



## The Epistle - March 2019

### A Season of Generosity: A Time to Invest in Our Community

Soon you will be receiving a letter asking you to consider an estimate of what you pledge to give to St. Peter's in the next fiscal year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020). We are sending them out earlier than usual this year because we want to receive them by March 31<sup>st</sup> in order to provide the Governance Council with information about anticipated giving sooner in the budget making process.

In addition, we listened to your feedback in last year's congregational meetings; as a result, we are providing a goal for the congregation to fund a budget that better reflects our values and theology. Along with the monetary goal, we are taking the bold step of being transparent about what this entails from each member of the congregation and asking you to pray, reflect, and then act to make your priorities and desires a reality.

The work of creating the Kin-dom of God is not easy and requires much. We are hopeful that being bold in our ask and transparent in our goals we can work together and create something wonderful with God's help.

With love, Seth Kreigh and the Generosity Team

### One Great Hour of Sharing: A Way to Provide Help Locally and Globally

During the month of March we have another opportunity for generosity as a spiritual practice. **One Great Hour of Sharing** is a special mission that the UCC offers. "The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response." The UCC is also only one of four denominations to participate in this mission. The American Baptists, Disciples of Christ, and Church of the Brethren all work together with Church World Service to make this ministry possible. The UCC specifically focuses on helping refugees, resettlement, and disaster relief. The Gospel of Matthew 25: 40 reminds us, "Just as you did it to one of the least of these, who are members of my family, you did it for me." This is one way we can live into being members of one human family. For stories of how OGHS helps those in need, please visit: [http://www.ucc.org/oghs\\_stories](http://www.ucc.org/oghs_stories)

### Wednesday Night Lenten Experience: Diving Deeper with the Spirit

Lent is a season of invitation. We are invited to begin our journey on **Ash Wednesday March 6th at 7:00p.m.** Our journey into the season of Lent continues as we follow Jesus, as we watch the unveiling of who he is and why he is here, to witness healing and blessing we have only dreamed about, and to reclaim a closeness with God and each other.

This Lenten season you are invited to a new experience of fellowship and worship. On Wednesday evenings we will gather first to discuss and reflect on the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. Following discussion and conversation, we will gather for a time of contemplative worship. The hope for this time together is to create a quiet and soothing balm in our busy 24/7 schedules and never ending to-do lists. Often our souls long for deep peace, which can often come from connection with God. Contemplative worship holds space for silence, reflection, and prayer as a way to open our hearts toward the Spirit. Together we will dive deeper into the prayer of St. Francis, sing centering melodies, and share in communion and prayer. Our first gathering will be on March 13th, discussion at 6:15-7:00pm with worship at 7:00pm-7:45pm.

### \*\*\*\*\*Table of Contents\*\*\*\*\*

Page 2: Calendar + Page 3-4: Clergy Team Update + Page 5: Education Team + Page 6,7,8: Missions Team +  
Page 8,9: Music Team + Page 7: Missions Team + Page 8 & 9: Music Team + Page 10 & 11: Spiritual Life Team + Page  
12: Governance & Preschool Team + Page 13 : Community Happenings + Page 14 Hospitality Team  
Page 15: Notes from the Church Office

# March 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Parlor in Use 9-10am Bystander Training 10- 12:00am Tamil School 2-4pm
3 Shrove Break- fast Youth Group 12:30-2pm	4 Bible Study with Sam 6:30pm	5	6 Ash Wednes- day Service 7pm	7 Women & the Word 9:30am Worship / Staff 1:30pm Ministry Council 6pm Handbells 6pm Choir 7pm	8	9 Parlor in Use 9-10am Tamil School 2-4pm
10 Connections Class 9:45	11 Bible Study with Sam 6:30pm	12 Young Adults Group (Books & Brews 7pm) Music Team 6:45pm	13 Lenten Class 6:15 Worship 7:00	14 Women & Word 9:30am Handbells 6pm Choir 7pm	15 Movie Night (Keystone Arts Cinema) 6:30pm	16 Parlor in Use 9-10am Tamil School 2-4pm
17 Connections Class 9:45 Youth Group	18 Bible Study with Sam 6:30pm Finance & Ops 6:30pm	19 Newsletter Articles Due Music Team 6:45pm	20 Lenten Class 6:15 Worship 7:00 Missions Team Meting 6pm	21 Men's Break- fast 8am Women & the Word 9:30am Handbells 6pm Choir 7pm	22	23 Parlor in Use 9-10am Tamil School 2-4pm
24 Connections Class 9:45am Installation Service 1-5pm Family Prom- ise ----- 31 FP Brunch Hour	25 FP Bible Study with Sam 6:30pm	26 FP Governance 6:30pm	27 FP Lenten Class 6:15 Worship 7:00	28 FP Women & the Word 9:30am Tech Team 7-8	29 FP Preschool Spring Break	30 FP Parlor in Use 9-10am

## From Your Clergy Team

Lori Bievenour  
Becca Lockwood  
Sam Locke

lori@stpeterscarmel.org  
becca@stpeterscarmel.org  
ministryintern@stpeterscarmel.org

317-846-6882 x222  
317-846-6882 x223

---

### From Lori

A few weeks ago, I preached about my retreat in North Carolina, where I found a shell that felt like a Worry Stone to me. I held it and rubbed it and was transported back to many times with my grandmother (one of many spiritual guides in my life and the person who introduced me to worry stones). And then I heard a voice, "It's not a Worry Stone. It's a Possibility Shell." I snickered to myself. Really? Did I just hear that? Absolutely. I was taken aback, humbled, and deeply grateful for that moment. The ocean was to one side of me. A sea of broken shells was underneath my feet. On my other side was the beautiful landscape of the Carolina Coast – marshlands and beautiful grasses mixed with white sands. I loved that moment and that voice, and they set me on a path to return home even more passionate about life as a parish minister.

On that Sunday, following worship, our child asked me if she could hold the shell. She knew exactly what to do with it, and she knew it was the Possibility Shell. She smiled and ran off... and then I heard her running back down the hallway of the church shouting, "It broke, Mommy! It broke!" And it had. She had dropped the shell in the front entryway of the church, and it broke into four pieces. One piece was lost forever. Three were in her tiny hands. In the moment, I was mad at myself for giving up "my" shell. I was sad to see its rough edges. I wondered if it could be glued back together, but most of all, I was calm in a way that surprised even me. A few people were present, and I could tell they were worried about me. They knew how much I liked that shell.

Well, the broken Possibility Shell has been on my desk for a few weeks, and here's what I've learned: it's still a great symbol for me and for St. Peter's – perhaps even better now that it's broken. Why? Because I do not hold all of the possibilities. The dreams of this congregation are held by all of us – some here, some there, a few tightly, a few loosely. Our dreams are not in the hands of our pastors but in the heart of God, made possible by the hands of ALL of us. I'm comforted by that... and I see that our dreams are already becoming realities! Here's how:

- v That same Sunday, I preached about us getting real about gender-inclusive bathrooms. The next day, I had three emails about that issue specifically. A day later, I received the first donation of money to start the project. And following that, one among us drew architectural plans for a re-modeled set of gender-inclusive, accessible, and family-friendly bathrooms. Just two weeks later, Governance Council has formed a team to delve into this possibility, and we are taking steps towards really living our Covenant of Welcome. Fantastic.
- v In a few weeks, I will be out of the office for continuing education for an entire week. I will be taking the Lake Institute's course for an Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising. It's going to be intense, and it couldn't come at a better time. Our Generosity Team is mailing letters this month to move us into a season of transparency and even more generous giving that reflects our values and mission as a congregation. Possibilities abound.
- v And then there's Lent. It comes every year, and yet, it usually sneaks up on me. This year, however, I crave it. I am ready to push a reset button. I'm ready to delve into the word of God through scripture and conversation. I am ready to journey with Jesus to the cross and beyond. I don't have words for all of these feelings yet, but I'm excited about what lies ahead, even though I don't know what it is exactly. I guess that's faith.

## From Your Clergy Team

Lori Bievenour  
Becca Lockwood  
Sam Locke

lori@stpeterscarmel.org  
becca@stpeterscarmel.org  
ministryintern@stpeterscarmel.org

317-846-6882 x222  
317-846-6882 x223

And so, here's the current status of my Possibility Shell. It's taken me a few weeks to be ok with this, but now I really love it, particularly because of its brokenness. What has surprised you lately? How is God grabbing your attention? How will your faith cause you to live differently in the days ahead? However you answer these questions, know that you are not alone... and seek each other and us out. We are eager to explore questions and adventures of faith with you and this beloved, changing, and inspiring community of God's people! - Lori



### From Becca

This past fall I planted some bulbs into the ground before first real frost, as directed on the package. While I love the outdoors and being outside as much as possible, I have little to not cultivated or inherited skills when it comes to gardening. But I really like flowers. I like that they make me smile every time I see them, so I thought, what the heck, I'll try planting some. How hard can it be, right? I'm pretty good at following directions. So, I put the bulbs in the ground, facing the correct direction, and put the suggested amount of soil/dirt on top of it and hoped for the best. Several months of mostly winter, and some very spring-like days, and--green things are popping out of the ground! This might seem painfully trivial/ridiculous to some seasoned gardeners, but for this newbie, signs of growth is very exciting.

I wish faith and ministry and life worked like this too. Follow simple instructions and boom, results. And some days it does feel like that, but most days it feels like standing over the soil and wondering if there's magic happening beneath the surface. Sometimes I wonder too, if we are the one watching, or if we are the seed breaking open. Or perhaps we are the soil, gently nurturing, comforting, and protecting the new growth about to emerge.

Where do you see yourself, this moment of your life, in this image? Where do you see God? As the season of Lent approaches, we are invited to journey with Jesus, to work and grow, and trust the process of rebirth. Here's some inspiration for our journey together:





# Education Team

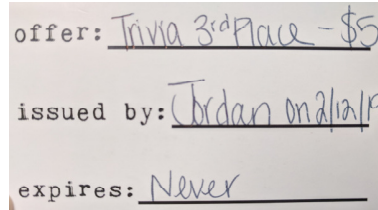
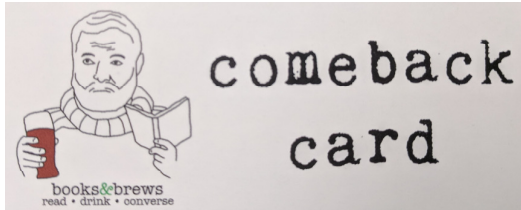
Team Leader: Stacy McIntyre

educationlead@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Young Adults Group: BB&T (Books, Brews, and Theology)

We did it! We won! Third place. :D Every second Tuesday of the month we continue to improve our Trivia skills and this month it paid off! We had a great team, with some excellent trivia skills and a lot of laughter. Come join us on March 12th for fellowship and trivia at Books & Brews in Carmel at 7:00pm!



## Easter Egg Hunt: Save the Date!

April 21st join the Education Team in our annual Easter Egg Hunt! We will hide eggs outside (weather permitting) as a way to have some fun and reflect on the search for new life in the Easter season. We will be accepting donations for prizes for finding eggs. We LOVE stickers, small things, candy with NO peanuts. (Can you double check this article from last year about donations?)

## Youth Group

It's hard to believe we only have three months left in our program year! We are excited to continue some deep conversations. In March we will be talking about faith and racism. How does our faith ask us to reflect on systemic racism? How are we a part of the system or oppressed by it? What can we do? In April and May we will talk about our faith and the environment and faith and the Bible.

We create safe space for challenging conversations, in part, by making sure we also have time to just be ourselves and have some fun together. In the coming months we will also be having a movie matinee, a Lock-in or an outing, and a scavenger hunt!

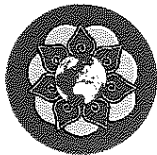
One of the foundational parts of our gathering is sharing a meal together, just as Jesus did with his disciples. If you feel moved by this ministry and wish to participate, we are always happy to receive volunteers for cooking or bringing lunch. Please be in touch with Becca at [becca@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:becca@stpeterscarmel.org) if interested.

## Palm Sunday Worship

In December we had our annual Advent/Christmas pageant. We told the story through different perspectives and experienced the familiar story in a new way. This year the Education Team has decided to do something similar for worship on Palm Sunday. We will tell the story of Jesus entering Jerusalem and facing the last week of his life from the perspective of multiple voices. If you are a youth of any age and would like to participate in this worship experience, please email Becca at [becca@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:becca@stpeterscarmel.org)

## Confirmation!

All 7th-12th graders are invited to participate in our Confirmation process. If you are interested in this journey, please email Becca at [becca@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:becca@stpeterscarmel.org).



**EXODUS  
REFUGEE**  
IMMIGRATION INC

**Exodus Refugee Immigration, Inc.**

2457 Washington St. Suite A

Indianapolis, Indiana 46201

317-921-0836 · Fax 317-204-2715

An affiliate of:



Church World  
Service

in participation with:

American Baptist  
Churches USA

Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)

Christian Reformed  
Church in North America

The Episcopal Church

Presbyterian  
Church  
(USA)

Reformed Church  
in America

United Church of Christ

United Methodist Church

February 14, 2019

Pastor Lori Bievenour  
St. Peter's UCC  
3106 E. Carmel Drive  
Carmel, IN 46033

Dear Pastor Bievenour,

I am writing to thank you for your gift of \$1,120 made on 1/30/2019. The Board of Directors and staff of Exodus are grateful for the generosity of faith organizations like yours.

Refugees come to Indianapolis from many different countries, cultures, and experiences. They arrive in our city with few possessions, but with hope and eagerness to work hard, rebuild their lives in safety and freedom, and achieve self-sufficiency. Your donation enables us to continue our mission to serve and empower refugees here in Indianapolis. We could not do it without you.

Presidential Executive Orders and policy shifts have drastically altered the refugee resettlement network in recent years. From Exodus' record high of 947 refugees in 2016, we received just 251 new arrivals last program year. At a time when there are 25.4 million refugees globally, and an additional 40 million internally displaced people, we can and must do more to support the world's most vulnerable.

Regardless of national policy shifts, Exodus remains committed to our work and our mission. Many of our services, such as English classes, mental health services, employment assistance, and medical case management continue to be vital to the refugee community in Indianapolis. We will continue to serve the many refugees we have already helped establish new lives in Indiana, as well as any and all future refugees to come.

Thank you for standing with us and with refugees.

You may use this written acknowledgement of your donation for your tax records. Exodus is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, and our Federal ID is 35-1900090. No goods or services were provided in exchange for this gift.

Sincerely,

Cole Varga  
Executive Director

*Thank you for your  
kind gift to refugees  
in Indy!*

# Missions Team

Team Leader: Sean Henseleit

missionslead@stpeterscarmel.org

## Bystander and Cop Watch Trainings Offered

Elise Whitaker will be leading Bystander Training in February and Cop Watch Training in March at St Peter's. These trainings will be open to the congregation and to the public. Elise Whitaker (they/them) is a scholar, an organizer, and an activist. After cutting their teeth in Los Angeles' Occupy Wall Street actions, Elise went on to co-found an organization called 99Rise aiming to end the corrupting influence of money on the American democracy. Having spent a number of years training in many narrative based, decentralized organizing structures and focusing in particular on issues around money in politics, the movement for black lives, and immigrant rights, Elise is now a full time student and researcher on public policy issues around environmental and racial justice. Both of these trainings were developed by the People's Response Team in Chicago; Elise was trained by American Friends Service Committee.

**Bystander Intervention Training – February 28, 6:30-9:00p.m and March 2, 10:00a.m.-12:30p.m.** this training focuses on ways to intervene in instances of racist, anti-Immigrant, anti-Black, anti-Muslim, anti-Trans, and other forms of oppressive interpersonal violence and harassment while considering the safety of all parties. Participants will participate in discussions and role plays to practice intervention techniques. No one is an expert on bystander intervention, as different situations and different individual risk factors will influence how each person will intervene; this training will seek to provide a basic framework and resources for the uninitiated and to hold space for people to share their own skills and experiences in a safe and affirming environment.

**Cop Watch Training – March 28, 6:30-9:00p.m and March 30, 10:00a.m.-12:30p.m.** The goal of this workshop is to quickly train the average person in basic cop-watching laws, methods, and safety considerations, and to promote cop watching as a method of bystander intervention. This training will utilize historical context, group discussions, role playing, and legal information, including tips on how participants might seek to learn more about local laws in their home cities. Questions? Contact Elise Whitaker at 317.946.8641.

## Carmel UMC Food Pantry Donations for March

Spring Cleaning! In the month of March, we will be collecting donations of cleaning supplies. Toilet bowl cleaner, window cleaner, multi-purpose cleaner, dish soap, sponges, scrubbers. Anything you need for spring cleaning is appreciated! As always, we will also collect the "luxury" items like hair conditioner, lotion, and feminine hygiene products.

## New Donation Area!

Special thanks to our Building and Grounds Team for the new wire shelving at the end of the coat rack in the hallway by the church offices. This area is intended as a space to collect donated items throughout the year - for the food pantry, Damian Center, and other Missions designated collections. Please don't use these shelves for storage as items placed on the shelves will end up being donated to the various missions we support!



# Missions Team

Team Leader: Sean Henseleit

missionslead@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Family Promise (FP) Hosting March 24<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>

FP is a not-for-profit organization that helps FAMILIES experiencing homelessness. FP runs two rotations, 14 people each, each week throughout the year. During the day their home base is the FP Day Center. While there, adults get help finding permanent housing, searching for jobs (if they are not already employed) & navigating additional services that are available to them. School age children head off to school/camp from the Day Center. In the evenings, each rotation of guests is welcomed at one of the many congregations in the FP network. St Peter's is one of those congregations. St Peter's typically hosts FP guests four weeks throughout the year. This is where **YOU** come in.

FP provides an opportunity to use your heart and hands to truly make a difference in the lives of people going through an unimaginably difficult time in their lives. You ask...how can **I** help? Let's count the ways!

**During our week of hosting, the following opportunities are available to support this St Peter's ministry & share compassion with our neighbors in need:**

- **14 times to drive our guests. (FP van provided)**
- **14 meals to host (14 breakfasts, 14 dinners)**
- **14 evening hosts (2 each evening)**
- **14 overnight hosts (2 each evening, wonderful St Peter's parlor accommodations included)**
- **Set up of guest rooms on March 24<sup>th</sup> (after the second service)**
- **Tear down of guest rooms on March 31<sup>st</sup> (6:45a.m.)**
- **Laundry**

Come by the FP table, in fellowship hall, starting Feb 24<sup>th</sup> .(online sign up will be available at that time, also)to see how you can put your faith into action, to help our neighbors in need. New to FP...we will happily partner you with a veteran volunteer. Please consider this opportunity to risk, act & connect in a new way!

# Music Team

Team Leader: Heather Kane  
Music Director : Cheryl Keckler

musicministrylead@stpeterscarmel.org  
musicdirector@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Singing the National Anthem

St. Peter's Choir has been invited to sing with Central Christian (Disciples of Christ) the National Anthem at the **Indians baseball game on Sunday, July 7 at 1:35 p.m.** Reminder – July 7 is a one-service 10:00 a.m. Sunday. We will be singing a 4-part harmony arrangement of the National Anthem. If you would like to join us, please let Cheryl know, [musicdirector@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:musicdirector@stpeterscarmel.org) or 317-213-1871.

## Indians Baseball Game

Come hear us sing at the Indians game on **Sunday, July 7 at 1:35 p.m.** **St. Peter's will have a block of seats for the game.** All congregants and their friends are invited to join us for an afternoon at the ball park. The cost of tickets will be \$14. Sign-up sheet with more information

## Carol Choir Singing

Palm Sunday, April 14, is the date for singing. **Rehearsals will begin on Sunday, March 10, from 9:45-10:15 in the Music Room.** Carol Choir is for children and youth Grade 2 and older. Come join in the fun of singing and leading worship.



# Music Team

Team Leader: Heather Kane  
Music Director : Cheryl Keckler

musicministrylead@stpeterscarmel.org  
musicdirector@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Making Music Together

You can join a choir and participate in the music-making. We'd love to have new members in the choirs – Chancel and Handbell. Treat yourself – remember, making music is good for your health, your stress level, and the community!

Rehearsals are on Thursdays.

**Handbells** from 6:00-7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

**Chancel Choir** from 7:00-8:30 p.m. in the Music Room

***Please share comments regarding our music program with any team member:*** Heather Kane, Don Kaufman, Sarah Scholl, Jim Vandivier; Addie Yoder, organist; or Cheryl Keckler, Music Director.



## Formative Congregations Grant Opportunity

Throughout 2018, Lori participated with the Center for Congregations in an experiment they called “Formative Congregations.” There were 10 pastors who were invited to this experience, and the congregations were each given a \$3K learning stipend.

**The Center for Congregations was so pleased with the results of our experiments that, for the first time ever, they are inviting 8 congregations to continue this work and apply for up to a \$30K grant. St. Peter’s Governance Council was delighted to begin this journey.**

Diane Carr and Jill Olinger will attend sessions with Lori Bievenour at The Center for Congregations to explore the idea of formative congregations even further; our grant proposal will be due in May 2019. (Note: \$10K could be granted without matching dollars. The additional \$20K would require a congregational match. We are *not* required to apply for the full amount. We are certain that by attending the sessions and continuing our exploratory work in January – May, we will craft a strong proposal, no matter the amount that we land upon!)

*“How might our congregation provide experiences that enhance the life of our adherents? The goal of a healthy, functioning congregation will not be the end. It will be the means to a greater end: a congregation that helps its members increase their capacity to live in the deepest and best commitments of faith in everyday life. The goal of the program is not to focus on congregational redevelopment or the organizational structure of the congregation. Nor is the focus on community engagement though there may be elements of these in the project. The focus is on the lives of the people in the congregation.”* Governance Council will continue to update you on the progress of this opportunity. For now, will you pray for the experience and continue to trust the Spirit as she reveals a way forward for our congregation with this grant opportunity?

# Spiritual Life Team

Team Leader: Chrissy Searcy

spirituallifelead@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Lent 2019: The Prayer of St. Francis

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.*

*O divine Master, grant that I may not so  
much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eter-  
nal life.  
Amen.*

This year, we will engage the prayer of St. Francis as individuals and in community in various ways throughout the Lenten season. This prayer offers many ways to explore and deepen your faith, to connect with others, and to nurture justice, peace, and love in the world. The prayer will be at the core of our Sunday worship during Lent, but please also consider joining us for the following:

### Wednesday Night Class during Lent

**6:15p.m. on March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17**

Before worship every Wednesday in Lent, we invite you to stay for 45 minutes to go deeper with the Prayer of St. Francis. A study guide will be available for those who gather. We expect the Spirit to lead... there will be questions, conversation, opportunities for reflection, additional resources, and more. Most of all, this will be a time to be with others from St. Peter's who want to go a little deeper this Lenten Season.

### Wednesday Lenten Worship Services

**7p.m. on March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17**

Do you sometimes crave a space for prayer? Or some more spiritual practices? Or perhaps a more contemplative worship service? For the season of Lent, Becca will be leading a contemplative worship service on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm. Worship will be designed to be soft and provoking, pensive and engaging. We will sing and/or listen to music. We will pray and engage in a spiritual practice. We will celebrate Communion. Our spiritual practice will center on the the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. And worship will be under an hour. Note: If you play an instrument and would like to be a part of this worship experience, please email Becca at [becca@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:becca@stpeterscarmel.org)

### Calling All Artists and Collectors!

At the Women's Retreat, Pastor Lori shared her love for trees and that they are strong, calm, and vulnerable. To celebrate spring, April's art display theme will be "Strong, Calm and Vulnerable". We are collecting artwork of trees AND/OR art that reflects one or more of the words strong, calm and vulnerable. Please contact Hedy Sutton [veritaslcs@gmail.com](mailto:veritaslcs@gmail.com) if you would like to contribute to our April art wall or if you have any questions.

# Spiritual Life Team

Team Leader: Chrissy Searcy

spirituallifelead@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Connections Group to Meet

A new Connections group began meeting on Sunday, February 24th. "Connections" is a place to learn more about St. Peter's: how it's organized, what it offers. For those who are ready to affirm participation with St. Peter's officially, it's a way of getting oriented to the workings of our congregation and, especially, for learning where and how you might want to get engaged. For others who are considering affirming participation, it's an opportunity to ask questions and discern in community if this is the right place for you. Above all, it's a place to make friends, an experience to share where you are on your spiritual journey. Co-led by Liz Chandler, Kyle Kroehler and Jon Kroehler, the group meets at 9:45A.M. in the parlor for a total of four sessions. Subsequent meetings have been proposed for March 10th, 17th and 24th, but the group will confirm workable dates once together. Those who wish to formally affirm participation with St. Peter's will do so following the completion of these classes. You can sign up in Fellowship Hall or by contacting the office at [office@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:office@stpeterscarmel.org). Questions can be directed to Kyle Kroehler at [Kyle@Kroehlers.com](mailto:Kyle@Kroehlers.com).

## If there is a loving God, why do we suffer?

People of faith have been answering this questions for literally thousands of years - the Book of Job, one of the wisdom texts in the Hebrew bible is one of the only places in the Bible that takes on the question head-on. Beyond the Bible, the Book of Job is often found on lists of the best literary works of all time.

Join with Ministry Intern Sam Locke for a four week study of the text and a read-through of the play JB: A Play in Verse, a "modern" retelling of the story that one the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award for Best Play in 1959.

After this 5 week series, interested individuals (that were or weren't part of the Bible study) will discuss possible dramatic interpretations (or even a more modern retelling) to be performed at Saint Peters!

- March 4 - Job 1-2 - General Bible Study / Discussion
- March 11 - Job 3-11 - General Bible Study / Discussion
- March 18 - Job 12-27 - General Bible Study / Discussion
- March 25 - Job 28-42 - General Bible Study / Discussion
- TBD - JB A Play in Verse - Read as a group

## Brown County Spirituality Retreat

April 26-27

This annual retreat offers a wonderful opportunity to delve deeper into your authentic self and your connection with God and others, in a beautiful Brown County setting. All are welcome. The retreat is held at Waycross Conference & Retreat Center and runs from 5:00p.m. on Friday to approximately 3:00p.m. on Saturday. Dinner, breakfast and lunch are provided. The cost is \$100 per person for a double room or \$130 for single room. Won't you consider joining us this year? Please sign up now in Fellowship Hall. Contact Chrissy Searcy at [spirituallifelead@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:spirituallifelead@stpeterscarmel.org) for additional information.

## Governance Council (Cont.)

**President:** Tim Tomlinson

**Vice President:** Jennifer Atkinson

**Secretary:** Dennis Heavin

**Generosity Team Leader:** Seth Kreigh

**Treasurer:** Diane Carr

**Treasurer Elect:**

[president@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:president@stpeterscarmel.org)

[vicepresident@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:vicepresident@stpeterscarmel.org)

[secretary@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:secretary@stpeterscarmel.org)

[generositylead@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:generositylead@stpeterscarmel.org)

[treasurer@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:treasurer@stpeterscarmel.org)

temporarily filled by Nan Bucksten

---

## Bathroom Conversations Begin

As Governance Council met on February 19th, we began to have exciting conversations about possibilities for a bathroom remodel of our front bathrooms. (The ones located across from the coat rack). For the past several months, during the Wednesday night study of Be the Church 2.0, and individual conversations, dreams for gender neutral bathrooms here at St. Peter's have emerged.

The desire from each conversation and encounter has been to live out our Covenant of Welcome to the best of our ability, which entails everyone feeling welcome and safe when we walk through the doors, and for our gender non-conforming, gender neutral, non-binary, transgender siblings, our bathrooms could be a barrier to that full welcome and embrace.

Moving forward:

- Craig Penquite, Rick Searcy, and Seth Kreigh have agreed to lead this endeavour with enthusiasm and care.
- They will put together rough proposals and bids for Governance Council to bring to the congregation, hopefully for our Congregational Meeting on June 9th 2019.
- We are always learning how to be better allies. One step in that direction as we engage this process has been reading the article, "Peeing in Peace." If you are interested in reading along, the article can be found here:

<https://transgenderlawcenter.org/resources/public-accommodations/peeing-in-peace>

If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Governance Council at [president@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:president@stpeterscarmel.org) or [vicepresident@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:vicepresident@stpeterscarmel.org)

## Preschool Team

**Team Leader:** Tammy Drummond

[preschoolteam@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:preschoolteam@stpeterscarmel.org)

---

## Preschool News

The preschool still has openings in the 2 and 3 year old programs for the 2019-20 school year. The preschool is also looking for a lead teacher as well as an assistant in the two year old program.

The next fundraiser is Thursday, April 11th from 5-8 pm at Blaze pizza. St Peter's Preschool will receive 20% of sales when guests present the flyer. You can show either a hard copy or digital copy of flyer to get credit for the fundraiser. Thank you for supporting St Peter's Preschool!





# Community Connections

Laurie Hesselink, Church Administrator

office@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Congregation Shaarey Tefilla

Interfaith Seder

Monday, April 1 at 6:30p.m.

A symbolic representation of the Passover Seder with food tasting, readings, and songs for the entire family to enjoy.

St. Peter's, let's show up. Let's show up and support our neighbors, offer love, and Be the Church. As more information comes available for the Interfaith Seder, we will share that.

## Sacred Places: Intersections of Religion and Ecology

The Butler University Center for Faith and Vocation invites you to the last event in a four-part series of free and public lectures that are part of the Butler Seminar on Religion and Global Affairs. The theme is "**Sacred Places: Intersections of Religion and Ecology.**" Basic details are below; more information is at [www.butler.edu/cfv](http://www.butler.edu/cfv). This month's offering is:

### Greening Indiana: Theologies and Ethics of Sustainability

Monday, March 4, 2019 - 7:00 p.m. in the Schrott Center for the Arts

## Spiritual Writers' Conference

March 13-14

Get inspired! On March 13-14, Christian Theological Seminary will host the inaugural "Writing for Your Life" conference at St. Luke's United Methodist Church for all who are interested in faith, spirituality, and the craft of writing. The conference will feature keynote addresses by notable writers Barbara Brown Taylor and John Pavlovitz and breakout sessions led by experienced writers and experts in the publishing world. Register at [www.cts.edu/writingfaith](http://www.cts.edu/writingfaith). Early-bird tuition (through February 15) for the main conference is \$299 and includes all General Sessions and Breakout Seminars, refreshments, one-on-one meetings, and an open-mic session. Regular price registration is \$329 (February 16 and thereafter).

## Honoring Phil Gulley and the Power of Progressive Spiritual Writing

March 12 at 7p.m.

Join Christian Theological Seminary to honor Phil Gulley and the power of progressive spiritual writing on March 12 at 7:00 PM at St. Luke's United Methodist Church. Gulley, longtime Quaker pastor and Indiana native, is the author of numerous books including the "Harmony" series of novels, *Front Porch Tales*, *If the Church Were Christian*, *The Evolution of Faith*, and, *Unlearning God: How Unbelieving Helped Me Believe*. The evening will include a talk by Dan Wakefield, fellow Hoosier and celebrated author of *Going All the Way*, *Starting Over*, *Returning: A Spiritual Journey*, and more. Cost is \$25 (free to all students), and all proceeds will go toward an Indianapolis-based literary project.

## Installation Service

The Indiana-Kentucky Conference invites you to the Installation of Rev. Dr. Monica Ouellette to the office of Associate Conference Minister for Search, Call and Congregational Transitions on Sunday, March 24 at 3:00p.m. Here at St. Peter's UCC. Reception to follow.

# Hospitality Team

Team Leader: Cindy Whitaker

[hospitalitylead@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:hospitalitylead@stpeterscarmel.org)

---

## Shrove Brunch

You are invited to join us on Sunday, March 3, between services for a pancake breakfast. Our annual Shrove Brunch is the perfect way to start the Lenten season. We will have pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee. All are welcome for this event of food and friendship. Questions? Please contact Cindy Whitaker at [hospitalitylead@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:hospitalitylead@stpeterscarmel.org).

## Brunch Hour

Our quarterly Brunch Hour is happening on Sunday, March 31st between services. The Hospitality Team will provide a main dish, please bring a dish to share. You won't want to miss this opportunity for breakfast and fellowship!

## A Message From Your Hospitality Team Leader

I want to take a minute and thank so many of you for the myriad of ways you have supported the Hospitality Team over the last four years: first and foremost my teammates, Ann-Marie Rohe and Sarah Hardin, for so often planning and organizing behind the scenes and also for pitching in and always being willing to help with dishes, and then to so many of you who have hosted Fellowship Hour, Greeted, planned Game Nights, and supplied food for funerals. Each of those gifts of love are noticed and appreciated.

Many of you are aware I am stepping down as Team Leader – I am back working full time AND have a knee replacement scheduled for 4/22, so my plate remains overflowing....

As I reflect over the past 4 years as Team Leader, I am humbled and grateful to be where we are today.

- We have a beautiful new kitchen, TWO dishwashers, and donated dishes, saving over \$1,500 per year in paper goods.
- We have a full Greeter roster for every service through 6/30/19.
- Fellowship Hour between services is working well and we have formed a team who rotates hosting responsibilities – Gary Roe, Debby Dzeguze, and I are each willing to host once a month and Terbush's are willing to host every other month, so we have one spot for one volunteer who will commit to every other month and then the monthly rotating roster is filled!
- Gary Roe functions as our Funeral Care Coordinator and this is an extremely faithful congregation when it comes to loving each other through our losses – there is a standing group ready to feed mourners on little notice.

Mostly, I wanted to express my deep gratitude to be at a point where all is running smoothly and folks have found a niche where they are comfortable serving. I also want to make sure, as a new team leader is sought through the guidance of the Nominating Team, that I have shared how well everything is running. This is almost a turn-key position – you could choose to do much more than my team has accomplished of course, but please know what exists is well-staffed and running smoothly!

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to serve our community in this role, and so grateful to know as I am leaving that things are running smoothly; I can move fully into the next chapter of my journey knowing the transition for the new team leader will be a smooth one.

# Notes from the Church Office

Laurie Hesselink, Office Administrator

office@stpeterscarmel.org

---

## Office Hours & Staff Schedules

Office staffing is Monday thru Friday 8:30-2:30. Please do not hesitate to contact our pastors.

**Lori Bievenour, Senior Pastor**

lori@stpeterscarmel.org, 317.846.6882 x222 (Friday Sabbath/day off)

**Becca Lockwood, Associate Pastor for Missions & Education**

becca@stpeterscarmel.org, 317.846.6882, x223 (Friday Sabbath/day off)

**Laurie Hesselink, Office Administrator**

office@stpeterscarmel.org, 317-846-6882

## Newsletter Articles

Articles for the April newsletter should be sent to office@stpeterscarmel.org by March 21st.

## Pastoral Support Teams

St. Peter's Constitution requires support teams for both of our pastors. Carol Dobrotka leads the Senior Pastor Support Team, with team members Ryan Hand, Eddie Meyer, and Sue Nye. The Associate Pastor Support Team is led by Elizabeth Roe, and includes Jaesoo Kim, Nan Bucksten, and Eric Smith.

## Weekly Emails

Community prayers and announcements are emailed on Wednesday. Notify the church office if you would like to receive these communications.

## Altar Flower Donations

Sign up in Fellowship Hall or contact the church office to request floral arrangements for Sunday worship services. **(\$50 donation requested.)** Make checks payable to St. Peter's UCC, "altar flowers" in the memo line. When signing up in Fellowship Hall, please be sure to include your name. If you would prefer to not share your name with the congregation, please sign up by contacting the church office.

## Donating Stock or Mutual Fund Shares at St. Peter's

Thank you for generously supporting the mission of St. Peter's United Church of Christ! Donating stock or mutual fund shares to the church is a wonderful way to experience both the joy of giving AND significant tax advantages. The tax advantages may include:

- \* NO CAPITAL GAINS TAX payable either by you or by the church
- \* NO GIFT OR ESTATE TAX because SPUCC is a charitable organization
- \* AN INCOME TAX DEDUCTION based on the present value of the gift

You may find numerous examples of just how powerful this method of giving is by searching online for "donating appreciated stock tax benefits".

An important determination in deciding how to best gift your shares is whether they have increased or decreased in value. If your shares have increased in value they should be "donated" to the church, NOT "redeemed" or "sold" or "cashed-in". If your shares have decreased in value, it's better to sell the shares first and then give the proceeds to the church by personal or brokerage firm check so you may deduct the loss on your taxes.

St Peter's has an account with Merrill Lynch Wealth Management who will help facilitate you in the gifting process. For more information, including our Merrill Lynch account number (not provided here for security reasons), please contact Adam Scholl Financial Secretary (financialsecretary@stpeterscarmel.org), Jenny Terry Financial Secretary-Elect (financialsecretaryelect@stpeterscarmel.org), or Seth Kreigh, Generosity Team Leader (generositylead@stpeterscarmel.org).

THANK YOU for your interest in supporting St. Peter's in this way!

## **St. Peter's Staff**

**Lori Bievenour**

Senior Pastor

lori@stpeterscarmel.org

**Becca Lockwood**

Associate Pastor of Missions  
& Education

becca@stpeterscarmel.org

**Sam Locke**

Ministry Intern

ministryintern@stpeterscarmel.org

**Laurie Hesselink**

Office Administrator

office@stpeterscarmel.org

**Lori Jannsen**

Preschool Director

preschooldirector@stpeterscarmel.org

**Cheryl Keckler**

Director of Music

musicdirector@stpeterscarmel.org

**Adeline Yoder**

Organist

## **Mission Statement of St. Peter's United Church of Christ**

*St. Peter's is a welcoming community, sharing God's love  
with our world and finding the Spirit in Life.*

## **Covenant of Welcome**

**"Welcome"** to everybody who has faith or seeks it, who lives in hope or who needs it.

**"Welcome"** to all who rejoice and are strong, or who mourn and are weary.

**"Welcome"** to those who know Christ, and to those who long for an introduction.

We believe God's grace is extended to all. To anyone who has felt unwelcome or has experienced rejection elsewhere, we say, "All are welcome here."

We acknowledge our diversities and we welcome, respect and support people of every race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, age, gender, marital status and physical and mental ability. We are a community where all are equal, all are loved and all are respected for who and what they are, and what they can become.

We acknowledge that our fears and ignorance sometimes hinder us. We challenge one another to follow the teachings of Jesus, who denied no one and welcomed all. We strive to live our faith by supporting inclusive eness and justice for all humanity, and we invite all who gather here to participate in our ministries of service, word and sacrament.

### **St. Peter's United Church of Christ**

3106 E Carmel Drive  
Carmel, Indiana 46033

Phone: 317-846-6882

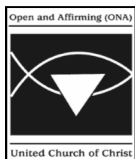
Fax: 317-844-0984

Preschool: 317-846-6860

<http://www.stpeterscarmel.org>

E-mail: [office@stpeterscarmel.org](mailto:office@stpeterscarmel.org)

#carmelucc #findingspirit



**TO:**

