

St. Peter Lutheran Church
208 Newtown Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06851



PARISHSCOPE

SEPTEMBER 2022



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Pastor's Ponderings

Isaiah 43:19 - Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Change is always challenging. Even good and healthy changes, like a graduation, require major adjustments that can be quite stressful. And most changes are a mixture of both good and bad, upside and downside.

When the prophet Isaiah spoke the words quoted above to the people of Israel, they were headed into exile in Babylon. Cast out from their promised land after generations of unfaithfulness. Driven into exile after shameful defeat and great loss of life. Clearly, as unpleasant a change as any group of people could face. Yet, God spoke these words of comfort and hope, "I am doing a new thing... I will make a way."

St. Peter, Norwalk is entering a period of change. Unlike Israel's change, your change has occurred for a healthy reason. Your beloved pastor of 28 years has been called to a different vocation, a different type of service to Christ's church. He will still be part of your spiritual care as your District President, but there will be a change in your week-to-week life as a congregation. You enter into a vacancy period and turn your eyes and efforts to the call of your next pastor, while still concerned for the care of each member daily and weekly.

As your Circuit Visitor, it is my role to help provide care and direction during this time of change. Please allow me to share a few observations that I hope will encourage you:

- 1) **Nothing is unknown to God** – God knew, from before he created the earth, that you would face this circumstance. Let that sink in a moment. From before time existed, He knew that St. Peter Lutheran Church in Norwalk, CT would bid farewell to Pastor Bob Beinke on August 28, 2022. He wasn't alarmed, surprised, or caught off-guard. He is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega. He knew this was coming, and he knows exactly what comes next. However...
- 2) **Much is unknown to us** – Human knowledge is limited. This is part of what makes change so stressful: we have to make decisions with less-than-perfect data in circumstances we've never faced before. In the face of these limitations, the three human stress responses emerge: fight, flight, or freeze. Some will be tempted to fight tooth and nail for control or to ensure that their view carries the day; some may be tempted to leave, concerned for the future or simply seeing this as a natural transition time; some may be tempted to freeze, unsure of any course and fearful of mis-steps. All are understandable responses, but none is an entirely faithful response. Instead...
- 3) **We must trust God** – There are established steps for a congregation to follow during a vacancy: a self-study, determination of the qualities desired in a called pastor, evaluation of available candidates, issuance of a call... Each of these steps have some resources and advice connected with them. But, ultimately, we don't place our trust in any procedure. Our trust is in our Father, who made us; our Lord, who redeemed us with his precious blood; the Spirit, which reminds us of all that Christ has taught and guides us into all truth. We trust that God knew this was coming and He knows where it is going. We cling even more greatly to His promises in his Word and to His means of grace delivered to us. When we are reminded of this, we...
- 4) **Remember: we know the end of the story** – We know that Christ shall return, triumphant over sin and death and the devil. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord. He shall make all things new and all who have called on His name in faith shall be saved. We will enter into the feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which shall have no end. We may not know what next week or next month will hold,
- 5) but we know where history shall end, and it is glorious.

This brings with it both a comfort and a challenge. The challenge is this: If you, the saints at St. Peter, Norwalk, trust to your own wisdom, experiences, and desires to guide your next steps, those steps will inevitably falter and fail. We are humans, limited in our experiences and locked in battle with our sinful nature which so easily entangles. We fight, we flee, we freeze.

But the comfort is this: If you, the saints at St. Peter, Norwalk, humbly trust in God to guide you... If you trust that He will make use of your wisdom, experiences, and desires, but may also direct in new and unexpected ways... If you trust that He shall continue to nourish and refresh you by His Word and Sacrament... If you continue to lift up your pastors in prayer – your former pastor, your future pastors, and all the pastors who assist in caring for you during your vacancy... If you remember that He is same, yesterday, today, and forever... Then I am confident that you will see proof after proof of God's love and care for you, as individuals and as a congregation. I am convinced that you will see reminder after reminder that the same God who was born in a manger and died on a cross and rose from a tomb and ascended to the right hand of God is indeed at work for you and in you and through you.

Change is hard. Israel could testify to this and so can you. But times of change can deepen our faith in wonderful and unshakable ways. I look forward to the day, hopefully in the near future, when we can look back at these days and say with joy: God has made a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Rob Morris

Circuit Visitor, LCMS NED Circuit 7

To all the members of St. Peter's:

Thank you so much for the wonderful reception you gave us after church at the end of August, and for your gifts! The picture of the church will go in our house when we move. We'll be sure to let you know our new address, when we have a house, and when we'll be moving in. Your very generous financial gift will be put to good use there! (And, who knows, your physical help with the move may also come in handy!)

It's still hard to believe that after 28 years we are moving on. I cannot imagine serving a more wonderful congregation. How God blessed us through the years through you! But, as I stressed in my sermon on August 28, I will be around, and you will see us from time to time!

The Lord will be with you and will direct you in all of your ways! Psalm 121, which you put on the picture of the church you gave us, assures us:

[Our] help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.

Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand.

The sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life.

The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

Amen! Thanks be to God!!

Pastor and Lorayne.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

A new concrete slab was poured which will house the air conditioners. A concrete block retaining wall has also been installed.

A contractor will start painting the south side of the church in early September.



Voters Meeting

We will be meeting after church on September 18th.



OUR ANNUAL CIGAR NIGHT will be on Saturday, September 17th, beginning at 4:30 PM. Burgers and dogs, side dishes and dessert, and a cigar will be provided (you're not required to smoke it!). Bring your own beverages. The cost is \$20.00. The event will be outside, in the back of the church.

Contact Carl Vogt with any questions and to RSVP. Everyone is welcome to attend.

NEW MEMBERS

Two new members joined our congregation during the summer. Our new members are:

- July 17: Charles Vinci
- August 14: Bobby Steiner

MISSION OF THE MONTH
MALTA HOUSE

Malta House promotes the dignity of God-given life by providing a nurturing home environment, support services and independent living skills to pregnant and parenting mothers of all faiths and their children. Mothers at Malta House receive on-site counseling, financial education, and parental development followed by transitional and post-residential support.

Your support of Malta House is a "yes" to your belief that every frightened young mother should have the opportunity to **choose life** for her unborn. As the only home for pregnant women above the age of 18 in Fairfield County and the only home where a mom can stay with her baby for over 30 days, without Malta House, many of these women are likely to make a different choice for their baby. Some are fleeing from violence in the home; others seek to get a fresh start and keep their babies out of foster care. Malta House provides women with the tools and spiritual support to gain long-term independence.

During these difficult economic times, your gift to Malta House helps the residents continue on their path to self-sufficiency. Malta House accepts monetary donations by mail as well as online. You can print and mail in the donation form to give by check or credit card. Check online for other ways you can help. The website is www.maltahouse.org.



Leadership Moments

From the desk of Fay Sobottka, Church Council
President:

August has been an interesting contradiction of excitement and sadness for me, and I suspect other members of our church family. It was nice to celebrate with Pastor and Lorayne and recall memories and share stories from past years, and to wish them well going forward. At the same time, it was difficult knowing that some hard work is about to begin in following God's urging to call a new Pastor to fill some very large shoes.

This month we will hear from Pastor Morris about the next steps in the Call process and his role in supporting us as Circuit Visitor. You will also hear from the Call Committee and Elders regarding information to be collected to support the Call process.

Although you have elected and volunteer leadership to support these activities, we all have a role to play in understanding God's plan for our congregation and who God is calling to be our Pastor. I would like to thank you in advance for your support in responding to requests and speaking when you are urged by the Holy Spirit to do so. Your voice is important.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

Thank You!

Thank you to Nancy Shandrowski, Deb Fasoli, Karen Shane, Gunilla Moy, JoAnn Shapiro, Linda Scott, and Fay Sobottka for organizing the dinner on August 6 and reception on August 28 to celebrate with Pastor and Lorayne. Thank you to Monica Arcario for the lovely cake.

Sunday School for All Ages

board member or email your
Communications@StPetersNorwalk.org

Sunday School for children and adults begins September 11. Our Superintendent of the Children's Sunday School, Gary Melfi, has planned an interesting curriculum for our young people. If it is a nice day, meet outside behind the church – and bring a friend or two or three!

The Elders and Council have selected a 6-week video series which the Adult Bible Class will be watching called "Apologetics" where Dr. Jan Lohmeyer will answer big questions with biblical, historical, and scientific proof that will help us to defend our faith. Join us downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. Bakers are welcome to resume the tasty treats enjoyed during the Adult Bible Class.

GET CONNECTED

Elections of Officers and Board Members took place at the June 12 Congregational Voters Assembly Meeting. There is still room on the Boards for more members – there is no upper limit, but we are missing our minimum board membership of 4 members. We need you!

If you would like to join one of the boards, please call or email your Congregational President – FaySobottka42@gmail.com

We need at least one more member on two of the boards.

- Evangelism & Christian Ed
- Stewardship & Deacons

LET'S BE SOCIAL

Now that we have a beautiful space for social events, let's plan some! Please email suggestions for fellowship or social events you are interested in. Don't worry, you won't automatically be expected to coordinate it – although if you want to, that would be great.

Your Boards of Evangelism & Christian Ed and Stewardship & Deacons are looking for ways to bring our church family together. Make your suggestion to any

Constant Contact

BIBLE READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

Emails are sent from the Constant Contact application.
Get on the list – email request to:
communications@stpetersnorwalk.org

During the vacancy time we will rely more on the emails from Constant Contact – check your inbox to ensure you are receiving them.

On August 23, you should have received a message titled “Farewell Reception” advising you that after Pastor’s last service as our Pastor there would be a reception with sandwiches and cake.

Emails from “StPetersNorwalk.org” look like SPAM to the average email account.

SPAM prevention – ensure that the Communications email is NOT blocked by the SPAM or Junk Mail blocker in your email application. This could involve the settings in your email application itself (yahoo, aol, gmail) or it could involve the settings in a mail program like Outlook.

Photo Directories

Email Communications@StPetersNorwalk.org for your copy of the St Peter Lutheran Church Photo Directory. Check out the Face Board in the Narthex as well. Congratulations 82% of church members are pictured!

Sept. 1	Job 40:1-42:17 2 Corinthians 5:11-21 Psalm 45:1-17 Proverbs 22:14	Psalm 54:1-7 Proverbs 23:1-3
Sept. 2:	Ecclesiastes 1:1-3:22 2 Corinthians 6:1-13 Psalm 46:1-11 Proverbs 22:15	Sept. 11: Isaiah 8:1-9:21 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 Psalm 55:1-23 Proverbs 23:4-5
Sept. 3:	Ecclesiastes 4:1-6:12 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:7 Psalm 47:1-9 Proverbs 22:16	Sept. 12: Isaiah 10:1-11:16 2 Corinthians 12:11-21 Psalm 56:1-13 Proverbs 23:6-8
Sept. 4:	Ecclesiastes 7:1-9:18 2 Corinthians 7:8-16 Psalm 48:1-14 Proverbs 22:17-19	Sept. 13: Isaiah 12:1-14:32 2 Corinthians 13:1-14 Psalm 57:1-11 Proverbs 23:9-11
Sept. 5:	Ecclesiastes 10:1-12:14 2 Corinthians 8:1-15 Psalm 49:1-20 Proverbs 22:20-21	Sept. 14: Isaiah 15:1-18:7 Galatians 1:1-24 Psalm 58:1-11 Proverbs 23:12
Sept. 6:	Song of Songs 1:1-4:16 2 Corinthians 8:16-24 Psalm 50:1-23 Proverbs 22:22-23	Sept. 15: Isaiah 19:1-21:17 Galatians 2:1-16 Psalm 59:1-17 Proverbs 23:13-14
Sept. 7:	Song of Songs 5:1-8:14 2 Corinthians 9:1-15 Psalm 51:1-19 Proverbs 22:24-25	Sept. 16: Isaiah 22:1-24:23 Galatians 2:17-3:9 Psalm 60:1-12 Proverbs 23:15-16
Sept. 8:	Isaiah 1:1-2:22 2 Corinthians 10:1-18 Psalm 52:1-9 Proverbs 22:26-27	Sept. 17: Isaiah 25:1-28:13 Galatians 3:10-22 Psalm 61:1-8 Proverbs 23:17-18
Sept. 9:	Isaiah 3:1-5:30 2 Corinthians 11:1-15 Psalm 53:1-6 Proverbs 22:28-29	Sept. 18: Isaiah 28:14-30:11 Galatians 3:23-4:31 Psalm 62:1-12 Proverbs 23:19-21

BIBLE READINGS Continued

Sept. 10:	Isaiah 6:1-7:25 2 Corinthians 11:16-33	Sept. 19: Isaiah 30:12-33:12 Galatians 5:1-12
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	Psalm 63:1-11 Proverbs 23:22		Psalm 70:1-5 Proverbs 24:8
Sept. 20:	Isaiah 33:13-36:22 Galatians 5:13-26 Psalm 64:1-10 Proverbs 23:23	Sept. 29:	Isaiah 57:14-59:21 Philippians 1:1-26 Psalm 71:1-24 Proverbs 24:9-10
Sept. 21:	Isaiah 37:1-38:22 Galatians 6:1-18 Psalm 65:1-13 Proverbs 23:24	Sept. 30:	Isaiah 60:1-62:5 Philippians 1:27-2:18 Psalm 72:1-20 Proverbs 24:1
Sept. 22:	Isaiah 39:1-41:16 Ephesians 1:1-23 Psalm 66:1-2 Proverbs 23:25-28		
Sept. 23:	Isaiah 41:17-43:13 Ephesians 2:1-22 Psalm 67:1-7 Proverbs 23:29-35		
Sept. 24:	Isaiah 43:14-45:10 Ephesians 3:1-21 Psalm 68:1-18 Proverbs 24:1-2		
Sept. 25:	Isaiah 45:11-48:11 Ephesians 4:1-16 Psalm 68:19-35 Proverbs 24:3-4		
Sept 26:	Isaiah 48:12-50:11 Ephesians 4:17-32 Psalm 69:1-18 Proverbs 24:5-6		
Sept. 27:	Isaiah 51:1-53:12 Ephesians 5:1-33 Psalm 69:19-36 Proverbs 24:7		
Sept. 28:	Isaiah 54:1-57:13 Ephesians 6:1-24		

ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 8:45 am Pastor Morris Discussion regarding vacancy 10:00 am Worship Service	5 	6	7	8	9	10
11 COUNCIL MEETING 8:45 am Adult Bible Study & Sunday School resumes 10:00 am Worship Service	12	13	14	15	16	17 4:30 PM Cigar Night
18 VOTER'S MEETING 8:45 am Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service	19	20	21 	22	23	24 INSTALLATION OF PASTOR BEINKE AS DISTRICT PRESIDENT 3:00 PM Our Savior Lutheran South Windsor, CT
25 8:45 am Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service	26	27	28	29	30	