

The Announcer

**St. Peter's United Church of Christ
8013 Laramie Ave.; Skokie, IL 60077**

From the Minister's Desk

By Reverend Richard Lanford

As Jewish mother-in-law Naomi urged Ruth to stay behind in her own country, Ruth pleaded, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go. Where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God my God. Where you die, I will die – there I will be buried."

Ruth truly loved Naomi. She was very, very devoted to her. So she was ready to leave behind her country of Moab, her friends, her family of origin, perhaps the chance to marry a Moabite man, to tear away from the warm circle of the familiar – in order to stay with Naomi. She would give this all up out of love for her.

She pulled up stakes, physically, culturally, socially, and spiritually. She was going to Israel as a native of a country that many Israelites would despise. She was entering vulnerability. That is how much she loved Naomi. That is quite an adventure she undertook. And that is what love can do to you or me or a church: take us on adventure.

Lots of Christians go on spiritual adventures beyond their borders; they're missionaries. It is too bad we are not so well versed these days in the heroic labors of a William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Jim Elliott, David Livingstone, and modern-day tellers of the good news through the U.C.C. Global Mission Board in places like Angola, Haiti, Turkey and elsewhere.

Congregations also can be so in love with their Lord that they go out of their comfort zone and on an adventure. Going up to the bell tower to check out the window damage is an adventure. Agreeing to be an officer or serve on some of the Boards can be adventures. Going to the A Just Harvest Kitchen to serve, starting the Brat Fry, having worship in Lorel Park during the Back Lot Bash, hosting the crew of the TV show NEXT during breaks, and getting the Mini-Pantry were some of our adventures.

I hope we never lose our sense of adventure, for the Holy Spirit often has places that He wants us to go to out of our love for Christ. Ruth reminds us that love, which makes us vulnerable, takes on adventures for the sake of the beloved, and for the sake of the lover. May St. Peter's continue so to be.

Keep and share the faith, Rev. Richard Lanford

(In service to transparency, most of this is excerpted from a sermon I preached at St. Peter's on Oct. 20th, 2013).



WORSHIP & LIVESTREAM:
Sundays at 10 AM
on YouTube & in
person worship.

**ANNUAL
INSTALLATION OF
OFFICERS &
BOARD MEMBERS:**
Sunday, February
3, 2022

**VILLAGE INN
FUNDRAISER DAY:**
February 20th
11 AM to 11 PM

Upcoming Events & Church News

THE ANNUAL INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS . . .

Will be **Sunday, February 6th** this year. Given that we're having hybrid worship, we will encourage the Installees to participate in person if possible, but at home if deemed safest by those being installed. If you're being installed remotely, remember to follow along with your e-bulletin and answer the questions posed in the service as if you were in the sanctuary in the group on the chancel steps!

VILLAGE INN FOOD FUNDRAISER! Our next Village Inn food fundraiser day will be on **Sunday, February 20th from 11 AM to 11 PM**. What a great day to plan to order carryout, delivery or dine-in (just don't forget your vaccination card for dining in) and enjoy a meal with friends, game or show on TV and not have to cook and clean. The best part is **we get 20% of whatever you spend**. That's the largest percentage any restaurant or chain will do. Plus, they have a wide variety of amazing food, something for everyone! Mark your calendars, help us and help you, too!

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP AND LENTEN STUDY - Ash Wednesday is next month. It will be **Wednesday, March 2nd**. COVID health concerns and in-place protocols allowing, we'll plan right now for services at 11:30 AM and 7:00 PM. The Lenten Bible Study will begin the Wednesday evening after that; suggestions for topics are welcome!

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

On behalf of the congregation of St. Peter's United Church of Christ and the Board of Finance, we thank everyone whose generous response to our request for year-end giving helped place us in the black! This included sizable gifts from non-members, but also from you folks who do claim this as your spiritual community, your home house of worship. Thank you, thank you, thank you! All gifts made a big difference and are very much appreciated.

WOMEN'S GUILD MEETINGS 2022

FEBRUARY 9TH, 2022

NO GUILD MEETING!!!!

DUE TO INCREASE CASES OF COVID 19

MARCH 9TH, 9:30 A.M.

SOUP LUNCH

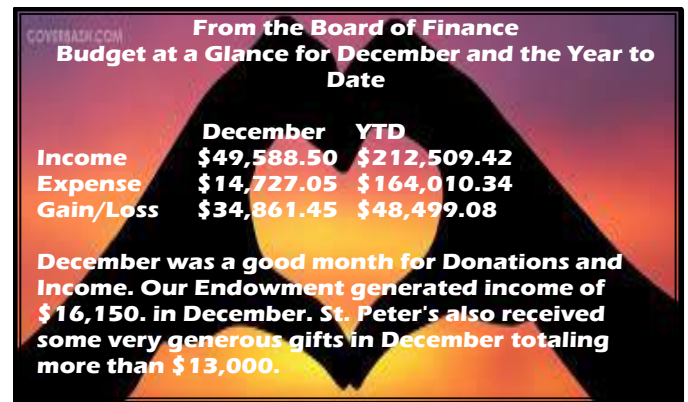
HOSTESSES: Barbara Bailey and Sue Bailey

DEVOTIONS: Barbara Todd

PROGRAM: ANNUAL KITCHEN CLEAN-UP

The guild did not meet in January due to cold weather. Please watch your announcer monthly for dates of our future meetings.

Submitted by Sue Bailey



DONATIONS TO THE MINI FOOD PANTRY -

We're running low again! Our pantry is a huge success and we need your help to keep it going. Canned food veggies, fruit, meat like tuna, chicken, etc. are great items. Fun and unusual things are also great. We currently do not need more mac and cheese or peas for now, lol! Bring your items Sundays or during office hours, we have shelves under the mailboxes by the stairs for all the food.

SPRING CRAFT FAIR 2022 is MAY 7TH: In the next two weeks Wendy will be contacting previous vendors (and the ones that were on a waiting list) with application forms for our Spring Fair on May 7th. **If there are any from church interested on having a table to sell their crafts please let Wendy or Beth Lanford know to reserve your spot.** We anticipate (and hope) this will be a sold out event so we'd like to offer to members first. Any questions contact us at st.peteruccbazaar@gmail.com. Thanks so much!

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Prayer Requests & Our People

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

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

FEBURARY ANNIVERSARIES

2/2- Karen and Ken Christianson

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

2/2 – Grace Castillo; Joshua Castillo
 2/4 – Tyler O'Hara
 2/5 – Britta Christianson
 2/6 – Phil Lindroth
 2/7 – John Gruze; Rich Schneider
 2/10 – Don Kahn; Jamie Iannotti
 Jeff Loach
 2/11 – Lana Kahn; Ray Erdman
 2/12 – Adrianna Paige; Tracy (Paige)
 Puckett
 2/13 – Roy Svenson
 2/16 – William Hoellerich
 2/19 - Angela Washek Kuras
 2/23 – Haley Kahn
 2/24 – Jason Iannotti; John Balling
 2/28 – Sue Bailey

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

2/2- Alice and Bill Schaller

PRAYER REQUESTS: Ingrid Anderson, Guy and Traudel Cline, Pat Mauer Erdman, Linda Haig, Ken Itter, Helen Mauer, Jim Todd, Roy Svenson & Cristy Lopez.

If you see your name listed and would like it removed, or, someone you know should be added, please contact the office.

Donation statements All those who donated to St. Peter's UCC in 2021 were either given a donation statement at the Annual Meeting or it was mailed to you on January 31st. If you do not get one in the upcoming week or so and were expecting one, or find anything incorrect on your statement, contact the office. Thanks so much for your generosity!

LECTOR & NURSERY SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY

Feb. 6 Nursery: Carolyn V.
Lector: Rich S.
Feb. 13 Nursery: Kathy
Lector: Annie
Feb. 20 Nursery: Annie
Lector: Mark L. (for Olivia)
Feb. 27 Nursery: Laurie M.
Lector: Beth L.
Mar. 6 Nursery: Beth L.
Lector: Peter S.

HOSPITALIZED: Dorothy Panzke had surgery to mend a broken leg in December and has continued to rehab at Harmony House in Chicago. She contacted COVID and got through that at Harmony House. Her daughter Kelly is to have spinal surgery scheduled for February 22nd. Ursula Dworak also came down with COVID and ended up at Glenbrook Hospital in January. She was in ICU for bit and went through a bit of a scary period, but as of this writing she is improving daily and like Dorothy may be home by the time this comes to you. If not, she may be getting some physical therapy somewhere if not at home. Annemarie Gloeckner was at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston for several days to deal with a variety of symptoms and problems, and she has stabilized and improved and is home now. Her daughter-in-law Marcia Hilliard had her knee surgery postponed until more hospital beds are available for non-COVID patients. Please keep these folks and their families in prayer. Thank you!

February Faith, Love and Fun

Faith's role in love

In *It's Okay Not to Be Okay*, Christian author Sheila Walsh looks at the all-encompassing love that Jesus expects of his followers. He commands us to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27, ESV).

But we can't love that way without faith, Walsh writes. “I'm not living by faith if I have an answer to everything. If I understand everything God does or doesn't do, then all I need to love him with is my mind. We're called to love him with more.” That “more,” she explains, involves these paradoxes: “We love with all our heart, even when it's broken. We love with our soul, even when our humanity wrestles against our situation. We love with our strength, even when it's almost gone. We love with our mind, even when we don't understand.”

Even if God's purposes and plans don't make sense here on earth, we can heed this advice from the great preacher Charles Spurgeon: “When we cannot trace [God's] hand, we must trust his heart.”

God of love — for, with and in us

An ancient heresy — that the God of the Old Testament was a God of judgment and wrath, while the God of the New Testament is a God of grace and love — still persists a bit. Yet God is the same God, with the same characteristics, throughout time. Way back in Genesis 3, God graciously sewed garments to clothe humans, although they had disobeyed him. And even in the Gospels, God's anger was evident through Jesus' response to temple moneychangers cheating the poor.

God always works for life and goodness in all things. Sometimes people misunderstand God's ways; sometimes God, like a human parent, uses “tough love.” Mick Brooks writes: “The Old Testament is God for us, the time of Christ is God with us, and the age of the Holy Spirit is God in us” (Every Day With Jesus, Sept/Oct 2020). That may be a bit simplistic, but it's a good reminder that while God's ways of interacting with us vary, he — the God of Love — does not.

BEYOND CANDY HEARTS AND ROSES

The first half of February seems dominated by pink and red, cards and candy. But people not in a loving romantic relationship can sometimes feel left out of the festivities. Of course, all people need love — and certainly love is not limited to the romantic kind. Author Leo Buscaglia, who became known as “Dr. Love” for writing about the topic, said, “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” Jesus taught that loving one another is second only in importance to loving God (Matthew 22:37-40), and that when we love one another, God lives in us (1 John 4:12). There are so many ways to do that — beyond candy hearts and roses! But Valentine's Day is as good a reminder as any.

Puzzle!

Answer each statement (based on Matthew's gospel) True or False by circling the letter in the correct column. Then write each circled letter on the appropriately numbered line below to discover why Jesus died.

	TRUE	FALSE
1. Jesus healed Peter's wife (<i>Matthew 8:14</i>).	E	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N
2. Jesus fed the 5,000 with two loaves and five fish (<i>14:17</i>).	R	A
3. At Jesus' Transfiguration, Peter saw Jonah and Elijah (<i>17:3</i>).	M	S
4. The rich, young ruler decided not to follow Jesus (<i>19:22</i>).	T	C
5. Jesus said the temple had become a “den of robbers” (<i>21:13</i>).	I	G
6. Famines and earthquakes are signs of the end of the age (<i>24:7</i>).	V	D
7. Jesus tells a story of the six wise and six foolish maidens (<i>25:1-13</i>).	F	A
8. Judas betrayed Jesus with a secret handshake (<i>26:48</i>).	P	L
9. The Roman governor Polonius interrogated Jesus (<i>27:11-14</i>).	W	O
		N
<hr style="width: 100%;"/> 3 2 8 6 7 4 5 9 1		

Answer: N, A, S, T, I, V, A, L, O; salvation

