

**St. Peter Lutheran
Church & School**

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



THE MESSENGER
April 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 (continued)

...[18] Therefore, our teachers must not be regarded as having taken up this matter rashly or from hatred of the bishops, as some falsely suspect. [19] There was a great need to warn the churches of these errors that arose from misunderstanding the traditions. [20] The Gospel compels us to insist on the doctrine of grace and the righteousness of faith in the churches. This cannot be understood if people think that they merit grace by observances of their own choice.

[21] So our churches have taught that we cannot merit grace or be justified by observing human traditions. We must not think that such observances are necessary acts of worship. [22] Here we add testimonies of Scripture. Christ defends the Apostles who had not observed the usual tradition (Matthew 15:3). This had to do with a matter that was not unlawful, but rather, neither commanded or forbidden. It was similar to the purifications of the Law. He said in Matthew 15:9, "In vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." [23] Therefore, He does not require a useless human service. Shortly after, He adds, "It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person" (Matthew 15:11). [24] So also Paul, in Romans 14:17, "The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit," and in Colossians 2:16, [25] "Let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to ... a Sabbath." [26] And again, "If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—'Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch'" [Colossians 2:20–21]. [27] Peter says, "Why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will" (Acts 15:10–11). [28] Here Peter forbids burdening consciences with many rites, either from Moses or others. [29] In 1 Timothy 4:1–3 Paul calls the prohibition of meats a teaching of demons. It is contrary to the Gospel to institute or do such works thinking that we merit grace through them, or as though Christianity could not exist without such service of God.

From "Article XXVI. The Distinction of Meats" in *The Augsburg Confession, Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, Pocket Edition*. © 2005, 2006 Concordia Publishing House.

Source: https://bookofconcord.cph.org/en/augsburg-confession/abuses/article_xxvi/

We return our attention this month to Article XXVI of the Augsburg Confession, where we had left off. Here, we have a continued discussion of the futility of looking to the observance of human traditions as a way to merit God's grace. The righteousness of faith (being freely justified through faith, believing that for the sake of Christ our sins are forgiven) must be the glory of the Church's proclamation. Anything that conflicts with the Gospel must be removed, no matter how long it has been observed.

Luther, having been a monk, understood very well the danger of seeking righteousness in human rites and traditions because he had lived this lie. Indeed, not even the God-ordained rites of Moses had proven capable of making a man righteous, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. If by works of God's Law, no one will be justified, certainly by works of our imagination, no one will be found righteous. Only through faith in Jesus Christ are sinners declared righteous. By Christ's merit, and not ours, we are justified through faith.

The Article of Justification is the heartbeat throughout all the articles of the Augsburg Confession. And here again, it is backed up by testimony from Holy Scripture, with many examples supplied. God never tires of teaching the truth of the Gospel, and we ought to never tire of hearing it. For all too quickly we slink back to our own works and forget our Savior. All too easily our sins alarm us and we fail to seek comfort in the absolution Christ gives. But it is a done deal—Christ has died for our sins and was raised for our justification. It is finished. You can rest in Him.

-Pastor Bayer

A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

A Sacrifice for Each of Us

*And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."
Luke 22: 19-20*

Looking at the school year calendar, April begins with Spring Break. It is a great time to relax and recuperate. It marks the beginning of the downward slide to the end of the year. More importantly, though, with the beginning of April this year, we are celebrating Easter. I am currently listening to a podcast that is going through the book of Luke. What stood out to me in chapter 22 is the reminder Jesus gives that he didn't just die on the cross. He died for each one of us. He died for me, and I can confidently say to each student in our school that he died for them also. There will be many fun activities and memories made as we look to the end of the school year, but none of them compare to the opportunity we have to share the gospel with our students every single day.

Before leaving for spring break, we wrapped up reading month. This year, we had more guest readers visit to read to the students than ever before. Thank you to everyone who visited the school to read to the students. The students and the staff enjoyed listening to the stories that were brought in, and the support for the school is greatly appreciated. Thank you also to Carl and Geri Jastram, who invited the students to their property to learn about collecting sap and making maple syrup. The students enjoyed exploring the woods and tasting maple syrup.

We have several fun opportunities to look forward to in April. On April 10th, the 5th – 8th grade students would like to invite you to their Trivia Night fundraiser, hosted by DJ Trivia. This is a great opportunity to support their upcoming field trip to the Ark Encounter and the Creation Museum, as well as an opportunity to test your trivia knowledge and enjoy fellowship with one another.

On April 17th, we are having our annual Grandparents Day at the school. Grandparents will have the opportunity to attend matins with the students, watch some skits the students are preparing, and enjoy brunch together. If you would like to help with Grandparents Day, you can join us to help serve brunch or provide a food item for the brunch.

Also in April, the students will be going on a field trip to the IQHub at AgroLiquid. While there, the will have a chance to explore their learning area, learn how to make butter and learn about aquatic macroinvertebrates. April is definitely going to be a fun and busy month.

Blessings in Christ,
Erika Brown
Principal/Teacher

Serving In His Light

Matthew 5:16



Capital Zone LWML Spring Fling Saturday, April 18

St Andrew Lutheran Church, 8867 Kent St, Portland



EVENT SCHEDULE

8:30am - Registration & Coffee

9am - Opening Service,
Bible Study: Rev. Klamer
Speaker: Dcns. Melissa Harnden

12pm - Lunch

Please bring for Portland Backpacks for Bellies:

instant oatmeal packets, granola breakfast bars, pop-tarts, small cereal boxes, applesauce and pudding cups, ramen noodles, canned soups and pastas, Goldfish crackers, etc



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@stpeterriley.org
principal@stpeterriley.org

Erika Brown

St. Peter Ladies Aid & LWM

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

April Schedule for Crucifer's

12th	William Potter
13th	Christopher Gallo
19th	Landon Miller
26nd	Leo Favor

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We are getting ready for Grandparents Day on April 17th. If you would like to volunteer to bring an egg c casserole or homemade coffee cake, we have a sign-up for that. We would love to have a few volunteers from the Church come to help in the kitchen on the morning of the 17th. This way, school parents and grandparents can enjoy the day. It's also an opportunity for you to get to know our students and staff and see our school.

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

Do you shop at Kroger's and want to help the School?

Here are the steps, you can find this information also, on Google

The Kroger Family of Companies is committed to community engagement, positive social impact and charitable giving at the national and local levels. Every community is unique, but our common goal is to partner with the neighborhoods we serve and help the people there live healthier lives.

One of the ways in which we do this is through our Kroger Community Rewards program. This program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. Once you link your Card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Shopper’s Card. Here’s how it works:

1. Create a digital account.

A digital account is needed to participate in Kroger Community Rewards. If you already have a digital account, simply link your Shopper’s Card to your account so that all transactions apply toward the organization you choose.

2. Link your Card to an organization.

Selecting the organization that you wish to support is as simple as updating the Kroger Community Rewards selection on your digital account.

1. Sign in to your digital account.

2. Search for your organization here.

3. Enter the name or NPO number of the organization you wish to support.

4. Select the appropriate organization from the list and click “Save”.

Your selected organization will also display in the Kroger Community Rewards section of your account. If you need to review or revisit your organization, you can always do so under your Account details.

3. Your organization earns.

Any transactions moving forward using the Shopper’s Card number associated with your digital account will be applied to the program, at no added cost to you. Kroger donates annually to participating organizations based on your percentage of spending as it relates to the total spending associated with all participating Kroger Community Rewards organizations.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS

Memorials

Evert Sillman \$ 765.00
Linda Chant \$ 930.00



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.

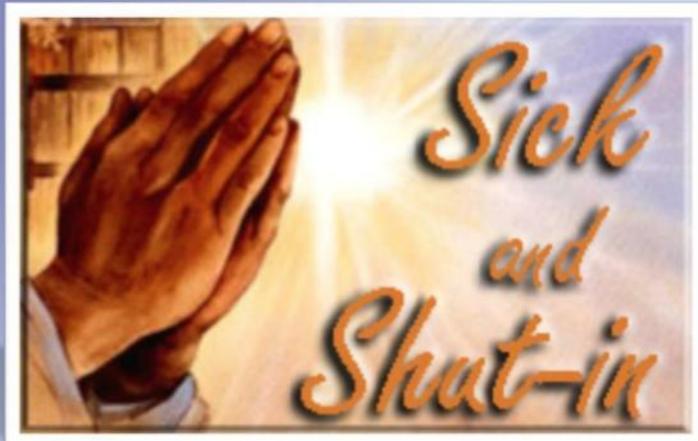
The Church will only send out emails if we have permission from the person or family of whom the email is concerning to respect peoples privacy.



Shut-In Visit List

Monthly Visits

Ellie Camburn
Linda Davis
Rhonda Dedyne
Ilene Gibson
Jan Maynard
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.

Fund Raiser for St. Peter School

St. Peter Lutheran School children in Grades 5-8, are planning a field Trip to Kentucky to visit Ark Encounter Museum.

To help cover costs, they are doing a bottle and can drive.

You can drop them off here at School, or if you have a large amount, contact us and we can make arrangements to pickup.

Mary, 989-224-3178.

City of Ovid Officers Watson Honored

Officer Robert Watson was named Employee of the Year by Chief of Police Lisa Rousseau in recognition of his outstanding investigative work and dedication during a Breaking and Entering case that ultimately resulted in a felony conviction and prison sentence.

Watson thorough approach to the investigation—specifically his attention to detail in locating, collecting, and preserving DNA evidence—demonstrated exceptional professionalism and skill.

“Officer Watson’s determination to dig deeper, follow every lead, and ensure that all forensic evidence was properly gathered directly contributed to identifying the suspect and securing a successful prosecution,” said Chief Rousseau.

His actions reflect a strong commitment to justice, victim advocacy, and the safety of our community. The level of diligence he displayed in this case exceeded the expectations of his role and showcased the high investigative standards of the City of Ovid Police Department.

Because of his efforts, a dangerous offender was held accountable, and the citizens of Ovid are safer. Your work brings great credit to himself, the department, and the City of Ovid.

“You are highly commended for your persistence, professionalism, and commitment to excellence,” said Chief Rousseau.



Officer Watson

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE – LWML

Were you there when they crucified My Lord? Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? Were you there when God raised Him from the tomb? Did it cause you to tremble? Draw near to Him and reflect on His suffering, death and resurrection! He is Risen!

Thank you to everyone that came and participated in our Quilting Bee, on Saturday, March 21! Sixteen women were busy tying quilts, cutting fabric, and sewing shorts. We all enjoyed the fellowship and the wonderful lunch. Every spring and fall, the LWML zones across Michigan have their societies join together for a morning of worship, Bible study, a guest speaker, or activity, a short business meeting, fellowship and a food. St. Peter is part of the Capital Zone. On Saturday, April 18 we will gather at St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Portland for our Spring Fling. The theme of the day is “Serving in His Light”. Deaconess Melissa Harnden will be our speaker. I am excited to invite all of you to attend, bring your older daughters; they will get to learn about what a deaconess is and does in the church. If you would like to car pool please contact me and we can make plans.

April is also time to register for the **LWML Michigan District Convention -- June 26-28** – Kellogg Hotel & Convention Center MSU 219 S Harrison Rd. East Lansing **“JESUS IS THE LIGHT”** 2Cor 4:6. It is right in our backyard. Ask me about it, I have an article I can share that has more information!

Praising God!

Laurie Flegler LWML Capital Zone Co-Chair and Ambassador for Living Word Orphanage Village

Cell phone 989-307-0692

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

The most common question about stewardship is not whether a Christian should give to their church. Of course Christians should give to their church. Everyone knows this. Rather, the question asked most is, “How much should I give?” But this question really means, “Should Christians give a tenth of their income to their local congregation?”

Here are some common reasons against tithing. Some say tithing isn't necessary because it isn't expressly commanded in the New Testament. There is no “Thus saith the Lord,” or “should” concerning tithing. Others say that Christians give to their congregation in ways much broader than money. They give of their time and their talents, and these together with treasures (money) add up to more than a tithe. Still others say that they give of their treasures to other things besides their congregation, and they want to support those things alongside their church. And then there are those who think Christians shouldn't tithe because of some fear. They are afraid that if they tithe, their gift will be misused, or that after tithing, there won't be enough left over to get the things that they use, want or need.

Here are some reasons why Christians should tithe. Even though the New Testament doesn't specifically command Christians to tithe, the Old Testament people were commanded to. And on top of this, St. Paul often describes giving a regular and generous proportion of the first fruits of one's income — terms similar to a tithe (2 Cor. 8:7–23; 2 Cor. 9:2–7).

But here's another way to think about it. What was the point of the tithe in the Old Testament? Where did it go? This tithe was intended to support the ministry of the Levites. They were not given any land because they had no time to farm; their full-time job was the ministry. What does it say in the New Testament? “The Lord commanded

that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14). This is the verse that Luther used in the Small Catechism's Table of Duties to explain what Christians owe to the support of the ministry.

It seems clear from both the Old and the New Testaments that the tithe is the goal of Christians in their giving. But what if we're not there yet? How should we handle this? What are we to do?

Let's answer this by asking a different question. What would you say to your adult children who only attended church quarterly or once a month? After all, there is no passage in the New Testament that requires Christians to go to church weekly. Hebrews 10:25 is the closest verse we have, and it states simply that Christians should not neglect gathering together. And even though there is no passage that commands Christians to gather weekly, that is the implicit expectation throughout the Old and New Testaments.

So, what would you say to that son or daughter? The conversation might go something like this. I'm glad you're still going to church. It is a wonderful blessing to hear God's promises of forgiveness, life and salvation, and to receive His gifts in Word and Sacrament. But you can do better, and it will only be a blessing to you. There is a better way, and I'd really like you to try to attain it.

We should approach the topic of tithing with a similar conversation. The tithe is not specifically commanded in the New Testament, but it sure seems like the implicit expectation of both the Old and New Testaments. So, we're ecstatic that you're giving, and that you're giving in all these various ways — time, talents and treasures. But there is a better way. And that will only be a blessing to you, just as the Word of God — Old and New Testament alike — promises. Can you try increasing your gifts over the coming weeks, months and years? Can you put your trust in the God who sent His Son to take away your sin and give you everlasting life? And if He did this for you, if He did not spare His only Son, how will He not give you all things? He will not disappoint.



Fundraiser

Gather your friends and put your knowledge to the test at a trivia night hosted by DJ Trivial!

This fun event will raise funds to support the Ark field trip scheduled for May 2026.

FRIDAY

April 10th

St. Peter Fellowship Hall

8990 Church Rd., St. Johns MI 48879

DOORS OPEN AT 6:30PM

TRIVIA 7:00-8:00

Register and pre-pay for trivia and babysitting in the office.

Mrs. Brown will supervise babysitting for ages 5-10.

Trivia: \$20.00/per person

Babysitting: \$5.00 per child.

Snacks and drinks will be provided.

Contact Erika Brown for questions at 989-640-0811.

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.

