



The ANNOUNCER

Quick Upcoming

WORSHIP & LIVESTREAM:

Sundays at 10 AM on YouTube & in person worship.

August 13th – Healing service in worship; “Learn with Love” suicide prevention screening during coffee hour after worship.

August 27th - Outdoor worship service and picnic at Lorel Park!



RUMMAGE SORTERS NEEDED! Sorting Tues & Fridays 10AM-Noon, Wed 6:30-8:30.

RUMMAGE NEEDED! Drop off during office hours, Sundays from 9-12 PM or if you have a key drop off whenever.

JOIN OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE! See article on page 3 for more information!

STAY FOR THE LEARN WITH LOVE SCREENING! August 13th. More information on this page.

MINI-FOOD PANTRY donations are always needed!

FROM THE MINISTER’S DESK

Throughout this summer we’ve been hearing about the climate crisis. There were droughts in the spring in some areas, and lots of precipitation in others (we had a pretty wet spring in Chicagoland, starting in late winter, and so did California). This July, Vermont had a “1,000-year rainfall.” Texas and Arizona are getting record-setting consecutive days with heat, and Europe is facing another sweltering summer. Oceans are getting warmer and warmer. I remember a group of us screening the film “An Inconvenient Truth” a few decades ago in our Memorial Room. An Environmental Justice Committee was later begun, but sadly, it did fizzle and ultimately disband. I once said in a sermon that it is too late to talk about “Creation Care” and “Stewardship of the Earth,” since our planetary home is on fire in so many places. Important insects, and other microbial subsets of ecosystems that are very important to habitats and food chains are dying off, never to return. It’s “Climate Crisis.” It’s God’s good earth, but we are ever more quickly going down the road to make it inhabitable in the not-too-distant future. You may not have liked Al Gore, but I wish we’d all taken him seriously then. What can we do? This is not a rant, but another August alarm so we keep remembering that this is not

going away. We were put on earth to take care of the planet, the animals and people that live on it, in it, and in the seas and skies. It is not just up to us, since many huge multinational businesses have a profit motive to keep drilling, to weaken pollution regulations, to keep mining, all which will further darken our air and heat up our seas and lands. I acknowledge that so much of this crisis seems to be out of our hands, and the hands of politicians beholden to campaign monies which come from “dirty energy” corporations. So, does that mean we just quit? No. Churches have a role to play, and the United Church of Christ seeks to equip the churches that want to take a stand and make a difference. For some time, the United Church has offered a resource for congregations interested in being a Creation Justice church called Cathedral on Fire (A Church Handbook for the Climate Crisis) by Brooks Berndt. It is in its 2nd printing. I will order a copy. My Minister’s Desk is rarely longer than this, so I will stop here. I have put together another, companion article in this Announcer that gives some details, both about this resource and what it takes to become a Climate Justice Church – if we have the bandwidth to consider that.

Keep the faith, and share it,
Pastor Richard Lanford

COFFEE HOUR ON AUGUST 13TH AND SCREENING OF LEARN WITH LOVE

Please join us after worship on **Sunday, Aug 13th** for an occasional summer coffee hour and a special screening of Learn with Love, a short documentary film from the Trevor Project, the leading suicide prevention organization for LGBTQ young people in the U.S. The film is part of Trevor Project’s initiative to protect transgender and nonbinary young people amid increased political attacks across the U.S. The film presents the stories of three transgender young people and their relationships with the people in the U.S. The film is part of Trevor Project’s initiative to protect transgender and nonbinary young people amid increased political attacks across the U.S. The film presents the stories of three (cont. p. 2)

(continued from p. 1) transgender young people and their relationships with the people who love them. In the words of one of the film’s protagonists, “If loving God and loving neighbor is the greatest commandment, that means the opposite of that—to NOT love—is the worst sin.” The film screening follows action taken at the recently concluded General Synod of the United Church of Christ at which a resolution affirming the dignity of trans and nonbinary persons passed with overwhelming support. (The vote was 633 in favor and 10 against, with six abstaining.) The resolution was a response to the threat to the human dignity and human rights of transgender and nonbinary persons due to legislation, passed or proposed, in



more than 30 states, denying access to life-saving healthcare, participation in sports, and access to gender-appropriate bathrooms. Gender dysphoria—the feelings of discomfort or distress that occurs in some, but not all, individuals whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth—is a serious medical condition that, if left untreated, can result in severe anxiety and depression, self-harm, and suicidality. After the film screening members of the ad hoc ONA Support Committee will share why supporting transgender youth and adults is such an important aspect of our church’s covenant to be Open and Affirming. The ONA Support Committee, formed to review and advise on how we might increase the strength of our ONA commitment, is your coffee hour host. Come see how you can “Learn with Love.”

HEALING SERVICE

Pastor Richard’s first service back from vacation will include a service of healing/anointing with oil/laying on of hands within the larger service (which will have a theme of healing). This is **SUNDAY, AUGUST 13th**. This 10 AM service comes out of the Book of Worship of the United Church of Christ, which says that a person may come forward for spiritual healing for themselves, or as a representative of someone else in need of healing, for whom you can be a proxy or channel. Everyone is welcome to attend whether a member or not. Following the service, the ad hoc Open and Affirming Committee of St. Peter’s will host a screening of the Trevor Project documentary, “Learn With Love.” The Trevor Project is the leading suicide prevention organization for LGBTQ young people. A separate article will say more, but it is not a coincidence the Committee’s plan to show the documentary and the Pastor’s plan to hold a Service of Healing on the same Sunday.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP AND PICNIC

Please join us for this special service! Thanks to the Skokie Park District, who is grateful for our sharing our large front lawn and Oakton Street right in front of our church building’s front door, on **Sunday, AUGUST 27th** we are holding our outdoor worship service, followed by a picnic at Lorel Park. Lorel Park is at the corner of Cleveland and Lorel Avenues; our service uses the Pavilion there. Afterwards a picnic is held, as always. We ask folks to bring either a dish, dessert, or snack to share with everyone. It is, however, **BYOB!**

	June Actual	Monthly Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Operating Contributions	17,581	13,342	75,562	80,050
Operating Expense	17,095	15,493	93,073	92,958
Gain/(Loss)	486	(2,151)	(17,511)	(12,908)

These numbers exclude line items for directed contribution, directed gifts, interest/investment income and the Clara Melone estate gift.

RUMMAGE SORTING CONTINUES IN AUGUST

Tuesdays & Fridays from 10AM to Noon and Wednesdays from 6:30 – 8:30 PM join us to help sort & prep items donated to us for our annual Rummage & Bake Sale in September! No experience necessary, just come and show up and we’ll find something for you to do. Not all jobs require lifting, so whatever you can do we’ll find a job for you. Contact Annie or Beth L. for more information or just come!

OUR RUMMAGE & BAKE SALE IS SEPT. 22ND & 23RD

Our Rummage and Bake Sale is coming next month and this one is sure to be as big as we’ve ever had! Clothing, accessories, wall hangings, jewelry, bath, bedding, kitchenware, small appliances, holidays, outdoors, pets and SO MUCH MORE await you, along with delicious home-made goodies when you come to our sale! Our sale will be from 9AM to 3PM both days, and for St. Peter’s folks we’ll let you know when a sign-up sheet to volunteer the days of the sale will be up, so please come help!

HOLIDAY CRAFT SHOW UPDATE

November 11th.... Mark your calendar for our Holiday Craft Show from 10AM to 3PM. **If anyone from church would like a table to sell your beautiful items please let Beth Lanford or Wendy Svenson know.** In September we will notify our following of crafters so get your table reserved now.

IN MEMORY: ELIZABETH ORPET HAENISCH (STEEK)

Elizabeth Orpet Haenisch passed away peacefully at her daughter Catherine's home in Fairfield, IA Monday, July 17, 2023. Betty was 93 years old. Perhaps better known to the church as Betty Steek, daughter of Edward and Irene Steek, sister to Lois Jarmuth, and Dorothy Hohman (passed) and brother Edward Steek Jr.

(passed). Betty was baptized, confirmed and married at St Peter's UCC and grew up just within site of the church on Laurel Str. next to the old fire station. Mother of Bob, Cathy, Jim, Bill and Sue. Any memorial services are pending and will be arranged by Catherine in the future.

HOSPITALIZED

In mid-to-late July, *Judy Paige* was to have a procedure done that is meant to improve her quality of life almost two years after knee replacement surgery. On August 1st, *Jen Schneider* will have a procedure to remove a substantial kidney stone. *Her mother Doreen Schurman* has been in hospice care since the middle of July. Later this

month, *Beth Lanford* is scheduled to undergo hip replacement surgery (left hip) at Advocate Lutheran General on August 15th and spend one night. Our apologies if we missed someone; these are the ones this writer was aware of on July 16th. *Jane Abramchik* was hospitalized earlier this summer after a fall at home, but has been back at home for some time, getting stronger. Please keep these persons in your prayers.

HAPPY 85TH BIRTHDAY!

Please say happy 85th birthday to my amazing dad Dr Richard Hook MD. My dad obtained the rank of Lieutenant Commander in the Navy, has two grandkids named after him (my boys Richard and Matthew), and also has a mountain in Antarctica named after him - Mount Hook! His loving daughter - Anna Riley

BIRTH IN THE CHURCH FAMILY

On July 21st, Skye Pape was born to Britta Christianson and Alex Pape. Blessings and congratulations to the whole family!

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 8/1 – Linda Haig
- 8/2 – Sharon Johnson
- 8/3 – Camden Allen Loach
- 8/6 – Richard Hook
- 8/7 – Erik Altmayer
Richard Steegmueller
- 8/8 – Arthur Daniel Svenson
Kathy Zipperer
Marlene Russell
- 8/9 – Kim (Loach) Bruhn
- 8/11 – Olivia Altmayer
- 8/14 – Elliott Kerbel
- 8/15 – Karen Rector
- 8/16 – Tom Schaller
- 8/19 – Rich Miller
- 8/20 – Dan Guenther
- 8/22 – Elizabeth Hoellerich
Fredrik William Svenson
- 8/23 – Allison Guenther
Juanito Banoyo
Ron Lundeen
Valerie Paige-Mahoney
- 8/24 – Harrison Kuras
Stephanie Lundeen
- 8/25 – Henry Muhrer

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 8/3 – Gail & Jack Hoellerich
- 8/7 – Gene & Leslie Kiesel
- 8/17 – Ron & Stephanie Lundeen
- 8/20 – Barb & Jim Todd
Bonnie & Mark Loach
- 8/22 – Dan & Heather O'Hara
- 8/23 – Errol & Laurie Mitchell
- 8/28 – Christine & Peter Svenson

FROM THE WOMEN'S GUILD

The Women's Guild meeting was held on June 14 at the home of President Barbara Todd for a picnic lunch on the deck at 11:30 a.m. The delicious lunch was provided by the Board and featured the long-awaited Sandwich Loaves by Barb Todd. The business meeting was minimal - the Board of Officers will remain the same: President, Barb Todd - Recording Secretary, Marlene Russell - Treasurer, Sue Bailey - Corresponding Secretary, Judy Paige - Sunshine Secretary, Ginger Kalensky. There are no meetings this summer nor in September, due to the Rummage Sale and Bake Sale on Sept. 22&23, in which our members will participate. There will be a meeting on October 11 and on December 13, when we will have our Christmas Luncheon and Cookie Walk. There will be no meeting in November. We hope to resume some of our Christmas Benevolences this year as our Treasury is looking better. With the possibility of a Christmas Advent event in December, the Guild will certainly participate in that. The afternoon concluded with a lot of conversation outside on the deck on a lovely day - no rain! Barbara Todd, President

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE FORMING

At its meeting in July, your Church Council voted to form a Strategic Planning Committee to help guide the congregation in its decision making. This Committee will use the UCC Local Church Profile to structure its work. The new Local Church Profile is designed to be a Discovery Document for congregations, leading them through these questions: Who are we now? Who is our neighbor? Who is God calling us to become? The Committee will review the Local Church Profile form, identify questions of strategic importance within it, and engage with resources that will help the congregation answer those questions. If you are interested in learning more and possibly serving on the Committee, please contact Pastor or Church President Peggy Reins.

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Lector/Nursery for August

August 6th	Lector: Rich S. Nursery: Carolyn V.
August 13th	Lector: Beth L. Nursery: Mike R.
August 20th	Lector: Olivia A. Nursery: Annie N.
August 27th	Lector: Annie N. (Lorel Park Service / No Nursery)
September 3rd	Lector: Peter S. Nursery: Kathy Z.



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AUGUST 2023

CATHEDRAL ON FIRE (A CHURCH HANDBOOK FOR THE CLIMATE CRISIS)

The urgency of the climate crisis requires that we act as if our cathedrals and churches are on fire. Indeed, God's creation can be seen as one grand cathedral on fire with burning forests and rising temperatures. Amid this dire situation, Brooks Berndt focuses our attention on the unique and vitally needed gifts that churches can offer. He writes with poetic passion but also with an eye toward the practical as every chapter ends with suggested, field-tested actions.

Chapters in the book explore the following areas in which churches possess immense potential:

- a commitment to care for God's creation as our first calling
- a scriptural basis in pursuing justice for a planet and its people
- a moral foundation for understanding the climate crisis as an inequality crisis
- a powerful, sacred language for articulating what fundamentally motivates people to act
- a hope-giving history found in the faith leaders who launched the environmental justice movement
- a rich tradition of theology in times of crisis
- a countercultural ethic of generational justice found in the Bible
- a recognition of youth as the climate prophets of today

The UCC's Creation Justice Church program assists congregations in making the ministry of environmental justice an integral strand in the DNA of their faith community. A congregation can be designated as a Creation Justice Church by taking these six steps: Many green church programs place an emphasis on creating a green team. That is an appropriate step for a lot of congregations, and the UCC offers its tips for starting a green team. In some churches, however, it might be advisable for the governing council or the social justice committee to drive the process of becoming a Creation Justice Church. That above is the first of six steps to become a Creation Justice Church; to do right by the rest will take too much space and time in this limited forum. So let me just point those on-line to our ucc.org home web page, and in the search engine on the home page, type in "Creation Crisis Resources." This Creation Justice Church program is a very local application of ecological themes and practices. Thank you for reading. Will St. Peter's UCC be able to do more than read? We'll find out. It's something for all of us to pray for discernment about. Pastor Richard.

www.stpeteruccskokie.org