

## St. Peter Lutheran Church & School

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



# THE MESSENGER

## January *2026*



### Church Services

Sundays: Divine Service at 9:30 am

Monday-Friday: Chapel at 8:35 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 XXVI: Of the Distinction of Meats

*1] It has been the general persuasion, not of the people alone, but also of those teaching in the churches, that making Distinction of Meats, and like traditions of men, are works profitable to merit grace, and able to make satisfaction for sins. And that 2] the world so thought, appears from this, that new ceremonies, new orders, new holy-days, and new fastings were daily instituted, and the teachers in the churches did exact these works as a service necessary to merit grace, and did greatly terrify men's consciences, if they should omit any of these things. 3] From this persuasion concerning traditions much detriment has resulted in the Church.*

*4] First, the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith has been obscured by it, which is the chief part of the Gospel, and ought to stand out as the most prominent in the Church, in order that the merit of Christ may be well known, and faith, which believes that sins are forgiven for Christ's sake be exalted far above works. Wherefore Paul also lays 5] the greatest stress on this article, putting aside the Law and human traditions, in order to show that Christian righteousness is something else than such works, to wit, the faith which believes that sins 6] are freely forgiven for Christ's sake. But this doctrine of Paul has been almost wholly smothered by traditions, which have produced an opinion that, by making distinctions in meats and like services, 7] we must merit grace and righteousness. In treating of repentance, there was no mention made of faith; only those works of satisfaction were set forth; in these the entire*

The distinction of meats, and other works ordained by men, where understood to merit grace before God. This error is swiftly refuted by the Word of God.

- Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man. – Matthew 15:11
- But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. – 1 Corinthians 8:8
- The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. – Romans 14:17

Erroneous teachings on this issue are dangerous, for they obscure the chief doctrine of justification, that we are “freely forgiven for Christ’s sake.” Christian righteousness is through faith in Christ, not by works of the Law, and certainly not by works of the human imagination which God has not commanded.

The article shows that the distinction of meats as a means of meriting grace and making satisfaction for sins is a gateway to many more works useless in making us righteous—“new ceremonies, new orders, new holy-days, and new fastings.” These things may all be useful for teaching, for discipline, and for subduing the flesh, but they are of no avail in making satisfaction for sins. This is Christ’s work, as the atoning Sacrifice. Through faith in His merit, we are declared righteous.

So repentance is restored to what it truly is—contrition (sorrow over sins) and faith (believing our sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake). Works of satisfaction play no part in the equation. It is Jesus’ work alone that makes satisfaction for sins.

This is only the start of Article XXVI, so we will continue on this topic next month.

-Pastor Bayer

# A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

## Singing with Thankfulness in Our Hearts to God

*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

*2 Peter 1:3-11*

The students and Sunday school children did a wonderful job singing and doing their recitations for the Christmas Service on Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Mrs. Bayer and Pastor Klamer for doing such a great job preparing for the service and working with the students.

Blessings in Christ,

Erika Brown

Principal/Teacher

# A LETTER FROM THE CANTOR

## Who We Are

You may have never heard of Melancthon, but Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther is a name everyone at St. Peter should know. C.F.W. Walther (1811-1887) was born in Saxony and studied theology at the University of Leipzig. While studying in Leipzig, he read the works of Martin Luther and came to understand the importance of the Lutheran Confessions. He was ordained as a Lutheran pastor in 1837, but he found the church in Saxony was rationalistic and had abandoned orthodox Lutheranism. In 1838, Walther with 800 other Saxons, under the leadership of Dresden pastor Martin Stephan, left Germany on five ships bound for America and the freedom to practice their Lutheran faith. One of the ships was lost at sea. The remainder arrived in New Orleans and made their way up the Mississippi River to Perry County, Missouri, near St. Louis.

Not long after arriving, Bishop Stephan was accused of misconduct and banished from the colony to the east side of the Mississippi. Now the colony of Saxons was in crisis. With their bishop gone, were they still a church? They had left the hierarchy of the church back in Saxony, which they saw as the source of their authority as a congregation. Based on the Lutheran Confessions and the works of Martin Luther, in 1841 Walther was able to convince most of the settlers that the Church exists where Word and Sacrament are administered according to Scripture, not because some prince or bishop says it does. Later that year he accepted a call as pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Louis, which he held until his death in 1887.

But he was busy in many other ways. He established a log cabin college in Altenburg, Missouri, in 1839, which ultimately became Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and served as its president until his death. He founded and edited the publication of *Der Lutheraner*, which became *The Lutheran Witness*. He wrote the text and composed the music for the Easter hymn, "He's Risen, He's Risen." In 1847 the group of Saxons as well as the men trained and sponsored by Wilhelm Löhe came together and established the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States or what we now know as the Missouri Synod. Walther served as the synod's first president from 1847 to 1850 and again from 1864 to 1878.

The President of Missouri Synod is now Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison. A native of Sioux City, IA (b. 1962), Rev. Harrison served as pastor in Indiana and Iowa before becoming executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care. When he was elected as LCMS President in 2010, he stepped in at another time of crisis within the church. There was a lot of pressure then for Missouri Synod to "be like everyone else," and "get people in the door any way you can." So congregations were encouraged to bring in the "praise band", drop the name "Lutheran", and even call themselves a "worship center" rather than a "church."

Working within the circumscribed role of the president, Rev. Harrison presents and advocates for a confessional Lutheran identity within the Synod and the nation. In addition, under his leadership, Missouri Synod has recognized it is in confessional unity and fellowship with dozens of Lutheran church bodies around the world. As with our first president, Rev. Harrison keeps busy in many other ways as well. He is co-founder and chairman of the board of The International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg (Old Latin School), which hosts some 40 students and church planters from the European Union and beyond who are studying to become ordained pastors. In addition, Harrison chairs the board of the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty in Washington D.C. and serves on the executive committee of the International Lutheran Council. He has translated numerous books, including ones by C.F.W. Walther and Lutheran theologian Hemann Sasse and written several others as well.

As at the time of Martin Luther, the Lord continues to raise up faithful men and women for his Church when they are needed.

You've probably noticed that I've turned over much of my "cantor" duties for younger men to carry on. I'll have a few more items about the people who have shaped our church before I wrap up these "Cantor Letters." I hope you've found them interesting.

Your brother in Christ,  
Dick Davenport

# CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **St. Peter Lutheran School—Open Positions**

We are still searching for a Lutheran preschool teacher for our program here at St. Peter..

Please share this with anyone you think might be interested in learning more about working at St. Peter. They can contact the church office or contact me directly.

church@stpeterlutheran.org  
principal@stpeterlutheran.org

Erika Brown

## **St. Peter Ladies Aid & LWM**

We continue quilting every Thurs. mornings 9 am-noon, join us ,you would enjoy it.

## **St. Peter Lutheran School Script** could use your help!

We have gift cards in our Inventory that we would like to sell.

We have Meijer, Speedway, and Walmart. They are in the amount of \$25.00 or \$100.00.

If you are interested, see Mary Hoy or call her at the office, Monday-Friday, 8:00-Noon.

**We are looking for volunteers** to help us take down the Christmas decorations at St. Peter on Sunday, January 11h after Sunday School. If you are interested in helping out, please just show up. Many hands make light work! This is a great time of fellowship with our brothers and sisters at St. Peter.

Charlene Kennedy, DVM

## **2026 CHILI AND CORN BREAD COOK-OFF**

Come One...Come All to the 9h Annual St. Peter Chili and Corn Bread Cook-Off on Sunday February 8, immediately following Bible Study. Drinks and table service will be provided. There will be an award for the best chili and corn bread. So get those secret recipes out and put them to the test. Let's see who has the best!

St. Peter Elders

# THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you for lifting up the bright light of Jesus for others to see. I am so deeply thankful to God that He chose you to supply what the work of the LCMS requires. Although giving may seem a simple act, it speaks so forcefully about the kind of Christ-following disciples God has made each of you to be. "Love one another," was Jesus' commandment to his disciples. You are doing just that through this gift, and all other acts of selfless sacrifice you make for the sake of the Gospel message. Even in financially challenging times like these, you are confessing your trust and faith in Christ alone. And I appreciate you. Thank you.

Pastor Matthew C. Harrison, President LCMS

Thank you for your support of missionaries and mission work throughout the world! Your contribution is very much appreciated. God is blessing our ministry through YOU, as together we partner to bring the Good News of Salvation to the world! —Global Lutheran Outreach

Dear Pastor Bayer and people of God at St. Peter Lutheran,  
Thank you for your donation of \$2,000 in April. Thank you for your prayers for my work with seminary students and the church in Ghana and for Joyce's work with missionaries and missionary programs throughout Africa. We are thankful for your partnership in proclaiming Christ in Africa! P.S. We have a new granddaughter!! —David and Joyce Erber, Together in Mission

Thank you Ladies from St. Peter Lutheran Church for the tray full of goodies. It's all so good.

Have a Blessed Christmas.

Sincerely,

Shirley Schrader

## THANK YOU

Thank you again to the St. Peter Ladies for acknowledging us older folks with such Delicious treats!! The cookies, candies, and lovely cards remind us of the endless Blessings from our Heavenly Father through each of you, our St. Peter Family!

### January Schedule for Crucifer's

4 <sup>th</sup>	Gabe Schneider
11 <sup>th</sup>	Landon Miller
18 <sup>th</sup>	Garrett Bloom
25 <sup>th</sup>	Andrew Bayes

# 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  
Jan Maynard  
Charlie Silm  
Evert Sillman  
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.***

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

"As summer in Michigan is upon us and the holiday season rapidly approaches this fall, many of us will find ourselves travelling and away from our home church here at St. Peter. During these times of travel, there are two resources that I invite you all to take advantage of to continue to stay close to Christ and continue to support the missions of St. Peter.

The first resource is the LCMS church locator tool. Simply visit [locator.lcms.org/church](https://locator.lcms.org/church) and use the search tools provided (including search by distance from address) to find a sister LCMS congregation nearby to wherever your travels take you. You can view address information, service times, and contact/website information directly from this easy to use tool.

The second resource is the online giving option offered here at St. Peter. We have a new and improved online giving platform hosted through Vanco that allows anyone to give anytime from anywhere. Simply scan the QR code below or go to [www.StPeterRiley.org](https://www.StPeterRiley.org) and click on "Give Now" to be directed to the online giving platform.

There is no cost for electronic giving as 100% of your contributions go to the church, and your giving will be included in your annual contribution statement for tax purposes identical to the tithing envelopes. You can set up one-time or recurring payments and manage future payments all from your smartphone or computer.

As you travel this season, next season, or any season, remember these resources to keep yourself nourished in Christ, surrounded by Brothers and Sisters in Christ, and supportive of the mission here at St. Peter.

-Evan VanBeelen, Assistant Treasurer"





## LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE -- LWML

“Joy to the World the Lord has come! Let earth receive her King!

Let every heart prepare Him room and Heaven and nature sing!”

May the joy of our Savior fill your hearts all through 2026! He has blessed us so much and promises to continue to do so. He holds us in the palm of His hand so that no one can snatch us from Him.

So where will God lead you to serve Him in this new year? There are many opportunities to serve right here at St. Peter. Here's just a few:

Altar guild, deep cleaning of facilities, repairs to buildings, volunteering in the classrooms, providing hot lunches for school students and teachers on Friday, supervising lunch room so teachers can step away, Piecemakers creating quilts and clothes, Sunday school teacher or assistant, position on one of the boards, providing meals to shut ins, organization of food pantry, Lutherans for Life, and the list goes on! God has something planned for you may you hear His call.

LWML is all about serving in big and small ways. Our mites serve and touch lives all over the world and here in Michigan.

One of the grants from Michigan District was for \$17,950 given to St. Martin Lutheran School for the Deaf, in Dearborn. They are using the money to purchase equipment for transform Christian based print books into ASL apps. This will allow deaf children across the US to view a book entirely by a deaf performer, and to build deaf children's reading fluency, as text and illustrations also will appear on the screen. (Taken from the LWML Michigan website)

On the national level your mites will go to helping the Orphan Grain Train continue to provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine. They have been working in Ukraine since the beginning of the war. In the past year 17 shipments of donated, food, clothing and medical supplies were sent to various locations in Ukraine. OGT is assisting 12 orphanages in the Kherson area and 3 in the Kyiv area. They are working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ukraine and other Christian churches to distribute the items. The Orphan Grain Train was granted \$100,000 for 2025-2027. (Taken from LWML National website)

Thank you to everyone that came to the Advent brunch and helped with the festivities. Lynn Riggs our speaker has a heart for Lutheran World Relief and truly is a Lutheran Woman in Mission. It is amazing what we can do when we work together to make this world a little warmer and comforting to those in need.

May your heart be filled with JOY as you serve Him by serving others!

God's Blessing, Laurie Flegler

## LCMS Stewardship Ministry

“And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new. Also, He said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true” (Revelation 21:5).

In January there is a great deal of “new” talk. Parties are held to ring in the “new” year. “New” year’s resolutions are made to set a “new” course of life in the “new” year. There is date forgetfulness as checks and other forms are filled out without using the “new” year on the dateline.

We use all this “new” talk because there is very often so much wrong with the old in us. We think back to the “new” resolutions from the previous year that only lasted a few weeks. That “new” person did not shed any pounds and instead, picked up a few. The “new” habits of going to the gym were soon replaced by even more time on the couch binging on Netflix. The “new” person who does not lose their temper, use sarcasm as a lethal weapon and spend more money than necessary, but who worships, prays and serves the Lord and the neighbor, never seemed to stick around. We need “new” talk because the Old Adam is alive and well within every one of us.

But this promise of “new” is a matter of stewardship. It is the Lord Himself who makes the promise of all things being new. These words recorded by St. John are not pious wishes or hopeless promises. They do what they say. YOU, that one baptized into Jesus’ death and resurrection, are NEW! These words are indeed trustworthy and true. This “new” comes to you in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It comes free of charge, even without our prayer.

This stewardship of “new” is not a vague, someday kind of stewardship either. You are NEW now! Forgiven. Reborn from above. The old is gone, nailed to Calvary’s cross and

buried and rotting in a tomb that was only borrowed by Jesus for His resurrection rest. The Gospel is what makes us NEW every morning. Remembering your baptism, you are new. Confessing your sins and receiving absolution makes you new. Hearing the Gospel filling your ears makes you new. Feasting on Christ’s body and blood in the Holy Supper makes you new.

These mercies, totally undeserved as they are, are entrusted to us to steward TODAY even as we long for the Last Day. But we know how often we fail in this stewardship. We hoard God’s creation as if it belongs to us. We belittle and devalue our neighbor because they look or sound or act in a way that we do not like. We seek to make the Holy Word of God softer and more palatable for those, or even ourselves, who refuse to confess sin as sin and repent. We value our comfort over truth, our reputation over faithfulness and our treasure over making sure that people get to hear of the Jesus who has done so much for the world and us.

We, as stewards of the Gospel, need to be made new every day. This is exactly what the Lord does. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel last year, so He gives us a new year. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel yesterday, and He gives us a new day. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel in the last few minutes, and yet in mercy our newness comes with each tick of the clock! Because that is how the Lord works.

As we see this working of all new things in us, it then calls us to be stewards of this newness to the world. This starts right in our own homes. It radiates out to our neighbors. It beams out from our congregations. This newness is teamed at the circuit, district and Synod levels all to shine the newness of the Gospel to those who need it.

Your new talk starts in the newness of the Gospel. Steward this treasure in this new year and this new day. It starts with a new you in Jesus. This is indeed trustworthy and true.

## **2026 JUBILEE CARNIVAL**

St. Peter Lutheran Church would like to invite all church and school families to join us at our annual JUBILEE Carnival. We are celebrating our school and all Lutheran schools around the country as we come to the end of Lutheran Schools Week.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 30<sup>TH</sup>  
6:00 PM TO 8:00 PM  
ST. PETER FELLOWSHIP HALL**

GAMES: Cookie Walk, Ring Toss, Fishing, Book Walk, Bingo,  
Bounce House for Smaller Children (must wear socks)

**THE GAMES ARE FOR CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL – 5<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE**

FOOD: Sloppy Joe's, Hotdogs, Bag of Chips, Popcorn, and Lemonade

**FAMILY FUN AND FELLOWSHIP  
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR FOR GAMES  
10 TICKETS FOR \$1.00**

**ALL PROCEEDS FROM THIS EVENT ARE GOING TO HELP  
SUPPORT ST. PETER LUTHERAN SCHOOL.**

**HELP SUPPORT ST. PETER LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

## St. Peter School...

### **Accelerated Reader Prizes**

We are continuing a school-wide accelerated reader store this year. Kindergarten through 8th-grade students can take tests on the books they read in order to earn points through the AR program. They can then use those points once a month to purchase items from the AR store. We need your help accumulating prizes for the store. There is a box on the counter in the office where prizes can be dropped off.

Examples of items that could be purchased: **Some new ideas have been added.**

Large squishes, fun socks, Chapstick, large bouncy balls, small lego kits, football cards, soccer cards, card games, TCG Pokémon Pack, Pokémon cards, yarn, glow in the dark sticks/necklaces, packs of balloons, Aphmeows, nail polish, hair accessories, small toys, new books, craft/art projects and supplies, gift cards to local businesses (\$5-\$10). Some larger prizes are needed, check with a teacher first to help with these.