



# St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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## Pentecost: Empowered by the Holy Spirit

*When the pilgrims, who had come to Jerusalem, heard the disciples speak in their own languages, they "all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?'" (Acts 2:12)*

What does this mean? is a question we tend to ask when we are looking for answers.

If you are a long-time Lutheran, this innocent sounding question *What does this mean?* may cause you to break out in sweat. Don't you feel, already, how your palms, caused by fear and anxiety, are all wet? But then, you pause for a second ... You take a deep breath. And, as you reflect on the meaning of the Holy Spirit, you come up – almost automatically – with the right answer and recite from Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*:

"I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He forgives daily and richly all sins to me and all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will give to me and to all believers in Christ everlasting life. This is most certainly true."

Of course, the disciples on that first Pentecost Day in Jerusalem did not recite from Luther's Catechism. But something phenomenal happened on that Day, which urged and prompted the visitors – the pilgrims – who had come to the Holy City to ask, *What does this mean?* The visitors heard Jesus' disciples (according to Acts 4:13 "uneducated and common men") speak to them in their native tongues!

We remember how God, in the story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11), came down from heaven to confuse the languages of the people, who wanted to make a name for themselves by building that tower. In contrast, on Pentecost Day the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, who enabled them to speak in different languages. This means that we can praise God in any language.

Pentecost Day is considered the birthday of the church. After Peter had preached to the crowd and explained to them what was happening, "three thousand souls" let themselves be baptized that day and were added to the church (see Acts 2:41). What does this mean? What lesson can we learn from this message?

We see that the Holy Spirit has equipped the disciples (then and now) with the gift of proclamation to share the message of Jesus as the crucified and risen Lord. Then, the Holy Spirit has given us the gift of translation so that we can "make disciples of all nations" (see Matthew 28:19) by preaching to them in their own languages. And through the gift of interpretation the Holy Spirit helps us find the right meaning of the words.

Jesus assures us that even in times when our faith is put to the test the Holy Spirit will "teach [us] in that very hour what [we] ought to say" so that we can defend our faith. The Holy Spirit helps us to respond to the challenges that we encounter. In every age. Because of the Holy Spirit, our faith is not a resting force. On the contrary. The Holy Spirit sets our faith in motion so that the message of God's love that has come into the world with his Son Jesus Christ can spread always and everywhere in the world.

*May the Holy Spirit continue to inspire us for Jesus. Yours in Christ, Bjoern E. Meinhardt, Pastor*

## **Pfingsten: Ausgestattet mit der Kraft des Heiligen Geistes**

*Als die Pilger, die nach Jerusalem gekommen waren, die Jünger in ihren eigenen Sprachen sprechen hörten, „entsetzten [sie] sich aber alle und waren ratlos und sprachen einer zu dem anderen: Was will das werden?“ (Apostelgeschichte 2:12)*

Wörtlich übersetzt, fragten sich die Pilger: Was soll das sein? bzw. Was soll das sein? In der Luther-Bibel ist ihre Frage mit „Was ist das?“ So oder ähnlich fragen wir, wenn wir nach Antworten suchen.

Wenn ihr langjährige Lutheraner seid, verursacht die unschuldig klingende Frage „Was ist das?“ bei euch vielleicht Schweißausbrüche. Vielleicht stellt ihr auch fest, wie eure Handflächen schon ganz feucht werden vor Unruhe und Angst. Aber dann haltet ihr einen Moment inne ... Ihr atmet noch einmal tief durch und fast schon wie von selbst erinnert ihr euch dann an die Antwort, die Martin Luther im „Kleinen Katechismus“ mit Blick auf den Heiligen Geist gegeben hat:

„Ich glaube, dass ich nicht aus eigener Vernunft noch Kraft an Jesus Christus, meinen Herrn, glauben oder zu ihm kommen kann; sondern der Heilige Geist hat mich durch das Evangelium berufen, mit seinen Gaben erleuchtet, im rechten Glauben geheiligt und erhalten; gleichwie er die ganze Christenheit auf Erden beruft, sammelt, erleuchtet, heiligt und bei Jesus Christus erhält im rechten, einigen Glauben; in welcher Christenheit er mir und allen Gläubigen täglich alle Sünden reichlich vergibt und am Jüngsten Tage mich und alle Toten auferwecken wird und mir samt allen Gläubigen in Christus ein ewiges Leben geben wird. Das ist gewißlich wahr.“

Natürlich zitierten die Jünger an jenem ersten Pfingsttag in Jerusalem nicht aus Luthers Katechismus. Aber an diesem Tag geschah etwas Außergewöhnliches, das die Besucher – die Pilger –, die zur heiligen Stadt gekommen waren, dazu veranlasste, zu fragen: „*Was ist das?*“ Denn die Besucher hörten, wie die Jünger Jesu (nach Apostelgeschichte 4,13 waren sie „ungebildete und einfache Leute“) zu ihnen in ihren jeweiligen Muttersprachen redeten!

Wir erinnern uns daran, wie Gott in der Geschichte vom Turmbau zu Babel (Genesis 11) vom Himmel herabkam, um die Sprachen der Menschen zu verwirren, die sich durch den Bau dieses Turms einen Namen machen wollten. Im Gegensatz dazu wurden die Jünger am Pfingsttag mit dem Heiligen Geist erfüllt, der es ihnen ermöglichte, in verschiedenen Sprachen zu sprechen. Das bedeutet, dass wir Gott in vielen Sprachen loben können.

Der Pfingsttag gilt als Geburtstag der Kirche. Nachdem Petrus der Menge gepredigt und ihr erklärt hatte, was da geschah, ließen sich an diesem Tag „etwa dreitausend Menschen“ taufen und wurden so der Kirche hinzugefügt (siehe Apostelgeschichte 2,41). Was bedeutet das? Welche Lehre können wir hieraus ziehen?

Wir erkennen, dass der Heilige Geist die Jünger (damals und heute) mit der Gabe der Verkündigung ausgestattet hat, um die Botschaft von Jesus als dem gekreuzigten und auferstandenen Herrn zu verbreiten. Dann hat uns der Heilige Geist die Gabe der Übersetzung gegeben, damit wir „alle Völker lehren“ und sie zu Jüngern machen (siehe Matthäus 28,19), indem wir in ihren eigenen Sprachen predigen. Und durch die Gabe der Auslegung hilft uns der Heilige Geist, die richtige Bedeutung der Worte zu finden.

Jesus sagt uns zu, dass der Heilige Geist uns auch in den „Stunden“, in denen unser Glaube auf die Probe gestellt wird, „lehren wird, was [wir] sagen sollen“, damit wir für unseren Glauben verteidigen können. Der Heilige Geist hilft uns, auf die Herausforderungen zu reagieren, denen wir begegnen. Zu jeder Zeit. Wegen des Heiligen Geistes ist unser Glaube keine ruhende Kraft. Im Gegenteil: Der Heilige Geist setzt unseren Glauben in Bewegung, damit sich die Botschaft der Liebe Gottes, die mit seinem Sohn Jesus Christus in die Welt gekommen ist, immer und überall auf der Welt verbreiten kann.

*Auf dass der Heilige Geist uns stets für die Sache Jesu begeistert. In Christo, euer Björn E. Meinhardt, Pfarrer*

## Lessons for May

### ***Easter 5 (Rogate) – May 5***

Acts 10:34-48  
Psalm 98  
1 John 5:1-8  
John 15:9-17

### ***Ascension (Himmelfahrt) – May 9***

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

### ***Easter 7 (Exaudi) – May 12***

Acts 1:12-26  
Psalm 1  
1 John 5:9-15  
John 17:11b-19

### ***Pentecost (Pfingsten) – May 19***

Ezekiel 37:1-14  
Psalm 139:1-16  
Acts 2:1-21  
John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

### ***Trinity (Trinitatis) – May 26***

Isaiah 6:1-8  
Psalm 29:1-11  
Acts 2:14a, 22-36  
John 3:1-17

## Newly Elected Church Council

We wish to thank all of church council for their dedication and service to St. Peter's over the years. Completing their terms and leaving council as of our March 17 Annual General Meeting are Dylan Grymonpre, Edith Herbst, Ralf Oppitz and Jerry Roehr. Both Paul Bergsagel and Michael Zacharias have completed their first term and have agreed to stay on and serve their second term. Ralf Oppitz has agreed to continue to serve as Treasurer. Thank you, Ralf! We welcome back Barbara Schott who was elected to council at the AGM. Thank you for your ongoing dedication and service to St. Peter's Barbara. We still have 3 vacancies on council. If you wish to serve on council, please let either our Pastor or someone on council know. We wish to also thank Steve Herbst for his many years (decades) serving as our Membership Secretary and to Klaus Albrecht for his role as Assistant Treasurer and also decades of service in other areas. May God bless our new council and their work in the upcoming year.

Here are the results of your newly elected board members for 2024:

Micahel Zacharias (President), Barbara Schott (Vice President), Ralf Oppitz (Treasurer), Allison Erhardt (Recording Secretary).

## **Financial Update** (Not audited) *Submitted by Ralf Oppitz – Treasurer*

*2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV):- Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

As of the end of March, the donations received, for our operating budget, total \$34,989.17. The expenses for the same time-period were \$51,299.36. This shortfall translates to a deficit of \$16,310.19.



*Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

The school continues to provide first-rate education, education beyond the traditional “reading, writing and arithmetic”. In an earlier newsletter, we showed



you the new science lab. This picture shows the construction of a new workshop that will provide the opportunity to learn skills like carpentry, welding and other hands-on skills.

Unfortunately, Malawi continues to be one of the poorest countries in the world.

President Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera declared a state of disaster because of the ongoing drought in 23 of its 28 districts. The president also made an appeal for “urgent support” as the country grapples with what the government said was “El-Nino induced prolonged dry spells and floods.” El Nino is a natural, cyclical climate pattern that tends to cause hotter weather and reduced precipitation and has heightened the risk of food, water and health security in some parts of the world.

We can share a short video from a farmer who is highly affected by the drought. <https://youtube.com/watch?v=NVB7ruW1pjU&si=kJktuOE6VnUQGHwO> In an average year, he is able to harvest about 12,500 kg of corn per year. Farmer Brino J. Watson says that this year, he will not be able to harvest one bag. He is grateful that Kuwala is providing occasional work for him so he can provide food for his family for the day. On a more uplifting note, we had provided two videos from the two teachers who moved into our sponsored teacher duplex at the annual meeting. We have now confirmed with Kuwala that the name of the residence will be “Bethany House,” a place of rest and refreshment.

On a personal journey, Jerry Roehr will join 19 other travellers on a trip to Malawi in early June and will stop over in Addis Ababa to visit Mehari, Gytome’s brother. Mahari has passed his first immigration interview and is waiting for medical clearance. Hopefully, he will join the Kesete family here in Winnipeg sometime in the future.

**St. Aidan’s Christian School.** The school is now open for the fall Kindergarten enrollment. In support of their fundraising dinner on April 29, 2024, we sent in our annual support of \$2,000.00. *Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

**John Longhurst.** Those of us who read the Faith Page of the Free Press or other religious articles will know that John is interested in comments or suggestions in connection with Premier Kinew’s suggestion to change the wording of the opening prayer in the Manitoba Legislature. *Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

**Mission Budget.** We would like to remind you that your early donations to our Mission Budget will give us the opportunity to send support to the selected Mission Partners early in the year and not as a last-ditch effort in December. To date, we have funds provided to the Winnipeg Free Press, the Lutheran Association for Missionaries and Pilots and St. Aidan’s School. Our next support will go to seminary student Paul Fredrickson (\$1000). Through special donations, we are also able to support the Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada and Siloam Mission. *Submitted by Jerry Roehr*

### Update on Communion

Church council decided at the last board meeting in March to bring back the common cup for communion. If you prefer the common cup but do not feel well, we ask that you refrain drinking from the common cup. Feel free to take the individual cup instead. As a reminder: the Lord's Supper is fully valid even if it is consumed in only one form (either the wafer or the wine). *Submitted by Pastor Meinhardt*



The next **St. Peter's Eaters** breakfast will be held in the church basement on Saturday, May 25, 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](mailto:stpetersoffice@mymts.net).

### Special May Birthdays

Erich Euteneier, 93 on May 2  
Linda Heckert, 87 On May 13  
Hedda Razik, 75 on May 26  
Hedwig Scham, 98 on May 31

Hans Luedtke, 91 on May 13  
Wolfgang Oppitz, 87 on May 16  
Maria Streu, 87 on May 27

**We wish you a Happy Birthday and the Lord's continued blessings!**

**If you need to contact the church office, please note that the office hours are as follows:**

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9:00 am - noon  
Thursday - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
Friday - office closed

*Submitted by Gudrun Neeth*

**The following members of St. Peters recently went to their heavenly home:**

Alfred Kienetz on April 1 (88 years). Funeral held on April 10.  
Ursula Hartfiel on April 16 (90 years). Funeral held on April 25.

**Our heartfelt condolences go to their families. Please remember the families in your prayers.**

**NALC Continental Youth Gathering 2024** *(An announcement from the NALC website)*

***“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.”***  
–Isaiah 43:1

Join us for an exhilarating journey of faith and fellowship at the inaugural North American Lutheran Church’s Continental Youth Gathering (CYG) from **July 1–4, 2024**, nestled in the heart of Texas at [St. John Lutheran Church, Boerne](#).

NALC youth will rally around the powerful theme *“We Belong: ‘I Know My Own and My Own Know Me,”* a testament to the profound connection we share in Christ. The mission of the CYG is to provide opportunities for Lutheran youth to not only grow in their faith, but to be encouraged by connecting with other believers throughout North America.

The CYG isn’t merely an event, but a milestone in nurturing a robust community of believers across North America. It is a space where youth can dive deeper into scripture, engage in earnest conversation with peers and leaders, and encounter God in a fresh, transformative way. Over four days, attendees will join together in:

- corporate worship,
- scripture study,
- large and small group sessions,
- and mission events that reach out to the broader community.

The **exciting line-up of speakers**, ranging from pastors to specialists in life affirmation and mental health, are geared to ignite conversations that resonate with the youth on personal and collective levels. Our **musical guests**, the Lurvey Brothers, will elevate our spirits with their unique blend of song leading, fostering an ambiance of joy, reflection, and togetherness. This gathering stretches beyond the traditional boundaries, welcoming Home Teams from other confessional Lutheran bodies to partake in this monumental event. With each session, we delve into what it means to belong—to Christ, to the Church, to our communities, and to each other, echoing the profound truth of our theme passages from John 10:14–15. As we anticipate the glorious days of CYG 2024, we remain rooted in the promise of Isaiah 43:1, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.”

**With only 500 spots available and a deadline for registration on April 15, 2024**, be sure to mark your calendars and register *as soon as possible*. Should you have any inquiries, feel free to reach out to Pastor Teresa Peters, our Director of Youth and Family Ministry and organizer of this event, at [tpeters@thenalc.org](mailto:tpeters@thenalc.org).

**Any submissions for the June 2024 edition of the St. Peter’s Newsletter should be made by noon Thur, May 23, 2024. Submissions should be sent to Ortrud Oellermann at [stpetersnews@gmail.com](mailto:stpetersnews@gmail.com)**