

St. Peter's Lutheran Church



Letter from the Pastors

Dear Friends in Christ,

We pastors (and Vicar) like questions. In fact, asking questions is a good way to grow in your faith. One question that was recently put to us was regarding the large cross above the altar in the sanctuary that displays the a wood carving of the crucified Christ on it (commonly referred to as a crucifix). The question was whether or not it was appropriate to display a crucifix since Jesus no longer is on the cross, but has risen from the dead?

First of all, that's a good question and thanks for asking it. Secondly, let us affirm very clearly, as Scripture proclaims, that Christ is risen from the dead! As God's people, no one denies that glorious, life-saving fact. Thirdly, keep in mind that crosses, whether they are empty or have the figure of Jesus on them, are simply a symbol of His suffering and death on our behalf to save us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. Therefore, whereas a crucifix more graphically symbolizes Jesus' suffering and death, the empty cross does that as well. In other words, they both convey the same reminder to us. That being said, claiming the freedom which God's Word gives us on these kinds of matters, Lutherans are neither commanded nor forbidden to use one over the other.

Finally, during the time of the Reformation, there were some who wanted to remove all images, including the crucifix, from their churches. They believed such images constituted idolatry. Consequently, the empty cross was preferred and some even suggested that the empty cross symbolizes Jesus' resurrection. That, of course, is not correct as it is the empty tomb that proves Jesus' resurrection. The cross, as stated above, is a symbol of suffering and death on our behalf. So, until Jesus returns, we all live under the cross in this life. We will encounter various kinds of difficulty and suffering in this world and, yes, we will eventually die in the sure and certain hope of life forever with our risen Lord. But until then, the crucifix (or empty cross) remind us that Jesus loved us to death and that, even in our own suffering in this world, we belong to Him both now and forever.

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2)

In Him,

Pastor Steve
Pastor McDowell
Vicar Nate

CONNECT to Christ with Us

Worship Times & Links

In-Person Worship

Saturday @ 5:00 pm

Sunday @ 8:00 am

Sunday @ 10:30 am

Monday @ 6:00 pm (Stepping Stones - Gym)

Live Stream Worship

These services can be accessed through our Facebook page

(www.facebook.com/StPetersFW).

Sunday @ 10:30 am

[Click here to access this Sunday's live stream service.](#)



Stepping Stones Worship

What's a mousetrap doing in church? Come find out how we can escape the punishment of sin at Stepping Stones. Service with communion starts at 6:00 pm. [DISCLAIMER] No mousetraps will be used at the family tables.

[Click here](#) for the full video from Pastor McDowell about this week's service.

(As a reminder, Stepping Stones is a worship service, so attendance does count toward the Congregational Scholarship requirement for school families.)

Short Communion Service

Wednesday, January 20 @ 11 am (Sanctuary)

For those needing the spiritual gifts of Holy Communion, but not ready or able to return to in-person services, you can come to this short 10-15 minute worship service. Masks are required; you can spread out further than 6 feet; there will be no singing; and a short devotion will be read.

The Congregational Scholarship Update

The Congregational Scholarship that has been on hold due to Covid has been reinstated. Communication, via email and a mailed letter, has been sent to students and parents of the Day School and Concordia Lutheran High School who receive this scholarship. For easy access to the Google Form referenced in the letter use the link below.

[CLICK HERE for the
Google Form to Log Livestream Worship](#)

In Person Worship forms are located in the Ministry Center.

Didn't receive the letter or email about the scholarship? Click the link below to update your contact information or email the Church Office at churchoffice@stpetersfw.org.

[Contact Update Form](#)

GROW in His Grace with Us

Sunday Bible Study:

Join us on Sunday morning at 9:15 am for a new study entitled, "The Eager Conversationalist." Lutheran Hour Ministries and the Barna Group have partnered to research the state of Spiritual Conversations in the Digital Age. This research has produced powerful insights about the nature of spiritual conversations and has led to two simple, powerful tools for Christians who want to grow in their witness. This engaging study is filled with helpful insights, inspiring stories, and practical guidance.

[Click here to access the live stream.](#)

[Click here to access the study materials](#)

Pastor Steve's Thursday Bible Study:

Pastor Steve's Thursday noon study started last week and continues. All are welcome. Now is a great time to join us as Pastor is just beginning his verse by verse study of the book of Hebrews. Class will run from 12-1 in the Sanctuary and via live stream on our YouTube channel

[Click here to access the live stream.](#)

Children's Bulletin

Click the link below to download a copy of the Children's Bulletin for this weekend.

[Children's Bulletin for January 17](#)

SHARE Him with Others

Chicken Dinner Sales

February 7 is Super Bowl Sunday, and the Youth want to help you enjoy the game by selling boxed chicken dinners. You will be helping them fund their mission trip to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota this June. The Youth will not be able to sell in-person at this time. However, forms are in the offering plates and can be returned back to the offering plates or the front office. You will get homestead chicken, green beans, baked potato, and a

roll for just \$10. You can still get your tickets online through the St. Peter's website.



An Opportunity to Offer Time & Talents

The Property Team is lining up volunteers to take a weekend to be on-call to cover sidewalk shoveling and salting around our entrances before & after weekend worship services. The main objective is to keep the walks near each door clear of snow and ice so our members can enter and exit our facility as safely as possible (the major parking lot plowing/salting is already covered).

This is a wonderful family project opportunity if you've been looking for a way to give back together. If this is something you or maybe your family is interested in, please complete the form found at the link below as soon as possible.

[Snow Patrol Sign-Up Form](#)

Mission News

Life in Uruguay

As we look forward to celebrating the one-year anniversary of St. Peter's connection with Missionary James Sharp on January 30-31, let's refresh what we know about the mission in Uruguay. Pastor Sharp serves three Lutheran congregations, two in Montevideo where he lives (approximately 150 members and 30 members) and one church about two hours to the north (30 members).

Pastor Sharp's four children attend Lutheran schools: Elias, a freshman at St. Paul High School in Concordia, MO; and the three younger children at Colegio San Pablo (St. Paul's Lutheran School, Montevideo, a school of 1400) where Mrs. Sharp is a teacher. The school year in Uruguay runs from March to Dec. 1, so it is now summer break. Christmas (known as "Family Day") is often celebrated on the beaches.

Covid-19 has had an impact on Uruguay with a shut-down which runs until the end of January. Live-stream worship services are being used. The country has a population half the size of Indiana, but where we have had over 9,000 Covid-related deaths, Uruguay has had around 250. The borders are closed, and no one can leave without a special passport showing proof of vaccination. Vaccinations are hard to procure since the small market of Uruguay is not attractive to the labs which produce the vaccine.

Knowing that travel has been limited is difficult for our mission family, especially since Pastor Sharp's father passed away last spring leaving his mother a widow. (He was not able to attend the funeral because of lack of flights.) It also must be challenging for Elias being so far away and travel restricted.

Notes of encouragement are always appreciated by the Sharp family, along with your prayers. Email Pastor Sharp at james.sharp@lcms.org, or send a note to Elias Sharp, c/o St. Paul Lutheran High School, 205 S. Main St. Concordia, MO 64020.

You can also watch a livestream service from Pastor Sharp at [Facebook.com/iglesiaLuterana.delUruguay](https://www.facebook.com/iglesiaLuterana.delUruguay). But be aware, it is in Spanish!

Tithes & Offerings

To view a complete list of giving options (along with instructions), [click here](#).

Stewardship Corner as of 1/3/20

This report represents the first six months of our fiscal year.
Blessings on your giving, may the lamp of God shine brightly in you!

	<u>Month to Date</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Other Revenue</u>
Total Giving	\$35,121	\$532,474	\$47,922
Budget	\$18,973	\$536,302	\$81,447
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$16,148	(\$3,828)	(\$33,525)
Loan Balance	\$2,048,674		

Thrivent Choice – Thank you to everyone that directs Thrivent Choice dollars to our church and school. If you are a Thrivent member and do not know how to direct Choice dollars, please contact your Thrivent representative or Tony Hunt, Director of Advancement (222-1291 or thunt@stpetersfw.org).

Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) – If you are over 70½ and have an IRA, you can take advantage of the QCD provision in the Internal Revenue Code. This distribution must be a direct transfer of funds from your IRA, payable directly to a qualified charity such as St. Peter's Lutheran Church and School. The power of this direct transfer is that you avoid having to pay federal tax on this distribution. In addition, if you are age 72 or older, this should qualify to eliminate or reduce your required minimum distributions. Several of your fellow members are currently take advantage of this tax provision with direct distributions to the church. For additional information, please contact Tony Hunt, Director of Advancement (222-1291 or thunt@stpetersfw.org). This is for information only, as we do not provide tax advice, please talk to your financial/tax advisor for guidance on your personal situation.



School Updates

Chick-fil-A Fundraiser

Help support the PTL on Thursday, January 21 by ordering your dinner from Chick-fil-A using their **mobile app**. The PTL will earn 15% from all app purchases between 5:00 and 8:00 pm at the 182 W Coliseum Blvd location.

Link for Apple App Store <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/chick-fil-a/id488818252>

Link for Android Google Play <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.chickfila.cfafalagship>

Open Enrollment

We are already looking ahead to the 2021/2022 school year. Enrollment is now open for members of St. Peter's. Enrollment opens to the community on January 24.

St. Peter's partners with families to provide a Christ-centered education that nurtures faith in Christ, promotes discipleship, develops God-given talents, and encourages academic excellence. Please share this information with anyone you know who may be interested in enrolling their child(ren) age 2 through 8th grade.

Contact the school office to learn more or to schedule a personal visit (enrollment@stpetersfw.org or 260-749-5811).

National Lutheran Schools Week January 24-30

We thank God for the opportunity to provide excellent academic preparation for the children we serve. We are most grateful for the opportunity to share Jesus' amazing love with children and their families. NLSW gives us an opportunity to proclaim these great blessings within our community.

Geography Bee

This year's geography bee will take place on Tuesday during National Lutheran Schools Week in the Wildcat Gym (Church Gym) at 2 pm. Parents of participants will be allowed in to join us for the event.

Artsonia

While our parents and visitors cannot come in and see artwork filling our hallways this year, our amazing Art teacher knew they needed to share it. Mrs. Koenig researched ways to make students' artwork accessible to families, even during this weird COVID time. What she found was Artsonia. Artsonia is an online gallery of all of the artwork our kids create. People can peruse artwork and even order items with a child's artwork on them like mugs, cards, and even Christmas ornaments. Thanks to the hard work of Mrs. Koenig and her faithful helper, Ms. Dierks, new artwork is posted almost weekly to the website to enjoy. There are currently over 1,300 art projects to enjoy on the site. Click the link below to view the amazing artistic talents God has blessed our students with. A huge thank you Mrs. Koenig and Ms. Dierks for making this possible!

[Artsonia Link](#)

Church Calendar

Saturday, January 16

5:00 pm - Worship with communion (In Person)

Sunday, January 17

8:00 am - Worship with Communion (In-Person)

9:15 am - Adult Bible Class (Cornerstone Room & Live Stream)

9:15 am - Public School Confirmation (Church Gym)

10:30 am - Worship with Communion (In-Person & Live Stream)

Monday, January 18 - MLK Day (No School or Preschool)

6:00 pm - Stepping Stones Worship (Church Gym)

6:00 pm - Finance Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Wednesday, January 20

11:00 am - Communion Only Service (Sanctuary)

Thursday, January 21

6:30 am - Men's Bible Study (Goeglein's Fireplace Room)

12:00 pm - Pastor Steve's Bible Study (Sanctuary & Live Stream)

6:30 pm - Board of Directors Meeting (Cornerstone Room)

[Send a Prayer Request](#)

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