

# THE INFORMER



## St. Peter Lutheran Church

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## January 2019

Alleluia! Let praises ring! / To God the Father let us bring  
Our songs of adoration.

To Him through everlasting days / Be worship, honor, power, and praise,  
Whose hand sustains creation.

Singing, ringing: Holy, holy, God is holy: / Spread the story  
Of our God, the Lord of glory.

As we begin another calendar year, and as winter settles in for a couple more dreary months, it's a blessing for us to remember our gracious God's acts of kindness and mercy toward us in the past year. As we consider the works of our God in our lives, it's very easy to allow praise for our God to fill our hearts and minds. We rejoice in the salvation we have been given and, as we rejoice, we begin to recognize our heavenly Father's hand in the flow of each and every one of our days. This recognition again ignites our hearts and minds and we find ourselves engrossed in thanksgiving as we allow our minds to rest in our God.

Alleluia! Let praises ring! / Unto the Lamb of God we sing,  
In whom we are elected.

He bought His church with His own blood, / He cleansed her in that blessed flood,  
And as His bride selected.

Holy, holy, is our union and communion. / His befriending  
Gives us joy and peace unending.

As this new year begins, we dedicate ourselves to our Savior, Jesus. We recognize that our lives are always in His hands as He is the One who rescues us from the damnation and futility of our sinfulness. We also recognize Jesus as the only source of true peace and comfort as we experience the ups and downs and the highs and lows of this life lived in a fallen, sin-saddened world.

Alleluia! Let praises ring! / Unto the Holy Ghost we sing  
For our regeneration.

The saving faith in us He wrought / and us unto the Bridegroom brought,  
Made us His chosen nation.

Glory! Glory! Joy eternal, bliss supernal / There is manna  
And an endless glad hosanna.

And, as we welcome this new year, we remember that our Counselor and Advocate is our daily Companion. The Holy Spirit keeps our hearts at peace and our minds focused on Jesus as we live this life. We live in the intimate company of our God as the Holy Spirit continues His work of calling, gathering, enlightening, and establishing us in His Church. We are truly blessed as our loving God leads us into this new year!

Alleluia! Let praises ring! / Unto our Triune God we sing;  
Blest be His name forever!

With angel hosts let us adore / And sing His praises evermore  
For all His grace and favor.

Singing, ringing: Holy, holy, God is holy: / Spread the story  
Of our God, the Lord of glory.



# The Elders' Corner



As the children of God, our faith is strengthened as we receive our Savior's gifts. We're brought into the faith through the waters of Baptism and we live our lives in the Baptismal grace our loving heavenly Father pours out upon us. We're strengthened for eternity as we receive the Lord's Supper. Jesus' body and blood sustains us in the faith as we await our Lord's return. We're established in this faith as we hear the Word of God proclaimed and as we "read mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the Word of God in personal study. Our faith is informed and enlivened as the Holy Spirit works in our hearts and minds through God's powerful Word.

Our Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 8:30 each Sunday morning. We meet for a half hour before the service and we use this time to delve into God's Word, to understand it more fully, and to encourage each other in our Christian walk as we share the Bible's impact in our lives.

Our Thursday Morning Bible Study meets at 10:45 Thursday mornings. The topics for this time of Bible Study seek to better equip us to carry the Word with us as we live our Christian lives.

Everyone is welcome to join either or both of these classes as we study the Bible, share our Christian experiences, and grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!



## Choir News

As we enter the month of January, your St. Peter Choir will be preparing their musical offerings for the seasons of Lent and Easter. This is a terrific time to join in on the musical merriment and add your voice to the melodic maelstrom of singing and harmony and fellowship!

The Psalmist reminds us to make a joyful noise to the Lord and praise Him with songs and hymns and spiritual songs. Your St. Peter Choir is just the place to let those happy harmonies soar!

Your choir meets on Thursday evenings at 6:30 pm. If you enjoy singing and like the company of friendly and supportive people, this is the group for you!





## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

I had a hard time thinking of what to write for January. As I was going thru boxes of "stuff" I came across a sermon of Pastor Moehring's dated January 13, 1963. Some of you might have a copy of it, if you do please don't circular file it. This sermon is one of a kind and has been presented in a lot of churches in the area. Pastor Moehring passed away on December 17, 1975 of a brain aneurism at the parsonage in Algonac and has surely been missed by a lot of people of both congregations and the community. We all called it the:

### **"Christmas Tree Sermon"**

This past week I did something that was a shame to do. Oh, it wasn't sinful it or evil. In fact, it was something that had to be done. But I didn't enjoy doing it, and I felt a bit ashamed while I was doing it. I took down the Christmas Tree and said "Goodbye to Christmas" at our home.

I took down the Christmas Tree and lost a fine friend. Three weeks ago on a bitter cold night I welcomed her with open arms. Like a bride I carried her over the threshold to the place of honor in our living room and did everything I could to make her comfortable among us. I gave her a good large stand, I helped her to turn this way and that so she could always put her best foot forward. I gave her a drink of water and helped her to stand straight so her graceful height gave her a drink of water and helped her to stand straight so her graceful height of shining green could truly appreciated. Then because she was our welcome guest, I showered her with lights and colored balls of different shapes with delicate angels and icicles, snowflakes and topped it off with a silver star shaped chapeau. Because she was from the hills and used to it, we warmed her feet with a blanket of snow. And to make her really feel at home, in those snowy hills we set a forest of deer and bunnies; a village with a church, houses and people, just outside the village a farm with cows and horses, sheep and goats, chickens, pigs and even a turkey. When I had done all this, then we visited. I had my coffee and some Christmas cookies; and she between sips of water told me why she had come to our house. How her lights did shine how her silver hat glistened; how her ornaments twinkled and twirled and how her delicate branches swayed as she spoke about Christmas - the real Christmas - of an angel and a heavenly choir and of shepherds; of a shining star and Wise Men; of the Bay Savior laid on the hay. She filled the room and she thrilled my heart with that story. I looked and I listened and the Cuckoo was striking three when she finally asked me to turn off her lights. So I did; and as I went up the stairs I turned to look back and there she was - my beautiful vivacious Christmas Tree - waving her delicate branches and whispering to the empty room "This is Christmas"! Jesus, the Savior is born! Jesus, the Savior is born!

The next morning younger feet than mine ran downstairs to greet our Visitor; younger eyes beamed at her beauty; younger hands shyly touched her branches and younger hearts sat down to thrill at her story. Even the cat lay down on the rug to gaze at and study this wonderful important Stranger.

But I had other things to do. I couldn't ignore her but I did neglect her. Oh I turned her lights on for her a few times, a couple of times I straightened some of her tinsel and once I did sit down for a visit. She pointed to her unchanging basic green dress and reminded me that God is like that - unchanged and unchanging. She said she really didn't mind having her trunk chopped off as long as it reminded me of the Sacrifice God made of His Son. She called attention to her pyramid symmetry and said, "Look to God as the Director and Goal of your Life," - and then - the telephone rang and - well, there was a lot to do - and last week I took down my Christmas Tree.

And it hurts! That was no way to treat a friend, such a fine friend. But isn't that how we all treat our friends? We never ignore them, but we do neglect them. How often do we write, or call or go to visit our friends? Friends are the beautiful Christmas Tree God has placed in the living rooms of our lives and when God takes down this tree or that one - we go to a funeral. And we are so ashamed.

And our dearest Friend? Jesus? He's more than a friend, He's a Brother! He's more than a Brother, He's Lord! And not

Just Lord, but our Savior who gave His life to save us! We don't ignore Him, but we do neglect Him. Like my Christmas Tree, Jesus is always there, ready to cheer and brighten our lives. But how often do we earnestly visit with Him? I took down my Christmas Tree; God takes down the trees of our friends; when we neglect Jesus, the devil can sneak in and take down our Jesus! Then we have lost! A Friend, our Brother, our Lord, Our Salvation!

I took down my Christmas Tree, but as I did I whispered in her ear that I would more appreciate my friends and that I would never forget my greatest Friend, Jesus.

I took down my Christmas Tree and got some reminders. Everything I saw and touched reminded me of Jesus. Her silvery hat told of the star that led Wise Men to Him who rose as the Star of Judah. Her hanging angel band and choir recalled to mind the Christmas Messengers - angels who still serve me! Her icicles and snowflakes told how in the cold winter of sin the Sun of Righteousness began to shine to warm my soul. Her ornaments of many colors and shapes said, "Jesus is a Beautiful Savior." Her lights reminded me that he lights and is the Light of the world. The village nestled beneath her branches said that He came to

men and for men; and the tiny carved animals remind me that all creatures are loved by Him and are to be loved by me.

Taking back all the finery I had given her, I saw again my blessings. On my Christmas Tree each year are two special ornaments - one green, one red; each with a name. Each year under the Christmas Tree there is a village - the special project of my spouse. These are my great blessings! I do not have fame, but I do have a son! I don't have a high position - but I have a daughter! I haven't a million, but I have a loving, lovely wife! Do I need; could I want greater blessings?

Each year on my Christmas Tree there is a special ornament, a tiny winged cherub. It's not an expensive ornament, but it is pretty. I first saw and admired these ornaments at the home of a friend. She had only a few but after Christmas she brought me one! Now each year that tiny, white, plastic cherub has the place of honor on my Christmas Tree - the place of a friend!

While I was taking down my Christmas Tree she gave me a warning. I like pretty ornaments and this year I bought an unusual one. It is black - solid black with just a little gold trimming. It is different and quite attractive. As I took down this ornament my Tree said quietly, "That's the way sin is - attractive, alluring, promising. But not matter how nice it looks; no matter how it is accepted by people, sin is still black and it makes you black".

Right after this warning my Christmas Tree gave me a word of hope and courage. I was taking down her white, plastic snowflakes - there were quite a few of them! Since we have had a good bit of snow, I couldn't help but think! As I reached for a snowflake over here and a snowflake over there, my Christmas Tree spoke ever so gently, "Oh, ye of little faith. If God will go to all the trouble to make each of His snowflakes different, can't you realize that He can keep track of you - all five feet seven of you?"

I took down my Christmas Tree. Bit by bit I removed her finery until she stood before me in her simple, green, peasant dress. And what a reminder that was! She looked so good in all her finery! Stripped, she really showed her age! Her needles were dry; her limbs were drooping and stiff. She was dead! So I wrapped her gently in my arm and took her out the front door.

What happened to her happens to us all! We all look so good but underneath we are aging. The skin is drying, the wrinkles are coming; the eyes are dimming, the hair is falling, the limbs are losing their spring; and someday someone will wrap us up and carry us out the front door dead!

This past week I took down my Christmas Tree. God willing, I'll have another Christmas Tree next year, and the next, and the next. I love Christmas Trees! To me the tree is the symbol of Christmas! If I have to make a choice, I'll go without something else to have a Christmas Tree, and, if I'm ever sick at Christmastide, bring at least a little tree into my room, I'll have another Christmas Tree. And, after they have taken me out the front door, I'll have another body! When Jesus comes again - not in the anniversary of Christmas, but in glory - this body shall be changed to stand new and clean and beautiful before Christ and with Christ! My Christmas Tree told me that.

I took down my Christmas Tree - my beautiful, faithful, friendly Christmas Tree. She told me of Jesus and to be faithful to my friends and to Jesus, my greatest friend. She showed me the blessing of family and friend, the dangers of sin, the guidance and protection of God. Seeing her sagging and stiff and dead, I saw myself fading and dying. But because she was a Christmas Tree, I now there will be for me the new and glorious Resurrection Life.

I took down my Christmas Tree. I carried her stiff body out the door and laid it gently on the ground. I put a match to her, but she was a friend to the end. As she blazed away in her last eerie glory, I heard her say, "Goody, my friend. I told you about Jesus. Now you must tell them about Jesus." With her last words ringing in my ears, I looked sadly at the charred remnants of her glory - "Goodbye my dear beautiful Christmas Tree. I will tell them of Jesus!"

## Scrapbook Club

**In January we will be meeting on Saturday, January 12th from 12 noon to 8 pm. Bring a dish to pass and come and work on your craft, scrapbook or whatever you want. For those who are going to the crop weekend come and sort thru and figure out what you want to work on. We hope to see you there!**



### Flowers on the Altar for January

**January 6 Gary & Sandy Carr**

**January 13 Pastor & Debi Hoerr**

**January 20 Al & Colleen Seitz**

**January 27 Carol Wolf**



### **Coffee & Doughnut Crew for January**

<b>January 6</b>	<b>Linda LeLacheur</b>
<b>January 13</b>	<b>Jim &amp; Renee` Jones</b>
<b>January 20</b>	<b>Jean Kettel</b>
<b>January 27</b>	<b>Jim &amp; Laura Neumann</b>

Thank you to everyone that helped with the LCFS Christmas!



**Altar Guild**



The St. Peter Altar Guild continues their faithful service to our congregation week after week, month after month, and year after year. We have been blessed with a wonderful group of volunteers who help keep our services running smoothly and pleasantly.

Our St. Peter Altar Guild volunteers are as follows:

January ~ Doug Fergusson	February ~ Marie Brockmiller
March ~ Jessica Hoerr	April ~ Claudis Methner
May ~ Karen Williams	June ~ Sandy Carr
July ~ Debbie Beres & Carrie Cain	August ~ Lorrie Schwark
September ~ Chris Turpen	October ~ Laura Neumann
November ~ Debbie Labuhn	December ~ Debi Hoerr
Substitute ~ Margaret Nizza	

Thank you very much to all our Altar Guild volunteers. Your work is a great blessing to all of us!

## **A Bible Reading Program for the New Year!**

**The Psalmist proclaimed, “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path!” St. Paul urges us, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” The writer to the Hebrews reminds us that “the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”**

**God’s Word is a glorious gift our heavenly Father has given to us. By it He leads and guides us, He keeps us safe from false teaching and equips us with His Word as we live in this fallen world, and He gives us His salvation through His Word as He cuts away the deceit of sin from our hearts and minds. The same powerful Word that spoke this world into existence and which continues to keep and sustain it has been given to us for our benefit. The Holy Spirit Himself is our teacher as He opens our hearts and minds to our God’s revelation of Himself through His Word. Through His glorious Word we meet with Jesus and are strengthened and established in the true faith which gives us life everlasting.**

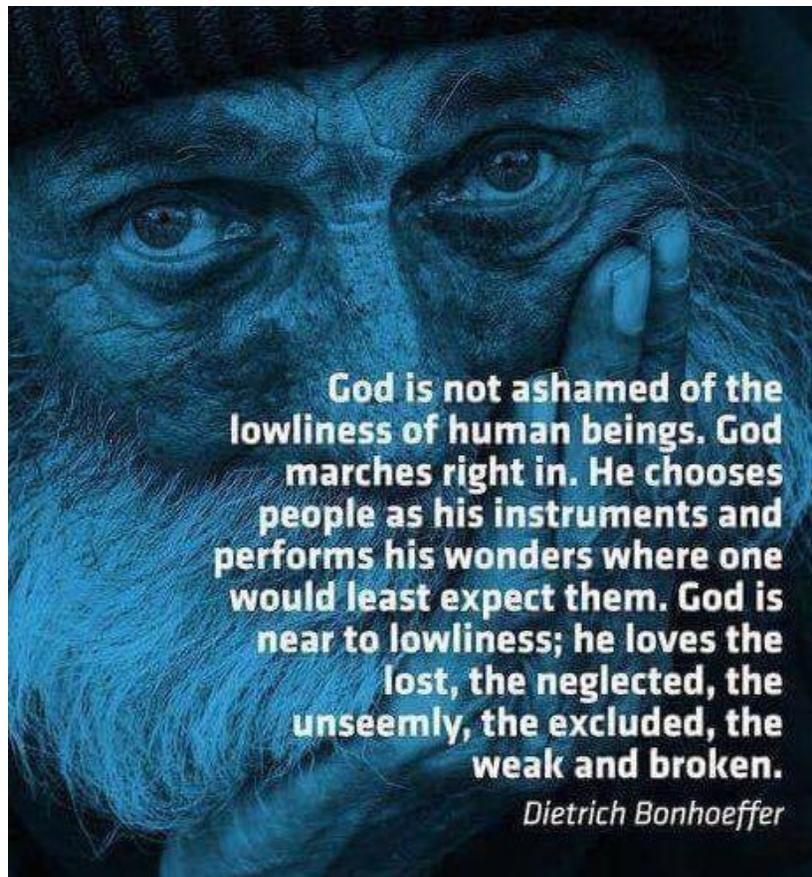
**The following is the Bible reading schedule for the month of January. Each month’s schedule will continue to be included in the Newsletter for that month. By following this reading schedule, the entire Bible can be read in a one year period. Take this opportunity to join in the pleasure of reading God’s Word and benefiting from the Holy Spirit’s leading through that Word!**

### **A Schedule for Reading the Bible in 12 Months ~ January**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Old Testament</b>	<b>New Testament</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	Genesis 1, 2, & 3	Matthew 1
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Gen 4, 5, & 6	Matt 2
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Gen 7, 8, & 9	Matt 3
4 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 10, 11, & 12	Matt 4
5 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 13, 14, & 15	Matt 5:1-26
6 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 16 & 17	Matt 5:27-48
7 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 18 & 19	Matt 6:1-18
8 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 20, 21, & 22	Matt 6:19-34
9 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 23 & 24	Matt 7
10 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 25 & 26	Matt 8:1-17
11 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 27 & 28	Matt: 8:18-34
12 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 29 & 30	Matt 9:1-17
13 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 31 & 32	Matt 9:18-38
14 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 33, 34, & 35	Matt 10:1-20
15 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 36, 37, & 38	Matt 10:21-42
16 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 39 & 40	Matt 11
17 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 41 & 42	Matt 12: 1-23
18 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 43, 44, & 45	Matt 12:24-50
19 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 46, 47, & 48	Matt 13:1-30
20 <sup>th</sup>	Gen 49 & 50	Matt 13: 31-58
21 <sup>st</sup>	Exodus 1, 2, & 3	Matt 14:1-21
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Ex 4, 5, & 6	Matt 14:22-36
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Ex 7 & 8	Matt 15:1-20
24 <sup>th</sup>	Ex 9, 10, & 11	Matt 15:21-39
25 <sup>th</sup>	Ex 12 & 13	Matt 16
26 <sup>th</sup>	Ex 14 & 15	Matt 17
27 <sup>th</sup>	Ex 16, 17, & 18	Matt 18:1-20
28 <sup>th</sup>	Ex 19 & 20	Matt 18:21-35
29 <sup>th</sup>	Ex 21 & 22	Matt 19
30 <sup>th</sup>	Ex 23 & 24	Matt 20:1-16
31 <sup>st</sup>	Ex 25 & 26	Matt 20:17-34



# LOOKING AHEAD



But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

~ **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:7-10**