

St Peter Lutheran Church Tidings

February 2024

Pastor Pedersen's Points – Love and Dust



February, while short, is a month where many classrooms and houses decorate their rooms with hearts galore. The hearts are inspired by Valentine's Day; a day dedicated loosely to a saint but more importantly to love...and chocolate.

February is also the month where our church usually celebrates Ash Wednesday. (Fun fact: Ash Wednesday in 2025 will be in March.) Ash Wednesday is a day that kicks off our Lenten church season, a time of discipline and solemnity, and during the service people are given an ashen cross upon their foreheads. As that happens the recipient hears these words, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

This year Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day are on the same day, February 14th. This can seem a little weird. Don't these two things oppose one another? Valentine's Day is about celebrating love. Ash Wednesday seems to be a day where we remember our mortality. Yet, that ash and those words about us being dust and returning to dust do connect with the theme of love.

Ash Wednesday reminds us that we are God's Creation. Also, our loved ones are God's Creation as well. Yes, we are fragile. Yes, our lives are finite, but it is the love of Jesus Christ which assures us that our dusty selves become more than just dirt to be vacuumed. It is the love of Jesus Christ which has died for us and saved us. That is why the Christian sign for love is not a heart, but a cross.

This Valentine's Day join us as we remember our fragility while celebrating our promised eternal life with God during our Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 pm. May the love of God fill your hearts, minds, and souls this February!

Our Season of Lent Begins -

Wednesday, February 14 - Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 pm

Lenten Services (Holden Evening Prayer) will be held Wednesdays at 7:00 pm - February 21, 28, March 6, 13, 20

Lenten Meals will be served prior to the Worship - 5:30 - 6:30 pm



Worship & Music Server

Sunday worship - 9:00 am

**Volunteers needed –please sign-up online or contact the office*

	February 4 Sunday 9:00 am	February 11 Sunday 9:00 am	February 14 Ash Wednesday 7:00 pm	February 18 Sunday 9:00 am	February 21 Lenten Service 7:00 pm	February 25 Sunday 9:00 am	February 28 Lenten Service 7:00 pm
Organist	Sheryl Moeller	Amy Lockhart	Sheryl Moeller	Amy Lockhart	Amy Lockhart	Sheryl Moeller	Sheryl Moeller
Acolytes	Brody Sanderson & TBD	Lydia Gleason & TBD					
Communion Assistant		Sue Buss & Garrett Wahl		Pat Leonhart & Melodie Foelske		Garrett Wahl	
Scripture Reader	Jackie Fober	Sue Buss	Jackie Fober	Gene Leonhart			
Multimedia							
Sunday School Helper	Brody Sanderson	Garrett Wahl				Garrett Wahl	
Sound System	Steve DeVries	Phillip Michels	Roger Donaldson	Larry Oltrogge	Alton Midthus	Steve DeVries	Phillip Michels
Video taping		Aubrey Roethler					
Altar Guild	Joyce Schimmels, Linda Krueger						
Usher/ Greeters	Gary & LaVonne Westendorf, and TBD						

Please find a replacement If you are unable to serve at the time you are scheduled.

Your ministry is vital and we give thanks for your willingness to serve.

AA/Alanon

AA/Alanon Step Class: Tuesday nights at 7 pm in lower level (second & fifth Tuesdays of the month)

Meeting: Tuesday nights at 7 pm in the lower level (first & fourth Tuesdays - round table format)

Open Meeting: 3rd Tuesday of each month. Anyone who has an interest in or questions about the disease of alcoholism or anyone who fears that a loved one may be dealing with alcoholism is welcome to attend the monthly open meeting.

E-giving through Vanco

This platform provides a secure and user-friendly way to give to our church online, and we are confident that it will make giving more convenient for many members of our congregation. We are so grateful for your generosity and commitment to our shared mission.



From the Church Office

Check out the online church calendar. The link is on the opening page of our website - www.stpeterdenver.org.

Under “Most Popular” click on calendar; you will be able to see the activities scheduled for the year. If you would like to add something to the calendar please contact the office. 319-984-5648

Bulletin Deadline: Thursdays 10:00 am
Newsletter Deadline: 4:00 pm on the 3rd Friday of each month.

Annual Meeting Update

At our Annual Meeting in January a possible new constitutional bylaw was presented concerning undesignated bequests. During our conversation it was decided to table voting on the bylaw for a later date. You will find the prospective bylaw below. Below the bylaw is Pastor Reed's reasoning for and description of the bylaw. Please read this carefully and feel free to reach out to a council member or the church office with any questions or suggestions.

BYLAW IX: Concerning Undesignated Bequests

The congregation shall tithe (10%) all undesignated bequests. The tithe of each such bequest shall be distributed as recommended by the Mission Board.

- a.) A bequest is defined as an estate, trust, or life insurance policy that has allocated its funds to St. Peter Lutheran Church.
- b.) A bequest is not a memorial. A memorial is the money given to St. Peter Lutheran Church by friends and family in honor of the deceased individual.
- c.) The term undesignated refers to the bequest having no demonstrative direction by way of the deceased's will.
- d.) If someone makes a designated bequest of their estate through their will but does not specify demonstratively concerning their trusts and life insurance policies, the money from the trust and life insurance policy is considered undesignated.
- e.) An individual tithe from an undesignated bequest may be distributed to multiple ministries.
- f.) If the tithe of an undesignated bequest exceeds \$5,000 the Mission Board must present the recommended distribution to the council for approval.

By-Law Origin, Expansion, Clarification

I, Pastor Reed, approached the finance board about tithing our undesignated bequests for the sake of mission. My reasoning was simple, as a church we tithe our yearly income to benevolence. This means that we send 10% of our yearly monies to the Northeast Iowa Synod and ELCA Churchwide so that it can be used for larger ministry opportunities. The act of tithing is biblical in nature. It comes from Deuteronomy 14:22-29. God institutes a tithe of the year's produce to be offered up in God's honor. This is meant to be gathered up in the temple and shared with those in need (poor, widows, orphans, etc.) We see this again in Malachi 3:10 when God says, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house." This command from God is not just for the individual. It also implies that the place of worship is using it as God intends. James expresses this clearly when he says, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (James 1:27)

Our church reflects this in our constitution. Under Chapter 4: The Statement of Purpose, it states that the purpose of our congregation is to, "Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs." (C4.02.d) It continues to say that to fulfill these purposes the congregation shall: "Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and suffering, and participate responsibly in society. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." (C4.03.f-g) Thus, giving to ministries (or charities) is seen as one of the main functions of our congregation and any healthy congregation.

It is through God's command in the Bible and being faithful to the purpose of our church as stated in our church constitution that I believe we should also tithe our undesignated bequests to the ministry of God.

Seeing as the council is meant, "To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons" (C12.04.e) while also, "ascertain[ing] that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently..." (C12.05.e), I believe that in approving this Bylaw for presentation at the next annual congregational meeting the council is both being an example and showing that our church will not simply be one that builds bigger storehouses for our grain. (Luke 12:16-21)

As for the Bylaw itself. Here is an explanation: The main paragraph makes it clear that we would take 10% from our undesignated bequests and task the Mission Board with choosing which ministry they would like to give that money to. Points a) and b) seem self-explanatory. Point c) speaks of those who designate in their will that their money bequest the church need go to a specific area (e.g., building improvement). An undesignated bequest would have no strings attached. Point d) speaks to something that has already happened at our congregation. A woman made it clear in her will that we would receive a percentage of her estate that must go to building improvements. She also bestowed us monies from a trust. The money we receive from the trust exists outside of her estate and therefore would be deemed an undesignated bequest since it exists outside of her stated designation in her will. Point e) makes it clear that the tithe from an individual undesignated bequest does not have to go to a single ministry. If the Mission board so wills it, they can spread it out to many charities and ministries. Point f), which was a great suggestion made at the previous council meeting, is meant to build an extra buffer in the case of large bequests. If the church receives an undesignated bequest over \$50,000 which would then mean a tithe was greater than \$5,000, the mission board would still suggest for how best to disperse the funds for ministry, but the church council will have final approval. (The initial setup was to have the council approve every undesignated bequest, but it was concluded that step isn't needed for smaller bequests.) Concern was raised about the \$5,000 rule we have as a council. This stems from our constitution C12.05.c, "The Congregational Council may inter into contracts of up to \$5,000 for items not included in the budget." Outside of that it must be voted on by the congregation. Seeing as this is meant for contracts and not donating funds for mission and ministry, this Bylaw would not be in breach of our church amendments. It can only be passed if the congregation approves it at an annual/congregational meeting. Unlike a memorial, bequests are the deceased's final offering to their church. These offerings are most likely bigger than what they might give annually, but they are an offering nonetheless. As a church it is important that we serve the world in need. There are people in need now. The many ministries of the ELCA seek to help with World Hunger, Disaster Response, World Relief, Refugees and Immigrants, and providing funds to help make seminary affordable for our future pastors. By presenting this Bylaw to the congregation we are saying that we want God's mission, spreading the love of Jesus by caring for the needs of this world, to be our mission, too.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

2 Donna Hulsing David Stevens Dennis Thurm	17 Marilyn Bergmann Angela Sadler Brody Sanderson
3 Bev Diercks Janice Miller	18 Jessy & Janet Kern
4 Jennifer Wirtjes	19 Jarett Clayton Julie Gleason
5 Tom Beckel Caryl Tjaden	20 Kara Bartels Brianna Drewelow Joyce Miller
6 Dwight Diercks	21 Luther Hougen Cylee Liddle John Upshaw
8 Gavin Carman Jodie Koepke Michael Milius	23 Abel Gienau Ariella Gienau Brian Nabholz Abby Roethler
12 Pat Leonhart Harper Nabholz	24 Jeremy Clayton Liv Gesme James Kurtt
14 Jeff DeVries Zachary Kern	25 Lisa Michels
15 Teresa Diercks Robert & Tammy Weston	26 Rodney & Teresa Diercks David VanDeBerg
16 Amy Lockhart	27 Greg & Kerry Thies
	28 Mandy Gesme

We apologize if your birthday or anniversary are not listed or listed incorrectly. Please notify the office with additions or corrections. Thank You

BINGO

Bingo at the Denver Sunset Home Friday, February 16, at 10:00 am. We are looking for three volunteers to assist the residents. Please contact Joyce Miller if you can help.

Offering Statements

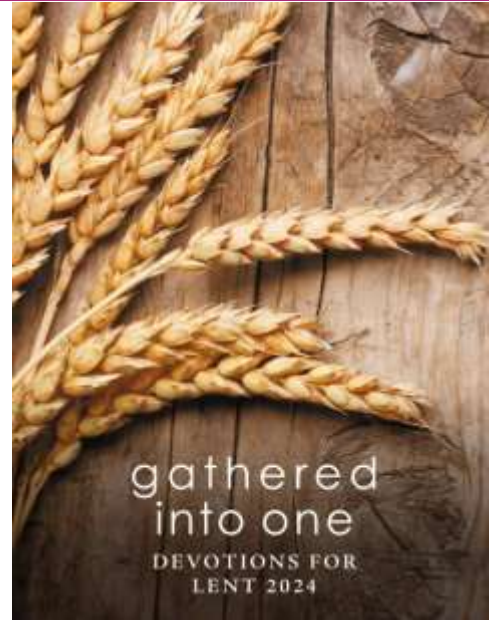
Year End Contribution Statements were emailed to all members with listed emails, and paper copies mailed to those that do not have email addresses. If you would like a printed copy of your contribution statements for 2023 please stop by the office or call. Thank you.

Church News

Lenten Devotions booklet available on the table outside the office.

Gathered into One provides daily devotions for each day from Ash Wednesday to the Resurrection of Our Lord/Vigil of Easter (traditionally known as Holy Saturday).

Devotions begin with an evocative image and a brief passage from First Corinthians. The writers then bring their diverse voices and pastoral wisdom to the texts with quotations to ponder, reflections, and prayers. Portions of First Corinthians appear in the Revised Common Lectionary during each lectionary year. The apostle Paul writes this letter to the church in Corinth after hearing of quarreling and divisions among the people. He teaches the Corinthians that each person has a unique set of gifts from the Holy Spirit, given for the common good, and reminds them that the church is the body of Christ, joined together with one bread, one cup, one baptism, one God, and one Spirit. This theme of unity amid diversity is as timely now as it was when Paul wrote to the Corinthians.



Volkswalk - Saturday, February 24

Destination Denver plans to sponsor a "Winter Blues" event known as a VOLKSWALK. This is German for a non-timed, non-competitive 5K walk around the community. The goal is to encourage people to get out and about in our Denver community. Businesses will be hosting specials and will be having fun spots with fun facts to walk past. Anyone can participate between 3:00 and 5:00 pm. St. Peter will be one of the spots along the route where people can stop and warm up at our fire pit on the west lawn between the church and the parsonage. We will be serving coffee and hot chocolate! It would be fun if people from the congregation were at the fire pit to welcome and visit with the walkers! Hopefully the Iowa weather will cooperate!



Community & Mission News

Bulletin Board

There's an opportunity waiting for someone to use his/her creative/artistic talents. If you would like to decorate the southwest entry bulletin board with appropriate seasonal items, please let Roxane or Pat Leonhart know of your offer. Also, filling the planter box at that entry each season would be another chance to volunteer.

It's Time for the SOUPer Bowl!!

The Board of Mission will be collecting cans of soup and/or monetary donations during February, Super Bowl month. Please put your donations on the table outside the office. All the soup and cash contributions will be given to the Waterloo Salvation Army.

On Super Bowl Sunday, February 11th, for the low price of a five dollar donation to the Salvation Army, you can wear any team logo shirt of your choice, from any sport (hockey, football, soccer, basketball, track) and from any high school, college, or professional team! A new twist was available last year for additional donations! It created lots of extra excitement! There will be three buckets on SOUPER BOWL Sunday labeled with the two participating teams and one labeled "I don't care!". Vote with your dollars! Let's have fun, show our team spirit and continue our support of the Salvation Army ministries.

Quilt Tying

Please join us for quilting, meeting again on Mondays, 9 am - 3 pm, and Tuesdays, 9 am - Noon. **The quilters are in need of bed sheets for quilt backs - full, queen, or king size sheets would be most welcomed and keep them quilting.**

Noisy Offering

The January & February Noisy offering will be going to House of Hope. Located in Waterloo, the House of Hope provides single mothers in homelessness, and women aging out of foster care, with housing.

Dusky Steele will provide a short temple talk on Sunday, February 4.

Please help us welcome her; our collection will be the third Sunday of the month February 18.



EWALU SUMMER CAMP

REGISTER NOW!

Early Discount
Save \$40 on full-week youth programs until February 29!

Sibling Discount
Save \$50 for each additional child from same family!

EWALU Camp & Retreat Center www.ewalu.org/summer-camp

Sign Up now for best summer camp pricing:

Ewalu summer camp registration is open for 2024, and families can sign up now for the best availability and the best prices! Go to www.ewalu.org/summer-camp to see all the programs and to register. Ewalu also has Family Camp and Grandparent Camp!

Ewalu's **Early Discount pricing** means \$40 off for most full-week youth programs if you register before February 29. This year, the **Sibling Discount** has increased to \$50 off for each additional child from the same family registering for a full-week program (after the first child) —and that's ON TOP of the Early Discount! Call Diane at Ewalu for more information at 563-933-4700. **Questions about pricing and registration?** Please contact the Ewalu office at the phone number above or email camp@ewalu.org.

You may pick up pamphlets on the table outside the office.

Reminder: St Peter offers \$300 per student to attend a Lutheran camp. Please contact the office for the campership.



CEDAR at 60

EWALU

Enrichment Event
Sponsored by HJR Financial Group

Seed Savers Exchange

Saturday, March 9, 1-3 p.m.
Ewalu Creation Center

Brennan Allsworth, speaker



High School Spring Retreat

EWALU Camp & Retreat Center

APRIL 19-21

2-night experience for Grades 9-12

REGISTER NOW!

Faith Formation

Sunday School Reminders

- Please have your Sunday School child bring a school or other picture (any size) to Sunday School on or before Sunday, February 4th. The kids will get to post their picture on a Sunday School Project February 4th. Even if kids aren't able to attend that day, their pictures are welcome!
- Sunday School will be celebrating Valentines Day on Sunday, February 11th. Optional: Children are welcome to dress in Red and bring valentines or a bag of candy to share. They will get to bring goody bags home.

2024 Sunday School Dates

February 4
February 11
February 18
February 25
March 3
April 7
April 14
April 21
April 28
May 5

Parents are being asked to assist as a Parent Helper two times throughout the 2023-24 year per Sunday School student. This will allow the Education Team to continue to provide a strong Sunday School program. Thank you to those who signed up already. Parents may sign-up via the Worship Servers Volunteer Sign-up <http://www.stpeterdenver.org/volunteer.html> The Education Team simply can not continue without helpers.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to

reach out to a member of the education team. Amy Oltmann, Jaime Leonhart, Julie Gleason, Mandy Gesme, Bri Drewelow.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets on the 1st Thursday, every other month at 1:00 pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 7.

If you know of someone who is in need of a Prayer Shawl, please take one from the closet in the Friendship Room. Please make sure you fill out a form (located next to the new shawls).

'Singers Needed'!

Our Easter choir will start rehearsal Wednesday, February 21, at 6:15 pm. We will be doing a newly published anthem that is filled with the excitement of our risen Lord. Please join us after eating the special Lenten meals for our half hour of practice in the sanctuary. All are welcome. *Mary*



Mandy Gesme photo



Sunday school was all about treasure! Hunting for treasure and how we are God's treasures.

Rejoice & Renew Appreciation Event

Women of the ELCA and their friends are invited to an appreciation event February 23-24 at Ewalu Stone Retreat Center, Strawberry Point. Sponsored by the Northeastern Iowa Women of the ELCA Synod Board and Katie's Fund, this "Rejoice and Renew" event is an opportunity to gather with other women to celebrate, learn and do ministry together.

January Baptism

Kellen Westendorf was baptized on January 14. We welcome him into the body of Christ and into the mission we share at St Peter.



February 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10:00 am Bulletin deadline 7:00 pm Worship & music mtg	2	3
4 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 7:00 pm Confirmation	5 9:00 am– 3:00 pm Quilting	6 7:30 am Womensfest 9:00 am—Noon Quilting 7:00 pm AAA/Alanon	7 8:00 am Mensfest	8 10:00 am Bulletin deadline	9	10
11 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 7:00 pm Confirmation	12 9:00 am– 3:00 pm Quilting	13 7:30 am Womensfest 9:00 am Welca Board Mtg. 9:00 am—Noon Quilting 7:00 pm AAA/Alanon	14 8:00 am Mensfest 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship	15 10:00 am Bulletin deadline	16 10:00 am Bingo @ Denver Sunset Home Newsletter Deadline	17
18 9:00 am Worship and With Noisy Offering 10:15 am Sunday School 7:00 pm Confirmation	19 9:00 am– 3:00 pm Quilting	20 7:30 am Womensfest 9:00 am—Noon Quilting 7:00 pm AAA/Alanon	21 8:00 am Mensfest 5:30 pm Lenten Supper 6:15 pm Choir practice 7:00 pm Lenten Service	22 10:00 Bulletin deadline	23	24
25 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 7:00 pm Confirmation	26 9:00 am– 3:00 pm Quilting	27 7:30 am Womensfest 9:00 am—Noon Quilting 7:00 pm AAA/Alanon	28 8:00 am Mensfest 5:30 pm Lenten Supper 6:15 pm Choir practice 7:00 pm Lenten Service	29 10:00 Bulletin deadline		

St. Peter Tidings is published 12 times a year by
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2024 MINISTRY BOARDS

Ministry Boards are a vital part of the congregational system. Lay members are currently needed for each of these boards to function as intended. Please consider where you might share your gifts in these important ministries of the congregation. If you would like to know more about a board please contact The Congregational President. Thank you!

Church Council: , Jackie Fober, Amy Oltmann, Jayson Gesme, Jill Nuss, Linda Schult, Kyle Niemann, Sara Sanderson, Krista Olson

Executive Board: Jayson Gesme, Jill Nuss

Property & Management: Gene Leonhart, Leroy Homeister, Roxane Franzen, Jim Jurgenson, Jayson Gesme, Steve DeVries, Jim Moeller

Parish Education: Amy Oltmann, Jaime Leonhart, Mandy Gesme, Julie Gleason, Bri Drewelow

Worship & Music: Mary Stevens, Amy Lockhart, Jo VanDeBerg, Niki Skaar, Nancy Lamos, Sheryl Moeller

Mission: Sue Buss, Pat Leonhart, Shirley Thurm, Kelley Carman, Marcia Ott, Leah Homeister, Linda Schult, Kim Lamb

Stewardship: Jackie Fober, Jan Gienau, Dori Jurgenson, Mary Stevens

Youth & Family: Eve Pautsch, Krista Olson, Sarah Sanderson, Julie Brinkman, Lisa Michels, Marcia Joerger

Evangelism: Jan Gienau, LaVonne Westendorf, Roger Donaldson, Marilyn Mueller

Financial Board: Dwight Diercks, Paul Meier, Jim Moeller, Todd Foelske, Jim Jurgenson