

A close-up photograph of two yellow daisies. The top daisy is in sharp focus, showing its many petals and central disk. The bottom daisy is slightly out of focus. The background is a soft, out-of-focus mix of warm colors like orange, red, and blue.

# EXTRAVAGANT OPPORTUNITY

## **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 1<sup>st</sup> 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** 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**

8013 Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL 60077  
(Oakton and Laramie)

**847-673-8166**

[www.stpeteruccskokie.org](http://www.stpeteruccskokie.org)

Rev. Richard Lanford (Pastor): [revlanford@gmail.com](mailto:revlanford@gmail.com)

Laura Olson (Office Manager): [office@stpeteruccskokie.org](mailto:office@stpeteruccskokie.org)

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

**St. Peter's United Church of Christ**  
**Oakton Street and Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL**  
[www.stpeteruccskokie.org](http://www.stpeteruccskokie.org)  
**847-673-8166**

---

**OUR ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR**  
**Sunday, November 15, 2020 10:15 AM**  
**Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Stewardship Sunday #2**

**WELCOME GUESTS!**

\* Indicates all who are able are invited to stand

**PRELUDE:** "We Gather Together" arr. Traditional

**THE SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS** Jenn Schneider

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (from Psalm 65)

Pastor: "Praise is due to You, O God; You visit the  
earth and water it; the river of God is full  
of water.

***Congregation: You provide the people with grain,  
for You have so prepared it. You  
water its furrows abundantly, settling  
its ridges,***

P: softening it with flowers, and blessing its growth.

***C: You crown the year with bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with richness. Let us draw near to worship the Lord our God!***

### **\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**We are reluctant to face Your judgment, all-knowing God. We know we have not fully invested the talents You have entrusted to us. We hide them and hoard them, retreating into a false sense of security. We live in the night-time of self-protection rather into the light of full participation in loving, faithful service. We seek to escape Your displeasure by shrinking from life rather than investing ourselves in the tasks to which You call us. Have mercy on us, O God. We want to be children of the day -- Your day. Help us and renew us in the name of Jesus Christ through whom we pray. Amen.**

## **\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

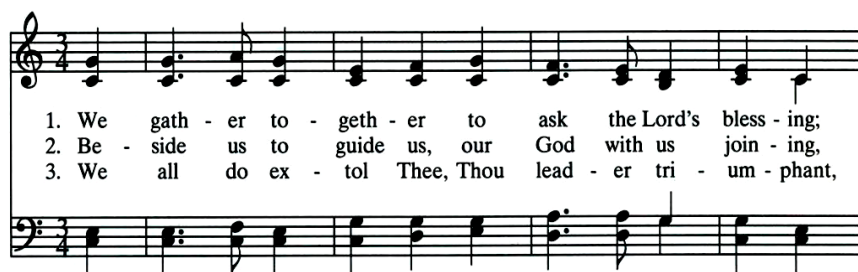
Let us continue Psalm 65 from the first verse: "Praise is due You, O God, in Zion; and to You shall vows be performed, O You who answers prayer! To You all flesh shall come. When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us, You forgive our transgressions" (vv. 1-3).

It is a relief to hear of God's mercy. Even more life-changing is to believe that the Son of God entered into solidarity with human suffering, paid the price for our sins and brought us forgiveness and resurrection, all out of the overflowing riches of God's pursuing grace. Please join me in claiming this good news as we loudly proclaim,


**All: Alleluia! Amen!**

**\*HYMN:** "We Gather Together"

SSB #12



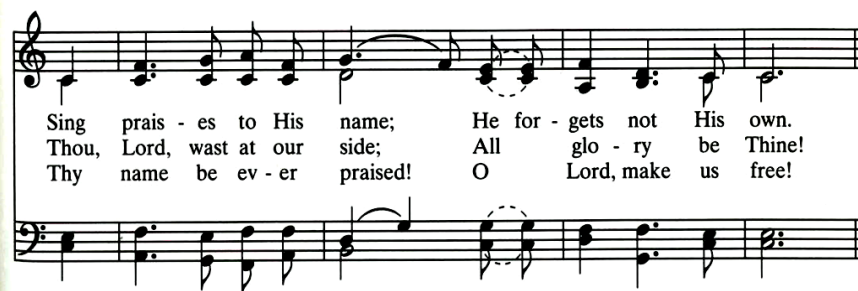
1. We gath - er to - geth - er to ask the Lord's bless - ing;  
 2. Be - side us to guide us, our God with us join - ing,  
 3. We all do ex - tol Thee, Thou lead - er tri - um - phant,



He chas - tens and has - tens His will to make known;  
 Or - dain - ing, main - tain - ing His king - dom di - vine;  
 And pray that Thou still our de - fend - er wilt be.



The wick - ed op - press - ing now cease from dis - tress - ing,  
 So from the be - gin - ning the fight we were win - ning;  
 Let Thy con - gre - ga - tion es - cape trib - u - la - tion;



Sing prais - es to His name; He for - gets not His own.  
 Thou, Lord, wast at our side; All glo - ry be Thine!  
 Thy name be ev - er praised! O Lord, make us free!

# WORDS ABOUT OFFERINGS

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Old Testament:

Peter Svenson

Psalm 123

Epistle:

I Thessalonians 5: 1-11

**MUSICAL MEDITATION:** "The Children of God"  
by Marty Haugen, arr. Cottier

**GOSPEL:** Matthew 25:14-30

**SERMON:** "Saint Peter's U.C.C.'s Got Talents"

**HYMN:** "Take My Life and Let It Be" SSB #7

F F/C C7 F Dm Bb Gm F/C C7 F C

1. Take my life\_ and\_ let it be Con-se - cra - ted,\_ Lord, to\_Thee; Take my hands and\_  
 2. Take my feet\_ and\_ let them be Swift and beau-ti - ful for\_Thee; Take my voice and\_  
 3. Take my lips\_ and\_ let them be Filled with mes-sa - ges for\_Thee; Take my sil-ver\_  
 4. Take my love\_my\_ God, I pour At Thy feet\_its\_ treas-ure\_store; Take my-self and\_  
 let them move\_ At the im-pulse of\_ Thy love,\_ At the im - pulse\_ of Thy love.  
 let me sing\_ Al-ways, on-ly for\_my\_ King,\_ Al-ways, on - ly \_ for my King.  
 and my gold,\_ Not a mite would I \_with-hold,\_ Not a mite would\_ I with-hold.  
 I will be\_ Ev - er, on - ly, all \_for\_Thee,\_ Ev - er, on - ly, \_all for Thee.

C7 F#sus2 F Bb F C7/E F F/C C Dm C F Bb6 F/C C F



## **PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYERS**

### **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**

***C: Amen.***

**\*POSTLUDE:** "Come We That Love the Lord" arr. Bjornsson

---

### FOR WORSHIP TODAY

---

MINISTER

Rev. Richard Lanford

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Ben Westphal

---

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

---

**Good Morning!** Friends in Christ, it's a joy to be with you today for worship! Please welcome one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

**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.

**Thanks to all who supported St. Peter's UCC (and a local business!)** by participating in last week's Village Inn / St. Peter's Fundraiser.

**Today is our Church Council meeting** via Zoom after worship (Nov. 15th).

**A Heads-Up:** The annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be held, via Zoom, on Tuesday, November 24th at 7:30 PM. When the link comes in to us, we will share it. Pastor Lanford is contributing once again, "live" and from our sanctuary.

**Winter is coming!** It's a good time to buy a plot at our St. Peter's U.C.C. Cemetery. See Kathy Zipperer to get the ball rolling.

**Wishes for blessed birthdays** go out to Bruce Mau, Roberta "Bobbie" Muhrer, Chad McCoy, Heidi Tarzian, Christine Svenson, Isabelle Banoyo, Libby Burmeister, Pat Erdman, Dorothy Stielow and Bill Cain.

**Ten Thousand Villages Fundraiser** – this Thursday, November 19th we kick off a special 48-hour shop! A Zoom presentation at 6:00 PM with a rep from St. Peter's UCC will be at the shop live, explaining the fundraiser and how to shop, and will feature great gift ideas to get your list going. More details on this in the Announcer and forthcoming! If you aren't on our email list, send us a message at [office@stpeteruccskokie.org](mailto:office@stpeteruccskokie.org) so you don't miss out!

**Holiday Meals for needy area families from the Jewel Food Store at 5667 Touhy in Niles is on and donations are needed.** As you might expect, the need is up this year! Laura has been reached out to by the various community partners we work with who benefit from these meals. If you are able please go to the Jewel and make a donation! Most of our meals go to Skokie School District 69 which has a very high rate of low income families, then UCAN which helps youth in crises become future leaders, and Pastor Cranford's ministries in Evanston. We'd sure like to make it a very happy holiday season for all!! Thanks so much for your support. You can go to the cashiers or service desk and write a check, you don't have to shop.

Our prayer of confession today is reprinted by permission of United Church Press from Taught by Love by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1998 by United Church Press.

According to the schedule, barring any switches next Sunday's Lector will be Jenn Schneider.

**Next Sunday, November 22nd, is the last Sunday before Advent begins on the 29th.** Please consider being one of those who writes and shares a brief devotional (for recording) for one of the Advent Sunday themes of hope, peace, love and joy -- contact Ben Westphal! But it is also Totenfest, and no one in our membership has died yet since last Totenfest, so we will follow the rest of Christendom and treat it as the "Reign of Christ" (aka Christ the King) Sunday. *However*, since we did not mark All Saints Day, if you would like a candle lit and a name (and reference point) for someone dear to you read aloud by the Pastor as part of the service, please contact him during the week and we'll do it!

**There will NOT be Poinsettia orders taken this year due to COVID and concerns about worship.** Instead the Women's Guild will buy plants to decorate the sanctuary this year. In Honor/In Memory – we'd like to honor all of you for all you've done this crazy year to hang in there with us. See the insert in this bulletin or the Announcer and return it to us by Dec. 6th!

---

**CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

---

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

---

915 Chicago Ave.  
Evanston (847) 733-8258



ten  
thousand  
villages



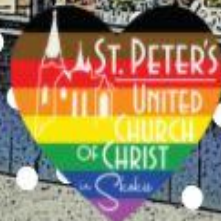
**Join us Nov. 19th at 6 PM  
online for a Zoom  
presentation -  
then start your shopping!**

How to shop: Shopping can be online at [www.ten-thousand-villages-evanston.com](http://www.ten-thousand-villages-evanston.com), in person at 915 Chicago Avenue or curbside pickup.

We have 48 hours from the presentation to shop, until 6 PM on the 21st. They will allow for special exceptions outside of that time period, if someone wants to shop in person but cannot get there during the shop days.

**YOU MUST MENTION YOU ARE SHOPPING FOR ST. PETER'S  
UCC'S FUNDRAISER WHEN ORDERING FOR US TO GET  
CREDIT.**

So you will have plenty of safe options to shop.



**NOVEMBER 19-21ST  
ONLINE & IN STORE**

# 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 6<sup>th</sup>! 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:



## TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

November 15, 2020

Matthew 25:14-30

### Extravagant Opportunity

The one who was given much uses what he is given to make an even greater amount. The one who was given a moderate amount returned a moderate amount. The one who began with very little...wait for it...ended up with very little. Sometimes the parables can be hard to relate to in our modern context, but this one seems very familiar. Maybe the one who was given much really was smarter or more faithful. Or, maybe he just got better advice.

We all need supportive peers, wise mentors and the still small voice that is heard in our own prayer practice. In the parable, we don't know how the servants made the decisions they did. We don't learn who was advising them. But we do know the kind of support that is available to United Church of Christ ministers at many places along their career path.

United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance (UCBMA), the philanthropic arm of the Pension Boards-United Church of Christ, operates with a covenantal spirit as it:

- provides direct financial support and compassionate responses to authorized ministers, lay church employees, and their surviving spouses/partners, in times of urgent need and personal crises
- administers and raises funds for leadership initiatives that promote faithful and fruitful ministry across the United Church of Christ

Through the Minister's Financial Vitality Initiative, Next Generation Leadership Initiative, CREDO and the Annuitant Visitor Program, the UCBMA is a financial partner and perhaps more importantly a compassionate supporter to pastors and their spouses. From providing peer mentoring and education to young pastors with promise, or financial aid for the widows of long-serving pastors, the UCBMA is available to help and support ministers wherever they are on life's journey.

To find out how you can support those who are supporting ministers and more about the work of the UCBMA please visit <http://www.pbucc.org/index.php/art-ma-landing>.



## SCRIPTURES FOR THE CONGREGATION

Nov. 15, 2020

### Psalm 123

To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master,

as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,

so our eyes look to the LORD our God, until he has mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us,

For we have had more than enough of contempt.

Our soul has had more than its fill of the scorn of those who are at ease,

of the contempt of the proud.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:1 - 11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, □

you do not need to have anything written to you. For you

yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, “There is peace and security,”

then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape!



But you, beloved, □ are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

#### Matthew 25:14 - 30

Jesus said, “For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, □ to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two

more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you,

that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter?  
Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and  
on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.  
So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten  
talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will  
have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what  
they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw  
him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and  
gnashing of teeth.'