



St. Peter's Lutheran Church

Parish *Visitor*

418 East Sumner Street
Northfield, MN 55057

507.645.8252

Church office hours:
Tuesday - Friday
9:00 a.m - 2:00 p.m.

Worship

Sundays 9 a.m.
Coffee + Social 10 a.m.
Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.

Education

September - May
Sunday School
10:10 a.m.

Wednesday Confirmation
6:30 p.m.

Staff

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What's Inside

Pg. 2 | December Worship at St. Peter's

Pg. 3 | Happenings at St. Peter's

Pg. 4 | Worship Volunteers

Pg. 5 | Dec. Calendar of Events + Birthdays

Pg. 6 | Music Notes

Pg. 7 | Council Highlights



Dear Saints of St. Peter's:

I find December to be an exciting, challenging, joyful, lovely, and exhausting month.

John the Baptist calls out to "prepare the way of the Lord." We have so many meals, parties, gatherings, and concerts to prepare for, we need to be intentional about preparing for the birth of Jesus—God Emmanuel.

For many of us, November 29 through December 25 will feel like an all-out sprint. Somehow or other, we squeeze concerts and parties into our already too busy calendars. As we draw closer to Christmas, we are so ready for Christmas to be done. But, Christmas doesn't start until December 25, and it lasts through January 5.

As our yearly calendar comes to an end, our liturgical (church) calendar begins. For Christians, December is both beginnings (Advent) and endings (December).

Advent is a time of new beginnings. New perspectives. New priorities.

F. Scott Fitzgerald, "I hope you live a life you're proud of. If you find that you are not, I hope you have the strength to start all over again."

Grace is the opportunity to begin again.

John O'Donohue wrote a blessing "For a New Beginning." I include the first and last stanzas of the blessing.

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,
Where your thoughts never think to wander,
This beginning has been quietly forming,
Waiting until you were ready to emerge

Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

Emmanuel,
Pastor David Weeks

December Worship at St. Peter's

ADVENT + CHRISTMAS + EPIPHANY WORSHIP

WORDS FOR THE BEGINNING is our theme for worship in Advent, Christmas and Day of Epiphany. Our Sunday worship schedule is as follows:

December 1 ~ You Are a Blessing

December 8 ~ We Can't Go Alone

December 15 ~ Do the Good That is Yours to Do*

December 22 ~ Hope is Worth the Risk

December 29 ~ Don't Forget to Laugh**

January 5 ~ The Road Isn't Straight

* includes our Sunday School Program and Lessons & Carols

**includes a Hymn Sing

Our mid-week worship service is on Wednesdays, beginning at 6:30. Our liturgy is Holden Evening Prayer. We hope you can get a break from the cacophony of sound and sight, and hear God's Word which always gives us a new beginning.

December 4 ~ Hope

December 11 ~ Love

December 18 ~ Joy

Visio Divina Bible Study:

Guided Visual Meditation & Prayer

We have done Lectio Divina here at St. Peter's, when we listen to a text deeply. Visio Divina is latin for "divine seeing", a method of meditation, reflection, and prayer through a process of intentional seeing. Visio Divina is a 6th Century Benedictine practice of lectio divina. We will meet in the Fireside Room on **December 8** at 10:10am to see images created for Words for the Beginning.



LESSONS & CAROLS



This year we are combining the Sunday School program with Lessons and Carols! Along with following the Advent theme of "Words for the Beginning", you will hear reading from confirmands; singing from the Sunday Schoolers and Worship Choir; ringing from Jubilee Bells; & special music from several high schoolers! Please join us in worship on **December 15!**



Advent Peace + Healing Worship



December can be a challenging time, especially when we're not feeling our best due to loss, separation, illness, and other significant life events. We invite you to join us for the Advent Service of Peace & Healing Worship on **Thursday, December 18 at 4pm**. Come for a comforting space that may bring you solace. Listen to beautiful music, light a candle, observe the winter solstice, and the turning of the year to more light. Come for optional anointing for healing of yourself or others. This service may help us lament, cry to God, and support others in their journey.



Christmas Eve Worship



Tuesday, December 24 ~ Worship Services at 3:30pm + 5pm

Both Christmas Eve services will include Holy Communion.

***3:30pm worship will be livestreamed.**

Happenings at St. Peter's

Stewardship Sunday

November and stewardship go together like ... well, æbleskiver and jam.

For the second consecutive year, St. Peter's marked the congregation's Stewardship Sunday with an æbleskiver breakfast served in the Fellowship Hall after the Nov. 17 worship service. More than 70 people lined up for plates of three spherical Danish, pancake-like treats sprinkled with powdered sugar and served with a dollop of fruit jam. Organizers nearly ran out of batter serving roughly the same number of people last year. They were better prepared for the turnout this time. Organizers Polly and David Hendee made seven triple batches of batter to ensure there would be enough æbleskiver for everyone. Cooks JoAnne Olson, Kirsten Thompson and the Hendees kept four æbleskiver pans busy during the morning. Evonne Clay, Sheryl Kleppe and Jolene Manzey worked the serving window.

Why æbleskiver? The congregation has Danish roots. St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church was founded in Northfield by Danish immigrants in November 1893 when 28 members – about the number of people who linger after church for coffee hour now – signed the charter. After initially meeting in homes, their first church was in what is now the Northfield Arts Guild building across town on Third Street. The congregation started constructing the current church in 1958. Worship started here in 1963.



- A Signage Committee, consisting of Mary Bleckwehl, Brian Kopack, Phil Olsen, and Dave Hendee researched, ordered, and installed numbers and labels on all the outside doors and signs in the office area.
- The MG's installed new light fixtures in the women's staff bathroom and in the staff supply room.
- Mark Shaw was spotted this Fall frequently with a broom and dustpan sweeping up dead flies prior to the church services on Sunday mornings.
- Brian Kopack checked out the sump pumps at Sarah's House and will be installing new pumps soon.
- A small group of congregation members assisted Bob Baker in moving apartments at The Manor
- Mary Peterson decorated the outside planters with beautiful pumpkins for the Fall.

This Month + Next Worship Leaders

If you are unable to assist on the date assigned, please change with someone else on the list and contact the church office so that the bulletin can be updated. 507.645.8252. Thank you, Volunteers!

Sunday communion will take place on the 1st and 22nd in the month of December.

Date	Time	Ushers	Reader	Communion Server	Coffee/ Kitchen	Live Stream
December 1	9:00 a.m	Don + Roberta Bonrud	Laura Gilligan	Sheryl Kleppe Jolene Manzey Julie Klock	Ginny Paulson Mary Boyum	Bill Bleckwehl
December 8	9:00 a.m	Tyler, Amanda, Tanner, + Theo Peterson	Patrick Bougie	-	Thelma Winter Ramona Pumper	Megan Culhane
December 15	9:00 a.m	St. Peter's Christmas Program	St. Peter's Christmas Program	-	St. Peter's Christmas Program	Naomi Ziegler
December 22	9:00 a.m	Dennis + Janet Hahn	Michon Weeks	Avonne Kaplan Brian Peterson Mary Peterson	Don + Roberta Bonrud	Dennis Kenison
December 24	3:30pm	<p style="text-align: center;">Volunteers are needed for both Christmas Eve worship services - ushers, communion servers, & readers. A sign-up sheet can be found at the welcome desk. Thank you in advance for volunteering!</p>				Dennis Kenison
December 24	5:00pm					No Live Stream
December 29	9:00 a.m	Borris + Joyce Mokoff	Mike Eaves	-	Ruth McCarty Evonne Clay	No Live Stream
January 5	9:00 a.m	Mary Bleckwehl Mary Boyum	Lorraine Rovig	Beth Eaves Mike Eaves Laura Gilligan	Richard DeBeau Doris Welke	Bill Bleckwehl
January 12	9:00 a.m	David + Polly Hendee	Pete Pedersen	-	Dennis + Janet Hahn	Naomi Ziegler
January 19	9:00 a.m	Lyle + Nancy Gunderson	Julie Klock	Ginny Paulson Beth Vivant Michon Weeks	Phil + JoAnne Olson	Rebecca Peterson
January 26	9:00 a.m	Brian + Mary Peterson	Steve Hill	-	Dennis + Beth Berry	Megan Culhane

December Calendar of Events + Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9am Worship with Holy Communion 10am Coffee + Fellowship	2 Happy Birthday DeLora Linder	3 10am Staff Meeting 12pm Executive Committee 1pm Stewardship Ministry Happy Birthday Theo Peterson Nancy Snesrud	4 6:30am Men's Bible Study + Fellowship Wednesday Evening Schedule Happy Birthday John Ehresmann Tamara Little	5 7am Table Talk 8am MG's + BG's	6 8:30am Women's Fellowship Breakfast Happy Birthday Rieber Paulson Nancy Solberg	7
8 9am Worship 10am Coffee + Fellowship 10:10am Sunday School 10:10am Visio Divina Bible Study Happy Birthday Linda Tollefson	9 6:30pm 4-H Big Giants	10 9:30am Hannah Circle 10am Staff Meeting 1pm Rachel Circle 7pm Church Council	11 6:30am Men's Bible Study + Fellowship Wednesday Evening Schedule	12 7am Table Talk 7pm Faith on Tap Happy Birthday Mavis Bell Pat Kenison	13 Happy Birthday Janet Hahn Ruth Johnson-Wirth	14
15 9am Worship LESSONS & CAROLS 10am Coffee, Hot Chocolate Bar, + Cookie Sale Happy Birthday Rylee Culhane Aimee Meliza Dale Ness	16 9:30 Eve Circle Happy Birthday Dawn Hutton Donna Scheffert Virginia Grant-Weiler	17 10am Staff Meeting	18 6:30am Men's Bible Study + Fellowship Wednesday Evening Schedule Happy Birthday Kendall Sholtz	19 7am Table Talk 11:30am SOLOS (Applebees)	20 8:30am Women's Fellowship Study	21
22 9am Worship with Holy Communion 10am Coffee + Fellowship	23 Happy Birthday Ardis Koehler Chris Peterson	24 10am Staff Meeting 3:30pm Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion 5pm Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion	25 Happy Birthday Mary Bleckwehl Drew Wierson	26 7am Table Talk Happy Birthday Tom Stowe Lucas Strand	27 Happy Birthday Finley Kopack Cowen Kuntz Ruth McCarty	28 Happy Birthday Paul Erickson Susan Peterson Gary Stein
29 9am Worship 10am Coffee + Fellowship Celebrating December Birthdays	30 Happy Birthday Mary Boyum Sandra Dockstader Ariya Suarez	31 10am Staff Meeting				



Wednesday Evening Schedule

- 5:30pm Hand Bells Practice
- 6:30pm Advent Worship
- 6:30pm Confirmation
- 6:30pm SPY (1st + 3rd Wednesday)
- 7:00pm Worship Choir Practice

Music Notes

By Mary Kay Bougie

St. Peter's is using a new Advent-Epiphany series. Beginning on December 1st, you will notice quilt patterns used in the bulletin, a take-home devotional booklet, an Advent calendar (found as an insert in this newsletter), and in the sanctuary. Throughout the season, the writers of this series were inspired by the storied tradition of quilting.

Each week, a new pattern will represent the themes:



Advent 1: You are a Blessing

Advent 2: We Can't Go Alone

Advent 3: Do the Good That is Yours to Do

Advent 4: Hope is Worth the Risk

Christmas Eve: Love Knows Your Name

Christmastide: Don't Forget to Laugh

Epiphany: The Road Isn't Straight

Here is an introduction of the series, from the writers: "Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year begins. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving; and yet, the world as we know it spins madly on. In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings—large and small, personal and political. But Mary proclaimed hope in a God who was and is making all things new. Christ's birth offered a beautiful new beginning for shepherds and Magi alike—all the while, King Herod tried to bring Christ's story to an end. When we ourselves navigate seasons filled with endings and beginnings, we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown.

Produced by A Sanctified Art, our Advent series is filled with blessings, with the scriptures and reminders we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season. These reminders root us in the fundamental truths of our faith. Many of them are life lessons we teach to children—lessons that adults continue to learn and relearn. They may resemble the blessings we impart to loved ones during special ceremonies like weddings, graduations, or baptisms. And so, we invite you to move through this Advent season as if you are entering a sacred new chapter, holding fast to the reminders that will bolster you for the journey ahead.

As you journey through this season, may you find words for belovedness and hope. May you find words for beginning again. For no matter what you are facing, no matter what this new day brings, love is your beginning."

Council Highlights

To express God's love and grace in building a community where people **believe** in God, **belong** to Christ, and **become** disciples who serve in day-to-day living.

Call to Order: Kleppe called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

Devotion: Pastor showed a brief video about the work Lutheran World Relief is doing in the aftermath of the recent hurricane flooding in western North Carolina. Quilts — like those made by the congregation's LUV Quilters — and personal-care kits have been godsend to displaced people who lost everything.

Reports

Pastor: Several people have mentioned that they are not hearing well during worship. Two letters have been mailed to congregation members on behalf of the Stewardship Team seeking their participation in making estimates of giving for 2025. The Confirmation J-Term kickoff is Nov. 13 at St. John's Lutheran. Bethel and St. John's congregation members will be coming to St. Peter's for the annual Thanksgiving Eve worship and PieFest. The Lessons & Carols worship and the Sunday School Christmas program will be combined for the Dec. 15 worship service. The Faith Formation ministry team will coordinate hot chocolate and a bake sale during the Dec.15 fellowship hour. Proceeds will go to a charity.

Council President: Kleppe renewed the annual lease with Sarah's House, a transitional facility for women. The house currently is full with five residents. Kleppe and Kopack inspected the two, old basement sump pumps at Sarah's House. One is dead. Kopack will replace both in the next few weeks.

Treasurer: Olson said income is basically matching expenses, but cautioned that it's far short of covering budgeted expenses — which include an unfilled staff position. Olson and Kleppe will work on a 2025 budget for presentation to the Council at its December meeting. The Personnel Committee will meet to consider staff compensation for 2025.

Committees

Signage: The Council inspected new signs in the south wing offices and set a tentative goal of completing others elsewhere in the church next year in coordination with possible narthex renovations.

Faith Formation: The Faith Formation team is starting GroupMe App groups for SPY, Confirmation and Sunday school in hopes of having better attendance at activities. Team members will look into the Sunday school milestones at other Lutheran congregations.

New Business: Phyllis Swanson requested the Mission Endowment Fund send \$1,000 to Lutheran Bible Translators. Kleppe will ask Swanson to put her request in writing to the MEF for its consideration.

Cub Scouts: A request for permission to use the church Fellowship Hall and a few Sunday school rooms as meeting places was tabled pending more information.

Continuing Education: Pastor will enroll in the Discernment Program through LeaderWise. The program helps pastors determine the best career and personal choices, given their gifts, passions and stage of their ministries.

Adjournment: Motion by Olson and second by Eaves to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. Approved, followed by the Lord's Prayer.



St. Peter's Lutheran Church

St. Peter's Mission Statement: Believe. Belong. Become. To express God's love and grace in building a community where people believe in God, belong to Christ and become disciples who serve in day to day living.

COUNCIL

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DECEMBER ~ 4F

The 4F (faith, fellowship, fun, food) group is going to the Norway House in Mpls on Thursday, Dec. 12th, to see the amazing, creative gingerbread houses. We will carpool from church at 10:00 for our timed entry at the Norway House at 11:15. Lunch will be someplace on our way home, suggestions are welcome. Our group can get the discount rate of \$12 if we have 10 or more people, \$15 otherwise. A sign up sheet is posted in the narthex or you can call Roberta Bonrud, 952-913-2417. The last day to sign-up is Sunday, Dec. 1st. We will be home in plenty of time to partake in Northfield's Winter Walk later that day.

CHRISTMAS **COOKIE EXCHANGE**

Music groups and youth of all ages are busy preparing for the St. Peter's Christmas program, scheduled for **9am on Sunday, December 15**. We hope you will attend! During coffee hour on that day, we hope to both enjoy and exchange Christmas cookies and other seasonal delicacies like bread, fruit, nuts, and so on. We are asking those who bake to bring a plate of cookies to share and a plate (or two or three) to sell for \$10 each. We will have a sale table in the back of the fellowship hall and all proceeds will be given to a hunger-related cause. The cookies for sale should be covered and on a plate you don't need back. Decorative wrapping is encouraged. There will be a sign-up sheet at the welcome desk starting on December 1, but all contributions are welcome, even if you don't sign-up. Bonus request: Snap a photo of the baking process and email it to the church office for posting on Facebook leading up to December 15.



Looking Ahead

St. Peter's Annual Meeting | Sunday, January 26 | 10am