

# St. Peter's Lutheran Church



Friends, it feels like it has been far more than just a few short weeks since our lives were upended and our church was spread apart. It is probably safe to say that each and every one of us is feeling the impact of being physically distanced from those we love. It is hard for sure, but please know that while physically separated, you are not alone. As a fellowship of believers, we have a bond, a community that cannot be separated. What an amazing comfort it is to know we are walking through these times together as a family.

Things may look a little differently at the moment, but the ministry of St. Peter's Lutheran Church carries on - because we are a family - because we hold the hope the world so desperately needs right now. We would urge you to continue to serve one another. Check in on each other. Pray for and with one another. Share the Gospel with those around you. Share our worship services with those who may not have an online church home.

Consider the great reunion, hopefully soon, we will have when we can all be together again. Perhaps, it will be a little taste of the joy we will experience when we are reunited in heaven. We will celebrate and praise our Lord who has been with us each and every moment.

In the meantime, please help us prepare for Palm Sunday.  
We have a plan to help us all feel a little more connected.

## **Palm Sunday - Help Needed**

Click the link below for a palm leaf template. Please print, cut out, and decorate this palm leaf. Then send us a photo of yourself or your family waving the palm branch. Our plan is to run a photo montage in place of our traditional processional during worship this

weekend. But, time is short. Please send photos to Michelle Leahy at [mleahy@stpetersfw.org](mailto:mleahy@stpetersfw.org) as soon as you can.

[Palm Leaf Template](#)

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**A special page on our website ([www.stpetersfw.org](http://www.stpetersfw.org)) has been created** with all the latest information concerning life and ministry during the pandemic. Please check this page often for updates. [Click here to access that page.](#)



## Worship

Worship will continue online until further notice. These services can be access through our Facebook page ([www.Facebook.com/StPetersFW](http://www.Facebook.com/StPetersFW)). You are not required to have a Facebook account to view the videos.

We have some great services and exciting features planned for our Holy Week worship together. Can't wait to "see" you all there.

### **Palm Sunday**

*Live Saturday @ 5 & Sunday @ 10:30*

We begin our journey with a special worship service complete with virtual palm processional. The service will include a hymn sung by Aunnee Trampe.

### **Maundy Thursday**

*Video posting @ noon; 7:00 watch party*

Since we cannot gather around the Lord's Table, we have a special service planned that includes and explores our tradition of stripping the altar in remembrance of Jesus' great sacrifice for us. You can watch this video starting at noon or join the watch party with fellow believers at 7 pm.

### **Good Friday**

*Video posting @ noon; 7:00 watch party*

This special time of worship will explore the seven last words of Christ from the cross. This will be a collaborative effort between St. Peter's, Concordia, Holy Cross, and St. Peter's - Portage, IN. What a blessing to come together as a community of believers.

### **Easter Saturday: Hymn Reflections**

*Live Saturday @ 5:00 pm*

Grab a comfy seat and sit down with our pastors as they spend a reflective time discussing and listening to their favorite Easter hymns. This time will definitely prepare your heart for Easter morning.

### **Easter Sunday**

*Live Sunday at 10:30 am*

Hallelujah, Christ is Risen! St. Peter's, Concordia, and Holy Cross will join together for Easter worship, including a special children's message, live streamed from our Sanctuary.

We can celebrate Easter Part 1 online...  
Easter Part 2 will be celebrated when we can all gather again.

[Click here for links to all our worship opportunities.](#)

**Church Facebook Page**

# From Your Pastors on Holy Communion

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Since we have not been able to join together for in-person worship at St. Peter's due to the pandemic, obviously that means we have not been able to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion together either. We, as your pastors, recognize that the inability to commune together is no small matter. We have explored various options of how we might distribute the Sacrament to our members but continue to run into obstacles.

Turning to our synod's leadership for direction, we have been guided to suspend the corporate celebration of the Sacrament until such time when we can resume in-person worship. Even though it would be our desire to find some way to distribute the Sacrament to all our communicants, nevertheless, we have chosen to heed the wise counsel of our denominational leadership. In their correspondence with us, they pointed out some interesting points to consider:

**We are not in uncharted territory on this matter.**

Over the course of history, there have been times when the church has had to suspend, for a period of time, the corporate celebration of Holy Communion (including during the great influenza epidemic of 1918-1919).

**Even though the Sacrament of Holy Communion is a unique way in which God delivers to repentant sinners the forgiveness of sins, it is not the only means by which He does so.**

Forgiveness of sins is still offered and given through the proclamation of the gospel as it is read and proclaimed to you. (By the way, this is why we have been going to all the trouble of live-streaming and recording our worship services for you, as well as seeking ways to provide you with other resources, in order that you might continue to hear the good news of forgiveness and salvation in Christ. So please continue to utilize these various resources.)

**Finally, from a biblical and theological standpoint,** the well-meaning efforts of trying to consecrate and distribute the Sacrament through live-streaming or a "drive-thru" in the church parking lot creates doubts and uncertainty about the legitimacy of the Sacrament and, therefore, negates its purpose.

Again, we cannot express enough how we long for that time when we will be able to come back together for in-person worship and to celebrate the Lord's Supper. In the meantime, please continue to join us in fervent prayer, asking the Lord to put an end to this deadly pandemic that is killing thousands and to restore to us the regular administration of the blessed Sacrament of Holy Communion. As always, please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. We are here to serve you.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Steve Ahlersmeyer  
Pastor Adam McDowell

P.S. Whereas the above pertains to the Sacrament of Holy Communion, it does not equally apply to that of Holy Baptism. Please note that baptisms will still be administered even in cases of emergency.

## Tithes & Offerings

Our ministry continues and so do our financial commitments. Thank you for continuing to support your church through your tithes, offerings, and Faithfully Forward pledge

payments. Please know, your staff is working tirelessly to find the best ways to reduce costs and to keep our ministry financially stable.

There are a variety of ways you can submit your contributions. To view a complete list of options (along with instructions), [click here](#).

### **You can still mail your offering envelopes to the church office.**

We have someone checking the mail daily.  
7710 E. State Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815

### **You can also give through your My.StPetersFW.org account.**

Every member of St. Peter's with an email address on file has access to [my.stpetersfw.org](http://my.stpetersfw.org). This is a secure site that connects you with the ministry. From this site, you can update your contact information, view the member directory, view your giving and pledge contributions, and more. You can also give through this site. It's simple and secure.

Better yet, once you log into your account and set a password, you can use that same email and password to log into the Church Life app on your phone. That app gives you full access to the member directory and the church calendar. You can also give through that app.

[Click here to go to the my.stpetersfw.org site.](#)

[Click here for simple instructions to get started.](#)

[Click here for even more detailed instructions for those less tech savvy.](#)



## **Devotions & Bible Study**

### **Holy Week Devotions**

Next Step Press has graciously shared a Shelter-in-Place Holy Week Devotional. For each day of Holy Week, you will find a scripture reading, short devotional message, prayer, and coloring page. Click the link below to download the devotional.

[Holy Week Devotional](#)

### **Holy Week Bible Study**

What better time to dig into God's Word than Holy Week during social distancing? By clicking the link below, you can access a Bible study from the Gospel of Mark. This study was created by Concordia Publishing House and is part of a series called *Life By His Word*.

[Holy Week Bible Study from Mark](#)

You can also join a group discussion of these study questions. Click the link below to go to our Facebook page. There you will find a link to join this private group. Each day Monday-Friday next week we will post the readings and discussion questions. You can comment and ask questions in the discussion. Art Wenzel will be the moderator for the group. (Note: when on the group page, you can narrow the discussion by clicking on the Topic tags on the right.

[St. Peter's Facebook Page](#)

# Table Manners

*Because it displays honor and fosters peace.*

In the midst of a wild and crazy time, there are silver linings... like family meal times. With everything removed from our typical busy schedules, we have the opportunity to gather as a family around the dinner table. Click the link below for a great article from the Concordia Center for the Family on practicing table manner with your family.

[Family Table Manners](#)

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St. Peter's Lutheran Church & School | 7710 E. State Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815

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