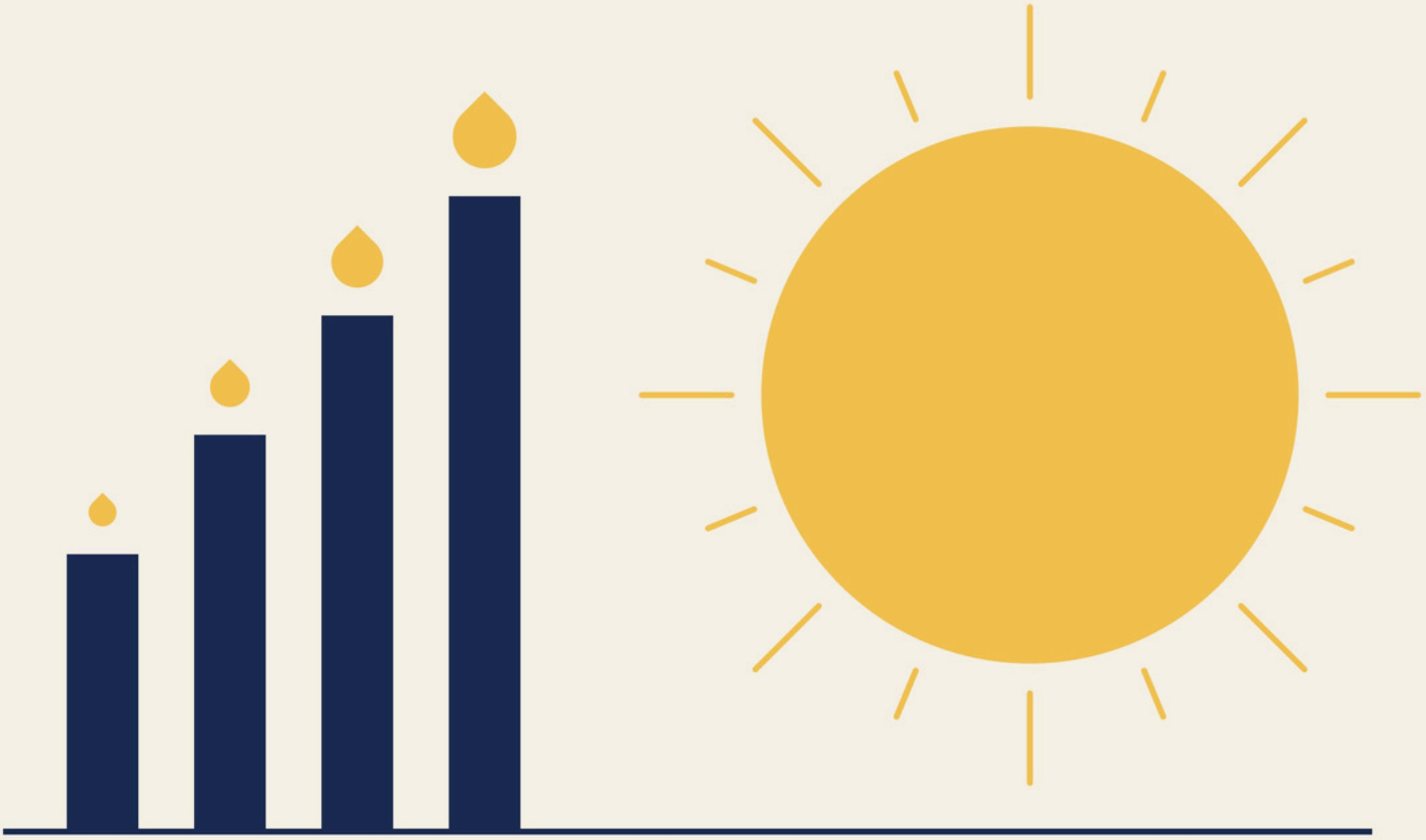


Advent Christmas Epiphany

December 2026
– January 2027

Dear Church,

Before I wrote this letter, I read the rest of this Scroll, and I'd suggest you do the same with a pencil in hand. Ham and a tree to trim on December 2. Gingerbread houses and a cello playing carols on the 13th. Christmas Eve at 4:00 and again at 9:00. A dinner for our first responders, Dinner Church with the youth, 180 Valentine favors to assemble, and the fourth Monday of every month at Mission Central. By the time these pages get around to Easter eggs, it is still only January.

And into all of this, the church says: wait.

Advent is the season of waiting, and that can sound like one more thing we are failing at. Who has time to wait? We picture it as sitting still, hands folded, calendar cleared. Then we look at December and decide that Advent must be for other, calmer people.

But look at who does the waiting in the Christmas story. Mary waits nine months, and she spends part of it on the road, first to Elizabeth's house and then to Bethlehem. Zechariah is reporting for his shift at the temple. The shepherds are at work in the middle of the night when the sky opens. Simeon and Anna have grown old waiting, and they are in the temple when the child is carried in.

Nobody in this story waits with empty hands. They work, travel, cook, and pray. What sets them apart is not how little they are doing. It is what they are watching for.

So a full calendar is not the enemy of Advent. The trouble is a full calendar with nobody looking up. The same ham dinner can be an evening to get through or a table where Christ is likely to turn up, and the only difference is whether we walked in expecting him.

Here is the good news underneath all of it: Christ does not come because we waited well. Bethlehem was crowded, distracted, and out of room, and he came anyway. He comes to the watchful and to the worn out, and he will come to us whether or not we manage a single still moment this December.

So take your pencil and circle what you can. Let the rest go without guilt. And wherever you do show up these next two months, show up as someone expecting to meet somebody.

In Christ,
Pastor Alex

President's Corner

This is an exciting time in the church as we begin to see the activities associated with Advent and Christmas unfold. There will be many opportunities to worship, fellowship, serve, and share during this time and into the new year.

One of the opportunities to serve is to be a council member. In November, we elected three people to serve a three-year term, and we are still searching for a fourth. If you have any interest in being considered, please let Pastor Alex or the congregation President know. The newly elected council members will start their term in January.

At the November meeting, the council elected new officers to serve both the council and the congregation for a one-year term starting in January. President, Vice President, and Secretary are elected from those remaining on council. Congratulations to Kathy Zagoric on being elected President. Steve Kessler was elected Vice President. Connie Kishbaugh was elected Secretary.

At the November meeting, the council also appointed the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Recording Secretary. The council has appointed Tom Draude as Treasurer, Rena Rinehart as Financial Secretary, and Dory Kessler as Recording Secretary.

Most people are aware that their regular offering goes into the General Fund, which is used to pay all the bills of the church that relate to the Annual Budget you approve. There is also the Building Fund, which is for the unanticipated building needs that are not in the budget, such as the replacement of the door security system that keeps the building safe. We are currently trying to build up this fund for deferred maintenance items such as this.

If you use envelopes, there is a place to indicate a contribution to the Building Fund. There is also a blue envelope for Council Designated Projects. Currently, we are still receiving donations to cover the cost of the renovations of the bathrooms. Look for a new project from Council in 2027.

President Priss Bashore

Worship & Music

Advent is approaching, then Christmas, then winter. Advent is the beginning of the church year. It's a good time to contemplate new beginnings.

We can dovetail our thinking about new beginnings with the recent stewardship campaign. We can look at what new time, talent, and resources we can offer. We can discern what our new gifts to our Lord and church could be. Can you be a worship service volunteer? There are many opportunities in which to participate.

As Christmas approaches, we begin a new search for gifts that would match the greatest Gift we have ever received, Jesus Christ. Of course, that isn't possible, but it might spark an idea of a new gift to offer.

Then, we move into the quiet time of winter when it seems nothing new is going on. However, all the new things and gifts we discerned during Advent or Christmas seasons require planning, cultivating, and focus. Winter's quiet gives us that opportunity.

What will your new beginnings be?

The Fruit of the Spirit

An overwhelming "**Thank You**" to everyone who has pledged support to our 2027 stewardship campaign. The response so far has been tremendous and heartwarming. As of this edition of the Scroll, 50 families and individuals have indicated their intent to share their Fruit of the Spirit with St. Peter's congregation and community. The total financial commitment is $195,381.68. You have shown once again that the hearts of our members are dedicated to helping others through contributions of your time, talent, and other blessings with those with whom we share the peace each Sunday morning. Anyone who has not yet returned their cards and forms, please know that you can still submit yours in the collection plate or at the church office. The Fruit of the Spirit is thriving at St. Peter!



Anahi School Sponsorship for 2027



It is that time again when we need to start raising funds for Anahi's scholarship. Her school year runs from January to October. As of now, the cost will be $150 per month. Please consider donating to help fund Anahi's education and needs.

ELCW News

The ELCW will be making 180 Valentine favors for Meals on Wheels during December and January. There will not be meetings at Cafe 100 during these months.

Crop Walk

Thanks to the generous support from this congregation and the West Shore community in general, the 2026 Mechanicsburg/West Shore CROP Walk was a great success on many counts. St. Peter recorded 30 walkers and many more donors in support of the walk on October 18. We raised over $3,400, and the CROP Walk in total had 463 participants and raised $58,500 for local and global hunger relief, with a substantial portion of that going to support Mechanicsburg Meals on Wheels and the New Hope Food Pantry. Thank you to all who volunteered, walked, ran, wheeled, and donated to this much-needed effort.







Partnership with Mission Central is Growing

In March 2026, we started a new outreach activity to our community by volunteering at Mission Central (located at 5 Pleasant View Drive, Mechanicsburg; https://missioncentral.org/). Since then, the St. Peter Lutheran Church (SPLC) group has volunteered there a total of three times, and we are scheduled to do that again on November 23, 2026. You can sign up here: Sign up here
This year, our congregation has also donated hand towels and nail clippers, items needed for the "personal hygiene kits", as well as school supplies, to Mission Central.



SPLC group together with Angel Flores, the new Volunteer Coordinator at Mission Central, on August 24, 2026.

Starting in January 2027, this partnership will grow, and we will start volunteering at Mission Central on the 4th Monday of every month. Each time, we need a group of 12 SPLC members. Sign-up sheets will be circulated ahead of each visit.
You can also continue to help us collect items that Mission Central needs for their different programs, the "kits" that they assemble. The three most needed items right now are:

1. Flushable wipes
2. Notebooks
3. Spray air fresheners, e.g., Mrs. Meyer's

There is a box in our church building where you can deposit your donations of these items. If you have questions, please contact Cheryl Fratus.

St. Peter Youth Group Happenings

We've got many exciting youth group and family ministry events coming up; we can't wait to see you at one! Our full event schedule is below, but I wanted to take a moment to call out and invite everyone to a few special events coming up. First is our December 13 Family Gingerbread Day! Join us after the late service for lunch and some gingerbread fun! We'll provide all the supplies you need to decorate gingerbread cookies and build a gingerbread house while we watch a Christmas movie together! This event is open to all ages and families of any kind! You do not need to sign up in advance.

Looking ahead to January, the entire congregation is invited to our annual Dinner Church Fundraiser on Saturday, January 30! Join us for a night of great food and worship led by the youth group. For a goodwill donation, spend some time in worship around the table and in fellowship with one another. More information about both of these special events is coming soon!

Throughout the season, we also have our normally scheduled youth group meetings, some Dungeons & Dragons & Devotionals Flex Meetings, and some synodwide events, like a Young Adults meeting on January 3 and Winterfest for Sr. High & Young Adults. If you are interested in learning more about any of these events, please reach out to Kellen at stpeterlcyouth@gmail.com.

Upcoming Youth Events

December 2026

13th - Family Gingerbread Day - 12 PM
SPYG Meeting - 5-8 PM
20th - SPYG Christmas Party - 5-8 PM

January 2027

3rd - SYNOD Young Adults Meeting - 5-8 PM
6th - D&D&D Flex Meeting - 6-8 PM
8th-10th - Winterfest - Sr. High Synod Retreat at Wyndham Resort, Lancaster

January 2027 Continued

24th - SPYG Jr. Meeting - 12-2 PM
SPYG Meeting - 5-8 PM
30th - SPYG Dinner Church Fundraiser - 5-6:30 PM

February 2027

7th - SPYG Jr. Meeting - 12-2 PM
SPYG Meeting - 5-8 PM
26th-27th - Lock-In - 8 PM-8:30 AM

2nd Annual Chili Cook-off

The Fellowship Committee held the 2nd Annual Chili Cook-off on November 8, right after the congregational meeting. Eight chilis competed this year, and Cheryl Fratus took home the top prize with a delicious Wendy's Copycat Chili recipe. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful time together.









2026 Winner - Cheryl
2025 Winner - Gloria

Sunday Fellowship

Join us on December 13, January 10, and February 14 for a time of fellowship with Church friends while you enjoy a hot beverage and a snack. In December, Cindy Ward will be entertaining us with Christmas carols on her cello from 10 AM to 10:15 AM, and in February there will be Valentine treats for everyone. Fellowship is from 9 AM to 10:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions contact Dottie Shultz at 717-766-0457 or dshultz627@gmail.com.

Ham Dinner

The Fellowship Committee will be hosting our annual Ham Dinner, Tree Trim, and Hymn Sing on Wednesday, December 2, starting at 6:00 PM, and we would love for you to join us! The committee will provide the ham and drinks. Please sign up in the hallway with the number attending and whether you will be bringing a side dish or dessert. This is a perfect way to start the Christmas Season with your St. Peter family.

First Responders Dinner

The Fellowship Committee invites you, your family & friends to join us for a Congregational Dinner for our First Responders on Saturday, January 23 at 4:00 PM. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the hallway.

Game Night

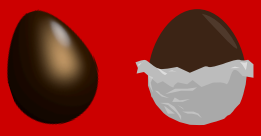
Please add GAME NIGHT to your calendar for Saturday, February 6 at 4:00 PM! A sign-up sheet will be posted in the hallway. It is always a good time. We will provide pizza and drinks. Bring your favorite game and a snack to share.

Egg Maker Lunch

Egg Maker Lunch will be at 1:00 PM at Brother's Restaurant on December 1 and January 5. There will be no lunch in February and March due to egg-making.

Easter Egg Making

Easter egg making will be here soon. Please mark your calendars for January 26 as the first day for egg making. We will continue making eggs every Tuesday and Thursday morning through March 18. It is a great time for socializing as well as making Easter eggs. Everyone is welcome!



Lent

Ash Wednesday is February 10 this year. The Fellowship Committee will be hosting our Annual Fish Dinners starting on Ash Wednesday and continuing every Wednesday through Lent. Our Annual Shrimp & Lobster dinner will be held on Holy Thursday. Sign-ups will be posted in the hallway.

Service Dates and Times

December 24 - (Christmas Eve)	**4 PM:** a family-friendly service **9 PM:** a traditional candlelight service
December 25 - (Christmas Day)	**9:30 AM** (one service)
December 27 -	**9:30 AM** (one service) Lessons and Carols
January 3 -	**9:30 AM** (one service)
January 10 - (return to regular worship schedule)	**8:00 AM** **9:00 AM Wee Worship** **10:45 AM**

Financial Snapshot

	October '26	YTD	
Income	22,474.40	**Income**	248,833.55
Expenses	22,881.43	**Expenses**	247,100.68
Net Income	-407.03	**Net Income**	1,732.87

Anniversary Blessings!



December 31 - David & Laurie Hamilton

January 3 - Gerard Tromp & Helena Kuivaniemi
January 18 - Chuck & Judy Wiley

February 2 - Brian Speck & Laurie Hoover
February 6 - Bill & Clare Laubenheimer
February 11 - Lou & Jackie Quatrini
February 22 - Brian & Amanda Zagoric



Birthday Blessings!



December 2 - Esther Lehman
December 3 - Priss Bashore
December 7 - Craig Nelson
December 7 - Shannon Pennington
December 8 - Frank Fawber
December 8 - Bill Laubenheimer
December 10 - Lou Quatrini
December 10 - Lance Savant
December 11 - Beth Peffer
December 11 - Linda Warner
December 12 - Evan Terry
December 15 - Carolyn Regan
December 17 - Chris Barry
December 18 - Carole Knisely
December 18 - Chuck Wiley
December 20 - George Bedorf
December 20 - Stephanie Reinhart
December 23 - Bonnie Gasswint
December 23 - Ginny Ruediger
December 24 - Carol Forbes
December 26 - Chris Nelson
December 26 - Bobbie Smith
December 31 - Fran Hummer

January 2 - Pat Ball
January 2 - Matt Witmer
January 4 - Kamryn Terry
January 5 - Faith Klemick
January 6 - Darlene Fawber
January 6 - Michael Peffer
January 7 - Grant Franko
January 8 - Kyle Noss
January 10 - Bill Bowen
January 10 - Gloria Moyer
January 11 - Anne Harner
January 15 - Esther Long
January 15 - Barbara Nace
January 18 - Madison Ernst
January 20 - Stephanie Gross
January 23 - Lori Caruso
January 23 - Clay Peffer
January 27 - John Sproat
January 28 - Marlin Keller
January 29 - Liam Curran
January 29 - Molly Curran
January 31 - Carol Cook

February 1 - Rick Allen
February 5 - Tom Draude
February 6 - Tammy Nelson
February 6 - Janice Shuty
February 7 - Brook Lenker
February 8 - Elsen Pironti
February 9 - Carol Slack
February 13 - Bob Barger
February 15 - Brynlee Bowers
February 16 - Stacie Witmer
February 17 - Amy Curran
February 18 - Bryce Gross
February 18 - Kevin Lehman
February 19 - Katie Noss
February 20 - Andrea Bankes
February 21 - Melissa Savant
February 28 - Deidre Lenker



ST. PETER
LUTHERAN CHURCH

130 Nittany Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

St. Peter Lutheran Church
(717) 766-2701
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM

www.stpetermechanicsburg.com
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youtube.com/@st.petermechanicsburg6351

8:00 AM and 10:45 AM Worship
Wee Worship 9:00 AM