



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 48

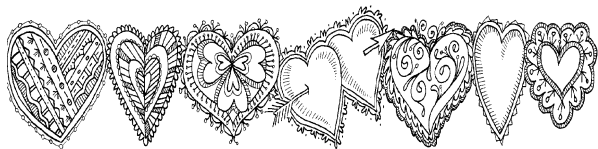
February 2026

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.

Ash Wednesday and the Forty Days of Lent

The holy season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, February 18th. The service time is 7:15 p.m. Christians gather on this holy day to make 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.



Valentine’s Day Prayer

Most Gracious Heavenly Father, You gave Saint Valentine the courage to witness to the gospel of Christ, even to the point of giving his life for it. Help us to endure all suffering for love of you, and to seek you with all our hearts; for you alone are the source of life and love. Grant that we may have the courage and love to be strong witnesses of your truth to our friends and family and to the whole world. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



For more information, news, photos, worship videos and sermons, visit us on the web at:
www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org.

River of Grace

by lectionary poet Andrew King

River of God’s grace,
where will you touch us this morning?
Through whom, river of grace,
will you pour out today?
May all God’s children know
your gift of acceptance.
And may all who seek that strength
taste the fullness of joy.

Dove of the Spirit,
where are you flying this morning?
On whom, Spirit Dove,
will you rest today?
May all God’s children know
the peace of your presence.
And may all who bow in prayer
feel the wingbeats of joy.

God who is love,
where will you speak this morning?
In whom, God of love,
will your voice ring today?
May all your children know
their call to be loving.
And may all who respond in faith
share the good news of joy.

Jesus our Lord,
where will you lead us this morning?
As whom, Christ our Lord,
will we leave here today?
May all God’s children know
the new life of the river.
And celebrate its blessings
on our way toward joy.



FEBRUARY

Birthdays:

Feb. 4:	Isabelle Boike	Feb. 13:	Valerie Smith
	Lois Mika	Feb. 15:	William Londak
Feb. 6:	John Borysek	Feb. 19:	Gretchen Kostelny
	Zachary Sawyer	Feb. 21:	Peter Drahos
Feb. 7:	David Richards		Adriana Kubova
	Ann Vana		Sarah Michaels
Feb. 11:	Donovan Byrne	Feb. 22:	Robert Kany
	Christopher Greer	Feb. 24:	Lily Diette
Feb. 12:	Jack Bute	Feb. 25:	Gary Drahos
	Susan Hassel		James Triska
		Feb. 28:	Lyla Yamamoto

Anniversaries:

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

Memorials and Honorariums

✧ For the Church ✧

Milan Zavodny, in memory of +Milan+ and +Olga Zavodny+ on the anniversaries of their birth.

Milan Zavodny, in memory of +Milan+ and +Olga Zavodny+ at Christmas time.

Sharon P. Stork

Ann Boor and Family, in memory of +Wayne Boor+.

St. Paul VI Parish (*facility usage*).

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

James and Diane Doeing, in memory of +Cristina Balas+, +Andrew Bandura+, +Anna Bandura+, and +Ann Beckius+.

Saturday Morning Big Book Study (*facility usage*).

Cornerstone Montessori (*facility usage*).

Soda Sales

John and JoAnne Slahor, in memory of +Wayne Boor+.

Betty Jane Licko-Keel, in memory of parents +Stephen+ and +Marie Licko+, sister +Nancy Carol Carter+, and husband +William Jerry Keel+.

Ann Kmet, in memory of +Mary+ and +Lisa Kubik+.

In loving memory of beloved mother +LaVerne Hanzel+ on the anniversary of her death by loving children Karen Cox, Kevin Hanzel, David Hanzel, and their families, sister Audrey Bucz, nephew Brian Bucz, and niece Adrienne Gana.

Wayne Rauschenberg

In loving memory of dear grandmother +Anne Gavac+ on the anniversary of her passing by remembering grandchildren Joe, John and Sheryl Hassel, and Sarah Gavac.

December 2025

Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering
Budgeted Offering: \$2,615.00

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
12/7	\$ 610.00
12/14	\$2,555.00
12/21	\$5,969.00
12/28	\$2,885.00

Donations are welcome via Zelle at
donations@stpeterandpaulriverside.org.



A HISTORY OF SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY

Valentine's Day started in the time of the Roman Empire. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a holiday to honor Juno who was the Queen of the Roman gods and goddesses. The Romans also knew her as the goddess of women and marriage. The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia.

The lives of young boys and girls were strictly separate, however, one of the customs of the young people was name drawing. On the eve of the festival of Lupercalia the names of Roman girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Each young man would draw a girl's name from the jar and would then be partners for the duration of the festival with the girl whom he chose. Sometimes the pairing of the children lasted an entire year, and often they would fall in love and would later marry.

Under the rule of Emperor Claudius II, Rome was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns. Claudius the Cruel was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. He believed that the reason was that Roman men did not want to leave their loves or families. As a result, Claudius canceled all marriages and engagements in Rome. The good Saint Valentine was a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. He and Saint Marius aided the Christian martyrs and secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. He suffered martyrdom on the 14th day of February, about the year A.D. 270.

At that time it was the custom in Rome, a very ancient custom indeed, to celebrate in the month of February the Lupercalia, feasts in honor of a heathen god. On these occasions, amidst a variety of pagan ceremonies, the names of young women were placed in a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed.

The pastors of the early Christian Church in Rome endeavored to do away with the pagan element in these feasts by substituting the names of saints for those of maidens. And as the Lupercalia began about the middle of February, the pastors appear to have chosen Saint Valentine's Day for the celebration of this new feast. So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons for the coming year, arose in this way.



FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVERS

February 1st:

Greeter: Staci Harden
Assisting Minister: John Broussard
Lectors: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Janet Broussard

February 8th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lector: Philip Painter
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: Rafael Martinez

February 15th:

Greeters: Philip and Linda Painter
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lector: John Kostelny
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: George Valek

Ash Wednesday, February 18th:

Greeters: Fred Kuzel
Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
Lector: Tom Myers
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Janet Broussard

February 22nd:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: John Broussard
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Walter Cudecki

Sacristan and Altar Care:
Fred Kuzel



Ash Wednesday, February 18th
Liturgy of Holy Communion
with Imposition of Ashes
at 7:15 p.m.

Memorial Flowers

Jan. 18th: In loving memory of beloved mother +Laverne Hanzel+ on the anniversary of her death by loving children Karen Cox, Kevin Hanzel, David Hanzel and their families, loving sister Audrey Bucz, nephew Brian Bucz, and niece Adrienne Gana

Jan. 25th: In memory of mother and grandmother +Betty Zittman+ on the anniversary of her birth by remembering children and grandchildren.

MARCH WORSHIP SERVERS

March 1st:

Greeter: Karyn Bute
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lector: Joanne Sefara
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: John Kostelny

March 8th:

Greeter: Carrie Watkiss
Assisting Minister: John Broussard
Lector: Beverly Tarbox
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: Janet Broussard

March 15th:

Greeter: Staci Harden
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lector: Charles Matthies
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Rafael Martinez

March 22nd:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lectors: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Walter Cudecki

Palm Sunday, March 29th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
Lector: Kristine Boike
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: Fred Kuzel

Sacristan and Altar Care:
Beverly Tarbox

We receive thanks...

January 22, 2026

Dear Friends of the Food Depository,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$546.00 to the Greater Chicago Food Depository on December 25, 2025. Our mission is to end hunger, and with donors like you on our side, we can ensure that everyone in our community has the nourishing food they need to thrive.

The Greater Chicago Food Depository, Chicago's food bank, serves a robust network of 800 partner pantries and food programs in Chicago and Cook County. We strive to end hunger for connecting our neighbors with healthy food and advancing solutions that address the root causes of hunger. To learn more about this work, please visit our website at www.gcdf.org/about.

Should you have any questions, please contact Adriana Almaguer, Donor Relations Coordinator at (773) 247-3663. On behalf of everyone at the Food Depository and the people we serve, thank you again for your support. Together, we can end hunger.

Sincerely,

Katie R. Maehr
Executive Director & CEO

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 Woodside Road
Riverside, IL 60546

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DATED MATERIAL

President's Day

from the *Old Farmer's 2025 Almanac*

When Is Presidents' Day?

Presidents' Day is observed annual on the third Monday in February. In 2026, Presidents' Day will be celebrated on Monday, February 16th.

Presidents' Day History

Historically, Americans began celebrating George Washington's Birthday just months after his death, long before Congress declared it a federal holiday. It was not until 1879, under President Rutherford B. Hayes, that Washington's Birthday became a legal holiday, to be observed on his birthday, February 22.

Washington's birthday was celebrated on February 22 until well into the 20th century. In 1968, Congress passed the Monday Holiday Law to "provide uniform annual observances of certain legal public holidays on Monday." By creating more 3-day weekends, Congress hoped to "bring substantial benefits to both the spiritual and economic life of the Nation."

Today, Washington's Birthday is one of only 11 permanent holidays established by Congress observed each year. One of the great traditions followed for decades has been the reading of the Washington's Farewell Address—which remains an annual event for the Senate to this day.

When Is George Washington's Real Birthday?

Although the federal holiday is held on a Monday (the third Monday of February), Washington's birthday is observed on February 22. To complicate matters, Washington was actually born on February 11 in 1731! How can that be?

Washington was originally born when the Julian calendar was in use. During Washington's lifetime, people in Great Britain and America switched the official calendar system from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar (something that most of Europe had already done in 1582).

As a result of this calendar reform, people born before 1752 were told to add 11 days to their birth dates. Those born between January 1 and March 25, as Washington was, also had to add one year to be in sync with the new calendar.

By the time Washington became president in 1789, he celebrated his birth on February 22 and listed his year of birth as 1732.

To summarize, Washington's birthday changed from February 11, 1731 (Old-Style Julian calendar), to February 22, 1732 (New-Style Gregorian calendar).

Myths About Washington

Legend has it, Washington chopped down a cherry tree when he was 6 years old and, when confronted by his father, said, "I cannot tell a lie. I did it with my hatchet."

Well, we can not tell a lie, either. Washington didn't say this; he didn't even chop down the tree! This tale was in fact concocted by Parson Mason Weems (1759-1825), one of Washington's biographers, who made up the story hoping to demonstrate Washington's honesty.

This tale is not the only myth about Washington. His wooden dentures? They weren't made of wood; they were made of hippopotamus teeth that had been filed down to fit into Washington's mouth.

George Washington Quote

Upon entering office, Washington was not convinced that he was the right man for the job. He wrote, "My movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution." Fortunately for the young country, he was wrong.

Worry is the interest paid by those who borrow trouble.

—George Washington (1732-99)

Cherry Cream Pie

Easy to make and wonderfully versatile. Try it with any type of fruit pie filling or with fresh or frozen fruit—strawberries or raspberries, for instance—over the cream cheese base.

Ingredients:

8 oz. (1 pkg) cream cheese, at room temperature
½ c. confectioners' sugar, sifted
½ tsp. almond extract
½ pint whipping cream
1 8 or 9 inch graham cracker pie crust
1 can (16 oz) cherry pie filling

Instructions:

Blend the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar, and almond extract until smooth. Whip the cream until stiff. Fold the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture. Pour into the pie crust. Top with the pie filling. Chill for a least 1 hour before serving.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.