Vol. 32 No.8 August 2026

Sunshine Thoughts

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
7014 Darmstadt Road Evansville, Indiana 47710 812-909-4391

Search Team Update

Although we have not had a recent candidate interview, we have been busy writing the Call Agreement with Rev. Shane Ranschaert and preparing for his arrival as our Bridge Pastor.

You may recall when Rev. Michael Erwin arrived as our Transitional pastor, his primary tasks were leading Sunday services, helping the Council update the Constitution, policies and procedures and assisting the Bridge Team with its duties. This work was vital so that we could define our core values, rewrite the Constitution and By-laws in current language, define the Marks of Excellence needed in our future settled pastor, and complete the profile. All that work is completed.

Rev. Shane's role as Bridge Pastor is to "bridge" this time until a new settled pastor is found and called. He is a Member in Discernment with the Indiana-Kentucky Conference and working toward ordination within the United Church of Christ. We as a teaching church will give him many opportunities to grow into the role of a UCC pastor. He will prepare and lead the Sunday service, offer faith formation, provide pastoral care, study and pray to increase his faith and improve his skills, and energize and deepen the spiritual connections and faith understandings of the St. Peter's members. We look forward to his presence amongst us, to lead us, as well as help us consider new ideas and ways to "be church."

Rev. Shane's position is one-half time (20 – 24 hours per week) with prorated benefits. He is planning to be in the church office each week. His hours may vary because he also has another job as a national fraternity advisor. If you need time with the pastor, please contact the church office so that an appointment can be made with him.

He begins on Sunday, August 9th. There will be times when he is out of the office during the week, but most of the time, he will lead the service on Sunday. I know everyone will give him a warm, St. Peter's welcome. If you have questions regarding Rev. Shane's position, please contact any Council member or any Search Team member.

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

Council Update

Hello Friends,

Our July 13 meeting was again full and productive. Cheryl Whitmore, co-chair for the Search Committee joined us. She and Kurt Simpson, the other co-chair and a council member, presented to council the call agreement for Rev. Shane Ranschaert. It was a unanimous acceptance by council, and we are all excited in having Rev. Shane be a part of our St. Peters family during his six-month contract.

We have had another month of our finances being in really good shape. Thank you for your continued support. The special offerings and stewardship season is on track to finish out the year. There was a bit of a tech issue with Zoom and You Tube for our June 12 service. This will be worked out with our tech team. Council approved having the pastor office repainted that is long overdue, and to purchase a new office chair that is also long overdue.

Finishing touches are now complete around the doors on the newly finished wall in the fellowship hall. We also have our bulletin board back in place there and it is full of information! Thank you building and grounds. We are continuing to search for a solution to repair the broken stall door in the ladies' restroom. Thank you, ladies, for your patience. Thanks to Mike Hobbs, April's new computer is ordered. His son in law, Teon Jones who is in the business, will be overseeing this and will come down from Indianapolis to do the install. We will provide him with a token of our appreciation.

On July 19, Rev. Dr. Monica Ouellette, IKC Associate Conference Minister lead our service and installed Rev. Shane Ranschaert as our bridge pastor. He will begin his pulpit service on Aug 9th. Council provided a meet and greet coffee hour following service. This was a great opportunity to meet and welcome both Rev. Monica and Rev. Shane.

Because we rotate council members in doing the monthly announcements, I thought I would post them in this entry for August: 2 Kurt, 9 Sharon, 16 Deb, 23 Mike, 30 Dave. We feel this is a good way for our members to see our council members. Two of our council members Kurt and Laura are also volunteers up in the tech nest and Laura is part of the tech team. We appreciate all that our tech team and the other volunteers do in keeping our service live for those who cannot be physically present. We are always needing volunteers in the tech nest and helping with Zoom. Please consider volunteering a Sunday here and there for this wonderful ministry. It really is not hard and is actually fun, and we have some good teachers. The goal would be having a steady rotation of volunteers to allow everyone to participate in our Sunday service.

Our next meeting is August 18, 2026, and Rev. Shane will join us for his first council meeting. Members are always welcome, just let us know ahead of time. We also welcome our members to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

Reflecting on one of Rev. Stephanie Weiner's messages, I hope you all have found some laughter in your day.

Peace,

Sharon Durkee

Council President

Communion Sunday

Holy Communion will be celebrated on August 2nd.

Sunday School

It's hard to believe summer is almost over! School will be starting soon!

We will resume our Sunday School class on September 27 at 9:00 a.m.

Everyone is invited, young and young at heart!

The hope is everyone had a nice summer!

Carl, Linda & Jaxson

June Finances	
Total General Offering*	$8,653
Building & Grounds	$125
*Need $9,467 monthly General Offering to meet budgeted amount of $113,604.	
Average Sunday Attendance	
In Person	38
Zoom	3
YouTube	17

Women's Guild

See you on August 25th for our Annual Patio Party. More details to come.

Men's Fellowship

Our next meeting has been scheduled at 6:00 p.m. on September 10th at the Church.

Church Office Hours

The Church office hours are:
Thursdays 7:30 am to12:00 pm

2026 Church Council

Sharon Durkee, President
Rose Gentry, Vice President
Kurt Simpson, Treasurer
Laura Medcalf, Financial Secretary
Debra Herke, Secretary
Mike Hobbs, Generosity
Bub Newman, Building and Grounds
David Patterson, Building and Grounds
Brett Vaught, Building and Grounds

Prayers of Healing and Concern for:

*Judy Allen
*Mary Ballard
*Bob Berfanger
*Phylis Berfanger
*Bruce & Linda Briel
*Pat Brown
*Chris Cheshire
*Megan Clanton
*Alexis Dickerson
*Gary Gantner
*Lyn Hayden
*Mike Hobbs
*Suzie Hobbs
*Katie Hudson
*Toni Klueg
*Dala McDaniel
*Brandon Meeks
*Jennifer Meeks
*Katie Mullen
*Gayle Nelson
*Mark Noelle
*Charlotte Pointer
*Sue Anne Simon
*Brook Smith
*Jeff Sprinkle
*Dick Sprinkle
*Mandy Stock
*Carl Todd
*Brett Vaught
*Tom Wardrip

Book Club Happenings

August's read will be: The Swan House by Elizabeth Musser. We will meet on August 20th at 10:30.

September's read will be: My Friends by Fredrik Backman.

Happy Reading,

Brenda Schell

Don't forget St. Peter's in your will!

Prayers for Service Men and Women

-Caleb Coffman serving in the US Navy.
(Please contact the Church Office, if you know of other service men and women.)

Future Needs Fund

The St. Peter's Church Council has established a "Future Needs Fund" for the church. This fund will function primarily as an emergency fund to cover unanticipated expenses that arise from the operation of the church the including (but not limited to) emergency building and equipment repairs. In order to fund this account, we will be receiving a special "First Fruits" offering on the first Sunday of every month. We are asking members to consider giving an extra $5 each month towards this fund.

United Caring Services Monthly Lunch Volunteer Opportunity

The 1st Saturday of each month is the day for St. Peter's volunteers to prepare and serve a meal at United Caring Services. We would first like to thank the congregation for your continued support over the years of this great outreach program and invite you to join us when you can. It is such a rewarding experience!

The <u>supplies we use for these meals are not provided by the shelter</u>. That is why we rely on monetary donations or supply donations to help offset the overall expenses for these meals.

In an effort to keep our expenses down, we have come up with a menu that seems to be a big hit and is cost effective. However, the price of groceries are increasing and we have seen an increase in the number of people we are serving over the last few months: anywhere between 85-110 lunches each month.

Our monthly menu is pretty simple: pasta bake entree, a garlic breadstick, a vegetable, a fruit, and a cookie/dessert. And while Angel & Julie shop around to try and keep expenses down, we are still spe 10-$130 for is aro per me

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We will have shelf near the water fountain in the Fellowship Hall for you to place your donations for the non-perishable items and the frozen breadsticks can go in the large freezer. We typically buy the large cans (#10) of these items at GFS, but are open to whatever you are able to donate.

These are the items we are asking for:

Seasoned Green Beans
Use 3 cans each meal

Prebaked Breadsticks
Use 5 bags each meal

Spaghetti Sauce
Use 2 cans each meal

Pineapple
Use 3 cans each meal





Large package of napkins & packages of 100 forks

Please contact Angel Nelson or Julie Ryder if you have questions or will be a volunteer.

Thank You Again for Your Support

Angel & Julie

Sister Joanna's Table

It's been a great year of the ETSA working together to feed neighbors in our community. In a recent email I received from Reverand Emily Slade, Sr. Pastor at Bethlehem UCC and President of the ETSA (Evansville Tri-State Association), she noted that since beginning this joint mission in July 2023, we have

served 15 meals. She also offered a thank you to the ETSA for financially supporting this work, and a thank you to each of you and the other volunteers from your church who have given of their time to this ministry.

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

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

We will be serving our last meal for 2026 on September 12th.

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

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

CWS Kid Kits

God loves a cheerful giver. School bags are now called 'Kids Kits'. I've talked with Church World Service and as I expected the need is great. Last year because of our love and generosity 57 children of all nationalities had big smiles on their faces because they could further their education - yes, we sent 57 filled bags!

I know sewing is becoming a dying art, but if you do sew and want to make bags call Mary Ramsey, Susan Rudisill or Susie Hobbs for directions. If you would like to donate supplies, leave them in a marked box in the foyer.

Supplies needed for one bag:
1- Box of 10 Colored Pencils
1- 2 Pocket Folders
1- Glue Stick
1- Pair of Blunt Scissors
1- 70 Count Spiral Paper Notebook
1- 12" Ruler
1- Handheld Pencil Sharpener
1- Box of 24 Crayons
6- Unsharpened Pencils

We take these bags to Bethlehem in October and they take them along with their cleaning supplies to CWS to be given to those who need help anywhere in this beautiful world God gave us. We start collecting early because it takes time to make bags and also because school supplies go on sale in July. Bags can be filled fairly inexpensively. Those of us who sew will make bags for all supplies donated.

A processing fee of $2.00 goes along with each bag.

Who knows - one of our bags might help to educate a farmer who feeds us. A doctor who keeps us well or a Minister who tells us of God's love.

Mary Ramsey

Parish Nurse Update

The Health Ministry Team will sponsor **QPR Training on Monday, August 17th at 6PM**.

QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Training is frequently compared to CPR (Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation). Both offer immediate and effective life-saving techniques; QPR is specific to a mental health crisis, and CPR is specific to a cardiac/heart functioning crisis.

The National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) provides these staggering statistics:

- 1 in 20 adults (5% of the adult population) in the United States have serious thoughts about suicide every year.
- Every 11 minutes someone in our country dies by suicide.
- It is the second leading cause of death for people between the ages of 10 years – 24 years.

How can we have an influence on these statistics? By learning how to recognize the warning signs of suicide, how to offer hope, and how to get help and save a life. You will learn these skills in this class that will last about 1 ½ hours.

The St. Vincent Mental Health Team will provide the training. The class is open to everyone and there are no prerequisites to attend. It is important that we know who is attending so that information and seating is available for everyone.

Joanne, Suzie, and I look forward to providing this mental health learning experience to our St. Peter's community. If you have questions or want to confirm your reservation, please contact Cheryl Whitmore (812.455.7536).

Submitted by,
Cheryl Whitmore, Health Ministry Coordinator

Paper Goods Drive

Items needed:
Plates: all sizes, bowls,
Cups: coffee and drink cups,
Napkins, Kleenex, plastic forks and spoons, storage bags: all sizes.

Place items in the fellowship hall. Thanks!

Would You Be Willing to Volunteer for our Tech Team?

The St. Peter's Tech Team is looking to expand our pool of volunteers that can help with operating our technology on Sunday mornings. Training will be provided, and you do not have to be a computer expert in order to help out. We are hoping to have enough volunteers in our rotation that your commitment would be no more than once a month. If you have questions—or would like to volunteer—please contact Laura Medcalf.

Church Calendar

The church is using Google calendar to schedule church events and meetings. You can view the calendar at https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0?cid=c3RwZXRlcnNoaWdobGFuZHVjY0BnbWFpbC5jb20Or scan the following QR Code with your smart phone.

Newsletter Deadline

The submissions deadline for the September 2026 Sunshine Thoughts is August 23rd. The September edition will be distributed on August 30th.

Newsletter items may be submitted via e-mail. Please send to rschell190@gmail.com

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

On Your Computer

Go to **https://zoom.us/j/850989470**

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

Using the Zoom App

Enter the meeting ID: **850 989 470**

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

Click "Join Meeting"

On Your Phone

Call **1-312-626-6799**

Enter Meeting ID: **850 989 470#**

Follow the prompts