



Evangelical
Lutheran
Church in America

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

Sunday School
10:10 a.m.

Wednesday Confirmation
6:30 p.m.

Staff

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Dear Friends in Christ:

If you are like me, you're not complaining that our winter weather was slow to arrive this year. It was the first time I can remember both putting Christmas lights on the house and taking them off while wearing a light jacket. Our extended Fall weather gave us ample time to prepare for the cold this year; we knew it would get here eventually! There were hoses to drain, furnaces to tune up, lawn mowers to put away and snowblowers to move into their "readiness" position. And alongside our wintry weather preparation came Advent and a significant amount of time preparing for Christmas both spiritually and culturally. We readied ourselves for Christ's birth and the celebrations that surrounded it through prayer and quiet anticipation. It was good to be prepared for winter and Christmas – it put us in a good place to welcome both.

With January quickly giving way to February, the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday will soon be upon us. Will we be ready? Fortunately, there's still time to prepare ourselves spiritually for Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. During Lent, we need to put aside time to reflect and focus on God. Through prayer, fasting and charitable giving we can prepare our hearts and minds for Easter and a deeper relationship with God. It is time to be like our snowblowers and put ourselves in a "readiness" position that is prepared for Lent.

Peace,

Mark Shaw, Council President



Music Notes

By Mary Kay Bougie, Director of Music + Worship

I'd like to share some thoughts from an online article about Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day coinciding.

Much of the following article is from the Most Rev. Thomas Tobin, recently retired bishop of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island. This article was written in 2018, also a year when these events converged.

"The impending collision of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day on the calendar this year might seem like an insurmountable conflict to some, and understandably so, for after all, the themes of one day are totally incompatible with the themes of the other." Valentine's Day is all about romantic love. On Ash Wednesday, we hear the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Ash Wednesday is a solemn day – the start of the Lenten Season. It is intense. We are asked to turn away from sin. Yet there is also love involved. Great love. On Ash Wednesday, we also hear the words, "Return to the Lord, your God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and ABOUNDING IN STEADFAST LOVE."

In a nutshell, Rev. Tobin states: "Ash Wednesday is to God, what Valentine's Day is to lovers!" Hear him out! Think about the parallels! Couples need to:

- 1.) Communicate. Be open, honest. "Sharing their hopes and fears, disappointments and dreams." Speak from the heart. And listen to one another.
- 2.) Make sacrifices for one another: possibly give up one's own priorities or preferences for one another.
- 3.) Be thoughtful. Seek forgiveness, when necessary. And grant forgiveness.

Communication, sacrifice, and love. We communicate through prayer. A sacrifice could be something you give up for Lent. And love. Well, love is part of being a Christian. We are called to love – perhaps by doing something for someone who needs help. Maybe it is supporting an organization that helps those less fortunate than you.

Let me share Rev. Tobin's closing remarks with you: "you see, our faith is nothing more than our longing for God, and his for us. But like any romance, it too has to be nurtured and nourished if it is to prosper and grow. And it's what the faithful observance of Lent helps us to do. It seems to me, then, that Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day have a lot in common after all, for the goal of both is to renew our passion for the one we love."

<https://www.ncronline.org/opinion/guest-voices/ash-wednesday-valentines-day-god>
Artwork depicting the coincidence of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day
(Feb. 14, 2018: CNS illustration/Elizabeth Butterfield, Diocese of Erie)



Take Heart

St. Peter's former St. Olaf intern, Maddi Froiland along with her mother, Rev. Dr. Lisa Bates-Froiland, are working on a project with Jesuit priest Garrett Gundlach of Racine, WI to distribute 8,000 olive wood hearts that were used in an ecumenical worship service on Dec 28, 2023, at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem to commemorate the Slaughter of the Innocents (long-standing date on the Christian Church calendar). On the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the Church mourns the children killed by King Herod in his enraged search for the baby Jesus ([Matthew 2:1-18](#)). In Bethlehem, Christian faith communities came together to mourn today's children killed by the ongoing war, innocent victims of conflict. These 8,000 olive wood hearts represent 8,000 children killed in the Holy Land since October 7th.

Maddi, who now lives in Jerusalem, visited the Bethlehem woodworking factory. She saw first-hand the beautiful work they do. Christian congregations across the United States have joined together to support the Bethlehem-area olive wood artisans who carved each of the 8,000 wooden hearts. The artisans have had little work since the war began due to the lack of tourism.

St. Peter's has ordered 100 of these hearts, available for purchase at \$3 each. At the printing of this newsletter, 95 of the hearts have been purchased. We hope to use them on Ash Wednesday worship, then distribute them to those who have purchased them.

Please consider purchasing a heart to support the work of Palestinians in the Holy Land.



Children's Ministries

By Cariann "Miss Ann" Strauch, Director of Children's Ministries



Guess Who?!

*"In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and **the Spirit descending like a dove** on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." - Mark 1:9-11*

During His baptism, Jesus is revealed as the Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills the prophecy that he has come to be the light of the world. During baptism, we receive God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, too. **The Holy Spirit lives in us and changes us.**

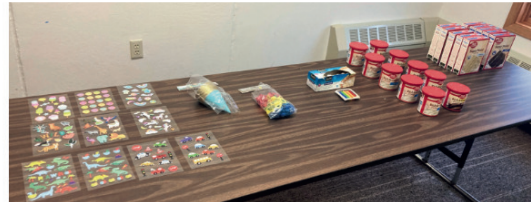
Sunday School

Children Serving Children

We are called together to serve God by serving others. Our Sunday School children learned about our call to serve and did a special service project for the Community Action Center of Northfield. They made Birthday Care Bags for local children in need including birthday cake mixes, frosting, candles and small gifts. **BIRTHDAY BAGS** provide families with an easy celebration-in-a-bag for a child's birthday.



Community Action Center



Parents: Join us for Fellowship + Faith each week in the Parent's Room during Sunday School!

Fellowship + Faith

Looking Ahead

February 4th - Parents are encouraged to join the Annual Meeting while children are in Sunday School.

February 18th - No Sunday School (Presidents' Day weekend)

March 17th - Sunday School children sing in 9am worship 🎵

March 24 & 31st - No Sunday School (Spring Break/Easter)

May 19th - Sunday School children sing in 9am worship 🎵 Last Day of Sunday School!

Reminder of Cancellation Policy: St. Peter's follows Northfield Public Schools cancellation policy for inclement weather. Notification for Sunday School cancellation will be sent to families via email and posted on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/northfieldstp>).

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!

Date	Time	Ushers	Reader	Communion Server	Coffee/Kitchen	Live Stream
Feb 4	9:00 a.m.	Dennis + Janet Hahn	Jolene Manzey	Carmen Sevcik Evonne Clay Michon Weeks	Don + Roberta Bonrud	Bill Bleckwehl
Feb 11	9:00 a.m.	Borris + Joyce Mokoff	Sheryl Kleppe	-	Nick + Emily Paulson	Megan Culhane
Feb 18	9:00 a.m.	Laura Gilligan Don Bonrud	Pete Pedersen	Beth Berry Mary Peterson Brian Peterson	Roberta Bonrud Marilyn Finneseth	Nick Paulson
Feb 25	9:00 a.m.	Joann Paulson Janet Gilbertson	Beth Vivant	-	Phil + Joanne Olson	Nick Paulson
March 3	9:00 a.m.	Evonne Clay Diane Boyum	Lorraine Rovig	Sheryl Kleppe Ramona Pumper Patrick Bougie	David + Polly Hendee	Bill Bleckwehl
March 10	9:00 a.m.	Nick + Emily Paulson	Kirsten Croone	-	Dennis + Janet Hahn	Naomi Ziegler
March 17	9:00 a.m.	Bryn Bridley Laura Gilligan	Avonne Kaplan	Michon Weeks Beth Berry Jolene Manzey	Brian + Mary Peterson	Megan Culhane
March 24	9:00 a.m.	<p>A sign-up sheet will be placed at the welcome desk for volunteer ushers, readers, communion servers and hospitality for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday.</p>				Megan Culhane
March 31	9:00 a.m.					Nick Paulson

February Calendar of Events + Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7am Table Talk 8am MG's 8am BG's	2 8:30am Women's Fellowship Breakfast (Little Frida's) 9am LUV Quilters Happy Birthday Judy Closson	3 Happy Birthday Sheri Jo Boyum Owen Luther Prescott
4 9am Worship with Holy Communion 10am Annual Meeting 10:10am Sunday School	5 Happy Birthday Laura Simonson Thelma Winter	6 10am Staff Meeting Happy Birthday Wanda Eisenhuth	7 Wednesday Evening Schedule	8 7am Table Talk Happy Birthday Bonnie Stowe	9 Happy Birthday Michael Humann	10 Happy Birthday Mark Albers Dave Gisvold Larry Odegard Michael Phelps
11 9am Worship 10am Coffee + Fellowship 10:10am Sunday School Happy Birthday Andy Simser	12 9am Eve Circle (The Hideaway Vault) Happy Birthday Janet Gilbertson	13 9:30 Hannah Circle 10am Staff Meeting 1pm Rachel Circle 6pm Faith Formation Committee Meeting 7pm Church Council Meeting Happy Birthday Paige Larson Gary Peterson	14 Wednesday Evening Schedule 6:30pm Ash Wednesday Worship Happy Birthday Janice Odegard	15 7am Table Talk 11:30 SOLOS (Perkins) Happy Birthday Mary Detlie Elaine Gravelle	16 8:30 Women's Fellowship Study 9am LUV Quilters Happy Birthday Hazel Peterson Nolan Sabyan Ryan Sabyan Greg Weiler	17 Happy Birthday Jacob Allen Larsen
18 9am Worship with Holy Communion 10am Coffee + Fellowship No Sunday School Happy Birthday Maxwell Hallcock	19 Happy Birthday Linda Ness	20 10am Staff Meeting Happy Birthday Linda Rowan	21 Wednesday Evening Schedule 6:30pm Midweek Lenten Worship	22 7am Table Talk Happy Birthday Gwen Green	23 9am LUV Quilters	24
25 9am Worship 10am Coffee + Fellowship Celebrating February Birthdays 10:10am Sunday School Happy Birthday Margaret Knapper Gary Van Erp	26	27 10am Staff Meeting Happy Birthday David Weeks	28 Wednesday Evening Schedule 6:30pm Midweek Lenten Worship Happy Birthday Julie Klock	29 7am Table Talk 1:30pm New Spirit Circle (Benedictine)		



Wednesday Evenings At St. Peter's

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

SPY Hunger Project

Seven St. Peter's Youth recently purchased \$249.72 worth of groceries to give away as part of a project to raise awareness about hunger in Northfield. They loaded two grocery carts with everything from Campbell's Chunky Soup and elbow macaroni to pretzels and diapers for distribution to local pantries. SPY parent volunteers Naomi Ziegler and Kristin Harner gathered the group at church on a Wednesday night to create goals and plan before heading to Cub.

"We all get to eat multiple times a day," Naomi said as the group talked about their experiences with food. "I didn't go hungry this last week." Keith Harner, a high school wrestler, said all he thinks about is water when sitting in school while he's trying to lose weight before a match, "So it could be hard for people who don't get food all the time to do well in school," he said. The group had \$250 to spend, courtesy of Thrivent and its Action Team program. The initiative invites Thrivent clients to gather a team of friends, family or neighbors – or a church group – to put on a fundraiser, educational event or service activity. Thrivent provides seed money, T-shirts and other supplies.

The youth divided into boy and girl teams. In addition to Keith, participants were Alaia Douah, Madeleine Douah, Sam Harner, Jake Larsen, Kennedy Larsen and Logan Miller. In addition to raising awareness about food insecurity, Naomi said she wanted the project to teach strategies for positively addressing the problem of hunger in the community. After shopping about an hour and boxing up the groceries, Naomi gathered the group a few steps away from the checkout stations to talk about what they learned after spending all but 28 cents of their budget. "Food is expensive," said one. The group will sort the 113 items purchased. It will be divided between the food shelf at Northfield's Community Action Center and the congregation's frequently used curbside little pantry along the east side of the church on Winona Street. In addition to Naomi and Kristin, the youth were accompanied by David Hendee, who secured the shopping funds as a Thrivent client.



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.

Devotion: Lead by Shaw. Shared a devotional reading centered around acknowledging the New Year + Resolutions that may come along with it. Remembering that God is with you.

Children's Ministry Reports: In January, during the Sunday school hour, children worked on a service project for the CAC of Northfield. The Sunday school made birthday cake care bags for local kids that included cake mixes, frosting + party favors. Fellowship + Faith gospel lesson discussion continues to be offered each week in the Parent's Room during Sunday school.

Personnel + Nominating Committee: Council recommends that new personnel + nominating committee members be identified at the February council meeting. Nominating committee has a full slate of candidates to fill vacancies on the church council for the 2024 year. Sheryl Kleppe - President, Nick Paulson - Vice President, David Hendee - Secretary, Phil Olson - Treasurer, At-Large Members: Beth Eaves, Brian Kopack, Kirsten Thompson + Mary Bleckwehl. While not all members are new it should be noted some current members have either extended time on council or moved into a new role. The slate of council nominees will be brought forward for a vote at the Annual Meeting in February.

Treasurer's Report : Income for December was \$66,480 - Exceeding the projected budget for the month substantially. St Peter's has ended the 2023 financial year with a net surplus of \$8,454 - above the budgeted deficit of \$17,625! The expenses for 2023 were budgeted to be \$389,912 and came in under budget at \$357,886. Olson presented the proposed 2024 operating budget to council + proposes to operate with a deficit budget of \$9,325. It should be reflected that this budget does not allocate funds for a part time Youth Director at this time. Bleckwehl motioned that the budget for 2024 be presented at the Annual Meeting as shared by Olson. Motion was seconded by Hendee and motion carried.

Maintenance Report: It was discovered during the preparation for the Synod move-in that the electrical panel current in use in the church was a fire hazard. After noticing a light in the parking lot not operating correctly and contacting Guth Electric it was shared that it would be more beneficial to replace all the lights in the lot with LED bulbs versus only addressing the 1 light. The electrical panel currently operating at Sara's House currently uses fuses and they are becoming incredibly difficult to replace. Hendee motioned to move forward with the project to replace the electrical panel for St Peters, \$3,200, as well as refit the parking lot lights with LED bulbs, \$2,700, and the electrical panel at Sara's House, \$2,400. With the work being completed by Guth Electric. This was seconded by Terpstra and the motion carried.



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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Sick? Hospitalized?

Please contact the church office if you would like a visit from Pastor Weeks. (507) 645.8252

or visit

www.northfieldstp.org/prayers-and-announcements

St. Peter's Annual Meeting | Sunday February, 4th
St. Peter's annual meeting will take place
Sunday, February 4th following 9am worship.
All congregation members are encouraged to attend.

HOLDEN VILLAGE REGISTRATION is now open for Summer 2024!
Northfielders from all three ELCA congregations are planning to visit August
4-9 (with options to arrive early or stay later).

Registrations and travel arrangements must be made individually (there is
no group registration), but planning and excitement can be shared!

You can also get more information about Holden Village at their website:
www.holdenvillage.org

**Camp Amnicon
Summer 2024
registration is
now open!**



This summer....

- experience wonder
- challenge yourself
- have fun
- experience Grace
- connect deeply
- grow

Flambeau River Ramble
Cost: \$400/person Dates: July 7-12 Middle School+
www.amnicon.org/sign-up



**It's like a roller coaster
you can WIN!**

Whitewater Canoeing on the Brule River
Ages: high school Dates: July 7-12 Cost: \$400/person
www.amnicon.org/24JPFNBRULE