

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

Volume 46

December 2024

Issue 12

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.

"Glory" Coming Sunday, December 8th

Advent and Christmas at Sts. Peter and Paul



"Glory"

Lux Cantorum Choral Concert
December 8th, 4:00 p.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 22nd

10:15 a.m., Liturgy of Holy Communion

Christmas Eve

7:15 p.m., Festival Liturgy of
Holy Communion with Candlelight

Christmas Day

at Ascension Lutheran Church
400 Nuttall Road in Riverside
10:00 a.m. Lessons and Carols
with Holy Communion
(No liturgy here on Christmas Day)



Lux Cantorum Chicago in concert at Sts. Peter and Paul in December 2022.

Lux Cantorum Chicago will present its holiday concert entitled "Glory" at Sts. Peter and Paul on Sunday afternoon, December 8th at 4 p.m. followed by a seasonal reception in the dining hall. For more information and ticket purchases, please visit luxcantorum.org. Performances will also be held on Friday, December 6th at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago and Saturday, December 14th at Pilgrim Congregational Church in Oak Park. Sts. Peter and Paul members Brandon Michaels and Pastor Dennis sing with Lux Cantorum.

Images for the Season of Advent

A vision from the prophet Isaiah places natural enemies of the animal world next to each other in a peaceable kingdom. This vision has been rendered by artists and proclaimed by preachers. Hurting and destroying others is forbidden. The weak and powerless, the poor and sorrowful will have God as their advocate and deliverer. For at least the four weeks of Advent, the church sets this hopeful vision and divine promise next to stories of war and conflict, demands for privilege, and muffled cries of the poor and powerless.

The prophetic readings from Isaiah during Advent speak strongly about peace to our world. Peace is not simply the absence of war, but

—continued on next page...

the intentional act of beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. God does not want us to learn the trade of war any more. Advent tunes our ears to God's dangerous call to serve as peacemakers. The psalmist's centuries-old prayer is still relevant today: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6). We enlarge the psalmist's vision and pray for the peace of the whole world.

In the second readings proclaimed this season, God's alarm clock wakes us to the urgency of repentance. God's promised coming offers hope amidst all the alarming news of the world. Romans 15:13 serves as a type of benediction for the Sundays in Advent as we celebrate the hopes and fears of all the ages in the coming of Jesus Christ. Sometimes it seems as though God's coming is delayed or ineffective, but we are counseled to be patient and wait on God's promises in hopeful expectation. In this season we do not pretend that Jesus has not yet come. We already claim the promises that are ours in the power of Christ's death and resurrection. We watch in confidence for the one who came, who comes among us each time we gather around Word and Sacrament, and who draws us into God's final coming to make all things new.

In the gospel readings, hopeful people are urged to be ready for God's unexpected appearances according to God's own time. A surprising voice in the wilderness again calls all people to a new appraisal of their lives and openness to the Holy One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and a cleansing fire. John, the whistle-blower on unholy lives, is jailed for pointing to Jesus as the one who brings good news to all people. It is good news that will become the song of the angels and that will be on the lips and in the hearts of those forgiven and healed by this Savior. All of this points to the Christ who is Emmanuel, God with us. We know him as the promised one who came among us, who continues to be with us, and who opens up all of God's future as a promise in which we can hope.

It is an eye-opening experience to be in Israel during Advent. There are no Christmas decorations or the pressure to buy presents. One has only the great promises of Advent. Perhaps this suggests that we should avoid muting the strong, sober messages of Advent with cultural Christmas decorations. The Advent readings talk about peace challenging our war-making. The Biblical message points us to the great needs of the poor, disadvantaged, and powerless who need more than once-a-year Christmas caroling or a few coins in the Salvation Army kettles. Advent points us to radical repentance and realistic hope that transform our expectations and the way we live in the world. Starting with the Advent readings, how might we express this season artistically? Advent might look very different from many of the commercial decorations that are commonplace during December. How might our visual images speak as surprising and challenging voices in the wilderness? How might we picture hope opening up a promising future?

All these readings stir up a new vision of a world in which God comes among us. Will we allow our imaginations to lead us toward a vision for what all this means for our congregation and our life in the community and world? During these December days, the world tries to define Christmas in a way that mutes the Advent message. The church has both the opportunity and the responsibility to proclaim that Advent is not a wet blanket on festivity, but rather a house-cleaning that prepares us to celebrate what God has given the world in Jesus Christ. That is what gives hope and joy to the world.

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Let's keep this sanctuary... a sanctuary: warm and welcoming, safe and sound.



Christmas Eve 2023

The autumn chill is a reminder of several facility needs to keep the sanctuary and building warm and welcoming as well as safe and sound during the coming months of winter and in the years ahead. The most important and pressing projects include the following:

Heating system repairs...

A section of heating pipe embedded in the second floor on the west side of the building adjacent to the gym needs to be replaced. Presently, a valve is turned off to prevent continued water damage but this leaves sections of this level, including the offices, without heat. Looking ahead, we hope to expand the heating system in the gym which was shut off some years ago due to similar leakage and followed by a very partial replacement of baseboard units at the north end.

Sanctuary smoke detectors...

Smoke detectors, or this section of the system, located in the peak of the high arched ceiling of the sanctuary need to be replaced. This is a project which has needed attention for many years.

Tuckpointing and masonry work...

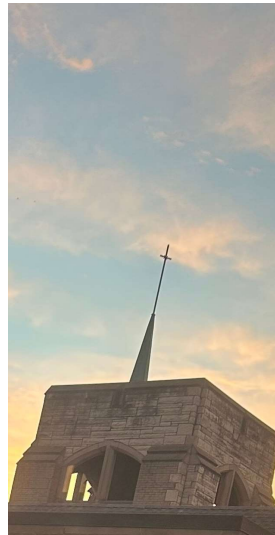
Thoroughgoing tuckpointing of the building began with the east face in 2018 following the celebration of the sixtieth year in Riverside and continuing in the summer of 2023 on the northside. The completion of this work remains to be done on the west and south faces of the exterior, including ongoing safety measures to secure the limestone facade on the bell tower.

Why not start today?

The Congregation Council hopes to have more detailed descriptions and cost estimates for you as we approach the season of end-of-the-year donations. You may begin doing so today by using any of the following options for making your thank-offerings for the well-being of this house of worship:

- Mark the "Building Maintenance" box with your gift amount on your set of offering envelopes.
- Send a check or money order by postal mail using the "Memo" line on your check to indicate that your offering is for "building repairs." Memorials and honorariums are always welcomed and appreciated.
- Use Zelle for electronic payments at the following link:

donations@stspeterandpaulriverside.org



Bell tower at sunset.

Thank you in advance for your continuous and faithful support of the congregation at Sts. Peter and Paul and for the mission to which we are called by the Holy Spirit to carry forward together.—*djl*

Passages

Bettye J. Harden, 76 year old mother of Staci, Paul Jr., and the late Mattilene, passed from this life on November 12th. A liturgy of the resurrection and service of thanksgiving was held on November 22nd at Sts. Peter and Paul followed by interment at Forest Home Cemetery in Forest Park.

Betty Ann Bagel, 87 years, passed from this life on November 11th in Schaumburg. She is the wife of the late John Bagel, mother of Jean, Ann and John, daughter of the late John and Anna Kucan, and niece of the late Susan Hrusik. A liturgy of the resurrection and service of thanksgiving was held on November 15th at Oehler Funeral Home in Desplaines followed by interment at Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Arlington Heights.

An electronic copy of this newsletter is
posted at our website
and can be accessed at:
www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org.

Disturb us, Lord, when
We are too well pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have come true
Because we have dreamed too little,
When we arrived safely
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when
With the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst
For the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life,
We have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth,
We have allowed our vision
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas
Where storms will show your mastery;
Where losing sight of land,
We shall find the stars.

We ask You to push back
The horizons of our hopes;
And to push into the future
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

—ascribed to Sir Francis Drake (1577)



Mildred "Millie" Londak celebrates her 95th birthday with family and friends on November 20th.

Pour Us out like Unending Love (1 Kings 17: 8-24; Mark 12: 38-44)

Where are you now, Elijah?
Where are the jars of meal and the jugs of oil
that will not run out of resources?
Where are you now among the widows
desperate with fear and hunger;
where are you now among the children
who must struggle just for survival;
where are you now, Elijah,
among the homeless and the helpless of the world?

Were you there with the disciples, Elijah,
watching gifts go into the treasury,
watching a lonely widow sacrifice
all that she had for living,
watching her place her life and future
in the hands of God?

I see where you are, Jesus:
I see you laying down your life for others,
I see you giving your body to be broken,
I see God in you, holding back nothing –
holding back nothing like
a sacrificing widow,
holding back nothing like
a jug of poured oil –
I see God who is willing to give everything
for the sake of the salvation of the world.

I hear your call to us, as God called Elijah,
to go to the sad and despairing;
I see you showing us, as you showed
your disciples,
the sacrifices made by the caring;
I hear you calling us to be part of giving
all that we are
for the sake of your future,
all that we have
for your love for the world.

O, pour us out, God, Holy Giver.
Pour us out, like unending love.

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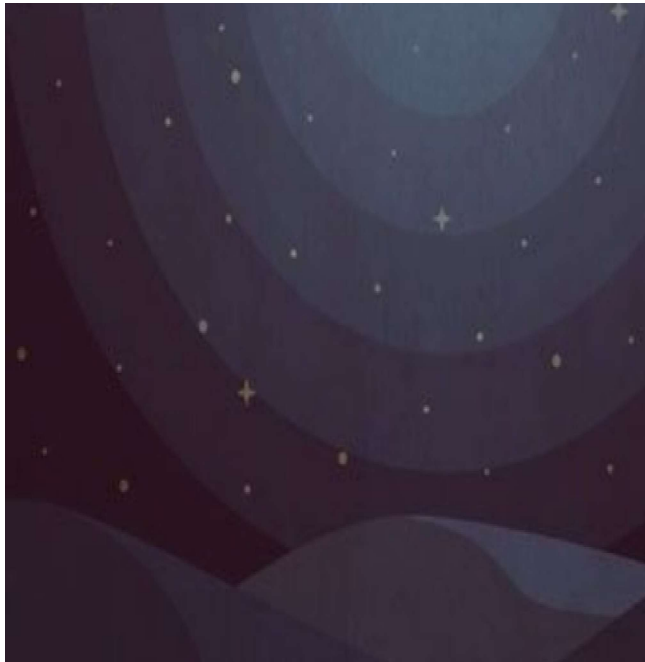
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DATED MATERIAL



*"Glory" | December 6, 8, & 14,
2024*

We express awe and adulation by commemorating seasonal events from diverse communities. "Glory" honors togetherness and universal aspirations for peace, love, and hope.

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DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVERS

December 1st:

Greeter: Edward and Joanne Sefara
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lector: Joanne Sefara
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Janet Broussard

December 8th:

Greeter: Staci Harden
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lector: Kristine Boike
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: George Valek

December 15th:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
Assisting Minister: John Broussard
Lectors: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: Walter Cudecki

December 22nd:

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

December 24th, Christmas Eve

Greeters: Philip and Linda Painter
Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
Lector: Fred Kuzel
Comm. Ministers: Vicki Michaels and Carrie Watkiss
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Janet Broussard

December 29th:

Greeter: Carrie Watkiss
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lector: J. T. Tarbox
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: Rafael Martinez

Sacristans and Altar Care:
Jane Lauritsen and Fred Kuzel

JANUARY WORSHIP SERVERS

January 5th:

Greeter: Fred Kuzel
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: Philip Painter
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Rafael Martinez

January 12th:

Greeters: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lector: Aidan Altavilla
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Janet Broussard

January 19st:

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

January 26th:

Greeters: Edward and Joanne Sefara
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lector: Tom Myers
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: Fred Kuzel

Sacristan and Altar Care:
Fred Kuzel

December Announcements

- ★ Offering envelopes for 2025 will be available for pick up in the lower hallway adjacent to the dining hall beginning the First Sunday of Advent, December 1st. Please pick up envelopes for friends or relatives who are unable to do so.
- ★ Financial donations made to the congregation must be received in the church office no later than Monday, December 30th in order to be included in your end of the year financial statement.
- ★ 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 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.





If you would like to order a poinsettia to help decorate the chancel of the sanctuary for the Christmas liturgies, a sign-up sheet is posted in the dining hall. You may also contact the church office to place your order. The cost per plant is \$17. The deadline for payment and sign-up is Wednesday, December 18th.

“Operation Stockings for Soldiers”

Send our troops and local soldiers a little taste of home for the holidays. Kuratko-Nosek Funeral Home, 2447 South Desplaines Avenue in North Riverside is proud to sponsor “Operation Stockings for Veterans.” From now through December 11th between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., stop into the funeral home and pick-up a free Christmas stocking to take home, decorate, and stuff with Christmas cheer. You will receive a list of recommended items along with the free stocking. Kuratko-Nosek Funeral Home will either ship or deliver the stockings at their expense to troops abroad and veterans here at home in time for Christmas. For more information please contact the home at 1-708-447-2500.

Memorials and Honorariums

✦ For the Church ✦

St. Paul VI Parish Sports Club

In loving memory of beloved mother and grandmother +Anna

Stastny+ on the anniversary of her death by remembering daughter Audrey Bucz and grandchildren Brian Bucz and Adrienne Gana.

John and Shirley Kostelny, in memory of +Stephen Kubik+.

DECEMBER

Dec. 1: Ludmilla Kovalsky	Dec. 14: Ruth Bakalich
Dec. 2: Elaine Haase	Audrey Bucz
Dec. 3: Lavinia Myers	Ann Pennino
Dec. 4: Eric Kostelny	Dec. 16: Robert Barcik
Dec. 5: Carrie Boike	Steven Melka
Walter Cudecki	Nickolas Ritacco
Ann Head	Dec. 17: Ann Kmet
Dec. 6: Fred Kuzel	Mary Jo Meyers
Dec. 10: Edward Sefara	Dec. 19: Martin Tornil
Dec. 11: Kristian Kubo	Dec. 26: Shirley Kostelny
Claire Watkiss	Mary Sasuta
Dec. 12: Betty Force	Dec. 27: Steven Mendel
Dec. 13: Vera Borysek	Dec. 29: Darina Miko
	Dec. 31: Grace Tapak

Birthdays and Anniversaries

December 4, 2004: Lee and Emily Drahos

December 28, 2002: Gerald and Beverly Tarbox

Memorial Flowers

Nov. 24th: In loving memory of beloved mother and grandmother +Anna Stastny+ on the anniversary of her death by remembering daughter Audrey Bucz and grandchildren Brian Bucz and Adrienne Gana.

News from Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

December is filled with holiday bells, crafts, presents, and putting on a Winter Show. Have a Merry Christmas!

—Lisa Manganiello, Preschool Director

House for rent...

Three bedrooms and a bathroom on the main floor with a basement space with its own bathroom. Some flexibility: 1) Rent the entire house to four working adults for \$750/mo. each. 2) Rent to a family for \$2,500/mo. 3) Make the basement space into a studio and rent it separately to reduce the cost of the main floor to \$2,000. Washer and dryer are in a common space. Electricity and water included. Gas negotiable. If interested or know of someone who is, please contact Pastor Dennis who will provide contact information.

October 2024	
Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering	
Budgeted Offering: \$2,615.00	
Date	Offering
10/6	\$1,365.00
10/13	\$ 895.00
10/20	\$2,200.00
10/27	\$1,415.00



Pastor Dennis, Karen Rouleau, David Richards and the members of the Congregation Council at Sts. Peter and Paul wish everyone a very blessed Christmas and a joyous, peaceful and healthy New Year.



Better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

From a 1907 collection entitled “The Supreme Conquest and Other Sermons Preached in America” by William L. Watkinson.