



St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Interim Pastor: Rev. Tom Lurvey

January 2026

Christmas is Kid Stuff

From the Interim Pastor Tom Lurvey

January 6 is the Day of the Epiphany, when the Church remembers the journey of the Magi (Wise Men) to find the baby Jesus. This poem was written in 1942 (during WW2) by an African American named Frank Horne. It could not be more timely in our time.

*The wise guys
tell me that Christmas
is Kid Stuff...
Maybe they've got
something there—
Two thousand years ago
three wise guys
chased a star
across a continent
to bring
frankincense and myrrh
to a Kid
born in a manger
with an idea in his head...*

*And as the bombs
crash
all over the world
today
the real wise guys
know
that we've all
got to go chasing stars
again
in the hope
that we can get back
some of that
Kid Stuff
born two thousand years ago—*

Council Update Regarding Intentional Interim Pastor

Submitted by Barb Schott

Our council has had two meetings in the past few weeks with the Intentional Interim Pastor that our NALC Synod has recommended to us. We are pleased to announce that Pastor Gary Braeuer, from Alberta, will be joining us in the New Year. He will begin on Sunday, January 11th. He will be with us for the next 6 months. Pastor Braeuer will do all the things a full-time pastor does: provide sermons, administer the sacraments, participate in meetings, visit members. In addition, he will help us address issues that arose (and continue to affect us) during the time of our previous pastor. He will also help us work through the process of calling a new permanent pastor.

Pastor Braeuer is somewhat familiar with our situation, but has asked council to consider and identify what he calls “deliverables,” - before his arrival. “Deliverables” can include a wide range of things, as we think about ourselves as a church and church family: everything from specific concerns you may have, to ideas and vision about our path forward to a permanent call. This is something we felt we should also extend to the whole congregation. These will be given to Pastor Braeuer to give him a bigger picture of where we are at the present. We very much look forward to having Pastor Braeuer with us in the new year. We pray God’s blessings upon his ministry among us and upon our congregation as we look to the future.

We have left sheets on the table in the narthex that you can take home and fill out. You can also call the church office at 204-775-6477 with your suggestions or e-mail stpeters@mymts.net

Looking Ahead

Submitted by Michael Zacharias and Gudrun Neeth

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) has been scheduled for Sunday March 15, 2026.

There will be a service at 11:00am followed by a light lunch. The AGM will begin right after the lunch.

Important: ALL COMMITTEE REPORTS, WHICH ARE NOT RELATED TO THE FINANCIALS, ARE/WERE DUE ON DEC. 31, 2025. If you are in charge of a committee report and haven’t yet submitted yours, please do so as soon as possible. FINANCIALS ARE DUE AFTER THE AUDIT.

Financial Update - Not audited

Submitted by Ralf Oppitz – Treasurer

As of Nov. 30th:

Congregation income [40100] is \$5,190 less than last year.

Congregational Expense are \$11,300 less than last year.

Overall we are \$5,940 ahead of last year. We are \$47,340 short year to date.

Help wanted

We are in need of someone to send out the monthly Birthday Cards to our members over the age of 65. The cards, stamps and info will be supplied.

If you're interested in serving in this capacity from the comfort of your home, please call Gudrun at the church office: 204-775-6477. Thank you!

Submitted by Linda Lurvey

Socks for The Madison

38 pairs of new winter socks were taken to The Madison in our Wolseley neighbourhood and gratefully received. Thank you for participating in this mission project!

Submitted by Linda Lurvey

The Power of Prayer

Please continue to pray for the four Afghani women - Taiba and her teenage daughters Hania and Oswa and friend Latifa who are waiting to come to Canada. They are waiting for the Canadian Visa Office in Pakistan to approve their applications to come to Winnipeg. Their situation as refugees in Pakistan is very precarious, as the Pakistan government is in the process of deporting thousands of Afghani refugees.

Here is a prayer written by Bruce Adamson one of the co-sponsors:

May they fall into the hands of government officials who will understand the urgency of their situation and help expedite approval and relocation so that all four may one day soon find themselves face to face with brothers and sisters who will walk closely with them on their journey to becoming Canadian citizens who flourish in their new surroundings and new found freedoms. AMEN.

Submitted by Linda Lurvey

Special Birthday Celebrations for January 2026

For members at least 65

Erwin Erhardt, Jan 10

Adelgunde Hellmann, Jan 16

Karl Wegert, Jan 29

Ewald Kittrmann, Jan 13

Trudy Matz, Jan 29

Wishing you a very Happy Birthday and the Lord's continued Blessings!



The next **St. Peter's Eaters breakfast** will be held in the church basement on Saturday, **Jan. 31, 2026** at 8AM. It's a men's breakfast group to which all men are invited for food and fellowship. If you plan on coming, please sign up on the bulletin board at the back of the church or contact the church office by phone (204.775.6477) or email stpetersoffice@mymts.net.

The next **Women's circle** will meet at in the board room at St. Peter's on Sunday **Jan. 25th** after the 11am service. All women are invited to attend.

NALC Youth and Young Adult events in 2026

- **Word and Witness: Young Adult Mission Trip/Event - May 23-30, 2026 in Winnipeg**
- **NALC Continental Youth Gathering 2026 - July 7 - 10, 2026 at St. John Lutheran Church in Roanoke, Virginia.**

Please see website below for more information and registration.
<https://thenalc.org/en-us/our-work/equipping-disciples/families/>

Christmas tree Decorating!

Submitted by Linda Lurvey

On Dec. 20th, thirteen St. Peter's Younger Adults decorated our sanctuary tree with Chrismons and Stars. What a lovely addition to our fourth Sunday of Advent Service! Thanks so much to all who put up the tree and decorated! Thank you, Ulrike for organizing this event and Allison for overseeing it.



Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services

We thank Pastor Tom and Linda for planning and leading both the Christmas Eve and the Christmas Day (with communion) services. The Christmas Eve service was attended by 266 and the Christmas Day service by 30 people. Pastor Tom's messages reminded us that through Jesus' birth God was given a human face and that Jesus is the Word become flesh – the Word through whom everything was created! We thank everyone who helped to make these services possible and everyone who attended. A big thank you to our guest singers Amanda & Donna and Markus for playing the trumpet! Both services were well-received and joyous events.



The St. Peter's Singers provide special music on Christmas Eve.



A view from the balcony



Submitted by Jerry Roehr Kuwala, at year's end, reported another successful year. Passing grades in Form 4 (Grade 12) were 100%, with 65% of the students qualifying for college or university entrance.



A video Advent message by the school administrator, Memory, addressed to St. Peter's, was played on the 4th Advent service on December 21st.

Kuwala is reporting continued progress of the construction of two dormitories and two classroom buildings. As noted earlier, the construction of a vegetable cool room is innovative as the outside wall will have water trickling over charcoal, saving on the need for electricity. In an expanded farm operation, 4.5 kg of wheat from a university produced a harvest of 200 kg or more. Some of it will be returned to the university, and the rest will be used as seed.



Kuwala continues to be involved in the community. During school breaks, students go home and give Bible classes for children in their villages. Children from local villages are attending Bible classes at Kuwala. Farmers from local villages are employed in Kuwala's farm operation. In the left photo, Christmas hampers are being picked up at St. Peter's Hall on campus.

Look at this picture on the right. We all need to be reminded that eleven years ago, there was just barren land and now there is a thriving, successful school community supported by a Canadian know-how farm with foreign crops, new to Malawi, with an adequate water supply.



John Longhurst. In his monthly report, John sent us this note, a reflection on the time of Christmas. He wrote: "Gerry Bowler is a former University of Manitoba history professor who has written three books about Christmas. Known as "Professor Christmas" for his love of the season, he is an unabashed supporter of the holiday. At a time when Canada is becoming more secular and less religious, Bowler says that Christmas still speaks to almost everyone. It's the kind of holiday, he says, that reflects a deep human need for hope, peace and light at a dark time of the year - and, for many of us today, at a dark time with so much violence and hate."

As Bowler put it: "Whether or not you believe in the stories of angels or a baby God in a manger, Christmas still calls us to behave differently, to be of good cheer, and to lay aside grudges. So, pick up that eggnog, shovel your neighbour's walk, hum a carol, call your mother and believe—for a little while, at least—in peace on earth and goodwill." Our congregation supports the Faith Page in Saturday's Free Press. *Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

A Mission Budget Thank You. As this paragraph is being written, we did not have the final Mission donations for 2025 records available, **but** we can report that we are meeting all our commitments set out in our 2025 Mission budget. As you receive this newsletter, we are about one week into the new church year. On behalf of our congregation and especially our Mission Committee, we would like to thank each of you who supported our St. Peter's Mission with your financial contribution. A reflection on the year past and the year to come is appropriate, and as we approach a new Mission support year, making your mission donations a little earlier in the year is helpful, as it gives us more flexibility in finalizing Mission project commitments. We would like to, once again, thank each one of you for your help. *Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

We wish all members and friends of St. Peter's a blessed 2026

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." **Isaiah 43:18-19**

May these words from Isaiah encourage us to trust in God as we embrace new beginnings at St. Peter's!

January 2026 Calendar; *TC = Tai Chi, **HS=Healthy Start

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 TC 10am
4 11 am Service in English	5	6 HS	7 TC 7pm	8	9	10 TC 10am
11 11 am Service in English with Communion We welcome Pastor Gary Braeuer! Meet and greet after the service.	12	13 HS	14 TC 7pm	15	16	17 TC 10am
18 11am Service in English	19 Council meeting 7pm	20 HS	21 TC 7pm	22	23	24 TC 10am
25 11am Service in English with Communion Women's circle meets after service in the basement	26	27 HS	28 TC 7pm	29	30	31 Men's breakfast 8am TC 10am

Any submissions for the February 2026 edition of the St. Peter's Newsletter should be made by noon Thur, Jan. 22, 2025. Submissions should be sent to Ortrud Oellermann at stpetersnews1@gmail.com