



St. Peter's United Church of Christ

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January/February 2009



A Note from the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Thank you!!!!!! I am overwhelmed with all your love and gifts and words of support and encouragement . . . all of which, I try to do what Mary did . . . treasure them in my heart! I am still very, very happy to be here! Yes, even on the snowy, cold, icy days. No, the commute isn't getting too hard. I haven't had to use my futon yet, but I have my overnight gear, just in case. It's a joy when I get into my car to have an hour each way to listen to Christmas music, books, the news, or to have to time to reflect. Your congregational gift is deeply appreciated and your individual gifts have been delightful and wonderful. Thanks!!!!

I have begun calling this "The Season of Surprises" for me . . . because it seems as if I make plans only to have them changed by family illness, weather, or some other unforeseen circumstance. The Serenity Prayer sits on my desk and hangs from an angel at home: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." I couldn't change that my Mother needed bypass surgery or that my Grandma wanted to be present for it. I could choose how I was able to help Grandma get to my parents' house. I could choose to be supportive and positive for my mother's well being instead of nervous and fearful. What I cannot change are the facts . . . but what I can change or choose is my attitude, thoughts, and feelings toward the whole event.

We can use the serenity prayer in many ways. We can use it as a congregation, as well as individuals by substituting the words "we" and "us" for the "I's" and "me's". "God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change; the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference." What can we not change? We cannot change the weather. We cannot change who chooses to attend worship, who chooses to participate in ministry, what happens to the building as it ages, etc. We need serenity to know that these things will be what they be. God will give us the courage we need to change the things we can . . . we need to strengthen our outreach efforts. There is a group of people beginning to form to think, ponder and then organize and act on these efforts. They are currently reading a book, so if you would like to read it,

there are copies in my office. When you meet someone with a negative attitude about church, it's important to know that you can make a difference! You can use your words and your actions to share the good news of what is happening here at St. Peter's. Perhaps you can share a brand new perspective. And the wisdom to know the difference is sometimes hard. You can't change someone else's attitude, but you might be able to influence them to change it themselves.

"Yes, We Can!" shouts Bob the Builder, a cartoon for young children. "Yes, We Can!" encourages our new president. "Yes, We Can!" preaches your new pastor! "Yes, We Can!" teaches the Word of God. With God's help, EVERYTHING and ANYTHING is possible!

Gratefully, Pastor Laurie

Help Us Save Postage!



2008 Giving Statements are available to be picked up from the box in the Narthex. If you do not find your statement, please contact Bonnie in the Church Office. Statements not picked up by January 27, will be mailed. If you have any questions about your statement, please contact Bonnie.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, cancellation of worship will be announced on radio station, WDWS (1400 AM). In addition to the radio announcements, a telephone tree has been formed by members of the Consistory, each of whom will call a specified number of our members.



Congratulations Kathryn!

In October, Kathryn Luther Henderson was honored by the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at its diamond anniversary celebration. Kathryn is a founding member of the Beta Phi Mu Alpha chapter. Many fond remembrances of Kathryn's influence on her students were featured in the January/February 2009 issue of the University of Illinois Alumni Association magazine.

Consistory Highlights – December

Editor's Note: The following notes from the December meeting are for your information only. Minutes and actions of this meeting were approved at the January meeting.



2009 Consistory officers have been elected. President: LiAnne Kitchen, Vice-president: Nick Voss, Secretary: Carolyn Yoss

The maintenance agreement with Kone Elevator for the next five years has been accepted.

Movie nights are well attended and will continue.

Do You Have Vision?

Don't miss the next Congregational Fellowship and Vision Process

At the first potluck on January 18th, we were able to remember our own history . . . what has shaped us to be who we are. What kinds of events? What kinds of reactions to those events? How did we react to situations that arose? What are the strengths of the church? What are the challenges? During the next gathering and visioning program . . . we will briefly review the past and decide what we want to carry forward into our future . . . we will also be discerning who we are as a community of faith and then helping to understand the gifts and skills God has given us now for the ministry that is to be developed in this place. If you've ever wondered what you have to contribute to the Kingdom of God, this would be the time and place to be. If you want to be part of future of St. Peter's UCC . . . then please come and participate. We need all voices and hearts! Also, you can record the U of I/Indiana game . . . it's an away game and we will be done by 1:30, no longer. Please mark your calendars for February 15th. This time, we will have an extended Fellowship Time in the Fellowship Hall so you don't need to bring anything, except an open heart and a smile. We will eat first and then play with the joyful gifts God has given us!

Need Support for Healthy Body, Mind, and Soul?

Then please feel free to come to our emotional and devotional support group on Wednesday evenings. We will be meeting for the first time on Wednesday, January 28 at 5:30 p.m. in the Consistory Room. The meeting will not go over an hour each time. And at this meeting we will be deciding how to structure the meetings. One rule will be that all sharing is confidential. So, if you need to lose weight, gain weight, or exercise . . . and if you need a reminder of how much God loves you and wants us all to be happy and healthy . . . then this is the group for you! Everyone is welcome.



Sausage Supper . . . Come join the fun!

The St. Peter's Annual Sausage Supper is Saturday, February 21. 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, February 20, 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 5:45 p.m., potato peelers will do their thing.

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 – one pound for \$3, four pounds for \$10 or nine pounds for \$20.

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.

Bible Study Opportunities

Two opportunities for Bible Study will continue into the New Year!

Sunday mornings (9:00 a.m.) will begin the "Adult Crossings" material. This is a video series that covers the eight core stories every Christian should know inside and out. We may not cover the whole story each time. This will begin on January 18.



Wednesday mornings (11:00 a.m.) will continue their study of "Adult Crossings", but they are further along, having only three or four more lessons. That study will begin again on January 21. After this study is completed, they will choose a new series.

If you would like to join either one of these studies or you are thinking of a new study of your own, please don't hesitate to talk to me! I LOVE to teach!



Family Movie Night!

Wednesday, February 18 at 5:30 p.m. We will be showing "Fairy Tale: A True Story". Come and join us!

With Grateful Thanks!



The St. Peter's Staff would like to thank the members of the congregation for your generous contributions toward the staff Christmas gifts. We are grateful for your thoughtfulness in showing your appreciation to us. It is truly a joy and a blessing to work at such a wonderful place!
St. Peter's Staff

5 - 19 - 38 - 71

These are just a few of the numbered offering envelopes available for 2009. If you would like to "adopt" one of these envelope sets, please contact Bonnie in the Church Office. If you currently have an envelope number, the envelope sets are available for pick up on the table in the Narthex.



In Memoriam



The prayers and sympathy of the St. Peter's Congregation are with the families of three longtime members and friends.

On December 14, 2008, **Mary Irene Van Rheeden** passed to life eternal at the age of 90.

Irene was born in Clay City, Illinois on December 10, 1918 to Charles and Cecile (Patterson)

Wilken. She married Robert Van Rheeden on May 4, 1940.



Irene is survived by two daughters, Jo Van Rheeden of Stevens Point, Wisconsin and Kay Hanley of Charleston; a grandson, Joseph Hanley and his wife, Kristy Mardis of Flossmoor; two great-granddaughters, Kieran Hanley and Maura Hanley of Flossmoor and two very special friends, Kittie Moll and Eleanor Douglas both of Charleston.

Irene was an elementary education teacher in several Illinois school districts before her retirement.

"**Lola**" **Lolamontues Sarah Bressler Tennyson** passed from earthly life to life eternal on January 6, 2009 at the age of 94.



Lola, born on October 3, 1914, in Flora, Indiana to Pearl and J. J. Bressler, was trained as a nurse in 1932-33 at Lafayette, Indiana Home Hospital. She married Robert W. Tennyson of Potomac on October 19, 1948, in Chicago. Lola and Bob enjoyed 54 years of marriage together and were loved by their two children; Joyce (Michael) Billing of

Ithaca, New York, and John (Connie) Tennyson of Bethalto; her six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Lola worked at the University of Illinois as a stenographer from 1970 to 1986. She was the most loyal fan and season ticket holder for men's and women's basketball games since 1970. Lola is survived by her brother, Joe Bressler of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and was preceded in death by brothers Floyd and Earl Bressler.

Lola and Bob were devoted members of St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Champaign since 1964. Lola is well known at St. Peter's for her Illini spirit and her gracious humor. She will be greatly missed.

Helen Ann Miller House Phipps

passed on to life eternal on Monday, January 19, 2009 at the age of 87. Helen was born on November 18, 1921, in Kinmundy to Arno Hugo and Dorcas Harvey Miller. She married William H. House in 1943 in Elkton, Maryland. Bill predeceased Helen in 1969.



In June of 1979, Helen married Lloyd Phipps in Champaign. Lloyd, a University of Illinois Professor Emeritus of Agriculture and a distinguished author, is a longtime member of St. Peter's. Helen and Lloyd enjoyed ballroom dancing and traveling to exotic locales like Russia, London, China, and Egypt.

Survivors include her loving husband, Lloyd J. Phipps; a sister, Norma Elet of New York city; three children from Helen's marriage to Bill House: Carolyn House Ferguson of New Jersey, Carla House of Atlanta and Gregory House of Champaign; two granddaughters: Alissa Phillips of Los Angeles and Blythe Emigholtz of Washington, DC; and two great-granddaughters, Munro and Teagan Phillips.

Surviving descendants of Helen's marriage to Lloyd include Lloyd's daughter Linda Slife; their grandchildren Abbi Edward and Mike Slife of Loves Park; and four great-grandchildren, Julianna and Connor Edward and Samantha and Katelyn Slife.

Can You Keep a Secret?



You are invited to a surprise party for Julius Demlow's 94th birthday party. The party is at 1:30 p.m. in the East Day Room at Heritage Manor in Gibson City. Cards are welcome if you are unable to attend. Send them to Julius at Heritage Manor, 620 E. First Street, Gibson City, IL 60936. If you plan to attend the party, please RSVP to Debbie Demlow, 227 E. Spruce Street, Paxton, IL 60957. Remember to keep it a secret from Julius!

Historian's Corner

Rev. Walter Noffke (St. Peter's pastor 1957-1979) will turn 95 on February 23, 2009. Cards may be sent to him at 5525 Vaughn Avenue, Pentwater, Michigan 49449.



Handbell Concert

Save the date! February 8 at 3:00 p.m. – First Baptist Church on Arbor Drive in Decatur. Several area handbell ensembles will participate in this free-will offering, benefit concert

for the Mental Health Department. You are invited to enjoy a sampling of a wide variety of musical selections.

Church Mailbag

Pastor Laurie and Members of Church family and Church staff –



Christmas Cards

There is a list of folks all written in a book,
And every year at Christmas time, I go and take a look
And that is when I realize that these names are part
Not only of the book they're in but, also of my heart

For each name stands for someone who has touched my
life sometime;

I really feel I am composed of each remembered name
For once you have known someone the years can not
erase

The memory of a pleasant word or of a friendly face

And whether I have known you for many years or few
In some way you have had a part in shaping my life
So every year when Christmas comes I just realize anew
The biggest gift that God can give is knowing:

Our Pastor Laurie
Church family and Church staff
God bless each and every one!

Kay Gravlin

P.S. This is an excerpt from an article sent to St. Peter's many years ago.



New Address

Nicole Shoudel
98-719 IHO Place # 5-203
Aieha, HI 96701

February Ushers

Kurt Eheart	Patty Kobel	Mark Williams
Barb Kobel	Kymerly McCarthy	Jocelyn Voss
Ed Kobel		Nick Voss



January Anniversaries

29 James and Dorothy Woller (1960)
30 Paul and Gladys Hemp (1954)

February Anniversaries

9 Shirley and Jerry Hoffman (2008)
17 William and Diann Wingler (1979)



January Birthdays

- 1 Heinrich Schmidt
- 2 Judy Moller Vaiden
- 4 Celeste Honn
- 6 Jeff Hallett
- 7 Shirley Hoffman
- 8 Doris Hershbarger
- 9 Lloyd Phipps
- 10 Sophia Kasper
- 11 William Limp
Cassidy Marcum
- 13 Henry Voigtlander
- 14 Blake Lehmann
- 15 Doth Sysouvanh
- 21 Ted Eichhorst
- 22 Jama Fager
Paul Marcum
- 24 Aileen Schindler
Jennifer Crone
- 26 Sally Martinie
Jeff Jewett
- 27 Clayton Lehmann
- 31 Julius Demlow



February Birthdays



- 1 Loreen Bonnell
Ruth Schloz
- 2 Irene Lofton
- 5 Latsami Sysouvanh
- 6 Will Hallett
- 7 Eileen Walters
Diann Wingler
- 9 Evelyn Kitchen
Terry Woller

- 12 Norma Hollen
Phou Sysouvanh
- 17 Eric O'Neill
- 18 Omer Benn
Cassandra Wentz
- 20 Bob Reifsteck
- 21 William Malone
James Martinie
- 24 Tricia McCarthy
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. You may mail changes, place notes in the Office Manager's mailbox or send an email to office@stpetersucc.com. Thanks for your help!