



**St. Peter's United Church of Christ**

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Website: [stpetersucc.com](http://stpetersucc.com)



## From the Study

For my column this month, I have decided to use the words from my Annual Report. We make limited copies of the annual report, so I thought I would use my February column as a way to distribute my thoughts at this time.

### Annual Report 2005

It is hard to believe that another year has passed and soon I will have served as Pastor of St. Peter's for an entire decade. As one looks back to the history of our congregation, very few pastors have served a decade or more. Yet, I believe that effective ministry does not begin until someone has been in a pastorate for five to seven years. It takes a minimum of three to five years for a pastor to begin to feel he has an understanding of the particular ministry. The statements are supported in a lot of church growth literature as well as my own personal experience.

During this past year, I have announced my intention to retire toward the end of this coming year, 2006, or the beginning months of 2007. Our church leadership is already engaged in providing for this transition. I will do my best to help this transition but I will be careful not to cross any boundaries in this transition and following this transition. For instance, my role can be an advisor about the process during this transition, but the goals and person to lead the St. Peter's congregation in the future are proper decisions of the congregation itself.

In terms of this transition process, I would alert you as a congregation that these next two years will be critical for the future of our congregation. The process will require a lot of tough introspection, many hours of prayerful study and seeking a process to make decisions as a united congregation. Prayer must be more than a word; it must be a lifestyle which is open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Honesty is very critical in this time of transition.

I mentioned in my annual report last year: *“Over the years I have been a minister, ordained ministry has become increasingly difficult. It will become even more difficult in the future. The good news is that there are exciting days of opportunity for the church of the future if they are open to the opportunities that the Holy Spirit provides.”*

I do see signs of hope for the future of the United Church of Christ and many of its local churches. The “God is Still Speaking” initiative has excited many pastors including myself in a very positive way. The TV spot entitled the “bouncer ad” has

won national acclaim and has won a prestigious advertising award. The advertising campaign was one of many seeking to make our United Church of Christ an inclusive church. Several established churches are in various stages of seeking affiliation with the United Church of Christ. I believe our denomination has a clear idea of its purpose and its identity, which it has not always had. I believe our United Church of Christ website ([www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)) is an

excellent resource for potential visitors as well as established members. This website is a good way to remind ourselves of our rich past as well as provide resources for our future. Without this message of inclusion embedded in a local church's understanding, it will be impossible to physically or spiritually grow in the future.

In addition, growth of any congregation requires a “mission” vision. I have been grateful for the response of our congregation this past year to the natural disasters that have occurred. I hope that we will continue to seek to meet mission needs beyond our doors.

May God bless us in our continuing ministry and give us the guidance which we need.

With warm regards,

**Pastor Glenn**





In the Spotlight this month — Beginning February 1, **St. Peter's website** will have a new and improved look. Take a moment to visit us online at [www.stpetersucc.com](http://www.stpetersucc.com). The new design features navigation links near the top of each page in addition to the pages being screen-width (no more scrolling to see the right side of the page!). Take a peek and let us know what you think!

## February Fun at WINN

February is full of fantastic fun on Wednesday nights at WINN. Check out the schedule listed below. If you have any questions regarding WINN, please call Rhonda Shoudel at 352-3353 or Kitty Hallett at 355-9316.

GROUND  
HOG  
DAY

- February 1 Ground Hog Wild – featuring beef roast
- 8 Sweet Surprise – featuring shrimp and fish sticks
- 15 Crazy Head (Hat or Hair) Night – featuring beef stroganoff
- 22 Family Night at Skateland

## Winter Jam 2006

Don't miss this Christian concert extravaganza event for all ages – Thursday, February 2 at Red Bird Arena on the ISU campus in Normal. Concert cost is \$10 at door and will feature some of the top contemporary/popular Christian artists including Toby Mac and Newsboys. The concert starts at 7:00



p.m. (doors open at 6:00 p.m.). The St. Peter's convoy will be leaving at 5:00 p.m. Talk to Lisa if you have any questions.

## A Special Birthday Note

Lena Dowling will celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on February 12. Cards may be sent to Lena c/o Illinois Masonic Home, 1 Masonic Way, Sullivan, IL 61951-9467. According to Lena's grandson, she still walks with her walker.



**Happy Birthday Lena!**

## Do any of these statements describe you?

- I have memories of Sunday school classes as a child but I don't remember much about the Bible.
- I have thought about joining a Bible study group but was afraid I would feel out of place. Everyone else would know more about the Bible than I do.
- When asked to look up a Bible passage, I have no idea where to look.
- Whenever people talk about the Bible, I get confused and have a lot of questions that I'm afraid to ask because they seem like stupid questions.
- I have studied bits and pieces of the Bible but I need an overview to see how it all comes together.



If one or more of these statements applies to you, then you may benefit from a new Bible study starting in February based on the two books *The Bible From Scratch, The Old Testament for Beginners* and *The Bible From Scratch, The New Testament for Beginners*. Each book is broken in seven to eight, one hour long sessions to give you a good basic understanding of the Bible and provide you with the knowledge and tools to continue on to other Bible studies.

Bill Malone will be leading this study session starting February 9 and classes are tentatively scheduled for Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Please sign up in the hallway across from the office or call Bill at 356-7329 or email at [wd-malone@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wd-malone@sbcglobal.net).



## All Church Dinner Out

Don't miss the Tuesday Circle All Church Dinner Out at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28. Dinner will be at The Ribeye. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the south hallway if you plan to attend.



## Sausage Supper . . . Come join the fun!

The St. Peter's Annual Sausage Supper is Saturday, March 11. Serving time will be 4:00–7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$8.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children ages 5–12 and children under 5 are free. Everyone is invited. Ya'll come!

On Friday, March 10, the preparation begins at 9:00 a.m. with dining room setup, cooking and squeezing sausage patties. Everyone is welcome to come and help.

Friday evening, March 10, beginning at 6:00 p.m., potato peelers will do their thing. I bet we have a potato peeler that will fit everyone's hand. Come try us out. After all the potatoes are peeled, we'll go out for pizza.

Saturday afternoon and evening, we will need everyone's help. Jobs to be done include cooking, dining room busing, serving line, dish washing and serving dessert, salad and drinks. After the last guest is served, clean up will also need to occur.



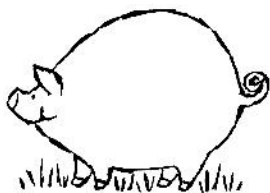
This is a fantastic opportunity to work together!



Since the sausage supper is a fundraiser, we would also like to encourage bulk sausage sales. We have ordered extra fresh mild blend sausage to be sold at \$3.00 a pound. Sausage must be ordered and paid for by March 4. Sausage orders can be picked up at the church on Saturday, March 11.

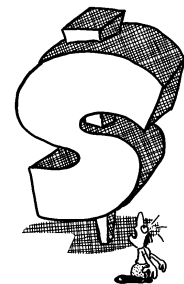
We have an opportunity for you to clean out your cupboards—we need plastic containers (butter tubs, etc.) for leftovers. Please leave containers in the church kitchen.

If you have any questions or suggestions, contact Marguerite and Larry Zahnd 359-3808 or Kurt and Fern Eheart 351-7997.



## From the Consistory

Reiterating the message from Linda McCarthy last Sunday, the finances of the church are already in dire straits. At the end of December, we had a deficit of \$5000.00. The biggest deficit is in the General Fund. We have, waiting to be paid, bills totaling \$7653.57. The contributions so far this year are not enough to cover these bills.



As you recall, we approved a budget with a \$44,000.00 deficit. It was approved with the understanding that we would have to dig deeply to meet our expenses. We need everyone to start digging.

The Consistory would welcome any suggestions on how we can meet our expenses. We do have money in the bank, but most of it is in other funds.

In keeping with our understanding when the monies from all funds were combined, we are trying not to dip into the other funds to pay General Fund expenses. However, Building and Grounds, Heating/AC and Elevator monies are all for the upkeep and running of the church. If we were to combine all of those funds, it would give us more capital with which to work. If you have any questions regarding any of these issues, please contact Shirley Records.

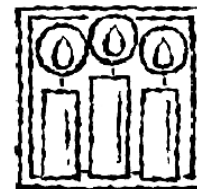
## Fellowship Time Sign Up

Please check the bulletin board in the south hallway for the Fellowship Time sign up sheet. We need volunteers to make coffee each Sunday. Volunteers are also needed to make or purchase a snack for Fellowship Time. Volunteers may sign up for coffee, snack or both. If you have any questions, please call the Church Office.



## Acolytes and Liturgists Needed

If you'd like to serve as an acolyte or liturgist for Sunday worship, please sign up on the bulletin board across from the Pastor's office.



## Consistory Highlights

*Editor's Note: The following notes from the January meeting are for your information only.*

*Minutes and actions of this meeting will not be approved until the February meeting.*



The Memorial Committee will purchase a new fire resistant file cabinet for the office.

In an attempt to enhance spirituality, Church and Ministry is suggesting that every committee, with Glenn's leadership, devote one meeting during the Lenten season to the study of the Lord's Prayer in lieu of conducting business.

Bill Malone is starting a new adult Bible study that will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday evenings beginning February 9. It will be a basic overview of understanding the Bible. He will be using the textbooks, *The New Testament for Beginners* and *The Old Testament for Beginners*.

The Board of Education reported that the Senior High School Class will hold an event for the entire congregation called "Worshipping the Creator". It will be held on Saturday, January 28.

The Contemporary worship service has been changed to the fourth Sunday in April (due to Easter falling on the third Sunday). There will be no Contemporary worship service during the month of May as May 21, 2006 is Senior Sunday as well as the choir's last Sunday. The worship service in May will be a blended service of both contemporary and traditional.

A special council meeting of our Eastern Illinois Association will be held Saturday, February 11, in Morris, Illinois.

Christie Taube will meet with the Ecclesiastical Council at 2:00 p.m. on March 19. The council is made up of both laypersons and clergy. Christie will be asked to answer a variety of questions as a precedent to her possible ordination.

The treasurer reported the income for December was \$18,938.21 and the expenses were \$24,012.93. The current deficit is \$5,074.72, with bills due at approximately \$7,000. Please note there was a substantial increase in the power bill this past month for both the church as well as the parsonage.

Please check out the St. Peter's website as Bonnie has been working on updating it and making it more user friendly!

Respectfully submitted,  
*Cheryl Lehmann* (Secretary)

## Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the March issue of *Connections* is Wednesday, February 15. Please submit your articles to the Church Office or leave them in the Office Manager's mailbox. Please include your name and phone number. Thank you!



## New Address

**Mildred Holleman**

401 Burwash Avenue, Apt. 156  
Savoy, IL 61874-9694

## February Ushers

Kurt Eheart  
Barb Kobel  
Ed Kobel

Patty Kobel  
Kymberly McCarthy  
Mark Williams



## February Anniversaries

- 11 Bruce and Pam Bostwick  
(1961)  
17 William and Diann Wingler  
(1979)

## February Birthdays

- 1 Loreen Bonnell  
Ruth Schloz  
2 Irene Lofton  
7 Eileen Walters  
Diann Wingler  
9 Evelyn Kitchen  
Terry Woller



- 11 Jason Stahl  
12 Lena Dowling  
Virginia Bryan  
Norma Hollen  
Phou Sysouvanh  
17 Eric O'Neill  
18 Omer Benn  
Cassandra Wentz  
20 Bob Reifsteck  
Tessa Vowels  
21 William Malone  
James Martinie  
24 Nigel Knop  
Ben Sterrett



**Editor's Note:** We apologize for omissions or errors. Information for the newsletter mailing list, birthday list and anniversary list is taken from Church records.

**Please report changes in writing** to the Church Office (weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.). You may mail changes, place notes in the Office Manager's mailbox or send an email to trost@net66.com. *Thanks for your help!*



## Mentors Needed

Westview School is happy to be a neighbor to St. Peter's. We have appreciated your generosity in sharing your parking lot with our volunteers and teachers. We have appreciated you sharing your building for crisis drills and offering it in case of emergency. We are hoping to deepen that relationship. Currently, we are looking for adults who are willing to mentor at our school.



Mentors commit to spending one hour per week, during the school day, on school grounds with their student. Mentors receive training, orientation, and ongoing support and are willing to commit to one year. We look for mentors that are reliable, committed, have a genuine interest in youth and have good listening skills.

This program was recently honored with a Governor's Hometown Award and has been shown to have positive effects for both mentors and students. In fact, a landmark study by the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America found children with mentors were 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs; 27% less likely to begin using alcohol; 53% less likely to skip school; and 33% less likely to engage in violence. For more information, check out our website at [www.cul1to1.org](http://www.cul1to1.org).

I know from personal experience as a mentor and a mentor coordinator how fun and rewarding being a mentor can be. Many of our local businesses allow their employees paid time off to do this service for our community. Every day I have students who come to me and beg me for a mentor. It continues to amaze me that



students are looking so actively for adult role models.

I hope that you will consider becoming a part of this exciting program. Be aware that we have CU One to One mentor coordinators in all elementary and middle schools in Champaign and Urbana, so if you would prefer to mentor at a different building, that can easily be arranged.

Contact Jill Schreiber (information below) today to request more information or to reserve your spot in one of these training sessions: Tuesday, January 31, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Urbana Free Library; Thursday, February 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Mellon Building.

Sincerely,

*Jill Schreiber*

Mentor Coordinator for Westview

Home: 356-7416, Westview: 351-3905

Email: [schreiji@champaignschools.org](mailto:schreiji@champaignschools.org)

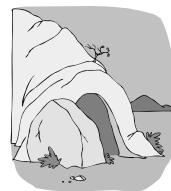
## Church Mailbag



*Dear Friends at St. Peter's,*

*Thank you very much for your prayers, your financial gifts, your partnership in serving others free in Jesus' name through the works of empty tomb, inc. Your generosity has been a Godsend . . . With the strong support we've received we're looking forward to the New Year. It is our privilege to serve others free in Jesus' name, and promoting oneness in the Body of Christ. Thank you for doing this with us!*

*May God bless you richly in days ahead! You have been a blessing to many, including the staff, and those we serve together through the works of empty tomb!*



*Sincerely in Christ,*  
Marcia A. Gruschow  
Coordinator, empty tomb

*Dear St. Peter's United Church of Christ,*

*On behalf of the clients, staff and board of directors of Restoration Urban Ministries Foundation, Inc. NFP, thank you for your continued, generous support of this organization in 2005.*

*Sincerely,*  
Bruce H. Swartz  
Financial Director, Restoration Urban Ministries

Dear St. Peter's Church Family,

On behalf of the staff and residents of the TIMES Center I would like to extend our gratitude to you for your gift to the Center. Our program depends heavily on contributions and the support of our faith community . . . we thank you for supporting the TIMES Center as we strive to provide hope in the lives of homeless men in our community.

Sincerely,  
Gail Elkins  
TIMES Center Specialist

On behalf of the Food for Families committee, our member agencies and those they serve, I would like to thank you for your donation. Your contribution of grocery product will directly benefit those at hunger risk through area food pantries, residential facilities, soup kitchens, homeless shelters and other non-profit community food programs. Your support allows us to assist over 24,000 individuals and families a month that rely on food provided through our 184 member agencies.

We appreciate your donation and support of our mission to alleviate hunger in east central Illinois.

Sincerely,  
Jim Hires  
Executive Director  
Eastern Illinois Foodbank



## The Lord Works Through All of Us

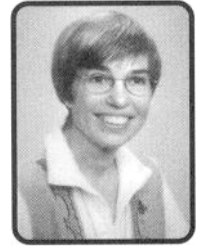
We have a most important  
and compelling work to do  
For each of us is someone  
that the Lord is working through  
He gave us willing, caring hands  
to perform some helpful deed  
He gave us sympathetic words  
to answer someone's need  
He gave us loving hearts  
to aid another along the way  
He gave us smiles and laughter  
to brighten someone's day  
He gave us all these treasured gifts  
for helping one another —  
The Lord works through us all  
When we are caring and praying for each other.

— author unknown

*"Every one helps a neighbor and says to his neighbor, 'Take courage!'"*  
Isaiah 41:6

## Doing together what cannot be done alone

Village by village devoted pastors in Sri Lanka are finding and supplying boats, outboard motors, nets and other equipment to enable tsunami affected fishermen to go back to the sea. For those who do not want to go back, or whose families cannot bear for them to go back, training is being offered in various alternative trades with the provision of a micro-loan to start a small business. Vocational training centers have also sprung up for women and girls in non-traditional jobs, such as carpentry. Pastors in the affected villages are working together with true ecumenical spirit to help families restart their lives. Communities which did not suffer damage from the tsunami have been suffering nonetheless from 20 years of war. Some families have had their lives destroyed by both the tsunami and the war. Missionary Grace Bunker reports, "Sensitive, fair-minded relief agencies are recognizing that the war-affected people must be helped alongside the tsunami-affected. It is only right that some good be salvaged from a disaster of such proportion to improve the lives of all who suffer."



GRACE BUNKER



*God, we pray for those whose lives have been devastated and for those who help them find new beginnings.*

Grace Bunker is a recently retired missionary from Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

You make the difference . . .



The prayers and help you provide through your local congregations make possible the work and witness of GLOBAL MINISTRIES, which is supported by Disciples Mission Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) of the United Church of Christ.

**GLOBAL MINISTRIES**

WWW.GLOBALMINISTRIES.ORG