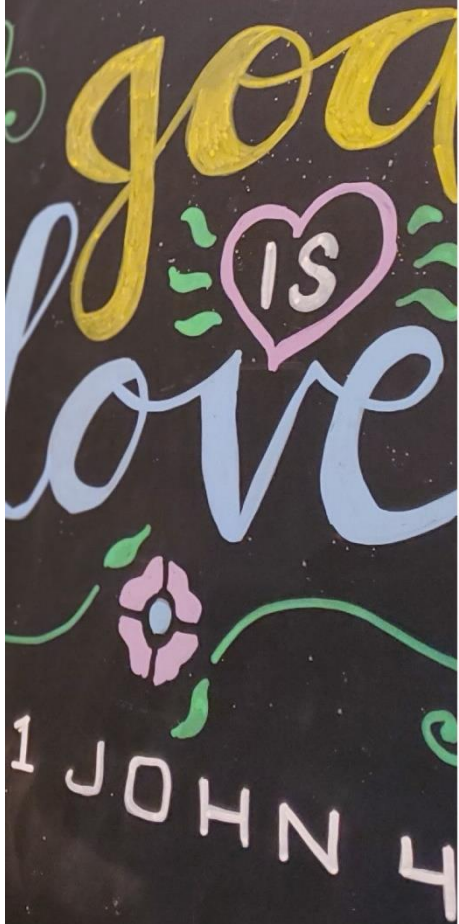
ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR

Sunday,

January 14, 2024

10:00 AM

**Second Sunday
after Epiphany**





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/display?host=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

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, January 14, 2024 at 10:00am
Second Sunday after Epiphany

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

PRELUDE Selected

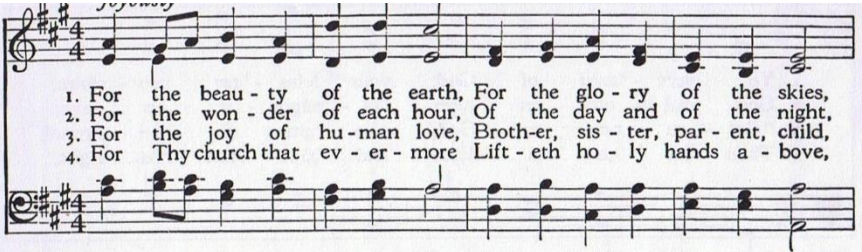
THE RINGING OF THE BELLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS Peggy Reins

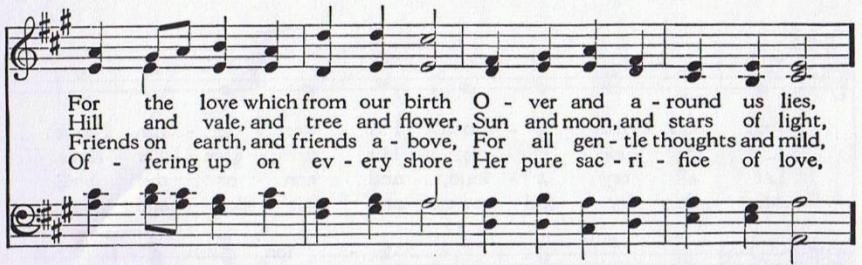
Will those who are able please stand up

CALL TO WORSHIP

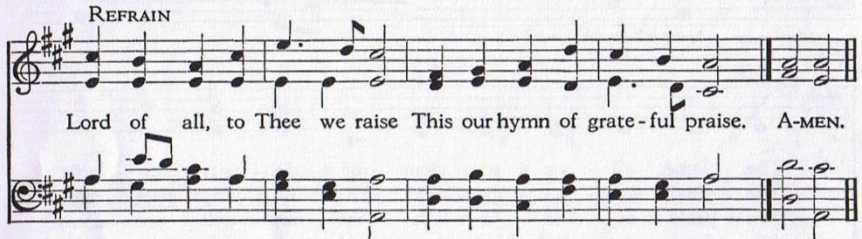
Today we begin our worship with song; let us sing the first two verses of Hymn #12, "For the Beauty of the Earth."



1. For the beau - ty of the earth, For the glo - ry of the skies,
 2. For the won - der of each hour, Of the day and of the night,
 3. For the joy of hu - man love, Broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 4. For Thy church that ev - er - more Lift - eth ho - ly hands a - bove,



For the love which from our birth O - ver and a - round us lies,
 Hill and vale, and tree and flower, Sun and moon, and stars of light,
 Friends on earth, and friends a - bove, For all gen - tle thoughts and mild,
 Of - fering up on ev - ery shore Her pure sac - ri - fice of love,



REFRAIN
 Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our hymn of grate - ful praise. A-MEN.

CALL TO CONFESSION

P: Our Scriptures today speak to us of God's call, how to respond to adversaries, and God's omniscience. Our Confession expresses our accountability and plea for mercy when we have left God's ways in these parts of the good news. Please join me in the words and spirit of prayer:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P: Holy One, You who have existed before time and whose call gives the time of our lives meaning, we admit we have heard You call us to this task or that service, and we have pretended we did not hear. You may have beckoned us to work for equal rights, but turned away.

C: If we did not pretend we didn't hear, we argued with You and told You no. We are good at rationalizing our denials of Your call, echoing the sin of our first parents in the Garden.

P: We have gone through periods of difficulty not sensing Your presence or Your care. But feelings are not facts, and both Your Word and our previous experiences tell us that You really are present for us, whether we know it at the time or not. Forgive the haughtiness of our pain.

C: You have taught us that for Your people, our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit; yet we have treated our bodies, and those of others, as objects of burden. Or simply for pleasure, something to value highly but

for our own good, not for the good of being Your 'home' within us. Forgive our not fully honoring You with our physical selves and when we've disparaged the bodies and minds of others of good will.

A: Pardon and change us, we pray; in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *2nd Timothy 2:10-13*

P: The author of 2nd Timothy wrote, "Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. The saying is sure: 'If we have died with him, we will also live with him; If we endure, we will also reign with him; If we deny him, he will also deny us; If we are faithless, he remains faithful -- for he cannot deny himself.'"

Our sins are forgiven, by the grace of God, through Christ crucified and risen, whose work God will always honor and is ours to claim and let it transform us. The Spirit empowers you, me and this church to go forward in the expectation to do good things, blessing others in love, in the name of and for the glory of our God. Can I get an Amen?

All: Alleluia! Amen.

HYMN

"I Will Sing the Wondrous Story"

#465

The congregation may be seated

1. I will sing the won-drous sto - ry Of the Christ who died for me,
 2. I was lost, but Je - sus found me, Found the sheep that went a - stray;
 3. I was bruised, but Je - sus healed me; Faint was I from many a fall;
 4. Days of dark - ness still come o'er me, Sor-row's paths I of - ten tread,

How He left His home in glo - ry For the cross on Cal - va - ry.
 Threw His lov - ing arms a - round me, Drew me back in - to His way.
 Sight was gone, and fears pos - sessed me, But He freed me from them all.
 But the Sav - iour still is with me, By His hand I'm safe - ly led.

REFRAIN

Yes, I'll sing the won-drous sto - ry Of the Christ who died for me,

Sing it with the saints in glo - ry, Gath - ered by the crys - tal sea.

MISSION MOMENT**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Mark Loach

Old Testament:

1 Samuel 3:1-10

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

MUSICAL MEDITATION Selected

Epistle:

Romans 12: 9-21

*Will those who are able please rise***AFFIRMATION OF COVENANT***This morning we will reaffirm our Open and Affirming Covenant, passed by St. Peter's U.C.C., Skokie, in June 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, 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.

RESPONSE

Gloria Creator (tune #493)

**Glory to the Creator,
The Christ, the Holy Spirit,
Three in One!
As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be,
World without end! Amen, amen.**

The congregation may be seated

PASTORAL PRAYER 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**

OFFERTORY

Will those who are able please stand up

RESPONSE

Doxology #551

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

A: We bring our gifts, our tithes and our offerings to You, God, because we have received them from You. We bring to You our lives, as well, because we have received them from Your generous hand. Bless all that we bring so that our gifts and our lives may be of service to You. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The congregation may be seated

SERMON “Servants, Listen: Love is Calling”

Will those who are able please stand up

HYMN "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

NATIONAL SONGS

563

Lift Every Voice and Sing

LIFT EVERY VOICE Irregular

James Weldon Johnson, 1921

J. Rosamond Johnson, 1921

Introduction

1. Lift ev - ery
2. Ston - y the
3. God of our

voice and sing till earth and heav - en ring, Ring with the har - mo -
road we trod, bit - ter the chas - tening rod, Felt in the days when
wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears, Thou who hast brought us

nies of lib - er - ty. Let our re - joic - ing rise high as the
hope un - born had died; Yet, with a stead - y beat, have not our
thus far on the way; Thou who hast by Thy might led us in -

lis - tening skies; Let it re - sound loud as the roll - ing sea.
wea - ry feet Come to the place for which our *fa - thers sighed?
to the light; Keep us for - ev - er in the path, we pray.

*Or "parents."

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
 We have come o - ver a way that with tears has been wa - ter
 Lest our feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met Th

Sing a song full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought
 We have come, tread - ing our path through the blood of the slaugh
 Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we for - get

us; Fac - ing the ris - ing sun of our new day be
 tered, Out from the gloom - y past, till now we stand at
 Thee; Shad-owed be - neath Thy hand may we for - ev - er

gun, Let us march on, till vic - to - ry is won.
 last Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
 stand, True to our God, true to our na - tive land.

CHARGE & BENEDICTION / *Peter 5:6-11*

P: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that God may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety upon God, because God cares for you.

C: **Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion our adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith,**

P: for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.

C: **To God be the power forever and ever.**

A: **Amen.”**

POSTLUDE Selected

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	Jenn Schneider
NURSERY ATTENDANT	Mike Ryan

News in the Pews

Welcome to St. Peter's today, we're so glad you are here!

We worship as we live — in the name, and under the guidance, of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered in the several ministries of the church this morning – ministries of worship, education, hospitality, and administration.

Our Board for Christian Education meets after worship today, downstairs in the Memorial Room.

The Micah 6:8 Committee meets at 6:30 PM today over Zoom.

Announcer articles for the February newsletter are due tomorrow!

This Wednesday the 17th Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley, Associate Conference Minister for the Illinois Conference, will meet with members of our Church Council by Zoom. Please see Peggy Reins with questions or for more information.

On Thursday the 18th the ad hoc Open and Affirming Support Committee meets in person at church at 6:30 PM and will be joined by some of our members closer to 7 PM.

The Church Council meets after worship next Sunday; if you are responsible for a report, please prepare it and submit it to the January 2024 Council drop-box as soon as you are able, giving other Council attendees the chance to read it beforehand.

The Nominating Committee is hard at work asking members to consider staying on a Board, or coming onto a Board, or becoming an Officer of the Church. Please do pray about the request; there is a reason you were thought of to approach. It is always an honor to serve God in these ways, and we do need folks to help carry on the labors the Church!

Moana Jr LIVE - Our very own Ricky Riley will be narrating the Special Gifts Theatre's production of Moana Jr., a fun show for all ages!! Special Gifts Theater is not for profit that helps kids like Ricky with intellectual disabilities. Click this link for tickets <https://specialgiftstheatre.org/tickets-for-upcoming-events/> and come give him our support! The LIVE performances are **Saturday, Feb. 3rd & Sunday, Feb 4th at 2PM**, located at Ebinger School, 7350 W. Pratt Ave. Chicago. Talk to Anna Riley annadriley@gmail.com for more info.

2024 Envelopes available! To everyone who's getting an envelope, you'll find them in the Memorial Room for pickup. If you don't see yours or want a set, let Chad or a BOF member know.

SAVERS FUNDRIVE is well underway! Softgoods like clothing, shoes, belts, hats, purses, linens, stuffed animals and more will be collected during the month of January through Feb. 3rd. There will be a designated spot on and/or

near the stage for collection. Bring during office hours or on Sundays. As well, there will be a date to be announced soon for the public to drop off on a specific weekend date and time.

Our People

Celebrating birthdays this week are David Iannotti, Andre Gloeckner, Karen Christianson and Harry Kuras. Pat (Mauer) and Ray Erdman celebrate a wedding anniversary (and also mourn the recent death of Ray's mom Lillian Erdman). Blessings to all of you!

According to the schedule, next Sunday's lector will be Olivia Altmayer, and Annie will attend the Nursery.

The Annual Congregational Meeting, followed by a Meeting of the Cemetery Association (please refer to your January Announcer), is two weeks from today! We need a quorum in order to conduct business; if you're an active member you're urged to stay! An active member of St. Peter's UCC is one who has, within the past year, taken Communion, attended worship, or financially contributed to the church.

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! See inside the bulletin's front cover for details on how to donate.

Let us know you were here! Please sign the attendance sheet in the black pew pads and when you think your pew is ready, please pass the pad towards the center aisle of the church.

Pastor's podcast is available wherever you listen to podcasts! Just type in "The Redheaded Preacher" and you'll find us!



MISSION MOMENTS

January 14, 2024

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Known and Loved

“In a real sense all life is inter-related. All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be...

This is the inter-related structure of reality.” - Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from Birmingham Jail

This week includes Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The day will be celebrated in many secular settings like schools and businesses. It's also important to honor this day in church, as we celebrate King's call to ministry and the church and faith that formed his thought and action.

In the above short quote from King's classic and powerful, Letter from Birmingham Jail, he takes his fellow pastors to task for their unwillingness to advocate on behalf of the civil rights movement. He asks them to imagine what would be possible if Christians spoke with one voice against injustice and hatred.

That same impulse is behind the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which began more than a century ago when friends corresponded about their longing for unity across the lines that too often divide those who profess to follow the same Christ. One of the friends suggested a day to pray for unity and the other responded that it would be even more powerful to expand that day to an "octave" or eight holy days. The original octave was founded by two Episcopalians, Father Paul, and Mother Lurana. During this week, all Christians are called to reflect on scriptures, pray for unity within the faith and participate in communal services together.

From Martin Luther King, Jr. in the American South, to Mother Lurana in the British countryside, listen! Can you hear the voices of our ancestors in faith? They are calling, commanding us to pray, move and act together for peace.

First Samuel 3:1-10

¹Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

²At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; ³the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. ⁴Then the LORD called, “Samuel! Samuel!” and he said, “Here I am!” ⁵and ran to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down. ⁶The LORD called again, “Samuel!” Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” ⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,

and are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.

You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

and now, verses 13 through 18:

For it was you who formed my inward parts;

you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret,

intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.

In your book were written all the days that were formed for me,

when none of them as yet existed.

How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

I try to count them—they are more than the sand;

I come to the end—I am still with you.

Our final, epistle reading today is from Paul's letter to the Church at Corinth, chapter 6, verses 12 through 20. Evidently some of the church members in this Greek city thought that since they were free from having to obey the Law to be forgiven, they could pretty much do what they wanted as long as it did not harm anyone. That included visiting prostitutes who worked at the temples of foreign gods. The Corinthians even had some phrases to justify giving in to their desires, like "All things are lawful for me" and "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food," which Paul will toss back at them in his reply.

First Corinthians 6:12-20

Paul wrote, ¹²“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are beneficial. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. ¹³“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.

¹⁵Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, “The two shall be one flesh.” ¹⁷But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”



SOFT GOODS DRIVE

**Donate during
January 2024**

St. Peter's UCC

8013 Laramie Ave. Skokie, IL 60077

For more information, call

(847) 673-8166

Items Needed:
Clothing
Shoes, Hats,
Purses, Belts
Bedding
Linens
Stuffed Toys
Pillows