



The Churchman

Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

250 Woodside Road, Riverside, Illinois 60546 * (708) 442-5250

“Faith Active in Love”

www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org

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Issue 2

We are called together by the Holy Spirit around Word and sacraments to glorify God the Father, creator of all things, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We trust God to nurture lives of faith and hope, as we serve and give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world.

A Letter of Gratitude on the Epiphany of Lord, January 6th, 2023



Today the Western Church marks the conclusion of the Twelve Days of Christmas on the Epiphany of Our Lord with his "shining forth" as a light to the nations. In some cultures this day commemorates the arrival of the three magi bearing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and representing the nations in acts of worship before the Christ child. January 6th is also the celebration of Christmas among the Eastern Orthodox Communion.

It seems appropriate on this day to thank you all for remembering our family with your greetings and gifts during the past Christmas season. These thoughtful acts of generosity and kindness are always so meaningful for us and our family, and we look forward to the enjoyment that these will bring in the coming year. Please accept our thanks for all your acts of kind support throughout our years with the congregation.

*The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest...
...For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (excerpts from Isaiah 9).*

We wish each of you and your households peace, hope, joy and love during the coming year!

—Pastor Dennis and Jane, Gianna and Sam, Isaac and Olivia

The Disciplines of the Season of Lent

Almsgiving: Giving alms, Jesus teaches, means making the hardships and needs of others our own: the young and the old, the sick and the suffering, next door neighbors and people in distant lands—people it would be easy to forget. Rather than simply looking out for ourselves, Jesus urges us to see those in need. And what shall we give? Some time, some of our talent, material resources. Whatever we give should be something that costs us, given in a spirit of gratitude to God for the life that fills us each day. What shall we give (up) in Lent? Maybe a visit to a homebound or hospitalized neighbor or friend or member of the congregation; maybe some time after school helping a child with homework; maybe an evening at a shelter for homeless men or women; maybe a gift to Lutheran World Relief. Maybe a new niche for ministry in the congregation. After all, before us are the great alms Jesus gave: “He loved us, and gave himself up for us.”

Prayer: The Lenten season calls us to pray, but prayer, Jesus teaches, is much more than saying words. “Go into your room, and close the door, and pray to your Father in secret.” Before we pray, we need to shut the door to the noise, the trivialities, the distractions, the countless cares grabbing for our attention. In the quiet place of our hearts, we speak and listen to God. We trust that God helps us pray in this season. For those who have stopped praying, or pray with little fervor, God gives graces for praying again. Usually the graces come as we turn to prayers and practices already there: reflective reading of the Bible and devotional materials, the liturgies of the Lord’s Supper and other opportunities for public worship, simple grace-filled prayers, like the Lord’s Prayer or the psalms. “What a Christian should be doing at all times should be done now with greater care and devotion,” Pope Leo told Christians of the 6th century who were beginning their Lenten observance. Lenten devotional materials will be available in the sanctuary or by request, including various sets of *CareNotes* for Lent and devotional booklets entitled *Not By Bread Alone 2023*.

Fasting: This discipline is likely the greatest challenge. Our society looks on fasting itself as peculiar, perhaps even abysmal. Urging everyone to eat, drink, and buy more and more, our world today has made fasting unfashionable and perhaps even un-American. Yet the gospel message warns us that more and more can ruin creation. An acquisitive spirit is a selfish spirit. The taste for too much can destroy. The good things of life can turn into our captors. In our society, fasting could be viewed as a gift to free us from those things to which we have attached our lives. This Lent, recognizing the hold some

—continued on the next page...

things have on us, we can try with God's help to keep them in their right place. For many good reasons, not all of us are physically able to fast due to health problems, work situations, family responsibilities, etc. But some reasonable abstaining from something which obstructs our relationship to God can be a liberating experience. Some may find that they are able to do without food during a day of the week, perhaps Friday in remembrance of our Lord's suffering and death, or Saturday evening before Communion on the Lord's Day. Others may find it helpful to set aside certain ways of spending time or money, addictive behaviors or manners of treating others. We need to develop a leaner, less wasteful way of life for the sake of all creation. Can the discipline of fasting lead us to a gentler style of living in communion with the earth and one another?

However you decide to practice the disciplines of Lent, let them be offered freely and generously, not unwillingly and begrudgingly, and in love for our Lord and in gratitude for the gift of life and redemption.—*djl*

Ash Wednesday and the Forty Days of Lent

The holy season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. The service time is 7:15 p.m. with a spoken Liturgy of Holy Communion. Christians gather on this holy day to mark the beginning of Lent's baptismal preparation for Easter. On this day, we receive an ashen cross on the forehead—a gesture rooted in baptism—make extended confession, hear the solemn proclamation to keep a fast in preparation for Easter's feast, and contemplate anew the ongoing meaning of our baptism into the Lord's death and resurrection. While marked with the ashes of human mortality, the church hears God's promise of forgiveness and tastes God's mercy in the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

Time to Be Respectful

by Steve Harper

If indeed time is the precious commodity of our time, we must not only be good stewards of it ourselves, we must be respectful of other people's time as well. Here are some ways to do that.

First, keep meetings to a minimum. I have lost count of the times I have read leadership literature which says many of our meetings are unnecessary. One of the ways we can give the gift of time to others is not to make the ministries of the church dependent on meetings. Meetings should be about authorizing things, not operationalizing things. Meetings should be held to answer the question, "What shall we do?"

Meetings should be about mission, not mechanics. The "how" aspects can be decided other ways. This requires authorization and trust on everyone's part, but it is necessary if time-consuming meetings are to be reduced. Meetings should focus on discernment, not details. Hand off vision to task groups.

Second, keep task groups small. Don't invite 10 people to attend task-related meetings when three or four can get the job done. Task groups will recruit others to carry out the particular ministry, but a lot of people are not needed to decide operational matters.

Third, no matter the type of meeting, keep it within a reasonable time frame. This requires a stated agenda that is followed so that "stream of consciousness" does not hijack the reason the meeting was called in the first place. Along with this, agree to limit conversation by asking for one view and one alternate view. Additional input is given only if it adds to what has been said. Some meetings run too long because of repetition that is redundant. Nail down the big-ideas needed to make necessary decisions and then leave.

Fourth, learn how to use social media to your advantage.

Technologies like Skype or Zoom enable people to meet without showing up at the same place. Imagine the joy of not having to leave your home to attend a meeting. Social media can also be used to form working groups who can share ideas, make plans, and implement things without even having to call a meeting. Again, here is where trust and authorization enable ministry to be planned and executed differently.

Fifth, keep ministry to a minimum. That may surprise you, but I believe it is true. Looking at the weekly schedule of activities printed in church bulletins sends the message, "This is a very busy place." But what theology of time is defining the activism? Respecting the time of others means asking, "Why does the church exist?" And asking it may reveal not everything taking peoples' time is essential. When time is precious, doing essentials is necessary.

Sixth, spread out who does what. Invite people into limited duty. If people cannot be found to conduct a ministry, don't try to get "the faithful few" to add one more thing to their church activity list. Just say, "That's a good idea, but right now we don't have the folks to do it."

The preceding items are only illustrations meant to spark your own creativity with respect to honoring other people's time. But there is an even deeper gift of time that you can give your people... Define ministry as life-oriented, not church-related. This means moving time into vocation and away from institution. Cultivate and celebrate the time people are spending being disciples other than when they are at church. If serving Christ is too closely linked with holding an office in or attending a meeting at church, people will always feel, "I don't have time for that." But if they are taught and encouraged to view all time as vocational, they will see they are in ministry all the time. Service anywhere is service for Christ.

Steve Harper taught spiritual formation and Wesley studies to Christian divinity students for more than thirty years. He is a native of Texas, graduating in 1966 from Haskell High School and McMurry University in Abilene in 1970. He received his M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary in 1973, and the Ph.D. in Wesley studies from Duke University in 1981. Across the years, Dr. Harper's ministries have included youth minister, evangelist, pastor, professor, and seminary administrator.



Lord, do not let us do more...

*...If in doing less we might do it better.
Do not let us acquire more
If in living with less
We might know Thee better.
We are easily swayed by size,
Equating quantity with quality,
Wealth with security,
And applause with popularity.
Forgive us for spreading ourselves thin
For the sake of appearances.
Permit us to amend our ways
Lest we miss the Baby in the stable,
The Lad in the carpenter's shop,
The Teacher on the hillside,
And the Christ on the Cross. Amen*

—E. Lee Phillips

February Announcements

A reminder to the congregation, especially during the months of winter weather, that complimentary cab service is available on Sunday mornings for rides to and from worship services. Please contact Blue Village Cab Company at 1.708.583.6900 as early as possible to make arrangements for pick up. When arranging your pick-up, please remind the dispatcher that the ride is to be billed to account number #101755.

If you will be leaving the Chicago area during the coming months for warmer climates, please notify the church office before then so the monthly newsletter can be forwarded to your temporary residence or cancelled until you return. The congregation incurs a fee for each newsletter that is undeliverable; stopped mail delivery to your permanent residence is considered "undeliverable" and returned to the church for a fee. Thank you for your assistance.

Thank you!

Thank you to the following households who purchased poinsettias to decorate the chancel of the sanctuary for our Christmas services.

Ruth Bakalich	The Mocek Family
Karyn Minarcin Bute	Charlene Patula
John and Shirley Kostelny	Martin and Ann Pennino
Fred Kuzel	Tina Rothstein and Family
Esther Meksto	The Slahor and Babyar Families
The Family of Steve Michael	The Family of Shirley Wood

Memorial Flowers

Jan. 22nd: In loving memory of beloved mother and grandmother +Laverne Hanzel+ on the anniversary of her death by remembering daughter Karen Cox, Kevin Hanzel and family, David Hanzel and family, sister Audrey Bucz, nephew Brian Bucz, and niece Adrienne Gana.

In memory of mother and grandmother +Betty Zittman+ on the anniversary of her birth by remembering children and grandchildren.



February 4: Isabelle Boike	February 15: William Londak
Lois Mika	February 19: Gretchen Kostelny
February 6: John Borysek	February 21: Peter Drahos
Zachary Sawyer	Adriana Kubova
February 7: David Richards	Sarah Michaels
Ann Vana	February 22: Robert Kany
February 11: Donovan Byrne	February 23: John Kostelancik
Christopher Greer	February 25: Gary Drahos
February 12: Jack Bute	James Triska
Susan Hassel	
February 13: Valerie Smith	

Birthdays and Anniversaries

February 5, 1972: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
February 14, 2008: Vincent and Valerie Smith
February 27, 1965: George and Joyce Hodul

From the Parish Register

Passages:

Audrey Ducay, 81 years old, passed from this life on December 8th. A service for Audrey was held on January 14th at Modell Funeral Home in Darien. Interment is at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

Darina Durkovic, 95 year old mother of Darina "Dee" Miko and Ivan Durkovic, passed from this life on December 22nd. A service was held at Sts. Peter and Paul on January 11th for Darina. Interment was at Woodlawn Cemetery

Memorials and Honorariums

❖ For the Church ❖

Mary Sordel (*designated for the replacement of the exterior building and grounds lights*).

Scott Michalec, in memory of dear father +Dr. Edward Michalec+. Joseph and Carol Ruiz, in memory of +John+ and +Molly Holub+, +Marie Kamp+, and +Dr. Paul+ and +Vera Kubala+.

John and Janet Broussard, in memory of +Jerry Predny+.

William Boor, in memory of +Jerry Predny+.

Esther Meksto, in honor of her 92nd birthday on January 6th.

Ann Neimes, in memory of +George and Elizabeth Palancar+.

In loving memory of beloved wife, mother and grandmother +Donna Tuider+, on the first anniversary of her death, by remembering husband Robert, daughter and son-in-law Kristina and Ashish Patel, and grandchildren Ashtin and Mila Patel.

Mildred Riban, in memory of +Michael+ and +Mary Riban+.

Mildred Riban, in memory of +John Kostelancik+.

❖ In Memory of Darina Durkovic ❖

Darina "Dee" Miko, in memory of mother.

Arnost and Anna Bulir

John and Shirley Kostelny

William Boor

John and Janet Broussard

Jewish Federation of Greater Santa Barbara

Voitech and Maria Chladek

Ann Kmet, Frank and Patty Kmet, and Ed Kmet

Beverly Podzamsky

❖ In Memory of Celia Martinez ❖

Suzanna Skudrna

Edward and Joanne Sefara

William Boor

John and Janet Broussard

Beverly Podzamsky

❖ In Memory of Audrey Ducay ❖

Kevin, Julie and Adri Mann

John and Janet Broussard

William Boor

Mildred Riban

Charles and Donna Baur

John and Shirley Kostelny

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DATED MATERIAL

Stream of Consciousness

by Richard Rohr

Most of us have lived our whole lives with a steady stream of consciousness, with a continual flow of ideas, images, and feelings. And at every moment of our lives we cling to these thoughts and sensations, so much so that I don't have the idea; the idea has me. I don't have the feeling; the feeling has me. We have to discover who this "I" really is, the one who has these always passing feelings and thoughts. Who am I behind my thoughts and feelings? The fixed point that watches things pass through me—is the real ME! Learn how to abide there in peace.

I'm sure that most people in the Western world have never really met the person they really are. We have to find a way to get beyond our self-image and our ideas about who we are. We have to discover the face that we already had before we were born, who we were in God all along, before we did anything right or wrong. This is the first goal of contemplation. This "I" is capable of union with God.

Imagine a river or stream. You're sitting on the bank of this river, where boats and ships are sailing past. While the stream flows past your inner eye, I ask you to name each one of the "vessels" or thoughts floating by. For example, one of the boats could be called "my anxiety about tomorrow." Or along comes the ship "objections to my spouse" or "I don't do that well." Every judgment that you pass is one of these boats. Take the time to give each one of them a name, and then let it move on.

For some people this is a very difficult exercise because we're used to jumping aboard our boats immediately; in doing so, we give them "gas"! As soon as we own a boat and identify with it, it picks up its own energy. We have to practice un-possessing, letting go, detaching from our thoughts and feelings, or they own us. With every idea or image that comes into our head, we have the opportunity to say, "No, I'm not that; I don't need that; that's not me." This frees you to intentionally choose your divine identity instead.

Some of the boats that are accustomed to us jumping aboard immediately head back upstream and return, trying to catch our attention again. Some people feel the need to torpedo their boats. But you must not attack, hate, or condemn any idea or thought; that would merely be your perfectionistic ego trying to "win." This is basic training in nonviolence. You must not hate your soul. The point is to recognize thoughts and feelings and to say, "That's not necessary; I don't need that." But do it very amiably. If we learn to handle our own souls tenderly and lovingly, then we'll be able to carry this same loving wisdom into our other relationships. A thousand seeming "distractions" are now a thousand opportunities to choose God instead. So there is really no such thing as a distraction! Why didn't someone tell me that as a novice?!

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:5).

The Walter E. "Wally" Kessler Memorial Mardi Gras...



...on Saturday Evening, February 18th,
5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Mark it on your calendars today!
*Food by Portillo's,
compliments of the Kessler Memorial Fund,
entertainment, raffles, costume parade and more.*

News from Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

February is going to be a sweetheart of a month. We will be busy making crafts, celebrating Valentine's Day, and having a visit from the dentist.

On our annual pajama day we will be watching a movie and eating popcorn.

—Lisa Manganiello, Preschool Director



FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVERS

February 5th:

Greeter: Carole Pollitz
 Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Lector: Charles Matthies
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: Janet Broussard

February 12th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
 Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
 Lector: John Broussard
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

February 19th:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
 Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Lector: Carrie Watkiss
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: Walter Cudecki

February 22nd: (Ash Wednesday)

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Assisting Minister: John Broussard
 Lector: Beverly Tarbox
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: Janet Broussard

February 26th:

Greeters: Philip and Linda Painter
 Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
 Lector: Fred Kuzel
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: George Valek

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Janice Hapgood



Ash Wednesday, February 22nd

Liturgy of Holy Communion
 with Imposition of Ashes
 at 7:15 p.m.

Spring Rummage and Bake Sale

Donations are being accepted for the Spring Rummage Sale scheduled for Saturday, April 22nd. Donations may be brought to the church Monday thru Thursday, 9 a.m. til noon. Please let Karen in the office know when you are delivering by calling 1.708.442.5250. All items need to be clean and in working order. No electronics, including computers and TV's, and clothing. Thank you!

MARCH WORSHIP SERVERS

March 5th:

Greeter: Sandy Garvey
 Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
 Lector: Emily Bittner
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

March 12th:

Greeter: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
 Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Lector: Tom Michaels
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: Walter Cudecki

March 19th:

Greeter: Carrie Watkiss
 Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
 Lector: J. T. Tarbox
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: George Valek

March 26th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Lector: Jane Lauritsen
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: Janet Broussard

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Ruth Bakalich

For more information, news, photos,
 worship videos and sermons, visit us on the

web at:

www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org



December 2022

Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering

Budgeted Offering: \$2,527.00

Date	Offering
12/4	\$2,258.00
12/11	\$4,874.00
12/18	\$1,192.00
12/25	\$1,420.00

Mission and Outreach 2022

Sts. Peter and Paul Lutheran Church, Riverside



Our ELCA sponsored missionaries from Japan, Andrew and Sarah and Zeke, were welcomed at our summer outdoor worship service.



We had the privilege of providing \$1,000 to each of our sponsored missionaries.



Steve and Bethany, ELCA medical sponsored missionaries, in Tanzania



Thanks to Fred Kuzel and Chuck Matthies, together with other members and softball players for walking in the Riverside Independence Day Parade!!

The congregation had the privilege of hosting Lux Cantorum Chicago in spring and holiday concerts with a festive reception in December.



Olexandr, Kataryna, Phylp, Alexi, Daryna, members of the Lauritsen family.

The Prokopchenko family arrived at Sts. Peter and Paul in September 2022. Thanks to Linda Painter, the liason between the Kiwanis of Willowbrook, which originally provided support for the family, the Prokopchenkos have found a home here. They come from Zaporizhzhia, a routinely bombed city in eastern Ukraine and are here through the United for Ukraine Program.