

February 2010

# The Messenger

TEAM: **T**ogether:  
**E**ternally focused—  
**A**chieving—  
**M**ultiplying

The World is in turmoil  
The Economy struggles  
Christianity (in our country) is in decline  
Our own congregation has suffered

We can find negative signs everywhere, so what are we to do. We could run around screaming, “The sky is falling.” Some chicken did that once without any success. We can withdraw and attempt to protect our own little corner of the world, but that only prolongs defeat. The other option we have is to believe—and to act from that belief.

Jesus once declared victory over sin, death and the devil. He has declared us to be “more than conquerors.” So while we do not underestimate the bad situations we must face in life—neither will we underestimate the power of God. So what do we do? Start small—with yourself and with several others around you.

TEAM is an approach to small group ministry that dares to believe we can change things in the world. By turning our focus to eternity and daring to act for change we believe God will effect change. And as we come together—we believe this movement can multiply until it affects the culture of our congregation, our community, our nation, our world.

So, what are you going to do? Several teams have already begun, but more will be formed in the coming weeks. When the opportunity arrives will you act to be part of a team focused on eternal change—or you will you just keep reading the headlines? Take the challenge and be a TEAM player!

St. Peter Lutheran Church  
Rev. Jeffrey Heimsoth  
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St. Johns, MI 48879



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### OASIS Retreat

In mid January, 14 middle school students attended the “Stepping Stones of Faith” retreat at Camp Lutherhaven in Indiana. The retreat is used as a vital tool of our confirmation program while enjoying God’s creation. “Whenever you get away on a retreat, your mind and heart seems to open up to God in new ways,” stated Mark Werner. The students learned how to add personal Bible study to their routine to feed their faith both now and after confirmation. Our church was joined by another Lutheran church from Clear Lake, IN. The staff led us through games, problem solving tasks, and “break 2 feast” (bible study) sessions. During the Sunday worship our students were divided into 3 groups to perform skits based on scripture. The skits not only told scripture, they were very funny! “I can’t wait to come back,” was the response from the students following the retreat. A special thank you goes out to Gail Baltimore and Rob Ruff for driving and serving as adult leaders.

### Youth Team Meeting

We will be meeting on **January 31** following the late service (approx. 11:40). We will meet in the gym during the fundraiser dinner. We have a lot of big events coming up, so this is an important meeting. If you would like to join the team, we are looking for more high school students and adults to step up. Contact Laurie VanBeelen 517-668-8238.

### Sub Sandwich Sale

We need middle school and senior high youth to help assemble the sandwiches on **Saturday February 6<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm**. Youth are also needed following the services on Sunday to hand out sandwiches. Contact Mark if you can help out on either day. There is still time to order sandwiches by contacting the church office. The proceeds from the sub sale will help those attending this summer’s mission trip to Harrisburg, PA & other youth events.

### Senior High Lock In

On **February 19/20** the New Crew students from Concordia Ann Arbor will be at St. Peter to lead senior high students in a lock in from 7:30 pm to 9 am under the theme ***Strength will Rise***. It will be an evening filled with organized activities, faith discussions, gym time, movies, food, and some sleep. ***Bring your friends!*** Not only does the New Crew bring a lot of energy, but their faith in Christ is evident. Permission forms are available from the church office. **The cost for the evening is only \$10.** The deadline to register is February 17<sup>th</sup>. Additional adults are needed for this event; please call Mark Werner if you can help out.

### Jr High Tool Time

It’s time to break free at the **Tool Time 2010** at Concordia University Ann Arbor, **March 12-13, 2010**. The theme is “PRISON BREAK” based on the text from John 8:34-36 where Jesus says, *“I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”* Tool Time provides an opportunity for our Junior High students to spend time developing the tools they will need to be God’s light in the world, while meeting up with youth from all over Michigan! The Concordia students will lead us through worship, games, skits, testimonies, music, food, and so much more. The group we sent last year had an incredible time! The cost for the overnight is \$25 if you pay by Feb 21<sup>st</sup>. After that date the cost is \$35. **Additional adults are needed.** Registration forms available in the church office.

### Trivia Night

On **Friday, March 19** the youth ministry will hold a trivia night starting at 7pm. So, gather your friends to form a team of 8, or join a team. Each team answers 10 questions during 10 various themed rounds. The cost for the evening is \$10 per person. Refreshments and snacks are provided along with prizes. It is a great evening of fun. The proceeds help the youth ministry programs. Sign ups will start at the end of February.

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## Principal's Page

### Captive Free

As we came off Christmas break we were given the opportunity to host a group of young people from Youth Encounter called Captive Free East Lakes. This group of young people (ages 18-22) did a masterful job of entertaining our students with their stories and songs. One of the things that impressed most of our students about them was that they talked to them about faith matters in a way that they could relate to. I had my students write a paragraph about this experience. I have included some of their thoughts with this article.

Jennifer Eaton struggled with going to basketball practice or going to the concert that night. The snow that night canceled her practice and allowed her to go to the concert. Here is what she said of her experience. "Their music was fun to dance to! I had a great time! I felt as though God wanted me to go to the concert for a purpose-to experience a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that inspired me and many other children in a way that I never thought was possible."

There was more to it than the music as Phillip Hartner recognized. "When I went to the Captive Free concert, I had a very good time. I liked the new songs they taught us, and the teachings each one provided. I also enjoyed their funny skits, and my favorite part was the great puppet show they put on."

Jessica Stock pretty well summed up the thoughts of most of the class, "Captive Free is an amazing group and I am sure that we would all like them to come back and teach the word of the Lord to all ages, and if not I will treasure their arrival all of the days of my life. I will put God's word into practice and I will serve the Lord. Captive Free taught me that I can help spread God's word where ever I go and what ever I do because I am doing it for the good of the Lord and it is he who gives me strength."

Have a great month of February!

### Preschool News

Preschool enrollment for the fall of 2010 will begin this month. Returning children and their siblings and members of St. Peter Lutheran Church are eligible for first enrollment. A \$50.00 enrollment fee is required to enroll your child. Packets with general information are available in the office. SCRIP credit(s) can be applied to your child's preschool tuition.

To be eligible for fall enrollment your child must:

- Be three years old on or before September 1, 2010
- Be completely toilet trained
- Have all immunizations up to date (as required by the State)

If you or someone you know is interested in our preschool program, please contact the office (224-3178) for more information. Our spring date for our information/enrollment/ night has not yet been determined.

Cathy Chambers  
Marion Koeppen

# The Future is Now

In partnership with

**Fan into Flame**



We believe God wants the church to grow stronger! In this belief we are joining together with congregations across the state to make possible more churches to be planted in Michigan and more young people to prepare to serve in ministry positions within the church. Now is the time to act before the statistics become more alarming.

## Year Communicant Membership

1968	1,877,799
1978	1,969,279
1988	1,962,674
1998	1,952,020
2008	1,835,064

Our own congregation averaged more than 300 worshippers in 1968 compared to 255 in 2009.

LCMS congregations baptized 24,000 fewer children in 2003 than in 1973.

The numbers are negative, but God is positive. Christianity, in the United States, is in a decline, but God's heart is still to bring salvation to all people. You and I can be part of the negative thinking or we can believe and act.

Attend one of several meetings the first week of February to learn how the campaign works.

Your contribution will provide for:

- Increased scholarship support for students preparing for full-time church work.
- New church plants each year in the state of Michigan.
- Support of international ministry thru church plants/missionary support.
- A \$750 scholarship each year for St. Peter students training for full-time church work.

The Future is NOW  
Let's work together to make it bright!

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## **COMING THIS MONTH...HOPE FOR THE HURRIED LIFE**

HELP FOR THE HURRIED LIFE is a small group and worship series that will help you find time and so much more in life. The main goal of this series, based on the book of Philippians, is to help people get out of the “rat race” of life by focusing on things that make an eternal difference - - resting in the Joy of the Lord. Paul says in Philippians 3:8 “I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things.” We are tackling this issue during Lent because this is the perfect time to get our bearings in life again.

Imagine an entire congregation prioritizing their time based on making an eternal difference rather than just what’s most popular, most attractive or “the thing to do.” Imagine an entire community deciding as people of God, as families, as a congregation, to get out of the “rat race” by cutting out things that don’t advance the kingdom. Imagine the impact of focused, intentional, content living. What a great way to respond to God’s call that our “attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 2:5.

We will become contagious people of God to the world as we live in peace, contentment, joy and focus in a hurried world. Join us as we demonstrate how people of God have something the rest of the world wants. More will come to know Jesus Christ through our example. God’s kingdom will be advanced, God will be pleased, and we will see a focus back on Christ our world so desperately needs.

### **HELP FOR THE HURRIED LIFE**

**Feb.20/21      Week 1 - Philippians 1**  
**I'LL NEVER GET IT ALL DONE - CHOOSING WHAT'S BEST**

**Feb.27/28      Week 2 - Philippians 2**  
**I'M FEELING OVERWHELMED - EYES LIKE JESUS**

**March 6/7      Week 3 - Philippians 3**  
**EVERYONE WANTS A PIECE OF ME - FINDING FOCUS**

**March 13/14    Week 4 -Philippians 4**  
**I WISH I COULD QUIT - CALM IN THE STORM**

**March 20/21**  
**A CELEBRATION OF THE UN-HURRIED LIFE**



### Cabin Fever Breakout

We did it! We would like to thank all the people who got dressed up and acted out their roles. Great job also to Mark for the sound effects. What a fabulous job the youth group

did for us. Thank you-thank you! John Burgess, you get a big hug for helping us put up the banner. Also, a big hug and thank you for Tammy Hine for all the painting of the banner and Mr. Ed for taking pictures.

Virginia Davis  
Jeanette Mehney

P.S. Hope the lucky ones that got to take home a centerpiece enjoy them. Orvest & Virginia Davis

Dear Festival of Lights Committee,  
Thank you so much for the help on our propane bill. It'll sure come in handy for this time of year. God bless everyone of you,  
*(a family assisted through Festival of Lights)*

### The Giving Tree

This year the giving tree served four families, with a total of 12 people. We want to thank all the people who took time to buy gifts for the individuals and gave money to our TIM missionary. This year again demonstrated the generosity of the St. Peter family in helping out those in need. The families were happy to receive your gifts. We tried something new this year, in that we wanted to reach out to their spiritual needs as well so some gift items were devotional books and bibles. Thank you again for opening up your hearts. The Baker Street Bible Study

For all the wonderful people at St. Peter, My family and I wanted to tell you all Thank You for so very much for the assistance provided to us in such a great time of need. Words can NOT even begin to express how grateful we are to have received this generous gift; it helped us in so many ways, not just financially but it helped me see that there are still good, caring people out there that are not driven by greed. Your act of kindness was a true blessing, as well as an eye opener. It has given us hope to believe that maybe we will all be ok as long as there are people who still care like all of you!! We send the warmest holiday wishes to all and your families and God bless all of you wonderful, heartfelt, individuals. Thank you all.

Grateful,  
*(a family assisted through Festival of Lights)*

To the congregation of St. Peter:  
Our congregation would like to thank you for your generous gifts to the needy in the Lansing area. The clothing and many other gifts, also your time, are greatly needed in this time when we Christians celebrate the birth of our Savior. Christ Lutheran is a lamp stand, the light of the God in this central downtown area., as you are to your community. But we also are helping brothers and sister of faith who have fall on hard times and to ensure them that God has not forgotten them. Myself and my family were blessed with the gift of baptism at St. Peter many years ago. Some of you may remember us. We have never forgotten the hard working and dedicated servants there, bringing up young people in the ways of the Lord so that they too may receive God's forgiveness through the word and sacraments. May the peace of the Lord be with you all now and forever!  
Your brother in Christ,  
Preston Rapelje

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## Thank You!!

To all the members of St. Peter Lutheran Church—  
My family and I would like to thank you all for the wonderful food basket. Thank you for thinking of us while my husband is out of work. We pray that it will not be for too long!

Have a Merry Christmas & Thank You!  
*(a family assisted through Festival of Lights)*

Thank you to Todd Savage and Frank Hart for their helping in changing the light bulbs in the gymnasium. Todd supplied the man-lift at no charge and Frank helped with replacing the bulbs.  
John Burgess

### From CACS

Dear Friends,  
Thank you for your generous donation to Walk for Warmth. We currently have no grant funds available for people with natural gas. This will allow us to help those in need!

Thanks again!  
Pauline Baert  
Capital Area Community Services

Money remaining in the Heat Assistance Fund after Festival of Lights was given to CACS.

Dear St. Peter Lutheran Church, Pastor Heimsoth and Tracy Dunn,  
I have recently received a check for all of you to help my family pay our Consumer bill. We deeply appreciate this generous donation. Times are very hard for us this year and sometimes I wonder how much longer will it be before we can see the light at the end of this dark tunnel. With all of your help, your church has given us some hope that great things are yet to come. Thank you greatly & deeply again.  
May God Bless all of you and Merry Christmas to all!  
*(a family assisted through Festival of Lights)*

Members of St. Peter Lutheran Church—  
On behalf of the Family Assistance Center, I would like to commend and thank all of you for assisting with our 2009 Adopt a Family Program. The program was larger than ever this year and the wverwheleming support of the church was greatly appreciated. Because of your donation, several of our military families will be assisted. I am truly blown away each year with the outpouring of generosity surrounding this program. Thank you, from the FAC, the Families and our Service Members.

Merry Christmas,  
Stephanie Rodgers (Family Assistance Coordinator)

We received a Christmas greeting and a donation of \$50.00 from Raymond & Lois Bergdolt with the following note:

Keep up the good work. God Bless. Given in honor of all our friends at St. Peter  
Raymond & Lois Bergdolt

*Raymond is a former principal of St. Peter and now resides near his hometown of Frankenmuth.*

### From MOST Ministries

Thank you for your gift of \$100.00. We truly appreciate your support, which allows us to carry out the work of MOST Ministries. The work of MOST Ministries depends upon generous gifts such as yours. You are truly a blessing to all those we serve.

Sincerely,  
Carly Stevens  
Executive Director

### Ladies Aid News

There will be changes in the Senior Member Meals this year. There will be no Senior Member Meals in January, February, and March; and then will resume in April. We decided with the winter months upon us it makes it difficult or nearly impossible for our seniors to get out. Seniors may choose to attend the weekly soup & sandwich luncheons served on Wednesdays during Lent. We will then resume the senior meals through the Spring and Summer months.

Our Lent Soup & Sandwich Luncheons will start on Ash Wednesday, the 17th of February after the 11:00 Service, then every Wednesday there after until Holy Week.

There were just a few ladies @ the quilting & meeting; but due to the bad weather we struggled through. We will hope for more on Thursday, February 4th, when we will meet again.

### December Mites

\$245.17



### Directory Updates/Corrections

Mike & Alison Bremer  
307-9274

Bill Caruss  
224-7065

Yvonne Flegler  
fleglerym@gmail.com

Evelyn Peterson  
517-243-0141

Matt & Jenny Scott  
593-2968



### Attention Campers!

The annual St Peter church/school camping trip has been scheduled for Friday, August 20 and Saturday, August 21. Due to popular demand, we will again be staying at the Isabella County Coldwater Lake Park (just northwest of Mt Pleasant). Camp sites are \$25/night and cabins are \$45/night. We would like to have a block of reservations made by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Call Laurie VanBeelen (517-896-6823) if you would like to go or with any questions. You can also check out the campground at [www.isabellacounty.org/parks/clfp.html](http://www.isabellacounty.org/parks/clfp.html) for more specifics.

### Evening Quilting

With the recent earthquake in Haiti, quilts are needed more than ever. Please join us the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm to tie - or if you prefer, we have a sewing machine available if you'd like to sew the squares together - or if you have an eye for color, lay them out so someone else can sew them together. Teamwork!! This is a great time to socialize and get to know one another.

## News & Announcements

### Memorials & Gifts

In loving memory of:

Clemens & Marcella Kloeckner

Sherry Stearns

Henry C. & Doretta Witt

Robert & Shirley Sampson

Emma & George Guthrie

Lilly & Leo Schafer

Leone & Don Balzak

Raymunda McHaffey

To Birthday Gift to Jesus      \$200

To LCFS      \$50

### Faith at Home Parenting Team

We're looking for a couple to *lead* our Parenting Team. This doesn't necessarily take people who are the best parents in the world with the best kids in the world -- it does, however, take a commitment and a heart for ministry. Training is available. We have several people interested in *servicing* on the team. If this is something you think you might like to be involved in, please call Diane Thurston (593-2480) or Pastor Heim-

### Green Thumbs Wanted!!

We are looking for volunteers to assist in garden maintenance next summer. Time commitment is approximately one hour, two or three times throughout the summer, depending on how many people sign up. If you are interested, please contact Sandy Lockwood at 517-669-7531



### Lenten Worship Services

#### Ash Wednesday

February 17    11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

#### Midweek Lenten Services

Wednesdays February 24-March 24

11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

*Light lunch to follow the 11:00 a.m. services*

Young adult coffee hour continues on February 7th in Pastor's office starting at 9am.

# Events & Opportunities

## Camp Lutherhaven's Winter Family Retreat

Come out to Camp Lutherhaven for the March Family Retreat on March 6-7. An optional Friday overnight is available on March 5 for those families who would like to have a longer "mini vacation". There will be time for your family, hikes, worship, age appropriate Bible studies, and no dishes for the weekend! Sign up by calling the Camp Lutherhaven office at (260) 636-7101 or e-mail the camp at [camp@lutherhaven.org](mailto:camp@lutherhaven.org). Registration forms are also available in the church office.

More information is available at [www.lutherhaven.org](http://www.lutherhaven.org)

## Red Cross Blood Drive

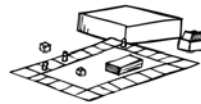


Tuesday, February 2  
1:00-6:45 p.m.

Call the office to schedule your appointment

## Family Game Day

We still have a few months before spring!!! Get the family out of the house and join the fun with an afternoon of games for ***ALL*** ages (0 to 100)!! We will provide the bean bag toss and BINGO for the little ones!!! But if you like, bring a favorite board game and a snack to share.



**Fellowship Center**  
**Sunday, February 21**  
**2:00-4:00 p.m.**

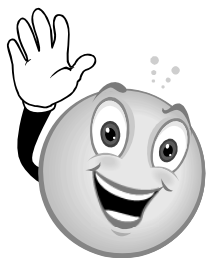
A sign-up sheet for the bean bag toss (2 players per team) is in back of church and the entrance to the Fellowship Center. Even if you don't have a team, come and we will pair you up.

So get out of your easy chair and come join us for an afternoon of fun with your family at St. Peter.

Any questions?? Call Jenny Scott, Sara Thurston or Tracy Dunn

***Sponsored by the Fellowship Team***

## March Greeter's Schedule



Date	8:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
March 7	Bonnie Bowen & Jean Dilts	Trish Martens & Debbie Schrader
March 14	Jim & Jan Mehney	Stephen & Karen Speerbrecker
March 21	Bruce & Jeanette Mehney	Matt & Laurie VanBeelen
March 28	Francis Burl & Edward Mikula	Lori Klein & Kathy Love

If you are unable to greet on your scheduled Sunday, please find a substitute and let the church office know. We will then print the correction in the bulletin.