

# The Messenger

## Chasing the Elusive Mountaintop Experience

Have you ever heard someone describe a church's worship service as a "mountain top experience?" Or how about with a word like "cold?" These descriptions imply that the usefulness of the church service is based on our emotional response. The subjectiveness of this metric is exposed by asking a person to explain *why* it was a mountaintop experience or *why* it was cold, a question for which a concrete answer is not easily found.

What do we know about our emotions? They, along with our entire beings, have been affected by sin. They are fickle and change quickly. Our emotions can even lie to us—we can feel something that in fact is not true. We cannot rely on how we feel in our hearts. The word of God places no confidence in the heart of man. *The heart is deceitful above all things* (Jeremiah 17:9). Therefore, our emotional response to a church service is a poor indicator of the benefits of that service and can in fact be misleading.

The tendency to look inward at our feelings to find God is nothing new—this tendency goes back to the fall itself, and we refer to it as *enthusiasm*. This word means "God within", and it is the tendency of our fallen nature which is obsessed with self.

Instead of inside ourselves, where we find wickedness and sin, God comes to us from outside of ourselves (*extra nos*). When we go to church, we have objective realities before us. We have the Word of God which endures forever. We have the abiding presence of Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Regardless of how we feel, these things are true. Take one aspect of the service—confession and absolution. There may be days when you hear the words, "In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins," and yet you still feel unforgiven. What is to be relied upon, the fickle feelings of your depraved nature, or the very word and promise of God?

It is an enormous comfort that the value of the gifts given in Divine Service are not dependent on our emotional response. If they were, we would never have certainty in God's love for us. God's love for us is true when we have a mountaintop experience at church, and it is equally true when we still feel upset, sad, anxious, etc. when we leave. For we have certainty that God has blessed us in Jesus Christ, for his word is truth. This sustains us through the ups and downs, the range of emotions, and all the other things that fluctuate in our turbulent lives.

The Divine Service is not for eliciting a particular emotional response; rather, the service is focused on the certain gifts of a God that will not lie to us. We hear the word of Christ that our sins are forgiven, that we have a loving Father in heaven, and a hope that will not disappoint. We practice hearing this and clinging to Christ alone.

When tragedy strikes, if we've become accustomed to counting on the mountaintop to get us through, we are in trouble, for a mountaintop is sometimes nowhere to be found. When we find ourselves on our deathbeds, the certain promises of Christ will sustain as we pass through the gloomy portal of death and reach our promised inheritance. If we've relied on emotional highs instead of the Word of God to prove to ourselves that God loves us, the mountaintop will be hard to find in the valley of the shadow of death. But if we base our hope on the objective truth of God's word and His promises, we will not be shocked in the valley. We will wait patiently on the Lord, under his cross, believing his certain Word to us and receiving exactly what he has spoken.



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## A Year-Long Parade

This summer I had the opportunity to walk in the Mint Festival Parade representing our church and school. I walked alongside members of our congregation, parents, and students. If I could describe the parade in one word it would have to be "Excitement". Everyone walking was excited and full of energy. Everyone watching was excited, cheering, waving, and smiling. It was a celebration!

Shouldn't the beginning of the school year have that same feeling of excitement? The teachers are excited to meet their students, get to know them, celebrate their successes, and support them through their learning journey. They spend a lot of time decorating their rooms and planning those first lessons so that the students will join in that excitement as the school year begins. Excited to learn, collaborate, be curious, and have fun with their classmates.

At St. Peter the celebration is built on the joy that we have as Christians, knowing that Christ died for us, and in Him, we have eternal life. What a blessing it is to be able to celebrate this joy with our students this year. If you have the opportunity to talk to one of the students at St. Peter, I encourage you to ask them about the school, ask them what they are excited about. I pray that this will be an exciting year and that our students will truly have a reason to celebrate!

Blessings in Christ,  
Erika Brown  
Principal/Teacher

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## Hot Lunch is Back

The school is excited to bring back Hot Lunch Fridays this school year. It is a lot of fun for the kids to have an awesome lunch and to get to know members of our congregation a little better. It is also a great opportunity for all of you to come in and see the school, see what the kids are doing, and build relationships.

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](mailto:principal@stpeterriley.org)

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## WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY UPDATE

Join us for Bible Study on Wednesday nights at 6:00pm in the Library.



We will be starting up children's Sunday school in September. It will begin the first Sunday after Labor Day. We are looking for teachers to help out. Please personally pray about this awesome opportunity to help the children of our church learn and grow in Christ. Sunday school is for preschool and school age children. Children will be with their families for the start of Family Bible Class, then we will break off to children's Sunday school. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Sally Pontius 517-204-7991 or Ann Stout 517-230-8547.

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.

Pam Mohr 989 224-4206

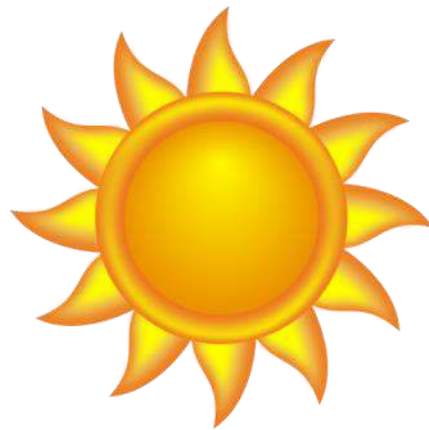


## Preschool News

We are very excited to be starting another school year in a few weeks. We currently have 10 preschoolers and would love to see that number grow before we start school on Monday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. Please let us know if you would like to enroll your child in preschool this fall. We have been preparing the classroom for open house on Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup> and meet the teachers on Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. These events will both begin at 7:00pm. We are looking forward to meeting new students and reuniting with returning students. We would appreciate your prayers and support for a safe, healthy, and successful school year.

Blessings,

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Fletcher



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**WE ARE LOOKING FOR A PART-TIME JANITOR TO CLEAN THE SCHOOL. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE AT 989-224-3178.**

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### High-Speed Internet

We finally have the opportunity to bring high speed internet to the church and school through the Westphalia Broadband company. We will have to cover the cost of materials to run the fiberoptic cables from their current location to the church property. While we are looking to cover some of the cost through a grant, it will not cover the full amount. Watch for more updates on this as we move forward.

Thank you to all the many volunteers who made our 2021 annual Hog Roast such a very special time of fellowship. Special thanks to all who helped set up on Saturday. Thanks to all who helped in the kitchen with the meal, serving and clean up. Thank you to Earl and Laurie Flegler for the use their tents for this event. Special thanks to Barb Weismantel for making the beautiful center pieces. A big thank you to Larry Mohr and Gary Lenneman for making Bingo a fun time for everyone. Thank you to all the individuals who donated such delicious cookies and caramel corn for prizes for Bingo. Thanks to the Ladies Aid for their donation of items and Geri Jastram for donating the koozies for Bingo prizes. Thank you to Rita Hollis for doing a Thrivent Action Plan to cover the costs of the meat and potatoes. A big thank you to all who helped with the clean up after this event. God has richly blessed us at St Peter.

Charlene Kennedy, DVM



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### St Peter Lutheran Church Endowment Fund


St Peter Lutheran Church established an Endowment Fund several years ago. The Endowment Fund provides St Peter Lutheran Church with a source of income to support projects beyond the day-to-day operations. The key is that each year only a portion (the interest) of the endowment fund can be used, but the remainder (the principal) is left to grow.

There are a variety of ways to grow the endowment fund. Donations can be in the form of cash, a memorial, planned gift of real estate or insurance. In this way, when someone leaves a portion of their assets to the Endowment Fund, these assets do not disappear over time but are left invested so the fund can continue to grow and the interest is available for distribution.

Many churches, as well as our own Michigan District, have established endowment funds to financially support a variety of specific projects.

Our Endowment Fund at St Peter Lutheran Church is held by In Faith Community Foundation. In Faith, in conjunction with Thrivent, has always worked to innovate and be flexible on behalf of those they serve. They are set up to help each congregation's Endowment Fund succeed and create a strong foundation for generations to come.

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Life without  
*God*   
is like an unsharpened pencil ...  
there is no *Point*

# **SOUP KITCHEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**September 11<sup>th</sup> 2021 - (Saturday)**

**We will be having our Soup Kitchen at:**

**St. Luke's Lutheran Church**

**122 S. Pennsylvania Ave. (opposite corner of Sparrow Hospital)  
Lansing, MI.**

**This is a Great Opportunity to help people in need.**

**They are Very Appreciative!**

- **We would like you to arrive @ 9:15 a.m.**
- **We will need people to put up tables and chairs, set the place settings on the tables in the dining room, people to prepare the planned meal of the day.**
- **If you work in the kitchen, you will need to wear a ball cap or a hair net.**
- **As people sit down, we will also need servers to serve the food on the plates & people to take their meal, beverage, salad, and dessert to their tables as they sit down.**
- **They enjoy a Wonderful meal.**
- **Then we clean-up, and generally we will be done around 2:00 p.m.**

**We would really like to See You There!!**

**If you would like to Help or have any questions, please call**

**Al & Renee @ 989-224-8663. **Thanks!****

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## ELDER AND PASTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Dave Bengel 517-281-5812      [me@davidbengel.com](mailto:me@davidbengel.com)  
Ryan West 517-977-5078      [westpropertyservices@live.com](mailto:westpropertyservices@live.com)  
Ken Bond 989-640-2380      [bondken88@yahoo.com](mailto:bondken88@yahoo.com)  
John Burgess 616-295-3903      [johnburgess6606@gmail.com](mailto:johnburgess6606@gmail.com)  
Pastor Bayer (Emergency ph#585-402-2807) [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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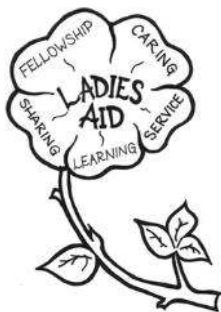
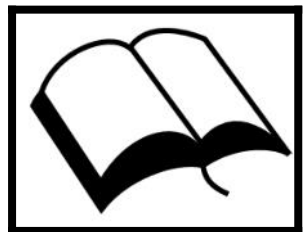
## **REMINDER:**

**MITES SUNDAY IS SEPTEMBER 26TH**

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## **ST. PETER 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY MEMORY BOOKS FOR SALE**

**\$7.00 a book. Make checks payable to St. Peter Lutheran Church. Contact the church office if you would like to purchase a book at 989-224-3178 or [church@stpeterriley.org](mailto:church@stpeterriley.org)**



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## **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.

**FOOD PANTRY - We are accepting non-perishable food items.**

**Such as:** Mac & Cheese, Tuna, Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruits, Peanut Butter, Stuffing, Spaghetti Sauce, Pasta, Cake Mixes and Frosting.

**Non-Food Items:** Paper Towel, Kleenex, Toilet Paper, Ziplocks, Dish Soap, Laundry Detergent, Cleaning Products, Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap, Toothpaste, Liquid Hand Soap.

**Monetary Donations are also Helpful!**

**Thank You for your Continued Support!**



Chuckie D's BBQ  
2525 Price Rd.  
St. Johns, MI 48879

St. Peter Lutheran Church and School would like to extend our sincerest gratitude for you processing the meat at your costs for our church hog roast. The food was amazing and enjoyed by all. Again thank you for your generosity.

#### MINT FESTIVAL PARADE 2021 THANK YOU MEMO

Thank you to all who donated candy for the Mint Festival parade. Thanks to all the walkers who handed out the candy, school brochures and koozies. Special thanks to the girls who carried the banner for St. Peter. Thank you to Evan VanBeelen for driving his truck in the parade for us to store the items we were passing out. We are so blessed to have so many wonderful volunteers at St. Peter.

Charlene Kennedy





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Welcome to Scrip. My name is Traci Brisboe-Cole and I am the Scrip Coordinator for St. Peter. St. Peter participates in Scrip as a way to give families a chance to support their students, church, and school! There are over 3 pages of retailers who participate in Scrip who offer rebates for their users from 1.5%- 18% on purchases. If you are interested in learning more about Scrip I would love to help you get started. I can be reached via email: [Tracieggleston20@gmail.com](mailto:Tracieggleston20@gmail.com) or phone: 269-908-6165 (text is preferred). If you want to get started to view their website you can join St. Peter with the St. Peter Enrollment code: 6L1A6F8L559. Download the shopwithscrip app! Please, do not hesitate to reach out for more information!!!!

Thank you,

Traci Brisboe-Cole



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### **Walking with St. Peter A Community Exercise Opportunity**

Beginning Monday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 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.

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I am sad to say that for personal reasons I am unable to organize work sessions at St. Peter. I have had the pleasure of working with a wonderful group of dedicated gardeners over the years and can't tell you the numerous complements I've received from members and visitors on how nice our gardens look. Anyone willing to take over this leadership role please feel free to contact me (517.669.8813) if you have questions. May God continue to bless this ministry at St. Peter.

Sandy Lockwood





## The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

### LCMS Stewardship Ministry

#### Newsletter article – September 2021


At the end of the first of his chapters on the virtue of faith in *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis provides a helpful reminder, by way of analogy, for the foundation of stewardship. He wrote:

“Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to His service you could not give Him anything that was not in a sense His own already. So then, when we talk of a man doing anything for God or giving anything to God, I will tell you what it is really like. It is like a small child going to its father and saying, ‘Daddy, give me sixpence to buy you a birthday present.’ Of course, the father does, and he is pleased with the child’s present. It is all very nice and proper, but only an idiot would think that the father is sixpence to the good on the transaction. When a man has made these two discoveries God can really get to work. It is after this that real life begins. (128–129).”

This is the first thing we are given to confess about stewardship, and it has to do with ownership. God owns everything, and we are simply managers – stewards – acting on His behalf. This is true not only of all that we have in this life (Deut. 8:17–18) but also all that we are in this life (1 Cor. 6:20).

The rest flows from here. Since we are stewards, or managers, of what belongs to God, entrusted to make use of it according to His will, there is an expectation of responsibility and accountability. For the Lord said, “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48b). And from this comes blessing and reward: “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master” (Matt. 25:21).

We have everything we need to support this body and life from our God’s fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us. We have everything we need for our spiritual life also from His merciful hands. Because of the sacrifice of His Son, our Lord Jesus, through the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, we have the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and everlasting salvation delivered to us with absolute certainty that it is ours – not as stewards but as sons (Gal. 4:1–7). Let us then, as His own sons, press all that He gives to us into the service of His church and to His glory.





*“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: Matins Service 9:00AM  
Bible Study 6:00pm



Sunday: 9:00AM - Divine Service  
Family Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall immediately following church



**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)

**MEMORIALS**

*Ethel Flegler \$25.00  
Ellen Martens \$20.00  
Janet Smalldon \$100.00*



*Marilyn Sampson Kloeckner, Clemens & Marcella Kloeckner,  
Sherry Stearns, Henry & Doretta Witt, Robert & Shirley Sampson \$1,000*



- 9/1/21 Matins Service 9:00am / Bible Study 6:00pm  
9/2/21 Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)  
Ladies Aid Meeting 12:00pm (Library)  
9/3/21 Over 50's (Gym)  
No School  
9/5/21 Confirmation 6:00pm-7:30pm  
9/6/21 School Board Meeting 6:30pm (Library)  
*Labor Day - Office Closed*  
9/7/21 Elders Meeting 6:00pm  
Pre-School Meet & Greet 7:00pm  
9/8/21 Matins Service 9:00am / Bible Study 6:00pm  
9/9/21 Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)  
9/10/21 Ladies Night at Parsonage 6:00pm-10:00pm  
9/11/21 Soup Kitchen @St. Luke's Lutheran Arrive @9.15am—2:00pm  
9/12/21 Sunday School begins  
Confirmation 6:00pm-7:30pm  
9/13/21 Heart Sisters 9:00am (Wheel Inn)  
PTL Meeting 5:30pm  
First day of Pre-School  
9/14/21 Endowment Board Meeting 5:00pm-6:30pm (Library)  
Council Meeting 6:30pm (Library)  
9/15/21 Matins Service 9:00am / Bible Study 6:00pm  
9/16/21 Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)  
9/17/21 Newsletter Deadline  
9/19/21 Confirmation 6:00pm-7:30pm  
9/22/21 Matins Service 9:00am / Bible Study 6:00pm  
9/23/21 Quilting 9:00am  
9/26/21 Kids singing in Church / Mites Sunday  
Norma Fitzpatrick retirement party (After Family Bible Class)  
Confirmation 6:00pm-7:30pm  
9/27/21 Heart Sisters 9:00am (Wheel Inn)  
9/29/21 Matins Service 9:00am / Bible Study 6:00pm  
St. Michaels and All Angels Service 7:00pm  
9/30/21 Ladies Aid Quilting 9:00am (Ladies Aid Room)

(Private confession available by appointment only on Saturdays at 6:30pm)

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### Shut-In Visit List Monthly Visits

Virginia Davis  
Shirley Edwards  
Lyle Huguelet

Charlie Silm  
Albert Smith  
Tom & Julie Johnson

## St. Peter Lutheran Church & School

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

Phone: 989-224-3178  
E-mail: [church@stpeterriley.org](mailto:church@stpeterriley.org)

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

