

The Church in the Vineyard

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church
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From the Pastor's Desk ...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Throughout this past winter, I cared for a number of lady bugs and their Asian impostors in my church office—particularly around the window. Every morning, I would greet these unsolicited visitors (up to six at a time!) with droplets of water... and occasionally black tea. After the first few days of my service to them, they began to crawl straight for those drops--almost as if they had been anticipating my arrival.

Unfortunately, by April they had all but disappeared, and for a while, I blamed myself. You see, one day I had offered them red raspberry tea instead of the usual Lipton, and I was afraid that maybe it “disagreed” with them. “I killed them all!” I lamented aloud. However, the week after Easter, I found one more true lady bug in the sanctuary, and I couldn't but help to scoop it up and head for my “feeding station.” Now, how she got away, I don't know, but within moments, she was gone. I thought that maybe I had dropped her and stepped on her, but no. I also checked my dressing mirror to see if she was crawling on my back--but again, no. So, I said a prayer, thanked God for my time with the little bugs, and asked Him to teach me to leave well enough (and the bugs) alone.

Well, an hour or two later, while I was typing at my desk, I felt a tickle on my stomach. Of course, I thought it was just an itch, but ... it was moving! I really wanted to believe it was her, but the thought of “spider” entered my mind too, so I carefully lifted up my sweater *and* my long-sleeved shirt, and, there she was, waltzing around and searching for who knows what. Incredible!

Having prayed for guidance beforehand, I withheld my desire to feed her and took her straight outside to the tree nearest my window. Try as I might, she wouldn't leave me until I accidentally bumped her with a small branch. And away she flew. Sadly. And joyfully.

So, yes, my friends, God answers our prayers—sometimes in the strangest and most beautiful ways. Honestly, I can't say that I will never feed these little guys again, but, I will certainly never give them raspberry tea—and that's for sure.



Peace, Pastor Matt

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Scripture Readings for May and June, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Easter – May 3, 2026

Acts 7:55-60, Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16, 1 Peter 2:2-10, John 14:1-14

Sixth Sunday of Easter – May 10, 2026

Acts 17:22-31, Psalm 66:8-20, 1 Peter 3:13-22, John 14:15-21

Ascension of Our Lord – May 14, 2026

Acts 1:1-11, Psalm 47, Ephesians 1:15-23, Luke 24:44-53

Seventh Sunday of Easter – May 17, 2026

Acts 1:6-14, Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35, 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11, John 17:1-11

Pentecost Sunday – May 24, 2026

Acts 2:1-21, Psalm 104:24-34, 35b, 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13, John 20:19-23

Holy Trinity Sunday – May 31, 2026

Genesis 1:1—2:4a, Psalm 8, 2 Corinthians 13:11-13, Matthew 28:16-20

Second Sunday after Pentecost – June 7, 2026

Hosea 5:15—6:6, Psalm 50:7-15, Romans 4:13-25, Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Third Sunday after Pentecost – June 14, 2026

Exodus 19:2-8a, Psalm 100, Romans 5:1-8, Matthew 9:35—10:8 [9-23]

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost – June 21, 2026

Jeremiah 20:7-13, Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18, Romans 6:1b-11, Matthew 10:24-39

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – June 28, 2026

Jeremiah 28:5-9, Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18, Romans 6:12-23, Matthew 10:40-42



CHANGES TO WORSHIP

With Pastor Matt's upcoming retirement on June 8th, there will be some changes to our worship service each Sunday. The changes we anticipate are explained below:

- On some Sundays, our service will be led by a Supply Pastor who can and will preside over Holy Communion for worshippers.
- On most Sundays, our service will be led by an Authorized Lay Worship Leader who is not permitted to preside over Holy Communion. A rotation of ALWLs will allow us to hear from different voices as the Holy Spirit leads them. We will have Holy Communion only when a Lay Distributor (authorized by the Bishop) is present. If no Lay Distributor is present, there will be no Holy Communion offered to worshippers.
- On an occasional Sunday, there may be no Pastor or ALWL scheduled to serve. On these Sundays, the Assistant Minister or a member of the congregation who volunteers will read the Gospel and then offer the devotional message for that particular day from the Daily Devotional Book which will be kept at the pulpit – with a moment of silence to follow. In this way, no member need worry or stress about having to prepare a sermon but instead be joyful they can share the Word of God with others! The first opportunity to do so will be on Sunday, June 28th. If you wish (or do not wish) to serve in this manner, please let Cathi know by calling or emailing the office.
- On the Fifth Sundays of the month, we will follow the Service of the Word liturgy with the AM or a member of the congregation reading the Gospel and the devotional message for the day.

Happening at St. Peter's and beyond in May and June

Reception to Honor Pastor Matt

On Sunday, June 7, 2026 following worship, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a catered luncheon to honor Pastor Matt on his retirement from St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend as we send Pastor Matt off to the next chapter of his life!

So that we can plan accordingly, reservations for this momentous occasion will be required. Please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board or call the church office at 814-725-1840 or email the church at stpetersnortheast@gmail.com



*Retirement
only means
it's time for a
new adventure!*

St. Peter's Daytime Book Club will meet on Friday, May 8, 2026 at the Bean in downtown North East.

9:30-10:00 Social Time

**10:00-11:00 Book
Discussion Time**

We will be discussing the book, The Giver by Lois Lowry.
All are welcome!



Recent Memorials

Given to the Glory of God
and in Memory of:

Charles Moorhead

For Current –
Joan Moorhead

Given to the Glory of God
and in Memory and Honor of:

Lillian Reno

For North East Food Pantry –
Anthony & Cathi Newara

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National Day of Prayer

On Thursday, May 7, 2026, Christians all over America, will join one another in lifting up prayers for one another, the church, our nation and the world.

The community is invited to participate in a Prayer Service on this day at the North East Alliance Church, 81 Main Street in North East beginning at 7:00 p.m.



Ascension Day

In celebration of the Ascension of Our Lord, Luther Memorial Church, 225 West 10th Street in Erie, is offering an Ascension Day Service beginning at 7:00 p.m. for members and friends of the East Erie Conference of Lutheran Churches.



North East Food Pantry

With school almost over, during the months of May and June, we will be collecting items that children would enjoy during the summer. Needed are: **16 oz. jars of peanut butter, boxes of cereal, boxes of Macaroni & Cheese, cans of tuna fish and cans of any variety of Chef Boyardee.** Thank you for all you do to help your neighbors in need!



Worship Aide Schedule for May and June 2026

*If there is a conflict on your given date, it is your responsibility to find someone to substitute for you.
Please notify the office by Wednesday before the Sunday of the change. Thank you!*

	Sunday May 3	Sunday May 10	Sunday May 17	Pentecost May 24	Holy Trinity Sunday May 31
Assistant Minister	Cathi N.	Marcia G.	Jeremy P.	Paul W.	Stephanie D.
Crucifer	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Acolyte	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Lector	Cathi N..	Dennis G.	Jeremy P.	Gerda W.	Crystal P.
Usher(s)	Anthony N.	Dennis G.	Harriet P.	Dennis G.	Marcia G.
Altar Care	Stephanie D.	Stephanie D.	Stephanie D.	Stephanie D.	Stephanie D.
Counters	Stephanie D. Cathi N.	Frank G. Paul W.	Don P. Scott T.	Paul W. Leslee G.	Stephanie D. Dennis G.

	Sunday June 7	Sunday June 14	Sunday June 21	Sunday June 28
Pulpit Supply	XXX	Pr. Brian Moran	Dr. David Olson, ALWL	No Worship Leader Scheduled
Assistant Minister	Jeremy P.	Marcia G.	Cathi N.	Paul W.
Crucifer	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Acolyte	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Lector	Jeremy P.	Marcia G.	Cathi N.	Beth H.
Usher(s)		Dennis G.	Anthony N.	Harriet P.
Altar Care Lay Distribtor	Marcia G. XXX	Marcia G. XXX	Marcia G. XXX	Marcia G. XXX
Counters	Leslee G. Scott T.	Frank G. Dennis G.	Cathi N. Scott T.	Don P. Paul W.

Milestones in Life

Congratulations to Rev. Matthew E. Dennison on his retirement – June 8, 2026!

On behalf of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, we thank you for shepherding us and your service to St. Peter's and Our LORD for the past thirteen years, first as our Vicar and then as our Pastor.

May the LORD bless and keep you.

May He make His face to shine upon you.

May He be gracious unto you.

May He lift up His countenance and

Give you peace at your retirement and always!



Birthday Wishes to ...

May 5	Amanda Smith
May 6	John Page
May 6	Jean Roache
May 11	Nicholas Greco
May 13	Liz Brooks
May 14	Dexter Angelcyk
May 14	Susan Wilson
May 18	Brett Ballew
May 18	Sara Randolph
May 20	Linda Cole
May 21	Sharon Chesley
May 22	Kurt Lichtenfeld
May 25	Stephanie Reagle
May 29	Eric Luke



Wishing a Happy Anniversary to ...

- Anthony & Cathi Newara on May 2nd
- Dick & Mary Mantsch on June 2nd
- James & Tracy Million on June 8th
- Frank & Pam Gildersleeve on June 12th
- Richard & Crystal Pratt on June 17th

June 3	Joanna Yamoune
June 4	Jessica Duda
June 4	Mary Helen Page
June 4	Aaron Wolf
June 5	Kimberly MacKeller
June 6	Dennis Groce
June 6	Anthony Newara
June 7	Andrew Aspden
June 7	Matthew Dennison
June 9	Emily Carver
June 11	Roy Henkes
June 11	Don MacKeller Jr.
June 12	Holli Fuller
June 17	Debra Rupp
June 20	Nathan Newara
June 22	Brian Behrens
June 26	Joseph Ferri
June 30	Therese Hutchinson
June 30	Scott Torrance Jr.



Green Corner – NWSA Synod Green Team



ECUMENICAL DECADE OF CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION (2025-2035)

The **Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action** is a bold invitation from the World Council of Churches and ecumenical partners worldwide: a pilgrimage of repentance, renewal, and action to confront the climate emergency with courage, hope, and love. The Earth groans under the weight of exploitation, and vulnerable communities bear the heaviest burdens of a crisis they did not cause. Yet our faith proclaims good news for all creation! **Why this Decade?**



The climate crisis is not only an environmental emergency – it is a spiritual and moral crisis.

- Rising temperatures, floods, fires, and droughts are destroying lives and livelihoods.
- Injustice deepens as the poorest and most marginalized suffer most.
- Greed and consumerism corrode creation and community alike.

Find more information: [Ecumenical Decade Of Climate Justice Action Web.pdf](#)

ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry, in his 2025 “Message on the Tenth Anniversary of the Paris Climate Accords,” affirmed the 2015 United Nations agreement that committed all nations, including the U.S., to limit global warming to well below 2°Celsius (C) while also pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C, and emphasized: *“It is not too late to protect our climate. With God, it is never too late. Kairos means that this is an opportune and urgent time to address Earth’s climate crisis. I am calling this church to be more connected and sustainable. This includes stewarding God’s creation as an expression of faith and seeking sustainability rooted in ways of living that honor everything God has called ‘good,’ including learning from and following the leadership of Indigenous communities. I commend to you the social message, Earth’s Climate Crisis.”* A social message was adopted unanimously for the ELCA by the Church Council on April 20, 2023. [Earths Climate Crisis Social Message.pdf](#) and the accompanying study guide, “Our Kairos Moment”, guides congregations through taking meaningful action toward Climate Justice.

A resolution has been developed for ELCA congregations and synods to affirm support for the DECADE OF CLIMATE JUSTICE. The Northwestern PA Synod Green Team is collaborating with Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) by presenting this resolution to our 2026 Synod Assembly in June. LRC synod resolutions make a real difference in the ELCA. Barbara Rossing and Jim Martin-Schramm explain the process in this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYrDKnQd6HM&source_ve_path=OTY3MTQ&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Flutheransrestoringcreation.org%2F



The model resolution: [Model Resolution for Congregations who have Synod Assemblies in 2026](#)

You can also go to www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org to find links information.



to all this

Green Team’s purpose is to “raise awareness of and advocate for the care of creation.” Our mission is to support and encourage creation care ministries, raise awareness, model creation care advocacy consistent with The ELCA teachings in our faith communities and public life.

Like and follow us on Facebook: [Northwestern PA Synod Green Team – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.](#)

Contact us at: nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com

May 2026



Inspiration and Prayers



REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Current Prayer Requests: Dan Reed, Ben Lydic, John Shaffer, Phil Harris, Scott & Shirley Torrance, Ed Koffler and Donna & Jack Brian

Those at Parkside: Richard "Dick" Mantsch

Our servicemen/women: Stephen Jelinek, William A. Lewis, Scott Torrance Jr. and Evan Valone.

Continued prayers for: Emily Arslan, Dale Bessert, Alison Bolinger, Dick & Peg Bonniger, Brian, Elaine & Daryl Bush, Carlos, Alan Cvetkovski, Diana, Everly, Gabe, Lydia Groce, Hadley, Jeff Hall, Steve Hartz, Tom & Pat Huber, Amanda Hunt, Joshua, Joyce, Kim, Linda, Marilyn Lamb, Danielle Larocque, Lisa, Sandy Lorei, John Martin, Mary Beth, Marilyn, Marty, Joan, Dave & Marge Montgomery, John Nielsen, Patti, Marie Pierce, Walter Pierce, Richard Pratt, Marge Santabene, Dan Sehnke, Shauna, Michelle Skrekla, Ed Whitney & Kim Whitacre

A Prayer for Daily Renewal

Almighty **G**od,
by our baptism into the
death and resurrection
of your Son, Jesus Christ,
you turn us from the
old life of sin.

Grant that we who are
reborn to new life in him
may live in righteousness
and holiness all our days,
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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May and June At-A-Glance

Youth Sunday School 9:00 – 10:15 am

(1st and 3rd Sundays Sept through May)

Sunday Adult Bible Study 9:15 am (Sept through May)

Sunday Worship Service at 10:30 am

May 5	Property meets at 7:00 pm
May 7	National Day of Prayer
May 7	Prayer Service at NE Alliance at 7:00 pm
May 10	Happy Mother's Day
May 13	Stewardship meets at 11:00 am
May 14	The Ascension of Our Lord
May 14	Ascension Service at Luther Memorial at 7pm
May 16	Armed Forces Day – Thank you to those who are currently serving!
May 19	Church Council meets at 6:30 pm
May 24	Pentecost Sunday
May 25	Memorial Day – Thank you to those who gave their lives for our country & freedom!
May 31	Holy Trinity Day
Jun 2	Property meets at 7:00 pm
Jun 7	Pastor Matt's last worship service at 10:30 am
Jun 7	Farewell Reception for Pastor at 11:30 am
Jun 10	Stewardship meets at 11:00 am
Jun 14	Flag Day
Jun 16	Church Council meets at 6:30 pm
Jun 19	Juneteenth
Jun 21	Father's Day

COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR 2026

Pastor Matthew Dennison

Mae Dudick

Marcia Groce

Harriet Partch

Don Partch

Crystal Pratt

Scott Torrance

Shirley Torrance

Paul Witosky

**OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION
FOR 2026**

President – Don Partch

Vice President – Marcia Groce

Secretary – Shirley Torrance

Treasurer – Scott Torrance Sr.

Council Financial Secretary –

Shirley Torrance

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Wednesday 9:00 am - 2:00pm

Thursday as needed

Telephone: 814-725-1840

PASTOR'S HOURS:

Tuesday-Thursday 9:00 am-5:00pm

Pastor's Phone: 814-725-1840 ext. 5

Email:

stpetersnortheast@gmail.com

Website:

www.stpetersnortheast.org

STAFF OF ST. PETER'S:

Rev. Matthew E. Dennison

Parish Administrator –

Cathi Newara

Organist -- Ellsworth Textor

Sunday School Director –

Cathi Newara



WE'RE ON THE WEB

Visit us at:

www.stpetersnortheast.org or on

Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/people/St-Peters-Lutheran-Church-of-North-East/100093705875362/>