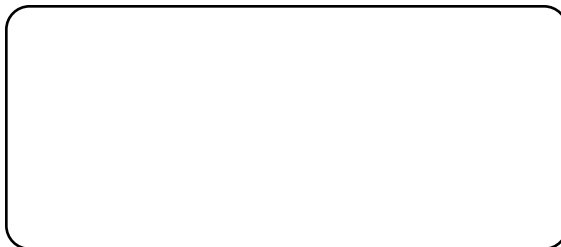


St. Peter Lutheran Church & School

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



THE MESSENGER *January 2022*



Church Services

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

Upcoming Feast Days:

Jan. 1 – The Circumcision and Name of Jesus – Divine Service at 9 am
Jan. 6 – The Epiphany of Our Lord – Divine Service at 7 pm

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Thankful, Giving Hearts to God

St. Peter is blessed. God is present with us in Word and Sacrament in this place. He has provided a servant to preach the Gospel. God’s gracious presence in our midst, mighty to save, should cause our hearts to overflow with thanksgiving.

In addition to this, our church has also been given the opportunity by God to run a Christian school. In a world opposed to Christ and his Gospel, we have the responsibility and privilege of providing an education for children that is based firmly in Christ’s redeeming love for sinners. Our students learn from the Holy Scriptures every day in school, and they worship the Lord every Wednesday at chapel. And on top of this chief concern—that they know Jesus Christ their Lord—they are learning all the subjects they need to be successful by talented teachers who love them and who love the Lord. I sometimes tell the kids that they don’t know how good they have it.

All of these things at St. Peter are God’s blessings, of which he has made us stewards. The pastor is the steward of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1). The Christian congregation, together with their pastor, as fellow priests of God, give their sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise for his gracious salvation given to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Our sacrifices include our prayers and thanksgiving in worship to God, they include service to one another, they include sharing our time and our talents, and they include giving from the abundance the Lord has given to us to support the church and its mission. This is all stewardship.

God is blessing the mission of the Gospel here. People are being catechized and baptized into Jesus. Our youth are being instructed and brought to the Lord’s Supper. Our school is growing and expanding its grade levels.

Our blessings become our responsibilities as stewards of God’s gifts to us. Last I heard, our expenses at St. Peter were up about 12% from last year, while our giving was down about the same percentage, a recipe for trouble ahead. As God continues to bless us by advancing his kingdom in our midst, will we be found faithful to support his work and mission in this place? Or will we take it for granted, fail to support it, and have it be weakened or lost?

As we learn in the catechism, the kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer (and we could add that it comes without our support as well), but we pray that it would come to us also. May we support the ministry of the Gospel as a small reflection of the abundant blessings God so freely bestows on us.

-Pastor Bayer



A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The Blessing of a Quiet Time!

And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon Him. (Luke 2:39-40)

The birth of Christ was an event. It wasn't just a child being born. There were shepherds who, having heard from Angels, went to visit the Christ child. Angels proclaiming the birth. Wise men following the promises that had been given to prepare God's people for a coming Savior. A king, so threatened by a baby that sought him out to kill him. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus had to wait a long time to return to a normal life. At the end of it, they returned to Nazareth, to a time when Jesus was growing, both as a human boy and in his wisdom and knowledge of Scripture.

December is a busy month, there are so many things to prepare for. And then comes Christmas break, leading us right into January. For teachers and students, this time of rest is needed. It is a gift that God gives us these quiet times. Time to reflect, to focus on Him, and to remember what our mission is. I pray that we all use this time to trust in the Lord, to allow Him to strengthen us through His Holy Word, and prepare us for what His plans are for the new year. God has many plans for us. Sometimes we need to be quiet for long enough to listen to what those plans are.

Blessings in Christ,
Erika Brown
Principal/Teacher



Hot Lunch!

Hot Lunch sign-up for the next quarter is posted in the front lobby on our new volunteer board!!

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, or send me an email. You would be providing lunch for about 40 people.

Erika Brown
principal@stpeterriley.org

A LETTER FROM THE PRESCHOOL

What a Wonderful Year!

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. We were very excited to be able to have our annual Christmas Program again this year. The children did a wonderful job and we loved having so many people here to enjoy the program. Thank you to Mrs. Stout and the staff for all your organization and help with the program. The school was able to enjoy their Polar Express Day Celebration on December 14th. The school and gym looked amazing, and the children loved spending the day watching The Polar Express movie and enjoying goodies. 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. We had a wonderful day celebrating the birth of Jesus. We want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing everyone in January.

Blessings, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Fletcher



CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS , NEWS & EVENTS

Are You Looking for a Way to Support St. Peter Christian Day School?

The day school is collecting caps from Pepsi bottles which are worth 19 cents. There is a 10 number/letter in the cap.

Coke products will give the school 5 cents per cap, 15 cents from the 12 can pack and 30 cents for the 24 can pack. The codes are on the cardboard part of the box and is perforated so it can be ripped off easily to get the cans out. It is a 12 or 14 number/letter code.

If you are interested in helping the school in this way, I will bring out a small box to collect the caps. Thank you for supporting St. Peter Christian Day School.

Ladies Aid & LWML News

We still gather every Thursday morning to tie quilts, there's 3 to 5 ladies; we will welcome many newbies. In our October Ladies Aid meeting we discussed our upcoming Taco Lunch after the Voters Meeting. We provided the cake for Norma Fitzpatrick's retirement party from playing the organ for many beautiful years. We discussed our upcoming Advent Brunch on Tuesday, December 7th, we will invite area Lutheran church ladies to join us. We are continuing supporting our Seminary student Adam Nettling with \$500 recently.

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.

50th Wedding Anniversary

Please join us to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of Marv and Shirley Hayes. An afternoon of memories, laughter and food. January 16, 2022 from 2 to 5 at the Riley Township Hall 7110 W. Pratt Rd Dewitt MI 48820 If you can't join us feel free to send a card to Marv & Shirley.

6530 S. Forest Hill Rd St. Johns MI 48879

MITES SUNDAY IS JANUARY 30TH

Walking with St. Peter A Community Exercise Opportunity

Beginning Monday, June 28th, St. Peter Lutheran School will be open for those wishing to walk for exercise from 8:30am-2:00pm Monday through Wednesday.

General policies and procedures:

- ◆ Open to all members of the community over the age of 18
- ◆ Sign a waiver of responsibility on first day of participation
- ◆ Sign in on the sheet provided on each day of participation located in the church office
- ◆ Change to walking shoes – please no boots or street shoes
- ◆ A route map will be available – 10 circuits = 1 mile or 24 laps of the gym = 1 mile
- ◆ There is no cost for participation – donations will be accepted and will be used towards our maintenance fund

We encourage you to participate – get some exercise and enjoy the excellent facility that the Lord has provided to St. Peter Lutheran School.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS , NEWS & EVENTS

On January 28th we will be hosting the January Jubilee which marks the end of Lutheran Schools Week. Part of this event includes a Book Walk for 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 seventh grade. You can drop off the books at the church office indicating they are for the January Jubilee. If you have any questions, please contact me at 989-224-7106.

Charlene Kennedy, DVM

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.

Shut-In Visit List Monthly Visits

Virginia Davis
Charlie Silm
Shirley Edwards
Albert Smith
Lyle Huguelet
Tom & Julie Johnson
Linda Davis
Terry Ordway

Notes of Thanks

Thank you to all the ladies (I would name them but I'm afraid I may miss someone) so you know who you are thanks for all you did to help at the Advent Brunch. I especially thank Kristin Bayer for being our speaker, we so enjoyed it and learned many new things about seminary life. May God bless you all.

January Jubilee Carnival

Friday, January 28

6 pm - 8 pm

St. Peter Fellowship Hall

Games: Cookie Walk, Ring Toss, Fishing, Book Walk, 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 School

Did you know that St. Peter Lutheran Church has an Endowment Fund?

St Peter Endowment Fund

What is an endowment?

Webster's Dictionary defines "endowment" as funds or property donated to an institution, individual, or group to produce income.

For our congregation, that income can mean the difference between just "getting by" and the security of bringing the church's mission and vision to life for generations to come.

With the **St Peter Endowment Fund**, the principal value can never be spent so the endowment earning power is protected against inflation. Excess income or appreciation is added to the principal to protect it's value over time.

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

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS , NEWS & EVENTS

January 2022 Stewardship Newsletter

'Tis More Blessed to Give Than to Receive

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ” (Acts 20:35)

And indeed, it is. Does this not strike a chord that resonates in us all? Which of us can't recall the look of surprise and thanks for the Christmas gifts that we labored to give to those whom we love? And the joy written on their face when that gift is received with thanksgiving means more than all the gifts we have received. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Our Lord knew this because He practiced it. He gave of Himself – sparing not even His life in death – in order to give us back to our Father in heaven. He knew that in giving you get more because joy is multiplied in giving. The one who receives and the one who gives both rejoice in what is given and received. And, what is more, the one who receives only wants to give back to the one who gave so generously in thanksgiving.

So it is with our tithes and offerings in church. We want to give because we have received from God all that we are and all that we have. Our giving does not originate in what we must do to earn God's favor. We have God's favor because of His gift of His Son, given through Word and Sacrament. Thus, we are made free from the compulsion of giving so that our tithes and offering are freely given in thanksgiving for what God has so generously given to us.

Why then does the church struggle to make budgets? Why does the church always seem stretched so thin when it is the place where God continually gives us His forgiveness of sins? Why does the church struggle when God, out of love for us, generously pours out His grace and mercy?

It is because we are sinners. Our fallen nature makes us selfish and miserly. It leads us to believe that we can have our cake and eat it, too. Because of sin, we want God's grace and mercy; we want His blessings of body and soul. But we don't want to share it with those around us. We want to remain comfortable in our own self-contained, neat, and tidy lives – without the headaches of loving those around us by helping them in their time of need.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ” Remember that God has placed you in a church, not only to receive His grace and mercy, but to press His eternal and temporal blessings into service to your neighbor.

Your tithes and offerings ensure that those around you have a pastor to preach the life-saving and life-giving Word of God. They ensure that the lights, heat, and air-conditioning are working. They ensure there is water for Holy Baptism as well as bread and wine for Holy Communion. They even ensure that your pastor has food and clothing and presents for his own family. The gifts of God are immeasurable. They multiply and redound to everyone's good as the fish and loaves in the feeding of the five thousand.

So, remember the words of the Lord Jesus: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” And remember the joy that attended the gifts you gave at Christmas. This same joy attends your gifts to the church.

– January 2022 LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://www.lcms.org/stewardship)

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS , NEWS & EVENTS

Toys for Tots

Thank you to all who donated to Toys for Tots. They were very appreciative as there was an overwhelming response from St. Peter. You helped to make a child's Christmas a little brighter! Thank you to **Dave Bengel** for making that delivery. Thank you also to those who donated to the Erber's in Nigeria (our Together in Mission family).

Diane Thurston

Life Sunday "2022"

"God Chose You" is Lutherans for Life's theme for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on January 23rd. The theme is based on John 15:16 – "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit." It is our responsibility as Christians to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves...the unborn, the elderly, the handicapped, the mentally challenged.

Pastor will talk about life issues during the Sunday School hour on January 23rd and will resume the study of Revelations the following Sunday. Our St. Peter Life Team will be serving coffee, hot chocolate and many goodies during this hour!

We will be taking an offering to be used for life causes. We will have a basket in back of church but also at the Fellowship Center for those who would like to support this cause.

St. Peter Lutherans for Life Team

Sarah Sills, Sara Thurston, Vickie Pline, Kristin Bayer and Diane Thurston

JANUARY SCHEDULE

GREETERS:

Suspended until further notice

ELDERS:

Ken Bond

Ryan West

John Burgess

Dave Bengel

ALTAR FLOWERS

Open

Open

ALTAR GUILD:

Geri & Jastram

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

MEMORIALS

Donna Witt- \$1100.00

Marilyn Kloeckner, Marcella Doretta Kloeckner,

Sherry Lynn Stearns- \$300.00

Roberta Marten- \$20.00

Gary Abendroth- \$10.00