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Church Is for Jesus

- Pastor Sorenson

In the Church Year, we are currently in the time sometimes referred to as the “non-festival” portion of the year. Some people will speak of this time as the “long green season.” Officially, it’s the time of year when we count the Sundays after Pentecost.

This time has come to pick up the “non-festival” label because all of the major Church festivals are over. Christmas, Holy Week, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost have all been celebrated and several months lie ahead until we will celebrate them again.

During these “non-festival” weeks, it’s become a familiar sight in many churches to celebrate other kinds of festivals. Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, and 4th of July are some of the most widely celebrated, but there are others as well.

In fact, this trend has gone so far that people can easily fall into the trap of thinking the Church must celebrate these festivals as the highlight of that day. These Sundays, or the Sunday nearest these days, must be reserved for whatever the secular festival is and everything in the church service must revolve around it.

Now, while it is certainly good, right, and salutary, that we, as Christians, should celebrate days like these, we ought to do so with one thing in mind. Church is for Jesus.

Church is not for celebrating any festival that may appear on the secular calendar. Church is not for celebrating our independence from Great Britain. Church is not for recognizing and praising every vocation on its given week. Church is for Jesus.

This is not to say that we should ignore these festivals. On the contrary, actually. The Church should acknowledge these days, giving thanks to God for whatever it is we may be celebrating and praying to Him for the same. This can look like applauding for our veterans or recognizing our mothers and fathers or praying that God would continue to bless our nation.

But the service ought to remain focused on Jesus. After all, the Church is in, not of, of the world. That means that we come to worship as people who have these other festivals on our minds and hearts, but we do not let them overshadow the main reason we come: to receive the gifts of Christ and to rejoice and praise Him for them.

The devil is so eager for each and every one of us to make church about anything other than Jesus. Whether that’s making the whole service about these worldly festivals or making it about our own preferences and feelings or anything else, Satan works tirelessly to try to make church about anything other than Jesus.

May it never be among us, according to God’s great and abundant mercy. Because church is for Jesus. It’s for Jesus to come to us and heal us in body and soul. It’s for Jesus to forgive us our sins and give us everlasting life. It’s for Jesus to comfort us and give us His resurrection joy. It’s for Jesus to wash us clean in Holy Baptism, proclaim His life-giving Word to us, and to feed us with His very body and blood that is for us the very medicine of immortality.

Even though we may be in the “non-festival” season, when we remember that church is for Jesus, we realize that every Sunday is a festival. A mini-Easter, in fact, one of the most joyous festivals of the year.

So, let’s not despise those other secular festivals, but let’s celebrate them in their proper place. Because Church is for Jesus. Jesus, Who gives us those festivals to celebrate with one another. Who blesses them just as we ask Him to do in our prayers. And Who has an even greater thing for us to celebrate and focus on as He comes to us in His Word and Sacraments in His Church.

Elders' Corner

(A new monthly feature from the Board of Elders)

Distractions abound in our lives today. Even to the point of causing us to miss the blessings God has lavished on us in so many aspects of our lives.

Many families have been so distracted by the business of the world that they aren't willing to say no to things that keep them from hearing the Word of God, or receiving His gifts of forgiveness and life-sustaining body and blood.

Any one of us can dwell on the injustices of the world and forget that we are only called saints because of the actions of our Savior Jesus - not because we know the law so well.

Sometimes we might even let some of the good things distract us, sometimes even in church. Noisy and unruly children, neighbors boisterously greeting one another can distract us from God calling us to pray and care for those very people that might be deeply hurting inside while dealing with challenging children, or hurting because of loneliness, isolation or poor health that others aren't aware of. Sometimes the worship service itself can be a distraction for us- a hymn that we don't particularly care for, a sermon that just doesn't click with us or maybe hits too close to the heart, or sometimes the service just goes too long for our liking and in our distracted state of mind just didn't help us much.

It is important to be respectful to others and to have reverence of the worship service, some of us need some quiet preparation before worship, or have limited hearing and miss important parts of the service because of noisy children or people talking loudly - no, God's house isn't a playground.

We should do our best to help those families with troubles, praying for them, offering help where we can, or kind advice that we hopefully have learned from our own loving families who were patient with us at some points in our lives when we were less than manageable. We should remember that God saw us as redeemable just like everyone He has called to worship Him. We are blessed to have such a church that we have. We are blessed to have a God who saw fit to take us sinners and make us His saints through His Son's atoning sacrifice.

Hopefully we will all remember that the ultimate answer to distractions in our lives is knowing that God is in control. Participating in His blessings: worship, prayer, hearing His Word, and receiving the sacraments, loving God and loving our neighbor can be our diversion from distraction!

In the love of our Savior,
Elders of St Peter

WORSHIP & BIBLE STUDY INFORMATION

Bible Studies:

- **Sundays:** We are studying the minor prophets Sunday mornings after worship. This month we will study the prophets Habakkuk and Zephaniah.
- **Wednesday Night Bible Study:** Meets at 6:30 PM each Wednesday. We are currently studying the rites of Holy Baptism and Confirmation
- **Book of Concord Study:** July 9th beginning at 5:00 PM. We will continue our study of the Formula of Concord and we will have a pitch-in dinner following the study. Everyone is welcome!

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.

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

IN OUR PRAYERS

Throughout the year, this space will be used to encourage you to keep your brothers and sisters in Christ here at St. Peter in your prayers. As you pray for them, you may even ask them how you can pray for them. Families will be listed in alphabetical order throughout the year. During this month, you are encouraged to pray for:

- Paul & Kathy Trotta
- Justin & Bradley Turner
- Eric & Brenda Turner
- Mike & Verna Vandercar
- Dennis Wessel
- Mark, Melessa, Sydney, & Trevor Wiesehan
- Mark, Yvonne, Makala, Job, & Aurora Willman
- Sonya Wilson

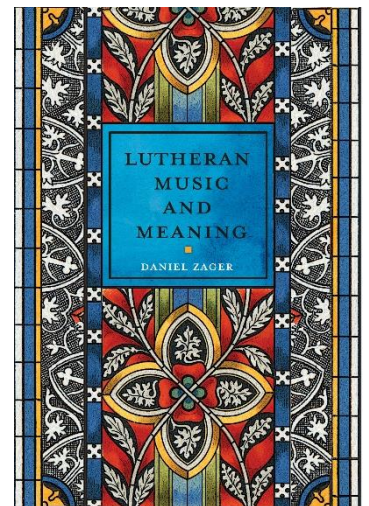
GENERAL INFORMATION

Missions: This year we will be supporting a variety of missions. The missions we will support include Clarity, Lakeview Ministries, Orphan Grain Train, Tiffany Smith (missionary for Lutheran Bible Translators serving in Tanzania), and a seminary student. If you would like to submit a name of a seminary student to receive this support, please speak to an elder or to Pastor. May God continue to bless these missions as Christ is proclaimed to the ends of the earth.

Puzzle Sharing: A puzzle share has recently started here at St. Peter. If you would like to borrow a puzzle or donate a puzzle, they can be found or placed in the cabinet in the Conference Room closest to the white board. Enjoy a variety of puzzles and some fellowship with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ!

Thrivent Action Teams: If you have any Thrivent policies or products, you are eligible for two action teams a year. An action team includes \$250 seed money and may be used for a fundraiser, an educational event, or a service activity. As a church, we have used action teams for the fish fry, the youth golf scramble, Bible studies, etc. If you are interested in using your action teams for events at church or anywhere else, you can look for more information and help signing up on the Thrivent website or by speaking to Pastor.

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 July Book of the Month is *Lutheran Music and Meaning* by Daniel Zagore. Here is an excerpt from the book: "Many Lutherans would find a spoken worship service – without any music at all – to be quite foreign to both past experience and current expectations. But the idea that music should somehow be related – perhaps even tightly related – to the spoken parts of the service, so that music contributes to an integrated whole, is not necessarily expected. I also want to explore that idea in this book. This book is *not* about how music might be *meaningful* to an individual on an emotional level, how music might relate to or affect an individual's feelings. Indeed, it would be impossible to account for the individual emotional responses of even a small group of people gathered for worship....While agreeing that meaning in Lutheran music is closely related to, even prompted by, verbal texts, I want to explore how the music itself plays a parallel role to text and can be studied objectively in terms of meaning."



Quarterly Voters' Meeting: We will have our quarterly voters' meeting on Sunday, July 23rd.

Usher & Communion Sign-Up Sheets: The 2023 sign-up sheets are up now 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.

Music Group: The music group is meeting again on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 6:00 PM. Come on out with any instrument you may have to learn, play along, and have fun! (No experience or expertise necessary.) We are also in need of singers who can sing along while we play.

Altar Flowers: If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, there is a sign-up sheet for 2023 in the hallway between Pastor's office and the church office. 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. Please contact Sue Anne Heilers at (812) 717-0167 if you have any questions.

Communion Assistance: We are looking for people who may be interested in setting up and/or cleaning up communion. No need to worry about the linens, as those will be taken care of for you. If you are interested in learning more, please speak with Lynette or Pastor. The sign-up sheet for 2023 is also on the bulletin board.

YOUTH GROUP & YOUTH CLASSES

Youth Group: The youth group will meet on Sunday, July 16th, for our youth night. We will have a meal, time to study God's Word, and a fun activity. Feel free to bring a friend! If you would like to be added to the text group to receive youth group notifications, please let Pastor know.

Sunday School: Thank you to Kevin & Michelle Schultz for a wonderful year of Sunday School!

VBS: Children ages 3+ are invited to join us for VBS July 10-13 from 5:00-8:00 PM each night. Our theme this year is God's Living Water: Covered in Jesus' grace. For more information or to register a child, please see the information in the narthex or talk to Michelle Schultz.

EVENTS

Game Night: Game Night will be on Friday, August 4th, beginning at 6:00 PM. All ages are welcome and bring a friend too! Feel free to bring a dish to share, your favorite games, or a deck of cards. Mark your calendars and invite your friends and family to come along as well!

LCMS COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

Trinity Lutheran High School SGO: Tax credit scholarships, better known as "SGO Scholarships", are awarded by Scholarship Granting Organizations to qualifying families to help them pay for the non-public school of their choice. Donations to fund SGO scholarships feature a 50% state tax credit for the donor. Trinity families benefit from donations made to the Lutheran SGO in our name. Donations can be made in the form of cash, check, credit or debit card, marketable securities (including stocks and bonds), real estate, farming commodities (gifts of livestock or grain), qualified retirement plans, or any item where value can be easily determined. If you would like to learn more about SGOs or would like to make a donation, contact Erin Brooks at 812-524-8547 or ebrooks@trinitycougars.org.

FROM THE OFFICE

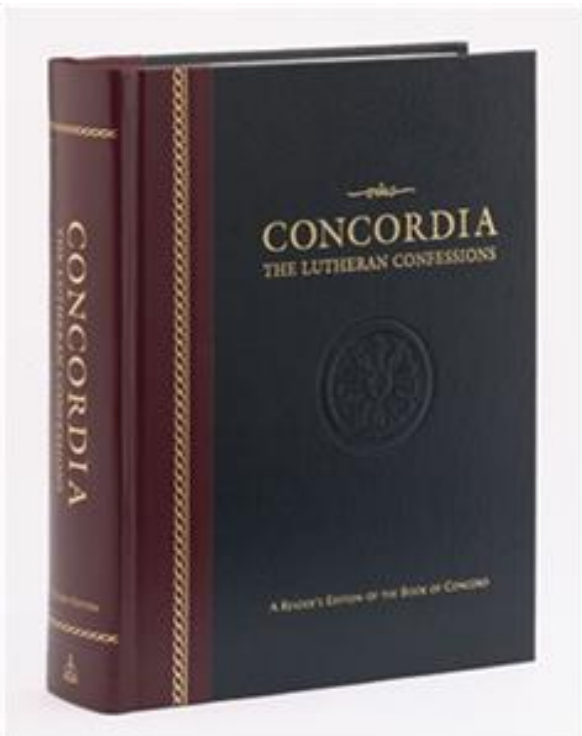
Contact Information: We would like to be able to contact everyone in a quick and timely manner. If you could please contact Camden or Pastor to update your contact information, especially phone number and email, that would help us tremendously and be greatly appreciated. Keep an eye on the church Facebook page for the most up-to-date information. Thank you!

Church Constitution: If you would like to sign the church constitution, please contact Camden.

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Book of Concord Corner

"Hallowed be Thy name....

Now, here is a great need that we ought to be most concerned about. This name should have its proper honor; it should be valued holy and grand as the greatest treasure and holy thing that we have. As godly children we should pray that God's name, which is already holy in heaven, may also be and remain holy with us upon earth and in all the world. 'But how does it become holy among us?' Answer as plainly as it can be said: 'When both our doctrine and life are godly and Christian.' Since we call God our Father in this prayer, it is our duty always to act and behave ourselves as godly children, that He may not receive shame, but honor and praise from us."

(Large Catechism, Part III, 38-39)

Join us for VBS!



July 10th-13th

5:00-8:00 PM

Children ages 3+ welcome

Sign-up sheet in narthex

St. Peter Lutheran Church Calendar

July 2023

Ushers: open

Communion Set-up & Clean-up:

All Sundays open

Acolytes:
July 2 – Rayleigh Acton
July 9 – Trevor Acree
July 16 – Abe Acton
July 23 – Rayleigh Acton
July 30 – Trevor Acree

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Upcoming Events: 8/4: Game night @ 6 PM						1
2 5 th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 AM – Divine Service 10:15 AM – Pastor’s Bible Study	3	4	5 6:30 PM – Wednesday Night Bible Study	6 10 AM – Elders meeting	7	8
9 6 th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 AM – Divine Service 10:15 AM – Pastor’s Bible Study 5:00 PM – Book of Concord study	10	11	12	13	14	15
Vacation Bible School – 5:00 – 8:00 PM each night						
16 7 th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 AM – Divine Service 10:15 AM – Pastor’s Bible Study 5:00 PM – Youth Group	17	18	19 6:30 PM – Wednesday Night Bible Study	20 7 PM – Council meeting	21	22
23 8 th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 AM – Divine Service 10:15 AM – Quarterly Voters’ Meeting (Bible study to follow as time allows)	24	25	26 6:30 PM – Wednesday Night Bible Study	27 6 PM – Music Group	28	29
30 9 th Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 AM – Divine Service 10:15 AM – Pastor’s Bible Study	31					