



St. John-St. Peter
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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StJohnStPeter.com



Church Handbook

WELCOME

Welcome to St. John-St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cleveland, Wisconsin. I am happy to have the opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with you.



When God calls us into his kingdom and sets us free from sin, he gives us purpose and meaning. We have been purchased by the blood of Jesus. We belong to him! Our lives are his. Wherever we go, whatever we do, we bear the name of Jesus and have opportunity to let his light shine in us and through us. We work together as a church to encourage one another in our faith as we walk together with our Savior. We join together to support gospel ministry in our community so that all may hear God's call to repent and know the confidence of the forgiveness of their sins through Jesus our Savior.

As your pastor, I consider it a great privilege and responsibility to serve you and your family throughout your life. I encourage you to be regular in your worship and communion attendance and to participate in Bible study often. If you find yourself in need of spiritual guidance and support, I stand ready at all times and in whatever way I can to serve you, consistent with my office as your pastor. Feel free to call upon me at any time.

In this book you will find information about what we teach and believe, how our church is organized, resources to help you walk with the Lord, and much more. I pray that the Lord will bless you always and that your membership in the congregation will be a blessing for you and for the congregation.

In Christ,
Pastor Steven Wall

Mission Statement

It is our mission, according to God's Word, to REFLECT CHRIST in all that we do, to GROW in Christ, to WORSHIP Christ, and to PROCLAIM Christ to all of the world.

Objectives

- To REFLECT Christ in all that we do, serving him and others in gratitude and praise for his gift of salvation. *“And he (Christ) died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”* (2 Corinthians 5:15)
- To GROW in Christ through personal and family devotions, regular worship, faithful use of the Sacraments, and active participation in Bible study or Sunday school. *“But grow (keep on growing) in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* (2 Peter 3:18)
- To WORSHIP Christ, sharing Christian love and fellowship with each other and building each other up in Christ. *“I rejoiced with those who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD.’”* (Psalm 122:1)
- To PROCLAIM Christ by sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in our community and throughout the world by our words and actions and with our offerings. *“Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.”* (Mark 16:15)

Affiliation

St. John-St. Peter is a member congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

(WELS). This church body is made up of more than 1,200 congregations spread across the United States and Canada. Over 400,000 people belong to those churches. (See p. 30-32 for more information about the WELS.)



This We Believe

We believe, teach, and confess that our hope for heaven and eternal life with God rests alone in Jesus Christ, God's Son.

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we can be saved." (Acts 4:12)

We believe, teach, and confess that the salvation won for us by Christ becomes ours by a Spirit-worked faith in Jesus as our Savior. *"No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit."* (1 Corinthians 12:3)

We believe, teach, and confess that salvation is by grace alone - not by personal merit, but by God's mercy. *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast."* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

We believe, teach, and confess that the Bible is the verbally inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God. God's Word is the source of all our doctrine and the guide for all our practice. *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness."* (2 Timothy 3:16)

If you would like to read more, please ask our pastor for a booklet entitled "This We Believe."



CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

How to Become a Member

Because God's Word is the center of our lives and the reason why we gather together, we want our members to understand what we believe, teach, and confess based on the Bible before becoming a member and communing with us.

For that reason, our pastor offers a Bible Information Class. He can meet with you individually or with a larger class to study what God's Word says about God, sin, salvation, creation, our lives as Christians, and much more.

If you are a member of a WELS church and familiar with what we believe, you may request a transfer to our church. Please notify the pastor of your current church as well as our pastor.

When you become a member of our church, we request that you sign a Membership Agreement to show that you understand what your membership means, what your church can rightly expect from you, and what you can rightly expect from your church. We also invite you to confess publicly before the church your faith in Jesus and your willingness to be a member of this congregation.



What Does it Mean to be a Church Member?

By becoming a member of St. John-St. Peter, you are offering testimony to the world that you are someone very special. You are saying that you are:

- A **Christian**: someone who confesses Christ, true man and true God, as the Savior of the world;
- A **Lutheran**: someone who professes to believe the Word of God as expounded by Martin Luther and others in the Lutheran Confessions of the Book of Concord;
- An **Evangelical**: someone who believes that the heart of the Bible is the Gospel message. *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”* (John 3:16)
- A **St. John-St. Peter Member**: part of a group of evangelical Lutheran Christians who join in worship and carry out the Lord’s work in Cleveland, Wisconsin.

Responsibilities of Membership

“The Holy Scriptures are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 3:15)

As a member of this church, you have a responsibility to God, to yourself, and to your fellow members:

- To continue steadfast in the true Christian faith;
- To be diligent in the use of God’s Word and Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord’s Supper);
- To lead a godly life even to death, and I ask God to help me every day in this;
- To support the ministry of St. John-St. Peter with my prayers, time, abilities, and offerings so it can carry out the work our Lord has given to this congregation.

Luke 11:28

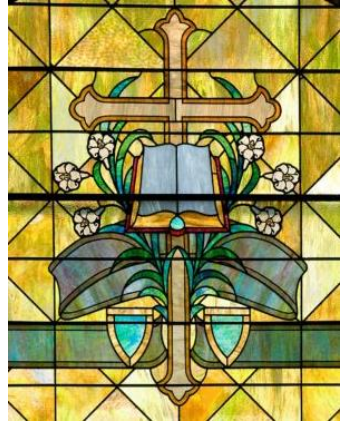
“Blessed (happy) are they who hear God’s Word and keep it.”

Hebrews 10:23-25

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together...but let us encourage one another.”

WORSHIP

The center and focus of our worship is God's Word. We gather every week to hear God's Word proclaimed; to administer the Sacraments; to confess our sins; to receive from him what he promises (forgiveness, new life, strength for this life, and eternal life with him); to apply his Word to our hearts and actions; and to sing the praises of our God and proclaim what he has done for us.



When we enter into the Lord's house to worship, we enter with reverence, as though entering into the presence of God. Truly, God has promised to be among his people.

We recognize our Christian freedom to worship him in a variety of ways. We also appreciate the rich history of the Christian church and the worship life of the saints who have gone before us. Some elements of our worship service go back to the earliest days of the Christian church. How awesome it is to join our voices with Christians of all ages.

Music is a gift from God. We value and encourage those, young and old, who would use their musical talents to glorify God in our worship services. (See Service Opportunities on pages 20-22)

Service Times (Regular and Summer)

During the regular schedule (September-May), church begins at 10:00 a.m. During the summer schedule (Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend), there are two opportunities to attend church: Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. and/or Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

The Lord's Supper (Communion)

The Lord's Supper is offered on the first and third Sundays of each month and on some special occasions. We ask our members to sign up on the Communion Registration form in the back hallway before receiving the Lord's Supper.

The Lord provides for our spiritual needs when he invites us to partake of Communion "often." Our faith in him is strengthened when we share in his body and blood. Therefore, a Christian is eager to attend the Lord's Supper on a regular basis.



Since the Scriptures teach that the celebration of the Lord's Supper is an expression of Christian unity, St. John-St. Peter practices "Member" Communion or "Close" Communion. We recognize church membership as the common confession of faith that binds believers.

If you are a guest or visitor to our church, it is our great hope and desire that you will seek to learn more about what our church believes and teaches so that you can join us in celebrating the Lord's Supper as soon as possible. Until then, we respectfully ask that you refrain from receiving the Lord's Supper.

Special Services

Throughout the year we have special services to mark holidays and other events. Check the monthly calendar for dates and times. Some of the occasions we celebrate are:



- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve
- Midweek Lent
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday
- Easter
- Ascension
- Service in the Park
- Hunter's Service
- Thanksgiving Day

Offering Envelopes

Each communicant member is assigned a specially numbered box of envelopes. Included in each box are weekly offering envelopes. Special envelopes are also provided for Manitowoc Lutheran High School, our Endowment Fund, Repair and Improvement Fund, and holidays. The weekly envelopes allow you to designate your offering for "local" (supporting the ministry of our church) and "missions" (supporting the work of our Synod). Using your envelopes allows us to track your offerings and provide a yearly statement which you can use for tax purposes.

Bulletins and Hymnals

We worship using the hymnals which are provided in the pews. Bulletins are available each week which include the Bible readings for the week and any special music, as well as announcements. Large print hymnals are available in the back of church. Ask the greeters or ushers for more information.

Nursery

A nursery is available where parents may tend to their children's needs and still be able to hear and see the church service. It is located in the back of the church near the restrooms. A changing table is available in the nursery and also in the women's restroom in the basement.

Restrooms

Restrooms are available in the hall in the back of the church as well as in the basement.

Assistance for Hearing Impaired



An assisted listening device is available if needed. Please talk to one of the greeters or ushers for more information.

YOUR CHURCH IN DAILY LIFE

Baptism Arrangements

Parents are urged to notify the pastor of the birth of their child. He will be happy to visit you during the hospital stay and discuss the God-given responsibilities of being a parent and the blessings of baptism. A Baptismal Data sheet should be completed by the parents as soon as possible.

If the parents wish to have sponsors for a child, they are to be of our same faith and fellowship. However, people who are members of another Christian denomination may serve as witnesses.



Most baptisms take place during a regular worship service. The congregation is able to witness this important event and rejoice in the fact that another name has been recorded in the Book of Life. Private baptisms may be administered upon request. Please contact the pastor to make the arrangements.

Wedding Plans

If you are planning a wedding, please contact the pastor to make certain that there are no conflicts in reserving the church for that date and time. Premarital counseling is provided by our pastor and is part of the wedding preparation.

A wedding service is no different than a regular worship service where our Savior and his Word are the central focus. Therefore, everything that takes place during that hour - the music, the sermon, the songs – is to be faithful to God's Word so that our Savior's name may be glorified.

Also, since this is a worship service, those who lead in the service, such as pastors, singers, and musicians, are to be members of our church or a sister WELS congregation. So that no misunderstandings arise, please consult with the pastor and the head organist before choosing any music or hymns, organists, or soloists. They will be happy to assist you in any way.

When You Are Hospitalized

When you or a loved one enters the hospital, please notify the pastor. The pastor will be happy to visit during this time.

Shut-Ins

If you are unable to leave your home, the pastor will be happy to provide you with the Word of God and the Lord's Supper on a regular basis. To make arrangements for this, simply contact the pastor. If you have internet access, please see the church website to access sermons as available.

A Death in the Family

If the pastor was not present at the time of a death in your family, please notify him as soon as possible. At such a time, the pastor will make every effort to visit with you and share with you the comfort and promises of God concerning those who die in the Lord.

Please consult with the pastor so that he may assist you in making arrangements for the funeral service, the committal, and the meal. While we will by all means attempt to schedule the funeral according to the desires of the family, circumstances may at times prevent this. Therefore, we ask that you not make funeral arrangements until you have talked to the pastor.

Counseling

There are times in the life of every Christian when personal, family, and/or marital problems arise. Your pastor stands ready and willing to help you. All problems will be discussed in the light of the cross of Christ.

If problems arise, let the pastor help you in finding an answer to your problems from God's Word before they seem unsolvable. God's Word does have the answer to our every need.

EDUCATION



The primary objective of our Christian education program is to prepare members for a successful life on earth and an eternity in heaven.

Children

Sunday School

Sunday School is one way in which our church can assist families as they continue to nurture their faith through the study of God's Word. The Sunday School and the home must work together if the Sunday School is to help children grow in their faith. It is the purpose of the Sunday School to reinforce the truths of God's Word that are taught by word and example in the homes of our members. However, focusing on Christ's Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) leads us to recognize that our Sunday School also exists to reach out to all people in our community. Students are encouraged to bring their friends.

The Sunday School meets on Sunday morning at 8:45 a.m. in the basement of the church. We begin with a devotion followed by Bible lessons, memory work, and music. Occasionally the Sunday School children will sing during our worship services. Sunday School is not church. Students and their families should make worship a priority and attend services regularly.

Confirmation Class

In order to prepare the young people of the congregation for confirmation, seventh and eighth grade students are instructed in the basic truths of the Bible. The materials used are Luther's Small Catechism and the Bible. At the end of the two years of successful completion of the class, a student is invited to become a communicant member of the congregation by Confirmation. Confirmation is usually held in the spring.

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

VBS is another way in which we can assist families as they continue to nurture their faith and is also used as an outreach tool to the community. Every summer, traditionally during the first week of August, we conduct a VBS week where children age 4 to 8th grade are invited to participate in a fun-filled week of Bible stories, crafts, games, and food. Family members are encouraged to participate with their children.

Christian Education

What is the most important thing your child can learn? Without a doubt, it is the way to eternal life. How can your child best learn of Christ, the Way? First and foremost, it is from God-fearing parents who diligently speak with their children of God's love, who read God's Word to them, who conduct devotions at home, and who by example show to their children their own love and devotion to God by regularly attending worship and Bible study classes.



WELS Lutheran Elementary Schools

Even though we do not have an elementary school of our own, we do have an arrangement with St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Howards Grove to instruct any of the children of our congregation. The goal is to provide the students with a complete Christ-centered education so that in all things these children will see him more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly.

St. Paul's Lutheran Elementary School is enrolled with the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program. Parents may be able to have all their tuition provided by the state of Wisconsin. Contact the school for more information at 920-565-3780.

In addition to St. Paul's, other WELS churches in our area that have elementary schools include Trinity in Kiel, First German and Bethany in Manitowoc, and St. John's in Newtonburg.

Our congregation assists member families with the cost of tuition at our area WELS schools. Applications are available.

Manitowoc Lutheran High School (MLHS)

If you wish your child to continue his/her Christian education into high school, MLHS offers an education designed to develop the God-given abilities of young people so that they can serve him as Christian lay people, teachers, or pastors. MLHS is accredited through various agencies. They offer tracks in preparation for college, technical college, or preparation for ministry as a pastor or teacher.



They have an accomplished music and fine arts program which has received many awards over the years. They also offer an interscholastic sports program with various sports for boys and girls. MLHS offers tuition assistance so that finances are never a hindrance to a child's desire to learn God's Word. Multiple programs are available to assist families in reducing the cost of tuition.

Please contact the school for more information at 920-682-0215.

Manitowoc Lutheran High School is also enrolled with the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program. Contact the school for more information. Our congregation assists parents with the cost of tuition.

Martin Luther College (MLC)/Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS)

For those students interested in continuing their Christian education into college, our Synod supports MLC in New Ulm, Minnesota, and WLS for potential pastors in Mequon, Wisconsin.

Young Adults

Our high-school-aged students and young adults meet on Sunday mornings during the Sunday School time (8:45 to 9:45 a.m.) to grow in their faith and enjoy fellowship with other youth of the congregation.



The group enjoys activities throughout the year—some just for fun and some in service to others.

Adults

Bible Study

An adult Bible class meets each Sunday morning from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. (during the Sunday School time) and Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Books of the Bible, specific doctrines, and topics of Christian interest are discussed. This class is open to all. During the summer months, we offer a brief 19-minute Bible study after worship for all members.

Bible Information Class

Bible Information Class is the name of our adult instruction class. For those who are not members of St. John-St. Peter or those who are unchurched or who are of a different denominational background, this class offers the opportunity to discuss, in an informal setting, all the major teachings of the Bible. NO memory work is required, but extra Bible reading outside of class time is encouraged. There is no cost for class materials nor are those attending under any obligation to continue the classes once they have started. We are thankful for the opportunity to share with them the joy we experience because of Jesus. Upon completion of the course, those who desire church membership are eligible to become communicant members. The Bible Information Class meets at a time mutually acceptable to the pastor and the participants.



FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

Scheduled fellowship activities are announced in the weekly worship bulletins and also in the monthly newsletter and calendar.

Lenten Suppers

Prior to our Wednesday Lenten services, a light supper is served starting at 5:30 p.m. The meal is prepared and provided by various organizations each week. A freewill offering is collected at the serving table.

Easter Breakfast

On Easter Sunday morning before the service, a fellowship breakfast is served from 7:45 to 8:45 a.m. A sheet is in the back of church for people to sign up to bring a food donation or give a monetary donation for the breakfast.

Church Picnic

Everyone is invited to our annual church picnic on the second Sunday in August. The day begins with the worship service that starts at 10:30 a.m. Following worship, members gather for a traditional picnic complete with brats and hamburgers and all the trimmings. Following our meal, games are provided for both children and adults.

Mission Festival

Usually a Sunday in fall is selected to have a missionary or guest speaker tell us about the work of WELS missions. Following worship we gather for a potluck meal, for which members bring a variety of delicious contributions.

Advent by Candlelight

On the first Sunday in Advent we invite women and girls to come to an event to help them focus on Christ during the busy holiday season. Women from the congregation volunteer to decorate tables, bake tortes, and do readings from a selected program.

Book Club

Twice per year the Ladies Aid and Women's Ministry select a book to read. About two months after the book is received, we gather together to discuss the book.

Pioneers

The Lutheran Pioneers and Lutheran Girl Pioneers are Christ-centered programs for boys and girls. The purpose is to teach the youth, in a scripture-based way, skills and crafts, good citizenship, and awareness of the beauty of God's creation and to enable these young people to be together in a relaxed and informal setting. The Pioneer groups (boys and girls) meet on the first Monday of each month during the school year at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Howards Grove.

Seder Meal

The night before Jesus was crucified he met with his disciples to celebrate the Passover meal, also called a Seder meal. The Seder meal remembers how God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt 1500 years earlier and is full of symbolism and meaning for us as Christians too. We celebrate the full Seder meal (about 2 1/2 hours) every other year before Easter.

Card Night/Game Night

Several times each year we gather together to play yard games, card games, and board games. Everyone is invited and can bring games they would like to play and/or snacks and beverages to share with the group.



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES



Worship

Greeter

It is important to us that all people feel welcome at worship so they can hear the good news of Jesus, our Savior. Greeters play an important role. They welcome worshipers as they arrive, hand out bulletins, and assist visitors. A sheet is in the back of church for volunteers to sign up for a service that fits their schedule. All that is needed is a friendly smile.

Choir

The choir is open to all communicant members of the congregation and meets from September until May. Check the monthly calendar or weekly bulletin for rehearsal dates. The choir beautifies our worship services.

Chime Choir

The chime choir brings praise to God through their music. You don't need any special training, just a willing spirit. Practices are usually Tuesday evenings. The group does not practice or play during the summer months.

Soloists/Duets/Small Groups/Instrumentals

We welcome and encourage anyone interested in using their talents in any of these areas to enhance our worship services. Please talk to our pastor if you are interested.

Organists

The organist serves our congregation by beautifying our church service. If your musical talent is playing the organ or piano and you would be interested in serving our congregation in this area, please talk to our pastor.

Flowers on Altar

If you desire to remember a special occasion or a loved one with flowers, please sign the flower calendar that is in the back of church. Please purchase the floral arrangement and bring it to church before the service.

Education

Sunday School Teacher

Sunday School teachers instruct our children about how Jesus died for our sins and lives in our hearts. If you enjoy working with children and appreciate the importance of



Christian education, please talk to our pastor. You can serve as a teacher, helper, substitute, or music director. Sunday School runs from September until May.

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

Are you good with crafts? Enjoy playing yard games? Enjoy teaching children? We can use your help! VBS is a fun and rewarding week of pointing our children to their Savior. Talk with pastor to volunteer. Ways you can help include VBS director, teacher, crafts, music, and serving lunch.

Manitowoc Lutheran High School Delegates

Delegates to MLHS are men elected by voters. We have up to three delegates who attend the federation meetings at the high school and represent our congregation in the school's affairs.

Serve on One of Our Committees

We have a variety of committees that carry out important work in our church. Men and women of the congregation serve on the committees to help carry out the gospel ministry here at St. John-St. Peter. (See the committees listed on pages 24 and 25)

Other Ways to Serve

God has given a variety of gifts to his people and a multitude of ways to use their time and talents to serve others and proclaim the gospel. Some possible ways to help include

- Build the parade float.
- Assist with maintenance and upkeep of the church and parsonage (shovel snow, trim hedges, etc.)
- Help maintain the church library.
- Help maintain the church website or Facebook page.
- Volunteer to help out with events, activities, and funerals.

We are open to new ideas. If you have particular gifts and want to use them to serve the Lord or if you see a need at church, talk to pastor or one of the council members.

ORGANIZATIONS OF THE **CONGREGATION**



Voters' Assembly

This consists of all male communicant members 18 years and over. Though subject to the Word of God, it has the final authority on all affairs of the church. Quarterly meetings are held in April, July, and October. The annual meeting is in January at which time elections are held. All members are welcome to attend meetings of the church.

Church Council

The church council administers the property of the congregation as directed by the voters' assembly. Its members are elected at the annual voters' meeting in January. The council meets once a month or as needed. The council has five trustees, three elders, a secretary, and a treasurer. The president of the council is elected from the five trustees.

Officers

- President – presides over all business meetings of the congregation and council and has general supervision of the affairs of the congregation.
- Council Secretary – records the proceedings of all meetings of the congregation and church council.
- Treasurer – manages the financial affairs of the congregation.

Trustees

Trustees administer the temporal affairs of the congregation and keep the property in good repair.

Elders

Elders aid the pastor in spiritual affairs of the church.

Committees of the Congregation

Education Committee

This committee is responsible for providing help and guidance to various educational functions at St. John-St. Peter with specific emphasis on the Sunday School. Our most important goal is to be sure that we train our children in God's Word. Additionally, we determine ways to integrate our children into our ministry and ways to carry out our mission through special events.

The committee consists of the pastor, Sunday School superintendent, Sunday School treasurer, Sunday School activities director, Young Adult Group Leader, an elder of the church council, and one or two additional congregational members. The committee will choose a chairman to lead the committee. Each member will be asked if he/she wants to continue on the committee on an annual basis with no limit on the length of service. This system creates continuity and still gives members the opportunity to leave the committee. The committee meets six to nine times per year, and we are always interested in new members.

Endowment Committee

This committee oversees the endowment funds of the congregation and makes recommendations for its use. The committee consists of the pastor, three members of the congregation, and the chairman. All committee members serve three-year terms, and the chairman must be a male voting member.

Mission Advancement Committee

The sole objective of this committee is to glorify God by expanding the ministry through the use of broad spectrum outreach ideas and programs. We seek to reach out to our community and serve our neighbors. The committee consists of the pastor, a chairman, and members of our congregation. If you have a passion for outreach, this is the committee for you!

Finance Committee

Once a month this committee counts the weekly offerings. There are five members of the committee: the treasurer, the recording secretary, and three members of the congregation.

Recording Secretary

The recording secretary records the weekly offerings, prepares an 11th month and yearly offering statement for congregation members, and prints and assembles the annual report.

Scrip Committee

This committee oversees the sale of Scrip gift cards and certificates and distribution of the funds from their sales. Any member of the congregation may assist this committee.

Women's Groups

There are two women's groups that meet regularly for fellowship, for Bible study, to plan events, and to work together to serve the congregation. We are also a member congregation of the LWMS. These groups are open to all women of the congregation.

Ladies Aid

The Ladies Aid meets during the day at 1 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month (except July). They coordinate serving meals at funerals and other events.

Women's Ministry

This group meets in the evenings (usually 6 p.m. on Thursdays). They plan a variety of events including book club meetings, Souper Sunday, bake sale, and garage sale.



Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS)

The LWMS is a national WELS organization dedicated to serving Christ by supporting our Synod's missionaries and their work, both here in the United States and overseas. Rallies are held several times per year, both regionally and nationally. Women attend these rallies to participate in workshops, hear guest speakers, and meet fellow Christian women.

CHURCH RESOURCES

Forward in Christ

Forward in Christ is the official magazine of the WELS and your link to the WELS. Drawing on the power of the Holy Scriptures, the mission of Forward in Christ is to enlighten, motivate, and inspire readers toward a stronger faith with God. Bible studies, articles on doctrines of the Bible, timely topics, human interest stories, and world-religion news are part of every issue. The magazine is published monthly and members purchase their own subscriptions. Magazines are picked up at church.

Meditations

Meditations is an inspiring, personal devotional booklet offering daily Scripture-based, soul-searching studies of God's Word. Each meditation is clearly written and easy to understand, with a special scripture reading, devotion, and prayer for each day. It provides scriptural guidance and encouragement for daily living. The booklet is published quarterly. Copies are available for free (donations gladly accepted). Large-print editions are also available for subscription.



Library

The church has a small library in the front entrance of the church. There are both fiction and nonfiction books, including large-print books, along with some videos. There is no checkout system. Members are welcome to take items home and return them when finished. Appropriate book and/or financial donations for the library are welcome.

Children's Library

The children's library is located in the basement. It contains fiction and nonfiction books and videos. There is no checkout system. Children are welcome to take items home and return them when finished. Appropriate book and/or financial donations for the library are welcome.

Scrip

Our church uses a Scrip Program as a fundraiser. This means we purchase gift cards (or scrip) from retailers at a discount and sell them to members at face value. The difference in price is used for various projects at church. Scrip cards can be purchased before and after most church services.

Through Our Synod

Through WELS, we have access to many useful resources. Members are encouraged to make use of these resources for their spiritual growth. Below are some of the more popular online resources:

WELS Website: www.WELS.net

The Synod website is a great place to find information and many useful tools for your Christian life. Check it out! Some popular resources include a Q&A section; a link to podcasts; commercial free streaming radio; articles; and links to official Synod publications, synodical history, and information about our world missions.

WELS App

If you have a smart phone or tablet, visit <https://wels.app> and add it to your home screen. It puts the most popular features of the WELS website at your fingertips and on the go. This is great for listening to a devotion while driving to work or school!

WELS Daily Devotions

Spend time in God's Word every day! These free daily devotions are a simple way to start your day reminded of God's grace and encouraged to live for him. You can read the devotion yourself or listen to an audio version. It is available on the WELS app and at the WELS website. You can even subscribe and have it delivered every day to your email.

WELS Church Locator

When you're on vacation or traveling for work, do you look for a place to worship? Do you want to recommend a WELS church to a friend or relative? Check out the WELS church locator available on the WELS app and website!

On Facebook

Our Synod has several Facebook pages. The WELS page (www.facebook.com/welslutherans/) is a spiritual resource where you will find devotions, worship helps, and articles to help you grow in your faith. The WELS News page (www.facebook.com/WELSNews/) is full of interesting news about WELS churches, schools, and members. If you are on Facebook, make sure to like and follow these pages.

Synod-Sponsored Website

WhatAboutJesus.com is a Synod-sponsored website intended to reach out to non-Christians or those who are new to the faith. It is a great resource for learning what the Bible says about a variety of topics.

Other resources

Northwestern Publishing House (NPH)

NPH is the official publishing house of the Wisconsin Synod. It is your place to find biblically sound, Christ-centered resources. You can find them online at www.nph.net, or call them at 800-662-6022.

Campus Ministries

Going off to college, or know someone who is? Don't go it alone! Sign up with WELS Campus Ministries

(www.wels.net/campus-ministry). Many colleges and universities are served by a nearby WELS pastor. Even if there is not an active group of WELS members on campus, you will receive helpful and encouraging resources from the WELS to keep you connected to Jesus.

WELS Military Services

If you or someone you know is entering or serving in the military, you have a right to request to be served spiritually by a minister of your own faith. The WELS has more than 100 pastors in place to serve our members and their families at military installations throughout the U.S. We also have a civilian chaplain in Europe. The Military Service Committee also provides Meditation books and other materials free of charge to our soldiers to build them up in their faith. Go to www.wels.net/military for more information.

WELS Prison Ministry

Their mission is to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to people who are serving time in jails and prison. If you know of someone who is in prison who would appreciate a visit from a chaplain, please contact WELS Prison Ministry at www.wels.net/prison. They provide Bible correspondence courses, Bibles, and other printed spiritual materials for inmates free of charge.

Sermons Online

Sermons can be listened to by accessing the website at www.stjohnstpeter.com/worship/sermons.

AN INTRO TO OUR SYNOD AND OTHER AFFILIATIONS

St. John-St. Peter is a member congregation of the WELS. This church body is made up of more than 1,200 congregations spread across the United States and Canada. Over 400,000 people belong to those churches.

The Wisconsin Synod began in 1850 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. All of its churches were located nearby. Meanwhile, the Michigan Synod and the Minnesota Synod



were being formed in those states. Beginning in the 1870s, these three little groups began working together, and in 1892 they formally joined into one group. They came to be called the Wisconsin Synod because Wisconsin had the most congregations.

The word “synod” means people who choose to “walk together” or share the same path. Actually, a synod is nothing other than a large congregation, a group of Christians who have the same beliefs getting together to do God’s work. A local church can do a lot of the Lord’s work: preaching the Word, using the Sacraments, training the children, doing local mission work, etc. But it’s pretty difficult for local parishes to start new churches in far-off states, train future pastors, and do worldwide mission work. Because that’s true, Christians have always banded together in large groups - some people call them synods. St. John-St. Peter is “us” on a local level; Wisconsin Synod is “us” on a national level.

AS A SYNOD we train men and women to be future pastors and teachers of our congregations. We own and operate two high schools or academies: Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, Wisconsin, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, Michigan. These two schools offer only college preparatory courses. Pastoral students head on to Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, and from there they enter Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary which is located in Mequon, a suburb of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Young people aiming toward a teaching ministry also attend college at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota. Each year our churches receive about 35 pastors and 100 teachers through that system.

AS A SYNOD we preach the Word of God in the United States, the English-speaking Caribbean, and Canada. We fund and organize congregations or home missions in communities in which there is no Wisconsin Synod church.

AS A SYNOD we preach the Word of God around the world. We salary missionaries and fund preaching stations in Albania, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malawi, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Russia, Taiwan, Thailand, Zambia, and among the Apache Indians in Arizona.

AS A SYNOD we organize and call people to serve all our congregations for various purposes. Serving us are men and women giving time and energy on various boards and commissions to develop materials and resources to help congregations in their ministries of worship, outreach, education, nurture, and stewardship. There are also commissions for interchurch relations, Christian literature, periodicals, audiovisual aids, and public relations. Our publishing company is Northwestern Publishing House (www.nph.net).

We have set up a group insurance plan and a pension plan for the pastors and teachers of the Synod. We provide special services for the 350 Lutheran elementary schools and 21 area Lutheran high schools that are operated by the local congregations of the Synod. We publish a magazine called Forward in Christ for families, The Lutheran Educator for teachers, and the Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly for pastors.

Members of a synod aren't obligated to do everything the same. But as members of a synod we share a common confession and a common goal. Wherever you go, "Wisconsin Synod" means you will hear the same thing you are hearing right here in Cleveland. The name "Wisconsin Synod" joins people of all cultures, races, and ancestry under one banner, the banner of the cross of Jesus Christ and of his Word. Thank God for the togetherness you have here at St. John-St. Peter. Thank him just as much for the fellowship you have in the Wisconsin Synod!

Our Synod is divided into 12 districts. Each district is divided into several conferences, and each conference is made up of several circuits.

Our church belongs to the Northern Wisconsin District of the WELS, which includes Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Green Bay, and Appleton area churches. The district meets every other year in June, and we send a lay delegate to that convention. We belong to the Southern Circuit of the Shoreline Conference.

MLHS Federation

Our congregation is a member of the MLHS Federation, a group of about 25 congregations which have joined together to support and offer secondary Christian education for their members.



OUR CONGREGATION HISTORY



Highlights from Our Past

- 1860 Lutheran congregation of St. John founded in Hika, Wisconsin. Called Pastor Morgott Quehl, and their membership was 40.
- 1863 Lutheran congregation of St. Peter founded in Centerville, Wisconsin. Pastor Morgott Quehl served both St. John and St. Peter. Membership was 46
- 1868 Pastor Quehl receives and accepts call to First German, Manitowoc, Wisconsin. St. John-St. Peter called Pastor Charles Dowidat who served until he accepted a call to Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.
- 1875 Called Pastor Franz Pieper who served until he accepted a call to First German in 1877.
- 1877 Called Pastor Julius Haase who served until he accepted a call to Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, in 1883.
- 1883 Called Pastor Jaeger who served until he accepted a call to First Lutheran, Racine, Wisconsin, in 1887.
- 1887 Called Pastor Philip Sprengling who served the congregations for 46 years.
- 1910 St. John's 50th Anniversary.
- 1913 St. Peter's 50th Anniversary.
- 1919 February 12 was the first meeting of the Ladies Aid Society of St. John and St. Peter churches.
- 1920 Decision made to merge the two congregations and build a new church building and parsonage.
- 1922 The cornerstone for the new church was laid.
- 1923 June 24 was dedication Sunday of the new church building.
- 1928 Mortgage paid in full.

- 1933 Pastor Sprengling retires for health reasons. Called Pastor Martin Braun who served until he accepted a call to St. John's in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1950.
- 1944 First meeting of Lutheran Married Peoples Society. Membership was 19 couples.
- 1947 First minutes of quarterly meeting written in English (prior minutes were in German).
- 1948 St. John-St. Peter celebrates 25th anniversary.
- 1950 Called Pastor Elden Bode who served until he accepted a call to North St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1959.
- 1952 New heating system installed.
- 1953 New organ installed and dedicated on January 31, 1954.
- 1960 100th anniversary, the congregation numbers 490 communicant members and 667 souls. Called Pastor Gerhardt Cares who served until he accepted a call to Zion Church Columbus, Wisconsin, in 1966.
- 1965 Individual communion ware was purchased.
- 1967 Called Pastor Paul Knickelbein who served until he accepted a call to Oklahoma City Mission Church, Oklahoma, in 1968.
- 1969 Called Pastor Henry Koch who served until his retirement in 1998.
- 1973 50th anniversary of the church building.
- 1975 Joined Manitowoc Lutheran High School Federation.
- 1985 125th anniversary and redecoration of our church interior.
- 1992 New church entrance completed.
- 1999 Called Pastor Aaron Schoenike who served until he resigned from the ministry in 2004.
- 2001 Stain glass window restoration project to keep them beautiful for future generations.
- 2004 Called Pastor David Endorf who served until he accepted a call to St. John's Church, Sparta, Wisconsin, in 2017.
- 2010 150th anniversary.
- 2017 Called Pastor Steven Wall who was installed in January 2018.

Notes

