



From the Pastor

“In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.” Ephesians 1:11-12

For weeks leading up to Christmas, the girls randomly shout out how soon it will be until Christmas break. The time measurements are rarely the same. Sometimes the countdown is measured in weeks, sometimes in days, but other times in school days, and then when we are close, it becomes a countdown of hours. I'm sure they aren't alone in their eager anticipation of the break from school.

Simultaneously, many of us have been marking the passage of time during Advent and counting down or up until Christmas day. Devotionals, paper chains, and various Advent calendars mark the December days and help to build the excitement of the long-awaited celebration of the arrival of Christ. In worship, we began the Advent season singing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” whose ancient words have long given voice to the yearning for God's Messiah to come and set things right.

Now that Christmas and its break from school have arrived, the girls aren't exactly sure what to do with themselves. Oh, there's lots they *could* do – figurines to play with, art projects to do, games to play, puzzles to put together – but deciding which specific thing to do is a struggle. Unmoored from the structure of school, they are somewhat adrift. That is some of the charm of having a break, but it also can devolve into a listless malaise and worse, battles.

In the church, we can suffer from this untethered uncertainty as well. For weeks, we have been lighting one more candle to watch for Messiah. We have been gradually greening our worship space. We have joined John in preparing the way of the Lord. Now Christmas and the celebration of the Incarnation have arrived. We light extra candles and sing extra songs, but what else? Now that we're through opening the windows on our Advent calendars and there are no more pages in our devotionals, what do we do with ourselves?

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Pastor's Page Continued

Emmanuel has come. God is with us. As people of God, called to live as disciples, how do we live this Christmas reality every day and not just one or twelve days? Our beloved carols and the Epiphany story shed some light on the right response, which is praise and worship.

Our song of "O come, o come Emmanuel" now gives way to "O come let us adore him" and "Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord." These lyrics reflect the shepherds and also the story of the magi who, despite the distance, differences in doctrine, and difficulties, come to worship Jesus. As a Christmas Church, we are called to come and worship. In light of the Epiphany, the inbreaking of God into the world, we are moved to live lives of praise.

In the coming days and weeks, as we put our decorations away for another year, let us Lord, our strength and redeemer, have mercy on us. remember that we are not adrift. We are anchored by the ongoing presence of God who has broken into the world and dwells with us. This anchor is a tether to hope crafted in love and lived by faith together in praise of the one who has come and welcomes us to come as children. With the wonder of the shepherds and determination of the magi, we come again and again into the presence of the Living Lord to praise his majesty and worship him for the perfect love he reveals. Moment by moment, in our words and our actions, in times together and apart, we structure these days and live our lives with purpose, for the praise of God.



On behalf of Christine, Lily, Anna, and Kate, I want to extend our deepest thanks to our church family for the many ways in which you made God's love incarnate for us this Christmas season, as you do throughout the year. We are humbled and overjoyed at your love and care for us, shown in this season through thoughtful gifts, moving cards and messages, and your support for us through serving alongside of us and your prayers. Thank you again for the gift of you and for all the ways you blessed us throughout the year. May God's love incarnate be with you always. +Pastor



St. Peter's Youth in Service



St. Peter's Youth offered a delicious Advent Luncheon under the direction of Ted Lindgren III and Pr. Johns. The kids worked hard to help meal prep a healthy luncheon and funds raised benefit future youth events. Many blessings to our youth as they seek a future of serving others beyond our doors.

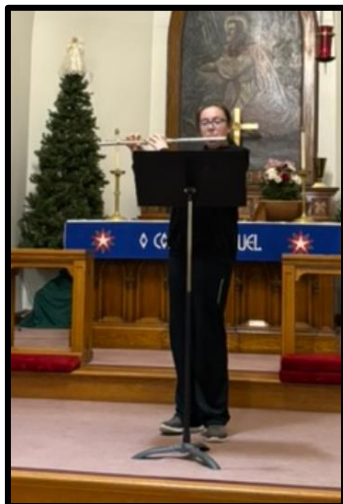


The After School Program group of Merry Makers delivered cookies to our church neighbors on their last day of school before Christmas break. A special thank you to the students who worked so hard to make and deliver such a special homemade gift to our neighbors. It's a joy to see the excitement in the eyes of those who got to deliver such gifts!



Manna Night

St. Peter's Manna Night Youth Celebrated their annual talent show featuring many talented young performers on Wednesday, December 14th. Many thanks to everyone who were brave in share their God given talent with others and to the Manna night staff for continuing to host this ministry to our local youth. Save the date for the return of Manna Night on Wednesday, January 14th! Please see Pastor Johns if you would like to volunteer for an evening or two! (Clearances needed for all who work with our youth) .



let
your
light
Shine



Sunday School Christmas Program



Many thanks to the children and families who participated in or attended the 2025 Christmas program. Many were in attendance to watch the play and as you can see in the photos, many children participated. The play *The Song of Salvation* was written by Pastor Johns, and the children did a great job of delivering the message of Christ's birth.



Caroling



Many thanks to everyone who joined us for dinner and the annual caroling event at St. Peter's. Friends, neighbors, and church families were greeted with the magical voices of Christmas.

We hope all in attendance felt the spirit of Christmas and the gift that their voices offered to others.



SPY Christmas Party



The 2025 SPY Christmas party was a success with many youth participating. Thanks to Kierstin Peak and Pastor Johns for providing activities. Kids got to enjoy an evening together with dinner, caroling, a gingerbread making contest, and just enjoying being together.



Congratulations to the winners of the Gingerbread House Construction event. Owen and Anna were the winners this year.



Thank You

A special thank you to everyone who helped to make Christmas Eve a magical moment at St. Peter's. As we lit each other's candles from the Christmas candle we shared more than love, more than peace. We shared in that moment, if not in other moments that evening, a gift from God. The spirit of Christmas, the spirit of Christ's birth, and the promise of hope was with all of us.

Thank You to everyone who helped in any way to provide gifts and gift cards for children and families at Glade Run Lutheran Services this Christmas.



Thank you to everyone who beautified our nave & brightened the days of shut-ins with your poinsettias!



St. Peter's Lutheran Church also received thank yous from United Lutheran Seminary, Lutheran Senior Life and ELCA churchwide for our generous giving to support their ministries.



A Special Thank You to our St. Peter's Church family.

Thank you for your care, concern, cards, calls and visits to Troy during his two-year illness. He always appreciated all the love shown to him and especially enjoyed the visits.

He is greatly missed and dearly loved. Thank you.

The Barkley family ~ Beverly, Scott & Tara



St. Peter's Family,

Thank you for your gift of giving! This year has been a trying one for us and knowing there are those in our church who are willing to give and to help out has taken an immense weight off our shoulders! God Bless you!

Announcements and Birthdays



Sundays in January

9 am Sunday School

10:15 am Worship

11:30 am Fellowship

Wednesdays in January

5:30 pm Manna Night

7:00 pm Senior Choir Practice

Thursdays in January

9:00 am Quilting

7:00 pm Bible Study

1 Jenn Erin

3 Todd Wearing

4 Chris Merrison, Sr.

6 Sean Weber

7 Jacob Vicheck

7 Austin Schmidt

9 Zoey Miller

11 Dean Zinkhann

13 Chelsea Mars

14 Elena Barron

18 Jack Erin

20 Ruth Roberts

20 Jane Taylor

21 Marge Lindgren

24 Kurt Wearing

26 Cindy Ayers

26 Barb Brown

26 Pastor Brandon Johns

28 William Floyd Wahl



Our annual winter congregational meeting featuring the Bulletin of Reports and lunch will be Sunday, February 1st after worship. Please submit committee and ministry reports by Sunday, January 18th. This gathering gives us a wonderful opportunity to share the good news of how God is at work through our church family. Reading and listening to the reports also can strengthen our connection to God because we realize even more how God is alive and at work here and now, and also strengthens our connection to each other as we appreciate the work of God being done by others in our family and discover ways we could get involved. We will also be voting on bids for bathroom renovations.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service



Please come out and support the memory of Dr King and the work of our local church by serving together on 1/19

9:45am – 10:00am Meet at St. John's UCC for a short MLK Day Celebration Devotion

10:00am – Organize for service. Possible Service Places:

The Grove - Lead bingo and possible sing-a-long

St. John's UCC - Make Thank You goodies and cards for staff at The Grove and then deliver them.

Penn Mar Apartments - Lead sing-a-long and Bingo

Prepare lunch and take and serve at Presidents Square.

10:15am-12:30pm – Go out and serve!

Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace.

A soul generated by love.

Upcoming Events



Join your church family and friends for the monthly Lunch Bunch outing **Wednesday, January 14 at 12 pm**. **This month's restaurant is Goodfello's** in Zelienople. Anyone is welcome to attend. Please let Pastor Johns know how many will be joining from your party so he can pass the information along to RSVP for the group! Stay tuned each month for the lunch date so you don't miss out on an afternoon of fun and fellowship.

Epiphany Luncheon

Our annual Advent Friend reveal will take place on Sunday, January 4th with a pot luck luncheon immediately following the worship service. **EVERYONE is invited** to attend and listen to the stories of those who participated in Advent Friends 2025.



500 Card Club – will meet this month on **Friday, January 1st at noon**. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend - no experience needed! If you would like to learn to play you are welcome to join in the fun. It's a pot luck event so bring whatever you would like to share.



GAME NIGHT



Saturday, January 17th at 6:30.

Bring your favorite game to share with friends and enjoy an evening of good old fashioned board games. All are welcome.



Bible Study – We gather on Thursday nights at 7pm via Zoom. We dig into the upcoming Sunday's lessons with humor and levity and no question is ever too silly or too serious. Hope you'll join in!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88634175171?pwd=Q0xmanZSOXNwdFBQZ3J1SDhwSVk0UT09>

In the month of January St. Peter's family and friends will collect peanut butter and jelly for the Evans City Community Food Cupboard. Please leave your donations in Luther Hall. If you would like to volunteer to pack food join us the 2nd Sunday of each month after worship as we collectively pack food for many local families.



Financial Facts

November 2025 Contributions:

Fund	Description	Amount
203	Advent	345.00
204	W.E.L.C.A.	370.00
212	Food Cupboard	315.00
213	Synod Benevolence	1,302.00
219	ELCA Glade Run	62.00
240	Evans City Library	200.00
242	EDCO Park	50.00
299	Pastor's Disc. Fund	20.00
400	Current Fund Income	17,851.14
401	Music Fund Income	10.00
402	Memorial Fund Income	55.00
405	Flower Income	120.00
406	Youth Fund Income	225.00
407	Priority Project Income	2,552.00
408	After School Program Income	1,160.00
410	Campership Income	20.00
412	Manna Night	10.00
413	Applefest	57.00
Grand Total		24,724.14

2025 Contributions to Date

Fund	Description	Amount
203	Advent	345.00
204	W.E.L.C.A.	586.00
206	Madagascar	2,566.00
208	Lutheran Campus Ministries	25.00
211	Meals on Wheels	126.00
212	Food Cupboard	2,406.80
213	Synod Benevolence	15,321.90
214	ELCA World Hunger Appeal	100.00
217	ELCA Lutherlyn Prospect	352.00
218	Lutheran Service Society	329.78
219	ELCA Glade Run	62.00
222	Passavant Retire, Zelle	82.00
223	ELCA Luth. Disaster Response	2,332.00
228	Seminary	57.00
234	Sherri Ifft - Missionary	142.00
240	Evans City Library	288.50
241	Evans City Fire Department	117.00
242	EDCO Park	537.00
244	ALS of Western PA	2,206.00
299	Pastor's Disc. Fund	1,558.00
400	Current Fund Income	165,854.54
401	Music Fund Income	677.00
402	Memorial Fund Income	2,985.00
405	Flower Income	3,021.50
406	Youth Fund Income	874.00
407	Priority Project Income	12,528.00
408	After School Program Income	16,078.55
410	Campership Income	4,881.07
412	Manna Night	2,657.05
413	Applefest	7,569.00
440	Softball Team Income	600.00
441	Church Outings Income	2,093.00
Grand Total		249,358.69

The 2026 offering envelopes are available in your church mailbox, located in Luther Hall. Please remember to keep your membership active a contribution and communion of record in this calendar year or the preceding year is necessary !

Please Note:

When you sponsor the newsletter (\$15), eternal candle (\$15), or altar flowers (\$20/vase), you can just add to your weekly offering by the amount and write FLOWERS, etc. on the Other line. You can do so at any time, no need to wait. Thanks!

A Financial Update – To keep everyone informed about our current financial situation, the reconciled treasurer's report of our Current Fund as of the end of November 2025 is as follows:

Current Fund \$5,344.50

Memorial Fund \$11,136.79

Youth Fund \$8,859.19

Manna Fund \$6,726.12

Priority Project Fund \$6,840.23

After School Program \$8,100.83

Many thanks to those who continue to give to these funds which give us the ability to serve Christ and others.



Our Monthly Benevolent Cause for January

Our Monthly Benevolent Cause will support Meals on Wheels. If you would like to support this cause, please mark the Other line on your envelope.



Thoughts and Prayers

Malala Allen
Cole Barkley
John, Summer, Timothy Barron & Family
Peter Barry
Ricky Benson
Tom Broeren
Eilene Budisky
Kay Burr
Lisa Burr
Reid Caldwell (ALS)
Jane Carruth (Colon Cancer - B.Barkley)
Luke Clawson
Penny Dusenberry
David English (Lung Cancer)
Diane Fair
Mary, Glenn, and David Fulghum
Lori Goodwin
Joan Gump
Patti Grubbs
Richard Hutchins (Cancer)
Stephanie Hogan
Ella Jason
Greg John
Val Kurth (Breast Cancer)



Todd Manuel (Blood Cancer)
Diane Marburger
Joe Marburger
Patty Marburger
Jane Mashuda
Diamond McCracken
Berty McMillen
Carmen and Sandra Morra
Cole Moretti (Cancer)
Matt Morris
Mark Phillips
Emma Plank
Jason Plank
Erin Price
Bill Puryear (Cancer)
Lori Rasp
Rick Reifenstein
Dominick Scarpino
Pastor Tony Schneck
Jim Schrader
Kay Marburger Terry
Garrie Wearing
John Wilson



PRAYERS FOR OUR HOMEBOUND

Please contact the church office as soon as possible
to request additions or changes.

Gini Rinkus
Nancy Zattiero

INTERCESSIONS FOR CONSOLATION IN GRIEF

Members and friends who have entered the
Church Triumphant in the previous 3 months:

The families of:
Troy Barkley
Bea King
Joan Harbaugh

St. Peter's Lutheran Church Council Minutes

December 9, 2025

Present: Pastor Johns, Staci Bettencourt, Dan Erin, Marge Wearing, Adam Price, Linda Schmidt, Robin Plank (via zoom), Casey Guerriero, Janice Hogan, Rita Reifenstein, and Corey Walker

Absent: Patti Flach and Jane Taylor

President Adam Price called the meeting to order at 7:24 pm. Pastor Johns finished our theme of “mercy” for this year.

Minutes: Minutes from the November 11, 2025, Council Meeting were read and approved. Rita motioned to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Staci. Motion carried.

Reception of visitors: Robin VanDyke and Pat Capella (both are Council members starting in 2026)

Pastor's Report: Written report submitted. Pastor was at Butler Memorial Hospital various times throughout the month of November visiting members.

Treasurer's Report and Financial Secretary: Written reports were submitted. We are in the positive for the first time this year! We hope this trend continues with the holidays approaching. Dan motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Corey. Motion approved.

Financial: Written report submitted. They are looking to have an Audit Party in February. Rita and Marge have agreed to help, we also might have Jason Plank helping as well. They would like to teach others the auditing process. There is a new organ tuner/repair person as of November. Memorial meeting needs to happen in 2026. Recommendations from financial committee: Keep the monthly benevolence causes the same as they were in 2025 (seconded by Dan), Advent offering to go to the card ministry to help pay for supplies (seconded by Staci), and end of year bonuses (name change because this will come from current fund) as follows- Pastor \$750, Marlene/Joe \$100, and Marge \$50 (seconded by Dan). It is to note that there were 2 votes of abstention for the end of year bonuses.

Fellowship: Fellowship met. They talked about the turkey dinner. There is no official report yet, but about \$2,300 was raised.

Learning Ministry/Youth: Kierstin and Kyle Peak are volunteering with the Youth.

Memorial: No meeting. They are to meet in January to discuss funds and donations.

Mutual Ministry: No meeting.

Property: Written report submitted. We currently have 3 bids for the bathrooms in the basement. Olde Hickory is more than likely the option we will be going with. We are waiting on one more bid. We will discuss this more at the January meeting. There should be a recommendation of what bid to go with and how to raise funds.



St. Peter's Lutheran Church Council Minutes *(continued)*

Worship and Music: Written report submitted. There was a discussion on the worship times for Christmas Eve service. Pastor had sent out an email prior to see if people had varying opinions on changing the times. By hand count, the majority of council voted to keep it the same times (7 and 10 pm).

Unfinished Business

Constitution updates: none

Clothing Cupboard: WELCA voted to close this at the end of the year. They are talking about possibilities of what to do with this space once the clothing cupboard closes.

New Business

2026 theme: Praise will be the theme for 2026.

Council installation date: January 4, 2026- same day as Epiphany luncheon.

Congregational Meeting: February 1, 2026

The next meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2025 at 7pm.

Adjournment and Prayer: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm. Dan moved to adjourn, seconded by Corey. Motion carried. The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Casey Guerriero



Volunteers

JANUARY VOLUNTEERS 2026

Date	1/4/2026	1/11/2026	1/18/2026	1/25/2026
Acolytes	Owen Price	Ethan Johns	Alyssa Mossor	Jocelyn Thomas
Altar Flowers (\$20/vase)	The Johns Family	needed	Walt & Amy Grigorovich	Beverly Barkley
Altar Guild	Teresa O'Malley	Teresa O'Malley	Teresa O'Malley	Teresa O'Malley
Asst. Minister	Teresa O'Malley	Ted Lindgren II	Glenn Fulghum	Karen Ferrari
Bell Ringer	Josh Green	Joe Ludwik	Wes Schmidt	Adam Price
Eternal Candle (\$15)	Teresa O'Malley	Teresa O'Malley	Teresa O'Malley	Teresa O'Malley
Greeters	Vic & Brenda Pepper	Heinie & Mary Jane Raupp	Wes & Linda Schmidt	Robin & Jason Plank
Lector	Tom Ayres	Jane Taylor	Adam Price	Ted Lindgren III
Nursery	Staci Bettencourt	Emily Taylor	Marge Lindgren	Beverly Barkley
Offering Counters	Michael Bettencourt & Jan Hogan	Michael Bettencourt & Jan Hogan	Michael Bettencourt & Jan Hogan	Michael Bettencourt & Jan Hogan
Tech Support	Adam Price	Heidi Beahm	Adam Price	Heidi Beahm
Ushers	Heidi Beahm & Brian Johns	Cindy & Tom Ayres	Adam Price & Rob Burr	Dan & Casey Guerriero

Sign ups – The flower chart, eternal candle, and newsletter sponsorship poster for 2026 is available on the bulletin board in Luther Hall.



The sign up for After Worship Fellowship is available on the bulletin board in Luther Hall. We are in need of many volunteers for the weeks in the new year. You can also sign up by calling or emailing the church office. Please consider serving in one or more of these ways. Thank you!

Nursery – We could use some older children and teens as assistants. Please let Adam Price or Beverly Barkley know if you're interested.



January Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 10:15am - Lessons and 11:30am - Fellowship	29 7pm - Boy Scouts	30	31 Blessed New Year 10am - Quilters Group	1	2 12pm - 500 Club & Lunch	3
4 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship 11:30am - Epiphany	5 4pm - After School 6:30pm - Fellowship 7pm - Boy Scouts	6 9am - Pr. Cluster -Zelie. 4pm - After School 7pm - Property Mtg.	7 9am - E.C. Ministerium 10am - Community 4pm - After School 7pm - Choir Practice	8 10am - Quilters Group 4pm - After School 7pm - Bible Study	9 4pm - After School	10
11 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship 11:30am - Fellowship 11:45am - Pack Up Food	12 4pm - After School 7pm - Boy Scouts	13 4pm - After School 7pm - Council Meeting	14 10am - Community 12pm - Lunch Bunch 4pm - After School 5:30pm - Manna Night 7pm - Choir Practice	15 10am - Quilters Group 4pm - After School 7pm - Bible Study	16 4pm - After School	17 6:30pm - Game Night
18 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship 11:30am - Fellowship 12pm - Bell Choir Practice	19 4pm - After School 7pm - Boy Scouts	20 4pm - After School 7pm - Finance Meeting	21 10am - Community 4pm - After School 5:30pm - Manna Night 7pm - Choir Practice	22 10am - Quilters Group 4pm - After School 7pm - Bible Study	23 4pm - After School	24 8am - WELCA Soup Sale
25 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship 11:30am - Fellowship 12pm - Bell Choir Practice	26 4pm - After School 7pm - Boy Scouts 7pm - Worship Mtg.	27 4pm - After School 7pm - Dorcas Circle	28 10am - Community 4pm - After School 5:30pm - Manna Night 7pm - Choir Practice	29 10am - Quilters Group 4pm - After School 7pm - Bible Study	30 4pm - After School	31

Women of the **ELCA** 

Update

Annual Soup Sale

The soup sale isn't just about selling soup. It's also about wonderful fellowship time. Everyone is invited to come out and be a part of the fun by helping to make and jar the soup. We start at 8 am on Saturday, January 24 and generally work until the pick up time. For more info about helping out, please talk to Christine Johns



Our Clothing Cupboard is closed and we are no longer accepting clothing donations. Thank you for all the contributions and service to this ministry throughout the years. There are a lot of hangers available to anyone who would like them. See Colleen Prenovitz for assistance.



Soup Sale



St. Peter's Lutheran Church

SOUP SALE



Saturday, January 24th

\$10.00 per Quart

\$3.00 per Loaf of Bread

Orders due by Tuesday, January 20th

***Please make checks payable to WELCA**

Name _____ Phone _____

<u>Choice of Soup</u>	<u>Number of Quarts</u>	<u>x \$10.00</u>
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Potato	_____	_____
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Stuffed Pepper	_____	_____
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Chicken Noodle	_____	_____
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Wedding Soup	_____	_____
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Loaves of Bread	Quantity _____	x \$3.00 _____
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Total Amount _____

To place orders, please return this form to the church office.

For more information speak with Christine Johns

Proceeds support Reagan's Journey and priority projects.

Soup orders may be **picked up*

Saturday, January 24th from 2:30-3:30 pm

or delivered to homebound upon request

St. Peter's Lutheran
Church

202 Van Buren St.
Evans City, PA
16033

Call us: 724-538-5810

E-mail us

stpeterslcec@zoominternet.net

God's Son



Never Fails

Website:

<http://www.stpeterslutheranevansc>



Our Staff:

Pastor Brandon Johns

Heidi Beahm,
After School Director

Marlene Domhoff,
Organist / Music Director

Joe Ludwik, *Sexton*

Christine Johns,
Interim Secretary

The Sunday Bulletin Deadline is

Wednesdays at 10am

Monthly Newsletter Deadline is the

3rd Sunday of each month

Beginning September 10th

Sunday School = 9am

Weekly Worship Service = Sundays at 10:15am

Check Our Weekly Calendar of other events.

Office Hours for Secretary:

Monday thru Friday 9am—noon

Newsletter

JANUARY 2026

**This issue of St. Peter's Post is
sponsored by the congregation**