

# Sunshine Thoughts

St. Peter's United Church of Christ  
7014 Darmstadt Road Evansville, Indiana 47710 812-909-4391

## Pastor's Paragraphs

Dear Fellow Companions on the Journey,

As we move into February, we find ourselves in a season of connection and possibility. Lent doesn't begin until March, so this month offers us the chance to focus on strengthening our ties as a church and as a community. This is especially important as the process of searching for a new pastor begins.

The Search Committee has begun their work in earnest. This is a significant step in the life of St. Peter's, and it's one that needs everyone's help. The Search Committee will need your prayers and encouragement as they discern who God is calling to lead the church in its next chapter. At the same time, it's vital that we, as a congregation, stay connected and engaged with one another. This season of transition is an opportunity for growth—not just as individuals but as a church family.

This theme of connection is echoed in an upcoming mental health program on February 20th, which will focus on how to help those who experience loneliness and isolation. Loneliness is an issue that affects many people, both in our congregation and in the wider community. As followers of Christ, we are called to nurture belonging. This program will help us learn how to better care for ourselves and for others, providing practical tools to build meaningful relationships.

In Ecclesiastes, we're reminded that "Two are better than one... if either of them falls down, one can help the other up" (4:9-10). These words resonate deeply as we think about how we can support one another in this season. Who might need a word of encouragement, a friendly conversation, or even an invitation to church? Let's take a moment this month to reach out, reconnect, and extend the love of Christ.

There are many ways you can help strengthen our community. Volunteer for an activity, join in an activity, or simply check in on someone you haven't seen in a while. And don't forget to invite a friend or neighbor to the mental health program—together, we can make a difference.

As we continue this journey, let's lean into God's call to be a people of connection, compassion, and faith. The future is brighter when we walk it together.

Faithfully Connected,  
*Rev. Michael*

## Search Team Update

Recently I provided a summary report on all the work done from the Bridge-Search Teams in 2024. This report is within the 2024 Annual Report packet. I invite you to read the report to learn how the Church Profile is progressing. The Search Committee is meeting every two weeks. Our team consists of: Sharon Durkee, John Gentry, Kaleb Herke, Kristen Hobbs (Council

President), Suzie Hobbs, Tom Ryder, Kurt Simpson (Co-leader), Dick Sprinkle and me, Cheryl Whitmore. Please contact any of these members if you have questions.

*Cheryl Whitmore,*  
Co-Chair Search Committee

## Communion Sunday

Holy Communion will be celebrated on February 2nd.

December Finances	
Total General Offering*	\$15,977
Building & Grounds	\$270
*Need \$9,041 monthly General Offering to meet budgeted amount of \$108,500.	
Average Sunday Attendance	
In Person	40
Zoom	6
YouTube	n/a

## Women's Guild

Our next meeting will be on February 25th at 6 pm. Bring your favorite ice cream topping to enjoy our annual sundae lovers meeting.

Save the date for our Tea Ring and Kuchen Sale on February 14th and 15th. Orders due on February 9th. See bulletin for order form.

## Men's Fellowship

Our next meeting will be on February 13th. We are meeting at the church at 6 pm.

## Sunday School

Sunday School will meet on the following dates:

- February 2
- February 16
- March 2

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- March 16
- March 30
- April 6
- April 20
- May 4
- May 18

### New Church Office Hours

The new Church office hours are:

- Thursday 7:30 am to 12:00 pm

### Prayers of Healing and Concern for:

- \*Joe Allen
- \*Judy Allen
- \*Bob Berfanger
- \*Pat Brown
- \*Jeff Buxton
- \*Chris Cheshire
- \*Megan Clanton
- \*Gary Gantner
- \*David Hare-Hart
- \*Jackson Hare-Hart
- \*Lyn Hayden
- \*Mike Hobbs
- \*Suzie Hobbs
- \*Katie Hudson
- \*Toni Klueg
- \*Mildred Kuhlenschmidt
- \*Dala McDaniel
- \*Jennifer Meeks
- \*Alexis Meeks
- \*Katie Mullen
- \*Gayle Nelson
- \*Larry Palmer
- \*Charlotte Pointer
- \*Tessa Shelton
- \*Carl Todd
- \*Brian Turpin
- \*Tom Wardrip
- \*Ursula Wegner
- \*Pat Williams

### Book Club Happenings

February's read will be: James: a novel by Percival Everett. We will meet on February 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 at St Peters.

March's read will be: The Women by Kristin Hannah.

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April's read will be: A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles.  
Happy Reading,  
*Brenda Schell*

### FYI

Member(s) in Nursing Centers. Please send a card to let them know they are in our prayers.

#### *Maxine Simpson*

Holiday Village  
1200 W. Buena Vista Road  
Apt 148  
Evansville, IN 47710

#### *Pat Williams*

Holiday Village  
1200 W. Buena Vista Road  
Apt 224  
Evansville, IN 47710



### Prayers for Service Men and Women

-Caleb Coffman serving in the US Navy.

Caleb Coffman's address:

21A Mahan Circle  
Goose Creek, SC 29445

(Please contact the Church Office, if you know of other service men and women.)

***Don't forget St. Peter's  
in your will!***

### Future Needs Fund

The St. Peter's Church Council has established a "Future Needs Fund" for the church. This fund will function primarily as an emergency fund to cover unanticipated expenses that arise from the operation of the church the

including (but not limited to) emergency building and equipment repairs. In order to fund this account, we will be receiving a special "First Fruits" offering on the first Sunday of every month. We are asking members to consider giving an extra \$5 each month towards this fund.

### Parish Nurse Update Understanding the Effects of Isolation and Loneliness

Even in our technology world of "instant communication", we all have experienced the effects of isolation and loneliness. Many of us have knowledge of individuals within our community of faith who struggle to get out of their houses to connect with people. Belonging is a basic human need, defined as a "deep connection with a social group, physical places, and individual and collective experiences." In 2021, nearly half of U.S. adults reported experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation. Research has shown that loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of premature death by almost 30% and contribute to anxiety, depression, and dementia.

You are invited to learn more about the impacts of isolation and loneliness, as well as the healing power of social connection by attending a program, given by Southwestern Indiana Mental Health Center. It will occur on **Thursday, February 20th at 6 PM at St. Peter's UCC, 7014 Darmstadt Road.** Mr. Wyatt Hatfield, LCSW, from the Southwestern Indiana Mental Health Center, will lead this engaging and informative conversation.

This program is designed for anyone experiencing loneliness and isolation, as well as for the caregivers, friends, and family members who support them. For more information, please contact Cheryl Whitmore, Health Ministry Coordinator, at 812.455.7536 or Rev. Michael Erwin, St. Peter's

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Transitional Pastor, at  
812.250.9399.

St. Peter's Parish Nurses, Suzie  
Hobbs, RN; Joanne Klueg, RN,  
and Cheryl Whitmore, RN

#### United Caring Services Monthly Lunch Volunteer Opportunity

Since 2019, a group of  
volunteers have met the 1st  
Saturday of each month to  
prepare a meal for United  
Caring Services. Thanks to the  
congregations continued  
donations and financial support  
of the monthly UCS lunches we  
have been able to continue to  
provide lunch to those that may  
have fallen on difficult times. If  
you have volunteered at the  
shelter, you know it is very  
gratifying to know that a simple  
meal, can bring a bit of joy and  
some smiles to those we serve.

If you haven't had the  
opportunity to volunteer, we  
invite you to join us. We serve  
lunch at United Caring Services  
on the 1st Saturday of each  
month, so mark your calendars  
for the dates below.

Volunteering includes being  
onsite at the shelter from 10:45  
am to 12:45 pm.

Upcoming 2025 Volunteer  
Dates:

- February 1
- March 1
- April 5
- May 3
- June 7
- July 5
- August 2
- September 6
- October 4
- November 1
- December 6

We are in need of 2-4  
volunteers each month to help  
prepare and serve the meal.  
Angel & I set the menu and all  
items needed are then  
purchased and are brought to  
the shelter on that Saturday.

Our Saturday volunteer group  
then prepares the meal onsite  
and serves lunch to the  
gathered group promptly at  
noon.

Please contact Angel  
Nelson at 812-204-5473 or  
Julie Ryder at 812-480-1165 if  
you have questions or will be a  
volunteer.

Thank You,

*Angel & Julie*

#### Sister Joanna's Table

We will be serving lunch at  
Sister Joanna's Table on the  
following dates in 2025.

March 8

May 10

July 12

September 13

#### Vintage Garage Sale Update

It is hard to believe that **the  
annual Vintage Garage Sale  
will be here within five  
months!** This is the time of  
year to clean out a closet or  
cabinet and donate the "gently  
used items" to our garage sale.  
The Basement has lots of room  
for many more boxes of "good  
stuff". If you have boxes of  
merchandise to offer and can't  
get them down the basement  
steps, no problem – place the  
boxes near the steps and  
someone will get them  
downstairs. If you need help  
getting the boxes out of your  
house – call Sue Anne Simon  
or Cheryl Whitmore.

In advance, we thank you for  
your donations to make our first  
fundraiser of 2025 a  
SUCCESS.

*Sue Anne Simon and Cheryl  
Whitmore*

#### Central High School Support Update

The Central Team wants to  
say "**thank you**" to all the  
members who have supported  
the Central High School

Neighborhood Project in 2024.  
This outreach project came out  
of the "Who Is Our Neighbor",  
discussion. Since August we  
have provided many personal  
care products to the Central  
School Nurse; she gives them  
to students who need  
assistance with everyday  
needs. In October, we provided  
10 fresh kuchens for the  
teachers. Next week, we are  
providing individual bagged  
snacks for the teachers and  
support staff. The snack  
expenses were covered by the  
Women's Guild and an  
anonymous member. Rev.  
Michael has talked about giving  
from the perspective of  
"Abundance" and we see this  
happening at St. Peter's, time  
and time again. Members and  
friends share their talents and  
resources to help people whom  
they will never meet. What a  
blessing! Thanks so much for  
supporting this neighborhood  
project.

The Central Team (Sharon  
Durkee, John Gentry, Suzie  
Hobbs, Brett Vaught and Cheryl  
Whitmore)

#### Would You Be Willing to Volunteer for our Tech Team?

The St. Peter's Tech Team  
is looking to expand our pool of  
volunteers that can help with  
operating our technology on  
Sunday mornings. Training will  
be provided, and you do not  
have to be a computer expert in  
order to help out. We are  
hoping to have enough  
volunteers in our rotation that  
your commitment would be no  
more than once a month. If you  
have questions—or would like  
to volunteer—please contact  
Laura Medcalf.



St. Peter's United Church of Christ  
February 2025 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Worship 10:15 a.m.	27 Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m.	28	29	30	31	1 Prepare & Serve Lunch at United Caring Services 10:30 am-1:30 pm
2 Sunday School 9:00 a.m.  Worship 10:15 a.m.	3 Search Committee Meeting 6:00 p.m.	4	5	6	7	8 Men's Fellowship BBQ Sale Pickup 1:00 p.m.
9 Worship 10:15 a.m.	10 Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m.	11	12 Choir Practice 6:00 p.m.	13 Women's Guild Bake Sale  Men's Fellowship 6:00 p.m. at Church	14 Women's Guild Bake Sale	15 Women's Guild Bake Sale
16 Sunday School 9:00 a.m.  Worship 10:15 a.m.  Newsletter Deadline	17 Search Committee Meeting 6:00 p.m.	18	19	20 Book Club 10:30 a.m.  Understanding the Effects of Isolation & Loneliness Fellowship Hall at 6:00 p.m.	21	22
23 Worship 10:15 a.m.  Caje Meeting after Worship	24 Girl Scouts 6:00 p.m.	25 Women's Guild Sundae Lovers 6:00 p.m.	26	27	28	1 Prepare & Serve Lunch at United Caring Services 10:30 am-1:30 pm