

The Announcer

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

From the Minister's Desk

By Reverend Richard Lanford

*I am reading a book called **If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get out of the Boat** (Zondervan Press, John Ortberg, 2001). I am not far into it as I write this, but in this month with (another) holiday focused on freedom, some things I've read in it seem appropriate to share.*

He's referencing of course the Gospel story when Peter, as bid by Jesus but asked by Peter first, answers the call and gets out of the storm-tossed boat the disciples were in. It is found in Matthew 14:22-33. Our Memorial Window on the west side of our sanctuary tells part of the story. Fear had to be one huge reason the other 11 disciples had no interest in following Peter's example, and asking Jesus to bid them to come to Him on the water. The author spends some time with that fear, and looks at similar examples of our own fear of stepping out in faith or risk.

In the sermon I preached on Juneteenth (June 19), I lifted up the idea that when folks honestly face the truths which they fear, they can be changed from still fearing the truth to becoming free of that fear. When they or we can, to paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, "steer their / our bark with Hope in the head, leaving Fear astern," we can steer with freedom. For us, though, unlike Jefferson, we would steer the bark of our lives with Hope in Christ, leaving fear astern." When you or I understand our fear and are willing to let go of the fear, we receive freedom.

The freedom is more than simply being free of that fear. We are now free, to refer back to the book, to grow spiritually. Like Peter, we find that Christ is there with us on the scary waters, and will pull us up to save us if we take our eyes off of Him and become unmoored again. We are free to start using the potential God has given us, by nature or grace. We are free to take chances if that is what Christ is telling us. That is freedom – freedom to get to know God better and discover more joy in deeds of service, witness, teaching and love.

On my wall at St. Peter's there is a wall-hanging. It shows 2 mallards taking flight from the ground. It makes me think of the freedom they have to fly, and how sometimes we humans, by being imprisoned by fears, become unable to rise above and fly. It can be saying "no" to the habit of not praying, and with the help of a Bible, devotional or friend, and begin drawing near to God daily in prayer. It can be giving up one weeknight of watching re-runs to attend a Bible study, volunteer somewhere, or help with Rummage set-up in the summer. Spiritual growth by getting out of the boat.

The Founders and all who sacrificed for freedoms in very age were afraid. But they chose to steer their boat with hope in something higher, to "leave fear astern" and join themselves to better, higher aims (flawed as they all were). Let us also do what we can to stop letting our fears keep us from greater freedom and service to the Christ who has already made us truly free. Keep the faith, Pastor Lanford



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

CHURCH COUNCIL – Meets after worship July 17th

VILLAGE INN FOOD FUNDRAISER: July 17th from 1 PM to 11 PM

RUMMAGE SORTING:
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6:30-8:30 PM and Fridays 10 AM to Noon.

UPCOMING EVENTS

RUMMAGE SORTING AND COLLECTING IS UNDERWAY. *Tuesday and Thursdays from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM and Fridays 10 AM to 12:00 PM*

we'll be here sorting all that wonderful rummage being dropped off weekly and daily some days. We're so grateful to everyone who's donating, we predict another huge sale this year. For those who want to drop stuff off you can do that during office hours (9 AM to 2 PM, *call ahead this month as vacations are happening*) or during the above sorting days and times! If those don't work and you can't make it Sunday morning, call the office and let us know and our Rummage coordinators will try to work with you.

OUR TURN FOR THE A JUST HARVEST KITCHEN

- Is ***Saturday, July 30th***. Our donation of \$500 is needed. Ever since The Virus and its variations have hit, the food has been and is still distributed curbside to prevent infection. Further, The Kitchen may not have a large group indoors at the same time, dining. The Kitchen staff has been using money we collect and send over, \$500 per event, to buy the groceries, cook the sloppy joes, and prepare the rest of the meal we would be responsible for, and do the serving. This will change when they tell us their arrangements have changed, and as of a recent conversation held in mid-June, that is not yet. We are grateful for the very generous gifts that have come forward from you all to meet the covenant/mission partner commitment! Please send your donation to the office, put it in the collection plate or feel free to donate online via PayPal, paypal.me/stpeteruccskokie.

CHURCH COUNCIL WILL MEET JULY 17th after worship & fellowship. Lots to be discussed after having June off. Please get those reports into Dropbox or to the office by the Wednesday before.

VILLAGE INN FOOD FUNDRAISER - SUNDAY, JULY 17TH FROM 1 PM TO 11 PM

-This really puts the fun in fundraiser. On this day, eat in, carryout or have delivered food from Village Inn on Lincoln Avenue in Skokie, *let your server know you are ordering for St. Peter's UCC fundraiser*, and we'll get 20% of whatever you spend!! You'll get a great meal you won't have to cook, it's a win-win! Mark your calendars!

SEVEN MINUTES OF PRAYER ONCE A MONTH

- The Niles Township Clergy Forum has, for over 2 years, been gathering with any and all like-minded people in the area, ***on Third Wednesdays at 3 PM*** for 7 minutes of silent prayer. This happens at the Village Green space just to the east of the Skokie Village Library's eastern entrance. It began as some kind of response to all the gun violence that was taking over our news. The convener is usually Rabbi Jeffrey Weill of Ezra-Habonim, the Niles Township Jewish Congregation." If you are interested in joining us/them, please know you are welcome.

HEALING SERVICE ON AUGUST 14TH -

Pastor Richard will once again incorporate a Service of Healing from The Book of Worship of our United Church of Christ during a Sunday service. The next one will be during a 10 AM Service on Sunday, August 14th. The service includes the anointing of one's forehead with oil in the shape of a cross, and the laying on of his hands with a prayer to go with it. Receiving those acts are strictly voluntary, of course.

CHURCH NEWS

ST. PETER'S TO BE A PART OF THE CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE'S OPEN HOUSE TOUR IN OCTOBER - We were invited to apply for this wonderful event, got accepted, and are officially a part of the tour on October 15th & 16th, 2022. St. Peter's will be opening the doors of our beautiful, historic church to folks near and far. Saturday the 15th we'll be open from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sunday the 16th from 2 PM to 5 PM. While we are still in the planning stages, we will need about 15 volunteers during the event, 4 per shift (official t-shirts to be provided). People will need to be on hand to man the entrances for the most part. There will be two short working sessions planned for August for those willing and interested in helping in whatever capacity. There also may be work done here to prepare for this one-of-a-kind event. Contact the office if you can help and thanks so much to our Council members for their work on this!

FOOD NEEDED FOR MINI PANTRY - Our large supply has dwindled; any food or household goods you have to donate is greatly appreciated! Things like canned beans, vegies, fruits, meat and fish, pasta, rice, bread items, unusual fun items, snacks, juice, cereal, dried fruits, nuts. Household goods include toiletries, paper goods - anything you might have that could be used is welcome, though we probably have enough toothpaste for awhile, thanks Bunco folks! Contact the office with questions and bring your donations to the shelf across from the office.

TOUR OUR WEBSITE! - St. Peter's used the Covid Summer of 2020 to overhaul our online presence with a gorgeous new website that reflects the beauty of our sanctuary. We put a lot of great information right on our home page and made it easy to access our worship bulletins and contact our church office

and pastor. If you haven't looked around our site lately (or never!) take a few moments to check it out. *Things to note:*

- Statements of faith, what we believe, and who we are
- Gorgeous pictures of our sanctuary, windows, and building
- Information about holding weddings, funerals, and baptisms at St. Peter's UCC in Skokie
- What the UCC at large is up to
- Upcoming events and special services
- An opportunity to join the mailing list
- And so much more!

	May Actual	Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Operating Contributions	\$15,241	\$11,667	\$63,628	\$58,333
Operating Expense	\$14,646	\$14,044	\$72,902	\$70,220
Gain/(Loss)	\$595	(\$2,377)	(\$9,274)	(\$11,887)

These numbers exclude line items for any income transfer, roof repair and directed gifts.

OFFICE MANAGER'S VACATION PLANS - Office Manager and Custodian Laura Olson has asked the Council for approval of taking vacation starting Monday, July 4th through Monday the 11th, returning on the 12th. Sharon Johnson will be manning the office that Wednesday through Friday. Thank you Sharon!

PASTOR'S VACATION DATES - Pastor Richard Lanford will be taking 14 of his 28 vacation days starting on either Wed., July 20th through and including Tuesday, August 2nd, OR Thursday, July 21st through and including Wed., August 3rd. Either way, he will be back in the study the next day. He has secured the services of guest preachers Rev. Dr. Penny Taylor (and most likely her husband fellow pastor Rev. Dr. Bill Ressler) for Sunday, July 24th. Both are LSCW and work with the Center to Awaken Kindness. Pastor Richard will know more after he and Dr. Taylor speak after this deadline. The Rev. Roger Dart will be our guest preacher on July 31st; he is currently the Volunteer Disaster Coordinator for the Illinois Conference of the U.C.C. and has long known our Pastor through Cluster 1.

OUR PEOPLE

~FREE ITEMS~ TABLE IN MEMORIAL

ROOM – New this year, the Rummage folks will be leaving items that they won't be selling on a table in the Memorial Room for St. Peter's folks to take home. You are invited to take anything you like and also welcome to add to this table – and, if you have large furniture or TV's or monitors you'd like folks to know about, you can leave pictures on the table of these larger items too with your contact info.

BUNCO THANKS - Thank you to everyone who helped out, donated to and/or attended our BUNCO night in May, we raised over \$2500.00! A very special thank you to Carol Iannotti, Laurie Mitchell and Heidi Tarzian and their helpers for all their hard work putting this together.

OUTREACH OPEN HOUSE THANKS -

Thank you to everyone involved in planning, setting up for and manning our Outreach Open House! Special thanks to Jenn Schneider for countless hours of work and communicating with our groups. It was a special day where over 12 of our community partners gathered at St. Peter's to offer their services to the community.

THANK YOU - TO EVERYONE for your heartfelt condolences on the loss of my dearest friend and companion Max. As well again thank you to everyone who helped with his care. I am truly grateful for that extra time I had with him. Since he's been gone it has been the hardest time I have gone through, but your kind words, thoughts and prayers have kept my head above water. He was a one-of-a-kind dog, I'm so glad so many of you got to know him too. Laura Olson

HOSPITALIZATIONS - Wendy SVENSON had hip replacement surgery in early June and is recovering at home. Jenn SCHNEIDER had left knee replacement surgery on June 14th and is also recovering at home. Both of course have been undergoing physical therapy, some at home and then some as outpatients. Dorothy PANZKE has been at Humboldt Park Hospital, then Elevate Care Irving Park for physical therapy, then Amita Saint Mary of Nazareth Hospital, then Elevate Care Irving Park, until difficulty breathing there necessitated her return to Amita Saint Mary of Nazareth in mid-June. As of this writing, she is back at Elevate Care Irving Park. Clara MELONE had an in-and-out visit at St. Francis Hospital, was taken to Alden on Touhy where she stayed for several weeks until she planned to go home near the end of May. Ralph BURMEISTER remains at Elevate Senior Living in Niles, in hospice care. Please remember them all in your prayers.

LECTOR & NURSERY SCHEDULE FOR JULY

July 3rd	Lector: Jenn Schneider Nursery: Mike R.
July 10th	Lector: Judy Paige Nursery: Annie N.
July 17th	Lector: Barb Todd Nursery: Beth L.
July 24th	Lector: David Iannotti (also lay liturgist) Nursery: Mike R.
July 31st	Lector: Karen C. (Also lay liturgist) Nursery: Kathy Z.

Birthdays, Anniversaries and Prayer Requests

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 7/1 – Mia Paige Speicher
Randy Altmayer
- 7/3 – Ann Aler
Beth Lanford
Mandy McDonald
Mike Taheny
- 7/4 – Dan Mahoney
- 7/7 – Ron Schuhrke
- 7/11 – Hillary Gack
Wendy Svenson
- 7/15 – Jeremy Steegmueller
Shari Meggs
- 7/16 – Mary Taylor
Sydney Kerbel
- 7/21 – Louise Dahm
- 7/22 – A.J. Tarzian
- 7/24 – Justin Mitchell
Kaitlin Garcia
- 7/27 – Alice Schaller
- 7/28 – Ryan Miller
- 7/29 – Ralph Burmeister

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 7/3 – Linda and Bruce Mau
- 7/12 – Beth and Richard Lanford
Gail and Greg Thomas
- 7/17 – Beth and Paul Brzozowski
Gail and John Balling
Lisa and Eric Martinek

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 8/1 – Linda Haig
- 8/2 – Sharon Johnson
- 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
- 8/22 – Clara Melone
Elizabeth Hoellerich
- 8/23 – Allison Guenther
Juanito Banoyo
Ron Lundeen
Valerie Paige-Mahoney
- 8/24 – Harrison Kuras
Stephanie Lundeen
- 8/25 – Henry Muhrer
- 8/31 – Helen Mauer

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 8/3 – Gail & Jack Hoellerich
- 8/7 – Gene & Leslie (Todd) 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

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.