

ST. PETER'S MESSENGER



St. Peter's United Church of Christ
20 East 5th Street
Washington MO 63090
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Website www.stpeters-washington.org

February 2024



Annual Mardi Gras Carnival February 18, 11:15 a.m.! Donations Needed!

Lent is just around the corner, and with it comes MARDI GRAS! We are excited to announce that our Mardi Gras Carnival will be held February 18 following worship. We will have all the things you love: games, gumbo, the cake walk, and silent auction. There is one significant change this year. This congregation's generosity has sustained our Youth Fund well and we know that this congregation will always see to the needs of the kids among us. That being the case, the Board of Christian Education has decided that the proceeds from Mardi Gras will go to support the General Fund this year!

With that said, we would appreciate your help this year just as in the past. We need items donated for the cake walk. We also need items donated for the silent auction. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pastor Eric.

We look forward to seeing you February 18!

Dear Friends,

What a difference a day makes! Yesterday was all about ice. Most streets and roads are passable this morning. But February is soon to arrive and while winter is not over yet, one sign of spring is the days getting longer. Another sign of the coming of Spring is that the Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14. Yes, St. Valentine's Day.

Now I don't remember these two days coinciding during my lifetime, but a quick internet search turned up that 1945 was the last time this happened. Is there a connection between these two days? Ashes and penance are quite different from chocolate and roses, after all. But if there is a connection, perhaps it is the gift of love. Love, of course, is central to our faith. We remember Jesus' teaching of the Greatest Commandment. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Mark 12:29-31) Some of the most beautiful and challenging words of scripture are Paul's hymn to Christlike love in I Corinthians 13. That chapter, often read at weddings, ends with these words. "Now faith, hope, and love remain ... these three things ... and the greatest of these is love."

As we enter the holy season of Lent, we are reminded of love's beauty and challenge. We remember a love so deep that God gave us the gift of Jesus Christ. It is Jesus, in turn, who reminds us that God's love for us is to be mirrored in our love for God and all people, even our enemies. During our Lenten journey we follow Jesus as he walks to the cross. That is a journey of teaching, healing, and serving, but above all, it is a journey of love. Can we love as Jesus loves? That is a powerful question that will us lead into, through, and beyond the Lenten season. That is a question for all seasons.

Blessings,

Pastor Kurt

We Live Here: the Midwest, Screening and Lunch & Learn, Feb. 25, 11:15 a.m.
The Justice & Witness Mission Group invites you to come watch a portion of a documentary entitled ***We Live Here: the Midwest***. The documentary shares the experiences of a few LGBTQ Christians in our region of the US. The film will be followed by a discussion. We will serve a meal as well. Please plan to join us in the auditorium after worship Feb. 25 to hear a perspective that we don't often hear.

All 2023 Boards and Committees. Year ending reports are due to the MESSENGER for printing in March 2024 for the Annual Report. Please forward the reports to [Newsletter Annual Report](mailto:newsletter@stpeters-ucc.org). (newsletter@stpeters-ucc.org) on or before Mon., Feb. 12, 2024. Thank you!

Sunday, February 25 11 a.m.–6 p.m.
Whole Hog Pork Sausage and Sauerkraut Dinner
St. Paul's UCC 103 S. Second Street, Marthasville, MO

Food Pantry News

Thank you to ALL the volunteers who help the food pantry continue its vital ministry in our community. In December, 88 individuals representing 33 families were served. We also thank for the generous donations from our December Food Pantry donors: Alan Kleekamp, Joline Logan, Wendell & Mary Lou Tyree, Stan Stricker, Rob & Barb Kell, Verna Borgmann, Elmer Flee, United Way, Brenda Bruns, Alan, Leah & Dean Jacquin, hth Companies, Beth & Gary Brehe, Kaye Nurnberger, Bill & Janet Hubbard, Richard & Donna Speckhals, John & Nancy Lakebrink, Mike & Linda Wideman, Eric & Julie Frankenberg, an anonymous donation honoring Debbie Scheible

St. Peter's UCC Missions Report

December 2023

Free Clinic

The Free Clinic saw five patients in December. The day went very smoothly. Nurse Leesa and Volunteer Janet Alspach discussed gathering and distributing extra over-the-counter products from the congregation to give to needy patients.

The Harvest Table

The Harvest Table provided 771 meals in December. Besides providing nutritious meals to the guests, they also provided needed sleeping bags, tents, and sleep mats. We hear that the volunteers were "Great!" Nurse Leesa saw additional patients and provided necessary care.

WERF

The Washington Emergency Relief was able to answer 236 calls and assist 91 of those community members in December with 31 grants totaling \$6,543.57. Ten of those grants were for electricity, four for water, fifteen for rent, and two for miscellaneous items.



St. Francis Borgia Food Pantry sent a note thanking the Festival of Trees for the donation of over 8,500 can goods items to the Borgia Food Pantry which served over 1,717 families in 2023.

Thank you so much to an anonymous person for copy paper donated to the church office.

Church World Service sent a thank you note for the donation to cover the shipment of Church World Service Kits in October.

Foundations for Franklin County sent a thank you note to St. Peter's for the December cash donation.

Washington Emergency Relief

These frigid temperatures are always tough for people, especially those on the streets. Due to the generous donations of many of the St. Peter's church members and organizations, we will be able to help more of our neighbors stay warm.

The Washington Emergency Relief would like to give a huge thank you to Ron & Brenda Brinker, Kirk & Cindy Kriete, Ruth Rinne, Royce & Mary Lovern, Delores Borcharding, Joyce & Vince Sanfilippo, Cheryl Cantwell (in honor of her son-in-law), the Washington Garden Club, and all those who donated and were responsible for the decision to give donations from the Festival of Trees to WERF. Also, thank you to St. Peter's staff and members for always supporting us. We cannot thank you all enough.

From the Finance Board

The Finance Board is ready to keep you up to date with the finances of our church. We will continue to give you Stewardship Moments monthly.

First of all, Congratulations for coming through with your support and lowering the deficit in our budget. In November we were close to \$30,000 in the red. December was celebrated with generous giving! As of January 1, 2024, we had cut the deficit to less than \$12,000. Yes, we are still in negative balance, but we are ahead of a \$14,000 deficit on January 1, 2023. Of course, we would rather be at a positive balance, but we are making progress! Remember that giving was up-but of course so were expenses.

One big expense is insurance. The Finance Board worked with our agent Doug Dischinger of the Insurance Board to find savings in our policy but still receive adequate coverage. Other companies were researched but to no avail! It was to our advantage to stay with our present company and our overall costs did not increase.

Several changes have been made:

We are making monthly payments rather than quarterly payments (to help cash flow), the deductible amount was raised, flood insurance has been eliminated, and there is a change in the umbrella policy which created a grand total savings of \$6,374 per year. That is more than one month's premium in savings and another step toward lowering our expenses.

We are in a new year with new challenges! Hopefully you will help us get to a positive balance as we launch our new fund challenge:

“Have a Heart—Help the General Fund”

In the atrium you will find a red and white lighted tree. The envelopes on the tree have a dollar amount printed on the outside. We are asking you to take an envelope, fill out the card inside, place the suggested amount of money in the envelope, and place it in the decorated box. Cash amounts are from \$1 to \$100. When all the envelopes are returned, we will have gathered \$5,050! That will lower the deficit by almost half.

The Finance Board is doing its VERY best to get the money situation manageable. We have several more budget enhancement campaigns in store for you. We are planning a special presentation entitled Finance 101, to help everyone understand our church's finance. And we promise that there will be some “entertaining skits” ahead!

Thank you again for your generosity and support of St. Peter's!

Blessed are those who mourn . . . for they shall be comforted. Please pray for:

Family and friends of Nola Gorrell who passed away Dec. 24, 2023.

Family and friends of Peggy Miller who passed away Dec. 31, 2023.

Family and friends of Betty Peffermann who passed away Jan. 4, 2024.

Family and friends of John Luechtefeld who passed away Jan. 18, 2024.

Family and friends of Sherri Kelch who passed away Jan. 20, 2024.

Family and friends of Kenneth Bierbaum who passed away Jan. 21, 2024.

St. Peter's United Church of Christ Church Council Meeting Highlights 16 January 2024

Guest Report from Cemetery Board:

Jim Gephardt reported the Cemetery Board's vote to approve Gary Edler as the new sexton. Gary will take over the duties of the sexton except the digging of graves (outsourced to Jeff Adams at a cost of \$650/gravesite). The sexton's salary will be decreased by \$500/month. Jim thanked all the volunteers for their time and effort in keeping the cemetery beautiful. A motion was made and seconded to approve the hiring of Gary Edler as the new sexton. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

The General Fund is still in the red (-\$11,800), but slightly better than last year at this time (-\$14,000). December's income was increased.

Discussion continued regarding suggestions to lower our insurance payments. Our current deductible is \$5,000. If we increase this to \$25,000, we will save \$3,938/year. Our agent suggested eliminating our flood insurance, as we are still covered for sewer backup, pipe breakage, etc., which would save \$1,427/year. If we change to a \$5 million umbrella liability policy from our current \$30 million policy, we will save \$1,009/year. Total savings of \$6,374/year.

A motion was made and seconded to approve these insurance changes. The motion passed.

A special meeting of the Council was called on Sun., Jan. 21, to conclude the Treasurer's Report approval. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

Senior Pastor's Report:

Bible Study will restart January 17.

Visits to hospitalized members were curtailed for a while due to COVID quarantine. Thanks to my wife, Mary Schaller Blaufuss, for filling in during that time, and to Sara Barnett for her great job directing the children's Christmas Play.

Thanks to St. Peter's for my upcoming vacation time and the opportunity to join with Eden folks and travel to El Salvador. I've been invited to speak on this at the Women's Fellowship February meeting.

	December	2023 YTD	2022 YTD
Total Receipts	90,197.97	648,829.46	630,608.95
General Fund	71,916.22	521,114.46	458,216.86
Building Fund	3,821.75	56,014.73	68,280.75
Other	14,460.00	71,700.27	104,111.34
 Building Fund			
Beginning Balance Dec 1	4,225.45		
Income	3,821.75		
Expenses	1,331.01		
Ending Balance Dec 31	<u>6,716.19</u>		
 General Fund			
Beginning Balance Dec 1	-30,989.84		
Income	71,916.22		
Expenses	52,738.37		
Ending Balance Dec 31	<u>-11,811.99</u>		

Associate Pastor's Report:

Sunday School took a break after their Christmas program and resumed on Jan. 7.

He discussed the video sent to members about his music project/new church start. The Eastern Association approved and adopted his project, but there are no set financial obligations from them or the Conference. Up to \$22,000 in grants and start-up funding may become available, which could then allow a commensurate reduction in his salary support from St. Peter's. If this were to occur, it would also mean that Pastor Eric would split his time 75%/25% between St. Peter's and his music ministry. As of now he continues to be full time.

Boards and Committees:

Building and Grounds:

- There was furnace trouble due to boiler flushing delay.
- Pastor Kurt will renew our Missourian ad for a new custodian. Other suggestions included social media posts, asking other custodians for referrals, member cleaning teams, hiring a handyman as needed, being flexible in the number of hours/week.
- Discussed video camera mount in the balcony. B/G should discuss this with Jimmy Wacker.

Mission:

- Pastor Eric reported that they met last week and agreed to continue Mission Moments and discussed potential mission trip to Back Bay. Jill added that the group wants to better communicate to the congregation about groups that are invited to come speak.

Justice/Witness:

- There is a future "Lunch and Learn" concerning ONA (Open and Affirming).
- Salam Clinic had 5 patients in December.
- Some members want to attend the MLK service at ECC.
- There was a discussion on the homeless situation, with the library serving as a daytime warming station however those people need a secure area to store their belongings. He asked if St. Peter's might consider approving a locker system here, as has been done in some other communities. They will continue looking into options and update on total cost.

Old Business:

Constitution Review:

- Discussions regarding the cemetery perpetual care and the current wording in the Constitution continue. Pastor Kurt suggested a subgroup to continue research on this.

Website Review:

- The team met with Jason Oesterly, who was very helpful in pointing us in a more focused direction and suggesting possible templates and themes for us to consider. He will work up a site map/tree for us to use.

AED/LifeVac:

- There are pictures that can be used in the newsletter and bulletins to illustrate locations.

Update on custodian search:

- Pastor Eric posted on Facebook, WashMO, may post at the Career Center, and we could have flyers available for people who come through the church for Harvest Table and Food Pantry.

New Business:

Festival of Trees:

- There were 1785 visitors, including 78 for the Franklin County Church Tours on January 1. We collected \$1,091 and 8,543 food items.

All Boards and Committees Meeting:

- The meeting will be held on Jan. 21.
- It was suggested that each group select a few goals to meet during the coming year. We should consider strengths and weaknesses and how to rejuvenate and energize the whole body.

Brass Players for Easter:

- Ken Tucker asked about getting 3 brass players for Easter services. Council approved this but will check with him on total cost.

Great Decisions 2024

The Foreign Policy Association announces the topic selections for *Great Decisions* 2024. Bill Schwab will lead the presentations on these foreign policy topics beginning Wed., Feb. 7, 2024, at 1 p.m. at the Washington Public Library. All are welcome to participate.

Library Author Speaker Events:

Thurs., Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m. Dan O'Neill, "Crazy but True St. Louis History"

Thurs., Feb. 15, 6:30 p.m. Malcome Tanner and Kerry Branson, "Descendants of Evil"



Aluminum can collection.

A pick-up truck will be parked on the South parking lot February 3 & 4.

Aluminum cans

ONLY, in bags please, should be placed in the truck; please do not include tin foil and/or pie pans.

Thanks for all the help we receive from the congregation!



On-line Opportunities-- Worship OnLine

We will continue to provide worship on YouTube on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

RECYCLE

Beyond the bag

Recycle your household plastic bags & wrap into Trex's Earth-friendly composite bench.



From your pantry

- Ziplock & other reclosable bags
- Cereal box liners
- Case overwrap (from water/soda bottle cases)
- Bread bags

From your front door

- Newspaper sleeves
- Dry cleaning bags
- Bubble wrap
- Plastic e-commerce mailers

From the store

- Produce bags
- Store bags
- Ice bags

Recycle Box Locations

- Washington Public Library
- Washington City Hall
- First State Community Bank
 - Starting the 2nd week of January
 - 1801 Bedford Center Drive

The Washington Parks & Recreation Commission is sponsoring the NexTrex Recycling Challenge. After 1,000 lbs of plastic is donated, the City will receive a high-performance composite bench.

 For questions, call the Parks & Recreation Department at (636) 390-1080, or email parcs@washmo.gov



Hello Friends!

It's time for
Valentine's Drive Thru Gala!
Benefits: Friends Foundation of Franklin and Warren County
Sat., Feb. 10, 2024

**Order by Visiting mosaiccafeandcatering.com
OR emailing pat@mosaiccafeandcatering.com
OR calling Café Mosaic 636-390-1722
by 4:00 p.m. Wed., Feb.7, 2024**

Pick Up from Mosaic Café and Catering
901 Patients First Drive Washington, Mo
4:30-7:00 p.m. Curbside Pick-Up Sat., Feb. 10, 2024

Friends Foundation Board Members
will be dressed in their finest to serve Curbside!!!
Payment can be made by Credit Card or
Personal Check payable to Friends Foundation
Pre-payment is appreciated by calling 314-960-1042.
Call 314-960-1042 or 314-566-9562 for any questions!

**Lenten Program: "Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve", Wednesdays in Lent,
5:30 p.m. [the dates are Feb. 21 & 28, March 6, 13, & 20]**

"Enter to Worship. Depart to Serve." Those words ought to sound familiar. They are our mission statement. They hang above the door into our sanctuary reminding us why we are there, at least in part. We enter the space to somehow be formed for God's work. This Lent you are invited to join us Wednesday evenings for a meal and a time of exploring the meaning behind this statement more deeply. We will explore worship, its composite parts and its purpose. We will explore the concept of mission and the context in which it all happens: our community. Please come and join the discussion! We are certainly looking forward to it!

Blessings,
Pastors Kurt and Eric

A note from **Harvest Table**: Thank you for your \$100 donation to the Harvest Table. We are grateful for your support. We truly could not do what we do each week without your generosity. The Washington community is truly blessed by your kindness and outreach to those most in need. We appreciate you!

Remembering with Purpose & Gratitude...

The congregation's Memorial Fund, Building Fund and various other funds receive gifts throughout the year from both members and nonmembers who are looking for a creative way to express their gratitude for the life of a friend or loved one, or for other times and occasions when they are moved to gratefully respond to a blessing of God.

In Memory of **Ruth Dowil**: Cecil & Doris Blankenship, Judy Verdine, Richard & Karen Houchins, Donna Houchins, Laurie Ebker, Michael & Sheila Peters, Daniel & Jennifer Houchins, Ann Sellmeyer, Rick & Linda Rice, Cindy Peters, Bob & Karen Brinkmann, Jim & Diane Gephardt, Sandy Carr, Bob & Mary Dobsch, Ronald & Deborah Obermark, Carolyn Slack, Sherri Korte, Douglas & Jayna Eichholz, Charles & Carole Sincox

In Memory of **Thelma Lucy**: Carolyn Slack, Roy & Brenda Morman, Joline Logan, Gordon & Elaine Epps, Dennis & Patricia Sahn, Carl Clover & Rhonda Stockglausner, Anonymous, Cecil & Doris Blankenship, Dorothy Meyer, St. Peter's UCC Quilters, Judy Verdine, Barb Schroeffer, Delores Borcharding, Mary Jo Stoyer, Steve & Pat Forget, Byron Stolte, Erna Holland, James Lucy, Marilyn Sherman, Dan Buschmeyer, Dottie & Robert Brinker, Jon & Barb Bauer Family, Alex & Carol Graham, Charles & Carole Sincox

In Memory of **Jackie Krafft**: Dottie & Robert Brinker, Rhonda Stockglausner & Carl Clover, Judy Verdine, Gene & Kay Hunt, Koren Kerr, Ardis Briggs, Joline Logan, Brunhilde Wahl, Charles & Carole Sincox

In Memory of **Marylou Epple**: Rhonda Stockglausner & Carl Clover

In Memory of **Dave Allemann**: Judy Verdine, Charles & Carole Sincox

In Memory of **Nola Gorrell**: Judy Verdine, American Legion Auxiliary

In Memory of **Peggy Miller**: Judy Verdine

In Memory of **Betty Peffermann**: Judy Verdine, Pat Placke, David & Jane Phipps, Essel Kruse, Joyce Gerner, Al & Sue Lampe

In Honor of **Ruth Wood**: Nancy Wood



February Birthdays

Benjamin Geisert	02/02
Bryanna Winfree	02/02
Cheryl Gillig	02/03
Keagan Moeller	02/04
Callie Briggs	02/05
Brenda Brinker	02/05
Parker Smith	02/05
Bobby Hackett	02/06
Mason Fitzpatrick	02/07
Briana Juergens	02/07
Hank Anderson	02/09
Hollyn Arnette	02/09
Kassydy Wolking	02/10
Amy Hellmann	02/11
Evelyn Mayer	02/12
Jim Heisel	02/13
Deanne Kriete	02/13
Logan Monzyk	02/13
Angela Skelton	02/13
Sharon Bacon	02/14
Lena Kemp	02/14
Alyce Menefee	02/14
Allison Montgomery	02/14
Marty Derner	02/15
Bernie Westhoelter	02/15
Ronald Montgomery	02/16
Danielle Mooney	02/16
Barbara Schroepfer	02/16

Theo Jacquin	02/17
Leroy Eggert	02/18
Joline Logan	02/18
Kitty Parsons	02/18
Brandi Fredeking	02/19
Trent Wacker	02/19
Chad Briggs	02/20
Patricia Forget	02/20
Charles Sincox	02/20
Daniel Wisdom	02/20
Kaylyn Wolking	02/21
Marge Jones	02/22
Kenneth Juergens	02/22
Dan Roewe	02/22
Lauren Schonaerts	02/22
Kali Coppotelli	02/23
Sheila Smith	02/24
Clifford Mueller	02/25
Rodney Schwentker	02/25
Robert White	02/25
Patti Fleer	02/27
Hayden Arnette	02/29