

Rev. Stephanie Woods, Pastor

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PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS: Office hours have changed to:
Tuesday & Thursday 9 AM – 12 PM (or by appointment)

CHURCH OFFICE: (330) 264-1986

E-Mail: office@stpeterelca.org

Website: stpeterelca.org

Facebook: [St-Peter-Lutheran-Church](https://www.facebook.com/St-Peter-Lutheran-Church)

PANDA PRESCHOOL: (330) 264-1986 (church phone)

THE MESSENGER

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

of New Pittsburg, OH

January-February, 2024

“Ready or not, here I come!” That call of kids playing Hide and Seek brings great joy for most that hear it. As adults, however, the same words can bring great fear, as change often comes at us when we least expect it.

Perhaps that’s why New Year’s Resolutions are so appealing. A new year brings a fresh start, a blank slate on which to dream new dreams. And so, millions make resolutions every year in hopes of making major changes in their lives, even though two thirds of them will fail in the first month.

As disheartening as that can make our resolutions seem, we have great hope. No matter the day, or the week, or the year, God is there with us. God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, offering steadfast love and abounding mercy to each and every one of us. When change comes flying at us even though we aren’t ready, God is there, and God promises a fresh start more than once a year.

In Lamentations 3:22-23, we hear,

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,

His mercies never come to an end;

They are new every morning;

great is your faithfulness.”

Every morning God’s mercies come bringing us new opportunity. We don’t have to wait a whole year to try again. God picks us up, wipes off our skinned knees, and sends us out into the world to continue showing love and mercy.

Ready or not, change is coming.

Ready or not, God’s mercies are new every morning.

Thanks be to God!

Pastor Stephanie Woods

ST. PETER’S MISSION STATEMENT: As God’s family led by the Holy Spirit, we are a loving and welcoming community inviting others to share and grow in God’s Word and grace.

Vision Statement: *As compassionate people we desire to reflect Christ’s love.*



Updates for 2024:

Please check over your family's listing(s) and submit changes. Submissions due by **February 12.**

Would you like to be ADDED to St. Peter's church directory? Submit name(s), address, phone, email, birthdate, wedding date to the church office.



The Social & Outreach Committee will be planning a family game night in March. Keep an eye out in the weekly messenger for more details!

Easter Craft

Social & Outreach is once again going to have a craft after breakfast, before worship service on Easter morning. Be on the lookout for a sign up sheet!



College & Military Care Packages

The Evangelism Committee will be putting together care packages again this year. We are seeking donations for these care packages. If you are interested in helping, please keep an eye out for a sign-up sheet in the back of the Narthex. You can contact Kristen Hudson with any questions.

Thank you for contributing to this outreach!



Benefit Love Brunch

Sunday, February 11th

Please join us following worship on February 11th for a delicious meal! We are having this luncheon to help raise funds to benefit our church and community. Thank you so much for willingness to help! Questions? See Jill Lemon/Kim Koch, Social & Outreach Committee.



Valentine's Blessings

Social & Outreach is again organizing Valentine's Blessings for our church members who are unable to join us on Sunday's. All are welcome to write a card/note for these loved ones. A box will be provided in the Narthex and will be due on February 11th. Any questions, please reach out to the Social & outreach committee. Thanks so much for you love to others!

Joyce Garner

Richard & Debbie Haughn

Becky Hershey

Jenessa Rice

Jim & Nancy Norton

Donna Jean Keener

Nona Becker





Women's Breakfast will meet the 3rd Monday of every month at 9 AM.

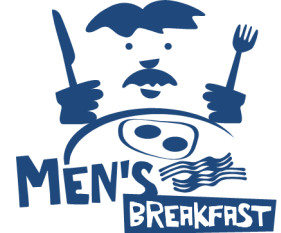
- January 15
- February 19
- March 18

A sign-up sheet will be available so we can prepare a table large enough for us.

Please join us for good food and GREAT fellowship!

Men's Breakfast will meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 9 AM.

- January 9
- February 13
- March 12



Join us for good food, GREAT fellowship!



THANK YOU!

Dear St. Peter's,

Thank you so much for your support of Panda Preschool. Your donations are a huge help to us. We truly appreciate all that you do for us.

Tara Vaughan, Staff & Students

Dear St. Peter Congregation,

Thank you so much for your very kind gift acknowledging my efforts at our church. I am so very thankful to serve a wonderful congregation who values and loves our youth. Your support is both encouraging and uplifting!

Very Sincerely,
Angie

St. Peter Congregation,

Thank you so much for the thoughtful gift! It is nice to know that I am appreciated and acknowledged. You all are so wonderful!

Love,
Madalyn



YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

♥ KEEP AN EYE OUT IN THE MESSENGER AND FACEBOOK PAGE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS!



More events, announcements, and updates will be posted on the SPYA! Facebook page.... Join the Facebook group so you don't miss out! Please contact Angie to be added to the group - it is a private page and can only be accessed if you are added by an administrator.

Speak
MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

JOIN US DURING WORSHIP

JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 18 - MARCH 17

HEAR GOD SPEAK IN OUR LIVES ~ SPEAK OUT ABOUT OUR FAITH ~ SPEAK LIFE INTO THOSE AROUND US



PANDA PRESCHOOL

Hi Everyone,

January/February will be a busy time at Panda! In January we will learn how God provides for the animals, discuss snowmen and various other winter activities. February we will be discussing Groundhog Day, healthy teeth and how to love the Lord with all your heart.

There will be no school on January 15th for Martin Luther King Day and no school on February 16th and 19th for Teacher Inservice and President's Day.

Miss Tara
Panda Administrator



First Communion

Monday, January 15th @ 1-3 PM

Do you have a child ready for First Communion? On Monday, January 15, 1-3PM

Pastor Stephanie will gather with any youth ready for communion instruction. We'll bake communion bread and learn the importance of communion for our faith. Please contact Pastor Stephanie to let her know you'll be coming.



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS

October 11, 2023 7:00 PM Secretary's Report

Church Council met October 11, 2023, with nine members present. Joe Rice and Angie Yarwood were absent. Dave Tegtmeier shared devotions.

President elect Ruth Ann Keener called the meeting to order. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were approved.

Pastor Stephanie reported Angie met with Deacon Jenny Franz and got resources and ideas for youth ministry as well as contacts.

Evangelism rep Kristen Hudson announced Trunk or Treat will be October 28th. Plans are underway to block off a portion of the parking lot to make it safer for the children. We are looking for more volunteers that evening.

Jon Kinney, Properties rep, reported the Ring doorbell has been installed.

Social and Outreach rep Kim Koch reminded us of the Fall Gathering at the Tegtmeier farm on October 15 at 6pm. They are looking for help with the annual Rabbit Supper on November 15 at 6:30pm. The Giving Tree recipient for October is West Salem food pantry (Thanksgiving Meals). Bell ringing and caroling are being planned.

Worship and Music committee met September 24. The theme for the Christmas season is "Treasures". This theme will carry over to the devotional booklet. The children's Christmas program will be December 10. The Fourth Sunday in Advent falls on December 24 (Christmas Eve). The 10am service will be a traditional Christmas Eve service with an evening service at 7pm. Planning is underway to get coverage during Pastor Stephanie's maternity leave over Easter.

We were given Pastor Stephanie's report of activities including time spent on pastoral care; worship; community; education; and administration. She also shares attendance comparisons and books she is currently reading. Pastor Stephanie listed things to celebrate including her connections made at the Wayne County Fair – she saw all sixteen youth show an animal. Over the four days she attended, she made 195 contacts with 115 different people. This is such a great venue for her to connect with community. Now that Panda Preschool is in session, she is making almost daily connections with our preschoolers as well.

We have eight youth planning to confirm their faith on Reformation Sunday, October 29. They are: Haley McLaughlin, Grant Koch, Colton Morris, Madilyn Smith, Jacelyn Cherry, Case Keener, Kaylee Cherry, and Madeline Morris. Council voted to accept these youth and know they'll become valued members of our congregation.

Pastor Stephanie is taking vacation October 17-19 and December 25-31.

The Neer family has approved using Devon's memorial money for the installation of a TV for the preschool. Scott Wertz will install it.

All Saints Sunday will again honor those who have passed. The new Paschal candle purchased in memory of Polly Sloan will be blessed on this Sunday.

Our website needs updated. We are looking for a small committee to review it and propose changes needed.

A reminder to our greeters - if two are scheduled, one should greet in the cement room (east entrance) and the other at the front doors. Many worshipers enter on the east side of the church.

Stewardship pledge cards are due on October 29.

Committee annual reports are due November 13. The Nominating committee should begin work on securing new committee members and slate of officers for next year. This needs council approval first and then the proposed slate should be published prior to our annual congregational meeting on December 3.

Council received LORAC minutes from August 24. They voted to give a gift card to Judy Frank to purchase yarn for her hat ministry. Council also received the 2024 communion schedule.

The next meeting will be November 8. We closed the meeting with prayer.

Joni Hagans, Parish Council Secretary

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS

November 8, 2023

7:00pm

Secretary's Report

Church Council met November 8, 2023, with eight members present. Joe Rice, Ruth Ann Keener, and Kristen Hudson were absent. Pastor Stephanie shared devotions.

The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were approved. Treasurer Rita Tegtmeier presented the 2024 Proposed Budget to council. Joni Hagans made a motion to accept the proposed budget and present it to the congregation on December 3 at our annual Congregational meeting. Motion carried.

Education and Youth committee met October 17 and planned the annual shopping day for charity in our Northwestern community. Shopping will be November 19 after worship. A lunch will be provided for the shoppers. The youth Christmas program is December 10. Sign ups are in the back of the church. Stage set-up will be December 8 from 4:00-6:00. Helpers for tear down after the program would be appreciated.

Jon Kinney, Properties rep, reported he fixed a leak under the kitchen sink. Pastor Stephanie handed out a list of repairs needed at the parsonage, especially some safety concerns in preparation for the new baby. There are some repairs needed at the church as well. Jon also announced we need to find a person willing to clear the snow from the parsonage driveway and the church parking lot this winter. Please contact Jon if you have a suggestion.

Social and Outreach rep, Kim Koch said plans are under way for the annual Rabbit Supper on November 15. Bell ringing for the Salvation Army is November 24 at Tractor Supply Co in Wooster. Caroling is December 10 following worship. Worship and Music committee plans on December 24 (Christmas Eve) is as follows: The 10am service will be a traditional Christmas Eve service with an evening service at 7pm. Pastor Stephanie is still working on getting coverage during her maternity leave over Easter.

Stewardship and Finance committee rep, Molly Hastings met November 3 with Treasurer Rita Tegtmeier to review the proposed budget. The committee met with Rita on November 5 to discuss it further. Pastor's compensation package follows Synod guidelines.

Endowment Fund committee met October 31 to choose recipients for monies requested. Tyler Keener made a motion to disburse \$4350.00. Roger Kamp seconded, and the motion carried. These recipients were presented to council and approved. They will be presented to the congregation for a vote at the annual Congregational meeting on December 3 following worship.

We were given Pastor Stephanie's report. Confirmation Sunday was a service to celebrate. Haley McLaughlin, Grant Koch, Colton Morris, Madilyn Smith, Jacelyn Cherry, Case Keener, Kaylee Cherry, and Madeline Morris all affirmed their faith and participated in the worship service and communion. One hundred fifteen were in attendance to celebrate them.

Discussion was held on how to use our 2023 surplus monies. Dave Tegtmeier made a motion to replace the ceiling in the upstairs Panda classroom. Molly Hastings seconded, and the motion carried. Properties committee will schedule this during Christmas break. Other ideas were given for council to think about as well.

Pastor Stephanie is taking vacation December 25-31 and January 19, 2024.

The Neer family has approved using Devon's memorial money for the installation of a TV for the preschool. Scott Wertz will install it. The Don Hershey family approved memorial money for upkeep of our AED battery and pads. Rumpke Waste and Recycling Services gave us a quote for a 4 cubic yard bin. Their price was a considerable savings. Dave Tegtmeier made a motion to contract with them. Rita seconded, and the motion carried. The Daily Record sent a proposal for advertising in a special holiday service directory. Council voted not to participate. Joni Hagans reported she will be maintaining the greeting card rack. It is now located in the library. These greeting cards are available for members to purchase for \$.50 each.

Our website needs updated. We are looking for a small committee to review it and propose changes needed. A reminder to our greeters - if two are scheduled, one should greet in the cement room (east entrance) and the other at the front doors. Many worshipers enter on the east side of the church.

The Nominating committee should be securing new committee members and slate of officers for next year. This needs council approval first and then the proposed slate should be published prior to our annual congregational meeting on December 3.

Council received LORAC minutes from October 25. They are supporting the Appalachian Christmas Project and Wayne County Make-a-Wish foundation.

The next meeting will be a Christmas gathering/meeting to be announced at a later date. We closed the meeting with prayer.

Joni Hagans, Parish Council Secretary

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS

December 6, 2023 6:00pm Secretary's Report

Church Council met December 6, 2022 at Lincolnway Vineyards for our annual Christmas gathering. A short meeting was held to vote on how our 2023 surplus should be used. A portion of it will pay for the new ceiling in the upstairs Panda classroom. Molly Hastings made a motion to put the remaining balance towards a new roof on the parsonage.

Ruth Ann Keener seconded, and the motion carried. Jon Kinney is getting quotes for the roof.

Pastor Stephanie made us aware of the discrepancies in our constitution and bylaws about committee member terms. We will be looking at that in the near future.

Our next meeting will be January 10, 2024 at 7:00 pm.

Joni Hagans
Parish Council Secretary

December 3, 2023 11:00am Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting for St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church was held on December 3, 2023, following worship. Council president elect Ruth Ann Keener called the meeting to order in Joe Rice's absence. Pastor Stephanie opened with prayer. Minutes from last year's meeting were read. Madalyn Schmucker moved to accept the minutes as read and the motion carried.

The endowment disbursements in the amount of \$4350.00 were presented. Katy Wertz made a motion to accept the disbursements, Elly Rice seconded, and the motion carried.

The budget was presented. Rob Hastings made a motion to accept the budget; Joni Hagans seconded, and the motion carried.

The slate of officers and committee nominations was presented. President elect Ruth Ann Keener first added Mike Martin to fill an open position on the properties committee. David Woods made a motion to accept the slate; Dave Tegtmeier seconded, and the motion carried.

There was no business from the floor.

We still had two open positions remaining on our slate and Pastor Stephanie explained it takes 55 members to fill all positions. Council will revisit the bylaws and constitution to possibly make the requirements more realistic for smaller congregations like ours. She shared some "wow" moments with our congregation: we had 98 children signed up for VBS; we have 48 youth preparing for our Christmas program next week; our weekly attendance has increased from last year; our youth under eighteen have increased from last year to currently 40% of our attendance. Our finances are another positive. Our giving exceeded the budget and lastly; we do a good job of caring for each other. She reminded us she will need us to continue to care for each other during her maternity leave in the spring. She acknowledged the staff, council, committees and the congregation for contributing to these "wow" moments. She announced we have some construction projects coming up. A drop ceiling will be installed in the upstairs Panda classroom during Christmas break and the parsonage will need a new roof in the future along with other repairs and remodels.

David Woods made a motion to adjourn, Kim Koch seconded, and the meeting adjourned with prayer.

Joni Hagans
Parish Council Secretary

FINANCIAL CORNER

FINANCIAL CORNER	9/30/2023
Checking Account - For Current Expenses	
September Offerings	\$11,464
Year-To-Date Offerings	\$121,306
Projected Offerings	\$105,222
Total Expenses Year-To-Date	\$105,045
Checkbook Balance	\$46,829
Other Offerings Given During This Month	
Noisy Offering (Blessings/Backpack)	\$79
Memorial/Youth Min. Balance	\$23,287
Contingency Fund (MIF) Balance	\$29,199
Build./Maint. Fund (MIF) Balance	\$40,211
Scholarship Invest. (LPL Financial)	\$24,451
Endowment Fund (all accounts)	\$101,805
(Balance as of 12/31/2022)	

FINANCIAL CORNER	11/30/2023
Checking Account - For Current Expenses	
November Offerings	\$12,109
Year-To-Date Offerings	\$146,010
Projected Offerings	\$129,504
Total Expenses Year-To-Date	\$130,143
Checkbook Balance	\$46,256
Other Offerings Given During This Month	
Noisy Offering (Blessings/Backpack)	\$49
Blessings/Backpack (Xmas Gifts)	\$1,107
Memorial/Youth Min. Balance	\$22,770
Contingency Fund (MIF) Balance	\$29,228
Build./Maint. Fund (MIF) Balance	\$40,251
Scholarship Invest. (LPL Financial)	\$23,708
Endowment Fund (all accounts)	\$101,805
(Balance as of 12/31/2022)	

FINANCIAL CORNER	10/31/2023
Checking Account - For Current Expenses	
October Offerings	\$12,595
Year-To-Date Offerings	\$133,901
Projected Offerings	\$118,712
Total Expenses Year-To-Date	\$119,006
Checkbook Balance	\$45,633
Other Offerings Given During This Month	
Noisy Offering (Blessings/Backpack)	\$36
Building Fund	\$110
Scholarship Fund	\$20
W.S. Outreach	\$100
Memorial/Youth Min. Balance	\$23,038
Contingency Fund (MIF) Balance	\$29,214
Build./Maint. Fund (MIF) Balance	\$40,231
Scholarship Invest. (LPL Financial)	\$23,708
Endowment Fund (all accounts)	\$101,805
(Balance as of 12/31/2022)	



WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	
<p>SEPTEMBER 2023</p> <p>3 92 10 AM / Live Stream: 22 10 50 10 AM / Live Stream: 17 17 90 10 AM / Live Stream: 15 24 83 10 AM / Live Stream: 20</p> <p>OCTOBER, 2023</p> <p>1 77 10 AM / Live Stream: 28 8 69 10 AM / Live Stream: 12 15 74 10 AM / Live Stream: 18 22 68 10 AM / Live Stream: 7 29 115 10 AM / Live Stream: 16</p> <p>NOVEMBER, 2023</p> <p>5 94 10 AM / Live Stream: 20 12 92 10 AM / Live Stream: 19 19 76 10 AM / Live Stream: 19 26 101 10 AM / Live Stream: 22</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER, 2022</p> <p>4 74 10 AM / Live Stream: N/A 11 59 10 AM / Live Stream: 10 18 57 10 AM / Live Stream: 13 25 65 10 AM / Live Stream: 12</p> <p>OCTOBER, 2022</p> <p>2 68 10 AM / Live Stream: 27 9 75 10 AM / Live Stream: 19 16 65 10 AM / Live Stream: 7 23 57 10 AM / Live Stream: 13 30 61 10 AM / Live Stream: 13</p> <p>NOVEMBER, 2022</p> <p>6 106 10 AM / Live Stream: 13 13 98 10 AM / Live Stream: 12 20 87 10 AM / Live Stream: 28 27 99 10 AM / Live Stream: 12</p>

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

9451 Ashland Road
Wooster, OH 44691

Address Service Requested.

Mailed on or before 12/22/23

TO RECEIVE NEWSLETTER BY MAIL OR EMAIL,
OR TO BE REMOVED from mailing:
Call 330-264-1986; Email: office@stpeterelca.org



Youth Events — Page 5/6
Panda Preschool — Page 6



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

February 14 at 7:00 PM

Ash Wednesday will include communion. The service will be live streamed.

Watch for more information in the *Weekly Messenger* about Lenten happenings.