



# Welcome



ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR

**Sunday,**

**August 20, 2023**

**10:00 AM**

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**Twelfth Sunday  
After Pentecost**





# 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-cmd=donate&source=paypal)

**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, August 20, 2023 at 10:00am**  
**Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost**

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

**PRELUDE**

Theme and Variations on "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

**THE RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Peggy Reins

*Will those who are able please stand up*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**P:** Like Israel in Isaiah 58, let us wonder if God hears and honors our worship.

**C:** **The people of God wondered in Micah 6 what the Lord wanted from them.**

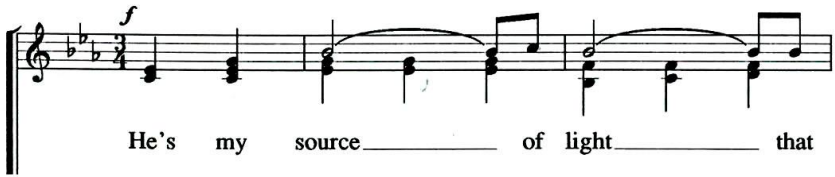
**P:** God told us that Israel asked God, "Why do we fast, but You do not see? Why humble ourselves and You do not notice?"

- C: The Lord told them why, too, which is teaching for us: “Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day . . . only to quarrel and fight. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high.”**
- P: The Lord then said to those wondering, “Is not this the fast that I choose: To loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke?”
- C: We are reminded that as we gather in worship and praise, God looks for the integrity of a people who worship but also walk the talk by doing what is just, and seeking to end oppression of the vulnerable and weaker.**
- P: May we always find the Lord pleased with our worship, never turning away.
- C: Yes, that is up to us! Being taught, let us praise the Triune God with our works and from the heart!**

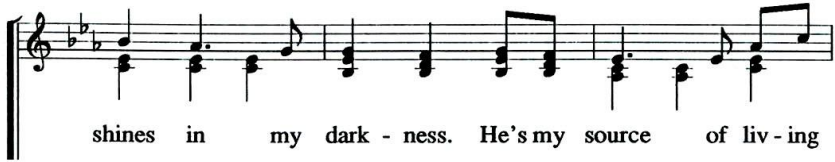
RESPONSE

“He’s My Source”

SSB #17



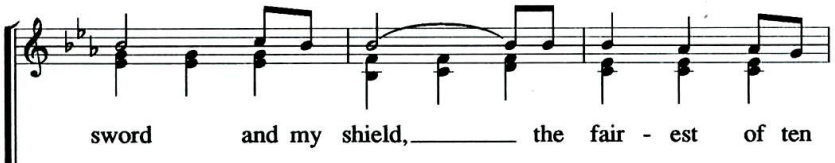
He's my source of light that



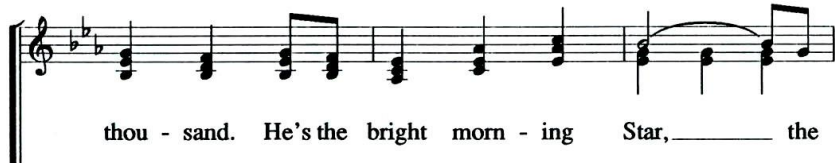
shines in my dark - ness. He's my source of liv - ing



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: In Matthew 7, Jesus said “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven” (v. 21). Looking deeply within, or perhaps we’re all too painfully aware of how we have left the Christ-path to forge our own self-oriented way, are we not grateful for warnings and moved to heartfelt confession? Let us take this opportunity to come clean with God and return to the will and love of God.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P: Great God, when we see people who are lonely and grieving, sometimes we walk by. When we see or know people who are out of work, suffering mental health challenges, mourning the loss of relationship, sometimes we walk by. We are more worried about getting our steps in than trying to be a channel of love or righteousness.

**WOMEN:** Because some people are only faces in the news, or statistics in a column, we do not pause. Other people are so close to us that we do not recognize how they have been hijacked on the road of their circumstances.

- MEN:** When we have seen the voiceless, we figure someone else will advocate for what is right for them. When we have learned about the truly powerless in the face of established forces that want to keep all the power, not helping the oppressed or impoverished, usually we do not speak out on their behalf.
- A:** We are motivated to act and pray in order to hold onto what we have, and hope to have, but not to expand freedoms, to dig into systemic roots of poverty and injustice, or to work for fairness for “the least of these,” where Jesus is. Forgive us. Reorient us! Have mercy on us, hear our confession and renew our minds and hearts to return to God’s will for those under a yoke they did not fashion or earn. In Jesus’ precious name we pray. Amen.

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

P: Paul wrote to the Church at Rome, “I appeal to you therefore, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect” (12:1-2).

By the mercies of God, Paul said. We are forgiven by the grace of God that we know in Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected! By these same mercies, as a manifestation of the new life we’re given, Paul urges us to forsake conformity to the selfish values of much of the world, and embrace those we find in Jesus, in compassion, honesty, service and hope. Thanks be to God, right, for God’s inexpressible gift of forgiveness and change! Let the people say . . .

**A: Amen and amen!**



## HYMN

## "Gather Us In"

SSB #19



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark-ness  
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-t'ry, we are the old who  
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter, here we will take the  
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



van-ished a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings  
 yearn for your face; we have been sung through-out all of his-t'ry,  
 bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,  
 light years a-way— here in this place the new light is shin-ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.  
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.  
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.  
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en, gath-er us in, the  
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty, gath-er us in, the  
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion, give us to cat the  
 Gath-cr us in and hold us for-ev-cr, gath-cr us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en,  
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low-ly,  
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion  
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.  
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.  
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.  
 fire . . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: GATHER US IN, Marty Haugen

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*The congregation may be seated*

**A CALL TO OFFERING**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Olivia Altmayer

Old Testament:

Exodus 21:22-25; Psalm 82:1-4;

Proverbs 31:6-9

**MUSICAL MEDITATION** “Intermezzo”

by Frank

*Will those who are able please stand up*

**GOSPEL**

Luke 4:16-30

## RESPONSE

## "Thy Word"

SSB #33

*Refrain, verse 2, refrain*

*Refrain*

Thy word is a lamp un-to my feet and a light un-to my path.

1 When I feel a-fraid, think I've lost my way, still you're there right be -

side me, and noth-ing will I fear as long as you are near.

*Refrain*

Please be near me to the end.

2 I will not for-get your love for me, and yet my heart for-ev-er is

wan-der-ing. Je-sus, be my guide and hold me to your side, and

*Refrain*

I will love you to the end.

Text: Psalm 119:105. Amy Grant, b. 1960

Music: THY WORD, Michael W. Smith, b. 1957

Text and music © 1984 Word Music, Inc. (ASCAP) and Meadowgreen Music Co./ Bug and Bear Music (ASCAP), admin. EMI Christar. Music Publishing

*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**

**SERMON**

“What IS Justice?”

*Will those who are able please rise to sing*

**HYMN** "God, May Your Justice Roll Down"

*Sing to the tune "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty"*

**God, may Your justice roll down like the waters You send here,**

**And may Your righteousness flow like a stream without end here!**

**Praying this prayer, many have struggled and dared,  
All for the world you intend here.**

**Christ, we give thanks for past saints who renewed education,**

**Freed the oppressed, brought Your healing and fought segregation.**

**Savior and Lord, great were the risks they endured,  
Bearing Your hope and salvation.**

**We as Your church now remember these stories of others**

**And pray Your Spirit will send us, as your sons and daughters.**

**Show us the way we, too, can serve You each day  
Till justice rolls down like waters.**

*Text: Copyright © 2001 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.*

*Included in **Songs of Grace: New Hymns for God and Neighbor** (Upper Room Books, 2009, includes a permission note for those who own this book (like our pastor does) to use this hymn (along with the 76 other new hymns in the book) in their local church's worship services.*

**CHARGE**

P: The Lord has told us, O mortals, what is good,

**WOMEN:** And what does the Lord require of us, but to do justice,

**MEN:** Love kindness,

**A:** And walk humbly with our God?

**BENEDICTION**

P: And, quoting from the late Rev. William Sloane Coffin, “May God give you the grace not to sell yourself short, grace to risk something big for something good, grace to remember that the world is now too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but Love.”

**C: Amen!**

**POSTLUDE** “Praise to the Lord the Almighty” arr. Callahan

*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**


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MINISTER	Rev. Richard Lanford
MUSIC DIRECTOR	Ben Westphal
DEACON	Barb Bailey
LIVESTREAM RECORDING	Jenn Schneider
NURSERY ATTENDANT	Annie Noorts

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# News in the Pews

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**Paul writes: “The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Romans 11:29, NRSV). God has called you, so receive his gifts for you today: his love, his forgiveness, his life.**

**Please join us after worship for coffee hour, celebrating Barb and Jim Todd’s 68<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary!** Thank you to Barb and Jim for letting us help celebrate such a monumental occasion.

**The deadline for articles** of the September 2023 newsletter is tomorrow, Monday, August 21st!

**The Church Council meets today** after worship and some coffee hour time!

**RUMMAGE SORTING SCHEDULE:** Openers and sorting times this week are Rita, Tuesday from 10 AM to noon, Carolyn/Carol, Wednesday from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM and Barb B., Friday from 10 AM to noon. You are welcome to come anytime within those hours and stay as long as you are able.

**Next Sunday our worship service will be held at Lorel Park.** Helpers and a truck from the Village will arrive at the Laramie Avenue entrance at 9 AM to pick up folding

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chairs, a Deacon's table if desired, a music stand or two, and maybe more. The service cannot be live-streamed, so we encourage folks coming in person when possible, and it will be recorded for our YouTube channel so folks can attend the service virtually, later. For a picnic afterwards, we ask those whose last names begin with letters A through M bring a dessert or chips, and those whose last names begin with a letter from N to Z please bring a dish or nice side to share. It is BYOB. Maybe if someone brings some various kinds of balls / gloves, we can use the park for more than just worship, grub and talk!

**Pastor Lanford is trying to schedule a New Members / Seekers Class**, to hopefully be held this month, with the reception of new members during worship on a Sunday in September. Please talk with him if you are interested in being part of this exploratory and educational one-time class!

**Thanks to all who last Sunday came for coffee hour** and a screening of the trans-related documentary "Learn with Love," created by the Trevor Project, and to all who provided the sustenance we enjoyed!

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# Our People

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**Happy birthday / anniversary!** Having a birthday this week are Dan Guenther and his daughter Allison, Fredrik W. Svenson turns 1 this week, Elizabeth Hoellerich, Juanito Banoyo, Ron and Stephanie Lundeen, Valerie Paige Mahoney, Harrison Kuras, and Henry Muhrer. Celebrating wedding anniversaries are Barb and Jim Todd, Mark and Bonnie Loach, Dan and Heather (Schuhrke) O'Hara, and Laurie and Errol Mitchell. God's blessings are wished for all of them!

**According to the schedule,** barring any switches, next Sunday's Lector will be Annie Noorts. There is no Nursery at the Lorel Park service.

**Please remember to lift up in prayers:** Beth Sterba and Beth Lanford, both recovering from hip replacement surgery.

As announced during worship last Sunday, former member Barb Donna died at the beginning of August, and Rich Schneider's brother-in-law Gene died last weekend.

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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!**

**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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**August 20, 2023**

**Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Genesis 45:1-15**

**Bold Moves**

In today's story, Joseph, having achieved success and power in Egypt, is reunited with his brothers who assumed that he was dead or enslaved in terrible conditions. Consider the words of this meditation as an invitation to reconcile a difficulty in your own life.

Imagine yourself standing, beginning to walk. You move with ease, each step making you stronger, never tiring...Imagine that you come to a hill and you begin to climb, noticing the terrain around you. It is the most beautiful kind of hill you can imagine. What does it look like? Is it dry desert and rock? Rain forest? Mountain meadow? Glaciers?

Now imagine that you get to the top of the hill, and the view of the valleys and plains around you opens up. You can see a long way. Imagine that the place spread before you is the country of your life...It is populated with all the people you have known and every place you have ever been and everything you have ever done. As you look over it, you can see it at a distance, yet you can

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see it all clearly – the country of your life...Take a few moments to locate someone precious, or something that brings you joy, or someplace that brings you peace from sometime in your life. Enjoy your memories and feelings as you look upon that beloved person, object or place....

Now turn your gaze. Somewhere in the vast country of your life, there is something that still feels out of place. It is time to look at the thing that it is time to forgive. From your safe place, high on the hill, you can look at it with fresh eyes. You can see that thing for what it is – one thing in the country of your life, not the whole of it.

You know what it is – this thing that needs forgiving.... Is it something in yourself? Or done by another?... Look at it from this distance and with this clarity. See again how the thing that needs forgiving is only one place in the country of your life – one part (whether large or small) of all the vastness that you have seen and known....

Allow yourself to imagine how it would change the geography of the country of your life if you were to forgive the thing that needs forgiving...Would the thing change in shape or color? Would it reflect or absorb the light in a different way? ... Would it become smaller? Would it disappear altogether, leaving room for something new? ....

Allow yourself to imagine forgiving that thing. Allow yourself to imagine that it is already forgiven by a God whose love is more powerful than any human act. When you are ready, return to this place and this time.

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**Exodus 21:22-25**

“When people who are fighting injure a pregnant woman so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no further harm follows, the one responsible shall be fined what the woman's husband demands, paying as much as the judges determine.

If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.”

**Psalm 82:1-4**

God has taken his place in the divine council;

in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:

"How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? *Selah*

Give justice to the weak and the orphan;

maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.

Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

**Proverbs 31:6-9**

Give strong drink to one who is perishing,

and wine to those in bitter distress;

let them drink and forget their poverty,

and remember their misery no more.

Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute.

Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

*This morning the Gospel is Luke Chapter 4, verses 16 through 30. We find the already-traveling Jesus coming home and attending his hometown synagogue in Nazareth, where he was asked to read and teach. By the end of the passage, most will wish that they had not.*

**Luke 4:16-30**

When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,*

*because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives*

*and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free,*

*to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'"

And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.