



St. Peter's Lutheran Church
*Building on the Rock
of Jesus & His Word*

Announcements

January 19, 2025

Pastor Peter Lindemann (920) 342-6924 pastorlindemann@stpetersfdl.net
Pastor Luke Boehringer (920) 579-8150 pastorboehringer@stpetersfdl.net
St. Peter's Lutheran School, Mr. Courtney Meyer, Principal 922-1160 ext. 302

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**ELECTION RESULTS AND INSTALLATION** The election of congregation officers and board members took place at the voters meeting last Sunday, January 12. Listed below are the results of the election. The gentlemen will each be installed during one of the services this weekend. We thank all the candidates who agreed to place their name in nomination. May the Lord guide and bless the work of those elected.

- President: Chad Birkholz (finishing out 1 year term)
- Secretary: Tim Achey (finishing out 1 year term)
- Vision Coordinator: Darren Pautsch
- Treasurer: Mike Will (incumbent)
- Board of Outreach: Jake Freiberg
- Board of Adult Discipleship: Kevin Westphal (incumbent)
- Board of Youth Discipleship: Chris Stolper (incumbent)
- School Board: Josh Guell
- Board of Elders: Eric Freiberg (incumbent) & Jeremy Kollmann
- Board of Church Properties: Nick Pitzen (incumbent)
- WLA Plenary Board: Luke Kaspar (incumbent)

We gratefully acknowledge and thank those gentlemen, who either served the maximum number of terms allowed or decided not to run for another term, for their years of dedicated service to the Lord: Don Knuth (Secretary), Tyler Radke (School Board), Chad Birkholz (Vision Coordinator), Jeff Compton (Board of Outreach), Joe Schneider (Board of Elders).

We would also like to thank the following gentlemen for serving on this year's Nominating Committee: Chad Birkholz, Dean Sampson, Terry Wojahn, Ben Raddatz, Kurt Turdo, Josh Guell, Pastor Boehringer, & Pastor Lindemann.

St. Peter's passed a **budget** of \$1,715,873 for 2025. After much discussion and by refinancing our loan, the congregation modified our giving to WLA as \$81,336 and to the WELS as \$98,160.

**ANNUAL VOTERS' MEETING** will be on **Sunday, February 9** after the late service & held in the **sanctuary**. Annual reports will be available before the meeting. Please make plans to attend!

**SPECIAL GIFT** was given to the General Fund in memory of Ralph & Joan Leisten.

**AT HOME WITH THE LORD** Our faithful God and Father called home to himself the soul of our brother in faith, Ronald Fincke, who departed from this life to life eternal on Friday, January 10 at the age of 87 years, 6 months and 25 days. A family visitation was held last weekend.

Our faithful God and Father also called home to himself the soul of our brother in faith, Arlyn Schwartz, who departed from this life to life eternal on Saturday, January 11 at the age of 95 years, 1 month and 4 days. The funeral service will be Saturday, February 1.

May Arlyn & Ron's family and friends find comfort in the truth and promises of God's Word!

**ATTENTION INCOMING 3K AND 4K FAMILIES** Enrollment is open for St. Peter's members at this time for the 2025-26 school year. We offer half day or full day options. If you would like to save your spot, please fill out an application and drop it off in the office **by the end of January**. Applications for enrollment are on the table in the narthex and in the office. **Join us for our Preschool Open House on Sunday, February 9 from 11:30-1:30 in the Preschool Room.**

**CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS** have been put in your member mailbox or mailed out. If you have questions about your statement please email Anna Gilgenbach at [annagilgenbach@stpetersfdl.net](mailto:annagilgenbach@stpetersfdl.net) or Ashley Will at [ashleywill@stpetersfdl.net](mailto:ashleywill@stpetersfdl.net).

**WINNEBAGO LUTHERAN ACADEMY 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY** will be celebrated at WLA on **Sunday, February 2**. A new campus update will take place at 1:00, the service will begin at 2:00.

**PTO MOVIE NIGHT** will be held on **Sunday, January 26** in the gym beginning at 2:00. This is for kids preschool age and older. Bring a blanket and a pillow and enjoy some fellowship with friends! Parents are invited to join in the parenting enrichment event with Pastor Boehringer in the Multi-Purpose Room.

**FAMILY ENRICHMENT EVENT** January 26 is Movie Night for all our congregation's kids and friends sponsored by our Parent Teacher Organization. It starts at 2:00 that afternoon in the gym. While your kids are watching the movie, parents are invited to join Pastor Boehringer in the Multi-Purpose Room for our first **Solid Ground** event. Solid Ground is the name of our joint effort to partner alongside all our parents and caregivers, families and households in building up the next generation on the Rock of Jesus and His Word.

Please plan to arrive before or around two o'clock, get your kids settled in for the movie, then come over to the Multi-Purpose Room, and get a bite to eat. We'll sync our time up with Movie Night, so plan to block out roughly 90 minutes. **Sunday afternoon, 2:00 to 3:30pm, January 26.** RSVPs are appreciated to [pastorboehringer@stpetersfdl.net](mailto:pastorboehringer@stpetersfdl.net), but not necessary.

**EVANGELISM WORKSHOP** As baptized Christians we want to share our trust in Christ with those who do not yet know Him as Savior. But we worry that we won't do it right and somehow make these lost souls even more lost. If this is your worry (or not), come to our first of three Evangelism Workshops. With discussion sparked by videos from our church body's coordinator of Evangelism, Rev. Eric Roecker, we want to engage with our confession and respond to our fears about how to joyfully connect next-door neighbors, adult children, coworkers, cashiers, anyone and everyone to Jesus, all those that the Holy Spirit puts into our orbits.

This first workshop will be offered three times on **Wednesday, January 22, 10am** and then **7pm** (this will be the topic for the midweek Bible study) and then again a third time on **Sunday, January 26, 9:10am** during the Family Bible Hour in the Commons. Let's engage ourselves with confidence in this work to which the Lord has called us, both when it is expected--in season--and when unexpected--out of season. Please contact Pastor Boehringer to learn more.

**PATHWAYS TO CHRIST** Joy in the Journey—"For the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10c). This is the theme for the 2025 Pathways to Christ Women's Retreat held in Oshkosh, WI on **February 28-March 2, 2025**. We are pleased to announce that registration for 2025 Pathways to Christ Retreat is now open! Please go to our website <https://pathwaystochrist.org/> for more information

about speakers, topics, accommodations, and more! On the website you have the choice to download and print a PDF registration form to mail in, or there is an additional link to our eventbrite link to register online. Please reach out via email at [pathwaystochristretreat@gmail.com](mailto:pathwaystochristretreat@gmail.com) with any questions.



**CHURCH LIBRARY** Start your new year with a good book from our church library. Continue or begin daily devotions with your family. Celebrate life with books that show the uniqueness of each child. Find books that take place in winter. Grow in your faith as you choose one of the People's Bibles. There are a variety of children's, youth, and adult books to keep you reading during the cold winter months ahead!

**VOLLEYBALL AND FELLOWSHIP** Join us on **Sunday, February 16** from 2:00-4:00pm in the school gymnasium for some volleyball and fellowship. This event is for high school students and older. There will be no childcare available for this first one, please let us know if that is something that would be beneficial to you for future volleyball afternoons.

**WIDOWS & WIDOWERS FELLOWSHIP GROUP** will meet at Faros Restaurant, 131 N Pioneer Rd, FDL on Tuesday, January 28, at 1:00pm. We will have an open discussion following the meal. Ask questions, share information, and participate in conversation. Plan to get to know someone you haven't met yet! Please RSVP to Dave Seibel at 920-948-9475 (call or text) or [dseibelz56@gmail.com](mailto:dseibelz56@gmail.com).

**WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS** on King David continues on **January 29** with **1 Samuel 17** and the story of **Goliath**, 10am and 7pm in the Multi-purpose Room.



**WEBSITE** We are looking for someone with website design experience or have interest in helping St. Peter's revamp our website. Please contact the office or one of the pastors if interested in helping.

**YOUTH RALLY SUPER BOWL FUNDRAISER** Our first Packer playoff game fundraiser went over very well (even though the Packers lost). \$1250 went to our Youth Fund. Chip Gilgenbach is organizing another one for the Super Bowl. The cost is \$50 per square and there will be 8 chances to win. Proceeds will go to our Youth Fund. You can contact Chip via text or call at 920-539-3039. Check for daily board updates on Facebook. You can pay by cash, check, venmo @ChipGil12 or paypal @HaroldGilgenbach.



## On this rock I will build my Church

The Faith of our Fathers

### Memories of a World War II refugee child.

By Else Cuppan

I was born in Bessarabia, Romania, of German parents whose ancestors fled Germany in 1832 for a better life. This area is directly west of the Black Sea and bordered on the south by the Danube River. The many villages retained the German language and customs. Our Lutheran Church was German. Many people followed and by 1940 there were 93,000 Germans living there. It was a good life.

In May, 1940 Stalin attacked Romania to take back Bessarabia since that area had once been part of Russia. The German settlers were fearful as they had suffered under Russian rulers before. They accepted Hitler's offer to help them leave rather than become Russians and possibly sent to Siberia. He promised to replace whatever was left behind. My parents left a large farm behind, so they should have received one in Germany. Women and children were sent ahead, the men stayed behind to bring in the bountiful harvest. I was born July 31<sup>st</sup>, right before my family left. We traveled by ship on the Danube and train to Austria and Germany.

The next year and a half were spent in camps as no homes were available. Our first camp was in Yugoslavia. We were there for 3 weeks. It had a large dining hall and hastily erected tents. Our second was Camp Wolfsberg in Austria, a former Catholic home for nuns. We were there for a year. It was here the men rejoined their families. It was very nice. The Bessarabian women did the cooking, young girls did the cleaning, and women with small children tended them. The men were put to work on roads and railroads. Bedrooms were shared by several families with curtains for walls. We slept on the floor on sacks filled with hay. Children were able to attend school as the language of Austria was German.

At Easter diphtheria ran rampant in the camp. Families were quarantined and many children died. Lilli, Helmut and Erna were hospitalized. Helmut also had scarlet fever and almost died. They operated on his throat so he could breathe. The scar is still there. When he was released my dad had to carry him back to the camp on his shoulders.

We spent 8 weeks at our last camp in Poland. We lived in summer cottages that had been owned by Jewish people, each shared with other families. Mom, who was very pregnant, had five children ages 1 to 11 to care for, Lilli, Helmut, Erna, Victor, myself. She had to walk a long distance to collect a heavy jug with our soup for the day. Wally was born at this camp in February 1942.

We finally received word that a farm was available in northern Poland. We traveled by train and arrived at Schilkendorf in May 1942. I was almost 2. Now my dad could stay home and work the farm. A good share of everything, including cows was conscripted for the army. It was joyful but sad as my parents were aware that a Polish family had been driven off this land. My mom shared whatever she could with Poles living nearby.

Things changed as the war escalated. As a young man, my Dad had served 4 years in the Romanian Military Calvary. Now, in 1944, at the age of 34, he was drafted into the German army to fight on the Russia front. In December he sent my mom a letter telling her to pack us all in our wagon and head to Germany as the Russians were winning and marching to Berlin.

We were right in the path of the advancing army. Families filled their wagons with warm bedding, clothing and as much food as they could for the long trip to safety in western Germany. We left the farm January 20, 1945 when I was 4½ years old. We joined a 10 wagon "wagon train". As we traveled other wagons joined our train. Our greatest fear was that the Russians would catch up to us. It was an extremely cold winter. Thankfully the fields were frozen solid since we often had to get off the road to let troops, even British and French march past. If we heard planes overhead and there were woods nearby, the wagons would quickly try to hide there. After our food was gone Mom would stop in the villages to find a bakery and stand in a breadline. Sometimes bread was available but at other times there was none. How sad we were because our stomachs were growling.

Cities had been bombed everywhere and most people had little to eat. We were sometimes fortunate to find a church, school, or barn to sleep in. If not, we slept in our wagon. Occasionally, kind people let us sleep in their home. How wonderful it was to warm up, have a nice meal and a warm place to sleep. One day we had to get out of the wagons and run to the woods. Airplanes were above us bombing a train and destroying the tracks next to the road. God protected us once again.

After three months traveling, on April 30, 1945, we arrived at a small village in northwest Germany. The mayor told a woman she had to share her house with us. She wasn't happy with the news but she had to let us live there. She gave us one bedroom and one kitchen area. This would be our home for the next 6 years. The war ended May 8. We had no idea where our Dad was or if he was dead or alive

Almost everyone in the village was Lutheran. In school we had Bible class each morning. I loved my 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher and the way she taught about God's love. It was then I decided I wanted to be a teacher like her. We had a lovely little church with a pastor

that served several congregations. If he wasn't there our principal read the sermon. Lilli and Helmut were confirmed there.

My dad became a prisoner of war (POW) in early April of 1945, a month before the war ended. He was shipped to a camp near Moscow that held 1,000 POW's all forced to do hard labor. Within a year 900 of the prisoners had died of severe cold, starvation or hard labor. My dad's shoes wore out and he wore newspapers on his feet. He carried our family picture in his pocket. It was by the grace of God that he survived. My dad knew the Russian language and was able to speak to the doctor who provided him with medicine.

The war left most of Germany in ruins. The bombings had destroyed cities, farms, industries and transportation. Everyone was half-starved and living conditions were dreadful. We mostly ate dark bread topped with lard, onions and salt. Oh, so yummy! Yes, it truly was to us!! We also had lots of vegetable soup which I still love today. During fall harvest we gleaned in the grain fields so Mom could bake some delicious, but never enough, bread. We picked wild berries and found mushrooms on the clean forest floor.

The governing Allies realized that many children were desperately undernourished. Erna, Victor and I were among them. During the summer of 1946, when I turned 6, we spent 6 weeks at a camp for undernourished children. We loved it there and it was really hard to go back to the meager meals at home.

My father was finally released from the POW camp in September of 1947. He was put on a cattle car and sent back home. He knew we wouldn't be in Poland anymore but had no idea where we were or if we were still alive. He got off the train in East Germany and headed for Berlin. He was emaciated and very sick. Along the way he stopped at farms looking for work, food, and a place to sleep. He finally got to Berlin and started searching for us using the Red Cross and other search organizations. Millions of people were looking for missing family members. Posts and buildings were covered with signs containing family names and addresses. By the grace of God he found his sister's address and they were reunited. She knew where we were. He was overjoyed that we were alive and he would see us soon.  
.....To be continued

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost!

*Daily Bible Readings*

|                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 01/20 Revelation 15      | 01/24 Revelation 18:21-19:10 |
| 01/21 Revelation 16      | 01/25 Revelation 19:11-21    |
| 01/22 Revelation 17      | 01/26 Revelation 20:1-10     |
| 01/23 Revelation 18:1-20 |                              |

*Last Week's Stewardship*

|                                             |                   |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Worship: 110 + 137 + 198 = 445              | Sunday School: 13 |
| Wednesday Bible Class (01/15): 24 + 21 = 45 | Bible Class: 61   |

*First Fruits to the Lord 2025:*

|                                                  | <u>Last Week</u> | <u>Year-to-Date</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Thank offerings in support of the unified budget | \$21,488.37      |                     |
| Other receipts in support of the unified budget  | 3,472.00         |                     |
| Total receipts in support of the unified budget  | 24,960.37        | \$46,703.38         |
| Honoring the Lord!                               | 1,371.55         |                     |
| Improvement Fund                                 | 445.20           |                     |
| WLA Forward in Trust                             | 309.00           |                     |



*This Week at St. Peter's*  
[www.stpetersfdl.net/calendar](http://www.stpetersfdl.net/calendar)

|                    |          |                                        |
|--------------------|----------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>MONDAY</b>      | 5:00 pm  | School Board                           |
| <b>TUESDAY</b>     |          | Pastor's Day @ WLA                     |
|                    | 6:00 pm  | Board of Elders                        |
|                    | 6:30 pm  | Area Women's Bible Study @ Faith       |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b>   | 10:00 am | Evangelism Workshop                    |
|                    | 6:00 pm  | Adult Choir                            |
|                    | 7:00 pm  | Evangelism Workshop                    |
| <b>THURSDAY</b>    | 6:30 pm  | Worship                                |
| <b>FRIDAY</b>      | 6:30 pm  | 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Night @ FDL YMCA |
| <b>NEXT SUNDAY</b> | 8:00 am  | Worship                                |
|                    | 9:10 am  | Evangelism Workshop/Sunday School      |
|                    | 10:30 am | Worship                                |
|                    | 2:00 pm  | Parenting Enrichment Gathering         |
|                    | 2:00 pm  | PTO Kids Movie                         |