

MESSENGERS OF
HOPE

Welcome to St Peter's UCC Virtual Worship Service!

Subscribe to our [YouTube Channel](#) to catch a new service at 10am each Sunday! We also share a [podcast](#) weekly of the scripture readings and sermon.

Open Holy Communion. We have communion the 1st Sunday of the month and we invite all Christians and seekers after God to partake of the Lord's Supper with us regardless of denominational background. To participate from home, please have a small cup of juice, wine, or other beverage you are comfortable with, and a piece of bread with you. When Rev. Lanford prompts us to "take and eat" (and "drink"), then we will all do so - physically separated, but together in spirit.

Who We Are. St. Peter's is an Open and Affirming congregation. We've been in the heart of downtown Skokie for over 152 years. We are a part of the United Church of Christ, which means we are passionate about our faith and open in our thinking. We believe in a Triune God who loves everyone, regardless of gender identity, orientation, race, status, or physical or mental ability, and we **welcome all people** to share worship, membership, marriage, baptism, funeral, and fellowship with us.

Attendance. We would like to get to know you better, too! If you are comfortable doing so, please put your first name and last initial in the comments section under the video, and where you are watching us from!

Donations. We have several options for giving, and your donation helps support our church and its various ministries. Now more than ever, every contribution (large or small) is important to keep us going:

- **Text Your Gift.** Text the amount you want to donate to **844-997-2346**.
- **PayPal.** Visit [PayPal.me/stpeteruccskokie](https://www.paypal.me/stpeteruccskokie) Uncheck the "Paying for Goods or Services" box to not pass on the fees to St Peters.
- **Vanco Give+ App.** Download the Vanco GIVE+ app from **iTunes** or **Google Play**, put in the church's zip code 60077 and select St. Peter's from the drop down. Set up an account with a password (or process as a guest), select your donation frequency, amount, and add payment info. There is also an option here to offset the processing fee.
- **Mail a Check.** We are collecting mail daily, and depositing regularly throughout the week.

Contact Us. You can email us – we are accessing email from home during the Shelter-in-Place order. Or call and leave a voicemail, we are picking up messages regularly while we are not in the building. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for daily updates and messages, and check our website for additional details, weekly announcements, and more.

St. Peter's United Church of Christ

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(Oakton and Laramie)

847-673-8166

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Ben Westphal (Music Director): bcwestphal@gmail.com

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OUR ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR
Sunday, December 6, 2020 10:15 AM
Second Sunday of Advent

WELCOME GUESTS!

* Indicates all who are able are invited to stand

PRELUDE "Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People"
By Johann Orearius, arranged by Anne Krentz Organ

THE SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS Jenn Schneider

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Prepare the way of God's coming in Christ.

Congregation: Open the highways, make the paths straight.

P: Prepare hearts and minds for the incarnation of God.

C: *Open minds, open hearts, make room!*

ALL: **Prepare the way! Prepare the way!**

CALL TO CONFESSION

P: If you and I would make room in our hearts and minds for God in Christ, stuff taking up space, taking up residence there, must move out. We must clean house spiritually, and in confessing our sins to God, we make a good start; so please join me in the spirit and words of prayer. Let us pray:

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Great God, You have told us not to worry because You care for us. And yet, we have allowed our fears and our anxieties to keep us awake at night. We have trusted our own instincts, drawing our own conclusions. We have forsaken the peace You long to make real within us.

Forgive us, Holy One! Forgive us for failing to remember to trust You, even when we are afraid. Forgive us for forgetting to call on Your name when there seems to be more darkness than light, even in this season of Christmas lights. Forgive us for worrying about so many things, instead of bringing our worries to You in prayer. Free us, once more, so that we might faithfully follow You, trusting you in all times and places. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Hear the words of Paul: "Do not worry about anything, but in prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in the Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

*HYMN:

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

#88 (v. 2)

88

Our Lord Jesus Christ

VENI EMMANUEL

From Latin, 12th century

Stanzas 1 and 2 Tr. JOHN MASON NEALE, 1851

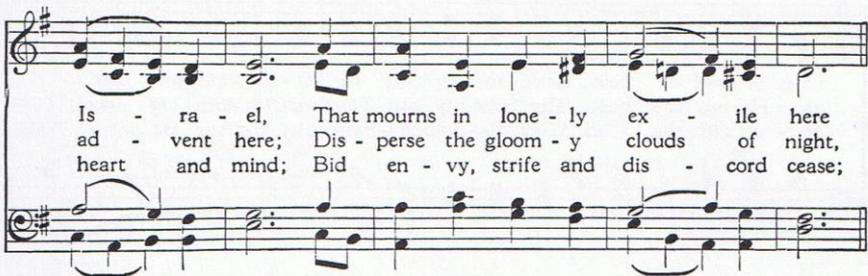
Stanza 3 Tr. HENRY S. COFFIN, 1916

8. 8. 8. 8. 8. 8. Ancient plain song, 13th century (Mode I)

Unison, with spirit



1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som cap - tive
2. O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer Our spir - its by Thine
3. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind All peo - ples in one



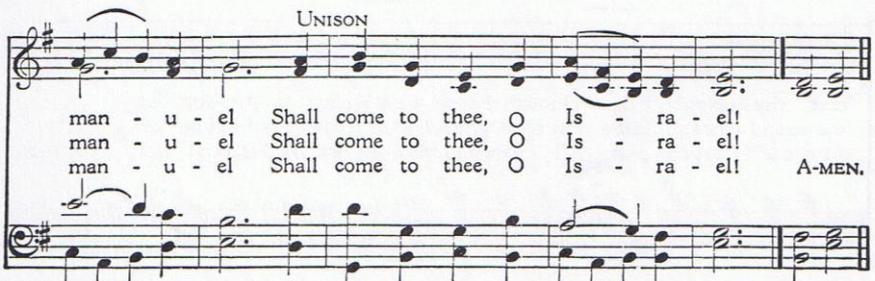
Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
heart and mind; Bid en - vy, strife and dis - cord cease;

HARMONY



Un - til the Son of God ap - pear. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
And death's dark shad - ows put to flight. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
Fill the whole world with heav - en's peace. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -

UNISON



man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el! A-MEN.

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Lighting the Candle of Peace this morning and sharing some thoughts on what hope means to him is David Iannotti.

RESPONSE: "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"

(v. 2)

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah

ELW 240

Traditional Yiddish Folk Tune

Lyrics by Wayne L. Wold

Am Em/G F Dm

1. Light one can - dle to watch for Mes - si - ah:
 2. Light two can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah:
 3. Light three can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah:
 4. Light four can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah:

3 E Am/E E Am E/B

let the light ban - ish dark - ness. He ___ shall bring sal -
 let the light ban - ish dark - ness. He ___ shall feed the
 let the light ban - ish dark - ness. Lift ___ your heads and
 let the light ban - ish dark - ness. He ___ is com - ing,

6 Am/C Dm Dm/F Dm

va - tion to Is - ra - el, God - ful - fills ___ the
 flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead ___ them
 lift high the gate - way for the King ___ of
 tell the glad tid - ings, Let your lights ___ be

8 E(sus4) E E(sus4) E Am

prom - ise.
 home - ward.
 glo - ry.
 shin - ing!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Barb Todd

Old Testament:

Isaiah 40: 1-11

Epistle:

II Peter 3: 8-15a

The following is our second introduction to this Advent's Hymn of the Month.

SPECIAL MUSIC: "Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn"

by Marty Haugen
Piano arrangement by Mark Hayes

ELW 242

Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn

Marty Haugen

$\text{♩} = 63$

D G Am⁷ G/B D

1. A - wake! a - wake, and greet the new morn, For
 2. To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3. In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, When
 4. Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, Though

4 G/B C Am⁷ D⁷ G Am⁷

an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for
 man - uel comes a sing - ing, His hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, As morn - ing light so
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, The ris - ing sun shall

7 G/B D Am⁷ D C G

now he is born, Be - hold the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, Yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
 qui - et and free, So warm the gen - tle and car - ing;
 crown you with light, Be strong and lov - ing and fear - less;

10 D G Em Am/C D

Come as a ba - by weak and poor, To bring all hearts to -
 Mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul, And hymns of lov - ing
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, The lame shall leap in
 Love be our song and love our prayer, And love, shall our end - less

13 Em D⁷ G C B⁷ Em

geth - er, He o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door And
 kind - ness, THE thun - der of his an - nounce - ment roll To
 won - der, The weak be raised a - bove the strong, And
 sto - ry, May God fill ev - 'ry day we share, And

Tag at end with ritard

16 Am⁷ D⁷ G C/G G

lives not in - side us for - ev - er, _____
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness, _____
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der, _____
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry, _____

12/19/2018

**GOSPEL:
PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYERS**

Mark 1:1-8

A CALL TO OFFERING

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE:

What can I give Him, poor as I am?

If I were a Shepherd, I would bring a Lamb.

If I were a magi, I would do my part.

Yet what can I give Him? Give my heart.

(Written by Christina Rossetti)

HOMILY "The Beginning of the Good News"

HYMN: "There's a Voice in the Wilderness Crying"#94 (vv. 1-3)

94 **Our Lord Jesus Christ**

J. LEWIS MILLIGAN, 1910 Irregular ASCENSION
Unison. With spirit H. HUGH BANCROFT, 1938

1. There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, A
 2. O Zi - on, that bring - est good ti - dings, Get thee
 3. But the word of our God en - dur - eth, The
 4. There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, A

call from the ways un - trod; Pre - pare in the des - ert a high - way,
 up to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late peo - ple
 arm of the Lord is strong; He stands in the midst of na - tions,
 call from the ways un - trod; Pre - pare in the des - ert a high - way,

A high - way for our God! The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed,
 The com - ing of their King; Like the flow'rs of the field they per - ish,
 And He will right the wrong; He shall feed His flock like a shep - herd,
 A high - way for our God! The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed,

The loft - y hills brought low; Make straight all the crook - ed
 The works of men de - cay, The power and pomp of
 And fold the lambs to His breast; In pas - tures of peace He'll
 The loft - y hills brought low; Make straight all the crook - ed

pla - ces, Where the Lord our . . . God may go!
 na - tions, Shall pass like a dream a - way,
 lead them, And give to the wea - ry rest.
 pla - ces, Where the Lord our . . . God may go! A - MEN.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Exhortation and Invitation

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Consecration

The Words of Institution

Participation

CLOSING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER ('debts')

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil;**

**for Thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory forever. Amen**

CHARGE & BENEDICTION

P: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you to bear all things, believe all things,
hope all things, endure all things, with faith, with
hope, and above all, with love.

***POSTLUDE:**

"Gaude!"

Emmanuel

FOR WORSHIP TODAY

MINISTER

Rev. Richard Lanford

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Ben Westphal

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good Morning! “Stir up your might, and come to save us!” prayed the psalmist (Psalm 80:2, NRSV). Welcome to worship in Advent, as we await our Savior.

We are always grateful for any and all offerings to the church. No amount is too small! So many thanks to everyone who’s been keeping us going with your donations! See inside front cover for details on how to donate.

This is a Communion Sunday, and so we ask you to have a piece of bread, a roll, or something small like this with you, and a cup of wine, juice, water, coffee or something else, each of which will be your “bread and cup.” As if we were gathered in person together, please partake of what you have when so prompted during Communion by Pastor Lanford.

Today is the last day to get in your IN HONOR/IN MEMORY poinsettia dedications, no donation needed! Email, mail or call the office with your submissions. In Honor/In Memory inserts will be included in our Christmas Eve service as well as the January Announcer.

Sunday School Baby Items collection is on! We WILL be collecting newborn and infant supplies for the Niles Township Food Pantry. Diapers, wipes, onesies, formula and other baby supplies are always in need. We will have special COVID safe collection days and ask that you leave the items at the door and ring the bell, or if you have a key just leave them right inside the door. Those days will be: Saturday, December 19th 1-2:30 PM; Monday December 21st 9 AM to 2 PM and Monday, January 4th from 9 AM to 2 PM.

Soft Goods Drive. Now through January start cleaning out your storage areas and give us all your soft goods such as clothing, accessories like belts, purses, shoes, linens, bedding, stuffed toys, coats, etc. You need to call the office to schedule a drop off: (847) 673-8166.

Jewel Holiday Meal program- we successfully distributed 148 Thanksgiving meals, thanks to all for your donations. We'll be doing it again, the week before Christmas most likely, so please be sure to get those donations in if you haven't. You can donate at the register or go to the service desk at the Jewel on Touhy at the Village Crossing Shopping Center in Niles. Thanks so much, so many in need were blessed thanks to your donations!

Wishing Happy Birthdays this week to: Mary Ann Kuehn, Drew Ryan, Erik Christianson, and Bruce Mau's grandson John Mau Gemignani. **Happy Anniversaries this week are:** Judy and Jim Williford and Larry and Dianna Pappadakis-haun.

Thursday, December 10th is our next Village Inn Pizza Fundraiser. Great day to take a break from all that shopping and purging to enjoy a hot meal with no prep or cleanup! Just remember to mention St. Peter's UCC when ordering; we get 20% of your bill!

The Announcer included information about our usual December mission projects and fundraisers, with links to lists or ways to donate. Please read it if you haven't, and check these email-letters regularly for important information. Something that was neglected but not any longer is the annual United Church of Christ offering for Veterans of the Cross and the Christmas Emergency Fund. Donations to this fund through St. Peter's U.C.C. or directly help our retired (and in some cases still employed) clergy, widowed clergy spouses, and some lay employees with health insurance premium supplementation, emergency cash grants, pension supplementation for those retirees with low pension funds, and Christmas 'Thank You' gift checks. All gifts and supplementations are administered by the U.C.C. Pension Boards' charitable arm, the Board for Ministerial Assistance. Checks sent to the church should be marked in the memo section as designated for this Veterans of the Cross offering. Thank you!

According to the schedule, next week's Lector is David Iannotti.

The Church Council meets next week. If you are responsible for a report, please prepare it and put it in the Council December drop box as soon as you can this week. Thank you.

The Micah 6:8 Committee is going to host a Zoom Coffee hour after worship on Sunday, December 20th, featuring a new, brief video from the Night Ministry sharing what they've been up to lately! It came out at Thanksgiving. Watch for info on a link to the Coffee Hour!

Laura will be taking off Monday and Tuesday Dec. 7th & 8th. Pastor will be calling in for messages!

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT	Jenn Schneider
VICE-PRESIDENT	Judy Paige
TREASURER	Mandy Steegmueller
SECRETARY	Carolyn Kuechler
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Marcia Hilliard

POINSETTIAS



If you didn't hear, we won't be doing our usual Poinsettia order this year. Due to COVID we can't be certain on how our Christmas service will play out yet. Instead, our Women's Guild will be generously providing poinsettias for our altar, in honor of all members and friends of St. Peter's. As a HUGE THANK YOU to everyone for all your extra care, support, thoughtfulness and concern for St. Peter's UCC during this unprecedented time, we'd like to offer you the chance to dedicate one of these poinsettias in honor and/or in memory of whomever you'd like. Just fill out the form below and return it to the office by December 6th! You can email your info, mail it or call it in to the office. We'll still be doing an In honor/In Memory insert for our Christmas worship and we'll also include it in the January Announcer!

Name:

Phone #:

In Honor Of:

In Memory Of:

Now through January

WINTER

SOFT GOODS

FUNDDRIVE



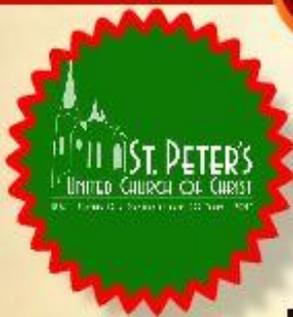
ST. PETER'S
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WELCOMING
CONGREGATION
IN ILLINOIS

DROP OFF AT
THE GYM
8013
LARAME,
SKOKIE OR
CALL TO
SCHEDULE
(847)
673-8166



WE NEED
CLOTHING
LINENS
BEDDING
STUFFED
TOYS
ACCESSORIES
AND MORE



VillageInn
PIZZERIA
SPORTS BAR & GRILL



Village Inn Food Fundraiser

December 10th 11am - 11pm

Village Inn Pizzeria

8050 Lincoln Ave.
Skokie, IL 60077

Mention St. Peter's UCC when ordering and we get 20% of your total

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 6, 2020

Isaiah 40:1-11

Messengers of Hope

The prophets are not always easy company. As a body, they would be difficult dinner companions. It's hard to imagine them sitting down to conversation about the weather or kindly inquiries about how the grandchildren are doing. Others shake hands politely. They blow raspberries.

The prophets calling and passion is to reveal the truth that God has shown them. Most of their listeners, in their time and ours, would rather have their truths served with a sugar coating. So, the prophets rarely win any "likeability" polls.

But if you can handle your truth served rare and with minimal dressing, the prophets are bracing conversation partners. Their bluntness springs from a deep and always unsatisfied yearning to bring everyone closer to God. And yet, sometimes, the poets surprise with an after-dinner song of joy.

Today, in the fortieth chapter of the book of Isaiah, the prophet leaves behind his fiery ranting and offers words which at last sound less like a lecture and more like a lullaby. Maybe this comfort, this intimacy with God is what the prophets had in mind all along. Can you listen past their prickly rhetoric to hear what they really want for those who listen - in their time and in ours?

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem

Today, on this second Sunday of Advent, listen! There are prophets speaking in your city, in your county, in your church. Sometimes those prophets are cranky. Sometimes they stick out their tongues instead of smiling. Sometimes they lecture, rather than hum lullabies. And that lecture can feel like it's really close to home.

But you'll know a true prophet by this. That their words bring you ever closer and more intimately into relationship with a God who wants nothing more than to know and be known.



SCRIPTURES FOR THE CONGREGATION

Dec. 6th, 2020

As scholars name the sections of this long book of Isaiah, chapters 40 through 55 have been called “Second Isaiah,” and, “The Book of the Consolation of Israel.” This reading begins it. Israel has been in exile in Babylon. The prophet is called to announce God’s coming.

ISAIAH 40:1-11

- 1 “Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
- 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD’S hand
double for all her sins.
- 3 A voice cries out:
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- 4 Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
- 5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

- 6 A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
- 7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
- 8 The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.
- 9 Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
- 10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
- 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep."

2 PETER 3:8 – 15a

- 8 But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.
- 9 The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.
- 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.
- 11 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness,
- 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire?
- 13 But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.
- 14 Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish;
- 15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Most scholars believe that Mark was the first Gospel to be written, so here are the first verses of the first Gospel. Note that while Luke

and Matthew begin with stories about the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, and John has a cosmic introduction about “the Word,” Mark starts his off with prophecy and its fulfillment, in the adult John the Baptist.

MARK 1:1-8

- 1 “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- 2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
- 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”
- 4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
- 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.
- 6 Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.
- 7 He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.
- 8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”