



Finding the Spirit in Life

#findingspirit

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#carmelucc

The Epistle - December 2019

Holiday Worship Schedule



Advent Sundays 8:30 & 11:00

Dec. 1 Hope & Christmas Pageant

Dec. 8 Peace

Dec. 15 Joy

Dec. 22 Love *One Service at 10:00am

Blue Christmas service

Dec. 11 at 7:00pm

CHRISTMAS EVE 4:00, 6:30, & 11:00 p.m.

Candlelight & Communion

Farewell to Sam Locke, Ministry Intern

Dec. 29 come wish Sam farewell. One Service at 10:00am, brunch to follow.

Ways to Engage the Season:

- * Giving Tree (pg. 8)
- * Christmas Caroling Dec. 8 (pg. 10)
- * Rural Health Party-Dec. 8 (pg. 8)
- * Christmas in Cincinnati Dec. 13-15 (pg. 9)

Poinsettias for Christmas Eve

If you would like to donate a poinsettia for the holiday season please feel free to bring in your plant(s) anytime after December 16 and before Christmas Eve services. If you would like to donate in memory or in honor of a loved one there is a sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall, or email Laurie Hesselink at office@stpeterscarmel.org.



December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 Worship 8:30 Fellowship Hour 9:45 Worship 11:00</p> <p>Youth Group 12:30-2:00</p>	2	3	4	<p>5 Women &Word 9:30- 11:30 Staff & Wor- ship Staff 1:30 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7-8:30</p>	6	<p>7 Parlor in Use 9-10a.m.</p> <p>Tamil School 2-4p.m.</p>
<p>8 Worship 8:30 Fellowship Hour 9:45a.m. Worship 11:00 Christmas Car- oling 12:30 Rural Health 2:00-4:30</p>	9	<p>10 Music Team Meeting 6:45</p> <p>Young Adult Group 7p.m.</p>	<p>11 Blue Christ- mas Worship Service 7:00</p>	<p>12 Women &Word 9:30- 11:30 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7-8:30 Ministry Coun- cil 7:00-8:30</p>	<p>13 Christmas in Cincinnati</p>	<p>14 Parlor in Use 9-10a.m.</p> <p>Tamil School 2-4p.m.</p> <p>Christmas in Cincinnati</p>
<p>15 Worship 8:30 Fellowship Hour 9:45a.m. Worship 11:00</p> <p>Christmas in Cincinnati</p>	<p>16 Finance & Ops 6:30 Waterford HOA 6:00- 9:00 Sanctu- ary</p>	<p>17 Governance Council 6:30</p>	<p>18 Preschool Songfest 12:15-1:15</p>	<p>19 Men's Breakfast 8:00 Women &Word 9:30- 11:30 Preschool Songfest 12:15 Handbells 6-7 Choir 7-8:30</p>	<p>20 Movie Night</p>	<p>21 Parlor in Use 9-10a.m.</p>
<p>22 Combined Worship 10:00 Fellowship Hour</p>	23	<p>24 Christmas Eve Candle lite Service 4:00 6:30 11:00</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day</p>	26	<p>27 Youth Group Lock-in 5:00p.m.</p>	<p>28 Youth Group Lock-in 8:30a.m. Parlor in Use 9-10a.m.</p>
<p>29 Combined Worship 10:00 Farewell to Sam Locke</p>	30	31				

From Your Clergy Team

Lori Bievenour
Becca Lockwood
Sam Locke

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317-846-6882 x222
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From Becca

Over the last three months many have asked if I've been counting down the days until the sabbatical season came to a close. I always had a little hesitancy when answering this, for a few reasons. 1. I wasn't actually always keeping track, (at least not until the last two weeks). 2. I didn't want to rush this time. It's been holy and sacred in so many ways. 3. I didn't want to feel like I was rushing Lori's time to rejuvenate. Three months both seems like a long time and not long enough.

And now here we are: just as I feel like I've finally settled into a rhythm and gotten used to Lori being away, she's back! It's amazing how quickly this time passed. There were times in the middle that felt a little slower, but in general, I truly can't believe three months have passed. This time has been so intimate and holy, and that is because of all of you. I believe that taking this time to share our stories with one another has created a closeness. A closeness that perhaps we didn't fully realize we needed, but a closeness for which I think we are all grateful. As one of our storytellers named, they didn't necessarily know or identify with everyone else in the congregation, but hearing the stories and hearing similar themes of life, love, loss, and brokenness helped them (and I think the rest of us) realize that there is a lot that connects us to each other.

Even though in many ways we are all quite different from each other, seeing ourselves in each other has brought us closer together. If I could put a name to this season, I would call it grace. It feels like we have given each other more and more grace to simply be, to make mistakes, to learn and to grow. The Spirit has nourished us in ways that we needed and didn't quite know how to ask for. We're poised, closely knit and roots growing ever deeper, to be the thriving congregation of St. Peter's. We're poised for challenging conversations and deeper listening. Alongside our storytelling, we held four Focus Groups where nearly 50 people shared in conversation about St. Peter's. (see page 5 for more details). And now we are preparing for more and continued conversation as a congregation. (see page 5).

I am hopeful for what lies ahead for this congregation. It is clear that the Spirit is moving among us, and we are listening and ready to respond.

I also want to say a deep and heart-felt thank you to all of you. While these three months have flown by, they have been full, exhausting, life-giving, and ministry affirming. I'm blessed and grateful to serve you. You have made these three months wonderful and I can't wait to see what lies ahead.

Color your way



into the season!

From Sam

I've started to write this several times and stopped because I don't like thinking about not being with you all anymore but, as they say, all good things must come to an end. Two and a half years have moved along quickly. I leave full of gratitude at the welcome you've given Molly, Spencer, and me during my time at St. Peter's. I leave equipped to be a better pastor, a bit overwhelmed at the possibilities in front of me, and with admiration for what having a church with a mission like ours means to the community.

About a year after I started at St. Peter's, I was with a gathering of friends and someone asked the kids at the event what their parents did for work, curious what they might say. When it was my kids' turn I was caught off-guard. I didn't know what they would say. Being a marketer or fundraiser isn't as easy to comprehend as many professions. I thought they would say "he talks on the phone a lot" or something like that. I was shocked at Molly's response: "My Dad is a pastor." No one had ever said that. What a feeling to realize that others - in this case my daughter, recognized an identity you'd hadn't fully embraced yourself. She saw me become a pastor. And that's all because of you and this amazing community of faith. With amazing teachers like Lori and Becca, I've been able to see myself in that role. In short, you've helped me find me and it will take a lifetime to fully express my gratitude.

I hope we've learned some things from each other. You've shown me what it means to be a Christian community that shows genuine love and care for one another and you've shown me how hard a church must work to live up to the standards it sets for itself and the standards God expects of us.

I hope, among other things, that I've helped illustrate the importance of engaging matters of faith in the public square and helped you see the power a church like St. Peter's has in helping members of the LGBTQ community heal from past religious trauma.

I look forward to cherishing our last few weeks together. Fittingly, at my favorite time of the year. I pray that our paths will cross in ministry together in the church at-large and I pray that St. Peter's continues to be a beacon of hope, peace, joy and love in a world that needs it more and more everyday. Thank you for being exactly what I needed as I step into a career of ministry.



Formative Congregations Grant

The Center for Congregations awarded us (and only a handful of other congregations) a Formative Congregations grant. The grant totals \$50,000, and all of that money must be used within our congregation. Our proposal was bold; there are many opportunities planned for St. Peter's over the course of the next year. We are excited to be offered this opportunity and are hopeful that you'll enjoy the many things that have been made possible by this grant!

December Prayer Station: Take What You Need

As we prepare for Christmas and eagerly anticipate all the season has to offer, we will come together in our prayers and creativity. For the month of December, we will pray with strips of cloth that we will then tie around a hanging Advent wreath. Together, we will add our prayers to the wreath, and each week we will watch the wreath grow. The Advent wreath is a reminder of the hope, peace, joy, and love God promises to birth into the world. Each week we will claim those promises and offer our prayers to God as we work together to make those promises a reality.

Lay Leadership: The Heart of Our Congregation Retreat on January 25

Did you know that the United Church of Christ (our denomination) practices congregational polity? This means that every local congregation is its own highest authority. Thus, it is the CONGREGATION that makes decisions for our church, not a national setting or other constituency. In our context, this means that we have a congregational meeting to vote on things like our budget and officers. Our LAY LEADERS do the work of our congregation, and these leaders are amazing.

Every year, our Leadership Team (members of the Governance, Finance & Operations, and Ministry Councils) gets together for a retreat prior to the kickoff of our program year. This year, we are doing things a little bit differently. Our Leadership Team will have a retreat on January 25 at ArtMix in Indianapolis (www.artmixindiana.org) with representatives from Fearless Dialogue (www.fearlessdialogues.com). There will be about 30 leaders gathered to enjoy a creative and spirit-filled experiences. Please pray for our leaders... and thank you!

One Service and Fearless Dialogues Congregational Experience on

Mark your calendars now for Sunday, March 15, 2020! Our Formative Congregations Grant is offering us a unique opportunity. We are bringing animators from Fearless Dialogues (www.fearlessdialogues.com) to our congregation for a special experience on Sunday, March 15, 2020. Worship will be different on that day. We are still working out the details, but for now, know that we will all be together, and we will be nurturing our faith in new ways on that morning. Our leadership will experience a version of Fearless Dialogues in January, and then a few weeks later, the opportunity will be offered to the entire congregation. We are VERY excited about this spirit-filled, creative, and challenging offering; please pray us through the development process and plan to attend!

Update on Fall Focus Groups for the Congregation

The fall season Focus Groups have been facilitated and we'd like to provide a short update. Thank you to everyone from the community who donated some of their time to come and share their perspectives. It was a wonderful opportunity to hear from many people about important questions related to St. Peter's. Four Focus Groups occurred, three on Sundays between services and one on a weekday evening. Overall, 46 members of the church participated, representing a wide range of experience and involvements.

- In round numbers, roughly a third of participants have been part of St. Peter's for 5 years or less, roughly a third have been active between 15-5 years, and roughly a third have been active longer than 15 years.
- The three key themes of the structured conversations were:
 - a. St. Peter's' identity and core values,
 - b. our impact beyond these walls in the wider community and world,
 - c. and how to reconcile our values and impact with the reality of limited resources.

We received a great deal of constructive input that was recorded by members of the Generosity Team in full. A report of major themes is being drafted and will be sent to Governance in the final week of November. Members of the Generosity Team and Staff Support are still reflecting on the wider learning we are seeing from the Focus Groups.

The report is not meant to represent any kind of final word or conclusion, but quite the opposite. We hope it is a starting point for further intentional discussion and listening. Naturally, the report will not capture every comment shared in the Focus Groups nor did we get a chance to hear all the ideas to be found in the community. To that end, we hope St. Peter's members will mark their calendars for January 5th, which will have the first of more regular Congregational Conversations, where the full community will gather for one service followed by the opportunity for the chance to break bread together for lunch and engage in further discussion, input, and sharing related to the work of the Generosity Team.

Thank you to those who shared guidance and assisted in this process and I share much appreciation for everyone who has shared their perspective in any way during this season of listening.

Congregational Conversations

In the many shared perspectives, ideas, and experiences; a desire to continue the conversation continued to surface. As Daniel named, it's clear that these Focus Groups were just the beginning of further conversation and reflection. An idea emerged from several of the Focus Groups and individuals to address this desire. Congregational Conversations: A setting and time like a Town Hall, but a little more informal, not time restricted, and involving food seemed wise. As was named above, the Congregational Conversations will be quarterly (every three-ish months) on a Sunday. On these Sundays we will have one service followed by the Congregational Conversation with a light lunch. During these conversations we will share further insights and ideas pertaining to the business of the church and the Generosity Team.

The hope behind these Congregational Conversations is that we'll have plenty of time for discussion, there will be time to digest and process information and conversation, and we know that the conversation will be able to continue at the next gathering.

We are hopeful that this will be one way in which to deepen and broaden our conversation as a community as our congregation continues to grow and evolve. Please join us at our first Congregational Conversation on January 5th. Combined worship will be held at 10:00am with the conversation and lunch to follow.

Governance Council

President: Tim Tomlinson

president@stpeterscarmel.org

Vice President: Jennifer Atkinson

vicepresident@stpeterscarmel.org

Secretary: Dennis Heavin

secretary@stpeterscarmel.org

Generosity Team Leader: Seth Kreigh

generositylead@stpeterscarmel.org

Treasurer: Diane Carr

treasurer@stpeterscarmel.org

Treasurer Elect: Cindy Whitaker

treasurerelect@stpeterscarmel.org

Notes from your Governance Council

Here is a sample of what we've been talking about in our monthly meetings

Stepping Up Our Visibility

St. Peter's is placing several advertisements in the community to raise our visibility

In December, St. Peter's will have new visibility in three ways:

- An advertisement in the Current Holiday Worship Guide
- An advertisement in the program for the Indianapolis Men's Chorus holiday concert
- Yard signs advertising our Christmas Eve services



The Current Holiday Worship Guide will be a special publication delivered to 128k+ households in Carmel, Westfield, Noblesville, and Fishers in mid-December.



The ad for the Indianapolis Men's Chorus program highlights one of our members, David Hoff. The concert is the weekend of December 20 and 21.

By the time you read this Epistle, the yard signs will be in place. Yes, we talked to Carmel Sign Ordinance people so we know the rules.

All three of these were paid by individual donors so there was no unplanned impact on our budget.

A boatload of thanks goes to Sarah Penquite & Rhonda Hughes for serving as a quick turnaround graphic designer!

Building & Grounds Team

Team Leader: Craig Penquite

buildinggroundslead@stpeterscarmel.org

Sanctuary Lights and Carpet Update

By the time you read this, the lights and the carpet projects in the Sanctuary should be complete. A crew moved the pews and replaced the existing lights in the Sanctuary with LED lights.

While the pews were pulled out, we had a couple of areas repaired and the carpet in the Sanctuary cleaned. **Thank you for all who helped.**



BEFORE



Building & Grounds Team

Team Leader: Craig Penquite

buildinggroundslead@stpeterscarmel.org

AFTER



Join the Buildings & Grounds Team

Please consider joining the Building & Grounds Team. Building & Grounds at St.Peters is a little unique compared to other “teams.” There are always projects and repairs to do that the more people involved, the more we can accomplish. If interested in a task at a time or on-going projects, the Building & Grounds Team needs your help. We don’t meet regularly but will use Realm to communicate the current items at hand. Many hands make light work, so please consider joining the Building & Grounds Team. Contact Craig Penquite (buildinggroundslead@stpeterscarmel.org) or Katy Palmer slead@stpeterscarmel.org if interested.

Hospitality Team

Team Leader: Julia Stolle

hospitalitylead@stpeterscarmel.org

The Halls are Decked: Thank you!

A huge thank you to everyone who stayed to decorate for the Advent and Christmas season! The tree is lit, the halls are decked, and the banners hung.

A special thank you to those who made chili allowing us to be fueled and fed for decoration.

A special thank you to Rachel Enlow, artist and creator of our stunning Advent banners. Over the last three months Rachel has come in a few hours a week to work on the banners, sketching, sewing, and finally putting dreams and designs into reality. She spent more than 40 hours creating these banners, which so beautifully help set the scene and tell the Christmas story. Thank you Rachel!



Fellowship Hour Host Opportunities

Can you bring snacks to serve approximately 25 people and stay to clean up before second service starts? If yes, you would make a great Fellowship Hour host! Julia Stolle is available to co-host with you if a co-host would be helpful to you. If you would prefer not to pay for the snacks yourself or don't have time to shop in advance, there are snacks to serve. Hosts are needed from 10:00 am to 11 am on these Sundays: January 12, January 19, January 26, February 2, February 9, February 23, March 1, March 8. Email Julia at hospitalitylead@stpeterscarmel.org

Are you interested in sharing your cooking or hosting skills? Hospitality Team needs your help! Email Julia at hospitalitylead@stpeterscarmel.org for more details

In Gratitude

Dear friends at St. Peters UCC,
Thank you for your support of Bethany Fellows! We are glad to be partners in ministry with you. Praying that your Advent and Christmas seasons are joyfue and sweet!

Peace,
Rev. Melanie Delaney
Co-director/Pastor
Bethany Fellows



St P's youth
you guys Rock! Thanks
so much for helping at the food
pantry last week. You all were
amazing with your great spirit
to help. Look forward to seeing
you again
many blessings
Kathie Gehler



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November 7, 2019

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
3106 E Carmel Dr
Carmel, IN 46033-4307

Dear Friends of St. Peter's United Church of Christ,

On behalf of our students, we thank you for supporting theological education and investing in the future leadership of the church and society. With your gift of \$748.83 to the Christian Theological Seminary Annual Fund, our students will be provided with the resources they need to fulfill their calling and make a lasting impact on the World.

CTS is an inspired and inspiring place. The brilliance of our faculty, the gifts and graces of our students, the dedication of our staff and trustees, and in and through it all, the loving-kindness and justice of God inspire us every day.

Your support allows us to continue to move in the direction that God is calling us, as we seek to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us. We rejoice in our partnership with you, giving thanks for your generous support.

Gratefully,

Kristin Champa, D.M.A.
Vice President for Seminary Advancement

Missions Team

Team Leader: Katie Lukes

missionslead@stpeterscarmel.org

Giving Tree

Our annual Giving Tree is up! Many have already taken tags from the tree, and many still remain. Join us in giving back to our community and partners in ministry. Each year we have different tags which support several of the ongoing ministries and relationships at St. Peter's. This year we will have tags for:

1. **Washington UCC in Cincinnati:** Each year we go down to set up and host Washington UCC's annual Christmas Gift shop where families from the community (the very families we work with in the summer) come and shop for toys and clothes for their kids at Christmas. Not only do we help set up and host, but we also bring many clothes and presents from our very own Giving Tree. Return gifts unwrapped by Friday, December 13th.
2. **Rural Health:** Gifts for the long-term residents of Rural Health. In addition to hosting a Christmas Party on December 8th from 2:00-4:30p.m. We bring each resident a gift! Please return gifts by December 8th.
3. **Family Promise** -\$25 gift cards to Kroger/Meijer and household items. Please return gifts by December 29th.
4. **Exodus:** As a way to welcome and support refugee families adjust and feel at home in a new country we will be collecting items such as: linens (towels and sheets) as well as diapers (sizes listed on tags). Return gifts by December 29th.

Special Collection: The Christmas Fund

Many retired pastors (and their beloved spouses) faithfully served UCC congregations but received low salaries. As a result, their pensions are also low, and the costs for their health insurance continue to rise. We offer our help to these dedicated church workers by contributing to The Christmas Fund, an annual offering coordinated by our UCC Pension Board, which provides a Christmas gift check and other supplementary financial assistance to these very faithful servants. St. Peter's will receive contributions to this fund throughout the month of December. Special offering envelopes are in the church pews. Make checks payable to St. Peter's but please earmark them for "The Christmas Fund." Your anticipated generosity will be much appreciated by the Mission Team and especially those retired pastors/ spouses who are helped!

Rural Health Christmas Party: December 8

On Sunday, December 8 from 2:00-4:30P.M., St. Peter's will host our annual Christmas Party at Rural Health. Every year we spend a couple of hours meeting and connecting with the residents at Rural Health. It is a beautiful opportunity to share some time and brighten someone's day. We often sing Christmas carols, do a Christmas craft, and eat lunch. Please join us for a time of fellowship and fun! Rural Health is a psychiatric nursing facility, and it is located at 1747 N Rural St, Indianapolis, IN 46218. For more information on how to be involved, please contact Bob Werner at bobwerner@yahoo.com or Katie Lukes at missionslead@stpeterscarmel.org

Carmel UMC Food Pantry Special Project

We continue to collect items for baking (flour, sugars, baking soda, spices, chocolate chips, peanut butter, marshmallows, etc) in December. We are also doing a special project! Please pull out your favorite holiday or family recipe and submit it to Liz Chandler (GentleMomLC@gmail.com) AND buy the shelf stable ingredients for that recipe. Donate the ingredients in the collection bin on the Missions rack outside the pastors' office. The recipes will be gathered, and a booklet created to give families who come for assistance from the food pantry. Please have your recipes submitted by Dec 15. Thank you!

Missions Team

Team Leader: Katie Lukes

missionslead@stpeterscarmel.org

Christmas in Cincinnati: Friday December 13- Sunday December 15

Join us for a fantastic, full, and busy weekend! Each year we travel to Cincinnati for the weekend to set up, organize, and help host the Christmas Shoppe at Washington UCC. Every year families sign up to shop for Christmas gifts for their children. It is a powerful and exhausting weekend, and truly one of the best ways to embody the Christmas Spirit. Go to Events in REALM to register. Questions? Email Becca at becca@stpeterscarmel.org



Friday-

- We will leave St. Peter's around 6:00 p.m.
- Set up Fellowship Hall for Saturday

Saturday-

- Busy morning of sorting through toys, determining how many of each kind we have and how many more toys we need based on the list kids provided.
- Often some break time in the afternoon for conversation and games.
- Once we have everything we need we will set up the toy sections and displays.
- In the evening we will go to Camp Washington Chili for dinner.

Sunday-

- Final check over to make sure everything is ready to go.
- Worship with Washington UCC in the morning.
- Break for lunch after worship. (Wendy's)
- Christmas Shoppe opens around 1:00pm and goes to 3:00pm (ish).
- After our last family comes through, we break down, pack everything up and have dinner together provided by Washington UCC.
- Drive home around 5:00/6:00 depending on clean up and eating time.

Come for all or just a bit, your help and presence is appreciated!

Just Mercy - Movie and Discussion

Many of you may have read this book or may be familiar with the work of Bryan Stevenson and the Equal Justice Initiative. On Dec 25, Just Mercy will open in movie theatres. The Missions Team will be planning to go see the movie and then discuss afterwards. Stay tuned to Facebook, email, and bulletin boards for more details soon! Contact Liz Chandler to be on the contact list once the plans are firm.

Music Team

Team Leader: Sarah Scholl
Music Director : Cheryl Keckler

musicministrylead@stpeterscarmel.org
musicdirector@stpeterscarmel.org

Christmas Caroling

☒ *Sing We Now of Christmas* ☒

The Advent season is here! It is time to go Christmas caroling! The date is **Sunday, December 8 at 12:30 p.m. Sign-up either in Fellowship Hall or on Realm.** Following a soup lunch, we will break into groups and share Christmas music with others – residents in their private homes, group homes, and nursing facilities. Come join in the fun.



Music for Children and Youth

The Carol Choir will sing on December 1. For the rest of the month, we will be playing the **Orff instruments**. Then in January-February, Grade 4 and older will ring the **Chimes**. All rehearsals are in the Music Room from 9:45-10:15. Come share your talents and join in the music making!

A Fun Date for Your Calendar

And that date is **Saturday, February 29, 5:00 p.m.** Spend the evening of your Leap Day participating in our Singing Circle. A pitch-in supper will start the evening. Then we literally sit in a circle and sing old songs, hymns, funny songs, rounds, whatever we like to the accompaniment of guitars and ukeleles. It is an evening of fellowship!

Making Music

The music year continues, and we are always happy to welcome new members. Music rehearsals for Handbells and Chancel Choir are on Thursday evenings:

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

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

For more specific information on our choirs, please contact Cheryl at 317-213-1871 or musicdirector@stpeterscarmel.org. Come join in music making at St. Peter's.

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



Spiritual Life Team

Team Leader: Chrissy Searcy

spirituallifelead@stpeterscarmel.org

Blue Christmas Worship Service December 11

The Christmas season is approaching, but sometimes Christmastime isn't always a joyous celebration for everyone. For those enduring hardship or struggle, celebrating just might not be the most comforting thing. Come join our Blue Christmas service. It's a place where we can be one with God and find a calming place to be amongst the bustle leading up to the holidays. Service will include calming songs and a space for those who need to grieve, pray or just be at peace. If you'd like someone to talk to, or for someone to just listen, we encourage you to stay after service. Retired clergy and other members of our church will be here to listen. Our Blue Christmas service will be held Wednesday, December 11th at 7pm. Anyone is welcome.



Please mark your calendars for the Spiritual Life Retreat on April 23-24 at the beautiful Way Cross Conference Center in southern Indiana. It will be lead by UCC Pastor and author Sarah Lund.

Preschool Team

Team Leader: Tammy Drummond

preschoolteam@stpeterscarmel.org

Tours for the 2020-2021 School Have Begun.

If anyone is interested they can contact Lori Janssen, Preschool Director, for a tour. Registration for in-house families and church members will take place Jan. 27th

The Preschool Carnival was a Success.

So much fun and a great way for families to spend time w/one another and socialize w/other preschool families.



Education Team

Team Leader: Lori Radford

educationlead@stpeterscarmel.org

Education Opportunities During Worship at 8:30 and 11:00a.m.

Worship & Wonder (Pre-K-3rd Grade) Weekly at 8:30 and 11:00a.m.

If you have kids in Pre-K-3rd grade, then Worship & Wonder is for you! This is a time where our kids leave main worship and have time to worship, wonder, and interact with their faith together.

456 (4th-6th Grade) 2nd and 4th Sundays at 8:30 and 11:00a.m.

If you have kids in 4th-6th grade, then 456 is for you! Continuing to form and strengthen friendships, our kids continue to meet during worship on the 2nd and 4th Sundays to talk about what is happening in the world, at home, or at school and how that intersects with what is happening in worship.

Education Hour Opportunities at 10:00a.m.

LAUGH (Pre-K-6th Grade)

If you have kids in Pre-K-6th grade, then LAUGH is for you! This is a time for us to be together, to move around, to learn, to wonder about faith and life. This year we are inviting members from the congregation (YOU) to share their gifts, skills, and passions with our kids. If you have a gift you would like to share like: music, baking, yoga, drawing, acting, life skills etc. please be in touch with St. Peter's Education Team.

New This Year: More Fun Youth Lectionary (7th Grade and Up)

By request from our youth, we are offering a Youth Lectionary! If you are in high school and interested in talking about scripture, then this is for you! : "We'll meet in the Youth Room to talk about the season of Advent. We'll explore and wonder about the scriptures we use each year for this season. We'll talk about the idea of waiting and patience...themes of this season...and together we'll prepare for Jesus to be born among us."

Lectionary Class

If you love to dive deep into scripture and how it intersects with our lives then Lectionary might be for you. Join us as we delve into the familiar story of the Advent season!

Current Events

Join us in the Conference Room in between services as we talk about what is happening in our community and world. Together we wrestle with hard questions and encourage each other to live our faith in action. Sometimes the world is a difficult and confusing place and we need to remind each other how to create a little more justice, mercy and compassion.

Women and the Word

"Adulthood is saying, 'But after this week things will slow down a bit' over and over until you die." -

Author unknown

Inspired by this quote, during the season of Advent we are exploring the benefits of being still and slowing down during this busy time of year. Each week we will lean into the themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love through prayer, journaling, sharing, and pondering together how embody God's rhythm. If getting ready for Christmas and the season of Advent often feels like a stressful rather than present experience, this series is for you. If you long to not get swept up by the busyness of this season but struggle against the current, this series is for you. Women and the Word meet Thursday mornings in the Parlor from 9:30-11:30a.m.

Education Team

Team Leader: Lori Radford

educationlead@stpeterscarmel.org

Young Adult Group

This ministry has been so much fun and we're excited for another year ahead of learning more about each other, having fun, learning some really helpful and life-altering trivia, and simply being together. Age is not a factor! If you are young at heart (or in numbers) you are invited! We gather every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at Books & Brews in Carmel at 7:00pm. We look forward to seeing you there!

Youth Group

The month of December will be full of fun holiday opportunities to be together, have fun, and embody the Christmas Spirit.

- **December 1:** We're going ice skating! We've reserved tickets for those who have RSVP'd. If you didn't RSVP and would like to join us, feel free to reserve your own ticket. We reserved tickets for the 1:45 time slot. We'll meet at the Ice on Center Green at 1:00pm. Please eat lunch prior to arriving! Pick up at 3:30 p.m.
- **December 13-15:** Christmas in Cincinnati! Join us as we embody hope, peace, joy, and love for our sister community in Camp Washington. It's a weekend full of hard work and Christmas spirit. Sign up on Realm to go! (see page 9 for more details).
- **December 27-28:** Holiday Lock-In! For those who are in town we're having a holiday themed lock-in! Join us starting at 5:00pm-8:30am. We'll have food, feel free to bring shareable nut-free snacks!

Christmas Pageant December 1st 2019

Mark your calendars for Sunday December 1st! At our 8:30 and 11:00 worship services we will begin the season of Advent by embodying the Christmas Story. After a season of storytelling, we will all come together to hear our children and youth will retell this familiar and beloved story. We'll sing carols, hear scripture, and watch together as the scene of the nativity comes together. There will be opportunity for reading the story. If you're interested please email Becca at becca@stpeterscarmel.org Maybe speaking in front of people isn't your thing but you love to dress up! This pageant is for you! During the telling of the story we'll invite characters to come forward and join the tableau of the nativity. (When we read about the shepherds hearing the good news, we'll ask all shepherds and sheep to come forward and join the scene.) We can't wait to begin this special season with you!

Intergenerational Trivia: Saturday March 14th

Do you love trivia? Join the Education Team as we host an evening of intergenerational trivia. All ages, knowledge, fun, and wisdom welcome! We will serve appetizers and dessert to fuel our brains for correct answers. Join us on Saturday March 14th from 6:30-8:30. (A little preview below):

- Which country produces the most coffee in the world?
- How many times does the heart beat per day?
- What are known as the five books of Moses?
- What are the names of the seven Harry Potter books? Double points for correct order.

Social Media Team is Launched!

St. Peter's is joining the ranks of faith-based organizations on social media

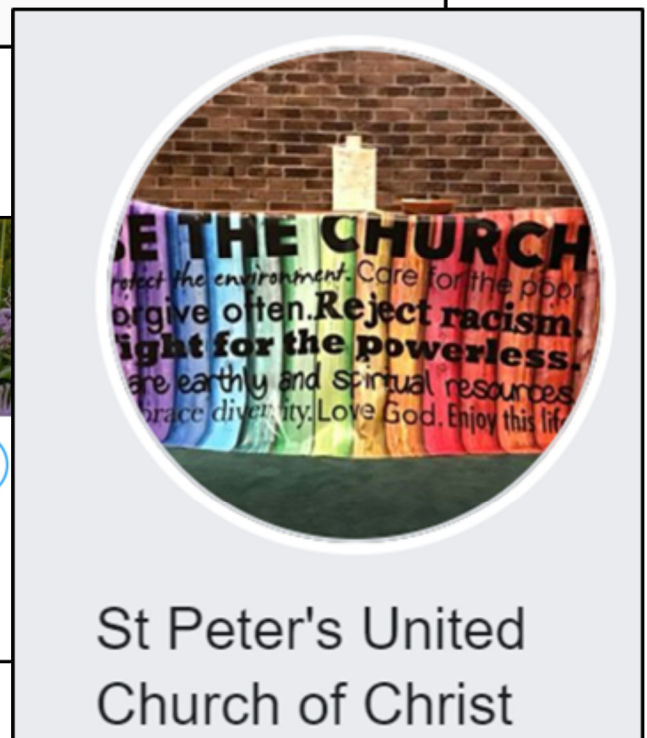
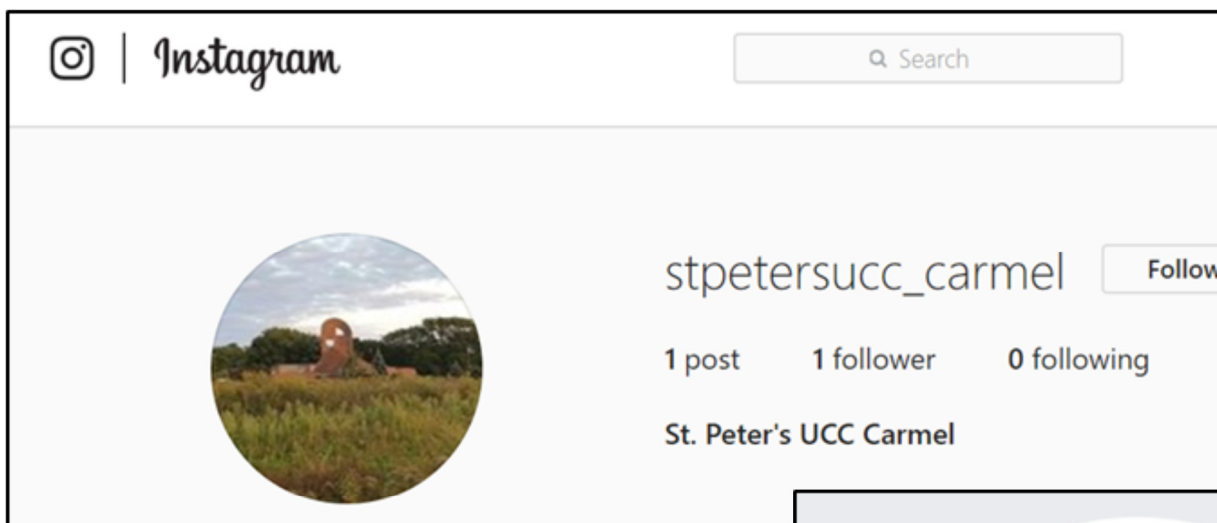
On December 1, St. Peter's will have Twitter, Instagram, and a public Facebook page. Thanks to the oh-so-connected help of a team of dedicated volunteers, we have a calendar of posts (all of which are approved by Becca or Lori), three people managing each platform, and a team manager pushing us forward.

After December 1, look for us – and follow us! – here:

Instagram: @stpetersucc_carmel

Twitter: @stpeters_ucc

Facebook: St. Peter's United Church of Christ (Religious Organization page, not the Private Group page)



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 (On sabbatical until December 1)

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 January newsletter should be sent to office@stpeterscarmel.org by December 18.

Pastoral Support Teams

St. Peter's Constitution requires support teams for both of our pastors. Eddie Meyer leads the Senior Pastor Support Team, with team members Sue Nye and Stacy McIntyre. Another team member will be added in December. 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 weekly. 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 Jenny Terry Financial Secretary (financialsecretary@stpeterscarmel.org), Cindy Whitaker 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
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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.

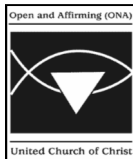
We believe God's grace is extended to all. To anyone who has felt unwelcome or has experienced rejection elsewhere, we say, "All are welcome here."

We acknowledge our diversities and we welcome, respect and support people of every race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, citizenship status, political affiliation, age, 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
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Preschool: 317-846-6860

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E-mail: office@stpeterscarmel.org

#carmelucc #findingspirit

TO: