

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church Newsletter
December 2020



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Church Board

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God with Us, Indeed

- Pastor Sorenson

This year has been unlike any other in so many ways. For most, if not all of us, living through a pandemic is something we have never done before. The threat of disease for ourselves and our loved ones has constantly been before our eyes. So-called “social distancing” is now our default mode of operation. Uncertainty abounds in virtually every aspect of life.

All of this stands in stark contrast to the normal mood of this season. Typically, these days would be full of festive music, anticipation of family gatherings, and the joy of celebrating our Savior’s birth. Instead, these days this year are filled with mandates, warnings against gathering together, and even the fear for many of coming to church for Advent and Christmas services.

While caution must be taken and sacrifices have to be made out of love and safety for ourselves and others, let us not lose sight of what the miracle of our Lord’s incarnation and birth really means for us. For this year, perhaps more than any other, makes us realize just what an amazing thing it is that Christ took on our human flesh and became Man for us.

The prophet Isaiah begins to reveal this to us as he records this promise from the Lord: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). The name Immanuel, as St. Matthew tells us, means “God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

What a wonder this is! God Himself, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the Lord almighty, comes to be with us. He comes to be in the midst of our death and disease-ridden world. He comes to be with men and women who suffer from various afflictions in this life. He comes to be with those who are afraid or anxious or tired or frustrated.

Even more than this, He comes as a Man, which means that He comes as One who could Himself get sick and die. The prospect of this, though, didn’t scare our Lord off. He didn’t distance Himself from us out of concern for health or safety, whether His or ours. Rather, He came to us fully aware that sickness and death were possible.

And why did Christ do this? Because that threat of sickness and even death paled in comparison to the far greater threat of eternal condemnation. This is the miracle of Christmas. That Jesus Christ would take on human flesh, even though it came with great risk (and certainty) of personal suffering, in order to save us from sin, disease, and death forever.

This is said beautifully in the hymn “O God, O Lord of Heaven and Earth” (LSB 834) by Martin H. Franzmann. In the third stanza he writes, “Thou camest to our hall of death, O Christ, to breathe our poisoned air, to drink for us the dark despair that strangled our reluctant breath. How beautiful the feet that trod the road that leads us back to God! How beautiful the feet that ran to bring the great good news to man!”

Truly, then, as Isaiah and Matthew both said, Christ would, in the flesh, bear our illnesses and our diseases (Isaiah 53:4, Matthew 8:17). Covid, in other words, doesn’t scare our Lord away. It doesn’t cause Him to distance Himself from us. Rather, even in these days, Christ desires to come to us. To be with us in the midst of sickness and death. To bear our griefs and our sorrows, our illnesses and diseases, and to give us forgiveness and eternal life.

Let us, dear saints, learn this lesson well. For this is what it means that Jesus Christ is Immanuel, God with us. And learning this, let us not be afraid to come to church, where Christ, our incarnate Lord, promises to be. For, indeed, when God is with us, no disease, no sin, no death, can ever triumph since He has defeated them all by His death and resurrection.

WORSHIP INFORMATION

Worship Service Update:

We are now back to having one service each Sunday at 9:00 AM. As we do so, we will continue to follow the state guidelines regarding social distancing and other safety measures. For each service, the radio transmitter will still be used and the sermon and readings will be posted on the website.

Bible Studies In-Person:

- We have begun meeting again on **Sunday mornings** after worship.
- **Wednesday night** Bible study will be on a break until after the new year.
- **Book of Concord Study** will meet on the second Sunday of the month, December 13, beginning at 5:00 PM and continue studying the Smalcald Articles. A pitch-in dinner will follow the study as well. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Online Bible Study:

- We will continue having a short devotional video on **Tuesdays at 2:00 PM** on the church Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/StPeterEvangelicalLutheranChurch>) and is also available to view in its entirety even after the study concludes.

Sermons and Devotional Resources:

- Weekly sermons will be posted on our church website (<http://www.stpeterwaymansville.com>) on the sermon page under the "At St. Peter" tab. (Direct link to that page - http://www.stpeterwaymansville.org/?page_id=417)
- You can also find helpful resources for your home devotions on the "Devotional Resources" page under the "Resources" tab (http://www.stpeterwaymansville.org/?page_id=489). Now is a great time to begin, continue, and strengthen a home devotional pattern by yourself and with your family.
- Portals of Prayer are available in the Narthex. You can drop by and pick one up or contact Pastor or the church office to have one delivered.

Lord's Supper: If you would like to receive the Lord's Supper during this time, please contact Pastor Sorenson via call, text, or email. His phone number is 812-371-1151 and his email is pastoresorenson@gmail.com. He would be happy to meet you at the church for this purpose or to bring it to your home, making sure at all times to take the necessary safety precautions.

May these resources assist you as you continue to hear the Word of God and cry out to Him in prayer.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the following members of our congregation who stepped up to fill roles on our church board:

Chairman: Rick Flohr (returning)

Practical Services: Max Thomas

Synodical Treasurer: Connie Stiles

Recording Secretary: Camden Jeffries

Also, thank you to Kelly Thomas and Phil Trimpe, our outgoing board members, for the contribution of your time and talents to our board during your terms.

Thank you to everyone who came to help with the greening of the church.

EVENTS & NEWS

Usher & Communion Sign-Up Sheets:

The 2021 sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. We are always looking for additional people interested in filling these roles. Please feel free to sign up even if you have never before helped in these ways. Someone will be happy to show you the ropes.

(At this time, communion assistance will be clean up only. Pastor will continue to set up communion so that there is only one contact prior to communion distribution.)

Library:

In an effort to build up our library and provide good theological resources for the congregation, we will have a special Book of the Month. The Book of the Month will be available in the Parish Hall library for you to look through and read. You may take the book home to read as well, but we ask that you please do not hold onto it for too long so other people can enjoy it as well. The December Book of the Month is *The Very First Christmas* by Paul L. Maier. Here is a description of the book: "Christopher wants the truth, not fairy tales. So his mother tells the amazing and miraculous story of Jesus' birth. Along the way, Christopher learns the answers to important questions about Christmas. And all the answers are right in the Bible! This book places the focus of Christmas on God's story – His plan for the salvation of mankind through Jesus Christ. It will become a treasured classic to be enjoyed year after year."

150th Anniversary:

Next year, 2021, will be the 150th anniversary of St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church! We will have a special service on Sunday, July 11th, 2021 to give thanks to God for 150 years of our life together here in His Church. The Indiana District President, Rev. Daniel Brege will be our guest preacher that day. As part of our celebration we will be putting together a new directory, a new cookbook, and having various other events throughout the year. Make sure to keep an eye out for all of the special things that will happen in regards to this anniversary and if you would like to volunteer to help in any capacity or if you have any ideas for how we can celebrate this special occasion, please speak to Barb Minor or Pastor Sorenson.

Altar Flowers:

If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, please contact Sue Anne Lee at (812) 717-0167. The cost to sponsor the flowers is \$20, and the payment can be put in the offering plate or in the mail rack outside the church office door. The flowers are yours for the taking after the worship service.

YOUTH EVENTS

Youth Group :

The youth group will meet on Sunday, December 20 for our youth night. We will have a meal, time to study God's Word, and a fun activity.

Sunday School Teachers:

Sunday School is underway, and they are still accepting help with teaching. If you are interested, please talk to Kevin Schultz or Pastor. This is a great opportunity to serve your neighbors in Christ and to raise up the youngest generation of the Church in the fear and knowledge of the Lord!

FROM THE OFFICE

THE FRUITS OF OUR LABORS: November 1 – November 28, 2020

Attendance: 11/1: 44 11/8: 42 11/15: 45 11/22: 72

Operating Fund Collected: \$11,543.00

Operating Fund Balance as of 11/28/2020: \$17, 116.16
***Of this balance, \$12,450.94 is in designated accounts.**

Building Fund Collected: \$260.00

Building Fund Balance as of 11/28/2020: \$4,993.20

Contact Information:

As the situation around us continues to change daily, we would like to be able to contact everyone in a quick and timely manner. If you could please contact Amy or Pastor to update your contact information, especially phone number and email, that would help us tremendously and be greatly appreciated. Keep an eye on the church Facebook page for the most up-to-date information. Thank you!

Pastor Erik Sorenson • (812) 342-4921, office • (812) 371-1151, cell • pastoresorenson@gmail.com

Amy Sciano • (812) 342-4921, office • (812) 390-2318, cell • amy@stpeterwaymansville.com

On the web: www.stpeterwaymansville.com • Facebook: www.facebook.com/StPeterEvangelicalLutheranChurch

Advent and Christmas Services

Advent is a season when the Church prepares for the coming (or advent) of Jesus Christ. This preparation is done by gathering together to hear the Word of God, repent of our sins, and receive the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

Throughout this season, God reveals to us the three advents of Christ. First, He came in the flesh by His birth in Bethlehem. Second, He comes to us here and now in His Word and in His Sacraments. Third, He will come again on the last day to raise us from the dead.

As such, the Church uses this season to prepare for all three advents of Christ, celebrating the first, experiencing the second, and longing for the third. May this Advent and Christmas season be a blessed time of preparation for all of us here at St. Peter as we join together to delight in the Christ Child who comes to us now and will come again!

The Midweek Services – Songs of Christmas

Wednesday, December 2, 7:00 PM – Magnificat – Song of Mary

Wednesday, December 9, 7:00 PM – Benedictus – Song of Zechariah

Wednesday, December 16, 7:00 PM – Nunc Dimittis – Song of Simeon

The Christmas Services

Tuesday, December 24, 7:00 PM – Children's Christmas Program

Tuesday, December 24, 11:00 PM – Christmas Eve Candlelight

Wednesday, December 25, 9:00 AM – Christmas Divine Service



St. Peter Lutheran Church Calendar

Ushers: Max Thomas & Kevin Nagel

Acolytes:

Dec. 2 – Rayleigh Acton
Dec. 13 – Laurie Schultz
Dec. 24 – Rayleigh Acton

Dec. 6 – Joe Acree
Dec. 16 – Jonah Sciano
Dec. 25 – Joe Acree

December 2020

Dec. 9 – Trevor Acree
Dec. 20 – Jenna Thomas
Dec. 31 – Trevor Acree

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Pastor at Circuit Mtg. until 1:00 PM 2:00 PM – Online Devotion	2 7:00 PM – Midweek Advent Service	3 7:00 PM – Elders’ Mtg.	4	5
6 9:00 AM – Divine Service (Communion) 10:15 AM – Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 11:30 AM – Youth Catechesis	7	8 2:00 PM – Online Devotion	9 7:00 PM – Midweek Advent Service	10 7:00 PM-Church Board Mtg.	11	12
13 9:00 AM – Divine Service 10:15 AM – Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 11:30 AM – Youth Catechesis 5:00 PM – Book of Concord Study	14	15 2:00 PM – Online Devotion	16 7:00 PM – Midweek Advent Service	17	18	19
20 9:00 AM – Divine Service (Communion) 10:15 AM – Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 11:30 AM – Youth Catechesis 5:00-7:00 PM – Youth Group Night	21	22 2:00 PM – Online Devotion	23	24 7:00 PM - Children’s Program 11:00 PM - Candlelight Service	25 9:00 AM - Christmas Day Service (C)	
27 9:00 AM – Divine Service 10:15 AM – Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 11:30 AM – Youth Catechesis	28	29 2:00 PM – Online Devotion	30	31 7:00 - New Year’s Eve Service (C)		

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