

# The ANNOUNCER

1/4	9:00AM – Sunday School <b>10AM – Worship w/Holy Communion</b> 11:15AM – Board of Elders
1/6	Epiphany 6:30PM – Pack 85
1/10	6-10PM – CRMS
1/11	9:00AM – Sunday School <b>10AM – Worship</b> Board of Finance meets on Zoom
1/12	Annual Reports Due 6:30PM – Council Meets via Zoom
1/15	6:30PM - Pack 85
1/18	<b>9AM – Sunday School</b> <b>10AM – Worship</b> 11:15AM – Church Council
1/20	Feb Announcer deadline
1/25	9AM – Sunday School <b>10AM – Worship</b> <b>11:15 – Annual Congregational Meeting</b>
1/31	11AM- AJH Service 1PM – Pack 85 Pinewood Derby build

## SOFTGOODS COLLECTION AND SPECIAL PUBLIC DROP OFF DAY

What began as a way to recycle leftover rummage has become a great source of funding thanks to Savers FUNDrive program. So all throughout January we ask for your donations of softgoods such as clothing, coats, shoes, scarves, handbags, wallets, fashion accessories, belts, backpacks, etc. Also, textiles including bedding, comforters, blankets, sheets, towels, linen, tablecloths, curtains, pillows, stuffed animals, can all be bagged up and dropped off. Drop off during office hours (if you don't

have a key) M-F 9-2PM, or on Sundays. Or wait until our special drop off date of **Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, from 10AM to 2PM**. Scouts from Pack 85 will be on hand to grab all your bags to make it so easy for you. All items collected will be brought to Savers in early February. If you have any questions, contact the office, and thank you, we are so grateful for all the support and community support for this and all our fundraisers!

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

You are officially called to join the Annual Congregational Meeting of Saint Peter's United Church of Christ on **Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>** after worship. A light lunch will be served. We will receive reports from Officers and Boards, (**Due to the office January 12<sup>th</sup>**) receive and take action on a 2025 budget, and elect members to the Boards and Offices of the church. This call to meeting is not a list of the agenda but a reminder

of the business that will be before us. A quorum of 20% of our active, voting membership will be needed. If you are a member of the church already, have attended worship, contributed financially or taken communion at least once in the last year, you are considered an active member. Please plan to stay, and if you have any questions reach out to any of our Council members.

Dear friends,

## ***From the Interim Pastor***

I love feeling when God shows up, ready to make a difference.

Maybe you have felt it, too. Sometimes a small spark of one person's idea ignites a spark in someone else. They talk, and inspiration grows. One idea builds on another. A vision begins to form. It grows until it ignites the whole group's imagination. They sense possibility. They begin to see how it could happen. One person mentions a resource that could help. Others add resources, passions, stories, possibilities they have heard of. Before I know it, the idea has filled the room. People are animated. The possibilities have already begun. Change is on the move.

One way I can tell that God has been present is when people leave a gathering with more energy than they had when they came. The energy is contagious. We have been moved, we have been inspired, and we can't wait for our next steps.

We have been inspired. In-spired. The Spirit is within us. The One who breathes on us and gives us life, the One who creates light and wisdom and hope – that One is ready to take hold and move us into something new. We have tasted God's possibility for us.

The work ahead can become challenging, tedious, sometimes tenuous. But with prayer and the energy God is creating between us, we recover the vision, reshape our understandings and prepare for our next step. And our next step.

This is how the work of Epiphany takes hold. Jesus has come into the world as God With Us. Jesus grows. We grow. Jesus dips into the work. We dip into the work. Jesus calls. We follow. We become part of God's new reign. Our faith community grows. God transforms the world, one tiny corner at a time.

I love this work. I love it when God shows up.

Correction: I love almost everything about this work.

There is one part I do not love: the painful part before the change.

You already know this pain. You know the heartbreak of beloved people missing from our lives. You have felt excluded, undervalued, overwhelmed. You have seen people you love in need of something that you can't give them. You have tasted hopelessness, fear, anger, shame, blame, isolation. Perhaps sometimes you have given up and decided to simply go through the right motions while your heart breaks.

Injustice. Hatred. Fear. Power struggles. Domination. Short-sightedness. Greed. These all fill our world. And sometimes I realize that, despite my best intentions, they have taken hold within me as well. No matter how much I wish otherwise, I am one part of the problem. Of all many things that must change, one of them is me. One of them is us. This part is painful.

That sense that something must change filled our church life in Advent. Knowing that something new is being born into our lives: that is the power of Christmas. Now we are in Epiphany, the season of growing in faith, building relationships with God, with each other and within ourselves.

For God has already shown up. God has already begun the work of transformation. Our job is to keep showing up and dipping into the story of Jesus. Because in this is the season we will see God showing up, leading us into passionate possibilities we can scarcely imagine.

Thank you for being my partners in faith. Even through the painful times.

Blessings, Brenda

## YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL

January is here and many parts of the church have been at work throughout December ahead of the annual meeting at the end of this month. This includes the Board of Finance, charged with preparing our church's annual budget, and the Nominating Committee. In addition, the Church Council resumed work on a behavioral covenant with guidance from church consultant Henrieta Ribiero, who started collaborating with us last year. Alongside these weighty tasks, the Council continues to fulfill its charge to carry out the "ordinary business and special decisions of the Congregation." You can read the minutes from the [November Council meeting](#) and a [special December Council meeting](#) by following the link provided here or by requesting them from the office. Please reach out to your congregational president Peggy Reins if you have questions about any Council proceedings and pastor Brenda about the Council's ongoing work with our church consultant. May we begin 2026 with deep gratitude for the many hands and hearts that support the continued ministry of our local church.

## WOMEN'S GUILD REPORT

St. Peter's Women's Guild met on Wed. Dec. 10 at 11:30 to enjoy our annual Christmas Luncheon and Cookie Walk. Our delicious chicken lunch came from Jewel by way of Heidi Tarzian and our dessert featured a fantastic array of cookies, provided by our expert bakers, who then went home with samples of each other's offerings! Devotions were given by Sue Bailey, who, later, also listed our annual Christmas Benevolences (charities) which totaled almost \$900.00. Instead of games or a program, the members engaged in a special Christmas Mission Project, presented by Annie Noorts. It is called "The Pinto Pride" and requests that Christmas cards and messages be sent to various LGBTQ people who are lonely and in need of some cheer. Our members gladly wrote warm messages on Christmas cards, provided by Annie, who also had a list of names and addresses. The Guild provided the funds for postage and 50-60 people received some Christmas Spirit from St. Peter's! Thank you, Annie! There are no meetings in Jan. or Feb. but we will convene on Wed. Mar. 11th to clean the kitchen, etc! Please join us and HAPPY NEW YEAR! Barbara Todd, Pres.

## NEW MEMBERS CLASSES

Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to prepare the experiences that our New Members deserve as they become part of the ministry of St. Peter's. This will happen soon. Please stay tuned. If you want to be included, please contact Brenda, Laura, Peggy, Judy Paige or Ann Herron.

Operating Budget at a Glance for November, 2025				
	Nov. Actual	Nov. Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Income	\$8,863	\$11,258	\$161,070	\$161,991
Expenses	\$19,684	\$17,193	\$170,575	\$190,693
Gain/(Loss)	(\$10,822)	(\$5,935)	(\$9,505)	(\$28,702)

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 1/1 – Jim Todd  
John Karol
- 1/6 – Alec Ryan
- 1/7 – Jennifer Mau  
Gemignani
- 1/10 – Usha Rajbhandari
- 1/10 – Jenn Schneider
- 1/15 – Beth Brzozowski
- 1/16 – David Iannotti
- 1/18 – Karen Christianson  
Andre Gloeckner  
Harry Kuras
- 1/21 – Alane (Schaller)  
Swiderski
- 1/24 – Ricky Riley  
Richard Schaller
- 1/25 – Layla Costello
- 1/27 – Ethan Michael  
Caras

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

- 1/17 – Pat and Roy  
Erdman
- 1/21 – Annie and Gerry  
Noots

**St. Peter's UCC**  
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Skokie, IL 60077  
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### **Lector/Nursery**

#### **for January 2026**

Jan 4th	Lector: Karen C. Nursery: Mike R.
Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	Lector: Beth S. Nursery: Kathy Z.
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	Lector: Rich S. Nursery: TBD
Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>	Lector: Mark L. Nursery: Laurie M.
Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	Lector: Rita M. Nursery: Heidi T.

## **The ANNOUNCER**

**JANUARY 2026**

**IN FEBRUARY** - Military Outreach USA's "Veterans Transitioning from Homelessness to Homes" program is a very loving thing you can do for our Veterans. Military Outreach helps place formerly homeless Veterans into new homes and sets them up for success by providing brand-new household supplies. We will be asking for items like cleaners, towels, wastebaskets and more. A full list will be included in upcoming media closer to February, and items will be collected in spots throughout the church. Thank you so much for your support!

### **Scripture Keys to a Joyful New Year**

- H**old fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)
- A**ssemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)
- P**ray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18)
- P**ray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)
- Y**ield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)
  
- N**egelect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)
- E**xamine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)
- W**ork diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)
  
- Y**ield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11,16)
- E**xercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)
- A**im at sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)
- R**edeem the time (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

— Gus Nichols