

The Voice



From the Desk of Pastor Mark:

Christmas is one of the most festive and celebratory seasons in the church year. Being at the end of December, it makes for a fantastic finish to the calendar year. We can ring in the new year filled with the hope, peace, joy, and love of Christ with the Christmas music and carols still ringing in our ears. The season of Christmas is the shortest season in the church calendar though, being only 12 days long. So, in my first two sermons of the New Year I talked about continuing to find space for the Christ child. No need to let the gifts of Christ be put away with the decorations, lights, and stockings. The gifts of Christ are for all times and places.

One author I've enjoyed reading over the years is Henri Nouwen. In his book *Making All Things New*, he writes, "We

live in a worry-filled world. We find ourselves occupied and preoccupied with many things, while at the same time feeling bored, resentful, depressed, and very lonely. In the midst of this world, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, appears and offers new life, the life of the Spirit of God." This new life in Christ is filled with hope in the midst of despair, peace in the midst of chaos, joy in the midst of sorrow, and love in the midst of hate and violence. These gifts of Christ are with us each and every day. Unfortunately, because we are "occupied and preoccupied with many things," we don't recognize and enjoy their benefits.

So . . . consider this a check in for the year. How is it going? Are you finding space for the Christ child? Are you finding space for worship, prayer, and

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- ◇ *May Craft Fair*

IN EVERY ISSUE:

- ◇ *Grimes Storehouse Donation Ideas*
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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 February 2 at 9:15 AM.

Middle School Youth Group will meet February 5 & 19 at 7:15PM

High School Youth Group will meet February 12 & 26 at 7:15 PM.

Mission Trip Participants will meet February 23 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.

fellowship with other believers? No, this is not meant to be a guilt trip. Remember that each day is a new day.

As I shared in my sermons, God is everywhere, and yet there are particular ways Christ is made known. Christ is made known in the Word and Sacrament ministries of worship. Christ is made known in the fellowship of believers. As Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them." (Matthew 18:20) Through prayer we can communicate with Christ any time or place, both in solitude and community.

Again, this is not a guilt trip article. This is meant to be an article of encouragement. The gifts of Christ Jesus' hope, peace, joy, and love are too good to put away until next Christmas. Each day is a new day, and an opportunity to be present with Christ Jesus and experience his benefits.

Gathered to Grow. Sent to serve.

Pastor Mark

Coming Up at St. Peter

Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting Feb. 9

Join us Sunday, February 9 after 10:30 a.m. worship for our semi-annual congregational meeting. We will approve the 2025 budget and discuss other church business. There will be a **budget forum on February 2** during the Sunday school hour to discuss any questions about the 2025 budget. Pick up your 2024 Annual Report for review before these meetings.

Winter/Spring Session of Children's Choir

The winter/spring session of our Wednesday Children's choir began in January. Wednesday Children's choirs will tentatively sing at worship on: Feb. 2, Mar. 2, Apr. 6, and Apr. 27.

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.



The Myamba secondary school year began in January, and St. Peter recently wired funds for 119 scholarships for students as they begin their school year. This includes children's Sunday School offering in 2024, which supports part of our scholarships for three students at the Mwanga school for the deaf. We also sent the remainder of our budgeted 2024 Myamba Missions support in our January wire transfer. Thank you for your support of these ministries!

Gathered
to
Grow

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

Thanks!



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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 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.



Faith, Fellowship, Coffee, & Dessert

All are welcome to join the Thursday afternoon Bible study as we begin our study on Ecclesiastes. This relaxed Bible study meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. There is no registration required, and you can come as often or as little as your schedule allows.

Contact Jill

at faithformation@stpeterofgrimes.org with any questions.

- January 9th - Ecclesiastes 1-3
- January 23rd - Ecclesiastes 4-6
- February 13th - Ecclesiastes - 7-9
- February 27th - Ecclesiastes - 10-12

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



30TH ANNUAL VALENTINE'S SPAGHETTI DINNER

Spaghetti Dinner Feb. 16 from 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Come and join us on Sunday, February 16, for a night of food, fun, and fellowship as the St. Peter Youth serve their 30th Annual Valentine's Spaghetti Dinner. The fellowship hall is transformed into a cute Italian Restaurant; and the youth serve salad, spaghetti, and dessert to our guests. A free-will donation will be taken for the meal. This night helps support the youth as they raise funds for the summer mission trip to serve in the Copperhill, TN, community. Don't miss out on this fun 30 year tradition at St. Peter!

Reservation sign-ups for 5pm, 5:40pm, 6:20pm, and 7pm will be available through Google Docs this year. Look for the link in the weekly eNews, on Facebook, or through the QR code. Sign-up for the time slot that works best for you. You may also call the church office at 986-3077 or email us at stpeter@stpeterofgrimes.org and we will be happy to help make your reservation.



HOSTED BY THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA

St. Peter Spring Craft Show

May 3rd
9-1pm

**\$50 FEE
NO TABLE
CHAIRS
PROVDIED**

**VENDOR SIZE:
8FT X 6FT**

Vendor applications open! Fill out the form and DO NOT submit payment to anyone other than Elizabeth (Beth) Hansen.

St. Peter Lutheran Church in Grimes

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!

February's focus will be:

Canned Fruits



Bring in donations of canned mandarin oranges, pineapple, applesauce, peaches, pears, fruit cocktail, etc.

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

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 9, 2025

Pastor's Report:

- Advent and Christmas seasons went well this year. Loved the various ways we celebrated together the gift of God's love for us born in the Christ child. SS kid's Christmas program, confirmation Christmas program with our friends from MO-SAIC, Choir cantata with the addition of the children's choir this year, Christmas parties, and wonderful candlelight Christmas Eve worship. A great way to finish the year 2024 celebrating Jesus' birth.
- The year 2025 is here and off to a great start! Happy New Year! After a couple weeks break from Wednesday and Sunday programming, the many wonderful ministries we share in together at St. Peter are active once again. Sunday mornings are filled with SS and worship. This Wednesday we have confirmation, worship, choir and youth group resuming. Always good to see the place hopping with people sharing in the good news of the Gospel together.
- I've been busy gearing up for the Emissary trip to Tanzania from January 13-25th. It's been busy getting everything ready for the trip, as well as preparing everything at church for when I'm gone. Thankfully, St. Peter has an amazing staff and leaders in the church, so I know things will run smoothly. I'm excited for the opportunity to meet and visit with our friends in Christ at Myamba.
- If you haven't yet, please stop by the table with the prayer banner. Say a prayer for our Myamba friends, and tie on a ribbon. We will be bringing the banner with us to give them for the new preaching point.
- You'll also notice a table with an opportunity for the congregation to support our friends with reading glasses. We will be bringing them with us.
- 2024 was a great year! I'm looking forward to what God has in store for us at St. Peter in 2025!

From the Stewardship Committee— Blake Franzen & Brenda Johnston

December 2024

Income: \$81,543.14

Expense: \$31,395.04

Net Gain: \$50,148.10

YtD 2024

Income: \$362,201.08

Expense: \$354,176.31

Net Gain: \$8,024.77

- General Fund—December 2024, expenses were less than income, thus it finished with gain of \$50,148.10.
- General Fund YTD—December 2024, Expenses were less than income thus it finished with a gain of \$8,024.77.

Faith Formation Report—Jill Capps

- **Faith Formation:** Our Annual MLK Week of service will run from January 15th-22nd. Members of the congregation will come together to make breakfast casseroles for the Salvation Army's mobile breakfast canteen. We are offering a few evening time slots for those who are unable to attend on either Sunday or Monday. If you have not participated in this event before I encourage you to give it a try – we have had families with children as young as 3 participate along with individuals, teens, adults of all ages etc., ALL are welcome!
- Preparations have begun for our Annual Fleece Blanket Project in February which will be held on February 23rd. You can participate by donating \$20 to sponsor a blanket, helping to set-up and prep blankets on Saturday, Feb 22nd and tying blankets on Sunday, February 23rd during the Sunday school hour. This year in addition to Mercy Hospital, tie blankets will be donated to the IHYC in downtown Des Moines. Watch the eNews & Facebook for updates.
- The Thursday afternoon Bible study will resume on January 9th. We will be studying Ecclesiastes during January & February. ALL are welcome to attend, we meet on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month from 1:00pm-2:30pm.
- **Confirmation:** Confirmation resumes on January 8th, after a two-week break for Christmas. The students will finish their study on Martin Luther & the Catechism and dive deeper into the life of Jesus. We have added 2 new students to our 7th grade confirmation class. These youth visited St. Peter during our Confirmation Christmas Program & Worship and decided to begin attending confirmation at St. Peter. We are always excited to welcome new youth to our programs.
- Confirmation will hold a Service & Fellowship event on January 15th, during which the youth will prepare breakfast casseroles for the Salvation Army's Mobile Breakfast Canteen as part of our MLK Week of Service.
- **Technology:** I have moved a wireless microphone transmitter to the front of the sanctuary, so it is closer to Pastor Mark & his wireless microphone pack. We will test this set-up on Wednesdays during worship, if this improves the connection, we will make the change for Sunday worship services. The transmitter will be placed in/

near the pulpit as I currently have it connected via the microphone jack that is in the pulpit. We will need to create a locking case for it so that the presets are not adjusted or changed in error.

- **Website/Facebook:** I continue to update Facebook & our website with information on upcoming events. If your committee is planning any events or would like to share anything via the website or Facebook, please let me know so I can make sure it is included.

Youth Report

- Middle School YG ended the 2024 calendar year strong with 28 kids attending our Christmas Party. I'm so thankful for my amazing and dedicated volunteers! Mindy, Matt and Jason, thank you!
- High School YG had 18 youth attend our Christmas Party. It was a fun way to end 2024!
- The Mission Trip youth and chaperones met on December 22nd. With the help of games, we continue to get to know one another. I'm excited to see this awesome group do great things in Tennessee! I booked a bus through Windstar Lines and paid a deposit to them. I've also started preparing for the 30th Annual Valentine's Dinner.
- Breakfast Club had 13 youth at our December meeting. The youth made Christmas cards for our 70-year-old and up members. Thank you to the Rouse Family for providing breakfast!
- Youth Room Update: Katie Scholl is working on getting a quote for new carpet.
- Shout out to the 10 chaperones attending the Mission Trip with me this year! Matt, Mindy, Jason, Sarah, Summer, Michelle, Bradley, Matt, Tim, and Katie, Thank you for attending the monthly Mission Trip Meetings and for all you do for the youth at St. Peter and in our community!

Treasurer's Report:

- Approve December unofficial financials. End-of-year giving still coming in during the beginning of this week. December financials not closed out. Unofficial numbers for December from Church Office
- Coming into December, our ytd general fund was at a loss of (\$42,123)
- December income was \$81,543. Expenses were \$31,395. Net income was \$50,148.
- 2024 Income was \$362,201* Expenses were \$354,176. Net

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.



income was about \$8,025 *Includes about \$6000 of 2025 pledges that were pre-paid in 2024

Committee tasks outlined

Stewardship :

- December was a busy month for worship tellers with 5 Sundays and 3 Christmas Eve services. Thanks to everyone who volunteered to pick up an extra shift counting offering this month.

Building & Grounds

- New overhead lights in the parking lot are installed and provide good light to the entrance.

Education:

- We are working on storage and a system to best utilize Sarah Capps's work on our SS curriculum moving forward as she completes her role. We plan to use the back room only for storage moving forward based on current rooms needs and attendance. That can be readdressed in the future if needs change, but for now, we want to prioritize getting the curriculum and supplies in an easy-to-use system that will allow us to continue our strong SS program with a group of volunteers.
- Starting to look ahead to VBS as the curriculum should be able to be ordered in February.
- Thanks to Jill for all of her help with everything!

Evangelism:

- Fellowship did not meet in December.
- No activities last month outside of Fellowship between services.
- A big Thank You to all that have stepped up to help out
- Plan to create a reference card for the new coffee maker.

Worship & Music :

- The Advent and Christmas seasons seemed to go smoothly. Beautiful music was shared by the adult and children's choirs at the cantata, and vocal and instrumental solos were shared on Christmas Eve.
- Christmas decorations were put away after services this past Sunday, with a lot of great help.
- Altar flowers are now being provided by Jill Frey, and everyone seems to be happy with the arrangements.
- Continuing to update W/M task list and decoration picture binder.
- Lenten season planning will start soon with Ash Wednesday on March 5.
- May need to plan for a new Christmas tree for the next season. Condition of the tree and active lights

Old Business:

- Annual Reports 2024 due to Lauri by Jan. 10
- Council – St. Peter Constitution updates - Eric submitted to Synod for review, and contact is on sabbatical until sometime in February.
- Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting Date set – February 9
- Committee Reviews in Progress – Roles & Responsibilities,

New Business:

- Audit committee review for 2024 Financials – Max Bodermann, Matt Morris, Bradley Fasse
- Plan for February 2 as audit discussion, council can attend as needed
- St. Peter Insurance Policy - Quote review by Steve Schultz, Rob Ridnour. Follow-up questions discussed for quote and plan is to get back to contact.
- City of Grimes Development Services - Notice of Proposed Rezoning of adjacent land: City council to hold a public hearing on the application; tentatively scheduled for 5:30 pm, on February 11, 2025. Input.
- Budget finalization for Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting
- Nominating committee for next year's council contacted– Preparing for June semi-annual – 1 Exec council position (Eric to transition), Members in last year of council positions transitioning for Stewardship, Building & Grounds, Evangelism

Local Mission Donation: Brenda Johnston Family

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WELCA MEETING JANUARY 21, 2025

- Financial Update: final balance 2024 was \$9382.15
- Thank You to Ellie Weiss and Michelle Jaeger for the service the last two years!
- **New Business:**
- New Board Members - Amanda Rokke and Heidi Ridnour
- 2025 Board assignments:
 - President - Heidi Ridnour
 - Vice President - Stephanie Picken
 - Secretary - Nicky Cooney
 - Treasurer - Kerry Schiller
 - Mission: Discipleship - Stephanie Picken
 - Mission: Justice - Amanda Rokke
- 2nd Annual Craft Fair - Beth Hansen
- Scheduled for May 3, 2025
- Registration has been sent out to vendors
- Information in the weekly St. Peter email
- discussed having a Facebook page for the Craft Fair
- Group agreed to cover the expense for the VBS CDs (4 to 5 sets at \$27.99 each).

Next Meeting: February 18th at 6:30pm at the church