

September 2023

Morning Star

St. Peter's Episcopal  
Church

218 Somonauk St.

Sycamore, IL 60178

Website [www.sycamorestpeters.org](http://www.sycamorestpeters.org)

## MARK MY WORDS

We are about to enter the unofficial end of summer (Labor Day). Life tends to slow down somewhat in the summer. Parishioners go on vacation. Programs go on hiatus.

Even though it is not yet Labor Day, Sunday School has already started. It is great to see the kids back! They bring so much energy to our common life. They are using an exciting curriculum and at announcement time every Sunday, one of the teachers will share what the kids learned that day. The kids will continue to shout the dismissal at the end of the service.

Mark and Sarah Mendenhall will soon resume *The Chosen*. If you have not attended one of these sessions, I strongly encourage you to come! Watch and listen for more announcements.

Looking further ahead, I plan to lead an Inquirer's Class later in the fall. You will hear more about this in the weeks ahead.

I continue to visit people at home or in the hospital or nursing home. I, of course, am always available in times of emergency. Please call me at (815) 766-0694 AT ANY TIME in the event of an emergency.

I hope that you have had an enjoyable summer. There are many good things that lie ahead.

Faithfully,

Fr. Mark

## From the Senior Warden

A new program year is underway! Sunday School began on August 20<sup>th</sup>, and we are gearing up for a full slate of activities in the coming weeks and months.

On Thursday morning, September 28<sup>th</sup>, we will have our second Breakfast for Heroes for the Sycamore Fire Department, the Sycamore Police Department, and the County Sheriff's Department. Pat Klein will be recruiting volunteers to help that morning. Look for sign-up sheets in Waterman Hall. Last year's breakfast was a great success and our local heroes are looking forward to another one later this month.

On Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, from 1pm – 5pm we will have AED and First Aid/CPR training for those interested in learning how to use our new Automatic External Defibrillators and to become First Aid/CPR certified. The session has a 10-person maximum. You must be 18 or older to participate. A sign-up sheet will be in Waterman Hall. We can schedule future sessions if there are more than 10 people interested in the training. There is a \$40 per person registration fee, but the fee should not prevent anyone from getting trained. Please contact the office.

On Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, our service will be outside in our parking lot and will include pet blessings in celebration of the Feast of St. Francis. After the service, we will have an outdoor cookout. More information to follow later.

Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup> is Pumpkinfest Sunday! We will have our service at 9:00 (no music, no sermon) and then get everything set-up for our food booth. Sign-up sheets and other information will be in Waterman Hall beginning later this month. Stefanie Hill has agreed to chair the event again this year. Thanks, Stef!

All Saints' Sunday will be November 5<sup>th</sup>. Please stay tuned for more information.

I'm also interested in getting your feedback on several ideas that have been brought to my attention. If you have opinions on any of these ideas, I'd like to hear them. If you have other ideas/suggestions, please talk with me. Remember, this is our church, and we all are stakeholders.

Is there interest in having a Thanksgiving service on Wednesday evening, November 22<sup>nd</sup>?

Is there interest in holding a regular prayer service on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month at 7pm in the chapel?

Is there interest in having communion at the altar rail?

Finally, I'd like to encourage you to talk about anything St. Peter's-related with me at a quiet table during coffee hour to discuss what's on your mind. I'm also available at other times; we can make an appointment. It's important to me that everyone's opinions are heard.

Peace,  
Varsie

## YOUR DESTINY IN NINE WORDS

No one grows up wanting to lead a meaningless or unsatisfying life. No one yearns to be incomplete or frustrated or to lack any sense of destiny or purpose. Who would want that?

Deep within each of us, God has implanted the desire to be the best version of ourselves. God has a dream for your life. And his dream for you is unique. Only you are you. And only you can become the best version of yourself

Saint Paul uses nine words to achieve the best version of yourself. He calls them the fruit of the Spirit as these nine words encompass the way of the Spirit, the way God intends for your life. (Gal. 5:22-23)

Love. Joy. Peace.

Patience. Kindness. Generosity.

Faithfulness. Gentleness. Self-control.

That's it. Nine words. A portrait of your destiny, the dream God has for your life. Whatever you call your destiny, these nine words provide the blueprint

Over the next nine months, your *Morningstar* will thoughtfully study each word. Stay tuned!

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

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Breakfast with Heroes

Thursday, September 28 we will again host the members of the Sycamore Police Department, the Sycamore Fire Department and the DeKalb County Sheriff's police for breakfast from 7:30 – 9:00am.

Last year's breakfast was a big hit with all of the first responders in attendance. Their gratitude and appreciation were apparent and the team who prepared and served them were thanked repeatedly for their efforts.

We will be looking for volunteers to prepare and serve the breakfast. Preparations will be on Wednesday the 27<sup>th</sup> and workers will also be needed on the 28<sup>th</sup>. If you are unable to help, you can still come to the breakfast to eat and listen to some very interesting stories. The breakfast will be open to the public and will be advertised on our website and Facebook page as well as the local newspaper.

There will be sign-up sheets in Waterman Hall starting in early September.



Picture from Breakfast with Cops (September 2022)

We are so excited to start Sunday school this fall and have started effective 8/20/23. We have 2 classes being offered weekly and will be running through the school year.

We have a pre-school class (from age 2 until kindergarten) led by Erin and a team of amazing volunteers. They are doing a Montessori modeled program and being intentional about having time to meet Jesus as the children grow and learn how he engages with them daily. The children will be filled with wonder and Joy and excited about knowing God intimately as only being like a little children can we do.

We also are offering an elementary program from 1st to 6th grade, and we will be teaching the students how to have a magical encounter with our Savior Jesus as we teach them that magical moments isn't just something that happens in the fantasy world of Harry Potter but an even greater magic happens with our Heavenly Father. During the school year we will be borrowing some fun ideas of Harry Potter and teaching our children about magical creatures such as Balaam's donkey, we will be defending against the dark arts of the attack of the enemy. Teaching about charming prayers and learning about the magical history of God through encounters with individuals such as King David, Gideon, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and others throughout History. We will be competing for a house cup and growing in the depth of love of Jesus throughout the year.

Come down and check out the excitement in both of our classes!



### Fall Bible Study – Season 3 of The Chosen

We will be meeting Tuesdays for 8 weeks from 9/12/23 and ending on November 7 2023. The writers and the cast all have stated that they believe this is their best season yet, and I completely agree. You don't have to have watched the shows beforehand but you certainly can if you desire.

The show is available in all types of formats and it is free to watch. You can watch it on the website [new.thechosen.tv](http://new.thechosen.tv) or you can download the app on android google by searching for the chosen, or it is also available on demand platforms of Netflix and Amazon if you are a prime member. You can even watch it weekly on CW network over the air every Sunday night at 7pm. Suffice to say there are all types of ways to find this show and the people who are making it are giving it to you for free.

We regularly have snacks and drinks for you or feel free to bring your own! If you have any questions or need more information, please reach out to the church office or contact Mark Mendenhall who is facilitating the study and he will gladly tell you more.

## **AUGUST 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.

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

### **CHRISTIAN OUTREACH COMMITTEE HOPE HAVEN**

Thank you to Cindy Vain and friends who contributed their time and cooking talents to help prepare and deliver a meal to Hope Haven in August. 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.

The Outreach Committee is also searching for new recipes, easy to prepare and low in cost. If you have suggestions, please put the in the mailbox of Lynne Roberts

### **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.

### **CROP WALK 2023**

The 2023 DeKalb Sondra King Memorial CROP Hunger Walk will step off on Sunday, September 24 at 2pm at the Sycamore Forest Preserve on Route 64 (East State Street). This new route is fully accessible so anyone with mobility issues or families with strollers will be able to easily participate. As always, 25% of funds raised will go to local agencies or food pantries. A St. Peter's Team is being formed and more information will be coming! Mark your calendars for September 24, 2023!

### **SPARTAN FOOD PANTRY**

A \$530 donation of diaper wipes, assorted sizes of diapers and "pull-ups" were donated to the Spartan Food Pantry in August to help supply the needs of Sycamore School Families. Our donations are in response to the local growing need for diapers, and is 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.

### **SAMARITAN'S PURSE SHOEBOX MINISTRY**

Each month the Morning Star announces items to be gathered for the Christmas Shoebox Ministry. This October the children of the Church School and interested parishioners will be invited to fill a shoebox using the collected items during a coffee hour. We hope to be able to fill 20-25 shoeboxes in October, making the cost of each box much lower and providing an experience filled with fun and fellowship for St. Peter's parishioners.

During the month of August, we collected school supplies, small puzzles, card games, card decks, "fidget toys," and small flashlights with batteries. Our last collection month will be in September, and will again concentrate on

school supplies – crayons, colored pencils, pencils and erasers, pens, and pads of paper to fit in a shoebox - which are always on sale for the upcoming school year. We will also be collecting jewelry items, including watches. Bins will be on the “sign-up” table for the items parishioners donate.

In November the Outreach Committee will take the filled shoeboxes to the nearest collection center and see that our special gifts begin the journey to children around the world. Thank you to those parishioners making donations to help make this world-wide effort successful.

### **ST. PETER’S “THINKING OF YOU” LIST AUGUST 2023**

George and Janice Abizaid  
1129 Milan North Drive  
Sycamore, IL 60178

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

Helen Beamish  
414 High Street  
Sycamore, IL 60178

Larry and Deacon Dee Buttmer  
20913 West Snowberry Lane  
Plainfield, IL 60544

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

Shirley Hamill  
3466 Prairie Flower Circle  
Rockford, IL 61114

Tom and Pat Klein  
344 Manning Drive  
DeKalb, IL 60115

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

Barbara Morton  
11715 Ellwood Greens Road  
Genoa, IL 60135

Chris and Denielle Noe  
1256 Ali Drive  
Sycamore, IL 60178

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

Linda Saxer  
440 Exchange Street  
Sycamore, IL 60178

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

Tricia Rusin  
1640 Brickville Road  
Sycamore, IL 60178

## **St. Peter's Episcopal Church**

### **Vestry Minutes**

**July 20, 2023**

**PRESENT:** Varsie Geisler, Stefanie Hill, Lynne Roberts, John Vain, Cindy Vain, Jenny Sidmore, Brian Duggy, Pat Klein, Fr. Mark Geisler

**ABSENT:** Fr. Georges and Deacon Dee The meeting was called to order at 7:10 with an opening prayer by all present.

**AGENDA:** Accepted as presented

**JUNE MINUTES:** Accepted as written. Stefanie Hill and John Vain motioned.

**Treasurer's Report:**

- Pat Klein reported that the month showed a drop in pledges which is not unexpected for June.
  - Year-to-date shows that we are still over budget by \$3,725.78.
  - June income was down \$5968.84.
  - Finance Committee met on July 16. We are due for audit. This will be an internal audit rather than the expensive external audit. Pat will pull together a committee.
  - St. Peter's now has a debit card and a tax-free Amazon for business account.
  - Stefanie Hill moved and Varsie Geisler seconded to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.
- Senior Warden's Report:**
- Special vestry meeting minutes had one change: Approved and accepted resignation. Approved as amended: Brian Duffy and John Vain.
  - Fr. Georges' laptop is owned by St. Peter's. Fr. George will be asked to copy and remove all his files and leave the laptop in his office.
  - Reverse Osmosis: Purchased from Soft Water City with contract under Fr. Georges' name. Will verify.
  - Memo of Understanding: Personal belongings can stay in rectory until 8-31, then they are to be moved to storage at Fr. Georges' expense.
  - Vestments: If purchased by St. Peter's for use by Fr. Georges, they must remain unless given as a gift.
  - Discussion of vacation days owed. We are legally required to cover vacation days accrued.

All accrual has been exhausted. Motion to approve by Brian Duffy with second from John Vain. Motion approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Building and Grounds report submitted by Frank Beasley. Quotes have been received for upgrades to the office hallway. BJ Flooring: \$2811. Magic Touch Painting: \$3150. Total cost of \$5961. It was suggested that the funds needed will come from the Mike Blakeslee Memorial Account. Motion from Varsie Geisler with Second from Stefanie Hill.

**CAREGIVERS:**

- Thinking of You list has been updated to include address information.
  - Fr. Mark will visit with shut-ins until the interim rector arrives.
    - Fr. Mark also will visit John and Ann Engstrom on July 21 with a full celebration. He also is planning to meet with Helen Beamish whose birthday is this week.
- OUTREACH:**
- Volunteers for Meals on Wheels are needed for Tuesdays and Thursdays during August.
  - Spartan Food Pantry appreciates all monthly diaper donations.
- OLD BUSINESS:**
- Test for tuckpointing has been done. The return date is set for late August.
  - AEDs: Bud Fredin and John Vain will find a Saturday to install the cabinets.
    - It's time to get people on the list for AED/CPR training on September 30.
    - Summer clean-up pushed back due to tuckpointing needs.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Use of rectory after August: Consider having a bed, nightstand, lamp, some kitchen items available for supply priests' use. Marketplace is a good source for needed items.
- Website: User-friendly site is needed. Stefanie is working to get pro-bono help. Follow-up. Vestry members should visit other church websites for ideas. Send links to Stefanie.
  - Church Email: Emails are not going through when sent as a group, receiving emails is sporadic. Alex Hill is a good source for analysis. Spam alert against St. Peter's.

- Wetzal house: Anita reported that the current rental rates for homes comparable to the Wetzal house are at \$2000/month. A letter will be sent to the current tenants advising them that their lease will not be renewed but they are free to apply for rental at the new price of \$2000, effective September 19, 2023.

- Signage for Church: Banner Up submitted a quote that will mirror our current sign for a cost of \$2120. Vestry approved the purchase and asked for sketches of the new sign. Motion by Varsie Geisler with second from John Vain.

- Caring Box: How to use it? Suggest it is used downstairs for Sunday School. Also consider moving it offsite for snacks near schools.

- Parish Supper on August 10 at 6pm with Mark and Sarah Mendall's presentation of their trip to the Holy Land. We will order pizza instead of asking for a dish to pass to leave more time for the presentation. Vestry approved.

- Pumpkin Fest application approved. Sign-up sheets will be available starting next month. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50pm with a motion from Stefanie Hill and a second by Brian Duffy.

Closing prayer and blessing was given by Fr. Mark. Respectfully submitted,

Anita Biletzky  
Interim Clerk

## St. Peter's Pumpkin Festival Booth



The Sycamore Pumpkin Festival Parade will be October 29<sup>th</sup> so is that time of year to start planning for the St. Peter's Pumpkin Festival Booth. Please check out the sign-up sheets in the parish hall.

Stefanie Hill  
Chair



### September Birthdays

- 6 Tom Klein
- 6 Shannon Egler
- 8 Larry Smith
- 16 Jack Frost
- 17 Kristin Hill
- 19 Alex Hill
- 21 Elizabeth Adamczyk
- 22 Barbara Koehnke
- 23 Shirley Hamill
- 25 Brian Duffy
- 26 Logan Egler
- 26 Kara O'Keefe
- 28 Tricia Rusin
- 30 Brady Shea



### September Anniversaries

- 1 Josh and Beata Boies
- 12 Ryan and Kristin Hill
- 21 John and Laura Hulseberg



**Service Times for Summer:**

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

**Parish Office Hours:**

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

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**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

**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](mailto:office@sycamorestpeters.org)

Days in office: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Jean Erlenborn      Bookkeeper

[bookkeeper@sycamorestpeters.org](mailto:bookkeeper@sycamorestpeters.org)

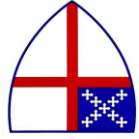
Days in office: Monday, Tuesday

*"...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*



Volume 28, Issue 9 – September, 2023

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