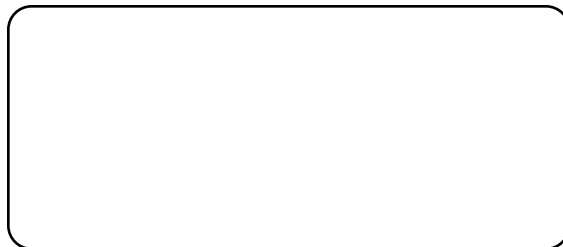


St. Peter Lutheran Church & School

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 *August 2023*



Church Services

Divine Service – Sundays at 9:30 am
Office of Matins – Wednesdays at 9 am (when school is in session)
Advent and Lent – Wednesday services at 7 pm
Feasts and Festivals – Services as announced in calendar and bulletin

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Augsburg Confession Article II – Original Sin

Our churches teach that since the fall of Adam [Romans 5:12], all who are naturally born are born with sin [Psalm 51:5], that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with the inclination to sin, called concupiscence. Concupiscence is a disease and original vice that is truly sin. It damns and brings eternal death on those who are not born anew through Baptism and the Holy Spirit [John 3:5].

Our churches condemn the Pelagians and others who deny that original depravity is sin, thus obscuring the glory of Christ's merit and benefits. Pelagians argue that a person can be justified before God by his own strength and reason.¹

After the first article concerning God in three persons and one divine essence, the Augsburg Confession immediately turn to anthropology. The Scriptural account of man is opposed to the world's account. We often hear people say the following things—"There's good in every person" or "In general, people are good." This is not what the Word of God teaches us. The Word of God teaches that since the fall into sin, each person conceived and born naturally into this world is an enemy of God, prone to all evil, and completely incapable of helping themselves out of this condition. Left to our own works and capabilities, we are damned.

The reason we need God's Word to illuminate this truth for us is that since the fall, we do retain the power to perform certain civil righteousness, or outward obedience to the Law. People can be good neighbors to a degree. They can refrain from the act of murder. They can refrain from the act of adultery. But this outward righteousness earns us nothing with God, for the problem is much deeper than our actions. Evil proceeds from our hearts, as Jesus teaches—and even this inclination to sin is damning. So even when we are "being good" in this world, none of it pleases God without faith. Our condition is one of depravity.

God alone saves us from our sinful condition, and His salvation is entirely based on the merits of Jesus Christ. Our works contribute nothing to our salvation. God provided the sacrifice for our sins in His Son Jesus. And God brings us to faith by His Holy Spirit. Through His gift of faith in Christ, we are justified.

In the article, the heresy of the Pelagians is pointed out. These folks believed that people cooperate with God's grace, and thus, contribute toward their salvation through their works. This error remains alive and well today. Modern versions of this heresy are lurking the Baptist's "sinner's prayer," where one must pray to God and ask Jesus into his heart, and this work of the sinner, together with God's grace, is effective unto salvation. Altar calls and asking people to "make a decision" to follow Jesus are all versions of this heresy. Our natural strength, reason, and power can help us none when it comes to our justification. It is God's work alone, through Christ alone, by grace alone. And, as the article points out, to think that we have some work that we can add to the equation to save ourselves is an affront to the all-sufficient merit and benefits of Jesus our Lord.

In Christ, Pastor Bayer

¹ Paul Timothy McCain, Ed., Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, Edition 2 (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 31.

A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Sharing God's Word, as We Discover His World

...but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. — John 20: 31

In June, the teachers and students are wrapping up the school year. There are tests, grades, games, fun, thanksgiving, and then a break from the fast-paced end-of-the-year activities. July is a month to relax, spend time with family, and enjoy summertime in Michigan. We are no longer worried about the end of the year, and we aren't ready yet to look ahead to the new school year. This is true not only for the school staff but for the students and school families as well. There is still work being done, but it doesn't feel as hurried and stressful as it often can during the school year.

I have been working on projects for the upcoming school year, technology updates, security and safety plans, etc. My excellent administrative assistant has been working with me on strategic plans, marketing, and other updates. The teachers have been in to look at new curricula to consider as we always strive to have an excellent academic program for our students.

And just like that, August is here. First, the teachers will return to plan, decorate, train, and prepare for a great school year. Next, the students and their families will come in to meet the teachers, bring in school supplies, and get all of the important information for the school year. Before the month comes to an end, the students will come back to St. Peter for the first day of school.

The beginning of the school year is exciting. This is true for many reasons, but most importantly, it brings the opportunity for all of us at St. Peter to share God's Word with each other, with our students, and with their families. We share His Word so that the students may believe in Jesus Christ and, through believing, have life in His name. This year we are blessed with 60 students enrolled in our preschool and day school. This means 60 students will be hearing the word of God each and every day and learning what God has done for them. These numbers are awesome, and the school year isn't even here yet. There is still time to tell other families about our school and bring them into the St. Peter community.

Blessings in Christ,
Erika Brown
Principal/Teacher

A LETTER FROM OUR CANTOR

Why We Do What We Do

“Why do we always do the same ol’ thing every Sunday? Why don’t we do some different things like other churches?”

The famous British author and layman C. S. Lewis had some interesting things to say about this:

Every service is a structure of acts and words through which we receive a sacrament, or repent, or supplicate, or adore. And it enables us to do these things best – if you like it, it “works” best – when, through long familiarity, we don’t have to think about it. As long as you notice, and have to count, the steps, you are not yet dancing but only learning to dance. A good shoe is a shoe you don’t notice. Good reading becomes possible when you need not consciously think about eyes, or light, or print, or spelling. The perfect church service would be the one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God.

But every novelty prevents this. It fixes our attention on the service itself; and thinking about worship is a different thing from worshipping....A still worse thing may happen. Novelty may fix our attention not even on the service but on the celebrant. You know what I mean. Try as one may to exclude it, the question “What on earth is he up to now?” will intrude. It lays one’s devotion waste. There really is some excuse for the man who said, “I wish they’d remember that the charge to Peter was Feed my sheep; not Try experiments on my rats, or even Teach my performing dogs new tricks.”

Thus my... position really boils down to an entreaty for permanence and uniformity. I can make do with almost any kind of service whatever, if only it will stay put. But if each form is snatched away just when I am beginning to feel at home in it, then I can never make any progress in the art of worship. You give me no chance to acquire the trained habit – *habito dell’ arte* [the practice of one’s art]....I think it would have been best, if it were possible, that necessary change should have occurred gradually and (to most people) imperceptibly; here a little and there a little; one obsolete word replaced in a century – like the gradual change in spelling in successive editions of Shakespeare. (The Joyful Christian, p. 80-81)

As a congregation we are blessed to be a part of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and using the Lutheran Service Book. One of the purposes of the synod (oft forgotten) is to promote uniform practice, so that any time you walk into an LC-MS service you know where you are and what to expect, because we share the same worship. At the same time our synod has provided in the Lutheran Service Book a wealth of resources and variety for any circumstance. Pastor takes us through each of the Divine Service settings in such a way that we can be familiar and comfortable with each of them before moving on to another, that *habito dell’ arte*. In time even Luther’s “Deutsche Messe” (Setting Five) with “Isaiah Mighty Seer” on Reformation Sunday will become comfortable and familiar.

I hope to share more of why we do what we do. Perhaps if you have a particular question or concern, you might pass that along to me through the church office.

Your brother in Christ, Dick Davenport

CHURCH NEWS

Corrections to the Directory

Irene Watson (989) 224-7988

Frank Hart Cell (989) 292-9778

Piecemaker “Quilter” News



Our Piecemakers (quilters) are in need of used fitted and flat sheets of any size. We use them for the back of our fillers for our many quilts we make. Maybe you're yard sale finders. If so, please buy some for us! Just place the sheets you have at the Ladies Aid (Piecemakers) door! Thanks in advance!

In Christs Service,
Kathy Bond

Christian Salvage Mission

Thank you to all who donated to the Christian Salvage Mission and thank you also to Frank and Diane Hart for delivering it to Fowlerville. Many people around the world will be reached through this ministry.

Life Quote from Lutherans for Life

“The Church is under an incredible assault, but perhaps never has the opportunity been greater. The question is whether we wish to take it, whether we want to be salt, or whether we'll just mark time, leaving nothing but ruins for those who follow in our footsteps.” *Rev. Peter Scaer, Concordia Theological Seminary – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

CHURCH NEWS

2023 MINT FESTIVAL

Saturday, August 12th

Plans are underway for the St. Johns Mint Festival Parade on Saturday, August 12th. St Peter Lutheran Church and School invite everyone to walk as a group in the parade. We will be passing out hard wrapped candy.

Let's take advantage of this great opportunity to share our church and school with others who may not know we exist! Hard wrapped candy can be dropped off at the church office or put in a bin in the back of the church. We need walkers to join us in the parade. Sign up will be in the back of the church or office. Please contact me with any questions at 517-927-5089.

Charlene Kennedy



We welcomed to our St. Peter family this past month by baptism and confirmation, the Hicks...Paige, Paityn, Ezra and Jace. Paige is married to William and their children attend school at St. Peter.

We also welcomed by transfer the DeGrandchamp's, William and Barbara, who were members here previously. Some of you may remember them.

Introduce yourself to them if you haven't already met them!!

CHURCH NEWS

Ladies Aid and LWML News

The “Piecemakers” continue to quilt every Thursday morning. We very much need help. Please come and see what there is to do. We have 80 quilts made to send to Lutheran World Relief and still have 2 1/2 months to make it to our goal of 100. With God’s help we will make our goal! We would like to thank everyone who has given us sheets and material, etc. We are using every piece we are given. Please continue bringing anything you may have and leave at the Ladies Aid door in gym.

We are cleaning out our kitchen. We are getting rid of the gray and white dishes and plastic glasses. If you would like anything, help yourself. The dishes are in the lower cupboards by the refrigerator and the glasses are to the left of the sink. Take whatever you would like.

In our first meeting on September 7th, Judy Nobis will be here to tell us about the National LWML convention she attended in Milwaukee, WI this summer. So please join us to hear all about LWML (Lutheran Women’s Missionary League) at around noon.

In Christ’s love, Kathy Bond





ST. PETER
LUTHERAN SCHOOL

8990 Church Rd. St. Johns, MI 48879
989-224-3178
school@stpeterriley.org

St. Peter Lutheran School Open Enrollment Request

Preschool - 8th Grade

We are excited to open enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year! Below is a link and QR code to request additional information on enrollment, availability and to set-up a tour of the school. If you have any additional questions you are welcome to contact the school office at 989-224-3178.

Erika Brown, Principal
principal@stpeterriley.org

Lisa Smith, Preschool Director
lisaschrauben@live.com

Corrine Fletcher, School Admin. Asst.
school@stpeterriley.org

We look forward to talking to you about our amazing Christian school!

<https://forms.gle/UVKpnWbmNgXvCoTw6>





The Food Pantry

We are accepting non-perishable food items from now until August 20 such as: Mac & Cheese, Tuna, Canned Vegetables, Stuffing, Canned Fruits, Peanut Butter, Stuffing, Spaghetti Sauce, Pasta, Cake Mixes and Frosting.

Non-Food Items: Paper Towel, Kleenex, Toilet Paper, Ziplocs, Dish Soap, Laundry Detergent, Cleaning Products, Soap, Shampoo, Conditioner, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Liquid Hand Soap. Money Donations are also Helpful! Thank You for your Continued Support! You can drop your items off in the back of the Church or in the Church office.

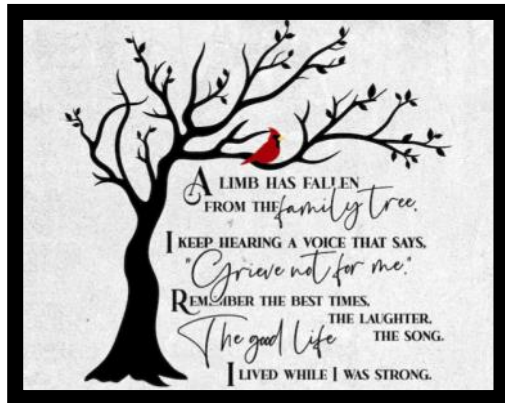


Mites Sunday is August 27th!

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS

Memorials

A memorial of \$100 was given to the Heritage Fund in memory of Gerald Burrows.



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 Church will only send out emails if we have permission from the person or family of whom the email is concerning to respect peoples privacy.



Shut-In Visit List Monthly Visits

Virginia Davis
Charlie Silm
Shirley Edwards
Albert Smith
Linda Davis
Glenn Bennett
Mary Ann Grennell
Linda Chant
Rhonda Dedyne
Jan Maynard
Ilene Gibson
Ellie Camburn



Please review our list of Sick and Shut In and show them some love by calling and visiting. Continue to remember them in your daily prayers.



Attention All Golfers

Please put Saturday, August 26th
on your calendar!

Get a team together and join in the FUN!

The Golf Scramble is at
Huckleberry Creek Golf Course,
2900 N. Hubbardston Road, Pewamo, MI
Brochures are in the church office and
in back of church.

Any questions,
contact John Burgess at 616 295-3903

LCMS FOUNDATION

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Ron and Sally put an estate plan together thirty years ago. Just recently, they began reviewing this plan, with the help of their LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor, getting them ready to go to their attorney for updates.

One evening over dinner, Sally said to Ron, “You know, I’ve been thinking about our plan. Thirty years ago when we put it together, we didn’t spend much time talking with each other about what was on our hearts. We certainly didn’t pray about it. We just got it done before we left on our trip to Europe. I feel differently this time.”

Ron responded, “I am glad to hear you say that because I have been feeling the same way. I really want to aim our gift to ministry to the scholarship fund in our congregation’s endowment. The school is the place where our Church connects with new families. Every year, dozens of new people are being baptized because of the school.”

Sally said, “I couldn’t agree more. Can we pray about those families that will be touched in the future through the nurturing, loving, environment of our school?”

They prayed. They wept. They found strong encouragement to do their work and adjust their estate plans.

Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help you get started. Contact...

Julie Burgess Gift Planning Counselor Church Extension Fund/MI District Email: Julie.burgess@lfnd.org Mobile: 713-822-5284

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS, AND EVENTS

Imagine a college where students learn:

- to value marriage and family over career and money.
- that men are men and women are women, with God-given and beautiful differences and roles.
- that to be a father is greater than being the president and to be a mother is greater than being a queen.
- that the Bible is the wisdom of God far surpassing all the wisdom of men.
- that the Lutheran Church has the greatest theology, the best hymns, the most excellent music in the history of the world.
- that Bible, hymns, prayer, devotion, and talking about God belong in our homes every day.
- that children are a heritage from the Lord, the only thing in all the earth we can take to heaven with us.
- that piety is better than wealth and virtue is better than fame.
- that the Western tradition, with its literature, philosophy, music, scientific discovery, and Christian theology, is by far the greatest tradition the world has ever seen.
- that socialism is theft and wokism is bullying.
that Christian culture grows through supporting faithful churches and leading pious homes.

Join us on **Sunday, August 20th**, Mr. Austin Mock from Luther Classical College will visit our congregation to thank us for our support and to give us an update on the progress of the new school. He will present during Bible class following Divine Service. Come and listen to the exciting things happening at Luther Classical College and see how our gifts are at work!

NEWS FROM THE ERBER'S

David and Joyce Erber
LCMS International Mission. +. Ghana, West Africa. +. July 10, 2023

Dear Partners in Mission,

The seminary in Ghana is on break. Even though we aren't in the classroom, there is still a lot going on. The students who have been in class for the last couple of years have headed out on Vicarage. This will be a year of practical ministry experience for them under the supervision of experienced pastors. Once the students were out-the-door, the seminary started the process of putting together a new group of students to start classes in September. At this time, the seminary is only working with one group of students at a time.

Recently, the church in Liberia requested the opportunity to send students to our Lutheran seminaries in Ghana and Nigeria. This means, in September, we will have men from Liberia in our seminary classroom. Of course, Joyce will be responsible for working out the financial dynamics. I look forward to having these men in class as I made many trips to Liberia years ago.

This summer, our Online MA students are studying 'Creeds and Confessions' with Dr. Rick Serina, the Associate Director of the CTCR (Commission on Theology and Church Relations). He teaches the class through his computer and the internet from his office in the LCMS International Center in St. Louis. He is doing a great job! This is a great opportunity for our small group of pastors scattered across Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan. Some of these men already seminary instructors in their own country.

I am presently on a quick trip to Michigan for a series of doctor appointments. I have had a lot of weeks of physiotherapy for my broken elbow. So far, the message about my recovery seems to be that I am doing well but still have a lot of therapy ahead of me.

In addition, Joyce and I have been blessed by a very special visit by our 11-month old grandson (and his parents). We loved waking up in the morning to his happy little voice!

Thank you for your prayers for our well-being and for the missionaries, churches and seminaries in Africa! God hears and answers every prayer! God be with you!

David and Joyce

LCMS INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARIES

About the Erbers

Pastor David and Joyce Erber serve as missionaries with LCMS International Mission. We live in Ghana West Africa. David teaches at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Accra, Ghana and coordinates the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Online Master of Arts in Theology degree for pastors in Africa. Joyce is the Regional Business Manager for Africa and is responsible for accounting and financial dynamics for LCMS missionaries and projects across Africa.

How To Connect with David and Joyce

David.Erber@LCMS.org Joyce.Erber@LCMS.org or via: 3809 Westchester, Jackson, MI 49203

How To Send Financial Support For Our Mission Work In Africa:

1. Write check to: The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
 2. On Memo Line, write: "Support for Erbers - Ghana"
 3. Send to: LCMS, P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861
- Or go to: www.lcms.org/givenow/erber Or go to: Mission Central

If you would prefer not to receive these letters, please send us a note.

Please note: These letters are not intended to serve as solicitations for donations. Some recipients uphold us in prayer. Some recipients send a donation once a month, once a year or once every couple of years. Some recipients simply like to hear about what is going on with us from time to time. These letters are intended to be a word of thanks for prayers and support as well as an attempt to stay in touch.

If you have a moment, we would love to hear from you! *David and Joyce*

Thank you...
to all who made the Hog Roast
such a huge success!

Much planning goes into an event like
this and we give thanks for
CHARLENE KENNEDY
and the wonderful job
she did to make it happen!!
Thank you also to all who helped
from set up, clean up, preparing food,
serving, games, etc.

Thank
you 

Spring Gala

We are starting plans for a spring gala in the spring of 2024 to support our church and school. This is a great opportunity for fellowship among members of our church and our school families. In order to have a successful gala we need a great team of people to help plan. I would like to have a committee together by the beginning of August to start planning. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Erika Brown or call the church office.

Thank you,