



*Ministry Matters*  
St. Peter's  
MINISTRY UPDATE NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025

Welcome to *Ministry Matters*! This publication will give you a regular look into St. Peter's movements in ministry and offer you opportunities to personally engage as a participant or volunteer in the detailed work in our church and community. You will see how we follow our commitment to be a church family who is *Loving People and Serving the World* as we worship, grow, and serve together.



***Desk of Pastor Hays***

Dearest St. Peter Family,

Spring is almost in the air and there is fresh new life before us. God is most certainly good.

As I compose this I am in a place of reflection on the past and visioning into the future. I was blessed to attend the Best Practices in Ministry conference at Christ Lutheran Church in Phoenix with five of St. Peter's lead ministry staff. A number of the spouses purchased airfare and joined us as well! It was a wonderful time to attend mass plenaries, sectionals, and help out with the Phil's Friends booth. To see the energy on the faces of this St. Peter team was uplifting. They were edified through the conference and affirmed by you with a trip to a warm destination. You will likely see some of their reflections in the pages to follow.

As I look into the future, I can tell you that we, as a congregation, are about to launch a five-year planning process with the help of a ministry called "Five-Two." By the end of eight months, we will have a tangible plan that we collectively feed into. For the following sixteen months they will have coaches that work with a variety of ministry teams to help us realize this vision. You will see a congregational survey, be invited to attend larger group gatherings, and ultimately have personal influence into the outcome. My personal goal for this is to have your input because you are the stakeholders. Your involvement in this process is extremely important and I pray

that you engage in the process. I can't wait to see what God is unfolding as we look forward to the days ahead.

So, my friends, we continue our journey as the St. Peter family where we continue to "Love People, Serve the World" with the love of Christ leading the way. Enjoy this issue of Ministry Matters! +Peace in Christ+

Pastor Jerry Hays



### *Desk of Pastor Dubensky*

St. Peter is a family that worships, serves, and grows together, and we have a variety of opportunities for you to engage with us in those areas as we love people, and serve the world.

#### Worship:

It feels like Easter is just around the corner! This Lenten season we will be walking through TWO sermon series. Our Midweek Lenten series is called "The Gospel in Genesis." –

Join us to hear familiar narratives in Genesis and see how the Lord was pointing us to Jesus, even in the first book of the Old Testament. Our weekend series is called "Guided." – Join us to hear how God is guiding us to live out forgiveness, hope, love, trust, and ultimately an entirely new life in Jesus Christ.

#### Serve:

April 4<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2025 is the Northern Illinois District's SHINE week - Look for more information soon regarding opportunities to serve our local community during this year's SHINE events.

If you are looking to support our upcoming Belize Mission Trip (June 2025), your donations are welcome! For every \$420 we donate to the Belize Mission Society – we can provide one student with uniforms, school supplies, tuition, and lunch for an entire year – My goal is to support 10 students in 2025, let's do this!

#### Grow:

If you're looking to get plugged into God's Word we have 3 New Bible Studies that you might be interested in!

1. M.O.M.S. Group Bible Study is 10am on Sundays. Moms and little ones are welcome! This group meets in the Nursery from 10-11am on Sunday Mornings and are going through a devotional book together called: "God Loves Moms: 12 Lessons About God's Mercy."
2. Wednesday Morning Bible Study with Pastor Matt. Are you interested in diving deeper into the Scripture readings we hear in church? Join us at 10am in the Lay Ministry Room for a closer look at God's Word and a sneak-preview of the sermon for the upcoming weekend!
3. The Fruit of the Spirit. Mike Condill is leading an in-depth study of the Fruit of the Spirit on Thursday nights @ 6:30pm – Do you need more patience,

kindness, or self-control in your life? Well, this may be the perfect Bible Study for you!

In Christ;  
Pastor Matt



### *Desk of Julie Messina*

The 24-25 school year is going well. It is hard to believe we are more than halfway through. St. Peter currently has 226 students enrolled, a significant increase from last year. This growth is a testament to our thriving community, and we are blessed to share God's word with the students and families.



Registration for the 25-26 school year is open and doing well. We are accepting new students and re-enrolling current students. Our preschool program is growing; we will add a new classroom at 7:45 a.m. We are looking for a new teacher to share the love of God with these students. If you are interested or know someone who would be interested, please contact Julie Messina.

We will be celebrating Cindy Oleson's retirement on Sunday, May 18, after the 9:00 a.m. service. This is a special occasion to show our appreciation for Cindy's dedication to St. Peter's and her role in sharing the Word of God with so many families. We look forward to celebrating her and the impact she has had on our community. More details will be shared as the date approaches.

We are looking for a Physical Education and Middle School specials teacher. The P.E. teacher will instruct physical education classes for preschool through eighth grade students throughout the day. Additionally, you will teach health to sixth, seventh, and eighth graders once a week. The P.E. Teacher will also organize and plan events such as Fall Fest and Field Day for the students. If you or anyone you know is interested in the position, please contact Julie Messina.

Our exciting summer camp, Summer Daze, is now open for registration. This camp, which serves three-year-olds through twelve-year-olds, offers a variety of fun activities. Each week has a different theme, catering to various interests. Whether or not your child attends St. Peter's Lutheran School, they are welcome to join our

camp. We are open to the public and offer a drop-in option, except on field trip days. For any questions, please contact Jennie Lewinski.

God's Blessings,  
Julie Messina, School Principal

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### ***Family & Youth Ministry Recap***

Youth Ministry - Another couple of months have blown by, but the fun is still happening in Youth Ministry. We've had Advent Services, Lock-Ins, Laser Tag, and more and it won't slow down in the next couple of months. In a couple of weeks on March 15th the Jr. High kids are having a Lock-In. Ash Wednesday is our next fundraiser, but our big one will be happening in April. The Spaghetti Dinner. This is a great chance to help the Youth prepare for their trip to New Orleans for the National Youth Gathering. You don't have to wait for a fundraiser though. Any time we are accepting donations to help us fund the trip. It's about \$600 per kid to get down for the National Youth Gathering so any little bit can help us make it there. I look forward to updating you on our progress in the next ministry matters.

Our Jr. High Youth Ministry has been growing over the last couple of months and we would love to have more adult volunteers help out. If you are interested in helping in Youth Ministry, please consider reaching out to me and possibly being a part of our Youth Ministry Board. Youth need every several relationships in their life that can shift them towards their Lord and Savior and that could be you. Email me at [mpaulsen@stpeterlcms.org](mailto:mpaulsen@stpeterlcms.org) if you are interested.

There's a lot happening in the area of Children's Ministry or annual events such as the Pillow Fight went off swimmingly. Sunday School continues to meet regularly in the gym from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. every Sunday. This is a great chance to drop your child off for a christ centered story, craft, game, and snack. There are many events coming up, such as an afternoon Movie & The Largest Banana Split Challenge, so make sure you are getting the Family Ties so you can stay up to date on all the phone.

The biggest event is coming this summer, VBS (Vacation Bible School). You can start registering for VBS as early as NOW! The link below will take you to our registration page where you can sign up for our week long adventure. VBS is from June 16th -

June 20th here at St. Peter from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. We would love for you to join us, invite a friend, and prepare for an amazing outdoor experience. We are so excited about traveling to the Wild North where we will learn all about God in Nature. Again, just click the link below to sign up.

[stpeterlcms.org/vbs](http://stpeterlcms.org/vbs)

Peace in Christ,  
Michael Paulsen



### ***Traditional Worship***

Choir and Handbells are back at it after a brief mid-winter break. We are busy preparing for Lent and Holy Week.

“There’s always room for one more” (or more!!) If you would like to join, please contact me, Julie Sawusch, at [jsawusch@stpeterlcms.org](mailto:jsawusch@stpeterlcms.org). Rehearsals are on Thursday nights – handbells at 6:30 and choir at 7:15. We’d love to have you join us!!

Do you have an instrumental talent? If so, I’m looking for instrumentalists for Holy Week. There’s room for all, from brass on Easter, to woodwinds & strings for Maundy Thursday or Good Friday. Rehearsals will be scheduled as needed in April.

As we look ahead to Easter, remember to always “Make a joyful noise to Lord” with whatever talents God has given you!!

Julie Sawusch  
Traditional Music Director



### ***From the desk of Rick Bersano***

Greetings in the name of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ

I want to thank you for your gifts in 2024 especially at the end of the year and into January 2025. It refilled the coffers and has allowed SPLC to continue forward in its mission and ministries. The congregation’s generosity has kept SPLC within 95% of its giving budget.

As we go into the Lenten season it reminds us all of the blessings God has continuously bestowed on each of us, our families and SPLC. Especially the gift of His Son for our salvation. His blessings never cease.

And our work, that the Lord gave us, to reach out to the world to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”) continues throughout the year. Thus, SPLC needs your time, talents and treasures whether it is during the Christmas season, Easter season or the middle of summer.

God’s Blessings,

Your Servant in Christ,

Rick Bersano



***From the desk of Greg Frey***

Greetings, in Christ, from the St. Peter Mission and Ministry Council,

The Council met in January, offsite, at Maggiano’s in Schaumburg for our yearly retreat. We reviewed the important documents of the church, our policy-based governance model, and recorded Desired Outcomes for 2025. We also met FiveTwo, a ministry partner, that is going to help St. Peter develop our 3–5-year plan and engage many within the congregation to participate in that process! We enjoyed a Maggiano’s family style lunch, and of course, time in God’s word to help ground our discussion and planning.

We met in February and finalized the Desired outcomes for 2025, that are now published in an updated Council Policies document. Pastor Hays shared with us highlights from the Best Practices conference in Phoenix, that he and St. Peter lead staff attended. We were encouraged to hear how everyone was very engaged at the conference, and excited to come back and apply some of their key learnings. Pastor encouraged the council to focus on strategic planning for the year ahead, and to think about how this Council could continue to add value to St. Peter Lutheran Church and School.

The Council looks forward to reviewing & approving the budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in April and May.

We're blessed to be part of St. Peter's long, 177+ years of history of sharing the Gospel and the love of Jesus in our community, our workplaces, and with the world.

We are family in Christ,  
Greg Frey

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### *Young At Heart*

Do you think you are you too young to join in with the Senior Ministry and enjoy the fellowship of those over 55? If not, consider joining on the fourth Thursday of each month. We enjoy pastor's presence and his lessons. We enjoy conversations with each other and the activities we do. Check it out!!! Let the office know and give your email if you would like to be notified about the activities of the monthly

meetings.

Our December 2024 meeting. What fun we had at our Christmas celebration with music by LaVerne and her DJ Paul. There were sing- a- longs, dancing (including the Hawaiian Hula) and traditional Christmas tunes. For lunch, we ordered a catered lunch from Moretti's. We invited the church Staff to join in for the lunch. The sandwiches and wraps were yummy. Green salad, chips and desserts topped off the meal.

Our January meeting lunch was a bring your own Brown Bag Plus. The plus is whatever anyone decides to bring to share. The Sesso's brought a hot dish Garlic Butter Rice as a plus item. We enjoyed that along with a variety of cookies and other desserts. Our Activity was **Bingo**. There is no charge to play. If you get a bingo, you can choose your prize from a wrapped White Elephant gift that members have donated. It is fun to see what your prize might be.



### ***Poland Missions***

Our 2025 Mission Trip team has been assembled. There's going to be 10 people going this year. It's the 2nd highest participation since inception. We are also changing our venue in Poland. We're moving from the church premises to a local public school. It has much better facilities and we're gaining exposure to over 1,000 school families, so anticipated kids' participation should be higher than ever. Because of these changes, we'll be ramping up our fundraising: March 2nd is our Fat Tuesday Paczki (Donuts) Sale; we're hosting Lenten Soup Supper on March 26th, and June 8th will be our Annual Polski Grill. Other fundraisers will follow. If you'd like to receive more information about our efforts in Poland, please reach out to Maciek at [maciej@kielbasinski.net](mailto:maciej@kielbasinski.net) or 224-388-0610.