

ST. PETER COMMUNICATOR

43 N 3rd St., Hilbert, WI 54129

Office: (920) 853-3217

February 2023

From the desk of Pastor Peterson

Grace, mercy, and God's peace to each and every one of you from our risen, victorious, and ascended Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. I hope that this new year of 2023 will be a blessing to all of you. There is a joke that goes around this time of year as Valentine's Day approaches. This joke involves single people. We are supposed to call St. Valentine's Day as "black Tuesday". Since February 14th is Valentine's Day and it falls on a Tuesday, you get the idea. When it comes to Valentine's Day though, we must remember that all days are Valentine's Day for those of us in Christ. While we send cards, money, flowers, or whatever gifts to our loved ones on this day, let us never lose focus on who loves us. Jesus. Through His Word and Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, Jesus delivers His love for us, and shows us that we are His people. Redeemed by the shedding of His blood. This was an act of unselfishness on the part of Jesus to give His life for us and shows us the true love (Agape) type of love that can only be defined or compared as the love that you all have for your children, and that definition falls short as well.

Valentine's Day is named after Saint Valentine. While modern day themes may look at angelic cherubs drawing back the arrow of love, Valentine's Day has another meaning that is more profound for us as Christians. A little history will show us the true meaning of what it means to celebrate Valentine's Day. Saint Valentine was a Catholic priest who had also worked as a doctor. He lived in Italy during the third century AD and served as a priest in Rome. Historians don't know much about Valentine's early life. They pick up Valentine's story after he began working as a priest. Valentine became famous for marrying couples who were in love but couldn't get legally married in Rome during the reign of Emperor Claudius II, who outlawed weddings. Claudius wanted to recruit lots of men to be soldiers in his army and thought that marriage would be an obstacle to recruiting new soldiers. He also wanted to prevent his existing soldiers from getting married because he thought that marriage would distract them from their work.

When Emperor Claudius discovered that Valentine was performing weddings, he sent Valentine to jail. Valentine used his time in jail to continue to reach out to people with the love that he said Jesus Christ gave him for others. He befriended his jailer, Asterius, who became so impressed with Valentine's wisdom that he asked Valentine to help his daughter, Julia, with her lessons. Julia was blind and needed someone to read material for her to learn it. Valentine became friends with Julia through his work with her when she came to visit him in jail. Emperor Claudius also came to like Valentine. He offered to pardon Valentine and set him free if Valentine would renounce his Christian faith and agree to worship the Roman gods. Not only did Valentine refuse to leave his faith, and he also encouraged Emperor Claudius to place his trust in Christ. Valentine's faithful choices cost him his life. Emperor Claudius was so enraged at Valentine's response that he sentenced Valentine to die.

Before he was killed, Valentine wrote a last note to encourage Julia to stay close to Jesus and to thank her for being his friend. He signed the note: "From your Valentine." That note inspired people to begin writing their own loving messages to people on Valentine's Feast Day, February 14th, which is celebrated on the same day on which Valentine was martyred.

Valentine was beaten, stoned, and beheaded on February 14, 270. People who remembered his loving service to many young couples began celebrating his life, and he came to be regarded as a saint through whom God had worked to help people in miraculous ways. By 496, Pope Gelasius designated February 14th as Valentine's official feast day.

Enjoy your Valentine's Day this year with your beloved. Candies, flowers, gifts, a good dinner date are all special events that can cement love with your spouse. In that spirit of love, always look to Jesus Christ, who is our true valentine. Remember, God really, really, really, does love you. Amen

Ref: Hopley, Whitney. "Saint Valentine's Story." Learn Religions, Sep. 5, 2021, [learnreligions.com/st-valentine-patron-saint-of-love-124544](https://www.learnreligions.com/st-valentine-patron-saint-of-love-124544).



LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION

Souper Bowl Sunday

We are well on our way to a generous supply of items to donate to the Bread of Life Food Pantry in Chilton. This facility serves the needy in all of Calumet County community, especially the Chilton and Hilbert area people.

Take a look at the WIM bulletin board in the Narthex and see what kinds of items are needed for this ministry. Then add one or two to your weekly shopping trip and place them in the container. This is a great way to share Jesus' love for all people.

Also, take a look at the tables in the Fellowship Hall to see what items we are able to provide with a Thrivent Cares card. Thanks to Thrivent for these funds, and thanks to Jan and Dean for using their Thrivent card to purchase \$250 worth of food and personal items. It's interesting to see what \$250 will buy these days! The gathering of items will continue until February 12 (Super Bowl Sunday) and will then be taken to the food pantry. Let's really load up Jan and Dean's vehicle and 'wow' the workers at Bread of Life with the generosity of St. Peter for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

LWML Convention in Milwaukee

In 1981, Lorraine Schultz said to me (Judy), "You really should go along with us (Anita Plate, Fortuna Stoltzman, Delores Koffarnus?) to this convention in Milwaukee." And so I did. It was the convention of the International LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) of the LCMS. I was amazed! So many women from all over the world came to worship together and to make plans for the mites they would gather over the next two years.

Since 1981, the 'International' word has been dropped as other nations developed their own

organizations of LWML, and we are now LWML. However, the concept is the same: gather mites to sponsor mission projects around the world.

Now, for the first time, the LWML convention is returning to Milwaukee with the expectation of several thousand women from around the country coming together to worship and make decisions about how to use our mites for the next biennium. It will be exciting to see what kind of a mission goal we will adopt. Two years ago in Lexington KY we approved a goal of \$2,150,000! We have just learned that this goal has been met, and that all our promises for missions have been fulfilled! Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow! Mites are powerful!

See the Quarterly from Winter 2022 for information about how you can join us for these inspirational few days. So now I say to you, "You really should go along with us to this convention in Milwaukee".

Monthly Bible Study and Planning

Our February meeting will be on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, at 1:00. Come for Bible study and the sharing of God's love for us.



Mission Matters

Have you looked at the SWD LCMS webpage lately? Check it out and see what's happening. Go to swd.lcms.org and click on the 'Mission and Mercy' section. You may be amazed at the exciting mission projects happening in our district.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

February 14th

Ken & Sue Plate





Thy People's Everlasting Light

by Stacey Egger

We live in a world without night. That is, we live with so many technologies to keep the fall of darkness from hindering our activity and productivity that the transition between daylight and nighttime — at least for us city dwellers (83% of Americans [in 2018](#)) — interests us casually, if at all.

No stray beam of sunlight reaches the desk where I work in the inner reaches of a large office building. Nor do I have need of one. The fluorescent lights above me shine changelessly over me and my work. A few times, usually in the week or two after we “fall back” an hour, I have left the office expecting to walk out into evening light, only to find myself exiting into total night, no hint of sunset on the horizon, the sky as black as it will be all night in the St. Louis metro area. A quick glance would reveal a dozen or two stars winking at me from above. I have worked right through the sunset without the least hindrance or notice.

Long before fluorescent lights, flashlights, streetlights or corporate office buildings, Christians gathered to sing praises to our God and theirs — in the morning, in the daytime and often as night fell. At some point in the seventh or eighth century, as they gathered together on evenings during Advent (as we do) to sing praises to the Christ whose second coming they awaited (as we do), they began to sing a chant in Latin, written for Advent Vespers, called *Conditor alme siderum*. We know this text in English as “Creator of the Stars of Night,” one of our beloved Advent hymns included in *Lutheran Service Book* (351).

Thou cam'st the Bridegroom of the bride, As drew the world to eventide ...

How different their experience of eventide must have been, over a millennium ago. Our logistical difficulties with an evening church service include things like getting ourselves up off the couch an hour after arriving home from work. We flip a switch to ignite the church's light fixtures and the 8,000 tiny bulbs on the tree in the corner.

As night fell in the seventh century, light for the next 10 or 15 hours meant fire. Lighting the sanctuary meant candles, torches, lanterns. Creating and maintaining light after nightfall involved great effort, not to mention some danger.

And yet, God did not leave our forebears quite to their own devices. As darkness fell, the moon rose, the evening star blinked on and the whole heavenly host followed thereafter. These lights were not as bright as the sun. They did not prevent night from being dark. But compared to total darkness, they were everything. They were light. And in contrast to the labor of tending fire, these lights from the sky were clearly, wondrously, gifts of God.

Creator of the stars of night, Thy people's everlasting Light: O Christ, Redeemer, save us all, And hear Thy servants when they call.

It seems quite natural that people daily beset by darkness would so readily praise God for His being Light (1 John 1:5). Yet what is meant by “Light” here, and what is this redemption that Christ's people need? The second stanza fills us in:

Thou, grieving that the ancient curse Should doom to death a universe, Hast found the healing, full of grace, To cure and save our ruined race.

The third stanza goes on to tell the story of this cure:

Thou cam'st the Bridegroom of the bride, As drew the world to eventide, The spotless Victim all divine, Proceeding from a virgin shrine.

The hymn moves quite seamlessly from Christ (to whom the whole hymn is addressed) as Creator of light to Christ Himself as the Light of the world. In fact, there really is no “move” at all: The text does not read as if God as Light is merely an image, a way of picturing the redemption of the world, but as if God as Light is literal^[1] — not only in the past, back in the manger and on Easter morning, or even

today in the forgiveness of our sins only, but also this morning when the sun rises, this evening when the stars and the moon come out. Christ is, literally, the light of the world.

The hymn reminds us, on the other hand, that just as God formed the day and night to be habitable and beautiful to His creatures, so He directs all of history through His providence. The stars reflect God's good will toward us and His creative order in all things, including our salvation. When we read the Old Testament and reflect on salvation history, we can be tempted to wonder: Why did Christ wait so long to come down to earth and save us? And just so we wonder, often during Advent: Why has He taken so long to return? What is He waiting for? This hymn comforts us on these points by reminding us of Christ as Creator. Each night the lights in the heavens appear just when they are needed. Just so was God's timing with the coming of Christ. As the world turned to evening, Christ the star emerged in our sight. "When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman" (Gal. 4:4). And just so will be Christ's return. It will come at the right time — the right time *for us*.

What a loving and beautiful reflection on Christ's faithfulness and care for us we gain from our brothers and sisters of centuries ago and the immediacy with which they encountered God's creation. Nightfall made dependence on Christ particularly evident to these early Christians. Pondering this hymn, we may wonder how our own technologically enabled distance from the created world might blind us to the status as dependent creatures which was so palpable to our ancestors in the faith. We have wrought our own "everlasting lights," and promptly forgotten about them. As a city dweller, my path is lit for me 24 hours a day, should I choose to venture out, and only in relation to my electric bill do I spare a thought for the origin of this light. Even in secular psychology, [studies](#) are again and again suggesting the profound (spoiler: negative) psychological affects that light pollution is having on human beings. It is a strong image, and one that may launch many reflections on our technological advancements, that our fending off of the night has so nearly blotted out our vision of God's created lights.

Perhaps, indeed, this is worth reflecting on — but not for too long. This month's issue of [The Lutheran Witness discussed anthropology](#), that is, the study of what it means to be human. If we see ourselves as fundamentally defined by our environment, we may find our sense of self looking rather bleak and isolating. How are we to understand ourselves in a world that has come so far from the days of Christ, from the days of the apostles, from the simpler world that led to the penning of "Creator of the Stars of Night"? How can faith survive in such a blind and blinding world? What do we share with these people who lived in a world so much more visibly God's?

Yet think of this: We still sing this hymn. We may never have been able to write it; we may skip right over the weight of the first line, hearing something akin to "God makes pretty things," and yet for most of the hymn we track right along with our kindred people of a millennium ago.

After singing of Christ as Creator and Redeemer, the hymn sings of Christ Enthroned:

At whose dread name, majestic now, All knees must bend, all hearts must bow; All things celestial Thee shall own, And things terrestrial, Lord alone.

This stanza speaks of a particular era in salvation history, one in which those who wrote the text lived and the very same in which we live. As the stars confess Christ their Creator, so "things terrestrial" — we — confess Him. So Christians of the seventh and eighth century, huddled together by candlelight, sang of Him; so we sing of Him on Wednesday nights in Advent under electric lightbulbs: our King and theirs.

Finally, the hymn moves on to another coming of Christ, the one that they anticipated and that we still anticipate today:

O Thou, whose coming is with dread, To judge the living and the dead, Preserve us from the ancient foe While still we dwell on earth below.

We face the same foe that these Christians did, one far more ancient even than they. With them, we are hopeless against that foe save by the preservation of our God. With them, we await Christ's second coming.

What we are fundamentally is what they were, what we will be as unknown to us as it was to them: “We are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). What we are and what we will be is in the hands of God, who created us from clay in His image, who redeemed that image in the incarnation and death of His Son, who preserves us now in the ark of His church. We await with the church of all ages the day of Christ’s judgement, when together with them we will sing praise to Him in that place where “night will be no more,” where “they will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light” (Rev. 22:5). Only under that everlasting light will mankind be changed, on that day when all that man has wrought over the centuries will fall away as dust, and we will stand as one people before the throne of God.

[1] See Hayden Lukas, “Light: Recovering an Ancient Perspective,” *Grapho* 4.1 (2022), 54–63.

Photo: LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter article – February 2023

Don’t Replace “And” with “Or”

We’ve all heard that stewardship means giving to the church of our time, talents and treasure. This alliterative trinity helps us see that giving is not just about money, but about our whole lives. As we confess in the Small Catechism’s explanation of the First Article of the Apostle’s Creed, God gives us everything we have and enjoy. First we confess that God gives us “our body and soul, our eyes, ears, and all our members, our reason and all our senses” (SC II). Then we confess that He gives us material things. The time, talents, and treasure trinity places before our eyes the fact that we are to give something of all three of these things toward the mission of the church in thanksgiving for what God has provided. For everything we have, and indeed, everything we are, comes from God’s fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

The problem with this alliterative trinity comes when we replace one little word with another little word — when we replace the word *and* with the word *or*. It is

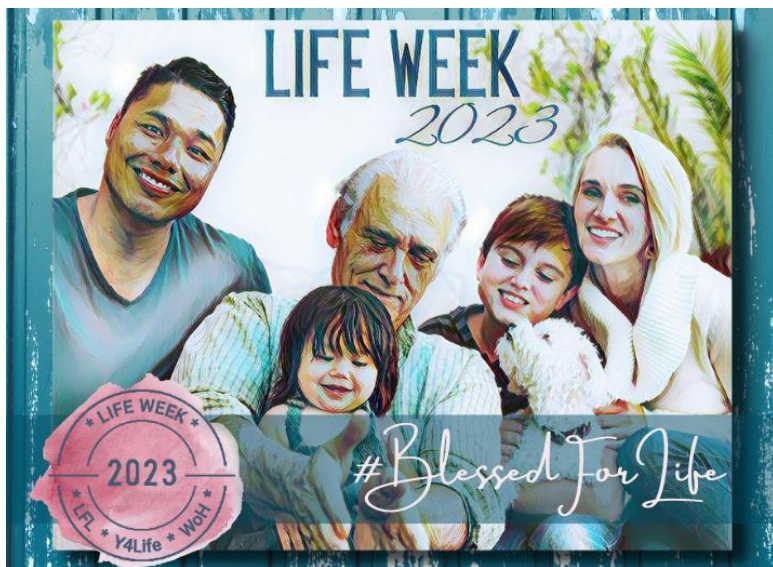
always written with the *and*, but when we read it, we read it with the *or*. Thus this quite helpful trinity, which extolls that everything that we have and are is a gift from God, to be given back in service of His church, turns into a trinity that we can pick and choose from when we serve God. The giving of our time, talents *and* treasure turns into the giving of our time, talents *or* treasure.

Then the question arises: Can we give of our time and talents instead of our treasure? Or perhaps it is the other way round: Can we give of our treasure and not of our time and talents? But these are the wrong questions. The right question is, can we give of our time and talents in addition to our treasure? Yes, indeed, we are called to give of all three. The things that God gives us are not to be pitted against one another. Rather, they are given to us, and we are to press them all into God’s service for benefit of His church and our neighbors in need.

Thus, we give all three. We give our treasure in the form of a generous, first-fruits proportion of our income. We give of our time in generosity for the benefit of Christ’s holy church. We give of our talents in the same manner. Since God gave us all these things, we are called to give generously of all these things in faith toward Him and in fervent love to our neighbors.

For God has provided all these things for us. Out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, He gives us each time, talents *AND* treasure as a means to bless those around us. We serve our neighbors with these things, blessing them with the blessings with which God has blessed us. We give of our time, talents and treasure to our families, our society, our church and our local congregations. And we do this because we know that we are not our own. Rather, we belong to God. We have been bought with a price: the holy, precious blood and innocent suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave everything — His time, His talents and His treasure — to have us as His own and to live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness. We have these things as gifts and blessings from God. Let us then press them all into service for the sake of His love — time, talents and treasure together.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship



Bible Study at Terra Verde

Friday at 10:00 a.m. weekly Bible Study meets in Chilton at Terra Verde Coffeehouse.

Please come join us for a time of fellowship.

Bible study also continues to meet Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. at St. Peter.



Our [Life Sunday 2023](#) and [Life Week 2023](#) theme, **Blessed For Life**, comes from Psalm 41: 1-2 (with an emphasis on verse 2) and can be observed and celebrated anytime throughout the year!

“Blessed is the one who considers the poor! In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him; the Lord protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land; you do not give him up to the will of his enemies.” (ESV)

Our Life Week Zoom presentations are available to view on our [Life Week 2023](#) page and on our [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo](#) channels.

- Blessed as a Gift (our Gospel-motivation) – Rev. Michael Saleminck
- Blessed in Longing – Rev. Steven and Stephanie Cholak
- Blessed Together – Delores Desemone
- Blessed with Healing – Deaconess Chrissie Gillet
- Special Presentation – Rev. Dr. Greg Schulz, Professor of Philosophy at Concordia University Wisconsin

Find out more by searching our website or going to the LFL app available through your carrier app store.

[Life Sunday 2023](#) | [Life Week 2023](#)



Happy Birthday

February

- 3 Miles Hernke
- 6 Laurie Mathes
- 9 Kari Filteau
- 10 Amber Roehrig
- 13 Jason Roehrig
Natalie Sowinski
- 16 Nancy Propson
- 18 David Schwalenberg
- 19 Judd Roehrig
- 22 Dan Diener
Joshua Ladwig
- 23 Benjamin Behnke
- 24 Tom Ruppenthal
- 25 Tyler Eldred
- 27 Dennis Roehrig

St. Peter Lutheran Church Quarterly Voter's Meeting January 22, 2023

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wally Jentsch.

Opening Prayer: The opening prayer was given by Pastor Peterson.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the last meeting were approved as distributed.

Correspondence: none

Pastor's Report:

- Shut-ins are being visited for the month of January.
- Bible Study at St. Peter and Terra Verde are going well. Come and join us!
- At the Synodical Convention in Milwaukee this summer it will be St. Luke's turn to vote for Synodical President and other offices. Pastor Peterson will have one vote and the congregational president of St. Luke will have one vote as stated in the dual parish/ joint parish agreement.
- Ash Wednesday will be on February 22nd at 10:30 a.m. at St. Peter and 7:00 p.m. at St. Luke.
- Lenten Services will be on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. at St. Peter and 7:00 p.m. at St. Luke March 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th.
- Palm Sunday begins Holy Week on April 2nd with Maundy Thursday service on April 6th at 1:00 p.m.
- Good Friday service on April 7th at 1:00 p.m.
- Easter Sunday on April 9th with regular church service times for Sunday services.

Treasurer's Report:

- We are doing fine financially.
- The Budget for 2023, projected to be \$137,900, was approved as presented.
- One scholarship has been used so far by the Scholarship Fund at Concordia Mequon. St. Peter contributed \$45,000 towards the fund which has grown to \$95,000 since started.
- St. Peter received \$750 for cans collected this year!
- The treasurer's report was filed for audit.

Board of Elders Report:

- The Elders and Pastor are going through the roster of members at St. Peter. **MMSC to remove the following no contact persons from our membership list; they are: Joseph Fletcher, Mark and Christine Hillegas, Ryan Hillegas, Mindy Meyers, Nicole Meyers, and Arianna Nunes.**
- A request to transfer to St. Martin, Chilton was given to Tom and Berd Piepenburg.
- A transfer of membership for Joyce Vissers from Green Bay to St. Peter was accepted.
- Elders are encouraging all members to attend serviced offered and receive the Lord's Blessing through the Word and Sacrament.

Board of Trustees Report:

- The restoration of the Bell Tower and other masonry items are yet to be fixed.
- Carpets were cleaned in the parsonage.
- Thank you to Dave Franz and Dan Schroeder for the lawn service at our cemetery this year! **MMSC to give the Trustees between \$2,500 and \$4,000 for lawn care service at the St. Peter Cemetery.**

New Business:

- We are looking for members to fill the church office of Vice Chairman and Congregation Secretary at St. Peter. If you are interested or know of someone who would fit these positions, please talk with Pastor or one of the Council members!
- Next voters meeting will be Sunday, April 23rd after the service in the Fellowship Hall.

Adjournment: MMSC to adjourn the meeting.

Closing Prayer: We closed the meeting praying the Lord's Prayer in unison.

Caroline Behnke, Secretary

February 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Altar Guild: Cheri Koffarnus Bonnie Ott Bonnie Teinert			1	2	3 <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	4
5 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany <i>Green</i> 8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	6	7 7:00p Bible Study	8	9	10 <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	11
12 Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany <i>Green</i> 8:30 Divine Service (NC) 9:30 Sunday School/ Fellowship Sunday	13	14 1:00p W.I.M. Meeting & Bible Study 7:00p Bible Study Valentine's Day	15	16 6:00p Elders' Meeting 6:30p Council Meeting	17 <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	18
19 Transfiguration of Our Lord <i>White</i> 8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	20 Newsletter articles due President's Day	21 7:00p Bible Study	22 Ash Wednesday <i>Black or Purple</i> 10:30 service @ S.P. <i>7:00p service @ S.L.</i>	23	24 <i>10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton</i>	25
26 First Sunday in Lent <i>Purple</i> 8:30 Divine Service (NC) 9:30 Sunday School	27	28 7:00p Bible Study				

Divine Services marked (NC) will not have Holy Communion