

St. Peter's Lutheran Church Communication Policy

The vision of St. Peter's is to help God's people

- Connect to God in worship and praise;
- Grow in their faith through His Word; and
- Share His love with others.

The communication outlets at St. Peter's help to reach this vision by spreading the word about its ministries. These guidelines exist to ensure clear, effective, quality, and trusted communications. Communication submissions will be evaluated for priority of placement based upon the following guidelines which include audience, time sensitivity and communicating the missions/vision of St. Peter's. These guidelines will assist in determining priority, yet are not fixed labels. Priority levels may shift depending on timing and space availability.

Audience/Content	Sample Communication Outlets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congregation as a whole or at least a majority (80%) • Guests • Supports mission/vision of St. Peter's • Time sensitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News & Notes (primary placement) • Worship Announcement • Ministry Center Booth • Website Front Page • Keynotes • Facebook • Outdoor Signage • Mailing – Large
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large audience • Time sensitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News & Notes (secondary placement) • Pre-Service Loop • Ministry Center Booth • Website • Keynotes (secondary placement) • Facebook (if posts/week available) • Mailings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller target audience • Not time sensitive • Recurring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News & Notes (calendar or ministry highlight) • Bulletin Board (Ministry Center) • Website Articles • Keynotes Calendar • Facebook specialty (ex., HSYG) • Mailings – targeted • Email – targeted • Tests • Word of Mouth • Phone Calls

Communication Requests

All communication or promotional needs should be forwarded to the designated person.

Plan your communication strategy in advance. Due to space and time restrictions, we advise ministry leaders to plan their communication strategy weeks in advance, especially if it will require a place on the website, in a worship service, or in the Ministry Center.

St. Peter's intends to focus its communication outlets on events held at St. Peter's, events sponsored by St. Peter's, or an event that a ministry of St. Peter's is attending. Promotions for events and program outside of St. Peter's must be approved.

Communication Outlets & Guidelines

Utilize the Communication Strategy Worksheet to plan your communications. Worksheets and accompanying documents must be submitted to Michelle Leahy at mleahy@stpetersfw.org or at the church office.

When drafting any communication, we recommend considering the following best practices:

- Keep your message succinct and to the point. Studies show you will lose the attention span of most people at the following points:
 - Online messages – 50 words
 - Social media – 10 seconds of reading time
 - Videos/Verbal announcements – 1-2 minutes
 - Print messages – 50 words
- If you have more information to convey than will fit in these parameters, focus on what people need to know to take the next step. Point them to another location for more detailed information.
- Always include next steps so readers know how to sign up for the event, who to contact for information, etc. Consider including both email and phone for contact information.
- Readers will quit looking at your communication if it doesn't change. Readers tend to scan through publications looking for new information. Rewrite your articles often if you have a lengthy promotion.
- Review your communication for grammar and punctuation. Our print communications should appear professional.

News & Notes

Intended Audience: Large portion of congregation in worship

Deadline for Submissions: Wednesday at noon

Published: Weekly

- The goal is to make members and guests aware of ministry opportunities and to direct them to the proper location for additional information or to answer any questions.
- Articles must be brief and to the point. Please limit it to a headline and 3-5 sentences, including contact information. Be sure to point the reader to a place to find more information, including personal contact, website, Ministry Center, etc.

- Articles and inserts will only run for two consecutive weeks. Readers will not review articles that are run weekly without change. We strongly recommend that you reword any articles that must be run longer than two weeks.
- There is no guarantee that your submission will be printed. As much as we would like to be able to print every submission, we have space restrictions and publication decisions are determined by the guidelines on page 1.

Key Notes

Intended Audience: Members and potential members who have added their email to the mailing list

Deadline for Submissions: the 25th day of each month

Published: Monthly

- Articles should be no more than 100 words.
- Because this is an email communication, you can submit links and documents that we can embed in the article. For example: “Click here to see the schedule” with a link to a pdf document.
- Include contact information or a source for additional information.
- Articles will run for one month. If you wish an article to run more than once, please rewrite and resubmit.
- Placement of the article within the email will be determined by the guidelines on page 1.

Website

Intended Audience: General public, visitors, members

Deadline for Submissions: No fewer than 2 business days prior to the publication start date.

Published: As approved

- Studies show that between 75-90% of potential guests will first look at a church’s website. Therefore, while the website contains very valuable information for St. Peter’s members, our primary focus is to provide timely, relevant information that a prospective visitor might find interesting. Please keep this in mind when crafting your article.
- Include the requested location for the placement of the article on the site.
- Include the publication start and end date.
- Information for the front page of the website should be limited to a title, date/time/location, and contact information. A link can be provided for further information found elsewhere on the website. Please indicate if you would like information posted in another location.
- Personal contact information will not be included in the text of the article. Instead, we will provide a link to contact a person. That link will open a window with a name, phone number and email address (if all are known) for that individual. This is done to protect your contact information from programs that search for such sensitive information online.

Facebook

Intended Audience: Public

Deadline for Submissions: No fewer than 2 days prior to requested publication date

Published: Upon request

- The St. Peter’s Church and School Facebook pages are intended to share information with the public about activities and events occurring at the church and school. Think of this as an opportunity to brag about the great things going on here.

- Each page will generally run no more than 3-5 posts per week.
- Posts requesting assistance or donations will be permitted only on a very limited basis.
- Announcements must be less than 50 words.
- It is helpful to include photos or images with your announcement. If you include a photo with children, you must have the permission of the parents of the children in the photo to post the image. Additionally, if you post photos with adults, you may not tag an individual unless you have his/her permission.
- Please note: No social media sites are to be created by individuals in the name of St. Peter's Lutheran Church and School, Fort Wayne without prior approval.

Email Announcements

Intended Audience: Specific collection of people who have agreed to receive email communication

Deadline for Submissions: 2 business days prior to sending

Published: As needed

- Email announcements are made on a limited basis.
- Ministry teams may establish a separate email list for their targeted audience. Please contact the church office for assistance setting up a mailing list and email.

Pieces of the Rock (School Newsletter)

Intended Audience: Parents of students in our day school

Deadline for Submissions: Thursday at noon

Published: Weekly

- Articles will run for 2 weeks only.
- Articles should be no more than 5-6 sentences.
- Because this is an email communication, you can submit links and documents that we can imbed in the article. For example: "Click here to see the schedule" with a link to a pdf document.
- Include contact information or a source for additional information.
- Placement of the article within the email will be determined by content and priority.

The Pebble (Preschool Newsletter)

Intended Audience: Parents of students in our preschool

Deadline for Submissions: Noon on 2nd Wednesday of the month

Published: Monthly on the 2nd Friday of the month

- Articles will be run for 1 month only.
- Articles should be no more than 2-3 sentences.
- Include contact information or a source for additional information.
- Placement of the article within the email will be determined by content and priority.

Pre-Service Loop

Intended Audience: Worship attendees

Deadline for Submissions: Wednesday at noon

Published: Weekly

- Submit either the content for the slide or a pre-designed PowerPoint slide.

- Due to the limited time before the slides advance, limit the text on your side to basic points.
- Only a limited number of slides will run each week. Inclusion will be based upon the guidelines on page 1.

Pre-Service Verbal Announcements by Pastor

Intended Audience: Worship attendees

Deadline for Submissions: Thursday at noon

Published: Weekly

- Pre-service announcements are to be extremely limited. Ideally fewer than 2 announcements will be made each week.
- Requests for announcements must be submitted in writing. Write out the key points for the Pastor. Limit your announcement to 25 words. Include how an individual can find more information.

Pre-Service Verbal Announcements by Non-Pastor

Intended Audience: Worship attendees

Deadline for Submissions: Thursday at noon for written proposal of announcement

Published: Weekly

- Pre-service announcements are to be limited. Only 1 non-Pastor announcement will be made per service.
- Requests for announcements must be submitted in writing. Write out what you plan to say.
- Limit your announcement to less than 2 minutes to deliver. Include how an individual can find more information.

Catalog

Intended Audience: Members, visitors, those considering membership

Deadline for Submissions: December 1 for winter/spring and June 1 for summer/fall

Published: Semi-annually in January and July

- The catalog provides a comprehensive overview of all activities and events occurring at St. Peter's within the six month time period. This is an excellent way, especially for those new to St. Peter's, to understand all that is available. Therefore, the more we include the better, even if the full details for your event have not yet been determined.
- Describe your activity or event in a paragraph.
- Include a name, email and phone number for the contact person.

Mailings

Intended Audience: Members

Deadline for Submissions: Requests for mailing labels and proposed mailing due 1 week prior to anticipated mailing

Published: As needed

- Letters and materials to be mailed must be pre-approved.
- Supply and mailing expense must be covered by ministry team budget. (Postage for a congregation wide mailing is approximately \$200.)
- A minimum of 200 identical items are required for bulk mail rates.
- Ministry teams are responsible for coordinating volunteers to assist with copying, stuffing, and mailing.

Ministry Center Booth

Intended Audience: Worship attendees

Deadline for Submissions: Wednesday prior at noon

Published: Weekly

- Booths are scheduled and posted through the church calendar.
- 2 “booths” are available each week. Because space is limited, book your booth far in advance.
- You may use 1 of the two 6’ tables in the Ministry Center that are covered with the black table cloths. You may not use additional tables without prior permission.
- Only one booth may be used for items requiring money per week.
- You are responsible for promoting your use of the Ministry Center through other channels (such as the News & Notes) using the guidelines stated for each.

Ministry Center Bulletin Board

Intended Audience: All in the church building

Deadline for Submissions: Allow 1-2 business days for your item to be posted

Published: Continuous

- Items to be included on the bulletin boards must be given to the church office.
- Please plan to remove your submission from the board once the activity/event has passed.
- The boards are intended for St. Peter’s events and activities. Non-St. Peter’s flyers must be pre-approved.

Outdoor Signage (including banners)

Intended Audience: General public

Deadline for Submissions: Please allow 2-3 business days for banner draft approval. Provide finished banner no fewer than 5 business days prior to requested post date.

Published: As requested

- Outdoor signs, banners, etc. must be pre-approved. Submit a draft of the signage for approval before ordering.
- The cost for the banner will come from your budget.
- Keep the announcement very short as drivers have limited time at the intersection.
- Include the date, time, whether the event is open to the public, and how to get more information. We recommend directing them to the church website for more information.
- Banners and signs will be displayed for no more than 2 weeks prior to the event.
- Banners and signs must be removed within 1 day of the event.

Take Home Materials

Intended Audience: Varies

Deadline for Submissions: Allow 1-2 business days for proposal approval before running copies

Published: As requested

- Materials must be no larger than one 8.5”x11” paper.

- Use of this strategy will be limited to avoid overwhelming individuals and to be good stewards of resources.
- Drafts of take home materials must be approved before publication.
- When submitting a draft, include a description of where, when, and to whom you would deliver these materials.
- Materials must be handed out after, not before, a worship service.
- Volunteers must be coordinated to hand out the materials. The ushers will not distribute materials.

Other Signage

Signs and communications are limited to the spaces outlined in these guidelines. Promotional materials may not be displayed in areas of the church outside the Ministry Center.