



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.

Children's Christmas Presentation on the Fourth Sunday of Advent



A Prayer of St. Augustine for Epiphany

O Holy Spirit, Love of God, infuse Thy grace, and descend plentifully into my heart; enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling, and scatter there Thy cheerful beams; dwell in that soul that longs to be Thy temple; water that barren soil, overrun with weeds and briars, and lost for want of cultivating, and make it fruitful with Thy dew from heaven. Oh come, Thou refreshment of them that languish and faint. Come, Thou Star and Guide of them that sail in the tempestuous sea of the world; Thou only Haven of the tossed and shipwrecked. Come, Thou Glory and Crown of the living, and only Safeguard of the dying. Come, Holy Spirit, in much mercy, and make me fit to receive Thee. Amen.



Ash Wednesday and the Forty Days of Lent

The holy season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, March 5th. The service time is 7:15 p.m. 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. Please mark this holy day on your calendars.

“When the time was fulfilled”: A Pastoral Letter to the Congregation and Friends

New Year's Day 2025
Riverside, Illinois

Joseph went up to Bethlehem to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time was fulfilled for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son (Luke 2:5-6).

Dearly beloved family at Sts. Peter and Paul,

In some sense every New Year's Day marks the “fulfillment of time” as we pause for a moment to look back at the year now past and then turn to lean forward into another year before us.

Today I write to you from a well of gratitude from which I see the early dawn of a promising horizon of hope for the congregation at Sts. Peter and Paul Lutheran Church. Some of you may remember that today marks the “fulfillment” of twenty-four years as your pastor. When you and I and our family began this journey together at the turn of a new century, I doubt any of us ever imagined that we would travel together for nearly a quarter of this 21st century. We have traveled a long distance through so many bright hopes, deep sorrows, unspeakable joys, and the long-awaited fulfillment of many dreams. Now, I believe, we have arrived at a place which some might call the “fullness of time.”

On this New Year's Day, with abiding faith and confidence in my heart, I write to you that I believe the time has been fulfilled for us as congregation and pastor. Today, I announce the resignation of my letter of call to the congregation and my intention to retire no later than the end of May with my final Sunday tentatively scheduled for May 18th. I assure you that my arrival at this place in time is the culmination of many years of prayer, reflection, conversation, patience, and the sometimes rigorous discernment of the will and call of the Holy Spirit through its counsel and guidance. And now, at last, I am at peace that the “time is fulfilled,” anticipating a new birth for the congregation in the coming year.

With the expected birth of our first grandchild, Jane and I look forward with delight to the enjoyment and continuation of our vocations in marriage and family with the hope of being more actively present both with our immediate as well as our extended families and the friendships which have weathered the passage of time. There are also a number of “callings” which I look forward to answering, including a life of deeper worship, prayer and meditation; a return to the disciplined study of the sacred writings and theology: reading much of that which has been shelved for many years; and then, possibly engaging in further reflection and writing. Already, I am looking forward to the many experiences which allow my heart and voice to sing.

As you may have noticed, the transition time which I am offering between this announcement and our departure is by comparison a rather long one. This is so for a number of reasons. First, this has been a long pastorate by the standards of today. There will need to be sufficient time to take inventory of and assign necessary responsibilities for coverage during the interim. During these months, I am also hopeful that together we can begin leaning forward into the future by completing, as much as possible, the prerequisites which are necessary to begin a call process, namely, a congregational self-study and ministry site profile, possibly beginning with the upcoming Lenten season of prayer and discernment. I hope that by doing this sooner than later, the congregation will be stationed for the call process to begin in the months after my departure.

I believe the congregation is poised to venture into new mission fields, particularly with the repopulation of our communities with young families and their small children as well as the rapidly growing bi-lingual populations in Riverside and nearly all the surrounding communities. One of the greatest needs of these so-called Gen Xers and Millennials is adult faith formation, catechesis, and a basic knowledge of scripture, creeds and confessions. In order for this horizon of hope to unfurl, I'm certain that you will need to travel with someone new. And I trust that the Holy Spirit will provide highly qualified, spirit-filled, mission-directed, loving and faithful pastoral leadership whom you will come to love, honor and respect as you have so generously and graciously offered to Jane and me and our family throughout the years.

Jane and I are happy (and relieved!) to share with you that we recently closed on a house in Riverside which we hope to make our home for many years to come. Naturally, there will be a tendency for you to turn to me in times of need, especially when that need is urgent or there is a special occasion for which you would want me to officiate. For the well-being of the congregation, the call process, and the ministry of a new pastor, I cannot in good conscience receive or respond to any such causes for pastoral care or counsel. Please understand that, at the conclusion of the upcoming transition period, I will no longer be serving as your pastor, and you will need to rely upon the interim pastor and then the duly called pastor. I ask you to please respect this for the welfare of everyone.

Jane and I will be moving from the parsonage during the second and third weeks of this month, so the immediate need will be to ensure that there is oversight of utilities and security at 318 Maplewood Road. I will be working with our council leadership to be sure this is in place.

I cannot possibly express to you the depth of gratitude and love which we have in our hearts for the many years and countless miles which our Lord Jesus has given us. Now, we must lift it all before him and offer it to him as our sacrifice of praise. With the Apostle Paul in the conclusion to his letter to the beloved churches at Philippi, I might also say, “Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.”

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. I am your brother and pastor,
Dennis J. Lauritsen

FEBRUARY

February 4: Isabelle Boike Lois Mika	February 13: Valerie Smith February 15: William Londak
February 6: John Borysek Zachary Sawyer	February 19: Gretchen Kostelny February 21: Peter Drahos
February 7: David Richards Ann Vana	Adriana Kubova Sarah Michaels
February 11: Donovan Byrne Christopher Greer	February 22: Robert Kany February 25: Gary Drahos
February 12: Jack Bute Susan Hassel	James Triska February 28: Lyla Yamamoto

Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVERS

February 2nd:

Greeter: Staci Harden
Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
Lectors: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Rafael Martinez

February 9th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
Lector: George Valek
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Janet Broussard

February 16th:

Greeters: Philip and Linda Painter
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lector: Joanne Sefara
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: George Valek

February 23rd:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: Kristine Boike
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: Walter Cudecki

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Janice Hapgood

Memorials and Honorariums

❖ For the Church ❖

Betty Jane Licko-Keel, in memory of father +Stephen Licko+, mother +Marie (Michalic) Licko+, sister +Nancy Carol Licko Carter+ and husband +William Jerry Keel+.

Ann Neimes, in memory of parents +George+ and +Elizabeth Palencar+.

Scott Michalec, in memory of father +Dr. Edward Michalec+.

Milan D. Zavodny, in memory of parents +Milan+ and +Olga Zavody+ and mother +Olga+ on the anniversary of her birth on January 9th.

Pat Gavac, in memory of husband +Paul+ at Christmas.

Sarah Gavac, in memory of father +Paul+ and grandmother +Anne Gavac+ at Christmas.

Dan and Raeann Dlhý for the Good Samaritan Fund.

The Doeing-Lota Families, in memory of +Anna Bandura+, +Cristina Balast+, +Andrew Bandura+ and +Ann Beckius+.

Sue Renville

Saturday Morning Intensive Big Book Study.

MARCH WORSHIP SERVERS

March 2nd:

Greeter: Karyn Bute
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lectors: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Rafael Martinez

Ash Wednesday, March 5th:

Greeters: Edward and Joanne Sefara
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lector: Fred Kuzel
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Fred Kuzel

March 9th:

Greeter: Sandy Garvey
Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
Lector: Brandon Michaels
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: John Kostelny

March 16th:

Greeter: Carrie Watkiss
Assisting Minister: John Broussard
Lector: Jane Lauritsen
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: Janet Broussard

March 23rd:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
Assisting Minister: Brandon Michaels
Lector: Charles Matthies
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: George Valek

March 30th:

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lector: J. T. Tarbox
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Walter Cudecki

Sacristan and Altar Care

Beverly Tarbox

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.

December 2024

Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering

Budgeted Offering: \$2,615.00

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
12/1	\$1,360.00
12/8	\$ 830.00
12/15	\$1,375.00
12/22	\$1,400.00

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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DATED MATERIAL



Guitarist Gabriel Datcu

An Invitation from Terry Sullivan

On Sunday, February 2nd at 4 p.m., I will perform a concert with the superb young guitarist Gabriel Datcu who is a native of Transylvania, Romania and one of the most gifted musicians I have met. Music simply pours out of him. To top it off, we will be joined by bassist Clark Sommers who is, in jazz parlance, a “monster” (meaning he plays very well). Clark has literally toured the world with jazz vocalist Kurt Elling; but for one Sunday afternoon he is ours. Location: Sts. Peter and Paul Lutheran Church, 250 Woodside in Riverside (31st and Desplaines). Easy to get to from First Avenue and parking is wide open. Members of the congregation may attend for \$10 (payment in cash only) rather than the usual admission ticket price of \$25 by identifying as such at the door.

Jazz guitarist Gabriel Datcu is a native of Transylvania, Romania. He began his musical journey at age four and by age nine was playing piano and acoustic guitar. As a teen, he was given several cassette tapes, one was Christopher Parkening playing Bach and another was a recording of jazz guitarists Joe Pass and Barney Kessel with Ella Fitzgerald. Since then, Gabriel’s commitment to studying these two music styles—classical and improvisatory—has been uncompromising.

While a student at both the National University of Music and the National University of Arts in Bucharest, Gabriel was invited to perform at several local music venues. Doing so allowed him to meet, study and perform with several of the best Romanian jazz musicians, including Sorin Romanescu, Tudy Zaharescu and Pedro Negrescu. At age eighteen he was asked to record at the National Radio-Television studios, and at nineteen, to embark on a two-week tour across Switzerland. In 2000, Gabriel was offered the chance to study and settle in the United States.—TS

News from Riverside Preschool at Sts. Peter and Paul

February is going to be a month of love. 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



Memorial Flowers

Dec. 29th: In memory of mother and grandmother +Betty Zittman+ on the anniversary of her birth on December 8th by remembering family Rocky, Tina and grandchildren.

Jan. 19th: In loving memory of beloved mother, grandmother, sister, and aunt +Laverne Hanzel+ on the anniversary of her death by remembering daughter Karen Cox, sons Kevin and David Hanzel and their families, sister Audrey Bucz, nephew Brian Bucz, and niece Adrienne Gana.

...And the Greatest of These is Love



1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

**Annual
Congregational Meeting:
February 2nd following the liturgy**