

St. Petri Evangelical Lutheran Church
804 Grand Avenue
Story City, Iowa 50248-1417

The St. Petri Messenger

A publication of St. Petri Evangelical Lutheran Church

St. Petri Worship Schedule

(Beginning September 7th on Rally Sunday)

9:00am Sunday School

10:00am Worship

11:00am Coffee/Fellowship

St. Petri Church Office Hours

8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Mon.-Fri

(Except Wed. afternoon)

Church Office Phone: (515) 733-4623

Email: stpetrilutheran@stpetri.org

Website: www.stpetri.org

Pastor Tim Malek 515-598-6635

Missionaries Patrick & Jacqueline Bencke, Japan

Parish/Financial Secretary – Veronica Wright

Custodian – Connie Valentine

September 2025

HOMEcomings SUNDAY

September 21st



You can also view the newsletter online at www.stpetri.org

ST. PETRI LUTHERAN CHURCH, STORY CITY, IA

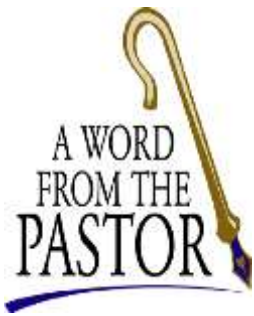
SEPTEMBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Every Sunday in Sept. (unless noted) 9:00a Sunday School 10:00a Worship Service 11:00a Coffee/Fellowship	1 LABOR DAY Office Closed	2 9a-3p Bethany Quilters	3	4	5 Pastor's Day Off	6
7 GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS 2:00-5:30p Theater Group 5:30p 10th grade Confirmands & Parents at Bergen 6:30p 8th-9th grade Confirmands at Bergen	8 10:30a Staff Mtg. 7p Prop/Trustee Mtg.	9 9a-3p Bethany Quilters	10	11 3:30-5:45p Theater Group 6:30p Salad Supper Guest Night at Our Savior's Radcliffe	12 Pastor's Day Off	13
14 Communion 11:15a Council Mtg.	15 10:30a Staff Mtg.	16 9a-3p Bethany Quilters	17	18 2p WELCA Circle 3:30-5:45p Theater Group	19 Pastor's Day Off	20 October Newsletter Articles Due
21 HOMECOMING SUNDAY Potluck, hymns, history, games 11:15am Adult Bible Study on 2 Corinthians 2-5:30p Children theater group 6:30-8p 8 th & 9 th grade confirmands-St. Petri	22 ---- LWR Quilt making 9a-noon Mon-Wed ---- 10:30a Staff mtg.	23 9a-3p Bethany Quilters	24	25 11:30a St. Petri Senior Luncheon 3:30-5:45p Theater Group	26 Pastor Day Off Sec. Day Off	27 8am Weekend Women's Bible Study on Genesis 10a St. Petri works at Loaves & Fishes
28 Communion ---Tri-Synodical Fall Theo. Conf 12:45-4:15p Children's Theater	29 10:30a Staff mtg.	30 28 th -30 th ---- 9a-3p Bethany Quilters	Oct. 1	2 3:30-5:45p Theater Group	3 Pastor's Day Off	4

St. Petri Messenger



SEPTEMBER 2025



Pastor Tim Malek

Faith Seeking Understanding

September always feels like a turning point. The heat of summer begins to soften, the days shorten, and the fields around us grow heavy with corn and soybeans. Farmers prepare for long hours in the combine, and communities gather at school events, football games, and fall festivals. In all these rhythms, we are reminded of God's steady faithfulness and abundant provision.

Harvest time in Scripture is often a picture of God's kingdom—of seeds planted, nurtured, and finally gathered in. In much the same way, our lives of faith bear fruit in season. Every act of kindness, every prayer lifted, every word of encouragement is like a seed planted in God's good soil. Even when we do not see results right away, God is at work bringing life and growth.

The old hymn sings it well: *"All is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin."* These words remind us not only of the farmer's harvest, but also of the spiritual

harvest God gathers in each of us—a harvest of grace, love, and faith.

This season is also a time of fresh routines. Students settle back into classrooms, families adjust to new schedules, and our congregation looks ahead to fall ministries. I encourage you to make worship and fellowship part of your rhythm this fall. Each voice, each prayer, each person adds to the richness of our life together, reminding us that though we may be small in number, we are strong in witness.

As we pray for our farmers—for safety, strength, and endurance in the weeks ahead—let us also look to the "fields" of our own lives. How is God calling us to gather in, to share, and to serve? May this September be a season not only of harvest in the fields, but of gratitude and growth in our hearts.

God bless you – Pastor Tim

Adult New Testament Class

Sunday September 21 at 11:15 a.m.
We will study Second Corinthians.
Please read ahead of time but come regardless, it will be informative.

OUR MISSION:

We are Disciples of Jesus Christ,
called to grow in Christ
and to invite all to follow him.

**SUNDAY
SCHOOL
BEGINS**
September 7th
at 9:00 a.m.



Mark your calendars!
September 7th will be the time change of
our worship service and Sunday School
will begin!

9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship service



“GOD’S WORK. OUR HANDS.”

September 7, 2025

This day is an opportunity to celebrate
who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America — one church, freed in
Christ to serve & love our neighbor.
This year St. Petri will be packaging treats
and writing advocacy letters – spread the
word and plan on joining!



HOMECOMING SUNDAY at St. Petri
September 21st, 2025

This special service will include favorite
hymns, pieces of church history, and end
with fellowship time including a tailgate-
type lunch and outdoor activities.

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

In August 2025

In Our Prayers

Connie Valentine (knee rehab)

Hospitalized in August

Judy Schnurstein (rehab),
Jane Bauman (surgery)

In Memoriam

Ongoing Prayer Concerns

Linda Fevold, Larry Reisetter,
Paul Wierson,
Darlene Patterson

Prayers for those not near to us:

Patrick and Jacqueline Bencke, ELCA
Missionaries, Japan
Soldiers, Peace Workers, and
Humanitarian Aid Workers
Those in Ukraine and Russia

We've enjoyed being
part of the St. Petri
family and thank you
for your well-wishes!
Ordean & Liz Johnson



Thank you to all who volunteered to
serve the Senior Citizens Wednesday
meals in August! You're a blessing!



St. Petri's Senior Luncheon
for members 75 years and older.
September 25th at 11:30am to 1:00pm
in St. Petri's Fellowship Hall
Come enjoy some
great food and great fellowship!



WELCA Report

September 18 2:00pm
WELCA Circle Bible Study
All women welcome!

September 22-24 9:00am-noon
Quilt making



**You are Invited
to the
"Weekend Women's
Bible Study"**

In September we are starting to read through **Genesis**. You can drop in any month. Genesis contains many well known stories, and we will read about these stories in new ways. Come prepared to be surprised! Certainly, Genesis affirms God's love for us all.

Our first meeting is **Saturday, Sept 27, at 8am, at the parsonage as usual.** (Most other months will be on the 3rd Saturday of the month, and meeting dates will be announced in the newsletters and bulletins.) Coffee and food are always enjoyed each month as well for those that are interested.

Call or text Debra at 320-905-9510 if you have any questions.

**LABOR DAY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st
~CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED~**

St. Petri Office Hours

Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
(except Wednesday afternoon)

St Petri Ladies, you are cordially invited!

Our Savior's Women's Guest Night Salad Supper

at Our Savior's Lutheran Church
(601 Isabella, Radcliffe, IA)

Thursday, September 11th at 6:30 p.m.

Theme: *More Than Words: Living What
We Believe*

Speakers: Wendy Kretzmann and
Kathy Houck

Join us for an evening of fellowship,
music, humor, and (hopefully) inspiration!

Freewill offering will be taken

Please RSVP Donna Ostrem 515-899-2276



Sept. 2: Valaree Muhlenburg
Sept. 3: Carter Barber, Jason Hill,
Doug Ness
Sept. 6: Karen Munson
Sept. 8: Noah Healy
Sept. 9: Don Kolbe, Janet Mortvedt
Sept. 10: Patricia Van Patter
Sept. 12: Evan Klett, Mary Pelican
Sept. 13: Cory Anderson, Nicole Healy
Sept. 14: Joni Brown
Sept. 18: Kendra Braucher,
Kelly Schmitz
Sept. 19: Margaret Johnstad,
Ryan Thorson,
Angela Van Patter
Sept. 24: Jennifer Holdredge,
Annette Owenson
Sept. 26: Colbie Bauman,
Kalen Bauman,
Sayer Peterson
Sept. 29: Sharon Sills
Sept. 30: Clark Grinde



ST. PETRI MEMBERS



If you have a new address, phone number, or email address, please contact the church secretary so we can update our church records.
(515-733-4623 or stpetrilutheran@stpetri.org)

Hi, it's Church Mouse!

It was so special for us to be included in Pastor Johnstad's 90th birthday celebration in August. The food was delicious, and they call me an animal, but you all devoured the cake like nobody's business. The table decorations were beautiful, with a large number 90 displayed. Happy birthday, Pastor Johnstad!



The church lawn growth hasn't let up during this rainy summer, and the Murkens have been keeping up with it flawlessly. Thank you so much, Pat, Jo, and David, for mowing the lawn all summer! We appreciate you.

**My heart is full,
Church Mouse**



LOOKING FOR A CARE GROUP LEADER

This is a really easy process that happens 2-3 times a year. It doesn't take much time and a great way to get to know members.

If you are in a different group right now, that doesn't matter. You can be the leader and move to the new CARE Group.

Please consider this great opportunity! See Ann Healy if you have questions.

SEPTEMBER C.A.R.E. GROUP 2025

CARE Group 2 Leader

Ann Healy

Martha Arends	Tim & Amy Crouch
Carol Foss	Erick & Paige Healy
Garrett & Sierra Healy	Kyle & Nicole Healy
Mike Healy	Jeff & Callie Henrichs
Barb Hermanson	
Roger & Nancy Hermanson	
Lorna Hoversten	Nancy Jewell
Rolfe & Margaret Johnstad	
Kevin & Diana Keech	Mary Nannenga
Darlene Patterson	Steve & Mary Peterson
Ron & Glenda Rahfeldt	Nathan & Kayla Tafolla
Ryan & Katie Thorson	Hubert & Gloria Tussey



OCTOBER C.A.R.E. GROUP 2025

CARE Group 3 Leaders

Debra Malek, Annette Owenson

Dave & Nicole Bauman	Jane Bauman
Dan Birchmier	Brad & Beth Dedic
Kim Finley	Tom & Kris Foss
Marlene Helling	John & Angie (Rieck)Hinz
Danny & Chris Hobbs	Tyler Hobbs
Jason & Heather Johnson	
James & Sherri Keigan	John & Jan Lekwa
Pastor Tim Malek	
Barry & Valaree Muhlenburg	
Trent & Katelyn Muhlenburg	
John & Mary Pelican	Sharon Sills
Paul Wiersen	Tom & Mary Wynia



Come check out the
books at
St. Petri's new Library
Book Shelf
In the fellowship hall!

**WEEKLY SUNDAY BULLETIN
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

are due the Wednesday morning before.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

are due the 20th of the previous month
to ensure that they will be in the
newsletter.

Please send them to
stpetrilutheran@stpetri.org or
give them to the Church Secretary.

Thank you! ☺

St. Petri has a YouTube Channel

We post videos past events and
services... We hope to post more
church-related events in the future.
You can find the YouTube Channel at
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC44o0DUzQrLYR7CEJBHCegQ>
Questions? Please contact: Abby & Tim
Patterson or Angie & John Hinz.



Dear Pastor Tim and St. Petri Members,

It's back-to-school season across Iowa. For many families, that's a reason to breathe a sigh of relief, because free and reduced-price school meals are back on the table.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you because for three long months, your generosity helped *Bridge the Gap* for thousands of students on summer break.

Hunger doesn't go away during the school year. Many children still don't have enough to eat in the evening or on weekends. Our childhood hunger programs are critical to ensure kids have reliable, consistent nutrition year-round.

Because without us, a child's focus, behavior and development are all at risk.

Through the Backpack Program, elementary students receive a sack of nutritious, kid-friendly food each Friday during the school year to carry them through the weekend.

Kids and families can also receive groceries through our School Pantry Program. Food Bank of Iowa stocks the shelves of more than 167 school pantries in 44 counties. We provide the food, delivery, equipment and training, while school staff run the pantries.

These programs are free of charge to our schools.

Thank you for helping Food Bank of Iowa *Bridge the Gap* this summer, and thank you for helping ensure our Iowa children — and neighbors of all ages — can rely on food access all year long.

With gratitude,

Bergetta Beardsley, VP of Philanthropy
Food Bank of Iowa



**St. Petri Lutheran Church
Approved Council Minutes
July 13, 2025 10:15 a.m.**

Present: Angie Rieck-Hinz, Travis DeRidder, Rick Stover, Angie Stover, Ann Healy, Pat Murken, Kelsey Olson, Pastor Tim Malek
Absent: Abby Patterson

Meeting called to order at 10:18 a.m. Ann Healy offered Devotions.

Angie S. presented the June Minutes for approval. Ann made a motion to accept the minutes as written; Pat seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

Rick presented the Treasurer's Report. He presented the June checks written and the June journal entries. He noted that, although income minus expenses for June was in the negative, the church's total budget remains in the positive. It has been more than 10 years since the church has had a positive balance at this point in the year. Kelsey made a motion to accept the information as presented; Travis seconded. No discussion. Motion passed

Pastor made the Council aware of visits he had at Riverside Bible Camp with four St. Petri campers. He noted that Grace UMC has a new interim pastor and that Rev. Johnathan Dolan is now a one-year interim at Bethesda Lutheran in Jewell. Pastor also made the Council aware that he would be using vacation time while the Iowa State Fair is going on. He plans to volunteer with two different organizations at the fair. An inspection of the Parsonage by the Property and Trustees committee is scheduled for the last Sunday in July.

Angie R-H announced plans for a representative of the Endowment Committee to attend the August Council meeting.

Ann reported that St. Petri will be involved with the R-S Serves event in the park Saturday, August 23. St. Petri plans to provide hot dogs and lemonade.

Pat reported that the Black Hills Energy service contract will be canceled soon. He also provided insight from the survey the committee handed out regarding new church signage. Survey responses are still being taken and Pat plans to put information regarding this in the August newsletter.

Kelsey reported that the first "Summer Fun Night" on July 2nd went well and a second one is scheduled for the 23rd.

Old Business: The Executive Committee completed Pastor Tim's yearly review.

New Business: A community meal will be sponsored by St. Petri Saturday, July 19 at Loaves and Fishes to coincide with the church serving the food pantry that day.

There were two vacancies on the Altar Committee that were filled immediately, and the Council appointed Kendra Braucher to finish out the remainder of Pat Murken's term on the Endowment Committee. Two people are needed to replace Tom and Kris Foss on the Finance Committee. Kelsey made a motion and Pat seconded to approve these committee changes. No discussion. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:37 am. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Stover

July income/expense -\$592.64 2025 YTD \$4,506.32
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LUTHERAN BIBLE CAMP EVENTS

**For more info or to register,
please contact us.**

Website: www.riversidelbc.org

Email: rlbc@riversidelbc.org

Office phone: 515-733-5271

Riverside Annual Golf Classic

Friday, September 19, 2025

at Coldwater Golf Links in Ames!

\$125/player 18 holes with cart, goodie bag, lunch, ice cream afterwards & prizes!

Women's Retreat

Friday evening (optional) thru Sunday
September 18-20

Guest Speaker – Amanda Neppel, a pastor and Adult Discipleship Team Leader at Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines.

Ride with the King

October 3-6 Mother-Daughter RWTk

October 10-12 Family RWTk

October 24-26 Mother-Daughter RWTk

Ride With the King is a ministry using horses as a tool to help people of all ages understand Christ's unconditional love in a way that encourages them to live for Him. **New in 2025, we are adding an additional Ride with the King event for families.** So if you want to bring dad or big brother, do it!

Mother-Daughter & Family Overnight

This event involves lots of "horse time", learning how our faith connects with horses, trail rides, horsemanship, and terrific fellowship. Enjoy the beauty of Fall, wagon rides, trail rides, a delicious cookout, activities, devotions... a great time of laughter, play and prayer!

EWALU Camp & Retreat Center EVENTS

**For more info or to register,
please contact us.**

Website: www.ewalu.org

Email: camp@ewalu.org

Office phone: 563-933-4700

37776 Alpha Ave., Strawberry Point, IA

EWALU's 38th ANNUAL QUILT AUCTION

Saturday, September 20, 2025

(online auction Sept. 15-21)

FREE admission & family fun day!

All are welcome for music, food & fellowship

9am – Family fun & quilt viewing

11am - Devotional Service

12pm – Freewill lunch

1pm – Live auction bidding begins

AUTUMN ODYSSEY

4pm Oct. 13 to 11am Oct. 15

Monday - Wednesday

55+ Retreat (just for seniors) speakers, hiking, relaxation...

Speakers: Rev. Joan Fumetti and

Rev. Larry Trachte

More info at www.ewalu.org/Autumn-Odyssey

FALL WORK DAY

Sat., Oct. 18 8am – 4pm with lunch

**Fri., Oct. 17 volunteers can spend the night
for FREE!**

DIRTY FEET RETREAT Grades 6-9

8pm Friday, Oct. 17-1am Sun., Oct. 19

Enjoy 2 nights of lodging, Bible studies, meals, snacks, praise music, High Ropes Course, campfires...

The Bencke Family in Japan



August 2025: 109番



This is a path I take when I walk to campus. In the early summer, these “weeds” sprout up in the cracks between the pavement and the walls. While the asphalt is not breathtaking and concrete encompasses about 98% of the picture, the green, purple, and white colors are central. Much like our lives where the background is fairly ordinary, we can find remarkable joy in its midst.

Joy

I don't know about you, but for me, scrolling through the news on any given day, well, joyful things seem to be hard to come by. Whether it's related to politics, climate, budgets, job security, health, or any other perceived calamity, finding joy in between the headlines takes work. Much like a relationship, recognizing joy takes some work. A couple of years ago, I attended a conference where Willie Jennings was the keynote speaker. He speaks of joy as an act of resistance against despair. It's counterintuitive in a world filled with suffering. Jesus differentiates joy from fleeting happiness, something that is not dependent on circumstances. Joy is a gift and a deeper state of spirituality, ever-present, even in our sorrows. And while I appreciate the sentiment behind her thinking, joy is more than just the subject of Marie Kondo's catch phrase of “does it spark joy” when you are cleaning out your closets.

In North America, another school year is approaching. Teaching is one of those professions where it can be difficult to find joy in our day-to-day grind. As the bureaucratic expectations continue to mount while resources dwindle, digging deep to find enthusiasm can be challenging, but there is deep fulfillment when students shine with the thrill of their achievements.

As a teacher in a missionary context, bringing different perspectives to the classroom or to the rehearsal requires an extra measure of considering whether my perspective is pushing a western version of Christianity or authentically opening doors to see the world through Scripture. This requires that I am both a student and a teacher at the same time. Figuring out how the Word is relevant for students in the music they prepare is (or should be) the nucleus of each rehearsal or class. Some days, I fail. Some days, students “get it.” My act of resistance is knowing that our Lord can redeem those days or moments when we feel we aren't measuring up. Faith is knowing that God redeems all of our efforts and shortcomings for His kingdom. All of it.

Recently, we have had a few opportunities to re-connect with graduates who participated in our classes and activities. One student, who was a chapel choir member, got married. In addition to asking me to play for her wedding, which was incredibly humbling, for her wedding ceremony she asked a couple of other graduates who were choir members to sing a few of the songs they had learned while in our chapel choir. What unfiltered joy filled my heart when I heard them sing praise to the Lord once again!

Another former student, from looong ago in our Menomonie days, spent a wonderful weekend with us in early June. What a privelege to meet his kids and spend time talking about how his life has unfolded since graduating from high school a few decades ago. It was a gift to reminisce about the past, share about the present, and ponder future endeavors. To be able to pray for student, past and present, is a gift in and of itself. I was reminded that our God is a God of yesterday, today, and forever. While our lives are on a linear path of time, God's time is a singular unit and our lives are meant for His purpose.

Patrick also went to a reunion for graduates who are currently teaching in primary and secondary schools. Again, their recollections of having meaningful experiences as they encountered Christianity for the first time in choir or as instrumentalists for chapel events made my heart soar with hope that those lyrics sung continue to have the ability to penetrate deeply into their soul.

These reunions allow us to look back, reflect, and pause in wonder at how God is faithful to us and is always working behind the scenes of what we see in our limited perspectives. I love it when I can get a 30,000 foot view of how students' lives unfurl after we push them out of the nest at graduation. Knowing that the Lord is the wellspring of joy, I can say with confidence that these moments quench my thirst for joy in what often feels like an ambivalent world.

In these final weeks of summer, before the classrooms are prepared, I pray that all who read these musings are able to take a moment to pause, take a sip of your favorite beverage, and point to the evidence of God's faithfulness throughout your personal and professional journeys. And may that, in itself, bring you joy.



Former student, Yuki,
and her husband



Patrick and two former choir
members at a reunion for
teachers.



Former Menomonie
student, Dave, and his
two remarkable
children enjoying a day
at Kumamoto Castle.

