

The Voice



From the Desk of Pastor Mark:

Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.
-Philippians 4:4

Happy New year! Welcome to the year 2025. As we say goodbye to the year 2024, I rejoice with the way God has been at work at and through St. Peter Lutheran Church. There are many and various ways that we can see how God has been at work. Perhaps it is best to share it through some of the quotes I've heard about St. Peter throughout the year.

1. "My daughter loves Sunday school and was so upset last week when I said we were missing it."
2. "Thank you for livestreaming your worship. I tune in quite regular-

ly." (This from a nonmember, but I've heard similar quotes from members as well.)

3. "The joy and appreciation shown by the families who received these small gifts from the church was very moving." (Member who dropped off angel tree gifts.)
4. "St. Peter is a unique and special place. I just love it here." (Words from a longtime member.)
5. "St. Peter punches way above it's weight." (This was from a man sharing how much he thought the church was doing for its size.)
6. "I just love the joy and enthusiasm from the kids as they run up and put quarters in the tube." (I've heard this often from people.)
7. "I think It's great how St. Peter is supporting all these kids with scholarships in Tanzania." (This year St. Peter will be supporting more than 110 students.)

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Worship Schedule

Thank you for joining us for worship!

Sunday worship occurs at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday school runs from 9:15-10:15 a.m.

Wednesday worship is at 6:30 p.m.

YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR

Breakfast club will meet January 5 at 9:15 AM.

Middle School Youth Group will meet January 8 & 22 at 7:15PM

High School Youth Group will meet January 15 & 29 at 7:15 PM.

Mission Trip Participants will meet January 26 at 6PM.

St. Peter Lutheran Church Office Hours

The Church Office is open
Mon.-Fri. 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Jill Capps – Director of
Faith Formation
Jill's day off is Friday.

Pastor Mark Schlenker
Pastor's day off is Friday.

8. "St. Peter is such a good singing congregation." (Relative of a member who visits often.)
9. "Thank you for the meaningful worship and the message. I really needed this today."
10. "You can see how St. Peter really takes "Gathered to Grow. Sent to Serve." to heart." (Shared from a visitor of St. Peter.)
11. "We really liked all the opportunities for kids, and really all ages to be involved and active." (Words from a new member joining the church.)

I could go on and on, if I only had the time and space; but I'll stop with those. You hopefully have heard or shared some similar quotes yourself. Why? Because St. Peter is a "unique and special place." For this I give all thanks and praise to God. Or, as the Apostle Paul encourages, I "rejoice in the Lord." The Lord has done and is doing wonderful things at and through St. Peter Lutheran Church. With the year 2024 now in the past, we press on into 2025 knowing the importance of our call to share the Good News of God's love in Christ with the world. With this call ever before us, we go forth boldly, knowing that the Lord is with us.

Gathered to Grow. Sent to serve.

Pastor Mark

Coming Up at St. Peter

Winter/Spring Session of Children's Choir

The winter/spring session of our Wednesday Children's choir begins January 15. Kindergarteners through 2nd grade meet on Wednesday evenings from 5:15-5:45 p.m., and 3rd through 6th grade meets from 5:45-6:15 p.m. Sign up with the QR code if your child was not in fall session but would like to join this winter!



2025 Flower Chart Is Posted

If you would like to share an altar arrangement on a special Sunday in 2025, please sign up on the Flower Chart clipboard that is posted on the Service Board in Fellowship Hall. Arrangements cost \$45 and will be made to match the liturgical colors of the church year.

In December, St. Peter donated the contents of the quarter tube in the sanctuary to the Grimes Storehouse food pantry in the amount of \$125.40. Thank you for supporting families in our community who are living with food insecurity by giving through the quarter tube and by food donations given in the basket in Fellowship Hall!

Gathered
to
Grow

Sent
to
Serve

The 15th of each month is the deadline date for newsletter items to be submitted to the church office.

Thanks!



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MLK Days of Service January 15-22

In January, we will hold our 5th Annual MLK Jr. Day of Service. We will prepare breakfast casseroles for the Salvation Army's Mobile Breakfast canteen. The mobile breakfast canteen provides breakfast to the Des Moines area homeless and near homeless populations. Each breakfast casserole feeds 10 people; the mobile canteen serves 150 casseroles each week, feeding 1,500 people.

How can you help? Sign up to prepare casseroles with your family or friends. Time slots are available January 15th through January 22nd. Sign up at <https://signup.com/go/AeALCJE> or with the QR code. *Please sign up for 1 slot for your group - in the comments let us know how many are coming.

You can also sign up to donate ingredients or make a monetary donation to buy supplies for the casseroles. Due to space, this year the donation drop offs will be at 2 different times. *For youth in need of silver cord or NHS volunteer hours, this would be a great opportunity to get a few hours.*



January Myamba Emissary Trip

Habari Kaka na Dada! (Hello Brothers and Sisters!)

The Myamba Missions Team has been planning our emissary trip to Tanzania for some time now. It is scheduled for January 13th through January 25th. We will be spending time in the Pare Diocese. Here are the places and people we will visit:

- The Mwanga School for the Deaf, where our Sunday School supports four students.
- The Myamba Parish and its 6 subparishes that we support through our budget monies.
- The three Myamba secondary schools, where we support more than 100 students.
- Gonja Hospital, where we have often given money and supplies, and have done building projects.

Thursday Bible Study

Bible Study meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 1:00 p.m.

Questions? Contact Jill at faithformation@stpeterofgrimes.org

2025 Offering Envelopes

Your 2025 offering envelopes are ready by the front entrance. If you don't see your name but would like envelopes; or, if you no longer need envelopes due to online giving, contact the church office. We will be happy to meet your current needs!

Men's Group

Join us for our monthly Men's Group Gathering this month! Men's Group usually meets the first Sunday of the month. Contact Bradley Fasse with any questions, and join the Men's Group Facebook page for the latest updates and news. @Facebook: St. Peter Lutheran Men's Group @bradleyfasse@gmail.com @515-971-2397



Our Emissary Team is comprised of Pastor Mark Schlenker, Bambi Schlenker, Cindy Kreklau, Carol Eilers, Dave Eilers, and Larry Gulleen.

We plan on hosting a blogsite again for this trip, so look forward to following us on our trip. We will announce that site in the bulletin and on our church website and facebook. Most importantly, please find a way to remember to pray for us – our preparations, our safety, our relationships when we are there, and for our families that remain behind.

Asante na Mungu Akubariki (Thank you and God Bless You)



Save the Date—Blanket Sunday is February 23rd

February 23 is St. Peter's Annual Fleece Blanket Sunday. We will once again be making fleece blankets for the patients of MercyOne Hospitals in Des Moines. New this year we will be donating a portion of our blankets to the IHYC (Iowa Homeless Youth Center in Des Moines). We've had great success with this project in past years and are looking forward to seeing how many blankets we can make again this year!

This is a great time of year to find the fleece on sale at local fabric stores. Please purchase either Blizzard or Anti-Pill fleece as other types of fleece are not suitable for making tie blankets.

What is the Fleece Blanket Project? These donated blankets to Mercy One Hospitals are given to patients from newborns to people at the end of their lives. They serve as comfort and are enjoyed by all ages.

How Can I Help?

1. Donate fabric – 2 pieces of fleece (each 1 1/2 yards in size) makes one blanket or 2 pieces of fleece (each 2 yards in size for the youth served by IHYC.)
2. Donate a completed blanket! Create a blanket with your family, friends, Bible Study, small group, sports team, neighborhood group etc.
3. Sponsor a blanket by donating \$20.00.
4. Help prepare the Fellowship Hall for the blanket tying event. (This will be done on Saturday, Feb. 22)
5. Help on Sunday, February 23rd during the tying event. Never made a blanket before? That's ok – if you can tie your shoe you can tie a blanket.

Who do I contact with questions?

Jill Capps at faithformation@stpeterofgrimes.org, Allison Newman at allisonknewman@yahoo.com, Amanda Rokke, Mallory Herbsleb, Sarah Capps, or Brenda Johnston.

Volunteers Needed – Can You Help?

If you can help as a communion **preparer** contact Kaarin Fasse. To be a **communion assistant**, please contact Katie Scholl.

If you would like to help as **Assisting Minister**, please contact Emily Wells.

If you would like to be a **reader**, please contact Sue Dooley.

If you can help **host** by greeting worshippers and helping them find their worship materials, contact Rita Rosenberg.

If you want to learn our **livestream audio/visual production**, contact Jill. You would be trained in the production process for our live-stream service.

If you can help with **Creation Station** during worship, contact Jill or go to this link: <https://signup.com/go/CwrXJph>.

The church office can put you in contact with these volunteer coordinators. Thanks for sharing your time and talents with St. Peter!



We support the Grimes Storehouse Food Pantry!

Our January focus will be:



Paper Goods



Bring in donations of paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, paper plates, small bathroom cups, personal wipes, and hand wipes.

Donations can be dropped off in the basket next to the Service Counter.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING DECEMBER 17, 2024

Pastor's Report:

- Advent season has gone quickly. Next Sunday is already the 4th Sunday of Advent. The Advent devotional, "Joy of Heaven, here on Earth," from Luther Seminary has been printed for people to take and use.
- Gingerbread house building was another good time for fun and fellowship at the church. It was well attended as usual.
- Loved having our friends from MOSAIC back last Wednesday. The confirmation students joined them in crafts and games before worship. During worship the confirmation students shared the Christmas story. It was wonderful to see some MOSAIC friends come forward and participate.
- Kids Christmas program went well on Sunday. Thanks to all who helped make that such a success. Love seeing the kids up front reading, acting and singing.
- This Sunday is the Christmas Cantata. The Wednesday children's choir kids will join the adult choir for a couple of songs this year. I love the partnership in ministry.
- Attended the SE Iowa Synod "Boundaries" training in West Des Moines on Dec. 7th.
- Met for lunch with other Grimes pastors on Dec. 21st. The group hadn't met for a while, so it was good to catch up.
- Thanks to Building and Grounds for getting the Christmas Eve banner put up. Thanks also to the group of guys that put the nativity up as well.
- Looking forward to our candlelight services on Christmas Eve, where we can join together and celebrate the birth of our savior Jesus Christ.

Faith Formation Report—Jill Capps

- **Faith Formation:** Gingerbread Houses – Faith Formation held our Annual Gingerbread House event on December 8th. We had a great turnout with 27 fami-

From the Stewardship Committee— Blake Franzeen & Brenda Johnston

November 2024

Income: \$19,672.46
Expense: \$28,285.59
Net Loss: (\$8,613.13)

YtD 2024

Income: \$280,657.94
Expense: \$322,781.27
Net Loss: (\$42,123.33)

- General Fund—November 2024, Expenses were more than income thus it finished with a loss of \$8,613.13
- General Fund—November 2024 ytd, expenses were greater than income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$42,123.33).

lies participating in the event. This event began in 2021 and has become a tradition for many of our members, with new members joining us each year.

- The afternoon Bible study group met on December 11th for our Holiday Potluck. We will not meet during the week of Christmas, and will start back again on Thursday, January 9th at 1:00pm.
- Planning is underway for our Annual MLK Week of service where members of the congregation will come together to make breakfast casseroles for the Salvation Army's mobile breakfast canteen. This year we will extend the days, offering a few limited weeknight opportunities as well.
- Preparations have begun for our Annual Fleece Blanket Project in February.
- **Confirmation:** On December 11th – the confirmation students hosted our friends from Mosaic for a Christmas party. The youth presented the Christmas program at the 6:30pm worship service, with our guests from Mosaic also taking part as angels & shepherds in the program. We had a great turnout with about 20 people attending from Mosaic. We started this tradition in 2019.
- Service & Fellowship – the youth will collect change through the end of February that will be donated to the DCG Angel Accounts which is a fund that helps students who do not qualify for free or reduced meals but still have a need for support.
- **Sunday School/Christmas Program:** I have assisted with the Christmas program practice for the past few weeks. The 5th/6th graders have done a great job learning their parts – they were excited to present the Christmas story with the younger Sunday school students on December 15th. To reach extended families who are unable to attend the program, I live-streamed that portion of the 10:30am service in addition to the 8am service.
- **Other:** Postcards were created for members to take to invite friends/neighbors to Christmas Eve services at St. Peter. Facebook & the Website have also been updated to include these services. We will have postcards/fliers that will be distributed at the Christmas Eve services. These will thank people for attending worship at St. Peter & highlight upcoming events.
- I have been attending choir Cantata practices the past

few weeks to test microphones to enhance the streaming of the cantata.

- Thank you to WELCA for purchasing 8 new confirmation/acolyte robes that will replace robes that are showing wear & tear.

Youth Report

- Middle School YG is always full of excitement! We continue having a great turnout of youth each month. With the fall down, it's been much easier playing indoor games now that the weather has cooled off.
- High School YG is going great! We had a Friendsgiving Appetizer Night on Sunday, 11/24. It was a fun night of food and fellowship, with 17 youth attending!
- Mission Trip has 43 youth and 11 adults going to Copperhill, Tennessee. We continue to meet monthly to build relationships and get to know one another. The youth's \$250 deposit was due by 11/24, and I paid the deposit to TEAMeffort on 11/30. Pictures are being taken of all the youth attending the Mission Trip for fundraising. Be on the lookout for their smiling faces!
- Breakfast Club was great with 13 youth. Thank you to the Ridnours for providing breakfast!
- Youth Room Update: The youth room has new paint! Whoo hoo! I primed the room and then 5 youth came and helped paint the base color. Thank you to Dave Eilers, Mallory, Danika, Kadin, Lincoln, and Nora for helping paint! Stop in and see our progress!
- Thank you to Matt and Mindy Morris and Jason Hughes for your continued help with our Middle School Youth Group Program! I couldn't do it without you!
- Thank you to WELCA for their donation to the Youth Room Reno!

Treasurer's Report:

- **October financials approved**
- General Fund--October 2024 mtd, expenses were greater than monthly income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$4,444.29).
- General Fund--October 2023 mtd, expenses were greater than monthly income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$3,672.59).
- General Fund--October 2024 ytd, expenses were greater than income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$33,510.20)
- General Fund--October 2023 ytd, expenses were greater

Online Giving Opportunities

St. Peter has online giving options through Thrivent's Simply Giving Program to include one-time giving and to enable members to set up their own recurring donations through the following secure methods:

1. **Phone App:** Find and download the Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app in the App Store or on Google Play for Android smartphones by searching "Vanco mobile". Type in "St. Peter Lutheran" and choose our address in Grimes, and follow the steps.
2. **Website:** Go to St. Peter's website www.stpeterofgrimes.org and click on the yellow Online Giving link or scan the QR code printed here.



than income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$14,715.49).

- **November financials approved**
- General Fund--November 2024 mtd, expenses were greater than monthly income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$8613.13).
- General Fund--November 2023 mtd, expenses were greater than monthly income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$4331.88).
- General Fund--November 2024 ytd, expenses were greater than income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$42,123.33)
- General Fund--November 2023 ytd, expenses were greater than income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$19,047.37).

Stewardship :

- 3 Bankers Trust CD's renewed for 6 months at 4%. Includes the Memorial, Building Fund, and Sabbatical CD's.
- Land sale CD matured 12/15. Approval to renew for 6 mos.
- Worship Tellers lined up for Christmas Eve Services at 4 and 9.

Building & Grounds

- Repaired restroom fixtures
- Installed Christmas Eve Banner
- Replaced lights over alter
- Set up Nativity
- Took load of old furniture to dump
- Parking lot lights installation work in progress
- Special thanks to Larry Wolinski for repairing the insulation around the front doors

Education:

- We had a successful Christmas pageant at the 10:30 service on the 15th. Special thank you to Kim, Sue, Carol, Michelle, and Jill for their help with the program.
- We made the decision to have Jill Capps extend her hours to fill the role of Vacation Bible School Director rather than looking for a separate person for this role. We will work with Jill in the coming months to plan what that looks like for her, us, and the many volunteers involved in VBS.
- We have made the decision to build out different storage cabinets in the 3 year old classroom to meet all of our Sunday school curriculum storage needs going forward and in a way that allows that classroom to be a classroom if needed. Jill and Sarah are helping us work with Tim S to get the project started. We hope to have everything built out this spring . Using this approach to curriculum prep will allow us to utilize more people who can be assigned a single lesson to inventory and prep over a period of time.

Evangelism:

- We continue to host fellowship hours between services. We are starting to use the new coffee machine and have been placing the coffee out on our coffee bar. Both Tim and I want to thank Jill and others who stay late and often-times clean up. We have also had a number of homemade snacks provided by volunteers.

- Looking ahead we have discussed partnering with the men's group and hosting a chili meal. Keep an eye out for details!

Worship & Music :

- **Adult Choir Update:** Cantata rehearsals have begun! Extra church members have joined the choir.
- **Children's Choir and Mini Me Music:** Both children's choirs will combine for December rehearsals (4th, 11th, and 18th) from 5:15-5:45 to practice the cantata music
- Practice for 2025 will begin January 15th
- **Advent Preparation:** Dan Ring will play at 4:00 & 6:00 services
- Advent readers are being found
- Christmas Tree and decorations to be done between Nov. 24 and Nov. 30. Coordinating with Building and Grounds or WELCA.
- Altar Flowers: Beth's contact, Jill Frey, made the flower arrangements on Nov 10 and 17. They looked great, and she's been delivering them to the church. Cost is \$40 plus tax. We will continue having her make the arrangements through December and then re-evaluate.
- Cleaning and organizing storage room – a goal for Katie/Rita to get done sometime in 2025. Will have Jill and Lauri assist.
- Will continue to update the W/M tasks document to include more details
- Creating a picture notebook to illustrate decorations for Fall, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost seasons
- **Special Sunday Services for 2024**
- **Dec 1** – 1st Sunday in Advent – see below
- **Dec 22** – Cantata
- **Feb 16-Mar 2** – Season of Creation, three weeks before Lent
- **Dec 29** – only one service at 9:00 am. Pastor Mark gone

Old Business:

- Planning for Myamba emissary team – January 13 – 26, 2025 – Pastor Mark invited to join and participate the team and travel
- Council Member Roles and Responsibilities documents due November 15

New Business:

- **Budget Planning for 2025**
- Review budget with Chad and Council
- Discuss changes - Eric work with Chad to make final recommended changes
- Annual Reports due Jan. 10th to Lauri
- Council – St. Peter Constitution review - Eric send to Synod for review
- 2025 Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting Date: Feb 9th
- St Peter Insurance Policy - Steve Schultz / Rob Ridnour look into getting quotes

Local Mission Donation: Des Moines Refugee Support