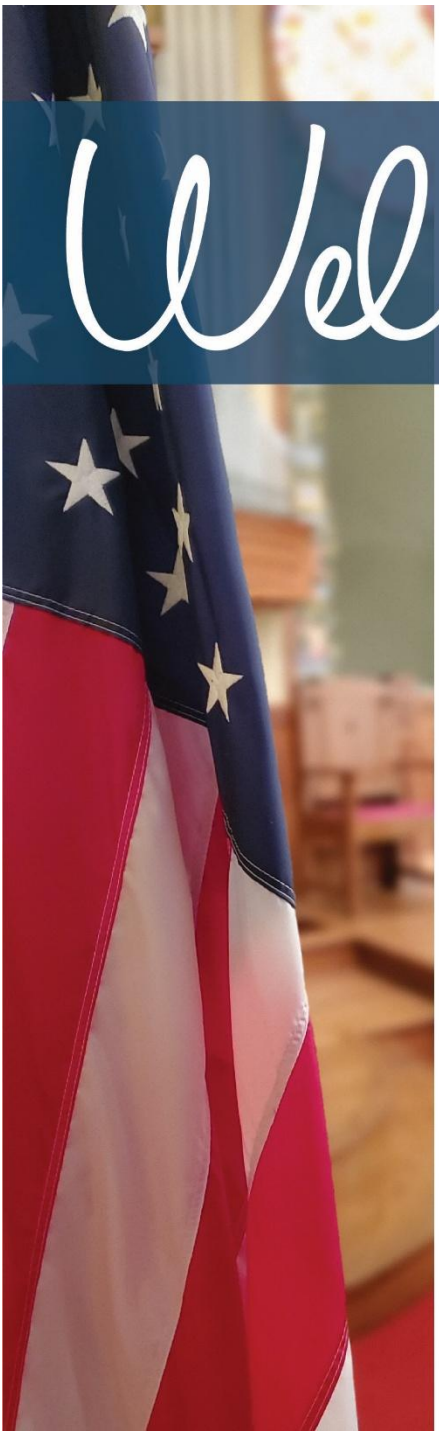


Welcome

ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR

Sunday,
July 5, 2026
10:00 AM

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

ST. PETER'S
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
OPEN & AFFIRMING IN SKOKIE, IL

Welcome to Worship!

SUNDAYS @ 10:00AM
In-person Worship. All are welcome to join us
Livestream on YouTube. Live at 10am then available on our channel after

Ways to Give

Send a Check. Mail to the address below ... this way still works fine!
Send with Zelle. Use your banking app to send to finance@stpeteruccskokie.org
Use PayPal. https://www.paypal.me/stpeteruccskokie
Set up Vanco. https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZCME/home
Set up your account or log in to give

Open Communion

All Christians and seekers after God are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper with us the **first Sunday of every month** and special Holy Days (Christmas, Maundy Thursday, and Easter). **At-home Communion** participants are invited to provide their own elements and join when Pastor bids you, “take, eat, and drink.”

About St. Peter's UCC

We've been in the heart of downtown Skokie since 1867. 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 **joyously welcome all people** to share worship, membership, marriage, baptism, funeral, and fellowship with us.

Contact, Follow, or Talk to Us

Rev. Brenda Barnes Jamieson (Interim Pastor): pastor@stpeteruccskokie.org
Ben Westphal (Music Director): bcwestphal@gmail.com
Laura Olson (Office Manager): office@stpeteruccskokie.org
Office hours Mon-Fri 9am to 2pm

Facebook/Instagram/YouTube: @stpeteruccskokie
Website: www.stpeteruccskokie.org

Like, follow, or join our email list for up-to-date info about events and activities!

8013 Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL 60077 | 847-673-8166

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
8013 Laramie Ave., Skokie, IL 60077
Order of Worship for
Sixth Sunday After Pentecost
Sunday, July 5, 2026 at 10:00am

Meditation during our sacred music:
Listen. Be attentive. Feel God's Spirit connect all of us gathered here, those with us online and in spirit, and those who cannot be present today.

PRELUDE Selected
THE RINGING OF THE BELLS
ANNOUNCEMENTS Peggy Reins

You may stand in body or spirit.

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Calling all citizens of heaven:
exiled dreamers and disciples of love,
All: God is close to the outcast and faithful to all.
One: Calling all pilgrims of the Spirit,
carried by the winds of hope,
All: God is everywhere at all times,
compassionate to all.
One: Calling all travelers between worlds,
who translate compassion into peace,
All: God makes neighbors of strangers
and kin of the forgotten.
One: Come to worship and be renewed
for this long journey.
All: Strangers in a strange land,
we have come to worship the creator of all.

GATHERING HYMN "America the Beautiful"

1. How beautiful, our spacious skies,
our amber waves of grain;
our purple mountains as they rise
above the fruitful plain.
America! America!
God's gracious gifts abound,
and more and more we're grateful for
life's bounty all around.

2. Indigenous and immigrant,
our daughters and our sons;
O may we never rest content
till all are truly one.
America! America!
God grant that we may be
a sisterhood and brotherhood
from sea to shining sea.

3. How beautiful, sincere lament,
the wisdom born of tears,
the courage called for to repent
the bloodshed through the years.
America! America!
God grant that we may be
a nation blessed with none oppressed,
true land of liberty.

4. How beautiful, two continents,

and islands in the sea
that dream of peace, non-violence,
all people living free.
Americas! Americas!
God grant that we may be
a hemisphere where people here
all live in harmony.
from New Century Hymnal; stanzas 2, 3, 4 by Miriam Therese Winter, 1993

CALL TO TRANSFORMATION

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

One: Gracious One, where do we begin?
You call us to do justice,
All: and we explain that justice is complicated.
One: You ask us to love mercy,
All: and we say that a show of strength is necessary.
One: You invite us to walk humbly with you,
All: and we struggle to recognize you in our neighbors, in the dispossessed,
in the poor and hungry places of our own hearts.
One: We confess we have failed to summon the courage and compassion required by your call.
All: We have treated hospitality as an option, kinship as a choice, instead of as the center of our life together. One: We have claimed your name, yet rejected your way.
All: Forgive us, we pray.
Pause for quiet reflectiion

WORDS OF GRACE

One: Friends, hear this good news: God's gift is love that liberates, hope that inspires, grace that transforms.

All: For there is nothing we can do, and nothing that can be done to us, that will ever stop God from loving us.

One: In Jesus our Christ, we are freed. We are forgiven. We are loved. We are being made whole.

All: Thanks be to God! Hallelujah!

PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you all!

All: And also with you!

Share a sign of God's peace: a smile, a wave, an elbow bump, a handshake, a hug. Let us fill this space with love.

SUNG RESPONSE

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah! Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!
Halle, Halle, Hallelujah! Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

The congregation may be seated.

SCRIPTURE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Ann Herren

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49,58-67

You may wish to stand for the reading of the Gospel.

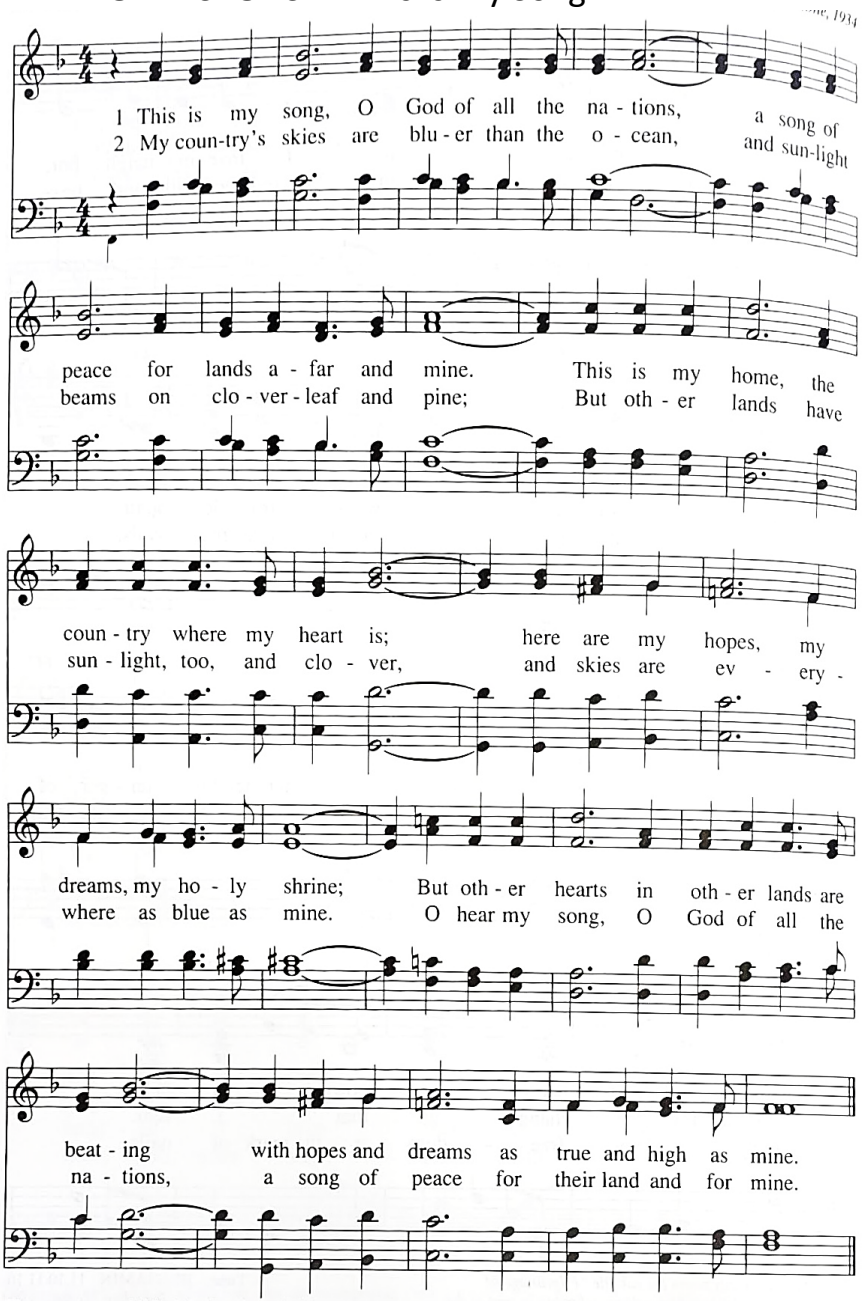
GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Please be seated.

SPECIAL MUSIC Selected

SERMON "A Love Song of Faith"

HYMN OF RESPONSE "This Is My Song"



PASTORAL AND SILENT PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

A: 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

OFFERTORY

If you donate electronically, you may place an "Electronic Giving" card into the plate as it comes around so you can enjoy participating in the physical act of giving.

You may stand in body or in spirit.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

All: Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
praise God, all creatures, here below!
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Praise God above, you heavenly host,
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: God be with you.
All: And also with you.
One: Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them to God.
One: Let us give thanks to God Most High.
All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.
One: Let us pray . . .

Words of institution

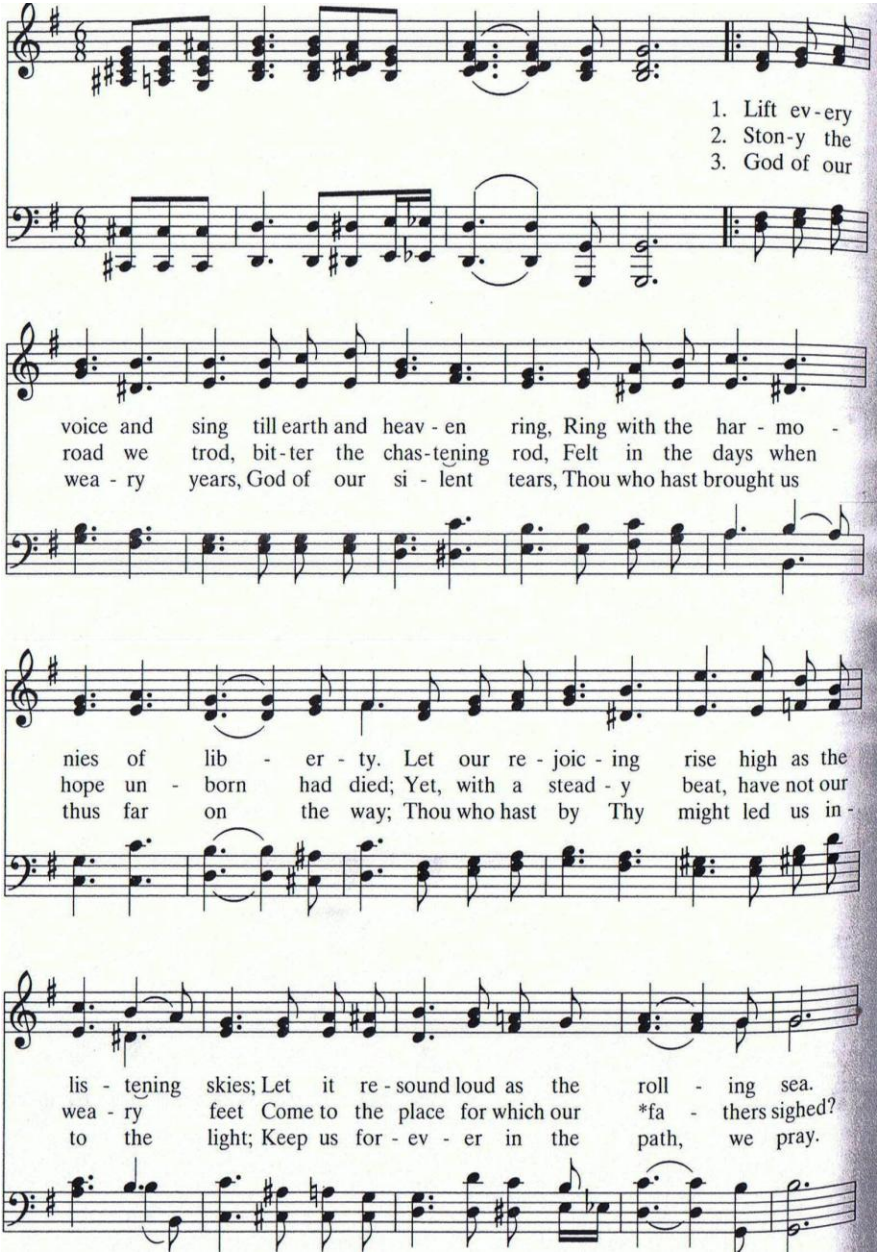
Prayer of Consecration

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Gratitude

We thank you, God of heaven and earth,
that you fill our deepest need
with the very gift of Jesus Christ,
broken and poured out for us.
Pour us out into a broken world.
Channel our common life
toward the common good,
following the way our Savior leads us
now and forever. Amen

HYMN OF COMMITMENT: "Lift Every Voice and Sing"



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Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
We have come o - ver a way that with tears has been wa - ter
Lest our feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met Th
Sing a song full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought
We have come, tread - ing our path through the blood of the slaugh
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we for - get
us; Fac - ing the ris - ing sun of our new day be
tered, Out from the gloom - y past, till now we stand at
Thee; Shad-owed be - neath Thy hand may we for - ev - er
gun, Let us march on, till vic - to - ry is won.
last Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
stand, True to our God, true to our na - tive land.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Selected

We pause to reflect during the Postlude as we prepare to follow God out into the world.

Today's liturgy is adapted from:
Worship Liturgy by Rev. Erika Marksbury and Rev. Amanda Meisenheimer, © 2026 Illustrated Ministry, LLC. All rights reserved. 16 FOURTH OF JULY PASTORAL CARE PACKAGE Provided under limited license.

Worship Resources: US Semiquincentennial, July 2026, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

FOR WORSHIP TODAY

INTERIM MINISTER	Rev. Brenda Barnes Jamieson
MUSIC DIRECTOR	Ben Westphal
DEACON	Peter Svenson
LIVESTREAM RECORDING	Rich Schneider
NURSERY ATTENDANT	Laurie Mitchell

News in the Pews

On this Sunday following our nation's celebration of independence, we are grateful you have come to worship Almighty God, who continues to bless our land in countless ways. Welcome!

Summer conversations before worship Sunday mornings. Join us in Lanford Hall starting at 9AM. Topics will be pulled from the UCC daily devotionals, you can sign up for them here: https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/.

Special Congregational Meeting - Please plan to attend the special congregational meeting on July 12th. The meeting will start as soon after worship as possible in Lanford Fellowship Hall. The purpose of this meeting is to ratify the expenditure of church funds for emergency repairs to the boiler. We will also use our time together for updates, not with formal reports, but through dialog about our priorities this year: the work of reconciliation, building up our church community, and discerning God's call to the church. Brenda may talk some more about what we have learned in our Exploring our Future sessions and the work that lies ahead.

Rummage Sorting – please join us Tuesdays from 10AM-12PM, Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30PM and Fridays 10AM-2PM each week to sort. No experience necessary, just a willingness to help. We'll find a job that works for you. It's a lot of fun, and even better when you find something you need! Come see what its all about.

Cemetery Update - Earlier this year a group of folks started working together to determine the future of St. Peter's Cemetery. It was formed to try to find a way to hand over the ownership and administration of the cemetery while preserving the historical significance and allowing it to stay an active cemetery for the community. Work includes including updating the records, conducting a title search and making sure that legal requirements are maintained (taxes and reporting) ....basically "getting our ducks in a row." As this is done, we will work to determine the best organization to honor our vision for the future of the cemetery. This group will apprise the council and all church members of significant developments. The church members will be asked to vote on any recommendations from this committee before any change will occur. All members of St. Peter's are members of the St. Peter's Cemetery Association. Please send any questions to the church office, they will be forwarded to the appropriate people.

Thank you to everyone who's been donating, and we can still use donations if you are able. Summer can be the hardest time for lower income families, who rely on free and reduced meals during the year. Your donations can help combat that!

Laura will be out of the office July 5th through the 11th and back the 13th. Sharon Johnson will be in M, W & F starting July 6th. Thank you Sharon!

Calling all Crafters. Our annual craft show will be on Saturday, November 7th from 10-3. If you are interested in a table, or have a question, please see Annie Noorts or email Wendy Svenson at stpeteruccbazaar@gmail.com.

Our People

Please keep St. Peter's extended family in your thoughts and prayers. Other folks that need your prayers include:

- Ben Westphal and his family.
- Kaye Dufern, who worships regularly with us, as she faces her last weeks of life.
- Ginger Kalensky who lost her cousin Greg a week ago.
- Mark Kelly, friend of Ginger's who is hospitalized after leg vein surgery and toe amputation.
- The Iannotti family who lost Carol's cousin Diane, who also was extended family of St. Peter's UCC.
- Annie Noorts' friend Geo Bonamasso who is fighting cancer.
- Mark Taylor.
- Wendy, friend and colleague of Beth Sterba, who is fighting liver cancer.
- Annie's friend Renee is fighting a long term, rare illness.
- Nicole McGinnis, childhood friend of Laura's who is fighting stage 4 cancer.
- Prayers for Julius and all immigrants, refugees and displaced people.
- Sharon Johnson's daughter Donna continues her battle with Lymphoma, which can be controlled but not cured.
- Susan Garcia's Aunt Janice battling cancer.
- Paul Brzozowski has now completed all treatment and will have MRIs every 2 months.

Others in our church family to keep close in our hearts include Larry Baumhardt and Lois Jarmuth.

If you are aware of others to include in our shared prayers, please let a church officer, an Elder, or the office know!

Happy Birthday to Nancy Lindroth, Sandy Piper and Wendy Svenson. **Happy Anniversary** to Gail and Greg Thomas. God's blessings to you on your special day!

According to the schedule and barring any switches, next Sunday's Lector is Rita McMahon, our Nursery attendant is Kathy Zipperer. Thank you so much for your service!

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT	Peggy Reins
VICE-PRESIDENT	Karen Christianson
TREASURER	Carolyn Kuechler (interim)
SECRETARY	Jenn Schneider
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Maria Altmayer (interim)

Regular Reminders!

Let us know you were here! Please sign the attendance sheet in the black pew pads and when you think your pew is ready, please pass the pad towards the center aisle of the church.

Private Signs: You will notice certain rooms around the church have been designated as "private." If ICE should ever come to our building, they will not be allowed to enter any room marked "private."

Donations to our mini-food pantry are always needed and greatly appreciated! Donations can be left in the narthex or downstairs by the offices on the designated shelves. Thank you!

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MISSION MOMENTS

Chosen Journeys

July 5, 2026

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Green

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

My husband wonders why I make life hard for myself. He especially wonders this when, under the scorching sun, he watches me walk by the hose he bought — the one with the extra-long extension — choosing instead to lug sloshing buckets of water from the house to my out-of-the-way garden.

It is a bit odd. I sometimes question my own sanity, too. But I have chosen this garden journey as a spiritual discipline. For in the arduous act of carrying water buckets, I'm reminded of those who still walk miles for their water. It is a small, prayerful act that keeps my coddled heart conscious of the urgent need for clean, accessible water for all.

Last summer, though, I finally admitted that watering the garden this way was becoming too much for me. My husband smiled, thinking the prized hose he bought would finally be used. He was wrong. Rather, what arrived a few days later in the mail was a 19th-century wooden yoke from a farmer in Lithuania. Its well-worn patina featured ornate notches carved into the wood that kept the buckets from sliding.

I placed the arch of the yoke behind my neck and masterfully balanced the buckets. The yoke did help to distribute the weight of the water, lightening the load a bit, and making my task a bit easier. And it also deepened my spiritual gardening discipline, as feeling the buckets sway with my steps, I heard my Savior's invitation once again: Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

I thought about the heavy burdens I carried that no one knew of — the worries that sloshed around in my spiritual buckets. I had grown weary by their weight. I had a tiredness in my bones that no sleep could cure. It was a tiredness that came from the constant buzz of stress keeping my nerves on high alert.

How many times would I ignore Jesus' help? Why did I insist on carrying all of life's burdens alone?

It is no wonder Jesus told the people of his time to take his yoke, for his was an easy one. Before modern machinery, farmers would use a wooden yoke on their animals. The frame that joined two beasts of burdens would mean they would share the weight of a load, making it easier to keep moving forward.

What a beautiful invitation we have as well. This is our opportunity, this day, to finally give our burdens to the one who will make them lighter. Will you embrace Jesus' yoke? I have. The garden hose, though? That I still ignore.

Patient God, how tiresome it must be to watch us struggling with the burdens and stresses and worries that we insist on carrying by ourselves. Help us to finally accept Jesus' invitation to take his yoke. May we stop being crushed by the weight of this world. May we know that all we struggle with is now in Jesus' capable and loving hands. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)