

ANOTHER ROAD



Welcome to St Peter's UCC Livestream Virtual Worship Service! Subscribe to our [YouTube Channel](#) to catch a new service at 10 am each Sunday! We also share a [podcast](#) weekly of the scripture readings and sermon. The podcast can also be found on most podcast catchers & platforms, under "The Redheaded Preacher." Give us a like and 5-star rating to help others find us!

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** 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)

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St. Peter's United Church of Christ
Oakton Street and Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL
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847-673-8166

OUR ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR
Sunday, January 3, 2021 10:00 AM
Second Sunday after Christmas

WELCOME GUESTS!

* Indicates all who are able are invited to stand

PRELUDE

Selected

THE SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jenn Schneider

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: In the beginning was the Word, and the
Word was with God and the Word was
God.

***Congregation: We understand Christ as creative
voice in all the universe.***

P: Christ is life, a life-light that could not be
overcome.

***C: The impossible is possible -- evil
shall not overwhelm good.***

P: The human being who was preexistent voice, true shining, was rejected by the world and ill-received by his neighbors.

C: *The only-begotten of God who is the prophet of Nazareth, gives us power to become children of God. Let us praise this God as we begin a new year!*

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Jesus Christ, God with us, You came that we may have life and have it more abundantly. We have not always lived up to Your expectations for us.

We confess that too often we are dry in spirit; fill us with Your grace.

We are often wrapped up in ourselves; open us up to others.

We are sometimes slow to learn; teach us of Your ever-expanding truth.

We waste ourselves in things that do not satisfy; whet our hunger and thirst for justice.

We are too often scattered like grains of the field; gather us into a single loaf.

We are frequently distracted of mind. Direct us to what is most important: Your love for us, Your will for our lives, and Your sustaining presence in every circumstance. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Paul wrote of Jesus, "who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death -- even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:6-8).

In this self-giving is our forgiveness, our new orientation to God and others, our life as children of God through faith. In the birth of Jesus we find the mindset, the heart-set, of the Almighty towards us, and it gives us grace. We are forgiven! Let the congregation wherever and whenever you are join me in praising God.

All: Alleluia! Amen.

***HYMN:** "Joy to the World" #120
 (In v. 2 you may wish to sing "let us our songs employ")

120

Our Lord Jesus Christ

From Psalm xcvi. ISAAC WATTS, 1719
With joy and dignity

C. M.

ANTIOCH
 GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL, 1742

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2. Joy to the earth! the Sav - iour reigns: Let men their
 3. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Him room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of His right - eous - ness,

And heaven and na - ture sing, And heaven and na - ture
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His

And heaven and na - ture sing,
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy,
 And won - ders of His love,

And
 Re -
 And

sing, And heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love. A-MEN.

heaven and na - ture sing,
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 won - ders of His love,

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gospel:

Jessica Schneider

John 1: 1-18

Matthew 2: 1-12

A CALL TO OFFERING

MUSICAL MEDITATION Selected

PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYERS

HOMILY: "Life and Light"

HYMN: "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

SSB #37 (w. 1, 4, 5)

In unison



1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are, Bear - ing gifts we trav - erse a - far
2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, Gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I, In - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume Breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;
5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice;



Field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, Fol - low - ing yon - der star.
King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er O - ver us all to reign.
Prayer and prais - ing, all men rais - ing, Wor - ship him, God on high.
Sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, Sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Sounds through the earth and skies.



REFRAIN



O star of won - der, star of night, Star with roy - al beau - ty bright,



West - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, Guide us to thy per - fect light.



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

P: Mary spoke words of faith and became the human vessel through whom God entered history.

C: ***Let her words be our own: "Let it be to me according to your word."***

BENEDICTION

All: Amen.

***POSTLUDE:** Selected

FOR WORSHIP TODAY

MINISTER

Rev. Richard Lanford

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Ben Westphal

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good Morning! Welcome to worship on this first Sunday of a new year. Let us praise the God who is always doing something new!

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.

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. Laura is there on Mondays but not always near the door, so call ahead if you plan to come. If that doesn't work, we can coordinate with our volunteers to meet you there when it works for you. (847) 673-8166.

Our Sunday School Supplies for Infant program has been collecting baby items for the Niles Township Food Pantry. The last day to drop off these items will be tomorrow, Monday January 4th from 9 AM to 2 PM.

Supplies are for newborns and infants and include but not limited to diapers, wipes, onesies, toys, bath supplies, formula, etc.

We're combining the Baby Items drop off with your offering envelope pick-up, and we'd also like to ask you to take a couple calendars as well. These will be on a table outside the office. If you are coming to drop off baby items and would like yours, after ringing the bell and standing 6 feet from the door, Laura will gladly grab yours or let you in and make sure you get it. If you have a key, you are welcome to come get yours anytime. Thank you all!

FROM THE PRESIDENT – Official Announcement about our Annual Meeting – In the interest of safety, and the likelihood that Illinois will not allow large gatherings by the end of January, Council is choosing to be pro-active and has decided to hold our Annual Meeting on January 31st as a Zoom call. We realize and acknowledge that NOT EVERYONE can attend this type of meeting. We are giving ample notice about this to allow for alternative solutions to this challenge. Perhaps if you are not able to Zoom, you can (safely) join a friend or family member on that day that CAN Zoom, and participate in that way. Or communicate your thoughts or concerns to a Council member before-hand ... we will allow proxies at this meeting. Sadly, we haven't figured out how to feed everyone

this way ☹️ More information will be available about the Agenda items and meeting structure as we get closer to the meeting itself.

It is safe to assume that, financials aside, we ask everyone who is responsible for submitting a report for the Annual Congregational Meeting please do so by Monday, January 18th. A special drop-box folder for these Annual reports has been created.

NEW St. Peter's Zoom Account! We now have an official Church Zoom account. There are many more benefits we are able to use because of this. If you are having a Zoom meeting, contact Laura in the office and she'll share the username and password so you might host an online meeting using the church account.

Pastor's Podcast is now on all the Podcast platforms- iTunes, Stitcher, Overcast, Spotify, Podcast Addict, Amazon Music and more. Just look up "The Redheaded Preacher" on your podcast catcher or music streaming service then hit subscribe and you'll get the newest editions weekly! Give us a 5-star rating and review if you can, it helps us grow so much

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According to the schedule, next week's Lector is Beth Sterba.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

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



Support Our Mission this Christmas!

During this holiday season, make your seasonal gifts from anywhere using our eGiving tools. St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Skokie offers PayPal, Vanco electronic donations & text donations.



See the first page of this bulletin for links to donate



Text Your Donation!

Simply text your seasonal gift amount to [844-997-2346] and then follow the instructions on your phone to complete your donation.

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

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

January 3, 2021

John 1:1-18

Another Road

In a few days, Christians around the world will celebrate the feast of Epiphany. Like so many of our Christian observances, this one contains the seeming contradictions of human and divine. It is on the one hand an acknowledgement of the divine nature of Jesus, which was recognized by the Three Magi who came to visit the Christ Child. On the other hand, it is a celebration of Christ's appearance to all people, as The Magi are often thought to represent Christ's Gentile followers.

It is not uncommon to tell stories to try and make sense of our stories, especially the ones that hold contradictions like Epiphany. In Italy on this day, Italian Christians tell the legend of Befana. The story goes like this:

Befana was an old woman, who was renowned throughout the village for keeping the most meticulously clean house. All of her energy and time went into creating a beautiful home. When the three Magi followed the star through her village, they naturally stayed with her in her lovely abode. They told her about the Christ Child, whose star they followed. After a day's rest, the three began again to follow the star, and they urged Befana to come with them. Befana said no at once, for if she left the village, who would keep her house clean and neat? The more she thought about the Christ Child, the more Befana was compelled to see and know more about him. Quickly packing a bag of sweet treats and carrying a broom for the new mother, Befana hurried down the road. But the Magi had already gone on ahead. Although she hurried to catch up with them, Befana could not find the Magi and to this day she searches for the Christ Child. Although her search for the Child was not successful that night, on Epiphany Eve, Befana travels still, visiting each child in Italy. And for each child, she leaves a gift, because she now knows that the Christ Child can be found in each young person.

Questions for reflection:

How does the story of Befana help you understand the story of Epiphany in a new way?

How does this story embody the paradox of this season's celebration both of Christ's divinity and his ministry to all people?

How can your life be a story that tells a story about the meaning of Epiphany?



BUC0205

8 1/2" x 11" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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SCRIPTURES FOR THE CONGREGTION

January 3, 2021

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of

God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

MATTHEW 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;

and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people,
he inquired of them where the Messiah[□] was to be born.

They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by
the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd[□] my people Israel.’”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men[□] and learned from
them the exact time when the star had appeared.

Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently
for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that
I may also go and pay him homage.”

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of
them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,[□] until it stopped
over the place where the child was.

When they saw that the star had stopped,□ they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.