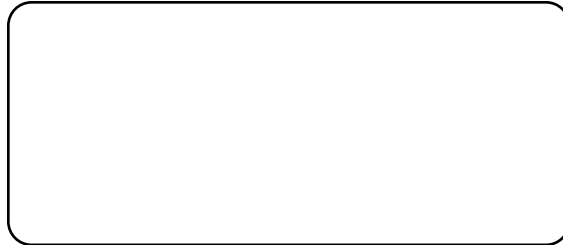


**St. Peter Lutheran
Church & School**

Rev. Timothy Bayer
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We are on the web!
www.stpeterriley.org



THE MESSENGER
August 2024



Church Services

Divine Service – Sundays at 9:30 am

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 XIII – Of the Use of the Sacraments

Of the Use of the Sacraments they teach that the Sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the Sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments.

They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify by the outward act, and who do not teach that, in the use of the Sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required.

There is a world of difference of the Sacraments being only “marks of profession among men” or “signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them.” If they are only marks of profession, the Sacraments are an act of man, but since the latter is true, this means the Sacraments are an act of God. Baptists and others see the sacraments as only marks of profession among men. For a Baptist, one is baptized as an act of obedience and as a public testimony to his faith. In no way do they see the Baptism itself as a means of grace through which God bestows faith. Therefore, the Gospel is turned to Law, and the Sacraments are an act of obedience of the person instead of a gracious gift of God.

We affirm, however, that the Sacraments are instituted by God to awaken and confirm faith. In other words, they are a means of God’s grace. We are saved by God’s grace, through faith in Christ. The Sacraments, in addition to the Word preached, read, and taught, are means by which God gives and sustains saving faith in Christ.

So the Sacraments are beneficial when the promises offered and set forth in them are believed—in other words, when faith is added. We could be baptized one hundred times and receive the Lord’s Supper hourly, but if we had no faith, it would be of no avail. Therefore, the position is condemned that says the Sacraments justify just by doing them (“by the outward act”).

Lastly, there is a distinction between the Sacraments being valid and being beneficial. The Sacraments are valid with or without faith, since they depend on the Word of God, which must be true. God’s Word is true whether we believe him or not. But for the recipient to benefit from the Sacraments, the promises of God must be believed. This is why the Sacraments are to be used in such a way that faith increases.

In Christ, Pastor Bayer

A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

To Him be the Glory

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith – that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3: 14-21

August is here, and with it comes the start of another school year at St. Peter. These verses in Ephesians, a part of Paul's letter, remind me of our school's mission. Our mission statement is, "Sharing Christ's Word as we discover His World". This is such a great reminder of God as the creator of everything, including us, God the Spirit who strengthens us so that Christ might dwell in us. As we prepare for the new school year, this is our focus. This is what we want to teach our students and their families. We are rooted in Christ and he continues to bless us abundantly.

One of the blessings we have seen over the past five years is the steady increase in our enrollment. For the 2019/2020 school year, we had 20 students enrolled in our program that ended in 5th grade. For the 2024/25 school year, we already have 27 preschool students and 34 day-school students enrolled in our kindergarten through 8th-grade program. Not only have we added more grade levels, but we are reaching more families through our school.

Providing the opportunity for a Christ-focused Christian Education to the members of our church and families in our community is essential. To continue providing this with our growing enrollment the school board is beginning the planning phase for calling an additional teacher to join our staff. We ask that as a congregation, you pray alongside us as we consider God's plan for St. Peter.

With the addition of the 6th - 8th grade over the past three years, and an empty grade that has been moving through since kindergarten that will be gone next year, we will have eight separate grade levels for the 2025/2026 school year. We have only three teachers to teach eight separate grades, one of which also has to handle all administrative responsibilities. We must continue to provide an excellent education, and doing so will require some changes to accommodate the number of grade levels and the number of students enrolled.

The school board has already been working to support our growing school. A plan was developed that is starting this year to increase tuition over a 4 year period. The tuition paid by our families supports our school financially. However, it does not cover 100% of the school budget. This past year, it covered about 55% of our budget. This percentage changes each year as the church financially supports any amount that is not covered by tuition. I can say that with increasing enrollment, the percentage of the budget covered by tuition has slowly increased.

The gala that was held this past spring was another step taken to help build support for our ministry. This was done to bring financial support and also to bring church families and school families together to celebrate our school. This summer, we have been working to set up a new tuition management system. This will be a benefit to our families and will also alleviate the increased work that comes with more students on the tuition management side.

Blessings in Christ,
Erika Brown

PRESCHOOL NEWS/THANK YOU' S

Welcome Back!

Wow, we can't believe we are getting ready to start another year of preschool! We hope everyone has had a fun and relaxing summer. We are very excited to have 27 preschoolers enrolled in the fall. Thank you for your continued prayers and support. It is truly appreciated.

Our preschool orientation will take place on Tuesday, August 27th at 6:00pm. This is for parents and their preschooler. We will be going over the layout and expectations for the upcoming school year. This is a great time for families to meet and children to check out their classroom. We look forward to seeing our returning and new preschool families.

Our first day of preschool will be on Monday, September 9th. We are looking forward to another great year of preschool. Enjoy the rest of your summer with family and friends!

Blessings, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Fletcher, and Mrs. Curtin

Thank You's

Dear St. Peter Lutheran,

Thank you for your support of missionaries and mission work throughout the world! Your contribution of \$500 for Pastor Massey was very much appreciated. God is blessing our ministry through YOU, as together we partner to bring the Good News of Salvation to the world!

The faithful support of people like you is what makes mission work possible. You can learn more about the missionary or project that you support on our website, www.GlobalLutheranOutreach.com

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

Thank you for your donation of \$2,000 on April 30th. Thank you for your prayers for my work with seminary students and the church of Ghana and for Joyce's work with missionaries and missionary programs throughout Africa. We are thankful for your partnership in proclaiming Christ in Africa!

David and Joyce

P.S. We have a new granddaughter!!

A LETTER FROM THE CANTOR

Why We Do What We Do

Now let's talk about hands. As you consider them, you realize how amazing they are. Each hand has 26 bones; together, they make up a quarter of the bones in your body.

What have hands to do with our worship? Quite a bit, actually. Our hands communicate much about our heart and mind. When you were young you probably learned to fold your hands, bow your head and close your eyes as you pray. These are acts of reverence as we quiet ourselves to bring our petitions before our heavenly Father. That's still a very good practice, as it helps us focus on what is being prayed.

But you may have noticed, when Pastor is standing at the altar during a prayer, he stands with uplifted hands. This is not some exaggerated reach-to-the-ceiling, hand-waving stance as you'll see in some Pentecostal churches. Rather, it's simply raising open hands to about shoulder height. Like many of our worship practices, this goes all the way back to Old Testament times and worship in the temple, and is known as the orans ("let us pray") position. It was the prayer posture for the clergy and the laity in both corporate and personal prayer, described by the early Church fathers as far back as the 3rd and 4th Centuries.

We can also use our hands to make the sign of the cross. As you look through the Divine Service, you see "+" at various places throughout. At the very beginning we read this encouragement, "The sign of the cross + may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism." The way people make the sign of the cross has differed with time and location. But the most ancient practice has been for the individual to create a mirror image of what the Pastor does. Watching him, you see he starts the sign of the cross at head level, then down to about the waist, then from the left shoulder to the right and back to the center. So mirroring this action, with the fingertips of the right hand, the worshiper would start with the forehead ("My Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven") to the breastbone ("and was incarnate for me") to the right shoulder ("and was crucified for me") to the left shoulder ("and entered into my heart.") and back to the center.

It's a commendable worship practice to make the sign of the cross wherever you see the symbol, such as the Invocation, the Absolution, the end of the Creed, the Benediction. Contrary to the attitude of some, it's not a "Roman Catholic" practice, but a "Christian" practice with centuries of tradition. Personally, I make the sign at the Invocation and as Pastor dismisses us from the Sacrament. It not only reminds me of my Baptism, but is a way for me to make those words of blessing individually mine. I encourage you to give it a try, even in only one place in the service. You'll find it enhances your worship.

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 ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHAT IS THE MITE BOX ALL ABOUT?

Your spare change once a month becomes more powerful than you can imagine!!

Through LWML (Lutheran Women in Mission), hundreds of thousands of dollars are distributed to many missions all over the world!

For example:

\$100,000 to A Healing Plan for At Risk Children
\$100,000 is given to Serve LCMS Office for Pastoral Education
\$100,000 A Legacy of Love for Special Needs Children in US
\$106,000 Healthy together, Healthy Workers, Healthy Church. (Lutheran Family Services in US)
\$100,000 fortifying Faith for Those With Vision Impairment (Lutheran Braille Workers)

Just to name a few! Your spare change & bills can work miracles all over the world
in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

That's what MITES can do. THANK YOU!! REMEMBER every last Sunday of each month is MITE SUNDAY!!

St. Peter Ladies Aid & LWML News

We continue making quilts for Lutheran World Relief. The delivery time is in October. We now are close to 100 quilts to send all over the world. We are always in need of material, sheets, pillowcases & anything else you may wonder if we can use; we can usually find a purpose.

We are finished making the women products. A door collection was taken and \$240 Was collected. Thank you all for your donations. Pastor and Alice Moses will be going on a mission trip to Africa and will be delivering them to many African ladies. Our St. Peter ladies worked together to make about 430 pads. Thank you all! FYI Alice Moses will be our speaker for our December Advent Brunch where we will hear much more about God's work.

Mite Sunday is the last Sunday of every month. Please take a little Mite box (found in the narthex) home with you to put your spare change and bills in. You can then return it on Mite Sunday and drop it in the BIG Mite Box in the Narthex.

There will NO Quilting Bee in August. The next one will be the second Saturday of September, the 14th, and everyone is invited to join us from 9am-4pm with lunch served.

We continue to sell our RADA knives, etc, Please let me know if you would like to see a catalog or our display case which is in the quilting room. Call me, text me, or see me in person.

“Our work comes through our Savior Jesus Christ.”

Kathy Bond (989-640-0630)

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS AND EVENTS



Women's Retreat 2024

Thank you to everyone who participated, helped with the bake sale, had fun together and became closer to God's gift of friendship through His Word. We enjoyed the leadership of our speaker, Pat Maier, and her sharing of artful ways to bible study. *"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."*

Psalm 46:10

Many thanks to all the ladies and "their families" for the time away to connect.

Committee friends,
Geri Jastram, Rita Hollis, Judy Bengel



CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS

2024 MINT FESTIVAL PARADE

St. Peter Lutheran Church and School will be represented in the Mint Festival Parade. We will be walking and carrying a banner for St. Peter. The walkers will be passing out hard wrapped candy and a bookmark with information on our church and school. Walkers are still needed for the parade. There is a sign up sheet in the back of the church. The parade is on **Saturday, August 10th.** Our entry number is “30” and line up is at Oakview Elementary School at the corner of Lansing and Townsend Streets. All walkers will need to assemble in their designated area no earlier than 8:30am and no later than 9:30am. The parade starts at 10:00am and will last around 1 1/2 hours. Please see Charlene Kennedy with any questions!

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WE'RE LOOKING FOR THRIVENT MEMBERS!!!

If you are a Thrivent member, would you please call our current Event Coordinator, Charlene Kennedy, at 989 224-7106? Your membership may qualify to sponsor a fund raising or service program we hold here at St. Peter.

Because of the “Privacy Act” Thrivent is unable to release a list of membership. A \$250 gift card is available to us from each membership twice a year. This is a service Thrivent provides and it is free...it does not cost YOU anything. If you have an insurance, health insurance or an annuity policy with them, please call Charlene. We appreciate your help

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Secret Prayer Sisters

Please continue to keep your Secret Prayer Sister in your daily prayers. One never knows what issues and life events are going on with them. There is nothing better than lifting them and their families up in prayer!!

Diane Thurston

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS

Memorials



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

Ellie Camburn
Linda Chant
Linda Davis
Rhonda Dedyne
Ilene Gibson
Mary Ann Grennell
Jan Maynard
Jeanette Mehney
Charlie Silm
Bernita Sillman
Albert Smith



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.

Mercy and Grace Lead to Generosity

“Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift” (2 Cor. 9:15)! This is St. Paul’s exclamation upon hearing the Corinthian church’s response to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his request for support for the church in Jerusalem. The Christians in Corinth heard and received God’s mercy in Christ, and they responded to St. Paul’s call to support Christians in Jerusalem with a collection. The Corinthians’ joy filled Jerusalem’s need.

This is the reality of stewardship. Because of God’s generosity in the giving of His Son to die on the cross for us, we are to be generous with all that we receive from Him. What do we receive? Everything. All that we are and all that we have is the Lord’s. He is the creator and the giver. We are His creatures and those who receive what He gives.

It sounds easy. And it is. But then again it isn’t. Stewardship is easy because it is God’s work. Through what God gives, we give to others. Through what God gives, we support the work of the church for the life of the world. He gives; we receive. And like our generous Father in Heaven, we, as His children, use what He gives to us to love and serve others.

But stewardship is also difficult. That is because it goes against our natural inclination to think that what I have is mine to do what I want with. This is our sinful nature. It is our selfishness and our greed. How can we who have been given everything — life, food, clothing, house, home, forgiveness, divine sonship, an eternal inheritance — be so stingy with what we give to the church, the place where we hear about and receive all that God gives us and does for us? We are all guilty of this kind of thinking. And the only godly response is to repent and trust in the Gospel.

For if God has given you His own Son, will He not give you all things? Yes. He will. This is His sure and certain promise. God provides for His people. He provides everything we need for this body and life and for the life that is to come.

The church is a mercy place. It’s a place where God’s mercy in the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, is given and received. For us who believe it means forgiveness, life and salvation in the face of sin, death and the power of the devil. Here in the church, we inhale God’s mercy in Word and Sacrament, and exhale this same mercy in love and service to our neighbor. And that is an enduring, joyful thing to do. Our joy fills our neighbor’s need because His joy filled ours (Heb. 12:2). Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!

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*

OPPORTUNITY FOR GIVING

School Family in Need

As we are wrapping up tuition accounts from the 2023/24 school year and preparing enrollment for the 2024/25 year, it has come to the attention of the school board that there is a school family in need of financial assistance. This family has been a part of our school for several years and would like to continue to be a part of our school.

The school board believes that it would be a great blessing to be able to help them pay off the tuition they still owe from last year so they might begin the new school year without that added debt. If there is anyone who would like to support this family by helping to pay off the balance on their account, please contact Ann Stout or Erika Brown for more information.

Unique Giving Opportunity

St. Peter Lutheran Church and School has discovered a way to keep our Junior High graduates grounded in a scriptural based, classical education through their High School years: Wittenberg Academy.

From their website:

“WittenbergAcademy is a completely online Lutheran school dedicated to forming scholars for life in this world and the next. We are unabashedly Lutheran in our delivery of quality, classical education: scholars receive instruction from teachers who believe, teach, and confess the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.”

We currently have 4 students interested in enrolling this fall. The approximate cost per year is \$5,000 per student. St. Peter will be providing a classroom, but no financial support will be included. (We currently cover approximately 55% of the total educational cost for our Dayschool students.)

To assist with the financial burden of this wonderful educational opportunity, a Wittenberg Scholarship Fund is being established. Anyone wanting to contribute can contact Dave Bengel or Sally Pontius. Contributions for the 2024-25 school year should be submitted by August 15th. Those wanting more information about the program can reach out to Kristin Bayer. Wittenberg’s website is www.wittenbergacademy.org.