

Sunshine Thoughts

St. Peter's United Church of Christ

7014 Darmstadt Road Evansville, Indiana 47710 812-909-4391

Search Team Update

It can be an overwhelming responsibility to decide if an individual, unknown to us, can lead our church into the future. This is not a decision to be made lightly. Even though good "decision making" is grounded in logical thinking and rational discourse, It assumes we have the capacity to understand and solve our own problems. In group decision making, pros and cons are shared, data is given to support an outcome, and when all questions are answered, a vote is taken. The solution of the "majority" is approved by the group, even though there may be members who wanted a different outcome. God may or may not have been included in this process. In many meetings, this is the practice that is followed because there are concrete problems, i.e. budget decisions, programming decisions that need logical decision making. This is not the process we will follow to decide the best candidate for St. Peter's next settled pastor.

Recently Rev. Michael led the Search Team through a spiritual discernment exercise. He gave us steps to follow to help us ask for God's presence as well as to ask for wisdom, humility and an open heart during our meetings. The assumptions are that God is not neutral about our mission and our choices; God is self-disclosing, and his will is revealed in community. Our tools are consensus (group solidarity in sentiment and

belief), prayer, silence, and listening. The exercise begins with lighting a candle, (like lighting the Christ candle each Sunday), a period of silence and a prayer. We sit quietly, breathe, and pray for God's presence. We ask for wisdom, humility and freedom from fear and hidden agendas. At the end of our discussion (meeting), we will ask "Where did we feel hopeful, alive, at peace"? When did we feel uneasy and anxious"? The answers to both questions may be ways in which God is giving us direction. We believe our discussions will be deeper; feelings of peace will be shared; fears will be verbalized, and God will be present, guiding us to his will.

Over the next few weeks, as we prepare to interview candidates, we will practice these new skills. We believe these skills will equip us to be more open to hearing God's direction for St. Peter's UCC (Highland).

Submitted by,
Cheryl Whitmore,
Co-Chair, Search Committee

Communion Sunday

Holy Communion will be celebrated on December 7th.

October Finances	
Total General Offering*	\$9,148
Don't forget St. Peter's in your will!	
Average Sunday Attendance	
In Person	40
Zoom	6

Women's Guild

Our next meeting will be our Christmas Party on December 9th at 6 pm. Bring a snack to share and a Bingo prize.

Men's Fellowship

Our next meeting has been scheduled for December 11th at the church.

We held our annual washer tournament at the October meeting. Thanks to John Gentry for hosting the meeting. The 2025 washer tournament champions are John Gentry and Roger Schell.



Church Office Hours

The Church office hours are:

- Thursdays 7:30 am to 12:00 pm

Prayers of Healing and Concern for:

- *Judy Allen
- *Bob Berfanger
- *Pat Brown
- *Bob Burkhart
- *Judy Burkhart
- *Jeff Buxton
- *Chris Cheshire

- *Megan Clanton
- *Gary Gantner
- *Lyn Hayden
- *Mike Hobbs
- *Suzie Hobbs
- *Katie Hudson
- *Toni Klueg
- *Mildred Kuhlenschmidt
- *Miss Mary
- *Dala McDaniel
- *Jennifer Meeks
- *Katie Mullen
- *Gayle Nelson
- *Larry Palmer
- *Charlotte Pointer
- *Becky Reeves
- *Ryder Family
- *Aggie Todd
- *Brenda Todd
- *Carl Todd
- *Brian Turpin
- *Tom Wardrip
- *Ursula Wegner
- *Pat Williams

Book Club Happenings

Our Christmas read will be: The Christmas Bookshop by Jenny Colgan. We will meet at St. Peter’s on December 4th at 12:00.

Our January read is: The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon. 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
Pat Williams

Prayers for Service Men and Women

-Caleb Coffman serving in the US Navy.
Caleb Coffman's address:

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

Grandin Evolution Christmas Mission Project

You know that the holidays are approaching when JC Whitmore announces that the Grandin Christmas tags are “ready”. This year we are sponsoring a Christmas celebration (presents and money for Christmas dinner) for two families. One family has four children from ages 8 – 12 years, and the second family has three children from ages 3 – 8 years. There are four parents in these two families.

It never ceases to humble me when I read the gift request form for each person. They ask for necessities, i.e. coats, new socks, towels, and blankets. Children should be asking for toys, but their requests are not extravagant. This year the primary request for adults and children is coats and hats.

Recently we have provided food gift cards so that each family has money to buy food for their Christmas Dinner. Each family receives gift cards to purchase \$150 in food. We are asking for “cash” so that we can buy all the cards at the same store. All extra money given is used to purchase additional food gift cards for other families who participate in the program.

If you can participate in this project, please have the wrapped packages or “cash for gift cards” at the church **no later than Sunday, December 14th.**

If you have questions about the gift request, contact Cheryl or JC Whitmore.

Our gifts give hope and joy to people we may have the privilege of knowing. Thank you for making this mission project a success “every year”.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Whitmore

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.

Burgoo 2025

Thank you to those who have volunteered to help with Burgoo 2025.

We cooked 357.5 gallons resulting in a \$6,661 profit.

Great job St. Peter’s!

United Caring Services Monthly Lunch Volunteer Opportunity

For the last several years, the 1st Saturday of each month is the day for St. Peter’s volunteers to prepare and serve a meal at United Caring Services. We would like to thank the congregation for your continued support over the years of this great outreach program.

Each month we serve between 75-100 lunches.

The supplies for these meals are not provided by the shelter, so that is why we rely on monetary donations to help offset the expenses for these meals. And in an effort to keep

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our expenses down, over the last several months we have had tried a variety of menu items. While they all have been well received, we recently we have landed on a menu that seems to be our biggest hit!. The menu includes a pasta bake, breadstick, vegetable, fruit, cookie and lemonade.

While we are spending approx. \$1.25 per meal, we feel we can lower the cost going forward if we ask for non-perishable supply donations.

1# boxes of rigatoni pasta

Large cans (106 oz.) of spaghetti sauce

Large cans (106 oz.) of seasoned green beans

Bottle of grated Parmesan cheese

Bottle of Italian Seasoning

Large can of dry lemonade mix

Package of napkins

100 forks (each meal)

Here is the last 2025 UCS lunch date:

- December 6th

We ask that you please have your items to the church by the last Sunday of each month. You can place items on the kitchen counter at church.

We are also in need of 2-3 volunteers each month to help prepare and serve the meal. Volunteering includes being onsite at the shelter from 10:45 am to 12:45 pm. Julie & Angel bring all the supplies on that Saturday and we prepare and serve the meal onsite.

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

It's been a great year of the ETSA working together to feed

neighbors in our community. In a recent email I received from Reverend Emily Slade, Sr. Pastor at Bethlehem UCC and President of the ETSA (Evansville Tri-State Association), she noted that since beginning this joint mission in July 2023, we have served 15 meals. She also offered a thank you to the ETSA for financially supporting this work, and a thank you to each of you and the other volunteers from your church who have given of their time to this ministry.

Over the last 2 years, St. Peter's has joined five of our sister UCC churches (Bethlehem, Bethel, Immanuel (Ford Road), Zion Lippe and St. Paul's (German Township)) the 2nd Saturday every other month to provide free hot meals to those in need at Sister Joanna's Table, located at St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 301 SE 1st St in DT Evansville.

St. Peter's began this mission project in 2024 and has had the opportunity to join these churches in providing meals 7 different times. I would also like to thank all of you that have supported this mission and outreach project by volunteering or providing food/desserts.

We will continue serving in 2026, so please mark your calendars for these Saturdays:

January 10th

March 14th

May 9th

July 11th

September 12th

As we get closer to those dates, we will be asking for 2-4 volunteers to help serve at Sister Joanna's Table. Since we are participating with other churches, the time commitment varies depending on what our task assignment is, but it would be about 2 hours.

Contact Julie Ryder if you have any questions or would like to volunteer.

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.

Join us for Online Worship at St. Peter's!

On Your Computer

Go to

<https://zoom.us/j/850989470>

Zoom will download briefly to your computer and log you into the meeting

Using the Zoom App

Enter the meeting ID:
850 989 470

Click "Join with a personal link name" and change how you are identified to others in the group

Click "Join Meeting"

On Your Phone

Call 1-312-626-6799

Enter Meeting ID:
850 989 470#

Follow the prompts

Church Calendar

The church is using Google calendar to schedule church events and meetings. You can view the calendar at <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0?cid=c3RwZXRIcnNoaWdobGFuZHVjY0BnbWFpbC5jb20>

Or scan the following QR Code with your smart phone.

**Newsletter Deadline**

The submissions deadline for the January 2026 Sunshine Thoughts is December 21st. The January edition will be distributed on December 28th. Newsletter items may be submitted via e-mail. Please send to rschell190@gmail.com