



ST PETER'S

— LUTHERAN CHURCH —



***WE ARE A BEACON OF THE COMMUNITY, EQUIPPING, EMPOWERING AND SHARING THE
HOPE AND LOVE OF JESUS.***



A History of Lent: Ancient Opportunity for Spiritual Renewal

The month of March we will take a journey through the season of Lent.

For Lutherans the 40-day season of Lent is an important one. But what is Lent? Do the Scriptures mention it? Why do we observe it?

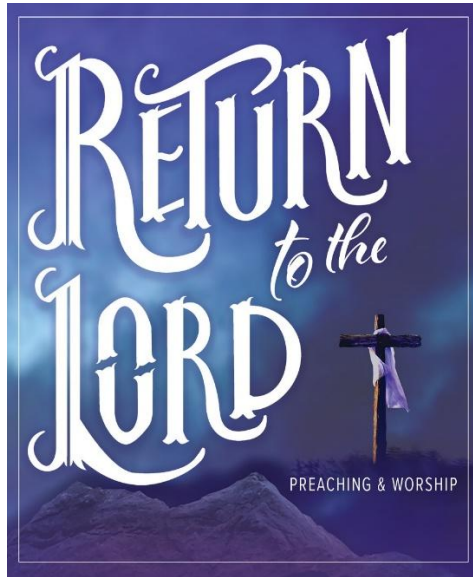
Though the Scriptures do not mention Lent, it has a longstanding tradition in the Church. It began very simply as a time of preparation for Easter. From the earliest times it was customary for Christians in most places to fast before Easter (or the Paschal Feast). At first this was a 2-day fast (Friday and Saturday). As time passed, this fast was extended here and there to a week (e.g., in Alexandria and perhaps Rome). Though we are not certain how it developed, by 350 A.D. the 40-day fast that we now have was already in vogue in most places. The earliest reference to a 40 day fast leading up to Easter that I am aware of is the Second Festal letter of Athanasius in 330 A.D.

Today Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday (Sundays are excluded to preserve the number 40). For Christians living in the Fourth Century Lent had two major emphases: (1) It was seen as a time of repentance and denial of self. All Christians were to examine their lives according to the Ten Commandments and other Christian ethical precepts and repent where necessary. They were to remember what it cost their Savior to save them, (2) It was a time of instruction and preparation for the electi, i.e., catechumens who wanted to become members of the Christian Church. During Lent they learned the Christian doctrine by studying the Creed. They were led step by step through prayer and special rites toward baptism. If they "passed" they were baptized and received the Lord's Supper in a joyous service either on Easter Eve (the Easter Vigil) or Easter itself. At the time of the Reformation, some Christians wanted to eliminate Lent since Scripture didn't command it. Luther urged that it be kept, for he saw Lent as an opportunity for the strengthening of faith.

"Lent, Palm Sunday, and Holy Week shall be retained, not to force anyone to fast, but to preserve the Passion history and the Gospels appointed for that season" (LW 53:90). Here Luther tells us that Lent should be preserved, in part, because it reminded Christians of the Passion (Suffering and Death) of Jesus and encouraged them to meditate upon it. However, no one should be forced to participate. It should be voluntary.

So we also retain Lent to this day, because we see it as a salutary (good-for-you) outward discipline that gives Christians a wonderful opportunity for spiritual renewal. Our observance of Lent combines many of the above features. Through our midweek and Sunday services, our Bible studies, and Lenten devotional materials, we come face to face with whatever sin may be hindering our walk with Christ. But most profoundly, we come face to face with the Gospel of Jesus which forgives and removes that sin and gives us the power to live anew.

Are you satisfied with your walk with Christ? Or do you long for more: to know Him better, to be more like Him, to experience His love more profoundly? Then I urge you to willingly submit yourself to the discipline of Lent. There is nothing like it to bring you face to face with Jesus and His Gospel. There is nothing like it to find spiritual renewal.



Ash Wednesday, March 5th at 6pm-“A Call To Return”

Services will be each Wednesday at 6pm.

RETURN TO THE LORD

In the Book of Joel, the prophet paints a vivid picture of the coming judgment of God, the Day of the Lord. The imagery is bold and terrifying: hordes of locusts swarming over the land and decimating everything. Joel’s prophecy has teeth even today as wars rage, natural disasters threaten and destroy, and our culture seems to be unraveling. But right in the middle of this frightening portent, we find a tender invitation from the Lord: **“RETURN TO THE LORD YOUR GOD, FOR HE IS GRACIOUS AND MERCIFUL, SLOW TO ANGER, AND ABOUNDING IN STEADFAST LOVE; AND HE RELENTS OVER DISASTER”** (Joel 2:13).

God’s invitation and promise finds its fullness in Jesus Christ, who personifies and accomplishes all that God declares. During this season of Lent, we will consider the theme **“RETURN TO THE LORD”** and examine how the call to return played out in practical ways for the people who walked alongside Christ as He demonstrated and carried out God’s grace and mercy on our behalf, taking God’s wrath upon Himself, setting the stage for God to “turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him” (Joel 2:14). Each sermon in this series focuses on a particular event in the Passion, with a special focus on the people involved in the event.

Ash Wednesday: A Call to Return

Midweek of Lent 1: Return to Prayer- Peter, James, and John in the Garden of Gethsemane

Midweek of Lent 2: Return from Betrayal- Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane

Midweek of Lent 3: Return from False Witness- Caiaphas and the Council

Midweek of Lent 4: Return from Denial- Peter in the Courtyard

Midweek of Lent 5: Return to the Kingdom of God- Pilate at His Headquarters

ALTAR FLOWERS

MARCH 2-PAM VINNEDGE

MARCH 9-PAULA SAMMIS

MARCH 16-PAULA SMART

MARCH 23-BONNIE THEOBALD

MARCH 30-MARSHA ROBERTS/CONNIE WAMSLEY



Hello. In case you didn't know, we were so blessed last year with free equipment from Upward Sports to be a pilot league for Pickleball. Pickleball is a fast and upcoming sport and is a great way to reach the community. Now, as we move forward, we need to figure out where to go with this ministry. But before we do, we are in need of someone to take up this ministry and formulate a plan.

If we decide to move forward, this person can find a team of volunteers to help and they can structure this ministry however they feel works best. It can be a 8-12 week commitment. They will decide how many practices there will be before the games start. There should be at least 6 weeks of games. Also, after speaking with Upward Sports, they suggest that the best "target" age for this sport ministry is 4th - 12th grade. And that summer is the peak time to have games. But again, whoever leads this ministry can help make these decisions. But what an opportunity!!!!

Volunteers are the backbone to most of the ministries we do at SPL - giving of their time and energy selflessly. . **Matthew 9:35-38 says "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest"**. I pray that you prayerfully consider either stepping up to lead this ministry or can help be a part of it.

Monica Pape

Phillipians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice!



There is still 1 more games in March: Saturday 8th. We are always in need of volunteers to help with concessions, clean up or just sitting in the stands talking to people. We are also having our Upward Celebration with a meal after 2nd service church on March 9. We would love to see you come celebrate with us and support these athletes.

We will have a sign up on the bulletin board for anyone wanting to join us and to donate a dessert.

MEN OF SPL

"AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSEHOLD, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD"

"MEN OF ACTION"

The men of SPL are encouraged to come together for fellowship and equipping ourselves to be the men after God's own heart. The **second Saturday of every month**, we will gather at **8:00 AM**. As iron sharpens iron we will pursue building up one another, learn from various speakers, serve where God calls us and grow.

Breakfast will be provided.... Join us!



Pairs & Spares meet together to engage God and one another.

The next breakfast is the first MONDAY of every month at 8:30am at the Main Street Family Restaurant in Creve Coeur.

Everyone is welcome!

We have volunteers for J.A.M. (Jesus & Me) time helpers during the sermon/message portion of our Worship Services to watch over children.

March 2nd Olivia S.

March 9th Pam N.

March 16th Jim K.

March 23rd Pam N.

March 30th Renee R.



Tuesday morning Bible Study at 10:00am lower level. The Engagement Project by Del Tackett.

Adult & Youth Sunday School at 9:30am

St. Peter's has a prayer chain group. If you would like to be placed on the list to keep updated on needed prayers, please notify the office by phone or email. Please share prayer requests with members who are not on the Prayer Chain.

The email is splprayerwarriors@gmail.com. or notify

Beth Underwood at 309-202-9909

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND THOSE SERVING IN HARM'S WAY!

Brady Martin and his family will be deployed to Spain for a 2 yr. assignment.

Lauren Tranchitella is now stateside, she is Debbie Inman's granddaughter.



IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO START UP!!!!

St. Peter's Lutheran Church is looking for people to host and/or join a small group in 2025. We currently have a few active groups who are moving on from, "The Story", which was our church community focus in 2024. Moving into this year, we have Deb Schoedel, whose group is revisiting "Community" again. This is a wonderful study that bonds groups with mutual faith and support. Bernie's group will be starting, "Genesis, I thru II" on Tuesday's at 1pm at St. Peter's. Pastor & Monica's group will be "Experiencing God" on Saturdays from 6-7:30 in their home. Moving forward, expect a possible phone call, or look out for posts about upcoming small group events. We are so excited to begin anew in 2025.

Prayerfully consider committing to this amazing addition to your life.

****Questions, call Deb Schoedel, Pam Nelson, or Pastor.**

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the day approaching. Hebrews 10:25

Church Classified----2025

Magnusson Construction

Mastic: Replacement Windows & Siding
Adam Magnusson, E. Peoria, Il. (309) 694-7831

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Alexandria Lamprecht (309) 439-9169
112 State St. Ste. 2C, Peoria, Il. 61602

Ron's Carpets

Sales & Service. Free Estimates
John Vollrath (309) 674-3338
1003 NE Adams, Peoria, Il.

Monica Pape (217) 714-6259

pianoteacher.MP@gmail.com
Piano lessons in my home.

Energy Savings

AAA Insulation, Don Meyer (309) 698-0062

Becca Ferro-Salon 125

125 N Parkway Dr. Pekin, Il.
(309) 863-0560

Tippy Creek

Raw (local) Honey and Honey Infused soap
Pam Nelson (309) 370-7271
Rob Preston (309) 657-5692 or TippyCreek.com

Cindy Miller, Crafts

Handmade Embroidery and Crochet items
(309) 472-2161

Genie in a Bottle Cleaning Service

Leslie Cody (309) 645-8701
Trish Woodward (309) 660-3656

Scott Roberts (309) 642-0874

Need firewood? Call me.
(pick up-no delivery)

St. Peter's Church is a covenant congregation member of Lutheran Senior Ministries and a Supporting partner of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. We are affiliated with Christ Lutheran School, 1311 S. Faraday Ave. Peoria, Il. 61605. Phone: 309-637-1512.

Office Phone: 309-699-5411

Pastor Brian Pape cell: 217-714-5562

For official church business please use: secretary@stpeters-epil.org

Facebook: St. Peter's Lutheran Church, East Peoria

Website: www.stpeters-epil.com

MARCH 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					OFFICE CLOSED	1 8-2 Upward Games
2 8-Traditional Worship 9:30-Sunday School 1045-Praise & Worship	3 8:30 Pairs & Spares	4 10-Bible Study 1pm Genesis 6pm-Finance 7pm-Elders	5 10am Bible Study 6pm Ash Wednesday Worship	6	7 OFFICE CLOSED	8 8-Men’s Bible Study 8-2 Upward Games 6pm Pastor small group
9 8-Traditional Worship 9:30-Sunday School 1045-Praise & Worship 12pm Upward Celebration	10	11 10-Bible Study 1pm Genesis	12 10am Bible Study 6pm Lenten Worship	13 Noon-Kiwanis	14 OFFICE CLOSED	15 6pm Pastor small group
16 8-Traditional Worship 9:30-Sunday School 1045-Praise & Worship	17 St. Patrick’s Day	18 10-Bible Study 1pm Genesis	19 10am Bible Study 6pm Lenten Worship	20	21 OFFICE CLOSED	22 6pm Pastor small group
23 8-Traditional Worship 9:30-Sunday School 1045-Praise & Worship	24	25 10-Bible Study 1pm Genesis 630pm Church Council	26 10am Bible Study 6pm Lenten Worship	27	28 OFFICE CLOSED	29 6pm Pastor small group

30 8-Traditional Worship 9:30-Sunday School 1045-Praise & Worship	31					
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