



The Churchman

Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 Woodside Road, Riverside, Illinois 60546 * (708) 442-5250
“Faith Active in Love”
www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org

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Issue 9

We are called together by the Holy Spirit around Word and Sacraments to glorify God the Father, creator of all things, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We trust God to nurture lives of faith and hope, as we serve and give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world.

Images of the Season: Autumn

A visit to an antique shop or second-hand store reveals the “in between” way in which objects are categorized. An old tattered quilt, an incomplete set of dishes, a refinished chest of drawers, faded paintings and pictures that are too good to throw away—all of these items remind us that times passes, yet has not concluded. Likewise, an item's worth can change: its value increases for some and it decreases for others. An in-between time, betwixt the beginnings and endings, the feasts and the fasts—this is autumn liturgy.

In a way, autumn is an arbitrary and ambiguous time of the year. With the post-Pentecost season's length extending from early summer to early winter, the church often struggles with a focus at this midpoint. Of course, it is a time for continuing growth in faith, a time for building on the foundations that have been witnessed through the resurrection appearances. Yet the challenge of this time of year often overwhelms. Where is the church headed? It is like waiting for a train that can be heard in the distance, yet seems to take forever to arrive.

The biblical stories are familiar and well-worn. They have tinges of memories associated with them. They have been heard before. Once in a while, there is something new and fresh, vital and surprising about the stories; more usually, though, they are retold with a rehearsed expectation and familiarity. They are, after all, part of the celebrated canon. They are a given.

Yet, at the very same time, it is the richness found in the retelling that offers a breath for new life. That which is well-worn is revitalized through an intimacy in a deep and abiding recollection of what is true and good, honorable and pure. Autumn liturgy is a time for homecoming, a coming home to Christ.

Autumn itself always brings about a number of changes. The seasons are marked by cycles of reversals: the stars shift in the sky; the natural world finds new ways of living. Likewise, school's days begin or end, new calendar years are established, old patterns of living are undertaken. A cabin might be closed for the winter, new windows put up on the house, clothing styles changed—these are marks of a shifting and transitional time.

Even though this change is apparent, it takes different ears and eyes to notice that the changes are not always dramatic or even recognizable. Conversion is much the same, seldom happening in an earth-shaking way. More often, transformation takes place in the ways that are hidden in the heart.

Perhaps it is the time of year to look for the subtle and simple nuances that contribute to a common faith. Perhaps it is the time of the year to revisit those aspects of faith that are considered

understood and agreed upon. That would give an opportunity to interrogate and discover anew the richness of a life lived within the liturgy of the church.

To investigate the pattern of the liturgy might be a good place to start. To see the possibilities within the pattern of gathering, receiving, experiencing, and sending through the word and sacraments affords the chance of liturgical formation. This is not to say that everything ought to be explained in great detail. That kind of didactic teaching can rob the liturgy of its multiple meanings. Rather, to reflect briefly in a homily or in a Sunday bulletin about the pattern that shapes community life—that might be the way to look anew at what is given, to see afresh what is gift. Liturgical formation is reflecting on how an understanding of the liturgy can help to shape the Christian life.

Patterns of formation are abundantly present in the texts for this time of year: teachings and healings, parables and ponderings. This was the reason Jesus gathered people together, to shape both their understanding and their living—to form them as children of God. This is the task of any catechesis: to shape individuals as individuals and to shape them all into one community.

Likewise, to revisit the historic creeds and confessions provides another opportunity to eke out new and profound commitments to the oldest expressions of faith to which the church attests. It might be the right time to look at the Small Catechism. Or work more intentionally with the church year's lesser festivals and commemorations. Working in consultation with ecumenical partners, the lengthy Pentecost season provides ample chances to explore common convictions and unique gifts.

It could also be the time of year to consider exploring hymnody at a greater depth. Telling the stories of composers or poets or bringing a practicing composer or poet to the congregation would add layers of meaning to all of the hymns. Calling upon musicians and artists in the community to share their talents and understandings could be a way to enhance appreciation for the old but new story.

In Christ, what is old can become new. That is why the liturgical year has a lengthy time of reflecting on the saving and redemptive work of the Christ who lives in the daily-ness of existence. Using the ordinary to usher in the extraordinary, drawing attention to the commonplace to bring to light the uncommon truth, pointing beyond the seen to the unseen, these are the tasks during autumn liturgy. When, for instance, the community gathers around a paten with some bread on it and a chalice with some wine in it, mystery across time speaks. The servers hold the real presence of Christ's body and blood which time itself cannot hold.

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Antiques have value not only for how they function, but for how they form a frame of reference for our experience. They have stood the test of time with generations of hands cleaning them faithfully, wiping dust from them. Old beds have been wrapped in blankets of prayers providing rest and refreshment to generations. An antique clock speaks about the confirmation or the wedding that was the occasion of its giving. The sideboard recounts the sustenance that has been prepared by generations. Through the subtle changes that are seen in the common and ordinary, a deepening and abiding faith is nurtured and sustained.

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Council Update...

A Season of Transition and Progress

Your church council has been actively engaged both before and after Pastor Lauritsen's retirement in June. We're grateful for the dedication and care shown during this important time of transition.

Call Committee Formation

We're pleased to announce the formation of our Call Committee elected to help guide the search for our next pastor. Members include: Gary Drahos, Vicki Michaels, Linda Painter, Karyn Bute, Staci Harden, Tom Myers, John Broussard, George Valek, and Paul Watkiss. Aidan Altavilla will serve as the alternate.

Ministry Site Profile (MSP)

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the council and the Call Committee, the final version of our Ministry Site Profile has been submitted to the ELCA website. Bishop Wilma reviewed our initial draft, offered helpful suggestions, and we've made the necessary updates. The revised report was submitted this week for her approval, and we anticipate the "job posting" will go live within the next week. If you'd like to review the MSP, a downloadable copy will be available via email upon request.

We Need Your Input

As we move forward in the search process, we invite you to reflect on what qualities you hope to see in our new pastor.

- What traits from previous pastors or interim leaders have left a positive impression?
- If you've worshipped in other congregations, what did you appreciate about those pastors?

Please jot down your thoughts and share them with me or any Call Committee member. Your insights are invaluable as we discern the future of our pastoral leadership.

Interim Pastor Update

We're excited to share that Bishop Wilma has identified an Interim Pastor for our congregation. The council has approved and will be moving forward with an offer this week.

Pastor Ken Johnson, who preached and presided during Sundays in July and resides in Riverside, has graciously agreed to serve in a part-time capacity—up to 20 hours per month. His ministry will include:

- Nursing home and shut-in visits
- Grief counseling
- Pulpit supply coordination
- Preaching one Sunday per month
- Funeral services as needed

We're grateful for Pastor Ken's willingness to walk with us during this transitional period.

Preschool Update

After 10 wonderful years Riverside Preschool has closed its' doors at Sts. Peter and Paul. We extend heartfelt thanks to Lisa and her team for being such a blessing to our congregation.

Looking Ahead: Cornerstone Montessori School

We're excited to share that Cornerstone Montessori School, currently located at Ascension in Riverside, is seeking to relocate to our church starting January 2026. Their proposal includes using our preschool classrooms, part of the dining hall (near the stage), kitchen, and prep room. This is a year-round program aligned with local school calendars. We're in the process of finalizing the agreement and will keep you updated. We look forward to welcoming these young learners and their families into our church community.

Gratitude

A heartfelt thank you to Karen, David, Bill, and Fred for their continued faithful service. To all our volunteers—thank you for making our Sunday worship run so smoothly. Your dedication is deeply appreciated.

—submitted by Carrie Watkiss, President

Good Soil

Every moment and every event of every person's life on earth plants something in her or his soul. For just as the wind carries thousands of winged seeds, so each moment brings with it germs of spiritual vitality that come to rest imperceptibly in the minds and wills of men and women. Most of these unnumbered seeds perish and are lost, for such seeds as these cannot spring up anywhere except in the good soil of freedom, spontaneity and love (Thomas Merton).

Passages

Mildred "Millie" Londak, 95 year old mother of William, passed from this life on July 15th. A service for Millie was held at Woodlawn Funeral Home on July 25th. Interment was at Woodlawn Memorial Park in Forest Park.

Where has the time gone?



Isaac Lauritsen (left) and Sarah Gavac (right) reunited with their Sunday school teacher Marty Pennino (center), on June 1st, almost 25 years since he taught them. Marty was proud of how they had grown into fine and successful adults.

—submitted by Martin Pennino

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SERVERS

September 7th:

Greeter: Staci Harden
 Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Lector: Philip Painter
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

September 14th:

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
 Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Lector: Joanne Sefara
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: Fred Kuzel

September 21st:

Greeter: Fred Kuzel
 Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
 Lector: Beverly Tarbox
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: Janet Broussard

September 28th:

Greeter: Karyn Bute
 Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
 Lectors: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: John Kostelny

Sacristan and Altar Care: Fred Kuzel

OCTOBER WORSHIP SERVERS

October 5th:

Greeter: Walter and Judith Cudecki
 Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
 Lector: Kristine Boike
 Live Stream: Charles Matthies
 Usher: Fred Kuzel

October 12th:

Greeter: Edward and Joanne Sefara
 Assisting Minister: John Broussard
 Lector: John Kostelny
 Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
 Usher: Janet Broussard

October 19th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
 Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
 Lectors: Gary and Jocelyn Drahos
 Live Stream: John Broussard
 Usher: Rafael Martinez

October 26th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
 Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
 Lector: George Valek
 Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
 Usher: John Kostelny

Sacristan and Altar Care: Janice Hapgood

Donations made easy

Donations to Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church can be made using the Zelle service from your bank. For some, this may provide a more convenient way to donate on a regular weekly basis as well as before or after an event or for a special occasion. This service should not charge you or the church a service fee, avoids the need for a paper check, and gets your donation to the church as quickly as possible. Other ways of donating continue to be gratefully received. Here are some easy steps to follow: Zelle is supported by most banking applications, rather than being a standalone app. You simply go to your online banking website or phone app, go to the Zelle interface, and add Sts. Peter and Paul as a recipient via our e-mail address: donations@stspeterandpaulriverside.org. From there, you may send any amount of money with a note as to what it is for. The money will automatically be accepted into our account. We will get a notification at that e-mail address that you have done so. Thank you so much for your ongoing support.—Tom Myers

Memorials and Honorariums

✦ For the Church ✦

David and Debbie Bark, Ken and Pam Wood, Mike Wood, and Larry and Sue Kusch, in loving memory of mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother +Shirley Wood+ on the anniversary of her birth.

John and Shirley Kostelny, in memory of +Rose Tornil+.

William Boor, in memory of mother +Irene Boor+ on the anniversary of her birth on August 16th. (*building maintenance fund*)

✦ In memory of Mildred Londak ✦

Vera Borysek
 Lois Michaels
 Ann Kmet
 The Hassel Family
 Jerry and Karen Keller
 Emil and Helena Galdun
 Robert Kany
 Liz and Mark Rouck
 Kelly and Sue Jones
 Adam and Joyce Olszewski

June 2025

Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering

Budgeted Offering: \$2,615.00

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
6/1	\$3,920.00
6/8	\$ 960.00
6/15	\$ 950.00
6/22	\$1,425.00
6/29	\$ 795.00

July 2025

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
7/6	\$1,150.00
7/13	\$1,785.00
7/20	\$1,175.00
7/27	\$1,036.00

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DATED MATERIAL

Blessing of Teachers and Students

Almighty God, you give wisdom and knowledge. Grant teachers the gift of joy and insight, and students the gift of diligence and openness, that all may grow in what is good and honest and true. Support all who teach and all who learn, that together we may know and follow your ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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Sept. 3	Martin Pennino	Sept. 16	Linda McShane
Sept. 5	Ezekiel Wilson	Sept. 17	Maycee Gillund
Sept. 7	Nathan Byrne		Benjamin Smith
Sept. 9	Julie Barcik	Sept. 18	Isabella Myers
Sept. 10	John Jakubec		Sebastian Myers
Sept. 11	Janice Decosola	Sept. 24	John Broussard
	Jon Hapgood	Sept. 27	James Gaydusek
	Dennis Horacek		Charles Matthies
	Alexandra Miller	Sept. 30	Beverly Podzamsky
Sept. 15	Deborah Jech		

Birthdays and Anniversaries

September 5, 1998: Thomas and Lavinia Myers
September 6, 1997: Matthew and Janice Decosola
September 9, 2009: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
September 12, 2020: Zachary and Jeanean Sawyer
September 13, 2014: Susan and Robert Gillund
September 14 2002: Michelle and William Ruska
September 18, 2010: Peter and Gandy Drahos
September 19, 2009: Christopher and Laura Teter
September 24, 2000: James and Sandra Gaydusek
September 30, 1995: Adriana and Branislav Kubo

PLEASE NOTE:

Contribution statements for the first half of 2025 will be mailed from the church office **upon request**. Call Karen at 708-442-5250, Monday through Thursday, 9 am til noon or send an e-mail to office@stspeterandpaulriverside.org

Altar Flowers

July 27th: In memory of +Anne+ and +Jacob Drahos+ by their remembering family.



Dear Loving Father,

We pause to remember the great losses and courageous acts of September 11th. We lift up those who are still affected—families of the victims, police officers, firefighters, first responders, and all who were involved. We pray for the light of Christ to flood the hearts of people everywhere. We believe You desire to redeem Your creation, and we trust that beauty will continue to come from the ashes of those dark days. Surround us with Your mighty angels of protection, give us compassion for one another in all of life's circumstances, and instill in us the courage to answer Your call. Amen