

Ministry Matters

LOVING PEOPLE
SERVING THE WORLD

St. Peter's
MINISTRY UPDATE NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2020

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,

Do you see the light at the end of the tunnel? Is the glass half empty or half full for you? French critic Alphonse Karr wrote, "We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorns have roses." So much of life is a matter of perspective. It would be easy to look at all of the things that we are not able to carry on at St. Peter in these times of COVID. But there have been many blessings as well. God has blessed St. Peter with amazing leaders, staff, members, and school families. While some things are postponed, much is happening to carry out our mission of *Loving People, Serving the World*. In the pages ahead you will see "the roses." Enjoy and may God bless you in this season of Advent!



Peace in Christ, Jerry Hays, Senior Pastor



Desk of Pastor Hintz

Adult Bible Study

As of this writing, Pastor Jerry and I have been recording Bible Studies to simply walk through a lesson, pause where you need to and reflect on the Scripture lesson for the day. We are continuing to analyze and determine the best steps for online study, in person study, and/or a hybrid approach as we move forward.



One class that I will offer starting in January is a class for couples called **LOVE AND RESPECT** by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs. Psychological studies affirm it, and the Bible has been saying it for ages. Cracking the communication code between husband and wife involves understanding one thing: that unconditional *respect* is as powerful for him as unconditional *love* is for her. It's the secret to marriage that every couple seeks, and yet few couples ever find. This class is for anyone happily married.... feeling lonely...engaged couples... in marital crisis... victims of affairs... basically it is for all couples! Class format will be based off of reading the selected chapters of the book and discussion. Looking at meeting in person as first option.

An additional offering also starting in January is **GIVING YOUR TESTIMONY**. Believe it or not, everyone has something to say about their faith in Christ. Often times, we don't know how to say it though. This class will help to identify what it is that you can witness about the power of Jesus in your life and how the experiences you have encountered are shaping what you have to say. Format of class is walking through a curriculum, discussion with examples, a bit of homework (to work on your own testimony), and celebration of God working through you in His Kingdom!

LERT

Volunteer members bring healing, hope and restoration to people hurting from natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornado's, floods and fires.

Please consider signing up to be involved in this uplifting experience, not only for those who receive the help, but also for those who bring it! For more information, contact Ken at: ken.kiviranta@sbcglobal.net

MEND (Mothers Enduring Neonatal Death)

Ever mindful of mothers who have lost children to miscarriage or stillbirth... MEND exists to be a support group to those (moms and dads) who have lost children in this way. The Chicagoland chapter meetings are held once a month on the first Tuesday of every month. Sara Hintz leads this group with a volunteer support staff to encourage and be "Jesus in the flesh," to those who are suffering.

At the time of this writing, all MEND meetings will be on a Zoom call. For more information please contact Sara at saraann@mend.org



Desk of Steve Zielke

Just like almost everything else in our world, in-person learning at St. Peter looks a little different this year. COVID restrictions and protocols have put a dent in opportunities for in-person parental involvement and many school social activities. Frequent hand washing, the wearing of masks, social distancing, extra cleaning and the like are now normal operations. Even with all the adaptations God's blessings are clearly



evident. He remains the same. And He continues to provide. Having two less classrooms of preschoolers this year has put a dent in our enrollment. Yet, we are blessed having twenty-four transfer-in-students since school began and our fourth grade class even has a waiting list. To this day we still are getting enrollment inquiries. Current enrollment stands at 205 students. What a blessing it has been to be able to offer in-person learning since our year began on August 17.

Academically our students continue to succeed. Our Fall MAP test scores demonstrate superior achievement. Did you know that approximately 70% of our students in grades 4th – 8th have earned recognition on our honor roll? 45% of our students in grades 2-5 qualify for our gifted program. Those students have scored at the 90th percentile or above. This isn't grade inflation. MAP scores validate our student's notable achievements. Our teachers work hard to help their students work hard to develop their God given gifts and achieve! What a blessing!

The first of the year brings us to the student recruitment season. If you know someone we should talk with about enrollment for the 2020 -2021 school year let us know. We will gladly reach out to share the benefits of Christian education at St. Peter. It's not unusual for the community at large to think that the "Red School" houses all we have in education. We are so much more. Let's get the word out!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support. We wish you unending joy as you celebrate God's blessings during the Advent and Christmas season ahead.

Sincerely, Steve Zielke, School Principal



Student Ministry Recap

Youth

Pastor Greg is currently leading the Jr. and High School youth areas of our church. Kids are faithfully meeting to grow in mental, physical and especially spiritual ways. As of this writing, Covid makes things a challenge as we try and plan events, but hopefully as the winter rolls on, we plan on skiing and tubing as one of our big events. We are also looking at a mission trip in July as we pray things have settled down more by then. All of this, of course, is in God's hands, but we look forward to continuing to meet, play and learn about God's love in Jesus. Until then, continue to pray for the search committee as we seek to find the next person to lead our young people in their growth in Christ.



Traditional Worship

Since the September Ministry Matters Newsletter, not much has changed. We are getting more comfortable with our live streaming, but as always with something new, there have been a few “hiccups” here and there. We are consistently getting better and our goal is to make the broadcast as smooth as possible.

One bright note: We have started having the school children sing in church! Although they are not in person, it’s a joy to see them praise God in all our services. What a blessing!

On another bright note: We will have handbells for Christmas Eve! Six ringers have been practicing (and getting rid of the “rust”) to help beautify our services on the 24th. They will be recorded so they can be shared in all the traditional services.

On a not so bright note: We’re not quite ready for choir yet. Hopefully, as the vaccines are approved and we start to open up, we will be able to start again. Keeping my fingers crossed for a choir by Easter!

May you and your family enjoy a Blessed Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Julie Sawusch, Traditional Music Director



The Older Adult Ministry

Our Senior group (those over 65 and Young at Heart) usually meets the 4th Thursday of each month.

Our 2021 dates have been reserved for us in the Fellowship Room. These dates may need to be canceled as required due to Covid. We will notify our members as each date approaches.

We are all anxious to get together but must “hold off” until it is safe to do so. Hopefully, soon we will be singing the three traditional verses of Happy Birthday lead by Pastor Bergmann.

In the meantime, we continue to support our seminarians Chad Bolosan and Ted Fisher with funds from our treasury.

Remember to Pray more – worry less – stay safe!!!!

Submitted by Marlene Jones and Gerie Kay



Telugu Lutheran Fellowship:

The Telugu Lutheran Fellowship under Rev. John Bushi, is not meeting in person at this time but they will be hosting a Christmas Eve "Eve" service at 5pm.



If you go to our website at stpeterlcms.org/india you can view a few recent images from the outreach to pastors in India. The Nittala family supports a few pastors, and these pastors distribute money, groceries & clothes to people in need. In this COVID pandemic, the pastors are struggling to show God's love.