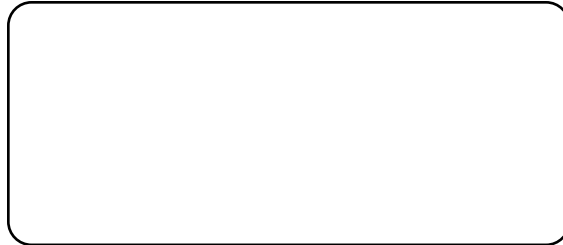


# St. Peter Lutheran Church & School

Rev. Timothy Bayer  
8990 Church Rd.  
St. Johns, MI 48879

Phone: 989-224-3178  
E-mail: church@stpeterriley.org  
school@stpeterriley.org

**We are on the web!**  
**[www.stpeterriley.org](http://www.stpeterriley.org)**



## **THE MESSENGER** *April 2022*



### **Church Services**

Divine Service – Sundays at 9 am  
Office of Matins – Wednesdays at 9 am

Advent and Lent – Wednesday services at 7 pm  
Feasts and Festivals – Services as announced in calendar and bulletin

# A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

## Wars and Rumors of Wars

*And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.* – Matthew 24:6-8

Jesus spoke these words in answer to two questions in Matthew's Gospel. 1) When will the temple be destroyed, and 2) what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? In Mark and Luke, the question of the disciples is focused on the destruction of the temple, but Jesus gives the same answer that encompasses both the end of the temple and the end of the age at the Lord's return.

Jesus seems to respond to both questions with the same answer. Much time is spent trying to determine which words Jesus says in connection with the destruction of the temple and which words were said concerning the end of the world. But it is not easy put each statement neatly into a box.

This is because each question has the same answer or at least answers that largely overlap. The destruction of the temple was the end of *their* world as they knew it, and Jesus' coming again is the end of the entire world. Both ends are accompanied by the calamities Jesus speaks about. These things will happen until Jesus comes again. There will be wars and rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes until the day the Lord Jesus descends from heaven with a shout.

As we look at the tragedy in Ukraine, we know we are not to be alarmed. The end is not yet, though it is closer now than when we first believed. The world has been in birth pains since Christ rose from the dead—for then the new Creation had already come, the release from bondage for which the whole creation longs and waits. We live in the birth pains of this new Creation being brought to fulfillment at our Lord's return.

The Christian is not alarmed at the birth pains but expects them. The Christian does not occupy himself with determining the hour of our Lord's return, which no one knows except the Father in heaven. Rather, the Christian lives watching and waiting, always prepared for His return and the completion of our salvation.

Though our eyes see tragedy and evil, we know by faith that Jesus is reigning. He is seated at the right hand of the Father and has all authority in heaven and on earth even now. He is working all things out for good for those who love the Lord—even our brothers and sisters in Ukraine. Even as their homeland is under attack, even in the worst conflicts this world can bring, Christians have peace. How? They are part of the kingdom which is not of this world. The kingdom which cannot be shaken. As Christ comes in Word and Sacrament into this crumbling world, the world to come is ours now. For our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, they are experiencing firsthand how true our Lord's words are—*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* (John 14:27).

We pray for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine and for us all—*deliver us from evil.* This prayer is fully answered only in the world to come, yet it is ours today in the kingdom that comes to us in Christ our Lord.

In Christ,

Pastor Bayer

# A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Church Newsletter - April

We turn to Him afraid, and through Him we rejoice!

The first day that you can stand outside without a coat and feel warmth, sun all around, is an experience like no other. I wonder if this feeling of relief and happiness is the same in other places, where winter weather can't stand up to a Michigan winter. Don't get me wrong, the snow in winter is beautiful and offers so many fun opportunities. Yes somehow, at the end, there is this feeling that the sicknesses and the bitter cold will never end. And then we have our first, sunny, warm, day. The cold quickly fades away, and everyone heads outside to play on the playground, go for a walk, or just stand outside and visit with each other. We soak up the sun as if the cold never happened.

At the end of Mark, there is an account of Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome going to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. When they got there, there was no body, only a young man telling them that Jesus had risen and that they would soon see him. And their response, "they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." Mark 16:8

The women didn't immediately realize what was happening. They didn't see the promise that had come from the sacrifice. When they realized the truth, that they were no longer dead in their sin but had the promise of eternal life, I imagine there was a feeling similar to the first warm sunny day after a long winter.

As Christians, we are still sinners who live in a sinful world. Sometimes we let doubt and fear take over. But we also stay in the Word and hold on to the truth. God is always reminding us that we can let go of our fear and rejoice in the hope we have through Jesus' resurrection. Every student at our school has their own story. They have their own struggles, doubts, and fears. I pray that this Easter, they take their fears to the cross and leave rejoicing.

Blessings in Christ,  
Erika Brown  
Principal/Teacher

# A LETTER FROM THE PRESCHOOL

## A MONTH TO CELEBRATE

We have had another great month at preschool. We started enrollment for the fall in January and are thrilled to have 21 preschoolers enrolled. We have a few spots remaining on Tuesdays and Fridays. We have started a waiting list for the other days. We are very excited to have a full class for the fall.

March is Reading Month was a huge success. We read several new stories throughout the month and Ms. Erin came and read to the children. We celebrated at the end of the month with a bounce house party and a movie and pajama day.

We will have an end of the year picnic at the park in May to celebrate a great year of preschool.

As always, thank you for your prayers and support. We feel very blessed to work with such amazing people at St. Peter.

Blessings,

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Fletcher





March 5, 2022

Dear St. Peter Lutheran School,

We are truly grateful for generous people like you throughout the country that have chosen to not only support us with their gifts, but with their prayers as well. Your gift card that we received over the Christmas season was a tremendous blessing to us.

We are a fourth year Seminary couple that moved here from Hubbard, Iowa. We were blessed with a wonderful home congregation in Hubbard and always enjoy our visits when we are back. Previously, I taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher in the public school and my wife, Michelle was an insurance agent. We have 3 grown children, all in their 20's. Our daughter, her husband, & our 2 granddaughters as well as our youngest son still live in the Hubbard/Iowa Falls area. Our oldest son moved to Fort Wayne shortly after we did in 2018 and it's a blessing to have him nearby.

The Seminary family is a close-knit family that takes care of each other, and we have been fortunate to make friends along the way. Even though we miss our family back home, we are blessed with the family and friends that we have here.

Thank you again, your support is greatly appreciated.

God bless you and keep you in His care.

*Jason and Michelle Zoske*



13400 Pinewood Street, Gowen, MI 49326

Phone: 616-754-3785

[office@campconcordia.org](mailto:office@campconcordia.org)

[www.campconcordia.org](http://www.campconcordia.org)

Camp Concordia exists to provide opportunities *for children, youth and their families*, to encounter Christ in the midst of God's Creation: *Enriching Body and Soul and resulting in strong missional skills and actions.*

January 19, 2022

St. Peter Lutheran Church  
8990 Church Rd  
St. Johns, MI 48879

Dear Friends at St. Peter Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your recent gift of \$250 toward the ministry of Camp Concordia.

Camp is already looking at an increased enrollment for 2022. This record registration presents potential opportunities as well as challenges. We don't know how the latest COVID-19 issues might affect summer camp numbers as summer approaches with additional state guidelines. We will need more staff in a "difficult to hire" environment. (Across the USA, organizations like camps, have experienced the shortage of staff.) We treasure your prayers as much as we appreciate your gifts.

Most recently Camp Concordia received a significant estate gift that allows us to get VERY serious about meeting the need for new bathrooms/showerhouse. The board of directors, at their last meeting, was happy to be talking about a culture of "building" instead of "surviving." Solving problems has been replaced with looking for opportunities to fulfill the mission as a premier children's ministry. This includes a very active approach to adding a new year-round ministry staff for support and ministry expansion.

I am so glad that you and I get to be on this *building* journey together.

Happy Winter!



Peace in Christ,

Dr. Craig S. Oldenburg  
Camp Director

SEEK A BLESSING!

# CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS & EVENTS

Glenn Bennett and family would like to extend their thanks and appreciation for all the cards and prayers during this difficult time.

Thanks to all the “angels” at St. Peter for everything you do to keep God’s house in working order. For every minute you dedicate to His service we are truly blessed!

Thank you,

Ann Shellito

## Card shower for Terry Ordway

If you would like to send a birthday card to Terry Ordway you can send it to Michelle Bailey. Her address is 4152 W. Centerline Rd. St. Johns, Mi. 48879.

If you would like to come celebrate his birthday with him it’s on Saturday April 23, 2022 from noon to 3 in the School gym. He would love to see some familiar faces that he has not been able to see in a while.

If you have any questions feel free to contact Michelle Bailey at (517) 749-8933.

## LADIES AID SALE

We welcome donated homemade items for Ladies Aid Sale. We have a display case in the hallway outside of the Fellowship Hall. Drop off your donated items at the church office or at church on Sundays. Proceeds go towards the Ladies Aid to support the needs of the congregation, charities we give to and the seminary student we support. There will be a payment box on the Ladies Aid display. Makes checks payable to St. Peter Ladies Aid.

## Ladies Aid & LWML News

We still gather every Thursday morning to tie quilts, there’s 3 to 5 ladies; we will welcome many newbies.

Mites Sunday is April 24th



Save the Date

**Rainforest Explorers**

Jesus Leads the Way

+

ST PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH

8990 CHURCH RD, ST JOHNS

JUNE 20 thru 24, 2022

9 am to Noon

The poster features a green background with a faint rainforest scene. At the top, it says 'Save the Date' in white. Below that is a wooden sign with the words 'Rainforest Explorers' in a stylized, bubbly font. Underneath the sign is the phrase 'Jesus Leads the Way' and a small cross symbol. The bottom section of the poster is a dark green band with white text providing the church name, address, dates (June 20-24, 2022), and time (9 am to Noon).

# CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS & EVENTS

## *FEBRUARY SCHEDULE*

### ***GREETERS:***

Suspended until further notice

### ***ELDERS:***

Ken Bond

Ryan West

John Burgess

Dave Bengel

### ***ALTAR FLOWERS***

### ***ALTAR GUILD:***

Geri & Jastram

(If you are interested in helping as Altar Guild please contact Geri Jastram )

## *Shut-In Visit List Monthly Visits*

Virginia Davis

Charlie Silm

Shirley Edwards

Albert Smith

Julie Johnson

Linda Davis

Terry Ordway

## **Prayer Chain**

If you have a prayer request, please call the church office (989) 224-3178 during office hours. If in the evening or weekend, please call Pam Mohr (989) 292-1686.

## The SPLC Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund benefits the church by offering members opportunities to provide a future legacy for the church and their families. While the original gifts grow through prudent investments, the church can use the earnings each year to enhance church ministries, outreach, and care facilities.

The endowment gift does not need to be a large gift. If 1 person contributed \$25 per week for one year, it would amount to \$1,300! If 10 people contributed \$25 per week for one year, it would amount to \$13,000! If 50 people contributed \$25 per week for one year, it would amount to \$65,000!

For more information, or to make a contribution, please contact a board member, Sandy Lenneman, Paul Weismantel, Jeanette Mehney, or Sara Thurston

## **Hot Lunch**

If you are interested in signing up to help with a hot lunch day please contact the church office, sign up in the back of the church, sign up on the volunteer board at school, or send me an email. You would be providing lunch for 40 people.

Erika Brown

Principal@stpeterriley.org



# CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS & EVENTS

*April 2022 Stewardship Newsletter*

## **Blessed Shall You Be**

“Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.” (Deuteronomy 28:3-6)

This is God’s promise to the Israelites as they stood beyond the Jordan outside of the Promised Land. He promises blessing to His people. He will make them prosper, whether they are in the city or the field. He will make their fruit of their work to prosper, whether from the ground, their wombs, their flocks, or their herds. He will make them to prosper in all things, whether upon their coming in or their going out.

But there’s a catch. He would do this for Israel only “if you obey the voice of the LORD your God.” (Deut. 28:2b) If they did that, He would cause that “all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you.” (Deut. 28:2a). If they didn’t obey the voice of the Lord, if they didn’t keep the commandments of the Lord and “walk in his ways” (Deut. 28:9), they would be met with curse and woe. The blessings would be replaced with curses. Everything that the Lord promised to prosper and bless would be cursed and fail.

Thanks be to God that our Lord Jesus Christ has come into our flesh and fulfilled the law for us – in our place and for our benefit. Our Lord Jesus Christ died for us – in our place and for our benefit. Our Lord Jesus Christ is risen from the dead for us – in our place and for our benefit. By this we have justification before God. We are forgiven, clean, holy, and righteous. The blessing of God is promised to us in Christ Jesus. It depends upon his work, not ours.

All this is ours in Holy Baptism. For in Holy Baptism, God claims us as His own, makes us His children, His heirs, and His holy people. And so it is that the work of our hands and its fruit is holy because we are holy in Christ. It is pressed into His service, and it thereby becomes a blessing to us and to our neighbor.

For this great gift, our reception of the blessings of God because of Christ Jesus our Lord, it is our duty to thank and praise, serve, and obey Him. This is not in order to receive the blessings but because in Christ we already have. With this in mind, we sit down on the first day of the week and set aside as He has prospered us to give to His church for His work of blessing in our midst (1 Cor. 16:2).

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://www.lcms.org/stewardship)

# CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS & EVENTS

## **Annual Easter Celebration Offering**

You are invited to join in the Annual Easter Celebration Offering with an extra financial contribution over and above your regular offering. Please use an envelope marked "Easter Celebration Offering", and place your gift in the offering plate or mail it to the church. Your gift will be put in the Heritage Preservation Fund to help maintain the St Peter Lutheran Church grounds and buildings. Thank you!!

## **What is the Heritage Preservation Fund?**

It is a fund to provide money to maintain the St Peter Lutheran Church campus. The Heritage Preservation Fund will allow us the dollars to do special maintenance or improvement projects such as roof replacement, new septic system, etc. without having to secure a loan to accomplish the task.

Did you know that the St Peter Lutheran Church campus is 6+ acres? It has 5 buildings (church, fellowship hall, school, teacherage, parsonage), a cemetery, 2 parking lots, a playground and sports fields. That means there are also 10 restrooms, 9 air conditioners, 12 furnaces and 3 kitchens that have to be maintained.

The Lord has been generous to the St Peter congregation for over 150 years. He has provided us with a beautiful campus. We must be good and faithful stewards of what God has entrusted us. The Heritage Preservation Fund will help us to preserve what the Lord has provided.

## **Help for Ukraine**

Please continue to pray for all of those affected by the Russian invasion in Ukraine. A recent article in the LCMS Reporter explains how the LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM) is working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine (ELCU) and partner churches to provide much needed support. According to the article, Rev. Serge Maschewski, bishop of the ELCU, requests funds for medicine; fuel for the evacuation of children, women and the elderly; food; and personal safety gear for pastors who work in dangerous areas. Maschewski said that the needs are always changing: "I don't know the exact amount of money. Today we need food. Tomorrow we need medicine. The list changes daily."

To support the people of Ukraine, please pray for them.

If you would like to help by contributing to help meet their needs, there are several ways to donate:

Text LCMSUKRAINE to 41-444.

[Give online via LCMS Mission Advancement.](#)

Call the LCMS at 888-930-4438.

[Give online via Mission Central.](#)

Call Mission Central (Mapleton, Iowa) at 712-882-1029.

By mail, make your check out to "The LCMS," and write "Ukraine Relief" in the memo line. Mail to: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861.

Reference: ['The list changes daily': Help for Ukraine \(lcms.org\)](#)



### Quilting

Making pictures for the quilting crew to work on. Stop by the school and see how neat it turned out. It's hanging in the hall across from the gym. Thanks so much to the quilting crew for doing this. It was so much fun and it turned out amazing. You ladies do awesome work!





### **March is Reading Month.**

Children participated in many activities to celebrate reading. Students worked very hard to increase their reading minutes to attain their bronze, silver, and gold medals.



### **Field Trip**

Field trip to Jastrams Sugar Shack. Children learned about the production of maple syrup. The students and staff are very thankful to Geri and Carl for allowing us to visit their farm to see the work that is put into making this delicious syrup to put on our pancakes. They even made Maple Syrup candy for us to sample!

LCMS International Mission, Accra, Ghana - February 19, 2022

Saint Peter Lutheran Church  
8990 Church Rd.  
Saint Johns, MI 48879-9230

Dear Pastor Bayer and people of God at Saint Peter Lutheran Church,

On January 28, 2022, our heavenly Father called my dad, Glenn Erber home to heaven.

Together with our children, Mom and Dad have been our closest mission partners.

Mom and Dad were with Joyce and me in May 1986 at the seminary in Fort Wayne for "Call Service" and the announcement of my first (and only) call in the ministry to: The Board for Mission Services, Nigeria, West Africa. They helped us pack our missionary barrels and bags for our first departure to Africa in January 1987.

They came to visit us in Nigeria in 1990, soon after our first child was born. They spent time with Chief Besong Obun, Eugene Ebu-Ekpang, Nagu's mother and many others. They came to live in Nigeria and taught at Hillcrest school from 1994 to 1996. These were the years when we were treading where there was no other Christian presence. We were trekking and planting churches in villages 30 miles from the end road. Mom and Dad simultaneously had great teaching experiences yet also suffered falls with broken bones and severe sicknesses. While they taught at Hillcrest School, our oldest, Luke, stayed with them and went to First Grade at Hillcrest school (9 hours away from home).

Back in the USA, Mom and Dad were our tremendous home base support team. We relied on them greatly during the years I worked through the Fort Wayne seminary PhD in Missiology degree to study traditional African training methods for training local indigenous pastors and church leaders. Mom and Dad were here for me in 2003, when I fell and had to be evacuated out of our little village in a remote corner of Nigeria and brought back to the USA for surgery and six months of recovery. The story goes on and on. And for years, Mom and Dad helped us with printing, enveloping and mailing these letters. (I'm not sure how we are going to do these letters now! As with everything else, God will help us!)

Dad was a great mission partner!

We rejoice, Dad is in heaven, in the everlasting arms of Jesus! His body awaits the resurrection in Hillcrest cemetery in Jackson, Michigan. The day of resurrection will be amazing for all who believe!

In the meantime, we've got to keep reaching out to those who are still lost!

Joyce and I have been with Mom during these last couple of weeks helping her to work through a multitude of details. Joyce and I have tickets return to Ghana on Thursday, February 24.

Thank you for your prayers and support! The Lord be with you!

*David and Joyce*

# Glenn R. Erber

Glenn Ralph Erber was born on July 5, 1931, in the home of Henry and Gladys (Loveland) Erber on their farm in Glenburn, North Dakota. He was born again into God's family through baptism a few days later.

Glenn and his wife, Lois, were blessed with and by a large, loving family. Glenn is survived by his wife Lois, his sister Gladys (John) Eichelberg, and his sister-in-law Jane Erber. He was preceded in death by his siblings Arnold Erber, Henry Erber, Jr., Inez (Roger) Brown, Florence (Lytle) Cook, and Norman (Sharyl) Erber.

God blessed Glenn and Lois with their children Julee (Ron) Shaw of Jackson; the Rev. Dr. David (Joyce) Erber of Accra, Ghana; Ameer (Rev. Mark) Boettcher of Jackson, Missouri; and Betsy (Rev. Steve) Stolarczyk of Unionville, Michigan. Those blessings only grew through the years with the addition of grandchildren: Matthew Shaw, Bethanee (Leif) Palland, Mirian Sunderman, Morgan (Seth) Yellowfox, Charity Sunderman, Dr. Luke Erber, Jonathan Erber, Naomi (Michael) Erslund, Faith Boettcher, Grace Boettcher, Paul Boettcher, Michael Stolarczyk, Owen Stolarczyk, Caleb Block, Lex Stolarczyk; and great-grandchildren: Autumn, Sebastian, Benjamin, and Frankie Shaw; Austin, Zoey, and Barrett Miller; Elizabeth, Lucy, and Jack Yellowfox; Josephine and Jeffrey Burton; and Evelyn Stolarczyk.

In spite of physical distance, the whole family remained close through their shared love and Glenn's rich sense of humor. They were blessed in their community with wonderful neighbors who, through the years, became good friends, sharing his joy and satisfaction in gardening, reading, woodworking, the Detroit Tigers, the Detroit Lions, and Michigan State sports.

Glenn started on the path to full time church work from an early age. After reaffirming his faith in the Rite of Confirmation, he was enrolled at Concordia High School and Concordia Teachers College in Seward, Nebraska. His teaching ministry first took him to a one room Lutheran school in Hoxie, Kansas. Upon graduation, God also blessed him with the gift of a wife, Lois (Kellner), on August 1, 1954. Together, they began teaching at Zion Lutheran School, Tobias, Nebraska. There Glenn served as a teacher, principal, organist, choir director, youth group leader, Sunday School director, janitor, and congregational secretary. Glenn next served Christ Lutheran School in Columbus, Nebraska. While there, he completed a master's degree in Education Administration at the University of Nebraska. Then, in 1966, he accepted the call to serve as principal at Trinity Lutheran School, Jackson, Michigan. While at Trinity, he took part in three major building programs, established a preschool program and a childcare facility, and transitioned the school into the computer age. He led the school faithfully, doing whatever was needed, including at times, driving a school bus.

He also served the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as a member of the Board of Directors, as the Chairman of the South and East Teachers Conference, as the Program Chairman and Conference Chairman of the District Principals' Conference, and as a member of the District Accreditation Committee.

Glenn continued to serve at Trinity after his retirement, leading a Bible study and visiting shut-ins. He also served beyond Trinity, served as principal for two years at St. Matthew Lutheran School, Holt, and served as the director of teacher placement at Concordia University, Ann Arbor. He and Lois also taught missionary children in Nigeria for two years and served in other mission trips in Poland, Venezuela, the Virgin Islands and in various parts of the United States. God blessed Glenn's life with many dear friends. Even as he was blessed, he was a blessing to many others along the way.

Finally, on January 28, 2022, God blessed Glenn with a holy death and took him home to rest in the arms of Jesus to await the resurrection of the dead. "Jesus said . . . "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live!" (John 11:25-26).

The funeral service was held on Thursday, February 3, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 122 West Wesley Street, Jackson. The Rev. Galen Grulke officiated. Glenn was laid to rest with at Hillcrest Memorial Park. Memorial donations were given to Trinity Lutheran School and/or Lutheran Hour Ministries.





# 2022-2023 OPEN ENROLLMENT



**DISCOVER** the difference at St. Peter!

Enrollment for St. Peter Lutheran School Pre-K – 8th grade is open!! Please contact the school for more information and school tours!!

Rev. Timothy Bayer, *Pastor*

Mrs. Erika Brown, *Principal*

Mrs. Lisa Smith, *Preschool Director & Lead Teacher*

Mrs. Corrine Fletcher, *Administrative School Assistant*

St. Peter Lutheran Church & School

8990 W. Church Rd. St. Johns, MI 48879

*1/2 mile south of Price Road between Dexter Trail and Forest Hill Office*

**Phone:** 989-224-3178

**E-mail:** [school@stpeterriley.org](mailto:school@stpeterriley.org)

**Website:** [www.stpeterriley.org](http://www.stpeterriley.org)

Blessings, St. Peter Lutheran Staff

