



## St. Peter's MESSENGER

St. Peter's United Church of Christ  
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December 2024

# 'Tis the Season!

## ADVENT WORSHIP

Saturdays: November 30, December 7, 14, 21

at 5:00 p.m.

Sundays: December 1, 8, 15, 22

at 10:00 a.m.

## CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

4:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Washington Civic Chorus Concert, Sunday, December 1 at 3:00 PM

East Central College Concert, Friday, December 6 at 7:00 PM

St. Peter's Festival Christmas Concert, Sunday, December 15 at 2:00 PM

Festival of Trees each Saturday and Sunday before Christmas

5:00 - 7:00 PM

Dear Friends,

The story is told, how a little boy was given his great-grandfather's gold pocket watch. He cherished that watch. He loved wearing it with his Sunday best. But one day as he went to ready himself for church he discovered his watch was gone. You can guess how horrified the young boy was. He prayed that it was still somewhere in his room. It just had to be. So he started checking everywhere. He looked among the covers of his bed and among the pillows. He rooted around his closet floor, pushing aside baseball gloves and toy trucks and tennis shoes. He dumped the contents from every drawer in his room and frantically searched and scratched among his clothes. Until he suddenly realized what to do. He stopped scurrying, sat very still, and became very quiet. And in the silence, he heard the watch ticking.

That story is a metaphor for the month ahead. Think about the many events that will call upon our time and energy. There will be parties, special church services and school programs. There will be family get-togethers, shopping, gift exchanges, baking and caroling. And all these things are special.

Yet how we need to find the time to slow down. One of the most beloved carols of the church is "Silent Night". But will we take time and seek the gift of silence, quiet rest and reflection which should be part of this season. Like the small boy, can we find a sacred moment when we stop our scurrying, become quiet and listen? Can we pause and ponder the incredible gift of God's presence in the Bethlehem manger? For when we do, we might very well find the deepest hopes of our heart in God's gift of Jesus Christ.

Wishing you a Blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas,

Pastor Kurt

**Blessed are those who mourn . . . for they shall be comforted**

Please pray for the family and friends of Ken Juergens who died Nov. 5, 2024.

**Thank You!!** The Harvest Table would like to thank everyone who helped with serving meals and contributing time or money to continue the mission. Mark your calendars for 2025 -- St. Peter's will be helping serve in April.

**Finance/Stewardship Thoughts**

The weekend of November 9 and 10 was the closing of the Stewardship Campaign for this year. We tried something different by passing out and signing commitment cards at the church services the first two weeks of November. It was most gratifying having so many signed cards returned, pledging your support of St. Peter's UCC.

The meal served on the 10th of November was a perfect example of stewardship in action! Over eighty of us enjoyed the meal and visiting with one another. There was outstanding help in preparing the dining room and cleanup. What a great example of sharing of time! The free will donation more than covered the cost of the meat. Sharing of resources! And what great talent we saw in all the wonderful covered dishes that had been prepared! TIME, TALENT, AND RESOURCES!!! One added benefit of that meal was the fellowship! Many smiles, laughter, and engaging conversations. Thank you for continuing to support St. Peter's!

### **Festival of Trees 2024**

The Festival of Trees event opens **Sun., Dec. 1** and will run every weekend in December prior to Christmas from 5-7 p.m., unless there is a special event planned. Walk through a winter wonderland of amazing holiday trees decorated by schools, organizations, and friends. Bring your cameras to capture that holiday photo! Free to all! Accepting canned food and monetary donations for local food pantries. Santa will be visiting! Please help spread the word.

The annual **Christmas Concert of the Washington Civic Chorus** will be held Sun., Dec. 1, 3 p.m. in our sanctuary. All are welcome!!

The **East Central College Choir Concert** will be held in St. Peter's Sanctuary Fri., Dec. 6, 7 p.m. All are invited!

The **Washington Brass Band** will have their annual Christmas Concert on Sun., Dec. 8, 3 p.m. at the Washington City Park Auditorium. There is no charge for admission, but a free will offering will be taken.

### **Women of St. Peter's**

You are invited to the annual Christmas luncheon on Thurs., Dec. 12, at the home of Judy Verdine. Please meet at the church parking lot at 11 a.m. to share rides. Call or text Judy at 636-346-8380 if you plan to attend. It will be great fun getting together to celebrate the season!

The next **Aluminum can drive** will be the weekend of Nov. 30 & Dec. 1. Please place only aluminum cans in the truck provided sitting in the south parking lot. Proceeds are used for mission projects. Thank you for your support.

### **End of Year Giving**

Please be advised that if you want to receive credit for any contribution for 2024, the church office must be in receipt of it by 4 p.m. Dec. 30, 2024. The only exception to this is that if you mail your contribution, your check **MUST** be dated not later than Dec. 31, 2024, **AND** the postmark **MUST** be dated no later than Dec. 31, 2024. Of course, you may also drop your donation in the offering plate at worship Sat., Dec. 28 or Sun., Dec. 29.

Please note: The church office will be closed all day on the following dates:  
Dec. 24, 25 & 31, 2024 and Jan. 1, 2025.

**Important Notice:** to ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, do not file your 2024 income tax return until you have received a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. Some of your contributions may not be tax-deductible if you file your tax return before receiving a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. Please contact the church if you need your information before Jan. 31.



**CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS/POINSETTIAS**

St. Peter’s is once again giving everyone the opportunity to remember their loved ones by helping to decorate the sanctuary on Christmas with poinsettias or providing memorials. Please return this form to the church office by Dec. 19 for inclusion in the Christmas Eve worship bulletins. We ask that the plants be delivered to the church before noon on Dec. 23.

**CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS/POINSETTIAS**

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or email \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to place a POINSETTIA in memory of:  
\_\_\_\_\_

I wish to donate a CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL in memory of:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed find: \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the Memorial Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the Building Fund  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ for the General Fund.

Please note: Any poinsettia not picked up by noon Dec. 29 will be delivered to shut-ins.

**Mission Report November 2024**

**Food Pantry News**

Thank you to ALL the volunteers who help the food pantry continue its vital ministry in our community. In October, 111 individuals representing 44 families were served. We also thank the following for their generous donations – October Food Pantry Donors: Joline Logan, Brenda Bruns, Wendell & Mary Lou Tyree.

**Back Bay Mission Update**

It has been 2 months since a group of five of us went to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi. The experience is still fresh in our hearts and minds. And, we are planning to return in 2025!

We have heard from several of our St. Peter’s members that they are interested in participating in another mission trip with us. We have tentatively set a date, **Sept. 13-19, 2025**, so mark your calendars!

You may ask what exactly would we be doing? There are a number of service opportunities including housing construction, housing recovery, food pantry, a day center for the homeless, and an off-site soup kitchen among other tasks which come up daily. You do not need any specific skills to participate. We would like to strongly encourage representatives from our Food Pantry, WERF, and Harvest Table to come along to learn and share.

There will be a Mission Moment about Back Bay Mission the first weekend in January and an informational meeting later in the month, date TBA. We are also hoping that one of the staff members from Back Bay will personally come and meet with us in the spring. So, stay tuned, as more news will be forthcoming.

## Washington Emergency Relief Fund

The Washington Emergency Relief was blessed with some much-needed donations in October, and we would like to give a heartfelt thank you to those who contributed them. Thank you to Ron & Brenda Brinker, Marilyn Sherman and Dan Buschmeyer. Your funds are going to help many.

The Washington Emergency Relief received 333 calls in October. Thirty-three grants were given out using \$6,765.36. Twenty-two of those grants were for electric, two for water/propane, eight for rent, and one for help with an AC unit repair.

## The Glory of God Shone Around Them (Luke 2:9)

For the month of December we uplift **The Christmas Fund**, formerly known as an offering for the Veterans of the Cross. For over 100 years this fund provided direct assistance to the healers in our lives: retired and active United Church of Christ ministers, church workers, and their families. Last year, over 1800 UCC congregations including St. Peter's joined together to secure the physical, financial, and spiritual health of those engaged in the life of the church.

We will receive our Christmas Fund offering the weekend of December 21 & 22 this year. Please give to ensure that more ministers, church workers and their families receive the loving support of the church in their moment of deepest need. Thank you for your generosity!

## A Note from Carol Muench

What a year it has been--unlike any other one in my entire life.....cancer and chemo for most of the time up until Sept. 15 when I had my last of many chemo treatments and now go in to see the doctors every three months for the next two years if all continues to go well!

I want to thank all of you who called and/or sent me cards and said you were praying for me. That meant a lot coming from my lifetime friends at St. Peter's Church, some of you have known me since I was a baby, others not quite as long.

I moved back to my home on Oct. 28 and have been doing fine there. I spent about 9 months in an assisted living place, and although it, the staff and other residents were very nice, it is so good to be back in my home doing things when and if I want to!

Our wonderful minister visited me several times at the hospital and assisted living home, and I was always very happy to see him.

Carol Muench



Never have cash or check handy but want to financially support St. Peter's UCC? Use this QR code to open a link to give via PayPal. PayPal allows you to use your credit card or checking account to give once or a recurring gift. Don't forget that your bank also offers recurring checks and/or transactions. Thank you for helping to take care of your church!

## **St. Peter's United Church of Christ Church Council Meeting Highlights 19 November 2024**

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- We are currently down \$34,600 on the General Fund compared to budget. This represents a slight improvement from last month.
- Expenses were down, but so were donations.
- A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made and seconded. The motion passed.

### **Pastor's Report:**

- All members in care centers have been visited in the last 4 weeks, and they were brought Communion.
- He has begun making calls to members on the Care Team list.
- The church received a Thank You note from Wings regarding their trivia night that was held at St. Peter's. They raised over \$7,000.
- St. Peter's is featured on the Historical Society newsletter. Article on page 9
- This weekend is Totenfest. 17 members who have passed in the last year will be remembered.
- Advent events are coming up.
- Confirmation class will be lighting the Advent candles.
- Pastor Kurt has a continuing education request. He would like to go with Eden on their trip to Kenya in January. A motion to approve this was made and seconded. The motion passed.

### **Boards and Committees:**

#### Building and Grounds:

- The door passcards are being tested by some Council members. They are designed for single admission and will only admit the holder; not lock or unlock the door in general. Many of the trial cards are not working properly and the system needs more testing.
- Security System bids have been received. This item is being tabled for now due to cost.
- The rumbling noise previously noted in Matt G's office is being caused by the AC Unit. Additional insulation will be added to dampen the noise.
- Sanctuary doors will be refinished once the company has an open slot to do so.
- Carol reported a water leak in her office. This is being investigated and would fall under roof maintenance.

#### Cemetery Board:

- The anniversary celebration will be May 18, 2025 with a backup date of June 1 (in case of bad weather).
- We are looking into getting a monument setting bar.

#### Board of Christian Education:

- Most discussion has been on the Christmas program. BCE will work with the Confirmation youth and younger kids on a simple program.
- We will need to move Prayground for Christmas season.

### Missions:

- For December, we have 2 mission opportunities:
  - The Giving Tree, which is designated for Franklin County Foster Closet this year.
  - The Christmas Fund, which is a national offering.
- We are booked to go back to the Back Bay Mission Sept 14-19, 2025

### Worship:

- The new white paraments are ordered.
- They are working on getting new ushers, as well as calling those currently on the team.
- Would like to have at least one person on each usher team who knows how to close the church after the service.

### Advisory:

- Results are coming in for the membership survey.
  - There were about 500 on the rolls.
  - It looks like we will have 380 to 390 members on the rolls when this is done.
  - We will need to look at the final list of non-responders for a last contact attempt.

### Evangelism:

- There is another game day this Thursday, after the Women's Fellowship.
- They are sending out Christmas postcards.

### Finance:

- Stewardship Sunday dinner had good attendance and went well.

### **Old Business:**

#### Website:

- Progress is being made.
- An events tab has been added, showing details for upcoming events.
- Pastor Kurt noted that a lot of our members rely on the weekly livestream; particularly those who are homebound.

#### Harold Wilke Plaque:

- The plaque has been installed and looks good.

#### Nominating Committee:

- Still have several openings, including a Council Seat.

#### Good Samaritan Fund Signatories:

- Good Samaritan Fund signatories are updated.

#### Care Team Update:

- Calendars are being printed by B&J and should be ready by the first part of December. Will be delivered to care team recipients and should have extra to sell.

## **New Business:**

### Bolster Youth:

- This will be a goal for next year.

### Festival of Trees:

- Preparation is on track.

### Communion for Christmas Eve:

- All 3 services will have Communion.
- 11:00 will likely be Altar Communion.
- Pew Communion at 4:30 and 7:30.
- The 7:30 service will be livestreamed.

### Board and Committees Planning Session:

- This will be on January 19th
- Council should determine ideas for goals for the church, to take to the boards and committees.

### December Council Meeting:

- Starting at 6:00 p.m. with regular Council meeting first.
- Everyone brings food to share.
- Invite Boards, Committees, Ushers for party at 7:00.

### Pastor Kurt Housing Allowance:

- Pastor Kurt requests the same \$12,000 housing allowance allocation as this year.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve the housing allocation request. The motion passed.

### Back Bathroom Remodeling

- This project was previously approved by the Congregation, but has not moved forward.
- There were plans drawn up that needed revisions, but this did not proceed.
- Sent back to Building and Grounds for consideration.



## Financial Report

Receipts	October	YTD 2024
General Fund	\$ 30,682.10	\$ 376,409.39
Building Fund	\$ 2,528.00	\$ 33,181.81
Youth Fund	\$	\$ 351.00
Memorial Fund	\$	\$ 15,892.75
Sanctuary Music Fund	\$	\$ 1,113.00
Pass Thru In	\$ 6,369.46	\$
Total Receipts	\$ 39,579.56	\$ 426,947.95
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>October</b>	<b>YTD 2024</b>
General Fund	\$ (29,739.09)	\$ (399,305.85)
Building Fund	\$ (1,548.37)	\$ (31,318.30)
Youth Fund	\$	\$ (1,147.52)
Memorial Fund	\$	\$ (15,171.38)
Sanctuary Music Fund	\$ -	\$ (494.20)
Pass Thru Out	\$ (6,369.46)	\$
Total Expenses	\$ (37,656.92)	\$ (447,437.25)

## Bank Balance Report 10/31/2024

Heritage Bank Balance	\$ 52,174.29
Less Building Fund	\$ 8,579.70
Less Youth Fund	\$ 7,914.84
Less Memorial Fund	\$ 66,367.36
Less Music Fund	\$ 3,920.84
Less Perpetual Member	\$
General Fund Balance	\$ ( 34,608.45)

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## Two Congregations Have Roots in Early German Church

By Katie Dieckhaus, Executive Director, **Washington Historical Society**

The first church building erected in the town of Washington was a small log frame structure on the southwest corner of Third and Lafayette streets. The building was completed in 1845 for the German Lutheran Church. Having been formally organized the prior year, they became the first organized church within the limits of the budding town. The most fascinating part of this history lies in the fact that both St. Peter's United Church of Christ and Immanuel Lutheran Church trace their origins to this small Protestant congregation. To understand the early history of the congregation and their eventual divide, we must look at the religious persecution of the Prussian king, Frederik William III, and lingering sentiments brought to the New World with German immigrants.

In 19<sup>th</sup> century Prussia, subjects faced compulsory religious education amid increased division among Lutherans and Reformed Protestant churches. Complicating the tensions further were the results of the Age of Enlightenment and German rationalism that led many to question theology, orthodoxy, and authority. To suppress this free spirit thinking, Frederick William III tried to unify the Protestant churches into

one Evangelical Church, also known as the Church of the Prussian Union, in 1817. Just like religious education, adoption of the new Protestant tenants was compulsory. Although many churches in the Western Rhine Valley embraced the order, most churches rejected the changes. Strict orthodox Lutherans were adamantly opposed and rallied in dissent. This led to anti-sectarian legislation and the imprisonment of several Lutheran pastors.

“At some places Lutheran and Reformed congregations shared in the use of the same church, although each had its own form of worship and was violently antagonistic to the other.” – Carl E. Schneider, *The German Church on the American Frontier*

Those seeking more religious and political freedoms turned to the New World for solace. Westward expansion in America offered an opportunity for land and upward mobility, but the remote settlements didn't immediately offer a place to worship or ordained ministers to conduct services.

The first ordained Protestant pastor to serve the early German settlers in Washington was Herman Garlichs. He was the pastor of the first German Evangelical Church in Missouri located along the Femme Osage Creek. His affiliation with German Evangelicalism reflected the unified Evangelical Church of the Old World where Lutherans and Reformed were forced to worship together. In the American West, it was due to necessity rather than compulsion.

Garlichs traveled from St. Charles County to preach in Washington homes and schoolhouses from 1836-1838, but the irregularity of the ferry service deterred him from continuing. Locals went without an ordained minister until 1845 when Reverend Edward Arcularius, a minister of the Reformed Church, became the first resident pastor of the German Lutheran Church in their new building at Third and Lafayette. Arcularius served for the next six years after which a series of pastors served short terms. One of these pastors, W. Matuschka, organized a meeting of orthodox Lutherans in 1862 to separate from the German Lutheran Church and establish themselves as the Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Congregation now known as Immanuel Lutheran Church. The original congregation became known as the St. Peter's Evangelical Church now called St. Peter's United Church of Christ.

The written histories of these congregations refer to this early church by several different names (if they refer to it at all): German Protestant Church, St. Peter's Evangelische Kirche, and St. Peter's Evangelical Church. However, the deed of sale for two lots at the SW corner of Third and Lafayette streets dated 1845 state that Abraham Detweiler and his wife sold the property and the church building on the corner lot for \$40 to the German Lutheran Church. Since Detweiler was an early trustee of the church, it is logical to conclude this is the rightful name of the congregation at the time.

The early German congregation's split may appear at first to be a story of division and animosity amongst neighbors, but it is actually a testament to the realization of the freedoms the settlers were originally seeking.



**December Birthdays**

David Homeyer 12/02  
 Kelsey Rich 12/02  
 Caleb McDaniel 12/04  
 Mary Ann Boland 12/05  
 Josh Buschling 12/05  
 Calvin Fredeking 12/06  
 Elaine Menke 12/07  
 Bob Coleman 12/08  
 Jenna Hamlett 12/08  
 Laura Sentivany 12/08  
 Lucas Meyer 12/10  
 Ava Strohmeier 12/11  
 Sue Winistoerfer 12/11  
 Sharon Miller 12/12  
 Mary Phillips 12/12  
 Dale Trentmann 12/13  
 Ray Eickmeyer 12/15  
 Evan Holdmeyer 12/15  
 Terry Hunt 12/15  
 Leann Allemann Bailey 12/16  
 Steve Hackett 12/16  
 Brenda Morman 12/16  
 Brendan Smith 12/16  
 Molly Bauer 12/17  
 Scott Jacquin 12/17  
 Dylan Shoemaker 12/17  
 Mary Howard 12/18  
 Noelle Kellermann 12/19  
 Alvie Buchholz 12/20

Susan Abrams 12/23  
 Stephanie Schonaerts 12/23  
 Michael Brinkmann 12/24  
 Ruth Engemann 12/24  
 Matt McDonald 12/24  
 Marjorie Donner 12/25  
 Lisa Moore 12/25  
 Gracie Buchholz 12/26  
 Hudson Scheer 12/26  
 Natalie Shocklee 12/26  
 Perry Schatz 12/27  
 Jody Krafft 12/28  
 Jennifer Kriete 12/28  
 David Montgomery 12/28  
 Paisley Amsinger 12/29  
 Amy Roewe 12/29  
 Hunter Triplett 12/29  
 Larry Dawson 12/30  
 Roger Rohlfing 12/30  
 William Amlong 12/31  
 Louanne Merrell 12/31  
 David Mutert 12/31  
 James Scannell 12/31