

The

Fisherman

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church



March 2024



St. Peter Lutheran Church ELCA

PO Box 07310

Fort Myers, FL 33919

(239) 463-4251

Email: Stpeterfmb@gmail.com



STAFF

Pastor – Rev. Bill Stehr (941)266-3377

Office Administrator – Trudy Archer

Organist/Choir Director – Jim Kreger

Digital Ministry Coordinator – Deacon Lisa Miller

WEBSITE: www.stpeterfmb.com

Facebook – [St. Peter Lutheran ELCA, Fort Myers Beach](#)

YouTube – [St Peter Lutheran Church Ft Myers Beach](#)

Go to the website and click the YouTube icon.

OFFICE INFORMATION Please keep us informed if you move, change your phone number or email address! We want to let you know what's going on here, so being able to reach you is important!

EITHER E-MAIL OR SEND TO OUR PO BOX

stpeterfmb@gmail.com

St. Peter ELCA
PO Box 07310
Fort Myers, FL 33919

Please make sure to use the new address!

Our QR Code – Scan to make a donation!



We are back at Fort Myers Beach! Pastor Bill Stehr has been a blessing for us all with messages of hope and strength for us.

Remember – ALL ARE WELCOME!!

Pets also!

Tell everyone!

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE – ASK AN USHER**

**This year our cover theme will be Florida wildlife
This month is the Roseate Spoonbill.**

The roseate spoonbill is the only spoonbill endemic (native) to the Western Hemisphere. This species can reach a length of 30-40 inches (76-102 centimeters) with a wingspan of 50-53 inches (127-135 centimeters). It has pink wings and underparts (with some red on the tops of the wings) with a white neck and back, and pinkish legs and feet. While the species looks almost entirely pink in flight, they actually have no feathers at all on their heads. The pink coloration comes from the organisms on which they feed, which are full of carotenoids.

One historical threat to the roseate spoonbill was hunting for their feathers, though this practice is now illegal which has allowed the population to rebound. Another threat to the spoonbill is the availability of adequate food sources and habitat degradation. In the Florida Bay, the increased fresh water flow from the Everglades may affect prey availability for the spoonbill. Other threats include habitat loss and disturbance, pesticides, and illegal shootings



From the Worship and Music Committee

MARTIN LUTHER QUOTES

"Everything that is done in this world is done by hope."



"You are not only responsible for what you say,
but also for what you don't say."



W.E.L.C.A. Anne Myrtle Circle

Hebrews 13:8

"Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever".



SOUPER BOWL RESULTS

NFC – San Francisco 21 AFC -Taylor Swift 41

The folks at Beach Baptist Food Pantry are the winners!!

Co-presidents, Diane Allen and Marilyn Torstveit

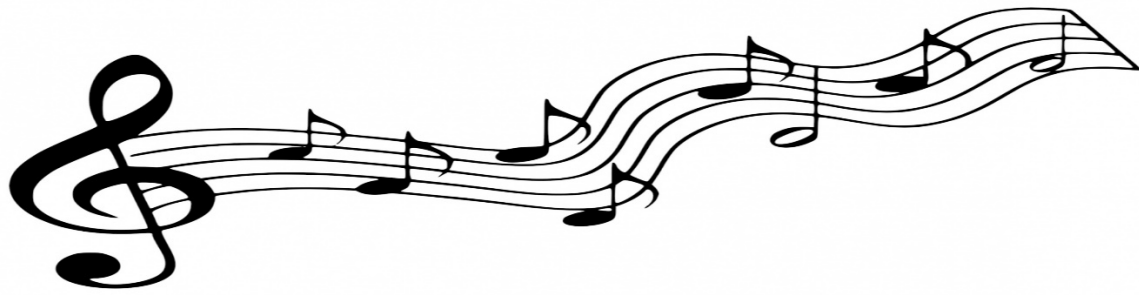
Grace is when God gives us
good things that we don't deserve.

Mercy is when He spares us
from bad things we deserve.

Blessings are when He is
generous with both.

God is good all the time!





There are some opportunities for you!

There are a few openings in the choir loft – maybe more than a few. If you can sing, like to sing, want to sing, enjoy singing or want to sit in the front of the tent, have we got an opportunity for you!

Stop and see our Music Director, Jim Kreger, and find out how much fun the choir can be! He's here early every Sunday.

It is of the Lord's mercies
that we are not consumed,
because His compassions fail not.
They are new every morning:
great is Thy faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22-23.



UPDATES ON THE BUILDING



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In his First Epistle, Peter writes to a group of Christians dispersed throughout the northern areas of Asia providing encouragement for all true believers. He encourages them to continue in the way that Jesus had laid out for all His followers. This is not too different than our St. Peter family who have been scattered after Hurricane Ian. Many times, unjust or unforeseen suffering can lead to frustration, anger, and uncertainty when unexpected events land on our doorsteps. It is during these most difficult moments of our lives, confusion reigns while contentment wanes and we find ourselves with more questions than answers. Peter reminds us however that God will make us whole again.

10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

It has been a little over 500 days since Hurricane Ian changed our lives on Fort Myers Beach forever. Certainly, during that time, we have experienced many trials and tribulations. Each of us has had to make many difficult decisions and prepare for our lives ahead. For many, the future is still unclear, and we continue to pray for those who are recovering. I am writing today, however, to share some updates and inform you that the sun is shining anew, and the future of St. Peter is bright.

Your St. Peter Church Council has been working diligently behind the scenes, navigating the challenges of dealing with insurance companies, submitting necessary permits, hiring contractors, planning for the future, and rebuilding on a barrier island; all the while sustaining our church family. This has been a herculean task and there have been many moments of frustration, uncertainty, and difficult decisions. Progress, though slow, is being made. Below are some recent updates:

- To date \$671,465.72 has been received in insurance funds. Council is working with Keys Claims Consultants, LLC to assist with furthering our wind claim. Citizens has offered additional funds to settle the claim, however we have not yet agreed on a settlement amount. We are hopeful we can reach a settlement soon.
- Don Griffin Appraisals, Inc.- Building Valuation Consultants was hired to complete an independent appraisal of our buildings. This was to ensure that necessary repairs fell below the 50% FEMA threshold.
- St. Peter, with the assistance of Pastor Stehr, has successfully transitioned to regular Sunday service under the tent. This has been well received and attended with an average weekly attendance of over 75 people.
- The demolition of Luau Hall was recently completed. This was not an easy decision but one that had to be made.
- Council hired David S. Moore and Associates to assist with the architectural redesign and required engineering of the front entry of the sanctuary, reconfiguration of bathrooms for ADA compliance, and replacement of the exterior ramps and stairways. Once plans have been finalized, renderings will be shared.
- We have voted to hire Valco Contracting, LLC, a general contractor, to begin the process of the repair and rebuilding of the sanctuary. A contract has been signed and building permit applications are being finalized. We are optimistic that construction should be starting in the next few weeks. Once timelines are finalized, this info will also be shared with the congregation.
- Council continues to engage with administrators from Chapel by the Sea and the Peace River Presbytery to envision how we can partner together on Ft. Myers Beach. A meeting was held on February 10 at St. Peter to further discussions and discourse regarding options for the future. A follow-up session is scheduled for March 12th.

We are appreciative for your support and prayers and thank you for your trust. Your Council has been extremely diligent and fiscally responsible. Presently, we believe that the rebuilding of our sanctuary will be accomplished without touching the Enduring Gift Fund. St. Peter continues to be healthy and is financially able to meet its obligations and we are thankful for your gifts.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

In service,

Dr. Jason Kurtz, Council President

On February 3, the Lau family gathered at St. Peter and laid Ann Lau to rest in the Peace Garden next to Pastor Dale Lau, the founding pastor of St. Peter. After the private service, they took the plaque from Lau Hall that the Council had graciously given to them.

Jana Clevenger had stopped at the church on her way home to see if everything was okay and they gave her a photo of the picture of Lau Hall painted by one of the great grandchildren.





CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

Thursday, January 18, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Jason Kurtz at 5:40 p.m.

Members present: Jason Kurtz, Mark Venturin, Arlene Burm, Jana Clevenger, Jim Look, Trudy Archer, Pastor Bill Stehr

Opening devotions and prayer by Pastor Stehr

A motion was made by Jana and seconded by Mark to approve the meeting agenda. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Jim and seconded by Jana to accept the Dec. 21, 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion passed.

Since the December 31 st , 2023 treasurer's report was not sent out to the council we will wait until the February meeting for approval.

Property/Maintenance report: Leaning palm tree was staked – digging and trying to straighten it might break the roots.

Work day set for February 10, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Worship and Music: Jim Kreger will attempt to organize a small choir for the worship services.

Old Business:

Jason and Mark met with the architect and contractor on January 8 to go over plans for estimates on the work needed to be done on the sanctuary building in order to apply for the permits. Should hear from contractor in a couple of weeks. Architect showed drawings for a new entrance.

Tentative date for demolition of Lau Hall is January 29, 2024. A silt fence is required per FEMA. Jason offered to install it.

Adjustments to sound system are working more effectively.

Truist Bank: Arlene met with a manager of Truist to update the council members, our address, and removing names from the credit card. Jason made a motion, seconded by Jana to remove Donna

Albert as a signer on the account and add Doug Eckmann. Motion passed. A date will need to be arranged for Doug, John Torstveit and Arlene Burm to visit a Truist Branch to make this change.

New Business:

On February 10, 2024 at 10:30, council members along with synod representative, Pastor El-Yateem will meet with Presbyterian representatives to clarify our mission going forward.

Jason suggested looking into purchasing a shed to use to store equipment for services so that we do not have to keep renting a pod. We would be able to use it for lawn care items once we have our sanctuary done as well. Jim Look will check out materials and prices.

A motion was made by Jana and seconded by Mark to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Motion passed.

We closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

The next council meeting is scheduled for February 15, 2024 at 5:30 at the home of Arlene Burm.

Respectfully submitted,
Arlene Burm, Secretary

* * * * *



February Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

March 5 Cherie Kullberg

March 6 Nita Saviste

March 9 Carter Kurtz

March 14 Barbara Deming

March 20 Liz Venturin

March 21 Paul Brandau-Shirley

Joy Booth

March 27 Harold Pekol

March 29 Gail Drohan

Just a note – Barbara Deming has been a member of St. Peter ELCA longer than anyone!! She joined on December 1, 1974

Anniversary

Feb 9 Bruce & Cherie Kullberg – 56 years!!



Living discipleship



Christian theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was hanged by the Nazis in April 1945, taught that Christianity and discipleship are intertwined. “Discipleship means adherence to Christ,” he wrote in *The Cost of Discipleship*. “An abstract Christology, a doctrinal system, a general religious knowledge ... render discipleship superfluous”

Bonhoeffer continued, “With an abstract idea, it is possible to enter into a relation of formal knowledge, to become enthusiastic about it, and perhaps even to put it into practice; but it can never be followed in personal obedience. Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”



God works in and through us!

Tony Campolo tells about the time he was asked to speak at a Pentecostal college. Before the service, eight men had him kneel so they could place their hands on his head and pray. Tony was glad to have the prayer, but each of them prayed a long time, and the longer they prayed the more they pushed on Tony's head. And then they even seemed to wander in their prayers. One of the men didn't even pray for Tony, he prayed for some guy he was concerned about. He began to pray and said, "Dear Lord, you know Charlie Stoltzfus. He lives in that silver trailer down the road a mile. You know the trailer, Lord, just down the road on the right-hand side."

Tony wanted to interrupt and tell him that God already knew where the guy lived and didn't need directions, but he just knelt there trying to keep his head upright.

The prayer went on: "Lord, Charlie told me this morning that he was going to leave his wife and three kids. Step in and do something, God. Bring that family back together."

With that, the prayer time ended and Tony went on to preach at the college chapel. Things went well and he got in his car and began to drive home. As he drove onto the Pennsylvania Turnpike, he saw a hitchhiker and felt compelled to pick him up.

Campolo said, "We drove a few minutes and I said: 'Hi, my name is Tony Campolo. What's yours?' He said, 'My name is Charlie Stoltzfus.' I couldn't believe it! I got off the turnpike at the next exit and headed back. He got a bit uneasy with that and after a few minutes he said, 'Hey mister, where are you taking me?' I said, 'I'm taking you home.' He narrowed his eyes and asked, 'Why?' I said, 'Because you just left your wife and three kids, right?' That blew him away. 'Yeah, yeah, that's right.' With shock written all over his face, he plastered himself against the car door and never took his eyes off me. Then I really did him in as I drove right to his silver trailer. When I pulled up, his eyes seemed to bulge as he asked, 'How did you know that I lived here?' I said, 'God told me.' (I believe God did tell me). When he opened the trailer door his wife exclaimed, 'You're back! You're back!' He whispered in her ear and the more he talked, the bigger her eyes got. I said with real authority, 'The two of you sit down. I'm going to talk and you two are going to listen.' Man, did they listen...that afternoon I led those two young people to Jesus Christ."

Today Charlie Stoltzfus is himself a Pentacostal preacher!

2023 – CHURCH OFFICERS & COUNCIL MEMBERS

PRESIDENT..... Dr. Jason Kurtz

VICE PRESIDENT.....Mark Venturin

SECRETARYArlene Burm

TREASURER.....Doug Eckmann

MEMBERS:

Jana Clevenger – Jim Look – Courtney Eckmann

You can still call the church office at 239-463-4251!

It rings to Trudy's cell phone!

"I've read the last page of the bible.

It's all going to turn out alright."

Billy Graham