

Our “Every Year” New Year Resolution: Witnessing in Action

So when they had come together, they asked Him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:6-8

It’s the New Year! 2024! And with the New Year comes a new three-part series of articles focused on how we can respond as a Great Commission congregation. My prayer is that you will find something practical to use when it comes to living out and sharing your faith, and that God will present you with opportunities through which His Spirit leads you to point others to Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

A number of years ago, I had the opportunity to attend a one-day conference titled, “Christ Alone in a COEXIST World.” Focused on what we call the Post-Modern world, the conference centered on the most effective methods to reach people in our culture and a response to questions such as: *How can you and I reach people for Christ when they live as if there are no absolutes? And, how can we bring the truth of God’s Word and Salvation through Jesus Christ alone to a person who believes that truth is relative - based on each person’s perspective?*

The conference began with a detailed discussion on the fact that not everyone comes from the same perspective. People are surrounded by a number of influences, which create challenges when it comes to seeing things from someone else’s point of view. Essentially, we all wear “glasses” – and the “glasses” through which we look will affect how we see things.

What I found most interesting was how the focus of the conference quickly turned to highlighting the value of developing relationships. After all, how can anyone effectively witness to someone in a personal way if we do not have a relationship with them? Getting to know a person is vital, and letting them get to know you is just as important; because ***you may be the only Bible that people ever read.*** (Did you catch that? YOU may be the avenue through which people hear the truth of God’s Word.)

That said, how can we develop the kind of relationship needed to effectively witness to someone through our lives and our words? Or, better yet, how can we develop a relationship that opens the door to sharing God’s Word? This month, we will begin to explore ways that will hopefully help you share Christ in this Post-Modern (“anything goes”) world in which we live. So...are you ready? Because, here we go!

STEP ONE: Listen! James 1:19 teaches us that “***every person must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.***” While **listening** is not always easy, it is absolutely vital. After all, when we **listen** we are then able to hear what matters most to the person we’re talking to. **Listening** leads us to understand what the person values – whether it’s family, success, work, their home life, religion, etc.; and when we discover what it is that they value most, we now have a conversation point where we can share interests and show that we care enough to get to know them.

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Keep in mind, though, that this first step to building a relationship is one that will not necessarily happen in five minutes or less. **Listening** takes time and may require a series of conversations. But it's worth it, because **listening** leads to understanding what a person values most, and understanding opens the door to a whole new level in a relationship where a person will be ready to hear what it is that matters most in your life.

That's why, next month, we'll continue to explore effective skills to help us listen and understand. For now, though, feel free to get started. Introduce yourself to that neighbor you've never met, and let me challenge you to see how many of your immediate neighbors you can get to know by name while learning something about them through a conversation. And when you do, let them do the talking while you simply listen to what they have to say. It's a great way to start a New Year.



A blessed 2024 to all of you!

Pastor Wenzelburger

Associate Pastor of Discipleship Update

At the December 10, 2023, Voters' meeting, the St. Peter Voters, with enthusiastic support from the Call Committee and Board of Elders, unanimously voted to extend the Divine Call to be Associate Pastors at St. Peter to both Reverend Joel Cundiff and Reverend Kevin Hohnstadt. These two men have unique and complementary spiritual gifts that align extremely well with the many opportunities we have to increase God's work in Macomb.

We have been working through the Call process for 20 months, patiently waiting for the Holy Spirit to lead us to a clear outcome. This recently happened and was reinforced initially by virtual meetings with both men and then when both Pastor Cundiff and Pastor Hohnstadt were able to visit with the leadership and staff here at St. Peter.

It is important to understand that Pastor Joel and Pastor Kevin now have Calls from St. Peter as well as from their current congregations. Please be in prayer for both men, their families, and their current congregations as they try to discern God's will for their future.

"And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding." - Jeremiah 3:15

To God be the Glory!

Bruce Brendle, Congregation President

Greetings President Bruce Brendle, Rev. Kurt Wenzelburger, and the members of St. Peter,

I am humbled by the Call sent to me by St. Peter Lutheran Church and School on December 11. This week I was able to notify an acknowledgment of the Call to both district presidents involved, both circuit visitors involved, and my own congregation at both services. In the coming weeks, Jennifer and I will pray for God's clear direction according to His grace. It is my intention to give you an answer in the week or two after Christmas. We will also keep St. Peter and everyone in our prayers during this time as well, praying for the accomplishment of God's will to be done. God's blessings to everyone at St. Peter during this Christmas Season as we prepare once again for the coming of the Christ Child, born for us here on earth, so that we may be born again and live with Him forever in His eternal kingdom.

Thanks and God Bless,
Pastor Joel Cundiff

Members of St. Peter Lutheran Church,

My family and I are deeply honored and humbled at the Call that you have extended to us to serve as one of your pastors. St. Peter has been a part of my extended family for a very long time, and I've only ever heard wonderful things!

Since my visit with y'all, Liz and I have been talking about the what ifs of St. Peter, if and when a Call did come. Well, here it is! And we are feeling every emotion imaginable as we begin to process through everything and build out a list of questions for God, for each other, and for St. Peter to answer.

But as we've begun to process, I can't help but think of Noah and his family on the ark. Noah had done everything God had asked of him and was now in a season of waiting. Waiting for God to move, waiting for God to act, and waiting for God to make His will known.

In much the same way, we're in our own season of waiting (fitting for the season of Advent!), waiting for God to move, waiting for God to act, and waiting for God to make His will known to us.

Now, something about me that maybe the Call Committee picked up on, I am not one who likes to sit quietly and wait for anything! I am a doer! But in this time of deliberation, prayer, and seeking to hear God's voice on the matter, we are holding on to a simple little message God may very well have whispered to Noah, and is certainly whispering to us,

"Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

Like Noah, we don't have a clear answer and we don't have a clear direction. But what we do have is a time to sit, a time to pray, a time to be present with each other, and a time to patiently await His calling out to us, as he did to Noah,

"Come out of the ark, you and your wife." Genesis 8:16

And on that glorious day, we will come out of our ark of deliberation, knowing where God has called us to serve, and continuing to live out His command to be fruitful and multiply! Not just as a family (though baby Hohnstadt #3 comes in February and every baby we have grows the church!), but also as the kingdom of God. Growing His kingdom by sharing the message of Christ to all nations!

We know our God has a plan for us, plans to prosper us, and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and future (Jeremiah 29:11). And when those plans are made clear, we will have for you an answer! But until then, we are going to be still, and seek God's voice!

All of this is a long-winded way of saying, we have received the Call documents from you. And now, we enter a time of deliberation, prayer, conversation, and seeking God's Will. It's a time filled with excitement and wonder, but also one where we would ask for your help! As we discern His plans for us and St. Peter, we would greatly appreciate your prayers! We hope to have an answer for you as quickly as God reveals!

Thank you again for blessing us with even being considered for this position. We look forward to the hope and future that God has for us all!

Go in Peace!

Pastor Kevin Hohnstadt

Worship

A Pericope for the New Year...

From Ephesians 4:17-32, "Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

New Year's Weekend

Saturday, December 30 - 6:00 p.m.

**New Year's Eve, Sunday, December 31 - 8:00 a.m.,
9:30 a.m., & 11:00 a.m.**

**New Year's Day, Monday, January 1 -
No Worship Service**



Robert's Music Spotlight

Happy New Year! This month I wanted to share with you the song, "Set A Fire" by Will Reagan of United Pursuit. While this is not a new song, it has been an anthem I find myself coming back to in my devotional time. The chorus is straight from the prophet Jeremiah when he is speaking about all the enemies around him, and even though they tried to get him to denounce God, Jeremiah says in verse nine that even when he tries not to mention Him, it's like fire in his bones that he cannot contain. (Jeremiah 20:9-12) The song goes on to say, "there is no place I would rather be than here in your love." As I reflected on this song in the context of the new year, I want to walk into 2024 searching for God in greater ways. I want there to be a deep seated fire that I can't help but declare the greatness of our God with a passion that is explosive. Let's walk into 2024 together searching for deeper relationship with Him!

Robert W. Costa
Director Of Modern Worship

“As with Gladness Men of Old”

Greetings in Christ and Happy New Year!

I suppose I can still get away with saying “Merry Christmas,” as we indeed enter the new year still in the Season of Christmas! I hope that you have enjoyed a blessed celebration of Christ’s birth with family and friends. I am beyond thankful for all those who served in various ways at St. Peter throughout Advent and Christmas. We had a wonderful and joyous celebration of Christmas, my thanks to everyone!

Though it does not happen every year, Epiphany happens to fall on one of our weekend services this year (Saturday, January 6). Often, we might have an Epiphany Observance when January 6 falls on another day. Epiphany can sometimes easily be forgotten, as it is squeezed in between Christmas and Lent. Yet, this season is very important, as it “progresses from the bright star guiding the Magi (Wise Men) to the shining dove at the Baptism of Jesus to the glory of the Transfiguration.” This season proclaims the mission of the Church. Just as the wise men were called by the light to worship Christ, the Church invites people isolated from God to come and behold Him. On the first Sunday after Epiphany, we traditionally hear of the Baptism of Jesus where the Holy Spirit (as a dove) points out Christ in the water. Outreach into the world points to this same water, as those who are called to join Christ are called to His light in Baptism.

One of the most common hymns for Epiphany is “As with Gladness Men of Old,” which will be our sermon hymn on January 6 and 7. The text was written by William C. Dix, an English writer of hymns and carols. Dix is also known for penning hymns such as “What Child Is This.” On Epiphany in 1858, Dix was suffering from a serious illness and read the Gospel reading assigned for the day. By evening, he had composed this text based on that very passage. It was first published in 1861 and soon after was included in the groundbreaking English hymnal *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Eventually, some text was changed, as Dix originally included incorrect references to a manger. However, Scripture tells us that the wise men came to a house (Matthew 2:11) and not a stable, so the text was revised to say “cradle,” with approval from Dix. This hymn text has been included in Missouri Synod hymnals beginning with *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941).

The tune for the hymn, DIX, originated in Germany, first appearing in a 1738 (pre-dating the text!). The tune was shortened by William H. Monk (who also wrote the tune for “Abide with Me”) to fit this text, though Dix notably did not care for the tune. It is thus interesting how the tune bears his name to this day, despite his dislike of it. Nevertheless, it became a well-known and loved tune, especially when paired with this text.

May God bless you as we begin another year, and I pray that you have a very blessed Epiphany! Happy New Year!

In His Service,
Charlie Russell, Director of Traditional Music

Upcoming at Our Worship Services:

- New sermon series - “Joining Jesus” begins January 14
- New Member Welcome - Sunday, February 25, 11:00 a.m.

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP	MODERN WORSHIP	LIVESTREAM
Saturday - 6:00 p.m. Sunday - 8:00 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.	Sunday - 11:00 a.m.	Sunday - 9:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

THINGS YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER WHEN GIVING CHARITABLE GIFTS

Most charitable gifts to St. Peter are given in the form of cash because this is so familiar. However, you may be able to increase your potential impact – and experience significant tax savings – by giving non-cash assets. Non-cash assets include monetary gifts that directly come from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) as a Qualified Charitable Distribution, Stock portfolio, and/or Donor-Advised Fund. These kind-of-gifts avoid income and capital gains taxes.

Benefits of IRA Distributions (IRA):

Individual Retirement Account (IRA) owners aged 70 ½ or older are eligible to make qualified distributions directly to a charitable organization. Qualified Charitable Distribution benefits

- allow you to give in a substantial way without affecting your cash flow,
- reduce your taxable income (whether or not you itemize!),
- can be used to fulfill any charitable pledges you've made, and
- will fulfill all or part of your required minimum distributions

Benefits of Donor-Advised Fund Distributions (DAF):

Donor-advised funds are becoming increasingly popular giving vehicles because they offer administrative convenience, cost savings and tax benefits. The benefits of giving through donor-advised funds include

- receiving an immediate tax deduction at the time of your gift.
- addressing real-time ministry needs.
- saving time when giving to multiple ministries

Prior to 2024, IRA and DAF contributions to St. Peter were acknowledged and verified in writing by sending a letter to the donor through the United States Postal Service. Recently, an email was sent to those contributors explaining that St. Peter has a new financial software and this will change how non-cash assets are acknowledged. If you did not receive this notice, we want to share with you that all non-cash assets, along with other cash gifts, will be recorded on the member's annual giving statement going forward.

We encourage members who desire to see their giving on a regular basis to set up a profile on the new giving platform. You do not need to be an electronic giver to take advantage of this function. Just follow these simple instructions:

- The “**Giving**” tab on our website (stpetermacomb.com) will now direct you to the new giving platform.
- Please click the “Giving” tab on our website, and create an account.
- You will be able to view your previous and scheduled giving (optional) in your account.
- If you have any questions about these steps, please contact Maria Morelli at mmorelli@splcs.net.

Through the new giving platform, electronic offering will show up on your financial statement as they clear the bank. If you contribute through the offering plate or by mail, your contributions are entered manually and may take a few days for that process to be accomplished.

All electronic givers need to be aware that the old giving platform will be discontinued soon. St. Peter wants this to be an easy transition. If you have a problem signing up on the new platform or closing your account on the old platform, please contact Maria Morelli in the Finance Office at (586) 781-3434 x 111.

St. Peter is thankful to all of our members and friends who faithfully give of their time, talent and treasures in support of the ministry and mission of the church and school.

“TREASURES FOR TOMORROW” – BUILDING UP THE ENDOWMENT FUND!

Did you know...St. Peter Church and School has an Endowment Fund? The goal of the Endowment is to raise at least \$500,000, and then from that point on the earnings and interest can be used for many great ministry endeavors. Beginning in 2023, the Finance Board proposed that every St. Peter Church and School parishioner, from one year old to 100+, consider making-a-donation on his/her birthday towards the Endowment Fund. A suggestion was made that children and adults would donate the same amount of funds per their current age (i.e. a child 5 years old would donate \$5, an adult 50 years old would donate \$50). Proportionally, each year the birthday donations would grow \$1 per person. Of course, any monetary gift is welcome.

In the offering envelopes mailed to your home, each packet will have a special “Birthday” envelope for gifts directed to the Endowment Fund. All donations in this envelope will be applied to the Endowment Fund. Of course, you do not need to have a specific envelope to donate to the Endowment Fund. Endowment Fund gifts can arrive in many forms...through Memorial and Thank Offerings, in plain envelopes and no envelope at all! Every month we receive birthday offerings that are going directly to the Endowment Fund. As of the writing of this article, the fund has received \$17,582.00. Recently, a portion of these funds (\$16,500) was transferred to Church Extension Fund and put in a 1-year fixed note to garner a higher interest yield. Won't you consider adding your “Birthday” gift(s) too! The Finance Board is excited to share that our St. Peter Endowment Fund is growing!

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2024 offering envelopes have been directly mailed to your home. The first of six packets should arrive through the mail. Bi-monthly, you will receive a packet containing two months' worth of envelopes.

- Please contact the Church Office and ask to speak to Frieda Schluessler or email her at fschluessler@splcs.net if you have any questions about offering envelopes.
- Please contact the Finance Office and ask to speak to Maria Morelli or email her at mmorelli@splcs.net if you have any questions about electronic giving.

2024 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARDS

2024 Stewardship Commitment Cards are available in the Church Office and at the Welcome Desk in the Narthex. They are also available on the website to print or to fill out in a Google form. We encourage you to prayerfully return your cards or fill out the online form. Online forms are available at stpetermacomb.com.

IN THE KNOW!—OUR ONLINE GIVING PLATFORM IS CHANGING! HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU WILL WANT TO KNOW:

- The “**Giving**” tab on our website (stpetermacomb.com) will now direct you to the new giving platform.
- To access our previous giving platform, there is a button at the top of the “In The Know” page on our website.
- Please make every effort to cancel your recurring online giving through our previous platform and set it up with the new platform by **February 29, 2024**.
- To sign up for the new giving platform, please click the “Giving” tab on our website and create an account.
- If you have any questions about these steps, please contact Maria Morelli at mmorelli@splcs.net.

Service

Praise Report

December was a very busy month and thankfully, so many volunteers provided the much-needed support.

Thank you to the 22 Christmas Cookie bakers who made over 182 dozen! We were able to include cookies with both December distributions and they were so welcomed.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Women's Ministry made 80 blankets and pillows. What a wonderful gift to share with each family! Thank you.

The KinderBridge class at St. Peter and their families donated food. Betty Brendle used a Thrivent Grant to purchase personal care items and 20 "blessing bags" were made. These were given to families that the Pantry delivers food to monthly. They love the special attention! Thank you.

Girl Scout Troop #77959 were AMAZING. Eleven scouts packed 40 boxes in 30 minutes! Great job ladies.

Girls Soccer Team-Michigan Sporting were the elves we needed for our December distribution. They helped pack produce boxes and handed out cookies & blankets to all the households. They were so helpful and a wonderful blessing!

A special thank you to Westlake Pipe and Fittings for the turkey donations. Those were a special treat for so many families!

The GM Tech Center Finance Department came in and packed so many boxes, we ran out of a lot of food! Thanks for your support and hard work!

The Cleaning Authority in New Haven donated four huge carts of food from their recent food drive. Truly a blessing and Thank You!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Gleaner Food Drive

Gleaner Food Drive is the BIGGEST food drive event for community pantries. Gleaner will partner with local Kroger stores on Saturday, January 13, and Sunday, January 14, from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Many volunteers are needed to work at the 23 Mile & Hayes store. Volunteers can sign up for as little as 2 hours or all day. Students are encouraged to participate, and community service hours can accumulate very quickly! Volunteers are needed to hand out fliers inside the store, not outside in the cold! Volunteers are also needed to pick up food, sort, and shelf food. Please use SignUpGenius to select your volunteer time slot.

Please visit SignUpGenius for the upcoming volunteer opportunities.

- **Truck Unloading:** January 3 and January 17 from 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
- **Food Distribution:** January 4 from 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. and January 18 from 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- **Packing Boxes** is always available for families, teams, groups, or individuals. Most Monday and Wednesday 6:15 p.m. - 7:15 p.m. are currently available but arrangements must be made in advance.

If you would like to volunteer or need more information, please contact me or visit hopeforthehungrypantry.org.

Yours in Christ,
Karen Foust, Chairperson (586) 491-0652 or karenwiegand@gmail.com



THANK YOU to everyone who helped decorate our church for Christmas and to the guys who braved the cold to put up the outdoor nativity scene. We really, really appreciate your willingness to participate in this project. Also, thank you to Hessel's Greenhouse who always donates the beautiful large wreaths! We are very grateful for your generosity! **Takedown goes very fast if we have enough help, so please plan to join us on Saturday, January 13, at 9:00 a.m.** It's a good opportunity to get Noah or service hours. Call Vickie Wangelin at (586) 749-3325 if you have any questions. *The Board of Trustees and Altar Guild*

PTL School Fundraiser:

The **Annual Gala**, held Friday, March 1, at the Palazzo Grande, is our largest fundraising event of the year, and the proceeds help the school and church to minister to our students, teachers, staff, and entire church community.

Tickets are now on sale! The cost is \$85 per person through January 31. Prices increase to \$100 per person after January 31. Last year's Gala sold out and we are looking forward to another great event this year. To purchase your tickets, please register online at stpetermacomb.com. Be sure to complete the registration form, hit "Submit", and follow the instructions for payment. Tickets are only reserved once the online registration and payment have been received.



We love to support our local St. Peter families and small businesses! If you own or know of a business interested in sponsorship opportunities or, if you would like to donate items/experiences, check out the sponsorship information at stpetermacomb.com!

The Christian Growth Board needs your help! We need volunteers to help clean up the doughnuts and coffee after the 11:00 a.m. service on Sundays. (Approximate time is 12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.) If you can spare some time to keep this service rolling, we would appreciate your help!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094BADAEE2DA1FA7-44641920-sunday/118641298#/>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Christian Growth Board Members:

Liz Kukuk
(586) 623-7100
Lizboik@yahoo.com

Lisa Ventimiglio
(586) 405-9272
lventimiglio@splcs.net

The new 2024 **St. Peter Lutheran Church Macomb Membership Directory** will be ready for publishing this March. Anyone interested in placing an **advertisement** for their business, or a personal message in support of our new directory should call Jake Allport at (248) 545-4330 or email him at jallport@cathedraldirectories.com. A business card may be used in creating a new ad. Many times, members have small businesses and other members aren't aware, but would love to support them. Also, advertisers do not need to be members of our church, so feel free to pass this information along to others.

Memorial Offerings

In loving memory of Don Schwark,
a contribution has been given to:

Church Ministry by Jerry and
Sharon Blake

Music Ministry by Robert & Heidi Devroy,
Don and Cindy King, Lorraine Rosso

In loving memory of Julie Walters,
a contribution has been given to:

Giving Tree by Rose Penzien, Dave and
Jackie Wangelin

In loving memory of Marilyn Smith,
a contribution has been given to:
Church Ministry by Shelly Penzien

Thank Offerings

***In celebration and thanksgiving for
Marion Krakowski's birthday,***
a contribution has been given to:
Debt Reduction by Stan and
Marion Krakowski

DID YOU KNOW that you can remember a special occasion or loved one by purchasing flowers for the front of Church? Maybe it's a birthday, anniversary, baptism, wedding, or just a special day to honor someone.

Please sign up in the Church Office. It's easy to do and it will be noted in the weekly bulletin. The cost is \$25. Checks made payable to: *St. Peter Women's Ministry.*

Questions? Please call the Church Office.



Thank You...

The St. Peter Giving Tree Project has been such a blessing over the past few years for numerous projects, including the ongoing restoration of the parsonage and recent security upgrades throughout our school. These projected goals have been realized through the enormous generosity of you, the St. Peter congregation! Thank you for your conscientious support of improvements for our church and school properties.

Working together for St. Peter Lutheran Church and School, *The Board of Trustees and Women's Ministry*

ST. PETER "LIFE SAVERS" A special thank you to our St. Peter community for making the American Cross Blood drive a huge success. We were able to exceed our goal by having 49 donors register, 2 of which were first time donors, and collected 47 units of blood. Every donation can save up to three lives which means that through our drive we helped save 141 people! Our donors are truly heroes! We have also been awarded the special recognition of being a Premier Donor Site.

Many area hospital patients including some of our own members have been helped by the generosity of our St. Peter community. We could not pull this off without our wonderful volunteers: Lillian, Jeanette, Ruthann, Katelyn, Jacob, Mellany, Makenna, Katlyn and Zander. Thank you also to our behind the scenes crew from St. Peter. Praise God for lives being saved through your generosity! *Blessings, Ann Meerschaert and Paula Hoegemeyer*

Dear College Scholarship Committee and St. Peter congregation, thank you for the generous scholarship to put towards my tuition at Concordia! This financial gift is greatly appreciated as I continue my studies to become a Lutheran school teacher! Thank you!
Anastasia Brown

Connection



For more information about current and upcoming Bible studies and small groups, please visit stpetermacomb.com

Bible Studies:

Sundays (9:30 a.m.):

- "Foundations: Prayer" led by Chris Oberly
- "Feasts & Festivals" led by Charlie Wolf (Administrative Conference Room)
- "Book of Matthew" led by Terry Davis (Fellowship Hall, north) Beginning January 7, start the new year with an in-depth Bible study of the first book of the New Testament.
- Youth Bible Study, ages 7th - 12th grade, led by Joel and Angela Schepmann (Library)
- Sunday School, ages 3 yr. old - 6th grade

LGBT Family and Friends Support Group: Do you have a family member, loved one, or have an acquaintance with someone who is not engaging in a relationship by God's design? Do you struggle with how to interact with them, not wanting to judge others but to show God's love and just meet them where they are at? Then the Family and Friends of LGBT Support Group is for you! ***We will meet tentatively on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Small Conference Room in the Administration Wing.*** For questions, please call Carol Poterek at (586) 566-3785.

Women in the Word Wednesday Bible Study

Begin the New Year by bringing the Joy of Jesus into your heart by studying His Word in our Women's Bible Study. We will begin on Wednesday, January 10, from 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Please enter Door #28 (Church Office Door).

All are welcome. We are continuing in the Study by Sharla Fritz, "Waiting," a study of 8 Biblical women who waited for God's plan for their life. Books can be purchased on Amazon or Sharla Fritz cph.org.

Please call Karen Gluski (586) 207-6201 for more information.

**"Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."
Colossians 4:2**



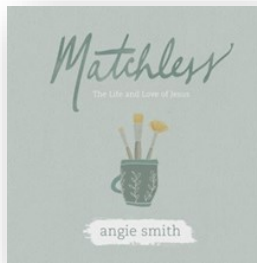
Moms in Prayer - Moms... and women! Come and join us each week as we pray for our children, schools, and community. Groups meet Mondays from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. (Zoom), Tuesdays in-person from 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. at His Rock (doors open at 8:00 a.m.) and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. (Zoom). Please contact Kelly Chirco or Nicki Wargo (nwargo@splcs.net) for more information.

"Joining Jesus"
Sermon Series & Bible Study

Adapted from Rev. Greg Finke's book titled "Joining Jesus on His Mission"

Talking to people about your faith in Jesus can be viewed as a challenge for all kinds of reasons. For one, many of us feel unprepared to simply go out and talk to others about Jesus. To help us refocus on the mission to which we've been called and the mission that Jesus has been on since before the time of His first Advent on the outskirts of Bethlehem, a Sermon Series and Bible Study called "Joining Jesus" will be offered during the months of January and February. In both the Sermon Series and Bible Study, practical "how to" witnessing points will be shared so that we, as Christ's people, actively participate in and join Jesus on the mission work He's already doing...in every day moments of our lives!

So...plan to join us for our "Joining Jesus" sermon series beginning Sunday, January 14; and plan on getting together in the Fellowship Hall from Wednesday, January 10 through Wednesday, February 7 at 7:00 p.m. for our "Joining Jesus" Bible Study.



"Matchless" Women's Bible Study

Jesus didn't come just to die for us. He came to live with us. Who is Jesus? Why did He come to earth? How can I know Him? We live in a world where there is a lot of confusion about Jesus. Too often people want to shape Jesus and His message to fit their personal needs and agendas. How can we know what is true? We have just the answer!

We invite you to come find out who Jesus really is! Meet the child who was born in a manger, walked on water, and gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf! See the God man who stood on a mountain and spoke to 5,000 people about his Kingdom and asked the crowd to stay for dinner as He took a few fish and loaves made it a feast with leftovers to spare! Meet the Savior on the hill on Calvary and be at the tomb when He steps out. Come and meet the true Jesus who desires to be your intimate friend and teacher. Come and discover the One who gave His life so you could have eternal life with Him.... Jesus!

Bring a friend and a Bible and be ready to go on an 8-week journey and walk in the footsteps of Jesus!

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME! The adventure begins on Tuesday 1/9 at 7:00 p.m. OR Thursday 1/11 at 12:30 p.m. Both studies will be at His Rock! There will be a discounted charge for the Bible Study books. Register at stpetermacomb.com! If you have any questions, call or text Sue Meyer at (586) 255-5773 or Lisa Compton at (586) 709-7699.

GriefShare wrapped up the latest 13-week schedule in mid December. We will begin our next sessions on Tuesday, January 9, and Thursday January 11. The Tuesday lessons begin at 6:30 p.m. and the identical session is held on Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. Please consider joining us if you have lost a loved one or share this information if you know of someone who has lost someone near and dear to them. We want to walk along with you to begin the healing journey GriefShare has to offer.

The GriefShare facilitators will also host a one time session titled Loss of a Spouse on January 7, at 2:00 p.m. We have held this session several times in the past. Participants have commented how helpful the session was and how informative the workbook is. The workbook can be used over and over again for reference as it addresses many different issues you face after losing your dear spouse.

For both GriefShare and Loss of a Spouse, please enter through Door #28 into the Church Office. There will be someone to greet you and show you into the Large Conference Room where all our sessions are held. It is best to park on the Romeo Plank side of the Church. If you have any questions, please call the Church Office at (586) 781-3434 or Darcel Bennett at (586) 255-7090.

New Member Class—St. Peter Church Membership

Our next New Member Class will begin on January 9 and continue through February 20 (seven weeks).

Classes will meet Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. New Members will be received at the 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday, February 25. Please call Frieda in the Church Office (586) 781-3434 if you have questions or go to stpetermacomb.com to register.

Organ Recital – Charles Russell

Sunday, January 21, at 3:00 p.m.

Featuring works by Manz, Gigout, Franck, Buxtehude, Langlais, Bach, Bender, Russell and Widor.

A free-will offering will be collected to support the July 2024 Belize VBS Mission Trip being led by Pastor Arendell. Checks should be made payable to “St. Peter Lutheran Church” with the memo line reading “Belize Mission Trip.”

January Women’s Ministry Invitation

To: All Ladies

When: Thurs., January 11
10:00 am – Fellowship and brunch
10:30 am – Meeting begins

Where: Fellowship Hall (south end)

Activity: Making fleece baby blankets for Compassion Pregnancy Center

Devotions: Vickie Wangelin

Brunch Committee:
Captain – Phyllis Stade
Helpers – Carole Vitale, Karen Bowers

Mite Counters:
Sue Koss, Lois Bellhorn, Joyce Schwark

Don’t forget your mite boxes! See you there!

NEW YEAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH

Are you ready for some new opportunities to take care of yourself after the bustle of the holiday season? Do you wish exercise could be fun and uplifting? Come and join us in one or both opportunities below! These are great ways to celebrate your gift of life – body, mind, and spirit!

Stay Healthy Exercise

People of all ages are welcome and can benefit. Shannon, our instructor, tailors the class to the audience. We work on our hearts, minds, and souls as we stretch, lift weights, and raise our heart rate slowly through low impact, easy to follow movements. Grab water, weights (two to five pounds), and a mat, and join us each **Monday morning from 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.** We will help you feel better from your head to your toes! Classes are \$5/session on a drop-in basis and are held in the Church Narthex. Enter through Door #1 on the southeast side of the Church. **Begins Monday, January 8.**

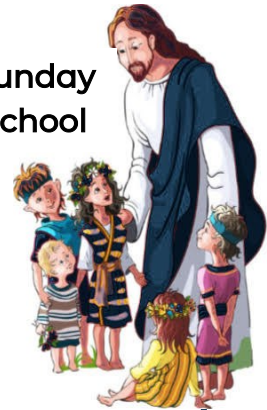
Christian Yoga

Come join us for a faith filled gentle yoga experience. Becky will guide us through prayerful meditation, stretching, and postures, embracing our mind, body, and spirit that God has given to us. All ages are welcome. Bring a yoga mat, water, and a joyful spirit for this class that will meet every **Thursday from 4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.** in the Church Narthex. The cost is \$10/session drop in. Enter through Door #1 on the southeast side of the Church. **Begins January 11.**

Contact Paula for more information hoegemeyer@att.net or (586) 322-2319.

Education

Sunday School



Our St. Peter Sunday School was blessed to present "From The Cradle to the Cross," on December 10 at the 9:30 a.m. service. We were thrilled that all students knew their parts and performed very well. We give God the glory for answering our prayers that all teachers, helpers, and students were on board for this special service.

I want to thank our teachers and helpers for their continual dedicated time to our Sunday School Ministry.

Bible lessons resume on Sunday, January 7.

May all of our parents and guardians continue to bring their children to Sunday School this New Year.

We wish our entire St. Peter family a most blessed New Year!

Yours in Christ,
Pat Losey
Sunday School Superintendent

School Update

Mr. Gary Faszholtz, from Lutheran High North, visited our Advanced Art Class on December 8 and spoke to them about color theory. He also shared some of his own personal artwork including a nativity card. Mr. Faszholtz retired from teaching in 2020, but still continues to share his love for art and ministry with students!

December was full of Advent and Christmas activities for the Preschool-8th grade students. Our annual Christkindlmarkt was held on December 15 where students were able to Christmas shop for family members. This event has been held for many years and students really enjoy it. A special thanks to Mrs. Thies and the volunteers for making it such a wonderful event!

The Kindergarten-2nd grade classes held their Christmas program on December 20 at the 3:30 p.m. service. The 3rd-8th grade classes presented their program later that day at the 7:00 p.m. service. We had approximately 2,000 worshippers, collectively, join us for these services! A lot of practice went into preparation for the programs, so a big thanks to Mrs. Wargo, Mrs. Boeling, Miss Tebay, Mr. Costa, and Mr. Russell. Thanks to our families and staff for their support as well.

The Preschool and Day School classrooms also adopted families for Christmas through the Macomb Charitable Foundation. Fourteen families with a total of 30 children received an outpouring of gifts for much needed items. We are so thankful for the generous support of this ministry and the opportunity to share God's love with families in our community.



St. Peter Macomb

2024-2025 OPEN HOUSE

Preschool - 8th Grade

Sunday, January 21
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

For more Information:

(586) 781-9296 ext. 118



STUDENT MINISTRIES

Angela Schepmann, Student Ministry Assistant

Happy 2024! It's a new year and there is one thing I love about a new year...a blank calendar! It means there are 365 new chances to learn more about Jesus...365 new opportunities to share Jesus with others...365 days to show our faith from the INSIDE OUT!

In order to reach our goals and share Jesus with the most students possible, we need you! Now is a great time to get involved with Student Ministry at St. Peter. We have 6 open positions on the Student Ministry Board. The board meets once a month to discuss what is going on with youth and young adult ministry. We are looking for enthusiastic people who want to bring Jesus to the youth and young adults. We are looking to set new goals for 2024 and really push this important ministry to new limits.

Please prayerfully consider a position on the Student Ministry Board.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

GLOW PARTY: Ring in the New Year with some glow in the dark fun! 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. January 14, at His Rock.

BIBLE STUDY: Every Sunday morning in the Library 9:30 a.m. starting back up on January 14!

2025 NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING MEETING: Zoom event on January 24 at 7:00 p.m., open to parents and kids to find out about the LCMS National Youth Gathering in New Orleans July 19-23, 2025. Open to all current 6th-12th grade students. Watch for the Zoom link in the bulletin.

SPRING HILL WINTER RETREAT: February 16 -18

Watch the bulletin and Facebook for even more upcoming events! For questions regarding events, please contact Angela Schepmann by phone/text at (586) 615-4186 or email her at aschepmann@splcs.net.



ENDURE

2025 LCMS YOUTH GATHERING
HEBREWS 12:1-3

Life Team

Focus on the Ministry of Lutherans for Life



LFL mission is to equip Lutherans and their neighbors to be gospel-motivated voices for life.

LFL vision is that every Lutheran, both individually and in community, uphold the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same.

Lutherans For Life has, since 1979, upheld the value of life affirmed by the resurrected Christ. We educate congregations on life issues with a Gospel perspective, equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. Lutherans For Life also offers help, healing, and forgiveness for anyone who bears the burden of overwhelming guilt through our 24-hour Word of Hope hotline (888-217-8679). This free service is available to men, women, and youth for information, referrals, and Scripture-based spiritual care to address life issues such as a surprise pregnancy, abortion recovery, suicide, doubting salvation, and physician-assisted suicide. Life Teams, Life Chapters, and Life Advocates are developed in congregations and communities—in collaboration with our volunteer relations team—to affirm life and participate in motivating others For Life through the Gospel. Lutherans For Life also serves youth through its Y4Life program! Specifically focused on helping high school and college youth become Gospel-motivated voices For Life, Y4Life offers a variety of educational resources, service projects, and interactive, in-person opportunities that teach youth how to uphold the lives of others. Lutherans For Life offers a wide variety of print and online resources—including our quarterly journal, LifeDate.

- Here We Stand to declare and defend the precious value of every human being.
- Here We Stand to celebrate the many blessings of abundant and everlasting life.
- Here We Stand for every human life, at each stage, in any state—no matter what she's done, no matter what he can't do.
- Here We Stand from the invisible miracle of conception to the moment of natural death—because of God's purpose, not our own plans.
- Here We Stand behind Jesus Christ's passion, not our own pride.
- Here We Stand bearing His Holy Spirit's presence, not our own capacities.

Throughout the year the Life Team will have articles covering different life issues and will spotlight certain topics each quarter.

This year the Life Week is January 14-20. The Theme is "*Just as I am.*" We will be celebrating Life Sunday on January 14. For more information on Lutherans for Life, please check out the website lutheransforlife.org

For Life Team questions, comments, or concerns, please contact Carol at carolpoterek@gmail.com.
lutheransforlife.org | www.lflmi.org

HISTORY CORNER



It is important to remember that St. Peter History is not meant to show how great St. Peter is, but how amazing God is as He works through His Word and Sacraments among us. History is His story. Our History is a Ministry that proclaims His great deeds to future generations.

Stained Glass Window

Two stained-glass windows were dedicated by Lewis Haberski and his family to St. Peter in memory of his wife, Pauline, who passed away in 1976. They were placed in the second sanctuary, now Kaiser Hall entryway. After nearly a half century of greeting members as they entered the building, they became in need of a serious restoration.

This year both pieces needed to be removed to make room for the new replacement entrance doors. The lower one was put in the History Room, and the larger upper one was put into storage. With no plans for either piece, the Historical Committee decided to take the opportunity to “do something” with the smaller one. Larry Reed generously volunteered his time and expertise in restoring the glass and did an excellent job with it.

As Larry described it: The three metal bars that were affixed to the frame had to be removed and the lower metal framing around the window had deteriorated so badly it crumpled when examined. Many solder joints were repaired, and the bottom metal border of the window was replaced. Several hours were required to clean and polish the glass to bring it up to an acceptable appearance.

A small piece of glass, located in the upper right corner of the panel, was cracked. I could not find a suitable replacement piece that would represent the time frame of the window. That type of glass has not been produced in decades. I chose not to use a new piece of glass. I felt the window’s authenticity would have been lost. So, I repaired it as best as I could.



Neal Hoegemeyer was asked to reframe it to add the lights and to be able to support its weight. The beautifully framed, lovely, restored glass now hangs next to the Fellowship Hall’s north door. Our group is dedicated to keeping St. Peter’s history alive to show how God’s work is done through us all throughout the years. We hope you enjoy it.

Submitted by Dawn Miller and Larry Reed



Rev. Kurt Wenzelburger
Senior Pastor



Rev. Mark Arendell
Pastor Emeritus



Rev. Craig Meyer
Pastor Emeritus



Mrs. Sandra LaPerriere
Interim Principal



Mrs. Robyn Adams
Early Childhood Director



Ms. Diane Hernden
Business Manager



Mr. Tim Leinberger
*Operations &
Project Management*



Mr. Charles Russell
*Traditional Worship
Director*



Mr. Robert W. Costa
*Modern Worship &
Communications
Director*

ST. PETER'S VALUES

Our Mission Statement:

To glorify God by
making and growing
disciples of Jesus
Christ

Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and make
disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the
name of the Father, of
the Son and of the Holy
Spirit, teaching them to
observe all that I have
commanded you. And
behold, I am with you
always, to the end of age.

Articles for **February Keynotes** must be submitted before 4:00 p.m. on January 15.
Please submit all articles for consideration by email to Allison Tebay at atebay@splcs.net.
All submissions should include your contact information. Please submit articles without
formatting (table, text boxes, etc.) in a Word document. Thank you!



17051 24 Mile Road, Macomb, Michigan 48042
Church: (586) 781-3434 School: (586) 781-9296
StPeterMacomb.com

Worship Service Times:

Saturday	6:00 p.m.	Traditional
Sunday	8:00 a.m.	Traditional
Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Traditional
Sunday	11:00 a.m.	Modern

Please visit **StPeterMacomb.com** to see other
opportunities to worship through Sunday School,
Bible studies, small groups and more!

St. Peter Lutheran Church and School is a member congregation of The LCMS.