

The Voice



From the Desk of Pastor Mark:

December means that the Advent and Christmas seasons are upon us. “The most wonderful time of the year” as some like to say. Our theme for this season at St. Peter is: “What do you fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent.” Some might think this is a rather dreary topic in this festive season of the year. Why have the focus be on fear when we are trying to celebrate the Good News of Christ’s birth? Here is an introduction to the theme you will find in the devotional:

Luke’s Gospel begins the story of Jesus with this opening line: “In the time of Herod. . .” This detail may seem minor to modern readers; however, it reveals layers of information about the fearful world Jesus entered, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability. A world not so unlike our own. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ’s birth, we hear the whispers of angels delivering a surprising message: “Do not fear.” When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God’s redemptive story, they do not deny their fears—they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, “Here I am, Lord.” When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope?

Asking the questions, facing our fears, means we are acknowledging the realities of living in this world. Facing these fears may help us experience the power of the

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Christmas Eve

Worship

December 24

4:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m.

9:00 p.m.

4:00 p.m. Worship will be
livestreamed.

Worship Schedule

*Thank you for joining us
for worship!*

Sunday worship is at 8:00 and
10:30 a.m. Sunday School is at
9:15 a.m. Wednesday worship is
at 6:30 p.m.

December Schedule

There will be no
Wednesday worship on
December 31.

On December 28, we will
have one worship service at
9:00 a.m.

There will be no Sunday
School December 21 or 28.

The Church office will be
closed on Christmas Day,
December 26, and January
1.

true hope found in Christ Jesus. That's my hope for you and me this Advent and Christmas season.

There will be printed devotionals you can pick up at church, or a link online will be shared with the congregation as well. Worship, adult education, and children's materials will also focus on this theme. I encourage you to join in facing our fears this hope filled season.

Gathered to Grow. Sent to serve.

Pastor Mark

P.S.—As you consider holiday and end of year giving, please consider St. Peter Lutheran. St. Peter's expenses have exceeded giving by over \$40K so far this year. Consistent with our Advent theme though, we are not letting "fear" of a shortfall stop us from moving forward in "hope." God has called us to this mission, and we trust that he will also provide us the resources to continue. St. Peter is an amazing church with wonderful ministry taking place. These ministries wouldn't happen without the generosity of people like you. I realize times are tough for many people right now. This is not meant to be a guilt ask, but an invitation. Grace and peace be with you.

Coming Up at St. Peter

Gingerbread House Decorating

We hope you can join us for fun and fellowship at our Annual Gingerbread House decorating event on Sunday, December 7 following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Please sign-up one spot per family, using the QR Code/Link – <https://signup.com/go/UaCpdOB>. If you have any questions, please contact Jill at faithformation@stpeterofgrimes.org.



Gingerbread House Decorating

Sunday, Dec 7th
11:30am-1:00pm

Sign Up 1 Spot Per Family



Christmas Caroling December 7

Join us in making a joyful noise on December 7 as we go Christmas Caroling! We'll meet at 4:30 p.m. at the church and then go out to spread some holiday cheer!

CALLED as children of God, and CLAIMED by the Holy Spirit, the members of St. Peter Lutheran Church are GATHERED together to build each other up to use and GROW our gifts in the multitude of ministries we share – and are SENT out to serve the greater church, our community, and our world by using those gifts and ministries to share God's love as the united people of God.

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

Thanks!



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

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



Sunday School Christmas Program

Join us on December 14th during the 10:30a.m. worship service as the 3 year old to 6th grade Sunday School students present the Christmas Story and share their musical talents.

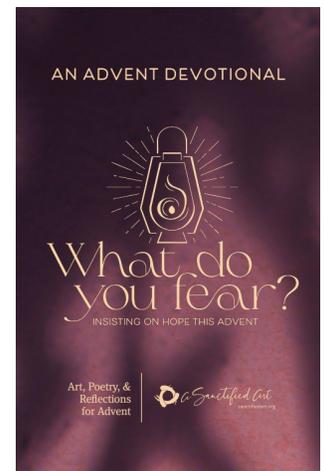
Advent Devotional

The season of Advent begins November 30. Join us in reading daily devotions from A Sanctified Art called *What Do You Fear?* as we embrace the spirit of anticipation and preparation that comes with Advent.



Paper copies are available at St. Peter, and online resources will be sent via email and in the weekly eNews, or by using this QR Code.

**Our friends at A Sanctified Art have provided a special e-reader version of this year's Advent devotional, which you can access on your computer and mobile devices. In order to protect their work, please refrain from sharing this link or posting it on social media.*



Mosaic & Confirmation Christmas Program

On Wednesday, December 10, our friends from Mosaic will be joining us at 5:00 p.m. for a Christmas party and at 6:30 p.m. worship for our Confirmation Christmas program. All are welcome!

Grimes Giving Tree

Our Grimes Giving Tree is up! Share Christmas cheer by purchasing a gift for a child in the DC-G school district who might otherwise go without. Gift ideas are hanging on tags on the tree in the front entryway. **Wrapped gifts are due back December 7.** Each child has 4 tags (2 clothing and 2 toys/fun items), and each gift is meant to be in the \$20-\$30 range. Thank you for your support!

Pastoral Acts

Jordan Eng and Maja Barringer were married on November 22, 2025, at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Grimes, Iowa. Pastor Mark Schlenker officiated the wedding.

Faith, Fellowship, Coffee, & Dessert

All are welcome to join our Thursday afternoon Bible study. This relaxed Bible study meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **Join us in a study on the Psalms that will go through December.** There is no registration required, and you can come as often or as little as your schedule allows. Contact Jill with any questions

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



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.

We support the Grimes Storehouse Food Pantry!

Our December focus will be:



Soup & Crackers



Bring in donations of soup crackers, saltines, large and small cans of soup, canned or boxed broth, and canned vegetables. Donations can be dropped off in the basket next to the Service Counter.

DONATE YOUR EMPTY WRAPPING PAPER ROLLS

St. Peter Sunday school needs your empty wrapping paper rolls for a craft this spring. You may leave the rolls on the service counter or in Jill's office. Thank you!

Book Club December 14

All readers are welcome at the St. Peter book club! We will meet December 14 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. to discuss *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig. Find the reading schedule in the weekly eNews or at the Service board. In January, we'll discuss *Dinner with a Perfect Stranger* by David Gregory.

YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR

High School Youth group meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.

Middle School Youth Group meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month. (There will be no 4th Wednesday MSYG in Dec.)

Breakfast Club for 7th-12th graders meets December 7.

The Youth Mission Trip Meeting will be December 21.

Volunteers Needed – Can You Help?

If you can help as a communion **preparer** contact Kaarin Fasse. To be a **communion assistant**, please contact Katie Scholl.

If you would like to help as **Assisting Minister**, please contact Rita Rosenberg.

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 Rita Rosenberg.

If you want to 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!



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 13, 2025

Pastor's Report:

- Planning is in full swing for the Advent/Christmas seasons. Sunday, November 30th will be the first Sunday in Advent.
- Lunch Abroad last month had 9 people learning a bit about Ecuador, the church there, eating the food and enjoying one another's company.
- Celebration Sunday on October 12th went well. Thanks to the Men's group for providing and serving the lunch.
- Met with fellow Grimes pastors for lunch on October 23rd. This is a good way to stay connected with the greater church here Grimes.
- The Raising Healthy Teens course Jill and I led had 4 different families present. It was really good information and well received. We may look to provide something similar in the future.
- Last week I attended a Clergy Seminar on Emotional Systems and Family Process. Very informative and helpful for all aspects of pastoral ministry.

Faith Formation Report—Jill Capps

- **Confirmation:** On October 25th the 7th & 8th grade confirmation students along with their guides & junior guides attended our annual confirmation retreat at St. Peter. We spent the morning learning about the different parts of a Lutheran worship service & then the youth prepared a worship service that they presented on October 29th at 6:30pm. (They did an amazing job!) We spent the afternoon participating in the "Amazing gRace" around Grimes – thanks to the eleven St. Peter families who hosted a stop on the race. Following the race, we packaged 100 care packages that will be sent to Sydney, Eric, and their unit who are currently serving overseas. Thank you to the guides for giving of their time during the retreat!
- **Faith Formation:** Several church members, Sunday School students, and Breakfast Club have completed cards for Sydney, Eric, & other members of their unit, the cards will be sent along with care packages. The Sunday school students also packaged 100 small care packages that will be sent along with those the Confirmation students made.
- The Gingerbread house event will held following the 10:30am service on December 7th. Welcome to all ages!
- We finished up our three session Loving Teens program in October. Pastor We received good feedback and enjoyed connecting with parents.
- We held our 2nd book club on November 9th. We have had great discussions over both books that we have read.
- **Communication/Technology:** Thank you to Cam Franzeen & Liam Fredericks for helping run the soundboard & projector during Wednesday worship services.

Youth Report

- I had lots of youth attend Fields of Faith at DC-G on October 1st. 30 youth sat

From the Stewardship Committee— Brenda Johnston & Jake Wager

October 2025

Income: \$23,012.59
Expense: \$29,650.49
Net Loss: (\$6,637.90)

Year to Date October 2025

Income: \$259,703.56
Expense: \$309,561.42
Net Loss: (\$49,857.86)

- General Fund MTD—Oct. 2025, expenses were greater than monthly income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$6,637.90).
- General Fund YTD—Oct. 2025, expenses were greater than income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$49,857.86).

with me and 3 other adults from St. Peter, and 50 youth joined us in our closing prayer circle.

- Middle School and High School youth groups are going well. MS has 32 youth attending weekly, and HS has around 23 youth attending weekly. Many thanks to my amazing volunteers: Mindy Morris, Matt Morris, and Jason Hughes!
- Breakfast Club met October 5th with 23 youth and 3 adults. This year we play a Bible game to start and then read and discuss Faith Lens (a weekly article put out by the ELCA). Big shout out to Rob and Heidi Ridnour for helping lead this group!
- We had 45 youth attend our monthly mission trip meeting on October 26th. I have 61 youth and 12-14 adults signed up for this year's trip.
- St. Peter Youth Group has collected \$56 from the can recycling program, Droppett.

Treasurer's Report:

- General Fund--October 2025 mtd, expenses were greater than monthly income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$6,637.90).
- General Fund--October 2025 ytd, expenses were greater than income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$49,857.86)
- General Fund--October 2024 mtd, expenses were greater than monthly income, thus it finished with a loss of (\$4,444.29).
- General Fund--October 2024 ytd, expenses were greater than income, thus it finished with a loss (\$33,510.20).
- October Financials approved

Stewardship :

- The Memorial CD at Bankers Trust matures on November 23. Recommend renewing for 6 mos at 3.4% after reviewing 3 mos, 6 mos, and 12 mos rates.

Building & Grounds

- Urinal Repair: A running urinal in the men's bathroom was repaired. Thanks to quick action by Jill and several team members, the water mess was cleaned up promptly, and fans and dehumidifiers were used to prevent any mold concerns.
- Snow Removal Bids: We requested bids from seven contractors for snow removal. Only two responded; several declined, and a few did not reply. We will continue using Finer Cuts for snow removal but switch to an hourly rate structure. Costs will be monitored for any variance compared to the previous contract.
- Shed Pad Preparation: Huisman Grading is scheduled to prepare the pad for the new shed.
- Garage Clean-Out: On 11/9, we had a great turnout for the garage clean-out. We removed clutter and junk and swept the garage in preparation for winter sealing. Tim Schiller will build a separator in the garage to organize seasonal items for easier access.
- Garage Leveling: Tim provided a quote for leveling the garage pad, which will likely occur in the next few weeks.
- Approved location of new gardening shed
- Approved up to \$4000 for the shed and pad build
- Approved garage leveling and quote from Midwest Polyfoam up to \$2000
- Approved replacement of Furnace and AC #5 at \$14,000 total
- Continued discussion on signage, insurance, Christmas tree, and back door

Education:

- We are beginning work on the Christmas program during Sunday School, and it is scheduled for Sunday, December 14th at the 10:30 service.
- We are hoping to host another Sunday School prep party sometime in January or February to prepare lessons. Date and

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.



more information to come.

- The organization is working well so far. Beth & Kirk are hoping to get the shelving up around Christmas break to allow for a more efficient work space in the back room.

Evangelism:

- Outreach Sunday was Oct. 26th. A group of about 20-30 adults and youth spread out amongst 6 locations to rake do yard work and various asks. Many met for pizza lunch after their hard work! Due to the weather many leaves have not yet fallen. A group of parents and kids with no school Friday volunteered to finish up a few yards - many thanks!
- Fellowship has gone well. We are planning to ask Sunday School kids to donate a dozen cookies/treats on Dec. 14th to serve before and after the Sunday School program. We have reached out to those on Time & Talent to help us cover all Sundays.

Worship & Music :

- No new applicants for Choir Director - Rita to continue as interim
- Advent preparation has begun
- We will use memorial money to purchase new communion chalices
- Continue looking to rehome an acoustic piano
- Katie is gathering information on potential contemporary songs that are singable for the congregation

Old Business

- Continued discussion on garage and shed

New Business:

- Quick review of the At-Large Option - Agreement that everyone is aligned on that approach? Next Steps - Steve, Carol, Jason can work up a proposal for more discussion in December on next steps
- Signage Conversation: Review the proposal provide by Bldg & Grounds (Jared, Adam)
- Insurance Policy - Renewal, Revision to new company - Inputs needed from Bldg & Grounds
- 2026 Budget inputs to Chad

Local Mission Donation: Grimes Storehouse

WELCA MINUTES NOVEMBER 18, 2025

Treasure Report - Kerry

- Balance- \$10971.56
- Youth - \$929 (sensory table \$180)

Last month spend: Sensory table \$182.25(Youth); Gather Magazines \$59.85 (Admin)

Donations: Grimes Food pantry \$350; Fareway gift cards \$150

Old Business

- Silent Auction - total deposit \$5398.82 an increase of \$560 over last year
- Things to consider for next year: Have choir or adult sings during 2nd service; Events are popular; Add a starting bid on the sheet (when possible); Pictures on facebook
- Coat Drive - Capitol Hill Lutheran: Donated 4 large trash bags of coats and warm clothes
- Urban Bicycle - deliver food and care packages on bikes to homeless: Donated sleeping bags, socks and blankets

New Business

- Grimes Giving Tree set up Nov. 22. 80 tags (4/child)

Upcoming Events

- Christmas shopping for Mosaic Dec. 9 at Urbandale Target at 6pm: gift wrapping Dec. 14 between services
- Audit Prep: (Heidi, Kerry and Bradley Fasse) - Heidi will schedule time with Bradley for January 2026
- Annual report due to Lauri in January

Next WELCA Board Meeting - Tuesday, January 20 at 6:30 pm—Destination Grill