



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 7/8

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.



welcoming our neighbors from
Ascension Lutheran Church

Sunday, July 12th
10:15 a.m.

Bring your lawn chairs and blankets.
Pets are welcome.

An Ice Cream Social will follow
the service.

Summer Solstice Reminds Us of God’s Grace to All

Why it matters that the Lord lets the sun rise on both the evil and on the good. By Hannah Anderson (June 17th, 2022)

On June 21st the sun hung in the sky over the Northern Hemisphere for what is colloquially known as the “longest day of the year.” In reality, the sun’s position will be no different than usual, but our perception of it will be different owing to the earth’s tilt on its axis as it orbits the sun.

Where I live in the mid-Atlantic, we’ll enjoy over fourteen hours of sunlight, but for those at the farthest reaches north—in places like Svalbard, Norway—the sun will simply never set. (Folks

in the Southern Hemisphere will enjoy the same phenomenon six months later when the seasons change.)

Traditionally, the summer solstice has been a time of celebration, bonfires, and revelry—inspiring stories like Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and even the placement of architectural wonders like Stonehenge and the Great Pyramid of Giza.

For many pagan cultures, midsummer was a time of ritual and sacrifice as humans worshiped the sun as the source of life. But there’s a difference between worshipping the sun and worshipping by the sun. And surprisingly, at least to our modern sensibilities, Scripture invites us to the latter.

Psalm 19—the psalm that tells us that “the heavens declare the glory of God”—calls attention to the sun’s orbit as it traces a path across the sky. The author likens it to an athlete running around a racetrack:

*It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is deprived of its warmth (v. 6).*

For the psalmist, the arc of the sun’s orbit (the same orbit that makes the summer solstice both possible and predictable) reveals something of God’s character. Elsewhere, the Scripture alludes to the role of the sun’s orbit in delineating “signs and seasons” (Gen. 1:14–19, NKJV)—while the consistent passage of the seasons tells of the faithfulness of God himself. As the Lord promises Noah after the flood,

*As long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night
will never cease (Gen. 8:22).*

Finding theological truth in natural phenomena may feel odd to modern readers—and perhaps it might even smack of paganism—but this hermeneutic falls squarely within the tradition of natural theology or general revelation.

The natural world is one of the primary ways God has revealed himself to humanity since the beginning of time. And so, while we’re more accustomed to knowing God through holy texts and prophetic utterances, saints throughout history have found him through his creation.

—continued on next page...

In the early 13th-century hymn “Canticle of the Sun” (based on Psalm 104), Saint Francis of Assisi worships God via the greatness of the sun:

*Most High, all powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor,
and all blessing.*

*To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no man is worthy to mention Your name
Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures,
especially through my lord Brother Sun,
who brings the day; and you give light through him.
And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor!
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.*

But general revelation also carries a kind of warning, reminding us of where we stand in relationship to our Creator. As much as we might minimize our helplessness or try to escape the uncomfortable truth of our dependence, the natural world has a way of snapping us back to reality.

When Job’s friends chide him for blaming God for his suffering, Job reminds them that even animals know their well-being rests in the hands of the Creator. “Ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind” (Job 12:7–10).

We simply cannot escape the testimony of creation: We are dependent creatures whose only hope is in our Creator.

As we approach the summer solstice, our earth circling around a blazing mass of glory, I can’t help but think about how fragile our life on this planet is. Just the right tilt of the axis, just the right distance, just the right length of orbit—all sustained by the One who first set it in motion and maintains it in a continual act of creation.

In light of all this, I understand why people have worshiped the sun. I understand how easy it would be to see the sun itself as your source of life, to realize how dependent we are on its rays and respond accordingly. But our dependence is only half the story. The natural world—the sun specifically—also reveals the goodness and grace of the God on which we depend.

Returning to Psalm 19, David suggests that God’s glory is like the sun’s heat: “nothing is deprived of its warmth” (v. 6). God’s presence pervades every nook and cranny of the earth. It “goes out into all the earth ... to the ends of the world” (v. 4).

But even as God generously reveals himself as the source of our lives, he also shows himself to be generous—and this grace changes us.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus appeals to the sun’s orbit to teach a new ethic of the kingdom of heaven. As children of our Father, he says, we must love not only our neighbors but also our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. And we must do this because this is what our Father does.

Our Father “causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous” (Matt. 5:45). He doesn’t differentiate between those who deserve the warming rays of the sun and those who don’t; he extends the grace of life to all—even to those who resist or hate him.

When we feel the glow of the sun on our faces, when we feast under its lengthening rays, we remember that our lives are sustained by its warmth in very real and practical ways. The energy that shines from heaven allows plants to grow and sustains all those who call this earth home. That light falls on everyone—regardless of whether we love and worship the Creator or not—and it is the same light that instructs us in his ways.

When self-reliance and ingratitude tempt us to forget the source of life (Jer. 5:24), we pray that God’s kindness will, like the sun, continue to shine on us and lead us to repentance. We pray that we will be open to what this light teaches us and that we will be made more like our Father in heaven—a Father so rich and so kind that the rays of his love permeate the whole earth, so that nothing can be hidden from them.

Hannah Anderson is the author of Turning of Days, All That’s Good, and Humble Roots: How Humility Grounds and Nourishes Your Soul. Reprinted from Christianity Today.



Summer Prayer

Father, Creator of all, Thank You for summer!

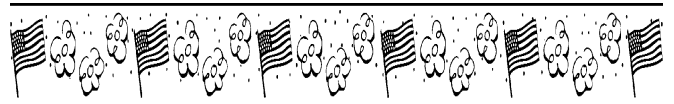
Thank you for the warmth of the sun
and the increased daylight.
Thank You for the beauty I see all around me and
for the opportunity to be outside and enjoy Your
creation.
Thank You for the increased time I have to be
with my friends and family,
and for the more casual pace of the summer season.

Draw me closer to You this summer.
Teach me how I can pray
no matter where I am or what I am doing.
Warm my soul with the awareness of Your presence
and light my path with Your Word and Counsel.
As I enjoy Your creation, create in me
a pure heart and a hunger and a thirst for You.

Amen.

- Author Unknown

—submitted by Charles Matthies



“Music has a great advantage:
without mentioning anything, it can say everything.”

—Ilya Ehrenburg

We Receive Thanks

May 12, 2026

Dear Members of Sts. Peter and Paul Lutheran Church,

We are so grateful for your generosity. Your gift of \$500.00 on May 4th, 2026 supports individuals and families facing homelessness have access to dignity-based shelter with a meaningful path toward housing.

Thanks to your support, BEDS Plus continues to offer a range of programs designated to meet the varied and complex needs of some of the most vulnerable clients in the community with flexibility and professionalism. For example, we provide a low-barrier walk-in center 6 days a week to give people direct access to resources and care. This essential operation relies on the in-kind donation of food/clothing, volunteer support and private funding but helps connect more than 375 unique individuals a month.

BEDS Plus increased services by 36% last year. We manage more than 100 units of shelter, including accommodations for medically fragile individuals. In FY25, we provided more than \$3 million dollars of eviction prevention and rental assistance support, we supported more than 770 people in short-term housing programs and managed 135 units of permanent supportive housing. To learn more about our impact, consider taking some time to view client testimonials on our website, reviewing our full impact report or becoming a volunteer.

Your investment positions the organization to meet the current need and prepare for what lies ahead. Together, we can reduce the impact housing insecurity has on the lives of people in our community.

In gratitude,

Tina Rounds
Chief Executive Officer
BEDS Plus



Altar flowers

June 7th: In loving memory of dear father +Clarence Triska+ on the 23rd anniversary of his passing by remembering children Jim, Carol, and Jeff and Lisa Triska.

June 21st: In loving memory of beloved mother +Arlene Gana+ on the 20th anniversary of her death by remembering daughter Adrienne Gana, dear sister Audrey Bucz, and nephew Brian Bucz.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

JULY

July 4: Carl Busch III	July 14: Janet Broussard
July 5: Joanne Sefara	July 17: John Kostelny
July 6: Karyn Bute	July 18: Timothy Dlh Megan Drahos
July 9: Lee Drahos Robert Kubik	July 22: Elizabeth Cudecki
July 11: Hannah Decosola	July 26: Bode Smith
July 13: Amanda Meyers	July 30: Keith Altavilla

Anniversaries

July 7, 1979: John and Linda McShane
July 11, 2015: Thomas and Kathryn Murray
July 20, 2019: David and Jessica Barajas
July 25, 1997: Timothy and Pamela Dlh

AUGUST

Aug. 1: James D'Alexander	Aug. 18: Nicole Smith
Aug. 7: Jenean Sawyer	Aug. 22: George Valek III
Aug. 10: Kristine Boike George Hodul Bradley Ruska	Aug. 23: Garry Horak, Jr. Aug. 26: Carole Pollitz
Aug. 12: Larry Crachy	Aug. 28: Matthew G. Decosola Steven Deshazer Brandon Michaels
Aug. 13: Vlado Vercimak	Aug. 29: Matthew J. Decosola Annika Diette Theodore Murray
Aug. 16: Adrienne Gana Daniel Tornil	

Anniversaries

August 15, 1997: Donald and Elaine Haase

Give All That You Have

by Anne Graham Lotz

Don't concentrate on what you lack; concentrate on what you have. Then give all of it to Jesus for His use.

Philip answered [Jesus], "Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" (John 6:7, NIV).

Almost as soon as Philip came to the conclusion that it was humanly impossible to feed the crowd gathered on the hillside, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" (John 6:8-9, NIV). While Andrew seemed to agree with Philip about the impossibility of feeding so many, his approach to the need was more positive. Without even realizing it, his faith had found the key to the storehouse of God's ample supply. When he offered Jesus a few loaves and fish, he was offering Jesus *everything* he had!

What do you have? Do you have a little bit of time?

...a little bit of love?
...a little bit of money?
...a little bit of faith?

Don't concentrate on what you lack, concentrate on what you have. Then give *all of it* to Jesus for His use.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
250 Woodside Road
Riverside, IL 60546
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Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Riverside, IL
Permit No. 37

DATED MATERIAL

A Graduate's Prayer

*Dear Lord,
As I look toward the future
Bright hope conducts this prayer,
For I know the plans You have for me
Were wrought with divine care.*

*Holy Spirit, lead me.
Let me run at Your command,
Yet be still and know that You are God
When trouble is close at hand.*

*Your Word will be a lamp for me,
A guide to light my way,
A solid place to set my feet,
A compass when I stray.*

*May I live my life to praise You,
Not for fortune, nor for fame,
May everything I say and do
Bring glory to Your name.*

*May my eyes stay fixed upon You
As I seek the way that's pure,
Tasting Your love and goodness
Sleeping and rising secure.*

*Planted by Your living streams
I'll delight in all Your ways,
Hidden by Your sheltering wings
With new mercies for each day.*

*Even in a dangerous land
When storms threaten to destroy,
At the cross I'll stand upon the Rock
My Strength, my Hope, my Joy.*

*Dear Lord, show me Your favor,
At all times keep me blessed,
May Your face ever shine upon me,
With peace and perfect rest.*

—Mary Fairchild

Independence Day

The Declaration of Independence is America's revolutionary Charter of Freedom and the document upon which the nation's founding principles were established.

Here is an excerpt from the Declaration of Independence (U.S., 1776):

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Right, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem mostly likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Did You Know?

The name "John Hancock" is synonymous with "your signature" because Hancock's bold signature on the Declaration of Independence dwarfed the signatures of the other signers.

Legend says that Hancock wanted the King of England to see the rebellious signature without having to wear his spectacles!

—published by *Yankee Publishing Incorporated*
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*"We hold
these truths to
be self evident..."*

JULY WORSHIP SERVERS

July 5th:

Greeters: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lector: Aidan Altavilla
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: Fred Kuzel

July 12th: (Outdoor Worship)

Greeter: John and Shirley Kostelny
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: Jocelyn Drahos
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: John Kostelny

July 19th:

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
Lector: John Kostelny
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Walter Cudecki

July 26th:

Greeter: Staci Harden
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: Tom Myers
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: George Valek

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Fred Kuzel and John and Janet Broussard

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SERVERS

September 6th:

Greeter: Staci Harden
Assisting Minister: Charles Matthies
Lector: George Valek
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: George Valek

September 13th:

Greeters: Larry Crachy and Karen Kubik
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lector: Joanne Sefara
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: Janet Broussard

September 20th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lectors: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: John Kostelny

September 27th:

Greeter: Karyn Bute
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lector: Beverly Tarbox
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: Fred Kuzel

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Fred Kuzel

AUGUST WORSHIP SERVERS

August 2nd:

Greeter: Karyn Bute
Assisting Minister: Vicki Michaels
Lector: John Broussard
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: Janet Broussard

August 9th:

Greeters: John and Shirley Kostelny
Assisting Minister: Tom Myers
Lector: Charles Matthies
Live Stream: Paul Watkiss
Usher: John Kostelny

August 16th:

Greeters: Paul and Carrie Watkiss
Assisting Minister: Carrie Watkiss
Lector: Kristine Boike
Live Stream: John Broussard
Usher: George Valek

August 23rd:

Greeters: Walter and Judith Cudecki
Assisting Minister: Beverly Tarbox
Lector: Fred Kuzel
Live Stream: Fred Kuzel
Usher: Walter Cudecki

August 30th:

Greeter: Ann Kmet
Assisting Minister: John Broussard
Lector: Philip Painter
Live Stream: Charles Matthies
Usher: Fred Kuzel

Sacristan and Altar Care:

Edward and Joanne Sefara

An electronic copy of this newsletter is posted at our website and can be accessed by clicking on the limestone church:
www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org

Meditation for the Day, July 7th

Painful as the present time may be, you will one day see the reason for it. You will see that it was not only testing, but also a preparation for the life-work which you are to do. Have faith that your prayers and aspirations will someday be answered. Answered in a way that perhaps seems painful to you but is the only right way. Selfishness and pride often make us want things that are not good for us. They need to be burned out of our natures. We must be rid of the blocks which are holding us back, before we can expect our prayers to be answered.

Prayer for the Day

I pray that I may be willing to go through a time of testing. I pray that I may trust God for the outcome.

*Quoted from the app Twenty-Four Hours a Day.
Find recovery resources at Hazelden.*

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 done so. Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

Memorials and Honorariums

❖ For the Church ❖

In memory of mother +Arlene Gana+ on the 20th anniversary of her death by remembering daughter Adrienne Gana, sister Audrey Bucz, and nephew Brian Bucz.

Soda Sales
Cornerstone Montessori
Saturday Morning Big Book Study

It's Time to Update...

The church database needs updating as changes are occurring with our members. Many households have disconnected land lines, which are now replaced with cell phone numbers, home and email addresses have changed, children have moved out and now require their own households, etc. Please complete the form below with any changes applying to your household. Each household needs a valid home address and phone number. Thank you for keeping us updated!

Sts. Peter and Paul Database Information Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone numbers:

Landline: _____

Cellphone(s): _____

Cellphone(s): _____

Email address: _____

Email address: _____

Please return your changes to the church office via mail: 250 Woodside Road, Riverside, IL 60546, calling the church office at 708-442-5250, or emailing them to Karen at office@stspeterandpaulriverside.org.

April 2026 Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offerings *Budgeted Offering: \$1,827.00*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
4/5	\$ 2,015.00
4/12	\$ 1,340.00
4/19	\$ 1,180.00
4/26	\$14,942.00

May 2026 Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offerings *Budgeted Offering: \$1,827.00*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
5/3	\$1,290.00
5/10	\$ 430.00
5/17	\$1,827.00
5/24	\$ 540.00
5/31	\$1,242.00