

The Voice



From the Desk of Pastor Mark:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul ... Love one another ... Love your neighbor as yourself. For God so loved the world.” Christianity is all about love. There is no doubt, as Christians, we are called to love the people and world that God so loves. There are many and various ways that we go about fulfilling this call to love. My focus for “loving” in this particular article is going to focus on the Earth Day 2024 theme “Planet vs. Plastics.” I know ... I talked about this back in January during our Season of Creation. I preached on this on April 21st, the day before Earth Day, as well. Why do I keep talking about it? Well, because I’ve come to believe it’s *that* important of a topic.

Earthday.org has this to say about the topic. “Plastics extend beyond an imminent environmental issue; they

present a grave threat to human health as alarming as climate change. As plastics break down into microplastics, they release toxic chemicals into our food and water sources and circulate through the air we breathe. Plastic production now has grown to more than 380 million tons per year. More plastic has been produced in the last ten years than in the entire 20th century, and the industry plans to grow explosively for the indefinite future.” One report I saw said that the plastic industry plans to build 170 *more* factories across the United States alone. Kathleen Rogers, President of Earthday.org, had this to say, “The word environment means what surrounds you. In the case of plastics we have become the product itself – it flows through our blood stream, adheres to our internal organs, and carries with it heavy metals known to cause cancer and disease. Now this once-thought amazing and useful product has become

IN THIS ISSUE:

- ◇ *Sunday School Carnival*
- ◇ *Spaghetti Dinner*
- ◇ *Small Groups*
- ◇ *Affirmation of Baptism*
- ◇ *Senior Recognition*
- ◇ *Confirmation Orientation*
- ◇ *Craft & Vendor Show*
- ◇ *WELCA Publications*
- ◇ *Myamba Emissary Trip*

IN EVERY ISSUE:

- ◇ *Grimes Storehouse*
- ◇ *Donation Ideas*
- ◇ *Volunteer Sign-Up Info*
- ◇ *Stewardship Update*
- ◇ *Church Council & WELCA Minutes*
- ◇ *Monthly Birthdays & Anniversaries*
- ◇ *Monthly Calendar*

Worship Schedule

Thank you for joining us for worship!

Sunday worship is at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. through May 19. Our summer worship schedule will begin on May 28, when Sunday worship will occur at 9:00 a.m. followed by fellowship time.

Our last day of Sunday school is at 9:15 a.m. on May 5, which is the Sunday School carnival. Regular Sunday school will resume in the fall.

Wednesday worship will resume in the fall.

St. Peter Lutheran Church Office Hours

The Church Office is open
Mon.-Fri. 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Jill Capps – Director of
Faith Formation
Jill's day off is Friday.

Pastor Mark Schlenker
Pastor's day off is Friday.

something else, and our health and that of all living creatures hangs in the balance.”

Plastic is not biodegradable. It stays around for hundreds of years. When it does begin to break down, degrade, it becomes microplastics that are harmful to the environment and human health. If we know that plastics are *that* bad for the environment and human health, why are plastics still allowed to be produced? Wouldn't the “loving” thing be to stop polluting our environment with this harmful product? These are my questions, and maybe yours as well. The answer is complicated, as plastics have become such a huge part of our societies. The answer may be complicated, but *not* impossible to fix. One of the major hurdles to stopping plastic production though, I've learned, is the petrochemical industry. Did you know plastics were made from fossil fuels? As the world has begun to reduce the use of fossil fuels for the sake of the environment, oil companies have turned toward increasing the production of plastics as a way to continue profiting off of their product. I don't fault them for trying to innovate in new ways. After all, the industry provides thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of jobs for people to make a living. I do fault them though, for continuing to produce, and even increasing production, when they know how dangerous their product is for the environment and human health.

So ... these are some of the facts and challenges of plastics. As I said previously though, the topic is complicated and challenging, but not impossible to fix. We Christians are not only loving, but we are hopeful. We are not a people of despair, we are a people of hope. With this hope we can work toward doing what we can to love the people and world that God so loves. Here are some things that provide me with hope on this topic of “Planet vs. Plastic”:

1. Earth Day 2024 getting the word out about the dangers of plastic and what can be done. Go to Earthday.org for more information.
2. United Nations Environmental Committee working on a treaty among nations to reduce the production of plastics.
3. Stories of people working to bring about change. Scientists, environmentalists, artists, activists, politicians, and more are using their gifts to make a “loving” difference.
4. Witnessing my own ability to change. I didn't know how pervasive plastics were in our society. Plastic is everywhere. As I've become more aware of the dangers of plastic, I've also started to notice it more. I now do my best to reduce my use/dependence on the material. It's a slow process, but I've made progress. If I can do it, I believe you and others can too.

Easter is the season of resurrection and new life. I'm praying earnestly, as well as doing my part in other areas, that the world may come together in efforts to reduce and one day eliminate the production of plastics. I encourage you to join me in prayer and practice in this endeavor. This is one among many ways that we can fulfill Christ's call to love God and love neighbor.

Gathered to Grow. Sent to Serve.

Pastor Mark



Gathered
to
Grow

Sent
to
Serve



1001 S James Street
Grimes, Iowa 50111
Pastor Mark Schlenker
515-986-3077

stpeter@stpeterofgrimes.org
www.stpeterofgrimes.org
www.facebook.com/
StPeterGrimes

Coming Up at St. Peter

Sunday School Carnival & Children Sing May 5

The Sunday School carnival will be May 5th! The carnival will take place during the Sunday School hour of 9:15 a.m.-10:15 a.m. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to attend, and we will be serving a light breakfast for all during this time. **Kids will also practice their music and then sing during the 10:30 service on that day.** We look forward to a lot of fun on the last day of Sunday School!

Spaghetti Dinner—Sunday May 5, 5-8 PM

The Youth of St. Peter will be preparing and serving their annual Spaghetti Dinner the evening of Sunday, May 5th. This is an event that everyone looks forward to. The food is fabulous, as well as the service. Come and enjoy an evening away from your kitchen! A free-will donation will be taken for the meal. Help support the youth as they raise funds for the summer ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans and a mission trip to serve in the LaCenter, KY community.

Reservation sign-ups will be posted at the church. Sign-up for the time slot that works best for you. You may also call the church office at 986-3077 or email us at stpeter@stpeterofgrimes.org and we will be happy to help make your reservation.

If you would like to help contribute a food item, please follow this link: <https://signup.com/go/XvJrugR>

Sign up for Small Groups

Are you interested in building connections with other St. Peter members? We invite you to sign up to be part of a small group. Small groups will consist of a group of 4 households (consisting of individuals and/or couples) who will meet to share fellowship, life stories, and faith journeys. Are you currently participating in a small group from last year? Sign up to join a new group and get to know another great group of St. Peter friends!

- **Who?** Small groups are open to all adult members (couples and/or individuals).
- **When?** Each group will schedule meeting times that work for the members of its group.
- **Time Commitment?** It is hoped that each group will meet at least 4 times over the next several months.

Sign up at: <https://signup.com/go/rWbhkQq> or on the sign-up sheet on the service board in fellowship hall. If you have any questions or need assistance signing up, contact Jill at faithformation@stpeterofgrimes.org.

Men's Group

Join us for our monthly Men's Group Gathering this month! Men's Group usually meets the first Sunday of the month. Contact Bradley Fasse with any questions, and join the Men's Group Facebook page for the latest updates and news. @Facebook: St. Peter Lutheran Men's Group @bradleyfasse@gmail.com @515-971-2397



Thursday Bible Study

Looking for a way to grow in your faith? Join us for a Bible Study on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 1:00 p.m.

In April, we will begin a study on the book of Jonah, reading chapter 1 for April 11 and chapter 2 for April 25. Readings can also be found on the St. Peter Website.

Questions? Contact Jill at faithformation@stpeterofgrimes.org

Affirmation of Baptism – Sunday, May 19

On Sunday, May 19, thirteen 8th grade students will affirm the promises of their baptism at the worship service of their choice. They will publicly profess their intention to:

- Live among God's faithful people.
- Hear the word of God and share in this Lord's Supper.
- Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed.
- Serve all people, following in the example of Jesus.
- Strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

These youth are not called to do these things alone but in community. During the Affirmation of Baptism Service, the congregation will "promise to support these sisters and brothers and pray for them in their life in Christ." As you consider the ways you will rest and renew this summer, remember that your unique presence, voice and gifts enrich and enhance our community as we seek to live out our call to be in community with God and God's people.

Congratulations to the following who will affirm the promises of their Baptism:

Lilian Biegger	Cash Cassens	Cameron Franzeen
Liam Fredericks	Jackson Hummel	Kennedy Johnson
Tyler Newman	Rocco Reitano	Milo Rouse
Samantha Shepherd	Jacob Short	Evelyn Soult
Grady Springer		

At this time, we would like to thank the Adult Guides who have faithfully journeyed alongside the youth during this time of faith formation:

Mindy Franzeen	Nate Fredericks	Rita Fredericks
Jenny Jones	Allison Newman	Andrew Newman
Adam Springer		



Online Giving Opportunities

St. Peter has online giving options through Thrivent's Simply Giving Program to include one-time giving and to enable members to set up their own recurring donations through the following secure methods:

1. *Phone App*: Find and download the Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app in the App Store or on Google Play for Android smartphones by searching "Vanco mobile". Type in "St. Peter Lutheran" and choose our address in Grimes, and follow the steps.
2. *Website*: Go to St. Peter's website www.stpeterofgrimes.org and click on the yellow Online Giving link or scan the QR code printed here.



Did You Know...

WELCA purchases several publications for our congregation. *Christ in Our Home* is a quarterly devotional containing daily devotions, and it comes in as a pocket sized or large print magazine. These are available by the front entrance.

Spark Family is a quarterly magazine for children and their families. These are great for use during worship or to take home. The newest issues can be found by the front entrance, with older issues on the children's activity cart in Fellowship Hall.

Gather magazine is a bimonthly publication of the Women of the ELCA and features devotions, articles, and stories aiming to help women reflect and grow in their faith. These are available on the service counter in Fellowship Hall.

WELCA Yearbook

You may have noticed that the annual St. Peter WELCA yearbook has not been sent with the monthly Voice this year. Due to member feedback, WELCA has decided to make these available at the service counter for those members who would like to have one. Contact a WELCA board member or the church office with any questions!

Senior Recognition May 12

On May 12th, we will recognize our graduating seniors at worship. Seniors will come forward at worship to share their future plans, and we will celebrate their achievements with a cake reception between worship services.



Confirmation Orientation for 6th Graders

There will be a Confirmation Orientation meeting for 6th graders and their parent(s) on Sunday, April 28, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will last about 45 minutes to 1 hour. The orientation meeting will give an overview of the confirmation program and answer any questions that you might have. Please feel free to share this opportunity with anyone you think may be interested in attending confirmation at St. Peter. We frequently have students who either attend church elsewhere or have had limited exposure to church attend confirmation at St. Peter. It is a great way to learn more about our Lutheran faith. Contact Jill Capps, Director of Faith Formation, with any questions.

HOSTED BY THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA

St. Peter Spring Craft Show

**May 4th
9-1pm**

**Come see a variety of vendors
sharing their homemade crafts,
artwork, baked goods, and more!**

St. Peter Lutheran Church in Grimes

Pastoral Acts

John Waldo Sullivan, son of Beth Hancock and Brian Sullivan, was born on January 23, 2024, in West Des Moines, IA. John was baptized at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Grimes on April 14, 2024, by Rev. Mark Schlenker. Bonnie and Cody Gengler are John's baptism sponsors.

The 15th of each month is the deadline for newsletter items to be submitted to the church office. Thanks!

January, 2025 Myamba Emissary Trip

The St. Peter Lutheran Myamba Ministry Team is planning an emissary trip in January, 2025 to visit our Tanzanian friends at Myamba, Mwanga School for the Deaf, Gonja Hospital, and the Pare Diocese office.

As emissaries, we communicate and act for St Peter. We will bring greetings and encouragement to our brothers and sisters in Christ, evaluate the effectiveness of our scholarship programs and our other gifts to Myamba, and see first-hand how we can help in other ways. This is not a traditional "church mission trip" where we are traveling to fix or build structures. Our purpose is to strengthen our relationships, communication, and support of Myamba, Mwanga, Gonja Hospital, and the Pare Diocese.

For years, our direct communication with our Tanzanian partners has been in the capable hands of a few people in our church. We would like to expand that circle of contacts and are looking for one or two volunteers to go on this emissary trip with us and join the Myamba ministry team, going forward.

Perhaps you have thought of being involved with missions or going on such a trip. If so, please prayerfully consider being a part of our team. Again, the purpose of this trip is to strengthen the long-term relationships with our friends in Myamba, relationships that have been built over 15 years and have included 7 mission trips already. We would hope that this trip would be the start of your involvement on the Myamba Ministry Team. You will gain from having new relationships and experiencing the hospitality of our Tanzanian friends. We hope you will benefit from those relationships and the ministry of support and encouragement for years to come. As a consideration, you will be gone for about two weeks in January, and will be responsible to pay for most your trip expenses.

A good source of information about this ministry is the Myamba Ministry Team report in the 2023 St. Peter annual report distributed in February. If you are interested and want to know if this would be a good fit for you and your gifts, let us know and you are welcome to join us at our next meeting.

You can contact Reg or Roberta Yoder, Dave or Carol Eilers, Pastor Mark or Bambi, Mary Stocks, or Larry Gulleen.

Thank you for your consideration of this important work.

The St. Peter Myamba Ministry Team.



Volunteers Needed – Can You Help?

If you can help as a communion preparer and/or communion assistant, please contact Kaarin Fasse or Summer Heeren.

If you would like to help as **Assisting Minister**, please contact Emily Wells.

If you would like to be a **reader**, please contact Sue Dooley.

If you can help **host** by greeting worshippers and helping them find their worship materials, contact Meghan Reingardt.

If you can learn our **livestream audio/visual production**, contact Jill. You would be trained in the production process for our live-stream service.

If you can help with **Creation Station** during worship, contact Jill or go to this link: <https://signup.com/go/CwrXJph>.

The church office can put you in contact with these volunteer coordinators. Thanks for sharing your time and talents with St. Peter!



We support the Grimes Storehouse Food Pantry!

Our May focus will be:

Baby Supplies



Bring in donations of diapers (all sizes), baby wipes, boxed baby cereal, and jarred baby food.

Donations can be dropped off in the basket next to the Service Counter.

VBS Save the Date!

Vacation Bible School will be

June 23-27, 2024

from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Join us for a week of fun and learning!



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 11, 2024

Pastor's Report:

- Wednesdays in Lent went really well. The soup suppers and worship all went well, and were well attended. Appreciate all the time and energy everyone put into it all.
- Holy Week went well also. Palm Sunday was good to have the adult choir and the Sunday school kids sing for worship. Good to keep up the tradition with a donkey again as well.
- Maundy Thursday and Good Friday were both well attended as well.
- Easter egg hunt had a big turnout. It's a fun kid/family event to be held on the grass.

From the Stewardship Committee—Andrew Newman & Blake Franzeen

March 2024

Income: \$27,462.03

Expense: \$25,182.29

Net Gain: \$2,279.74.

YtD 2024

Income: \$93,830.17

Expense: \$89,488.01

Net Gain: \$4,342.16

- General Fund—March 2024, expenses were less than monthly income, thus it finished with a gain of \$2,279.74.
- General Fund YTD—March 2024, expenses were less than income, thus it finished with a gain of \$4,342.16 .

- Easter is always a joyous festival worship. We enjoyed a true sunrise worship at the 6:30 worship. It was pretty dark when we started, but the sun rose at the end with perfect timing.
- Thankful for the adult choir and the brass quartet to lead us in music at the 9 and 10:30 worship. Made for a wonderful worship.
- Easter breakfast was delicious as usual as well. Thanks to Matt and the youth for organizing and serving that meal to be enjoyed by all.
- Baptism of John Sullivan coming up this Sunday, April 14th.
- April 21 and 28th will be the new member class from 9:15-10:15. We will welcome the new members on the 28th during the 10:30 worship.

Faith Formation Report—Jill Capps

- **Faith Formation:** Faith Formation, Education, & Evangelism hosted our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30th at 10:00a.m. We had over 80 children participate in the Egg hunt including both members and non-members. We once again heard great feedback from the families in attendance, who appreciate the time & effort put into the Egg Hunt, along with the breakfast and “Golden Egg” prizes that the kids receive.
- **Confirmation:** The youth wrote the prayers of intercession that were shared during the March 20th worship service, they did a great job. We will continue with our study on the Apostles Creed and Lutheran Life in April. I will meet with the youth who will be confirmed in May, along with their parents for a Faith Statement preparation meeting on April 10th following confirmation. I will meet with 6th graders and their parents for confirmation orientation on April 28th at 6:00pm. Families will learn about confirmation curriculum & expectations and will register their youth for confirmation that will begin in September.
- **Thursday Afternoon Bible Study:** We will begin our study on Jonah that will run through April & May. We will take the month of June off from the study and start back up in July
- **Misc.:** Senior Sunday—On May 12th we will recognize our 2024 graduating seniors at the beginning of the 8:00am and 10:30am worship service. Evangelism will provide a cake reception that will be held between the worship services. Graduating seniors have also been invited to provide a picture and details of their postgraduation plans so that we can share those in the Voice. Seniors can provide picture & write-up to Jill and Lauri and let Jill know which service they plan to attend.
- **VBS:** Destiny and I continue to work on VBS. I recently opened registration and we already have several youth registered. Destiny is in the process of ordering items

that we will toss out at the parade. We are working on filling our last few volunteer spots. If you have not volunteered with VBS before, we encourage you to do so, it is a fun week and a great way to get to know our youngest members. Mary Stocks will offer 2 VBS themed creation station crafts during the month of May to help get the word out about VBS.

Youth Report

- Middle school Youth Group did not meet during the month of March due to us pausing our gathering (as usual) for the season of Lent.
- High school Youth Group met three times during the month of March. We didn't meet on March 10th due to spring break. We also did not meet on Easter Sunday, March 31st.
- Lent Suppers concluded on March 20th. During our suppers we raised over \$1,850. We also had a successful Easter Breakfast fundraiser where we brought in \$776.
- On March 17th, we held a ELCA Youth Gathering participant meeting. During our meeting we had a devotion and continued planning.
- On March 24th, we held a Mission Trip participant and chaperone meeting. We had a devotion with small group time and discussed the upcoming Easter breakfast fundraiser.
- Middle school Youth Group will resume again on Wednesday, April 3rd. I look forward to getting the group back together after our break during Lent.
- April will also include a ELCA Youth Gathering meeting, a Mission Trip meeting and planning for our Spaghetti Dinner which is scheduled for Sunday, May 5th.

Treasurer's Report:

- February financials approved

Stewardship :

- Contribution statement letter end of the 1st QTR.

Building & Grounds

- Made calls on the sign: figure out what the budget number is for this so we can get an idea on pricing. Looking at a message board. Limited on the size we can do based on the frontage. LED signs can only be a certain percentage of the area.
- About 2-3 weeks out from paving on the road.
- Made calls on the asphalt patch on the back but no quotes.
- Confirm logo on and graphics.

Education:

- Working on carnival as the main event.
- Donuts will be brought by Rob and Evangelism.
- Need to flag off areas for the areas that we need to keep

the kids from getting into.

- Need help hanging the VBS banner; asked Todd for this.
- Sunday after VBS kids will sing in church and would like this to be an outreach Sunday with food being provided. June 30th is the date.
- 23 kids registered this year plus one new for Sunday school.

Evangelism:

- Coffee time in March along with the Easter Egg hunt; New member coming up to prepare. For the new member service, will do breakfast casseroles. Do this in lieu of the cake.
- Supporting May 12th cake; May 19th Confirmation Sunday.
- Tim Schiller has agreed to come on.

Worship & Music :

- Discussion on providing some money to Lacey Baker who volunteered the donkey to come.

Old Business:

- Banner: Can remove this, just need to know when we take it up.
- Can take the cross down after Pentecost Sunday: May 19th will come down afterwards.
- Fundraiser – April
- Council nomination follow-up
- Evangelism: Council agreed to have Tim Schiller appointed and will be voted officially in July as part of the congregational meeting.
- Education: No luck, Eric to reach back out to the Nominating Committee.
- Bldg & Grounds: Need to follow-up
- Stewardship: Need to follow-up
- Exec: Need to follow-up.
- W&M: Need to follow-up
- Church Council Structure

New Business:

- Oven replacement: Tim Schiller has a lead on a \$3500 to do a new Gas Oven/Stove. Pastor will look at the Memorial Funds; WELA may have some funds for this. Concern may be around the code or building changes needed. Todd will talk to Larry then follow-up with Tim if it's good; Pastor will check with Memorial funds and WELCA.
- Evangelism will provide \$100 to Lacey Baker for her generosity in bringing the Donkey to service. Gift card to Bomgars: Rob will go and get this and ask Lauri for reimbursement.
- Steeple and hanging gazebo need to be fixed or painted: power washed or something. Todd will take a look at these to see if we can spec out the cost. May use Men's Group to do this. Need further information.

Local Mission Donation: Grimes Hunger Fight—\$200 for March and April

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WELCA BOARD MEETING FEBRUARY 20, 2023

- Treasurer's report : Postage for senior gifts was \$97.80
- Balance of General fund \$5927.91
- Balance of Kitchen fund \$1561.53
- Mission: Justice: Mosaic donation for Residents towels and soaps
- Mission: Discipleship: Last month 1 baptism, Freddy Malcom, parents of Kirsten and Taylor Malcom.
- Mission: Stewardship: Dessert & Devotion, March 19th 6:30-7:30pm. 15 in attendance, great turnout and positive feedback.
- Next Dessert & Devotion scheduled for July 9th, 6:30-7:30pm. Nicky Cooney volunteered to present.
- Donations – Toy Drive update, 4 bags and 2 boxes donated.
- Budget outline discussed. We will allocate our budget into 4 categories.
- Building Adm/Kitchen expenses= 2024 budget \$2000
- Donations (ex: Myamba)= budget \$1500
- Youth(baptism, Sunday school, confirmation, youth group)= budget \$1000
- Outreach (ex: VBS, Mosaic)= budget \$1500
- Calendar of events
- Pieces of WELCA, April 14th, 2-4pm. We will have 4- 200 piece puzzles. We will be discussing Welca's purpose/mission along with fellowship and light snacks.
- Craft Fair, May 4th, 9am-1pm. We have 12 vendors signed up, availability for 28 to 29 spaces total.
- VBS ice cream- approved \$100 go to this event.
- Earth Day- reusable totes giving out to church members with St Peter logo. We will discuss at next meeting.
- Misc.: Welca Yearbook is available to pick up at the church.