



# 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 1

*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.*

## The Epiphany of Our Lord, January 6<sup>th</sup> *We Offer What We Have*



*Advent and Christmas 2022*

We bring what we can. We offer what we have. We give our time, our skills, our resources. We give not out of a sense of duty or obligation but in response to the immeasurable gift we have received.

Together, the church is the body of Christ, a ragtag community of believers following a hunch and a star. Together, we offer what we have. We offer our songs, words, hopes, fears, and failings. We offer our prayers. We offer our ability to comfort and mourn, our willingness to be vulnerable. We give our gifts, whatever they are, and we give them joyfully. Some shiny and new, some worn and mended, some cracked but beloved. Gifts more precious than gold, rarer than frankincense or myrrh.

We journey down a long road, sometimes through the dark. Together, we face danger. We face uncertainty. We face temptation. When we come finally, joyfully to celebrate the arrival of the baby Jesus, the king in the humble manger, we rejoice. We pay homage. We offer our gifts in response to the God who has given us all that we see and know. We offer what we have because of what we have received. We bring what we can because the gift that God gives us in Christ is a gift beyond our ability to measure.

We can't always offer as much as we wish we could, but we offer what we have in the spirit that we can and find that together, our

broken gifts make a beautiful whole. The gift we have received is the sure and certain truth that our gifts are enough. That we are enough. That we are created with care and redeemed to be love and light in the world.

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## Images of the Season for Epiphany

As we fumble our way out of bed on a winter morning that seems more like night, Isaiah's words "Arise, shine for your light has come!" may sound ironic... . But then, we know that the prophet's words have no connection at all to the changing seasons. No, they come to us in the context of our Lord's revelation as the beacon of salvation for the whole world. In response to that, the Epiphany season calls us, entices us, *commands* us to rise up, to leap out of those places where we live in spiritual dimness. God calls us to polish our glasses, clean our windows to be able to see with clarity this new thing that has happened. Arise! Shine! We are invited to greet and welcome the light—a luminescence that shines with such magnitude that it melts the icy coldness of our hearts.

Epiphany is no wimpy one-candle-in-the-darkness deal, but rather a blast of brightness heretofore unseen. Get up and see it! Bask in its brightness! Behold the light that shines upon us, scattering the darkness of our minds so that we may walk as children of the light. The light is Christ. Any spiritual light that we have is his, shining in and through us. And indeed, so great is the grace that shines upon us that it seems that our faces, like Moses', should be glowing with reflected glory. At the very least, our way of living surely will catch the light of Christ's love and shine it on those around us. Such is the extroverted, mission nature of this season.

And while the people are the church and thus will be the primary light-givers in this season, our centers of worship, too, should glow with the light. Don't let Epiphany be wimpy. Let everything associated with our worship shine in celebration that the light of our lives is living within us. Polish the metals in the worship center till they gleam. Light those candles. Let the light shine full blast. Our places of worship should be beacons, searchlights, calling out to all those who labor in spiritual darkness.

Epiphany begins at Bethlehem, but it deserves to be more than

a half-baked rerun of Christmas—it has much to offer of its own. The magi followed an unmistakably bright star previously unknown, a luminous sign from God to pay attention. During the season of Epiphany we also celebrate the baptism of Jesus, introducing the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. A liturgy that includes the affirmation of our baptism certainly has a place on that day. Let it be a time to celebrate the brightness of being a child of God. Be washed in the bright waters of baptism, burn again with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

And the brightness carries on through the season. At Cana, Jesus does the first of his signs, revealing his glory. The rabbi Jesus proclaims the recovery of sight for the blind. Jesus' is a light seemingly too intense for some in his hometown. He invites others into the circle of his light, inviting fisherfolk to pull in people. Christ is a light that shines where none has before, blessing the poor, the hungry, the sorrowful. And finally comes the dazzling light of the transfigured Lord.

This light is for all people: "a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel" in the words of Simeon. This light and fire of God shines like a therapeutic laser right into the places where it is most needed. This cleansing light sears away the scales on our eyes, cauterizes the seeping wounds of sin, and halts the gnawing darkness of anxiety. This is a healing light, a refining light, a burnishing light and a purifying light. This light is like no other. This light has the power to save.

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## December 3<sup>rd</sup> Holiday Concert



Lux Cantorum in concert at Sts. Peter and Paul Sunday afternoon, December 4<sup>th</sup>. Photo by Rafael Martinez.

## New Members Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>



Joined by family members and the congregation, Bettye Hardin and Staci Hardin were publicly welcomed to Sts. Peter and Paul on the Third Sunday of Advent, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

## In the depths of winter...

*In the depths of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer* (Albert Camus).

Sometimes we suddenly see or sense opposite emotions within ourselves. The cold of winter presses in on us, and we may feel tested by its bite. Yet, when we think we cannot bear it a moment longer, we find a counterforce within, an inner reassurance that comes like a summer breeze and says we can do what we must. Perhaps it comes in a time of dark despair, and we realize that at least we've made it this far. We are pretty tough. In our deepest sadness about the loss of a love, we may find a more meaningful contact with our Higher Power.

The opposites in our lives may tempt us to fight them. One side may be very clear and obvious while the other side is hidden. When we are open, these extremes are spiritual teachers for us. As we think about life and our feelings today, what opposites do we find?

Today, I will remember that I have an invincible summer at the deepest part of winter in my life.

*Quoted from the app Touchstones. Find recovery resources at Hazelden.*

## Lutheran World Relief Helps Ukrainian Neighbors in Need

After millions were forced to flee violence following the invasion of Ukraine. The gifts shared through Lutheran World Relief have provided shelter and community, warm meals, emergency cash funds, life-saving medical care and supplies, and mental health resources to the most vulnerable of our Ukrainian neighbors. But most importantly, because of our congregational support through LWR, families fleeing war have hope. Thank you for sharing God's love when it was needed most. To learn more about the work of Lutheran World Relief, visit [lwr.org](http://lwr.org).



# “Leavetaking”

by Anne Porter

Nearing the start of that mysterious last season  
Which brings us to the close of the other four,  
I’m somewhat afraid and don’t know how to prepare  
So I will praise you.

I will praise you for the glaze on buttercups  
And for the pearly scent of wild fresh water  
And the great crossbow shapes of swans flying over  
With that strong silken threshing sound of wings  
Which you gave them when you made them without voices.

And I will praise you for crickets.  
On starry autumn nights  
When the earth is cooling  
Their rusty diminutive music  
Repeated over and over  
Is the very marrow of peace.

And I praise you for crows calling from treetops  
The speech of my first village,  
And for the sparrow’s flash of song  
Flinging me in an instant  
The joy of a child who woke  
Each morning to the freedom  
Of her mother’s unclouded love  
And lived in it like a country.

And I praise you that from vacant lots  
From only broken glass and candy wrappers  
You raise up the blue chicory flowers.

I thank you for that secret praise  
Which burns in every creature,  
And I ask you to bring us to life  
Out of every sort of death

And teach us mercy.



|                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Jan. 3: Gerald “J.T.” Tarbox | Jan. 18: John Galdun  |
| Jan. 4: Suzanna Skudrna      | Jan. 20: William Boor |
| Jan. 6: Esther Meksto        | Jan. 22: Trevor Jech  |
| Jan. 8: Samuel Lauritsen     | Kenneth Kostelancik   |
| Jan. 10: Joyce Hodul         | Mildred Riban         |
| Jan. 14: Thomas Michaels     | Jan. 31: Leslie Byrne |
| Jan. 15: Sarah Gavac         | Rachel Decosola       |

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

January 18, 2015: James and Kathi Zinsser  
January 19, 2014: Eric and Gretchen Kostelny  
January 21, 1996: Leslie and Matthew Byrne

## Memorial Flowers

*Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>:* In loving memory of dear husband, father and grandfather +Larry Bakalich+ on the 94<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth on December 7<sup>th</sup> by the remembering Bakalich Family.

*Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>:* In memory of +Anna Slahor+ on the anniversary of her birth and the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of her death by remembering children John and Joanne Slahor and Shirley Babyar.

## Memorials and Honorariums

### ❖ For the Church ❖

Sue Renville, in memory of husband +Dale+ and father +Steve Podzamsky+.

David and Patricia Kostelancik, in memory of father +John Kostelancik+.

Dan and Raeann Dlhý (*Good Samaritan Fund*).

Charlene Patula, in memory of husband +David+, parents +Emil+ and +Mae Terem+ and beloved pet +Blizzard Patula+.

John and Shirley Kostelny, in memory of +Marjorie Hudnall+.

## January Announcements

- ★ Offering envelopes for 2023 are now available for pick up in the lower hallway adjacent to the dining hall. Please pick up envelopes for friends or relatives who are unable to do so.
- ★ If you will be leaving the Chicago area during the winter 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.

## Spring Rummage Sale

Donations are being accepted for the Spring Rummage Sale (date to be determined) Monday thru Thursday, 9 a.m. til noon. Please let Karen know in the office when you are delivering by calling (708) 442-5250. All items need to be clean and in working order. No electronics, including computers and TV’s, and clothing. Thank you!

### November 2022

#### Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering

Budgeted Offering: \$2,527.00

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Offering</u> |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 11/6        | \$2,082.00      |
| 11/13       | \$ 633.00       |
| 11/20       | \$3,713.00      |
| 11/27       | \$ 655.00       |

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church  
250 Woodside Road  
Riverside, IL 60546  
— Postage Guaranteed

Non-Profit Org.  
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**DATED MATERIAL**

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**JANUARY WORSHIP SERVERS**

**January 1<sup>st</sup>:**

Greeter: Shirley Kostelny  
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss  
Lector: J. T. Tarbox  
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel  
Usher: Rafael Martinez

**January 8<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeter: Sandy Garvey  
Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels  
Lector: Emily Bittner  
Live Stream: John Broussard  
Usher: Janet Broussard

**January 15<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeter: Carrie Watkiss  
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels  
Lector: Tom Michaels  
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss  
Usher: Walter Cudecki

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>:**

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny  
Assisting Minister: John Broussard  
Lector: George Valek  
Live Stream: Charles Matthies  
Usher: George Valek

**January 29<sup>th</sup>:**

Greeters: John and Janet Broussard  
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies  
Lector: John Kostelny  
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel  
Usher: John Kostelny

**Sacristan and Altar Care:**  
Fred Kuzel

**News from the Riverside Preschool  
at Sts. Peter and Paul**

We will be starting off by celebrating 2023 with number projects focusing on 2023 along with ice and winter. We will end the month with a “Crazy Dazy Day” where we will enjoy being silly all day in preschool.

—Lisa Manganiello, Preschool Director

**FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVERS**

**February 5<sup>th</sup>:**

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

**February 12<sup>th</sup>:**

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

**February 19<sup>th</sup>:**

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

**February 22<sup>nd</sup>: (Ash Wednesday)**

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

**February 26<sup>th</sup>:**

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

