



COURAGE
for Community

Welcome to St Peter's UCC In-Person and 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](https://www.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

Our network name is: ATTUNITEDCHURCH; Pass:
UNITEDCHURCH8166

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**

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**OUR ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR
Sunday, September 26, 2021, 10:00 AM
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

WELCOME GUESTS!

* Indicates all who are able are invited to stand

PRELUDE "Variations on Lobe den Herren"

**THE RINGING OF THE BELLS
THE SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Pastor: We worship a God who saves, rescues,
delivers and liberates.

Women: *True worship is more vital than even the
most dramatic athletic contest.*

Men and Youth: *Let us offer our praise to God who is full of
surprises.*

ALL: **Let us worship as we await God's
unexpected grace!**

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

P: "Confess your sins to one another, and pray
for one another, so you may be healed."

Congregation: *"Prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective."*

P: We seek, we need, that right relationship with God that empowers our prayers and our service. Let us pray!

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

P: As we remember both Your call to us and Your mercy towards us, we confess our sins, failures, and shortcomings to You, O God. In this time of year we are busy and easily distracted. School has started back; vacations are over.

Men: *We may allow this hustle and bustle to take our focus away from our spiritual sides and our confrontations with injustice. We may find more excitement in athletic contests than in the drama of salvation.*

Women: *We may forget that more is at stake in the work of the church than in mere games on television. Forgive us for our distractions.*

P: Redirect our attention, great God, to the teaching healing, reclaiming, saving and challenging work to which You call us.

ALL: **Empower us to be the church with a compelling message to the world. May our words and actions bring glory to You. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

"In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2nd Corinthians 5:19-21).

In Jesus Christ we are reconciled to God, our sins forgiven!
In claiming this amazing grace and letting it change our lives, will the church join me in saying . . .

ALL: Alleluia! Amen.

***HYMN:** "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty"

#8

WORDS ABOUT OFFERINGS

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Carolyn Van Til

Epistle:

James 5:13-20

Gospel:

Mark 9:38-50

MUSICAL MEDITATION "Praise to the Lord the Almighty"

PASTORAL PRAYER 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: "For? Against? Together?"

***HYMN:**

""Hear Us! Save Us!"

(Sing to the tune of "God Himself is with us," #29)

**Hear us when we suffer;
Listen to our praying:
Keep our wounded lives from straying.
May we be forgiven
For the sins we carry
Coming to this sanctuary.
Calm our fear; keep us near,
God of strength and power;
Meet us in this hour.**

**Save us from oppression,
Help the sick and dying.
May our prayers be edifying.
Raise us up and heal us,
As we help each other,
Caring for each sister, brother.
May our youth seek your truth,
Guard their feet from stumbling
When their world is crumbling.**

**Grant us strength to praise you;
Fill our hearts with gladness.
Take away our numbing sadness.
Give us faith to follow
Where the Teacher leads us,
As with lasting food Christ feeds us.
Salt and peace: we'll not cease**

**Serving where you send us.
May your love defend us.**

***CHARGE:**

P: Be watchful.

Men: *Stand firm in your faith.*

Women: *Be courageous and strong.*

P: Let all that you do be done in love.

***BENEDICTION (3:18)**

P: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,

C: *So that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

ALL: AMEN.

***POSTLUDE:** "Lobe den Herren" arr. Lehenbauer

FOR WORSHIP TODAY

MINISTER
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Rev. Richard Lanford
Ben Westphal

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good Morning! Loving Spirit, I pray for all who are gathered for this worship service. May each of us hear from you what we most need in order to grow in faith, hope and love. Amen.

Welcome back to Ben!

RUMMAGE CLEAN-UP, having begun last Monday and Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, continues this week, same days and time.

Thank you to everyone who participated in last Sunday's Village Inn / St. Peter's U.C.C. fundraiser. We receive 20% of the proceeds from any orders that came in to them on the 19th that also mentioned they were for or with the St. Peter's UCC fundraiser.

We are always grateful for any and all offerings to the church. No amount is too small! As we said in the opening announcements, you can support our work (and thus, your work too) by mailing in a check, via text, signing up for electronic giving, or using PayPal as indicated, with links, on the first main page of announcements. Depending on how you set up your PayPal account, you can arrange to pay whatever transaction fee there is yourself, or, that it will be included in your donation and deducted before it hits St. Peter's account (so St. Peter's, in effect, pays it). Thank you very much for giving!

About our new Mini-Pantry now that it's here: Non-perishable food Items will be needed regularly to keep it

stocked! Donations can be brought to the shelves outside the office during office hours (M-F 9 – 2) or on Sundays. The Mini-Pantry is also intended to highlight, raise awareness of, and address food insecurity in our community. The Mini Pantry will operate on a “Give what you can, take what you need” system, and anyone from anywhere can deposit or withdraw food items. Recommended items include canned goods with ring-pulls; hygiene products: toothpaste/toothbrush, deodorant, soap, menstrual products, peanut butter, kids' snacks; non-perishable foods, bottled water.

Having birthdays this week are Beth Sterba, Lucy Rees, Nicole Miller, and Ron Schuhrke’s oldest grandchild, Maya Martinek. Celebrating wedding anniversaries are Harrison and Angela W. Kuras, Kathy and Jeffrey Issel, and Rich and Mandy Steegmueller. Blessings on all your celebrations!

Upcoming events: Our Pet Blessing will be October 17th! All furry and feathered friends invited for a pet party, blessing, treats and more! November 13th is our Holiday Craft Show (and hopefully Bake Sale). We hear there will be over 30 vendors in both the gym and Memorial Room! Contact Wendy to help out and mark your calendars now!

Donations for Our Turn to Serve at A Just Harvest at the end of October are being collected now. We are not serving yet, but AJH is preparing and serving the meals carryout style so we need funds for them to purchase and prepare the meal! Checks can be sent to the office, and you can also use Paypal if you are able. Thanks so much!

According to the schedule next Sunday's lector is Jess Schneider, who is away at college, so we need a switch!

Next Sunday is Worldwide Communion Sunday, so if you are a live-stream worshiper, remember to have ready what you use for joining us in Communion.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

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

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 26, 2021

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22

Courage for Community *American Indian Ministry Sunday* *United Samoan Ministries Stewardship Sunday*

Esther's story is hidden history for most modern United Church of Christ congregations. Readings from the Old Testament book that bears her name only appear once in the three-year cycle of the lectionary, which is the calendar of Bible readings used by many congregations to guide worship. And there are several readings to choose from each Sunday, so unless a congregation is very thoughtful and deliberate in choosing to share her story, you might not know anything about her.

This is not so for our Jewish brothers and sisters in faith. Each year in the festival of Purim, her story is celebrated with joy and gratitude as one of the great heroes in the centuries-long battle against anti-Semitism.

Hidden histories are those stories from the past that have either been forgotten or deliberately suppressed as a way to center only one telling of history. On this day in the UCC, as we bring Esther out of hiding, we celebrate the voices of two significant groups whose stories have too often also been hidden.

American Indian Ministry Sunday is an opportunity to hear the voices of our Native American siblings. According to caimucc.org, American Indian congregations "are an integral part of the life of the United Church of Christ. We maintain our Indian traditions by employing our Native values and cultures to witness in our communities through authentic and postcolonial Indian expressions of the Christian faith."

United Samoan Ministries Stewardship Sunday is a chance to recognize the UCC's Samoan congregations. You can find their web presence on Facebook at [/united-samoanministriesucc/](https://www.facebook.com/united-samoanministriesucc/), where they proclaim: We are the body of Christ, gathered and scattered in various states and cultural environments, proclaiming our faith in our Risen Lord Jesus Christ! The United Samoan Ministries of the UCC is established to provide a setting for members of Samoan congregations to gather for fellowship, spiritual nurturing, mutual support, and communications, and strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ.

Learn about Esther, and then join these two organizations in keeping language alive and telling stories that reveal hidden histories.

