

# The Messenger

## Unpacking Christian Worship

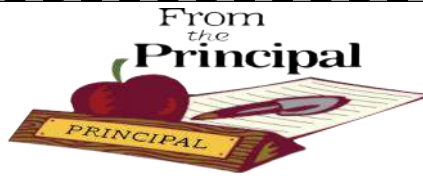
We talked all about this at our Wednesday night Bible class, and I thought it would be beneficial to bring these points together in an article. What is worship? Often we think of worship as the gathering of believers to offer prayers, thanksgivings, and praise to God, and a sermon is given where we learn about God. This is all correct, but this is not the centrality of Christian worship. As a matter of fact, a Jew or a Muslim could give the exact same definition of worship. The centrality of true (Christian) worship is Christ giving us Himself through the Word preached and the sacraments administered. Through these means, Christ is present with His gifts of life and salvation. The giving of these gifts is the liturgy in the narrow sense, which is God's liturgy, or service, to us. Only after receiving the gifts of Christ in Word and Sacrament do we respond to God with prayer, thanksgiving, and praise. This response is our Eucharistic sacrifice to God for the propitiatory sacrifice accomplished by Christ and given to us. Therefore, the primary direction of worship is from God to us, and we respond because He has first loved us. The liturgy of God, Christ's gifts to us, are the heart of worship. The settings in which we place the gifts are rites, and the adornments to our worship are the ceremonies.

The liturgy is purely an act of God toward us. Through the means of Word and Sacrament, Jesus is present and gives us life eternal and salvation, which we receive by faith. These acts are divinely mandated (Matthew 28:19-20). These activities are not optional. They are the means of giving life to the church, without which, we are dead (John 10:10, John 14:6). When the church and those who oversee her attend to matters of the liturgy, fidelity is of the utmost importance.

The rites are the settings in which the liturgy is placed. A useful analogy is the box that holds the gifts. Rites give order to the delivery of Christ's gifts. It is hard to imagine the gifts being given and received well if they stood all on their own. We package the liturgy with words, most often drawn from scripture. We say, "This is the Word of the Lord", "the true body of Christ", and "the true blood of Christ" in order that the gifts may be recognized for what they are. We sing the Alleluia to acknowledge Jesus coming to us in his Word. We sing the Sanctus knowing that Jesus is coming to us with His body and blood. We use lectionaries to help us decide what portions of scripture, and in what arrangement, best deliver the gifts. We sing hymns declaring what we receive. In all these examples, the rites point to the gifts and present them for reception. Rites are somewhat of a mixture between divine mandates and human decisions. In matters of rite, discernment should be taken. The Latin phrase *lex orandi lex credendi*, which means the law of praying is the law of believing, supports discernment in matters of rite. This phrase suggests that how we worship has the power to shape our very beliefs.

If rites are the box that holds Christ's gifts, ceremonies are the wrapping paper and bows. Vesture, posture, architecture, and music are examples of ceremony. Individually, these matters are adiaphora, meaning neither commanded nor forbidden by God. This area of worship is left to human decision. While there is more liberty in this category, care must be taken that the ceremonies all point to and communicate well something about the gifts. It should be noted that even ceremonies of adiaphora cease to be adiaphora when making changes gives the impression of compromise to the Gospel or enemies of the Gospel (cf. FC SD X 5).

Liturgy (Christ's gifts to us) is necessary for the church to exist. In fact, the presence of the liturgy is the definition of the church – "The Church is the congregation of the saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments are correctly administered" (AC VII 1). Rites are unavoidable. People are creatures of ritual. When churches reject traditional rites, new rites immediately develop and are adopted. Often, the attempt of rejecting rites results in their replacement by rites that are at best, superfluous and at worst, heterodox. Time-tested and universally accepted rites, specifically those retained in the Reformation for sake of their support of the Gospel, are cherished. Alteration of these rites should be done slowly, with mutual consent across the church catholic. Ceremonies can be more readily adapted to the local customs and traditions, but even here, reverence, good order, and magnification of the gifts of Christ direct us. Liturgy, packaged in rites and adorned with ceremony, is the Divine Service whereby Christ gives to his church life in His body.



## 2020 Vision

These last several years both my wife and I have had to make numerous visits to various eye doctors. We always marvel at how God has given these doctors the skills to maintain and restore our vision. Yet, we also find that our sight is not perfect, neither of us has 20/20 vision.

Only our God has truly 20/20 vision. He can see the entire span of history from His creation of this world to its end on the last day. He can also see us, His saints in our daily struggles and in our joys. He can see our congregation with its blessings and challenges in the past 150 years, He can also see what challenges and blessings we as His church will experience in the years ahead.

Our God with His perfect vision also sees how the perfect world that He created has been damaged by our sinful acts. Not only has our physical world suffered from the results of our actions, but also man, His ultimate creation that He created in His own image, has been corrupted by sin.

Children often try to hide their misdeeds from their parents by covering up their mistakes and any damage that they may have done. They may blame others for the damage or they will attempt to repair the damage. Parents will usually see the mistakes and the damage that has been done. Children will suffer the consequences of their misdeeds either through punishment imposed by parents or teachers, or they will be miserable with a guilty conscience.

God with His 20/20 vision sees our every sin and misdeed. He sees through any effort that we may make to hide our sins. He can see our misguided attempts to please Him with our good deeds and charitable acts. The good news is that our Heavenly Father also sees His beloved Son, whom He sent into this sinful world to live a perfect sin free life. He sees His suffering and death on our behalf and forgives us because His Son has taken our punishment and we are forgiven. God looks at us, His forgiven children, and sees us as perfect.

This year as you struggle to remember to write 2020 instead of 2019 let it remind you of God's 20/20 vision and how He sees you as His forgiven saint.

His Servant,

*Paul Weismantel*, Principal

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FREE display case to anyone, it's on 4 castors with glass in front and top. It's in the Ladies Aid room.

Contact the church office at 989-224-3178 or Kathy Bond 989-640-0630 if you are interested.



I am looking for members to help with the children's Sunday school. I could really use more helpers. If I could get 6 or 8 people to each volunteer to commit to 3 Sundays until this spring it would be so helpful. I will have the lessons and crafts all organized ready to go. It is a huge commitment for just a couple people to run the classes on a weekly basis. I'm asking you to please pray about this

request and if you feel the Lord tugging at your heart, please contact me and we can talk. Even if a couple people would want to do the classes together, that would be awesome! We have a wonderful church family and our children are it's future.

God's Blessings,  
Sally Pontius, Christian Education Director

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## PRESCHOOL NEWS

We have had an amazing first half of the school year. The children are growing, developing, and forming wonderful friendships. We are very thankful to have the opportunity to work with such amazing children and families. We will begin looking at enrollment for next school year when we return from Christmas break. We are excited to continue growing our wonderful preschool program.

The children did an amazing job at the Christmas Program. It was wonderful to see the excitement they expressed during this beautiful event. We loved seeing a packed Activity Center to watch the children share the story of Jesus' birth. Thank you to everyone that had a part in making it a huge success and as always thank you to our families for sharing their children with us. We hope you all have a very blessed Christmas season!

The school also enjoyed their third annual Polar Express Day. The school and gym looked amazing, and the children loved spending the day with the grade school kids for this special event. Thank you to everyone that helped set up, provided food, and cleaned up afterwards. These wonderful events would not be possible without the support of the families, staff, and church. Thank you to Mrs. Fletcher for starting this wonderful tradition!

We ended our month with our class Christmas party. Several parents were able to join us, and the children loved having them there to share this special day with. We want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing everyone in January.

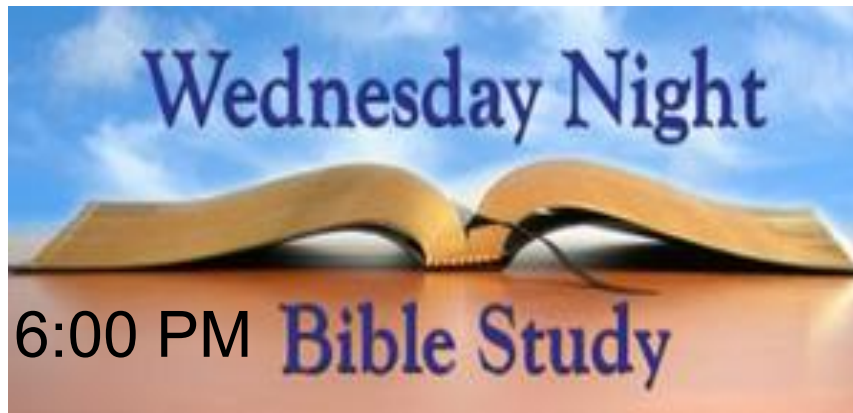
Blessings,  
Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Fletcher





***THANK YOU for the  
Christmas gifts!***

***Pastor Timothy Bayer  
Principal Paul Weismantel  
Liz Stevens  
Corrine Fletcher  
Lisa Smith  
Betsy Rowe  
Kim Ellis  
Nicole Curtin***



**Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>**



## 2019 Rummage Room/Goodie Bags Report

Christ is truly the reason for the season – what a gratifying day of caring for the community at St. Luke Lutheran - Christ Campus in Lansing Michigan. Five of our own members and four non-members made the trek to the church on Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 for our annual Rummage Room and “Goodie Bags”. My mom, Ruth Nihart along with my Aunt Jeanette drove her Ford truck filled top to bottom and front to back with Rummage Room items and I in my Jeep packed to the max with all the Goodie Bag items. Also Chris, Mark & Zarren Grennell arrived as well as her friends Laurie & Kurt Slamka and Judy Boettger arrived a little later. We set up 16 tables in the fellowship hall then disbursed a total of 5 vehicle loads of nicely donated items such as coats, blankets, clothes (men-women & children’s) and we had 3 tables of “new” gift items made available for all the participants. We filled the “Goodie Bags” (50 men’s 50 women’s and 30 children’s) with personal new products like soap, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, toothpaste and tooth brushes, chap stick, combs and socks (men – women - children) and new small toys for the children. Needless to say I was again very impressed with our group for such a skillful execution of duties (incredible team work). It’s never less than a miracle that all of the work is accomplished in a very short amount of time. We arrived at the church at 8:00 and were ready by 10:30 for our patrons. A “very heartfelt \*\*Thank-You” and deep appreciation to the dedication shown by all in this outreach effort. We opened the hall doors for the patrons at 11:30 (people were lined up about 30 deep and would not eat the food they wanted into the fellowship room). The people came streaming in and scooped up almost all the wonderful items and each person (man, woman & child) was given a “Goodie Bag”. So very thankful especially to the ladies who handmade the beautiful quilts – they were quickly snapped up (guarded to one per household) the word is out on the street because they are a “sought after item” every year! The kitchen served 115 people that day. Patrons were most appreciative. Pastor Zerit Yohannes expressed the people who frequent the soup kitchen are very grateful for our efforts and enjoy the community of fellowship. A couple of women said to me they weren’t sure about Christmas this year and there we were with all the abundant and beautiful items, they were extremely elated. What a wonderful way to spend the day. I think we all received as much as we gave. A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO DONATED ITEMS and gave of your time and talents for service in the name of our everlasting Lord.

Bonnie Gregory – Rummage Room / Goodie Bag Coordinator

**LADIES AID NEWS:** In our last meeting we reviewed all we have done in the last month; Sub Sale profit was \$156, Baby Shower all went well Kristin was so amazed and appreciative of everything, we all very much enjoyed doing this. Advent Brunch was very successful with about 88 ladies attending and Dick Davenport speaking on our feelings during Christmas season. Our profit of the RADA and miscellaneous items after the Brunch was about \$200.

We reviewed our charities that we contribute to at Christmas, it amounts to around \$500.

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### JANUARY JUBILEE

ON JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2020 WE WILL BE HOSTING THE JANUARY JUBILEE WHICH MARKS THE END OF LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK. PART OF THIS EVENT INCLUDES A BOOK WALK FOR THE CHILDREN. I AM ASKING FOR DONATIONS OF BOOKS TO USE FOR OUR BOOK WALK. THESE BOOKS CAN BE NEW OR GENTLY USED FOR AGES FROM PRESCHOOL THROUGH THE FIFTH GRADE. YOU CAN DROP THE BOOKS AT THE CHURCH OFFICE INDICATING THEY ARE FOR THE JANUARY JUBILEE. PLEASE GIVE ME A CALL AT 989-224-7106 FOR ANY QUESTIONS.

CHARLENE KENNEDY, DVM

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### JANUARY JUBILEE CARNIVAL FRIDAY, JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup> 6 PM - 8 PM ST. PETER FELLOWSHIP HALL

**GAMES:** Cookie Walk, Ring Toss, Fishing, Obstacle Course blow up  
(must wear socks)

**FOOD:** Hotdogs, Bag of Chips & Lemonade

Family fun and Fellowship

Tickets available at the door for games

10 tickets for \$1.00

Help support St. Peter Lutheran School



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## ELDER CONTACT INFORMATION

Dave Bengel	517-281-5812	<a href="mailto:me@davidbengel.com">me@davidbengel.com</a>
Tom Gorby	989-292-1715	<a href="mailto:tomgorby@gmail.com">tomgorby@gmail.com</a>
Ryan West	517-977-5078	<a href="mailto:westpropertyservices@live.com">westpropertyservices@live.com</a>
Ken Bond	989-640-2380	<a href="mailto:kbbenji88@yahoo.com">kbbenji88@yahoo.com</a>

Pastor Timothy Bayer email: [pastorbayer@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbayer@gmail.com)



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## **Prayer Chain**

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

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I am excited to announce that our teachers Amazon wish list are now on our [stpeterriley.org](http://stpeterriley.org) website under the school tab. One easy click will provide you the link to get right where you need to go!! We also have our Shutterfly storefront link on this page to help raise funds for the school every time you order through Shutterfly!! As always thank you for your generous donations and love for St. Peter School.

Blessings Always and Thank you, St. Peter Staff



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## **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual St. Peter Lutheran School Gala**

This is the time of year when people start getting new calendars for the coming year so we want to give you a date to put on your new calendar. The 2020 St. Peter Lutheran School Gala is scheduled for Saturday evening, April 18<sup>th</sup> and it promises to be better than ever. Keep watch for future details but get the date on your calendar now.





## KINDERGARTEN PARENT NIGHT

We would like to welcome you to an informational parent night for the 2020-2021 school year! Parents will get to meet and greet Mrs. Ellis our K-2 teacher, our Principal Mr. Paul Weismantel, tour the classroom and have a Q & A session about our amazing Christian school!

When: Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Time: 6-7pm

Where: 8990 Church Rd. St. Johns, MI -  
Gymnasium

We will host a Kindergarten round-up in the spring where students can meet and greet the teacher, we will have dates available for round-up at the parent night.

If you have any questions please feel to contact the school office at 989-224-3178

Blessings,

Mrs. Kimberly Ellis, K-2 Teacher

Mr. Paul Weismantel, Administrator

Mrs. Lisa Smith, Preschool Director/Lead Teacher

Mrs. Corrine Fletcher, Administrative Asst./Preschool Co-teacher

WE WANT TO WELCOME YOU TO  
OUR

# Kindergarten

FAMILY!!



**GREETERS.....**Thanks for your smiling faces, warm handshakes and maybe a hug or two. Praise God for you! If you are unable to greet the date scheduled, please switch with someone else and let Liz in the church office know so she can print the correct information in the weekly announcements. Please let me know if you have questions.

<b>January 2020</b>		
01/05/20	Connie & Dale Martens	
01/12/20	Sandy & Gary Lenneman	
01/19/20	Judy & Dave Bengel	
01/26/20	Rollie Kloeckner & Bill Caruss	
<b>February 2020</b>		
02/02/20	Jean & Roger Heathman	
02/09/20	Karen & John Burgess	
02/16/20	Carleen Eaton & Dave Richmond	
02/23/20	Rita & Tom Hollis	
<b>March 2020</b>		
03/01/20	Lorna & Keith Kirschenbauer	
03/08/20	Laurie & Earl Flegler	
03/15/20	Hartner Family	
03/22/20	Shirley & Lyle Huguelet	
03/29/20	Shirley & Marv Hayes	





*“Laying the Foundation to Build on the Rock of Christ.  
Study the Word, Seek the Lost, and to Serve our Neighbors”*

## ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH SERVICES

Wednesday: Chapel 9:00am  
Bible Study: 6:00pm (Library) **(Will resume on January 8th)**

Sunday: Worship Services 10:00am  
Bible Study 8:45am  
Sunday School 8:45am



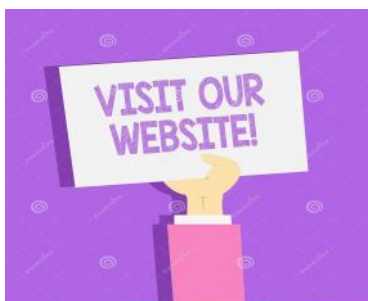
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### Shut-In Visit List Weekly Visits

Shirley Edwards  
Ethel Flegler  
Bill Horman  
Tom Johnson

Charlie Silm  
John Sillman  
Lois Sillman

Albert Smith  
Bill & Sherri VanBeelen



Be sure to check our website for event or service updates and cancellations. Also on our website you are able to download the monthly newsletter, bulletin and calendar. We are continuously updating and making changes to the website so if you have not logged on the website lately check it out see what's new.

**Check out our website!**  
**[www.stpeterriley.org](http://www.stpeterriley.org)**

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## Stewardship News

**What is Stewardship?** The careful and responsible management of life and life's resources (time, talents and treasures) for God's purpose.

Stewardship is the Christian life and Christian life is stewardship.

It requires many stewards to maintain and grow ministries at St Peter. How can you get involved? Here are some ideas.

### 101 ways to get involved at St Peter Lutheran Church

Vacation Bible School Volunteer  
Stewardship/Missions Coordinator\*  
Elder\*  
Altar Guild  
Coffeemaker for Sunday School  
Director of Youth Ministry\*  
School Lunchroom Volunteers  
School/Church Office Assistance  
Vice Chairman of Congregation\*  
Endowment Board Member\*  
Endowment Board Chairman\*  
Sunday School Director  
Wednesday Workers  
Lead Usher  
Card Ministry Volunteer  
Sunday Service Greeter  
Treasurer\*  
Church Council Secretary  
Member of Ladies Aid  
School Gala Committee Member  
School Script Program Coordinator  
Church Properties Volunteer  
Food Pantry Coordinator  
School Board Member\*  
Youth Ministry Volunteer  
Giving Tree Gift Giver  
Choir Member  
Blood Drive Volunteer  
Be a Blood Donor  
Soup Kitchen Coordinator  
Soup Kitchen Gifting Room Volunteer  
Soup Kitchen Gifting Room Donor  
Join Heart Sisters

Vacation Bible School Coordinator  
Director of Volunteer Ministries\*  
Chairman of Elders\*  
Cookie Supplier for Sunday School  
Volunteer to Assist with Funeral Meals  
Director of Christian Day School Board\*  
School Recess Assistants  
Chairman of the Congregation\*  
Director of Christian Education\*  
Sunday School Assistant  
Sunday School Teacher  
God's Gardeners  
Usher  
Usher Trainer and Coordinator  
Card Ministry Coordinator  
Sunday Service Greeters Coordinator  
Assistant Treasurer\*  
Financial Secretary\*  
Ladies Aid Chairperson  
School Gala Chairperson  
Church Properties Coordinator\*  
Food Pantry Volunteer  
Join the Hat Ladies  
Youth Ministry Board  
Giving Tree Coordinator  
Giving Tree Gift Distributor  
Choir Director  
Blood Drive Coordinator  
Soup Kitchen Volunteer  
Soup Kitchen Gifting Room Coordinator  
Librarian  
Library Assistant  
Special Event Cookie Bakers



Mint Festival Float Coordinator  
Join Secret Prayer Sisters  
Join the Parent Teacher League  
Easter Breakfast Coordinator  
Help Decorate the Church for Holidays  
Coordinator Children's Christmas Program  
Host a Halloween Trunk or Treat Car  
Lutherans for Life Member  
Prayer Chain Coordinator  
Fellowship Picnic Volunteers  
Trivia Night Volunteers  
Assistant Sexton\*  
Summer Hog Roast Coordinator  
Join Thrivent  
Life Size Board Game Assistant  
January Jubilee Coordinator  
Christmas Caroler  
Thanksgiving cards Coordinator

Quilters  
School Board Member\*  
Chairman of Parent Teacher League  
Easter Breakfast Volunteer  
Lutherans for Life Leader  
Coordinate Halloween Trunk or Treat Event  
Mint Festival Float Coordinator  
Coke Rewards Coordinator  
Prayer Chain Volunteer  
Advent Brunch Volunteers  
Sexton\*  
Coordinator over 50 group  
Chili Cook-off Assistant  
Summer Hog Roast Assistant  
Life Size Board Game Coordinator  
January Jubilee Assistant  
Cookie Trays & Cards for over 80 members

\*Designates volunteer position elected by the congregation

**Would you like more information about one of the opportunities listed above? Let us help or contact the church office for more information about the opportunity.**

Your Stewardship Committee: Sandy Lenneman, Jeanette Mehney, Harold Anderson, Bruce and Norma Fitzpatrick, Frank and Diane Hart

# LADIES AID SUPER BOWL SUB

## SALE ORDER FORM

We are offering fresh baked 7-inch bakery wheat and white buns. Please specify which bread for each sub ordered. All subs come with American cheese on it and lettuce on the side. We will be making subs on Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. They will be available for pick up after service on Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

	White	Wheat
Turkey	_____	_____
Ham	_____	_____
Club (turkey/ham/bacon)	_____	_____
Veggie (mushroom, peppers, onions, black olives, lettuce, tomato)	_____	_____

**Total number of subs**

\_\_\_\_\_

***Subs are \$6.00 each or 6 for \$33.00***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Total due: \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave **ORDER FORM AND PAYMENT** in the office.

*\*Subs will not be ordered without payment*

**Orders due by Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Please make checks payable to "St. Peter Ladies Aid"**

To place an order or ask questions, call Kathy Bond at 989-640-0630

# JANUARY

- 01/1/20 New Year's Day (Office Closed)  
01/3/20 Over 50's Group 6:30pm (Gym)  
01/6/20 School Board Meeting 6:30pm (Library)  
01/7/20 Elders Meeting 6:00pm (Library)  
01/8/20 Chapel 9:00am & Bible Study 6:00pm  
01/9/20 Ladies Aid Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)  
Ladies Aid Meeting 12:00pm (Library)  
01/14/20 School Board Meeting 6:30pm (Library)  
01/15/20 Chapel 9:00am & Bible Study 6:00pm  
01/16/20 Ladies Aid Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)  
01/17/20 Newsletter Deadline  
1/18/20 Hall Reserved All Day  
1/20/20 Gala Meeting 6:30pm (Library)  
1/21/20 4H Meeting 7:00pm-8:30pm (Gym)  
1/22/20 Chapel 9:00am & Bible Study 6:00pm  
1/23/20 Ladies Aid Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)  
1/26/20 Voters Meeting (Immediately after Church)  
Mites Sunday  
Children Singing at 10:00am Church Service  
1/27/20 Super Bowl Sub Orders Due  
1/28/20 Kindergarten Round-Up Parent Night 6:00-7:00pm (Gym)  
1/29/20 Chapel 9:00am & Bible Study 6:00pm  
1/30/20 Ladies Aid Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)  
1/31/20 Jubilee 6:00-8:00pm (Gym)

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## MEMORIALS

### *In Loving Memory of*

*Sheila Ordway \$25.00*

*Mel Sehlke \$75.00*

*Cindy Horman \$305.00*

*Ellen Wolf \$550.00*



## St. Peter Lutheran Church

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

Phone: 989-224-3178

Fax: 989-224-8962

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

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

