

November 2023
Morning Star
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
218 Somonauk St.
Sycamore, IL 60178
Website www.sycamorestpeters.org

Christian Meaning of Thanksgiving

The spiritual person is the one who is thankful for everything. He is the one who receives everything with thanksgiving and who knows that he has nothing except what he has received from God.

"A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven." (John 3:27)

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." (James 1:17)

In the Old Testament, thanksgiving was fundamental in the life of God's people. The temple liturgy offered offerings of thanksgiving and praise and sang psalms regularly of thanksgiving to God.

In the New Testament, thanksgiving is the heart of the Church's life. The word eucharist means thanksgiving, and the very center of the Church's worship of God is when, in remembrance of all His salvific acts in Christ, the faithful "lift up their hearts" and "give thanks unto the Lord."



Pumpkin Fest 2023

The decision was made to move the sale indoors due to the cold weather and our patrons really appreciated it! The turnout was good and we owe thanks to Stefanie Hill who chaired the event and all the volunteers who made it a success!

St. Peter's was well represented in the pumpkin displays by a number of our kids.



Dallas Duffy took 3rd place in the carved category for ages 7 and under.



Louie and Oscar Boies both had entries in the Pumpkins of History category.



We were surprised and happy to see Jack and Juanita Burke along with their daughter, Sarah, who braved the cold to pay us a visit. It was wonderful to see them and catch up with old friends. They are back living in Illinois so hopefully we will see them more often!

Parish Hall Entry Almost Finished

The walls are painted, the doors and trim are refinished. There are still some finishing touches to do but the hallway is almost done! The goal was a brighter and more welcoming feel and it looks like that was accomplished.



New Sign for Parish Hall

After discussions with some of our newer members, it was decided that clearer signage was needed to direct people to our Parish Hall.

This sign was designed to complement the sign in front of the Church. Good job to Brian Duffy, Anita Biletzky and committee for getting this done!



November and December Worship Schedule

November 5 Fr. Mark celebrant and preacher
All Saints' Reading of names of the dearly departed

November 12 Fr. Mark celebrant, Deacon Dee preacher
UTO Sunday

November 19 The Rev. Marcus Johnson celebrant and preacher

November 26 The Rev. Marcus Johnson celebrant and preacher
Christ the King

December 3 The Rev. Barbara Wilson celebrant and preacher
Advent I

December 10 Fr. Mark celebrant and preacher
Advent II

December 17 Fr. Mark celebrant, Deacon Brad Osborn preacher
Advent III

December 24 Fr. Mark presider
Advent IV Lessons & Carols
10:15 a.m.

December 24 Fr. Mark celebrant and preacher
Christmas Eve
4:15 p.m. Choir Pre-service Music
4:30 p.m. Feast of the Nativity

December 31 Fr. Mark celebrant and preacher
Christmas I

JOY

YOUR MOST ATTRACTIVE QUALITY

Come, share your master's joy

Joy is surprisingly scarce these days. Technology makes you ever busier, and the frenzy around you increases. Joy is often the first thing to get squeezed out of your life. That's because joy finds it difficult to grow where stress is abundant.

However, the apostle Paul reminds us that joy is at the center of the Christian's life. We are Easter people. Christ had defeated death. Easter had conquered Good Friday. That means we are people of joy. Even in the most difficult times in your life, you can rely upon the deep abiding joy that comes from Jesus Christ. The world and your circumstances may press in and seek to crush you, but a relationship with Jesus will grow a joy that cannot be squelched.

Joy is just what Jesus intends for us. It is His goal that joy will be a vital part of your life with these words: ***"may joy be in you and your joy may be complete"***. Possessing that joy helps us endure whatever life may bring.

GROWING A LIFE OF JOY. There is no better way to grow in joy than to be around people who have it. Select a person in your life who has an abundant amount of joy and spend time with them as much as possible. This time helps offset the effect that the negative people in your life may have on you.

Each day for a week, in your prayer life, list specific things in your life for which you are thankful. These are some of your joys. Be specific. Name your joys one by one. Give thanks to God for these joys in your life. The more you notice your joys, the more you will be able to cultivate the parts of your life that grow your joy.

During Sunday Services, be aware of the intimacy we have with Jesus, who gave his body and blood in the Eucharist. Seek the presence of the Holy Spirit as you receive the elements. The Eucharist is Jesus's special gift to His followers. Celebrate it!

"Although you have not seen Him, you love Him.

Even though you do not see Him now yet believe in Him

You rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy,

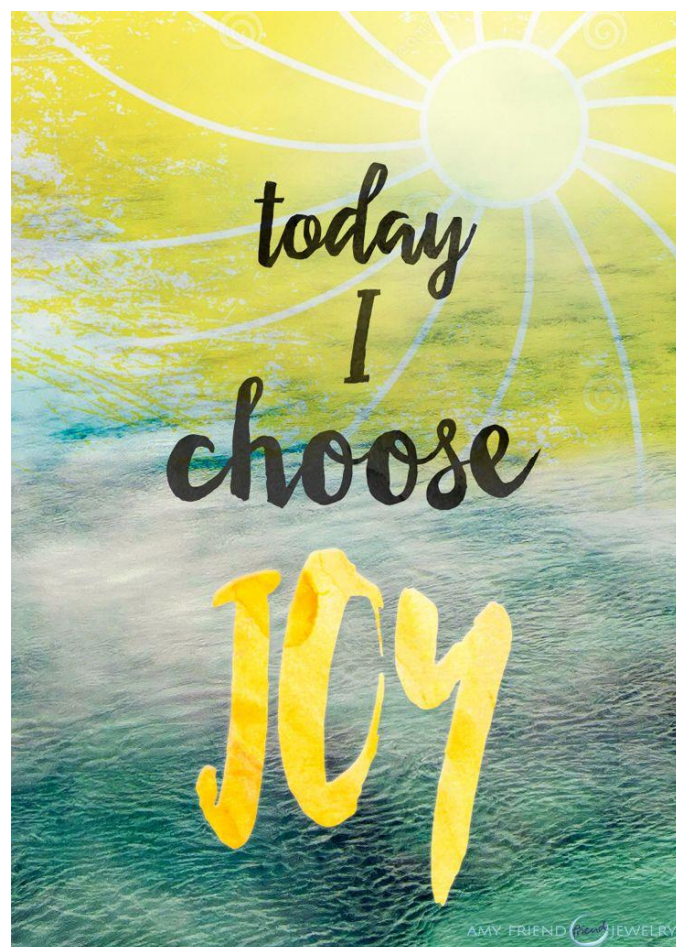
As you attain the goal of your faith,

The salvation of your souls"

John 15:11

1Peter 1:8-9

Adapted from "NINE WORDS" written by Allen R. Hunt



Fall 2023
United Thank Offering Ingathering
November 12th

Autumn is traditionally the time of harvest and of giving special thanksgiving to God for all His blessings. Let all of us look gratefully into our hearts and say special thanks. May this Fall Ingathering be a generous harvest in the true spirit of thanksgiving.

The United Thank Offering has been around for 134 years. Sometimes people think of UTO as something out of date and fading from the modern world. But the goal of encouraging daily thankfulness and generosity in our lives is far from outdated, and that is the main goal of UTO; not just collecting money, but creating thankful people.

Every Sunday in our liturgy we say it is “right, and a good and joyful thing to give God thanks.” It is our duty to give thanks, but like so many Christian guidelines, what God asks us turns out also to be good for us and makes us happy. Quite a lot of research has been done on the affects of thankfulness in our lives, and the list of its effects on the thankful person is impressive. Thankful persons have stronger immune systems; fewer aches and pains; lower blood pressure; better sleep, more joy, pleasure, optimism, and happiness; are more forgiving; and feel less lonely. A good and joyful thing, indeed!

But like other Christian duties, thankfulness needs to be cultivated until it becomes a habit, and your UTO Blue Box can help you with that. Every day, take just a moment to name something you’re thankful for, that day. It can be as big as the love of your family or as small as the beauty of an Autumn leaf. Take a few seconds to put some money into your Blue Box to share that blessing with others around the world. The more moments of gratitude we build into our days, the more we are likely to see the benefits of thankfulness to ourselves and the world.

The United Thank Offering provides seed money to start new programs around the world. UTO provides a practical way for a

grateful person to serve mankind. Personal thanksgiving is translated into everything from infant care to help for the aging. Acts of kindness only happen because of people like you who thank the Lord for all things by caring and sharing.

The United Thank Offering is not out of date, it’s as current as social media. UTO gives thanks for each of you and gives thanks for the opportunity to be part of widespread missionary efforts. The Blue Box is a tool we can use to bring our baptismal covenant into our lives, particularly the promises to seek and serve Christ in all persons, to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being.

The last day for submission of the UTO collection will be November 26th. Gift offerings may be mailed to the office, placed in the offering plate on Sunday or put in my Vestry box in Waterman Hall. Together our gift offering will be mailed to the Grant Committee for UTO in New York, NY.

Happy Thanksgiving and many blessings to you and your families.

In God We Trust,

Cindy Vain 899-1124
UTO Custodian



NOVEMBER 2023 MORNING STAR ARTICLES....

CAREGIVERS COMMITTEE

Committee members, along with the Clergy of St. Peter's, continue to monitor the status and needs of St. Peter's parishioners. We visit "shut ins," send greetings through email and cards, and meet every other month to keep up with our parishioners. The current extended Caregiver's List is in this newsletter and is also at the back of the church. Please continue to help with prayers, phone calls and birthday cards for those individuals on our list, those alone at home, and residents in health care facilities. Visits, phone calls and written words from friends and family are invaluable, especially during the holiday season.

Father Mark has volunteered to visit St. Peter's "shut-in" parishioners during our time without an Interim/Full Time Priest. Visit requests can be made directly to Father Mark, our Senior Warden, Varsie Geisler, or any Caregivers Committee members.

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH COMMITTEE HOPE HAVEN

Thank you to all parishioners who contributed their time and cooking talents to help prepare and deliver a meal to Hope Haven in October. Sign-up sheets for future monthly 2023 dinners for Hope Haven residents are in Waterman Hall. Students are welcome to help out by cooking or baking! Volunteer hours needed for school can be acknowledged by the office. A monthly email will also be sent from the office if additional help is needed. Let's all continue to help fulfill St. Peter's 2023 commitment to Hope Haven and our community homeless and hungry.

SYCAMORE FOOD PANTRY

St. Peter's is no longer gathering food donations for the pantry, but monetary donations are always welcome. Quarterly donation checks are sent from the Christian Outreach Committee to the Sycamore Food Pantry, indicating our desire to have food purchased through the Food Bank to guarantee the most value for our donated funds. For Sycamore Food Pantry 2023 donations by

check, please indicate "Sycamore Food Pantry" on the memo line.

SPARTAN FOOD PANTRY

A donation of diaper wipes and assorted sizes of diapers was donated to the Spartan Food Pantry in October to help supply the needs of Sycamore School Families. A parishioner also donated feminine hygiene products during October after a special request was received. Our monthly donations are in response to the local growing need for diapers, and are also a way St. Peter's can assess what size and kind of diapers are most needed in our community, and the least expensive way to purchase them. The Spartan Food Pantry was most appreciative for the donations. Currently the Spartan Food Pantry is the only local community pantry with consistent supplies of diapers and wipes. St. Peter's Outreach Committee is proud to be a part of that local service and effort!

SAMARITAN'S PURSE SHOEBOX MINISTRY

On Sunday, October 22, Jacob Noe led the Church School staff to fill 26 shoeboxes to complete

St. Peter's donation to Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Ministry. In early November the Outreach Committee will take the boxes to a regional center where they will begin the journey to children in a third world country. We are able to track the boxes and will learn the destination in early 2024.

Thank you to all parishioners making donations throughout 2023 to help make this world-wide effort successful.



**ST. PETER'S "THINKING OF YOU" LIST
OCTOBER 2023**

Dick Balstrode
BICKFORD of AURORA
7 S Orchard Road
Aurora, IL 60506

Helen Beamish
414 High Street
Sycamore, IL 60178

Larry Buttimer
Room #202
1936 Brookdale Road
Naperville, IL 60563

Billy Clem
PO BOX 559
Sycamore, IL 60178

Cynthia Dorband
1600 North Fourteenth Street #204
DeKalb, IL 60115

John and Ann Engstrom
1349 Axel Lane
Sycamore, IL 60178

Harriet George
1008 Joshua Street
Genoa, IL 60135

Beth Krogman
2944 Greenwood Acres Drive
DARC Health Care Center
DeKalb, IL 60115

Jane Ovitz
Goodwin House Alexandria
4800 Fillmore Avenue #316
Alexandria, VA 22312

Carol Quitno
2944 Greenwood Acres Drive
DARC Health Care Center
DeKalb, IL 60115

Henry Vincent
921 Knollwood Village Road
Apt W208
Caseyville, IL 62232



ST PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting
September 21, 2023

Approved 10/19/2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
with an opening prayer read by the Vestry.

Present for the meeting were Varsie Geiser,
Brian Duffy, Cindy Vain, Stefanie Hill, Jenny
Sidmore, John Vain,
Lynne Roberts, Fr. Mark Geisler, Pat Klein
Absent: Deacon Dee.

Meeting agenda: Safe Community Safe Life,
and Parish Keys situation were requested to be
added to the agenda. The agenda was
approved with the changes.

Minutes of the August Vestry meeting:
approved with no changes.

Treasurer's Report: Income for August was
\$9201.29 with expenses of \$13,937.52.

YTD income vs. plan is positive by \$1038.77.
The treasurer's report was approved.

Pat asked the vestry if we wanted to pay to be
listed in the Chamber 2024 booklet. The vote
was unanimous to be listed.

Guest speakers: Barbara Morton and Linda
Saxer asked the Vestry to consider that St.
Peter's have a small welcome sign for the
LGBTQ community added to our church sign.
Their feelings are that these are good people,
and they need a place to call a church home.
They asked for a small sign "All are welcome
here". A visible sign of welcome. A good

discussion by Vestry followed. The Vestry will discuss the request further at the next meeting.

SR Warden report: Sierra Reyes, our Canon for Ministry, cannot attend the October vestry meeting on the 12th as originally planned. The October meeting will be moved back to October 19. Sierra reported that she has a lead on a clergy couple who are interested in serving as interims/priests-in-charge. Sierra will explore the option of having one serve DeKalb and one serve Sycamore.

Varsie listed many upcoming church events:

- *Blessing of the Animals will be held on

October 1. No cookout is planned this year.

- *All Souls Service “roll call” of names will be held on November 5 at the 10:15 service.

- *Christ the King service on November 26 music selections will include Sunday School children.

- *St Nicholas Service and Dinner: Dec 1

- *December 24 (Sunday): the 10:15 regular morning service will be lessons and carols. Late afternoon: Christmas Eve Service and possible program by the children of the parish.

There was a discussion to consider a prayer service on the 4th Friday of every month using the Church chapel.

There was no buy-in by the congregation and the vestry voted not to pursue it further.

JR Warden report: Security cameras are ready to be installed. Brian was urged to check the rectory for needed repairs, so all is ready for supply priests.

Pete Biletzky will provide needed blueprints for the new storage area needed in the hall.

The new sign for the front grounds should be ready within the next 2 weeks as Banner Up has located the needed property pin.

B&G report: The committee feels that we should consider using a landscape company to do the needed Fall clean up. Brian will contact local companies.

Gripper strips are needed on the kitchen steps, the sacristy steps, and the chapel steps.

Committee reports:

Sunday School report received from Mark Mendenhall, the Elementary director, and overall education director.

Outreach: Shoebox project assembly will be held on October 22 during coffee hour.

Caregivers: Fr. Mark will continue visits to our shut-ins.

Old Business

- *AED and First Aid/CPR training is scheduled for September 30. Eight people have signed up.

- *The tenants at our Wetzel House asked to have the current lease extended to the end of January 2024.

A lease extension was signed and witnessed. The extended agreement will not allow for any further extensions.

New Business:

St. Peter’s Facebook page and Website: work needed. John Vain, Denelle Noe, and Mark Mendenhall have access to Facebook. All post requests must be submitted to the Sr. Warden for approval before posting.

Our supply of Church keys is exhausted. It could be that members still have a key that they no longer need. Varsie will talk with the congregation.

Anita reported that she has been in contact with a company that offers Live Video Streaming for our Sunday service. SUB SPLASH offers streaming through our website, Facebook, and YouTube simultaneously. Essential needs that we provide would be a camera and Encoder App. The monthly cost for the basic package would be \$178/month. The Vestry asked that Anita provide additional information at the October meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 with prayer and a blessing from Fr. Mark.

Respectfully submitted:

Anita Biletzky

Interim Vestry Clerk



November Birthdays

- 5 Dan Sidmore
- 8 Judy LaPorta
- 9 Mary Glynn Boies
- 17 Kathleen Reid
- 20 Jean Evans
- 20 Anneliese Masco
- 28 Steven Grimson
- 30 Betsy Jo Koehnke



October Anniversaries

- 1 Josh & Trisha Crittenden
- 6 Brian & Barbara Koehnke
- 9 Jerry & Judy Dettloff

Service Times:

Sunday **10:15 am** In-Person Rite II
10:15 Sunday School

Parish Office Hours:

9am-1pm Monday-Thursday
9-11am Friday

Saint Peter's Episcopal Church

218 Somonauk Street
 Sycamore, Illinois 60178 815-895-2227
www.sycamorestpeters.org

Parish Clergy and Staff

Assisting Priest: Fr. Mark Geisler
 815-766-0694
 Deacon: Desiree Goodale
 Sarah Mendenhall: Music Director

Pat Klein Admin. Assistant

office@sycamorestpeters.org
 Days in office: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Jean Erlenborn Bookkeeper
bookkeeper@sycamorestpeters.org
 Days in office: Monday, Tuesday

The Vestry of the Parish

Varsie Geisler, Sr. Warden	815-766-1127
Brian Duffy, Junior Warden	815-298-6182
Stefanie Hill	815-761-5052
Jenny Sidmore	815-501-0102
Cindy Vain	815-899-1124
John Vain	815-761-5169
Lynne Roberts	815-751-7846
Pat Klein, Treasurer	815-751-0722

"...until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" 2 Peter 1:19

*The newsletter of Saint Peter's Episcopal Church
The Parish Vision Statement:
To be an inclusive fellowship growing in the Holy Spirit, Nurturing the burdened and the joyous,
Reaching out to our communities and God's world*



The Morning Star



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