First Out Loud

God's Work. Our Hands. To Serve ALL People.

NOVEMBER- 2025 NEWSLETTER

Siblings in Christ,

One of the things I love most about Christmas is the sheer number of "Yes" statements we hear. For example, an angel of the Lord appears to a young woman named Mary and says that God has chosen her to be the mother of Our Savior. Mary pondered this statement and then said "Yes" to becoming Jesus' mother. Paul's letter to the Philippians says, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death- even death on a cross." (Phil. 2:5-8) So, we see that Jesus said "Yes" to leaving his glory behind in heaven to come down, be born as one of us, and suffer death for our sake to grant us eternal life. Those are a lot of "Yes" statements. Ones that altered the course of human history.

So, my question for us to ponder this Christmas is: "What are you willing to say 'Yes' to?" Are you willing to say "Yes" to helping set up at church for worship? Are you willing to say "Yes" to helping serve on the fourth Monday of each month at The Kitchen at Trinity Lutheran Church? Are you willing to say "Yes" and learn more about how to stand up for those who have no voice in our society? Perhaps there is a child who needs you to say "Yes" to mentoring them through a tough time in their life? Pay attention to where God might be calling you to say "Yes" to the needs of God's children. Mary and Jesus said "Yes" to what was asked of them. Who knows what God might be calling you to say "Yes" to this Christmas time.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor Christopher Culuris

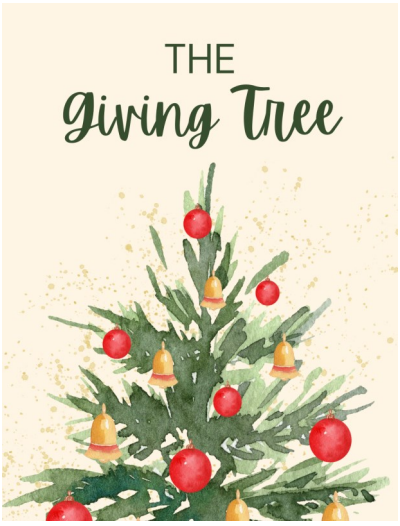
We're definitely coming up on the busy time of the year! It seems that everything has jumped into high gear. In addition to all the activities in the schools & amp; around town as well as preparations for the end of the year and Christmas, the church is busy finalizing our budget for 2026. This will be proposed to the congregation at our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, December 7 immediately following worship. We'll also approve new council members who will start their terms next year. Final planning for the Live Nativity, which will be held Friday, December 12, is also in full swing. I encourage you to participate if you can, or at least stop by as a spectator! It's really a wonderful event.

This will be my last monthly newsletter article. The new council, and specifically the new Executive Committee, will be voted into office at our December meeting. It has truly been a joy to serve as the church council president in 2025!

Sincerely,

Mark Roemhildt

During the season of Advent, the Altar Guild invites you to contribute to the Giving Tree. This year the money will go to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. The tree will be placed in the Gathering Space.
To make a donation, take an envelope off the tree, fill out the enclosed card indicating the persons you are honoring or remembering with your contribution, place the card and donation in the offering plate or take to the office. Lastly, place a star on the tree to indicate your donation..
For Christmas, the Altar Guild invites you to sponsor a poinsettia or as a way to honor or remember a special person or persons. Sign up form will be on the table in the Gathering Space.
Thank you for your contributions.



APOSTLES
PETER & PAUL
Catholic Area Faith Community

November 17, 2025

Pastor Chris Culuris
First Lutheran Church
1114 W. Traverse Rd
St. Peter, MN 56082

Dear Pastor Chris,

I write to you on the occasion of our 25th anniversary of dedication for our current worship space. On behalf of the Church of St. Peter, I would like to thank First Lutheran Church for providing a safe port in a storm following the tornado of 1998. Your gracious hospitality for two and a half years is most appreciated and will always be remembered. Last weekend I gave a 'shout out' to First Lutheran during a short reflection concerning the tornado in order to provide the context for our upcoming dedication this weekend. It was well-received by the members of the Church of St. Peter. It is appropriate that we celebrate the 25th anniversary, because many of us won't be around for the 50th.

While other churches experienced significant damage, many businesses and families had to repair or rebuild as well. As the receiving church, you were the rock of faith that still holds a warm spot in the hearts of many.

With great appreciation, your brother in the Lord,

Msgr. Douglas L. Grams

Msgr. Douglas L. Grams, Pastor
Area Faith Community of Sts. Peter and Paul

Social Justice Committee News:

ISAIAH: A LIGHT IN THE STORM – AGENDA LAUNCH & ANTI-AUTHORITARIANISM STRATEGY TRAINING

Our future isn't yet written. We get to be the authors in what happens next. And for us that l looks like people organizing. Building power. Defending our neighbors and communities. Shaping a Minnesota where every family can thrive, no exceptions. Please consider joining other people of faith for the "A Light in the Storm: Agenda Launch & Anti-Authoritarianism Strategy Training" at the

Minneapolis Convention Center, on Saturday, December 13 from noon - 6:00 p.m.

Buses will be leaving from the First Lutheran Church parking lot at 10:30am. Please contact Olivia Bergen to register: obergen@isaiahmn.org

Save your Stamps for the Wounded!

Please remember that we continue to collect stamps year round to send to "Stamps for the Wounded." Carefully clip, or tear the paper around outer edges of the perforations around the stamp. Do not clip off the perforations. Remove any extra pieces of envelope leaving just the stamp. Do not remove stamps from postcards but donate the entire postcard. The same is true for any envelopes dated prior to 1941, aerogrammes, or mail with special markings or cancellations. International or foreign stamps are also desirable.

Philatelic material from stamp collections: stamps, covers, albums, and supplies are also accepted. Flag design stamps and liberty bell stamps are NOT needed. Place your stamps in the box near the usher's stand. Thank you!

Wednesday's Faith Formation Update

Our Pre-K-1st class continues to bring energy to Wednesday nights! They balance their class time between exploring our children's bible with lessons and reaffirming those lessons in activities and play. They also participate in Cherub's choir time with Sarah Chambers. This group performed in church for the first time and did fantastic! See the photo below. Teachers continue to organize fun and engaging lessons but we still need volunteers to assis our teachers.. Please let someone on the Lifelong Learning Committee know if you can assist in a Wednesday night class with this active crew!

Our 2nd-4th grade class is continuing to grow in their faith with bible stories, crafts, and games. Lessons that we have covered are "Baby Moses-the Burning Bush" and "The Plague/Red Sea/ Ten Commandments." We also did a craft of the burning bush that we hung in our classroom. Feel free to check it out! This past week, we got in the Thanksgiving spirit with a game of Thanksgiving Feud. This group is inquisitive and ready to participate each week!

Our 5th-6th grade class are a group of learners who are preparing to move up to Confirmation! Lessons they have participated in this last month are "Abraham," "Moses," "David and Jesse Annointing." They are working each week to explore the books of the bible and are encouraged to practice their faith at school and at home. We also encourage them to explore the bible on their own time. This group is maturing and getting ready to embrace their own faith journey!

All our Faith Formation groups participated in a "Stump the Pastor" night on October 22nd. This was an idea the LLC committee came up with last spring when we were planning our next school year. We are lucky at First Lutheran to have a number of retired pastors in our congregation. The participating pastors were fantastic with the kids' questions and the kids came up with thoughtful questions and were engaged the entire hour. They enjoyed it so much that each week they are asking when they can do that again! We will have another "Stump the Pastor" night late winter/early spring.

Finally, as we work on our Christmas program, written by Grace Timm, we invite you to join us for the performance on Wednesday, December 17th. It's a beautiful and fun way to enjoy the beauty of the season. Happy Thanksgiving and the start of the holiday season!

KITCHEN
DELICIOUS

First Lutheran volunteers will serve their final 2025 meal at The Kitchen on November 24th. We will be serving turkey and stuffing with all the fixings to celebrate Thanksgiving. The Kitchen is closed Christmas and New Years weeks. We will begin the new year serving on January 26, 2026. Thank you to all the volunteers who have faithfully served at The Kitchen during 2025! Thank you to our wonderful chef who shows up every month to cook whatever recipe is handed to him. Thank you to the volunteer who drives to Mankato before 7a.m to pick up donated bakery. Thank you to Hy-Vee and Family Fresh for donating bakery to the Kitchen every week. Thank you to those who help prepare the meals, set up the dining room bakery and dessert tables, serve the meal to our guests, welcome the guests and help those who need a little assistance. Thank you also to all of those who collect the used dishes, get them ready to go through the dishwasher, dry dishes and put them away. A special shout out to the boy scouts and their leader who served twice this fall. As you can see it takes a lot of volunteers to provide this much needed service to our St. Peter family. During the month of October, The Kitchen served over 120 people every Monday.

If you are interested in joining this service group, watch for volunteer si up sheets on the table in the foyer, or call Marilyn Kochsiek at 612-695-6270 for more information.

1ST ANNUAL HOTDISH COOKOFF 2025

Galen Bly won with a Chicken Ranch Hotdish!

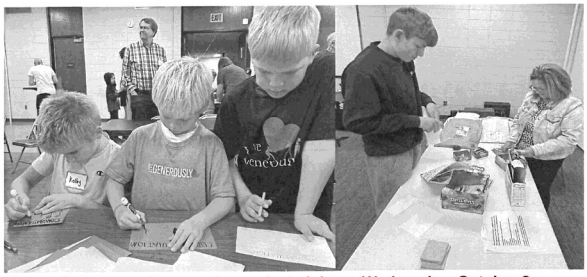
FROM THE DESK OF DEACON BRENDA| 7

This month my newsletter news comes to you in the form of photos. October was a busy month of lots of LISTENING. Our students had to listen extra hard at our Intergenerational project night where students made items like cards and stress balls and put together items to send a little love to our 2025 graduates. The church hosted a bi-annual meeting for the Minnesota Valley Conference South African Vryheid Circuit ministry. We heard from Kat, a South African student at Augsburg tell about life in South Africa and also from Pastor Becky Sullivan who has been to our companion synod in South Africa several times. People from several churches came together and really listened to these speakers, to each other and to ideas that are sparking life in this project of walking with each other on two different continents. Finally, our students are back into the swing of Wednesday night Faith Night at First - both in classes, service project nights, and in Youth group meetings. They continue to ask some great questions (like at Stump the Pastor night on October 22 see photo elsewhere in this issue) which requires listening to ask follow-up questions. It all leads to learning

There is a theme here - we need to listen carefully to each other and to God's voice. It helps us be the person God calls us to be. As we venture out to family and friends' homes for the upcoming holidays, I am thinking of how we need to be a better listener. We need to listen for understanding rather than preparing what we want to say next while our conversation partner talks. Say a prayer before you enter into these conversations and don't give up! Keep listening deeply and know that you can still speak your own story and experiences into the conversation. God walks with us as we encounter all of God's beloved children.

+God's peace!

Brenda



Above: Intergeneration service project night on Wednesday, October 8. Our kids make cards for the post-high kits. Graham and Sylvia put it all together

Below: FLC Hosts the Vryheid Circuit meeting, October 2nd. It was an evening of listening and learning. Pastor Becky Sullivan explains the needs of the Vryheid semin and details of an upcoming trip to South Africa.

Junior High and Senior High Youth groups are meeting thanks to a team of leaders who care about our youth. Each group meets monthly with a structured 'plan' that allows for time to pray, worship, listen and have fun. Upcoming service projects are Christmas cookie decorating, caroling and a food packing event coming in 2026.

Youth groups are up and running and we are having fun!

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
1114 Traverse Rd.
St. Peter, MN 56082

Non-Profit Organization
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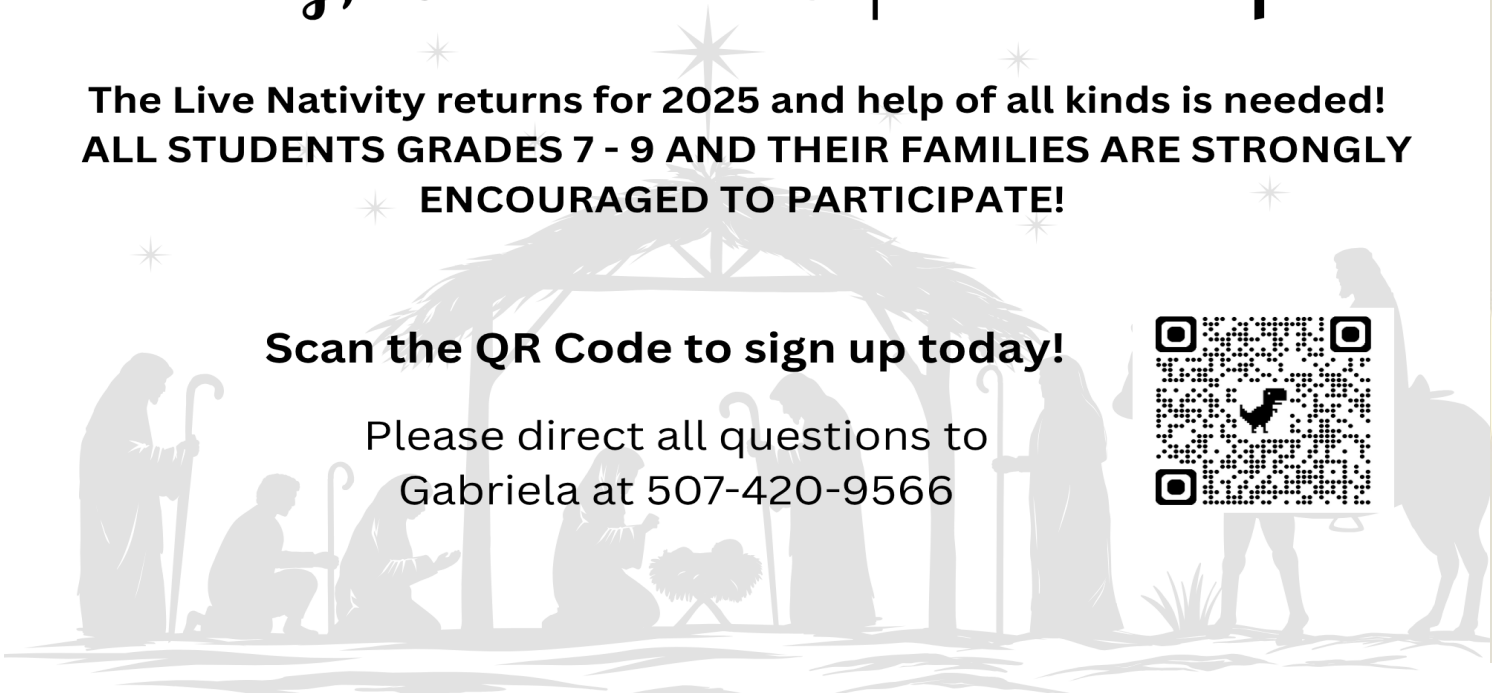
PAID
St. Peter, MN 56082
Permit #3

Live Nativity 2025

Friday, December 12 | 5:30 - 8 p.m.

The Live Nativity returns for 2025 and help of all kinds is needed!
ALL STUDENTS GRADES 7 - 9 AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE!

Scan the QR Code to sign up today!

Please direct all questions to
Gabriela at 507-420-9566