

The ANNOUNCER

- 2/1 9:00AM – Sunday School
10AM – Worship w/Holy Communion
11:15AM – Board of Elders
- 2/7 Savers Truck Load and Drop off
9:00AM – Pack 85 Pinewood Derby
- 2/8 9:00AM – Sunday School
10AM – Worship
11:15AM – New Members Coffee Hour
- 2/14 9AM-12PM – A Heart for the Veterans Collection drop off
- 2/15 9:00AM – Sunday School
10AM – Worship
11:15AM Church Council
12PM-3PM – A Heart for the Veterans Collection drop off
- 2/17 March Announcer deadline
- 2/18 **ASH WEDNESDAY**
11AM-1PM -Ashes to Go
7:00PM - Service
- 2/22 **9AM – Sunday School**
10AM – Worship
11:15AM – New Members Class



LENTEN SEASON BEGINS AT ST. PETER'S

Ash Wednesday is February 18th, and with it we begin the season of Lent. Lent is a time for reflection, hope and promise. Join us through the journey starting February 18th. We will again have our Ash Wednesday "Ashes to Go" from **11:00 AM to 1:00 PM** and then come for our evening reflection of music and prayer, beginning at **7:00 PM**.

Our Soup and Study will be on Wednesdays, beginning on **February 25th at 6:30PM**. We will share a simple meal and it will be a time to discuss and learn. Come in person to share in the food, or via Zoom for conversation from your own home. Let Pastor know if you are interested in joining us!

A FOR THE VETERANS COLLECTION

Give a heartfelt housewarming gift to show your support to a Veteran exiting homelessness this Valentine's Day with **NEW** move-in essentials! We are inviting you to provide hope and encouragement to local veterans transitioning from homelessness into permanent housing through a program called Move-in-Essentials (MIE). Coordinated with **Military Outreach USA**, St. Peter's will take donations **February 14th from 9am to 12pm and 15th from 12pm to 3pm**. Setting up a new home is exciting, but it is easy to take for granted essential items and their cost. St. Peter's will be collecting the items shown below **throughout the month of February**, items needed include:

Personal Hygiene: Bath Soap, Hand Soap, Deodorant, Toothpaste, Toothbrush, Shaving Cream, Hairbrush, Comb, Nail Clippers.
Kitchen & Cleaning: Dishwashing Liquid, Windex, Paper Towels, Kitchen Trash Can, Garbage Bags, Dish Cloth, Mop & Bucket, Sponge, Broom & Dustpan
Bathroom: Toilet Brush, Plunger, Toilet Bowl Cleaner, Bath Towels, Wash Cloth, Shower Curtain, Toilet Paper
Miscellaneous: Flashlight, Light Bulbs, Sandwich Bags, Laundry Detergent, Hamper, Laundry Basket, Aluminum Foil, Pot Holders.



Dear Friends,

From the Interim Pastor

Welcome to the journey of Lent, with all its opportunities.

By the grace of God, we have 40 full days to celebrate all that it means to be human. On Ash Wednesday, we are marked as beautiful gifts of God: strong, tender, hopeful, wounded, healing, finite, beloved, stardust. In Sunday worship, we will read and reflect on profound faith stories designed to help us explore who we are and whose we are. Stay after worship for New Members classes and conversations. Then come back on Wednesday evenings, in person or online for Soup N Study, connecting with wisdom and challenges of the early church. Every day, be guided by reflections of our daily devotional. Move with us all the way through the passion and devastation of Holy Week. All of this prepares us for the mystery and majesty and freshness of Easter.

I need this season. I can be tempted to believe that, in times of overwhelming injustice, I am too small to make a difference. Or I can wear myself out believing it is all up to me. Or I can see myself as part of the solution without awareness that sometimes I make things worse. During Lent, I get to slow down and take stock of all that I am: beautiful, horrible, searching, confused. I don't have to be anything other than exactly who I am.

And I get to remember that God is with me. God is transforming me, along with all creation, if I am willing. God is drawing St. Peter's into a whole new stage of mission and ministry, if we are open. I will have to let go of many things that I value. That will hurt. Sometimes I will have no idea what to trust and what will come next. But I also get to know that it will end in God's everlasting love.

Please keep me company in this holy time. Please search for opportunities to examine, stretch and grow. Please join me in these 40 days that just might re-shape everything I know.

Blessings, Brenda

COFFEE HOUR: INTRODUCTIONS FOR NEW MEMBERS



By the grace of God, a good number of people are interested in joining our church. Whether you are a seasoned member or just exploring the possibility of membership, please come along. This is our chance to help them get to know each other more fully, deepen connections with the mission and ministry of St. Peter's UCC and explore what we can become together.

Join us for Coffee Hour following worship Sunday, February 8th. We will start by introducing ourselves, asking some questions and outline the rest of our classes. Then set aside Sundays: **February 22, March 1 and March 8** so we can talk and learn together. Let's have some fun and see where God is leading us.

RICKY RILEY IN THE WIZARD OF OZ



The Special Gifts theatre presents The Wizard of OZ starring our very own Ricky Riley will be playing from February 28th through March 1, 2026. Tickets are on Sale now, click this link: Wizard of Oz Tickets to purchase them, or copy & paste this link if you have problems:

<https://specialgiftstheatre.app.neoncrm.com/nx/portal/nonevents/events?path=%2Fportal%2Fevents%2F29512>. Ricky will be one of the actors playing the Tin Man and a Munchkin. We're so excited for you Ricky!!

YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL

January marks a turning point, a time when the congregation meets to reflect on the year gone by and the work ahead. This year, the congregation received an outline of broad initiatives for the year: more reconciling work within, building community inside and out, and entering the search and call process for a settled pastor. The congregation also approved an annual budget and elected its officers and members to serve on our various boards. Leading up to the annual meeting Church Council did its work. This article links to the notes from the [January 12 Council meeting](#).

Then, at an all-boards meeting on February 1st church leaders met to begin their work and form a church council:

St. Peter's 2026 Church Council

- Peggy Reins, President
- Karen Christianson, Vice President
- Jennifer Schneider, Secretary
- Maria Altmayer, Financial Secretary (interim role)
- Carolyn Kuechler, Treasurer (interim role)
- Judy Paige, Representative, Board of Elders
- Peter Svenson, Chair, Board of Deacons
- Rita McMahan, Chair, Board of Christian Education
- Chad McCoy, Representative, Board of Finance
- Mike Ryan, Chair, Board of Trustees
- Brenda Barnes Jamieson, Interim Pastor

Let us give thanks to all who serve! May they experience joy in the service.

	<u>Dec. Actual</u>	<u>Dec. Budget</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Income	\$45,155	\$45,109	\$206,225	\$207,100
Expenses	\$16,115	\$15,045	\$186,690	\$205,738
Gain/(Loss)	\$29,040	\$30,064	\$19,535	\$1,362

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



- 2/2 – Madeleine Reese
Todd
- 2/5 – Daniel (Mau)
Gemignani
- 2/8 – Susan Leshner
- 2/16 – Sue (Burmeister)
Speicher
- 2/18 – Atlas Fink
- 2/19 – Hunter Medaglia;
Lois Jarmuth
Richard Schaller
- 2/22 – Autumn Fink
- 2/27 – Eric Svenson;
Lincoln Svenson

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES



- 2/12- Karen and Ken
Christianson

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

Trials this season will not relent. But neither will our growth in the Spirit. If these words speak to you, then join us in our Lenten practice of daily, private devotional readings. The words are from the 2026 Lenten devotional book, *Outgrow*, brought to you by the God Is Stillspeaking Writers' Group. The daily readings explore what it means to outgrow people, old habits, circumstances, beliefs and begin to explore new possibilities. A copy of *Outgrow* is waiting for you. Simply email Laura at office@stpeteruccskokie.org to request your copy. You will receive a link to download a pdf edition that you can read on your phone, tablet, or computer. Laura will also print out a limited number of paper copies. You can ask her to mail you one or pick up a copy outside the church office or in the Narthex sometime before Ash Wednesday, February 18, the start of the Lenten season and the daily devotional readings. What have you outgrown this season? What are you now growing towards? May you find strength and challenge in these questions this Lenten season.



**Lector/Nursery
 for February 2026**

Feb 1st Lector: Rita M.
 Nursery: Heidi T.

Feb 8th Lector: David I.
 Nursery: Carolyn V.

Feb 15th Lector: Marilyn F.
 Nursery: Kathy Z.

Feb 22nd Lector: Barb T.
 Nursery: Carolyn V.

March 1st Lector: Carolyn V.
 Nursery: Mike R.



The ANNOUNCER

FEBRUARY 2026

Heartfelt Thanks and Appreciation

Here we offer our deep thanks and appreciation to our outgoing officers and board members. Special thanks to Annie Noorts who stepped away from her role as Secretary of the Congregation at the end of 2025. Thanks also to Laurie Mitchell (Board of Elders) and David Iannotti (Board of Trustees) who retired from their respective boards after generously serving five years. We owe a debt of gratitude to Carolyn Kuechler, Denise Hopp, Rita McMahon, Judy Paige, Mike Ryan, and pastor Brenda for their service on the Nominating Committee. Their hard work to bring together the gifts of our members. These individuals received your vote of confidence at the Annual Meeting on January 25th and were duly installed on February 1st.

2026 Church Officers and Board Members		
President, Peggy Reins	Board of Elders	Board of Deacons
Vice President, Karen Christianson	Judy Paige (Council Rep)	Peter Svenson (Chair)
Secretary, Jennifer Schneider	Barb Todd	Barb Bailey
Financial Sec'y (interim), Maria Altmayer	Sharon Johnson	Beth Sterba
Treasurer (interim), Carolyn Kuechler	Ginger Kalensky	Denise Hopp
Board of Christian Education	Board of Finance	Board of Trustees
Rita McMahon (Chair)	Chad McCoy (Council Rep)	Mike Ryan (Chair)
Ann Herren	Andre Gloeckner	Rich Schneider
Marlene Russell	Marcia Hilliard	Roy Svenson