

June 2024



God's Service to Us



Who of you, taking time to read this, is ready & excited for summer? [I am firmly raising my hand ... well, I will when I take a break from typing] With the weather now sunny & warm, people can get back to camping, gardening, spending time at the beach, hiking, fishing, and the like. Lots of things for people to do on weekends, right?

The Church Year in spring gives us Easter, Ascension, & Pentecost. Jesus Christ is risen, He returned to the Father, and He has poured out the Holy Spirit on us all! That is the Good News of this time of the Church Year. We celebrate Jesus Christ risen and ascended. We offer thanksgiving for the Holy Spirit who gives us visible and silent growth in the faith.

There's a song I [and many of you] learned as a child

"Here is the church, Here is the steeple. Open the door and see all the people"

Some of us might think [myself included at times] we might need to adjust that song a bit.

"Here is the church, Here is the steeple. Open the door, and where are the people?" Truth be told, average attendance is slightly up from where it was 2-3 years ago, but certain not where many of you remember it once was.

You can usually count on a small dip in church attendance as the weather warms. But what if the dip becomes a trend? It most certainly has over the last 30 – 40 years. This is not unique to Lake County Ohio. It is a challenge faced by so many churches in America today. A steady decline in people actively participating in a congregation. And there is not just one simple, major reason it has happened. A number of factors have combined to create this situation. In some of my reading, I've come across people, church leaders especially in Lutheran circles, attempting to get people to see what happens in the Worship Service in a different light to attempt to reverse this trend one person at a time.

Often, we view worship as something I attend and maybe participate in a little bit. I come hoping to get a little something out of it. What really happens on Sat night/Sun morning at St. Paul's? We come together for a Divine Worship Service. It is Divine because God begins it. It is Worship because it is a vehicle to offer praise and thanksgiving to God. It is a Service because when God's people come together, God is there to serve them. It is this Service aspect that I want you to consider. Think about it for a few seconds [then a few minutes later!] God invites me to come and gather with other people, so He can serve us? Yet, that is exactly what happens! We gather around God. He assures us of the forgiveness of sins. He opens His Word for us to read and better understand. He feeds us with the Holy Supper of His Son. He gives us opportunity to return

'GOD'S SERVICE TO US continued

thanks and praise to Him for His actions. AND, He gives the chance to be served EVERY WEEK!

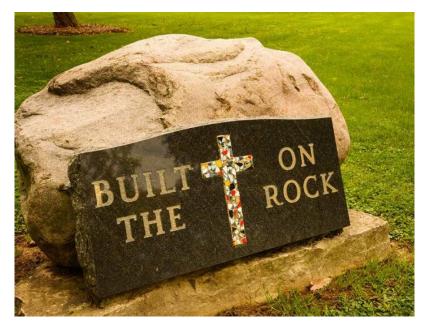
What difference would it make if each of us came together with a view of coming together to be served by your Creator? How would that affect/change how you see the other 6 days of the week? What strength it gives to know your Creator desires to serve you, His creation! Receive with joy and thanksgiving the things our God serves regularly & faithfully!

Serving our Lord [who serves us] Together

In Christ

Pastor Sundbom

²⁴And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another Hebrews 10:24-25



'The Rock': God's Original

By A. Andrew Das

In Matthew 16:13–20, we read about one of the most colorful and beloved figures in the Bible: Saint Peter. When Jesus and the disciples arrived in Caesarea Philippi, He asked them: "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" Jesus used the phrase "Son of Man"

to refer to Himself: "So who do people say that / am?" And yet the phrase is also a reminder that Jesus was a human being just like one of us, a son of man. But the people of His day knew He was special.

The disciples answered: "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah — they were all prophetic figures. He seemed to be "one of the prophets" come to speak God's end time revelation, but still just a man, a son of man.

Simon Peter knew better. Jesus "said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?'" Peter answered: "You are the

'THE ROCK': GOD'S ORIGINAL continued

Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16, CSB). No one had recognized Jesus as the Messiah in Matthew's Gospel up to this point. Peter was the first, and yet Peter doesn't stop. He adds that Jesus is the Son of the living God — the God who offers life. Even as God alone offers life, Jesus will soon make clear that He has the power of life and death.

Jesus: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter (*petros*), and on this rock (*petra*) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:17–19).

What powerful words. What an amazing blessing. Unfortunately, Jesus' words have long been overshadowed by a debate over the significance of this blessing of Peter. For Roman Catholics, this passage forms the basis for the papal office. The administration of a worldwide church stems, they say, from Peter. After all, he's the one who's blessed here — and they're right about that. Lutherans point out in response that this passage says nothing about a whole series of men standing in some unbroken line of papal succession from Peter — and the Lutherans are right about that. Yes, it is Peter himself who is blessed as the rock on which Jesus will build His church, but it is a Peter not just at any moment in his life. No, Christ blesses confessing Peter who speaks and confesses the revelation God had given him. As Peter stands and recognizes who Christ is, he is the Rock, the blessed one. It is the confessing Peter whom Jesus praises.

Whether or not Peter fully realized all that he had just said, this was Peter's moment to shine, and yet the glory was ultimately God's. Jesus tells us that God had revealed this insight to Peter. By this point in the Gospel of Matthew, we've come to know something of Peter. He had sometimes proven rash, confused and overconfident. There were even times he would prove cowardly. And yet, as vacillating and fickle as Peter could be, Jesus singled out Peter that day: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." The church doesn't ultimately depend on Peter. Jesus builds His church, not Peter. But when Peter opened his mouth that day at Caesarea Philippi, divine revelation and power manifested itself. The bold, confessing Peter would be the rock on which Jesus would build His church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Who would have ever guessed that a poor Galilean fisherman would become the foundation for a new people of God?

The second confession at Caesarea Philippi

At the very same location, Caesarea Philippi, once again God worked a miracle through the confession of St. Peter. The miracle: The first Gentiles came to faith as Peter told them of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of the living God. And the gates of hell could not prevent it. As Peter spoke those words of salvation to the Roman soldier Cornelius and his household, he proved to be the rock (Acts 10–11). Soon other Gentiles joined the church Cornelius had entered through Peter's witness.

Perhaps that's why Jesus called him "Simon bar-Jonah," "son of Jonah," when we know from John's Gospel that Peter was the son of John (John 1:42), not Jonah. While John and Jonah were similarly sounding, no one would have confused the names. No, Peter was to be like one of the prophets, like John the Baptist, or Elijah,

'THE ROCK': GOD'S ORIGINAL continued

or Jeremiah — the son of Jonah. Jesus' followers were to make disciples of all nations, but Simon Peter required God's intervention and vision to bring the Gospel to the unclean Gentiles (Acts 10). Peter was to be God's prophetic voice to open the doors for the Gentiles to come to faith, as had Jonah all those years before. John the Baptist had warned the Jews that God could raise up from dead stones children of Abraham (Matt. 3:9), and now God was doing exactly that, thanks to Peter, the *petra*, the rock.

Jesus admonished His disciples a little earlier in Matthew's Gospel to build their houses on the bedrock — the *petra* — of Jesus' teachings (Matt. 7:24). As Peter stood there confessing what God had revealed, "the rock" embodied that teaching. This is a passage primarily about who Jesus is, rather than who Peter is, let alone his papal descendants. In making that confession, Peter became the pillar of a new temple that Jesus Himself was building. You may remember that the first Jewish Christians called Peter a "pillar" (Gal. 2:9). It is the confession of who Jesus is that makes Peter into something more than he could ever have been on his own. But there would be other "pillars" too, James and John. Others had recognized Jesus to be the Son of God even before Peter made his confession (Matt. 14:33). And Jesus revealed His identity to others besides Peter, especially to infants and babes (Matt. 11:25–27). And in Matthew 18:18, the power to bind and loose belonged to the entire church, and this is still true today as it holds fast to Jesus' teachings.

What an incredible gift we, as members of Christ's church, possess: the power to speak to people about the person and work of Jesus Christ, opening and closing the gates of heaven. Is the Lord Jesus Christ on the tip of your tongue? At the very moment we open our mouths to speak of Christ the divine revelation that transformed Peter is transforming us, and it also transforms the people in whose midst we speak. It is the power of the Word of God and of that divinely gifted confession. When we stand firm on what God has revealed to us in His Word then, like Peter, nothing — not even Satan and all his minions — will be able to stand against us. We are God's instruments as others come to receive Jesus Christ as their precious Lord and Savior.

Photo: LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford

About the Author

A. Andrew Das is a professor and assistant dean at Elmhurst University, the author or editor of nine books, and served as a pastor at Trinity and St. John's Lutheran Churches (LCMS) in Lombard, Illinois.

Das, A. Andrew., (2022, January 18). "The Rock': God's Original. The Lutheran Witness-Articles. https://witness.lcms.org/2022/the-rock-gods-original/





June Life Quotes

June 2 "So, what are we as Christians to do in a culture that rejects God's gift of marriage, sex within its bounds, and children? Repent. Turn from your sin. Receive Jesus' forgiveness. And do not forget to pray. Pray for all marriages and all families, that the Lord who makes two into one flesh would richly bless them with His love, joy, and mercy." *Rev. Matthew Wietfeldt, Concordia Theological Seminary – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • <u>lutheransforlife.org</u>

June 9 "For the Christian, changing hearts and minds isn't just about meeting bodily needs; it also means connecting our neighbor to the true source of life—Christ Himself. It means providing for her needs in this world and the next by boldly intertwining our works and words of mercy with the gift of mercy Himself. It means helping him carry the crosses of this world on the way to his heavenly home." *Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • *Lutheransforlife.org*

June 16 "I can finally perceive that God put some of the most difficult neighbors in my life at some of the most difficult times in order to bring me to the end of myself. Jesus didn't say that what God asks us to do would be easy. What God asks is impossibly difficult if God were not actually alongside us, helping us every step of the way. But the good news is that He is alongside us, helping us every step of the way." Donna Harrison, M.D., American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • <u>lutheransforlife.org</u>

June 23 "The state of marriage is under a full assault from the devil. He will use whatever means necessary to destroy what God has created. Pray also for all God's children. Pray that love may abound in all homes. Pray that forgiveness may be the first word spoken between husbands and wives, parents and children. Pray that you and all people receive an increase of the Holy Spirit, for it is only through Him that we may repent of our sinful lives, amend our ways, and live joyfully in the comfort of God's grace." *Rev. Matthew Wietfeldt, Concordia Theological Seminary – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • <u>lutheransforlife.org</u>*

June 30 "History, science, and Holy Scripture affirm: No matter what age, every human life has irreducible worth. No matter what appearance, every human life has inestimable purpose. No matter what abilities, every genetic member of this one race and species of ours has incomparable and irreplaceable sanctity—the cute little babies and the dear old ladies, yes; but also those who in pride promote, those who in anger permit, those who in fear participate in the devil's deception that death supplies a suitable solution to difficulty—none so helpless, dependent, and undeserving as we ourselves." *Pastor Michael Salemink, Lutherans For Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • <u>lutheransforlife.org</u>*

Congratulations Graduates!!

Owen Cardina

Graduate of iStem School

Owen is currently undecide about his future plans.





Sheyla Lelle-Urban

Graduate of Boston Latin School

Sheyla will continue her education at Boston University with her first year abroad in Sevilla, Spain and then Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Announcements

Our Shepherd Annual Golf Classic

The annual golf outing fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, June 29, 2024. Registration forms and information should be available at your church, at the school and on the school website - www.oslpainesville.org, if you would like to golf in the event. If you are not a golfer we invite congregation members to be a sponsor or make any monetary donation to offset the cost of outing (marked envelopes have been provided). This is the only major fundraiser of the year for Our Shepherd. We are raising money for updated wifi and



chromebooks for the school. We thank you for your prayers and support. For questions or more information email jdrake@oslpainesville.org.



Mite Giving for May

Mite giving for the month of April was \$198.31.

To God be the Glory!

Local Summer VBS Programs

Zion Lutheran Church, Painesville—June 17—21. Theme: God's Living Water. To register go to https://www.zionpainesville.com/vbs-volunteer-sign-up.html.

Faith Lutheran Church, Mentor—July 29—August 3. To register go to https://www.faithmentor.org/





Food & Fellowship Fridays

Members of St. Paul's gather at 1:00 pm the 4th Friday of every month from March to October for a good meal and great fellowship. Watch the bulletin and the digital message board for the next Food & Fellowship location. Hope to see you there!

St. John's Geneva Blood Drive

St. John's Lutheran Church in Geneva is hosting a blood drive in memory of their church elder Rich Gansheimer. Rich was very involved in the church and his community. Please join his family and church community for this blood drive which continues his legacy of helping those in need. The blood drive will be held in the Social Hall at St. John's Church, 811 S Broadway in Geneva on Friday, June 28th from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. For an appointment, please visit <u>redcrossblood.org</u> and use keyword: <u>RedsForRich</u>.



Altar Flowers



A great way to remember any occasion is with Altar Flowers. The Altar Flower Chart is located on the double doors at the back of the Sanctuary. Just sign up next to the appropriate weekend. Clearly print the occasion , who the flowers are for and who they're from. Altar flowers are \$40.00. Please place the monies in an envelope labeled "Altar Flowers" with the date of the weekend and put it in the collection plate.





May Meeting Minutes

Pastor's Report: Pastor was helping his daughter move into her apartment. He is hoping to be on vacation to MN. June 4-10. Emma Wilhelm will be confirmed May 11/12.

President's report: Dennis reported the insurance policy of Margret Hiller was a term policy that expired in Sept. 2019. He has applied for and received a grant from Thrivent Action Team to build 10-12 Hearts of Mercy & Compassion. Dennis announced we have received a very generous donation from a member who has purchased an 8-camera security system for the building and hopes to have installation soon (Joe, Dennis, and Craig will head that project).

Vice President's report: Eric reported he is working on getting volunteers to fill council positions before Annual Meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Russ reported our cash is up slightly from last year. Offerings are up \$2,763 the 1st 10 months and with preschool transfers, total income is up \$12,575; expenses are up \$5,666, and netting an increase of \$12,969.

Education Report: Erin reported Sunday school & Adult Bible study continues to meet and average attendance is now 23. Sunday School & Bible study will continue during the summer. She said if attendance continues to increase, she will likely split into 2 classes. She is also working on cleaning the clutter in SS office.

Preschool report: Star reported that NLSA accreditation visit went well and expects they should be recommended for approval. She announced Karen will retire as Treasurer in 2026 and will begin looking for someone to serve as backup. Contracts for next year completed, 1 assistant is needed, and enrollment for next year stands at 26.

Elders' report: Dale said 12 delinquent member letters were sent out, all inactive for at least 2 years, Don & Suzanne Luther were released to transfer to King of Kings, Willoughby and Emly Berndt transferred in from Grace, Thompson. Stewardship report: Kristi reported she has posted a sign-up sheet for volunteers to maintain our garden beds this summer/fall.

Financial Secty report: Jenn said she post a notice for needed counters in the bulletin as several months need helpers to count offerings.

Outreach Report: Ken reported he will work with Pastor, Peggy, and Elders to get contact information quicker to reach out to visitors. He said next year's Easter Breakfast will most likely be a continental breakfast. Star continues to work on updating the website. Plans for the Open House are starting to take shape.

Buildings & Grounds report: Craig reported Spring Clean-up will be Saturday, May 4: removal of front arborvitae, weeding and spreading of mulch in beds, & tree trimming will be top items. Chuck Atwell has offered his tractor and trailer to haul away debris. The wrong valve was installed on backflow preventer and will be corrected. Moving schedule has been posted. Ongoing issues at the parsonage need to be addressed. Security cameras will be installed soon.

MAY MEETING MINUTES continued

Contribution Secretary Report: Billie reported April's offerings were \$14,914 (4 week vs. \$14,534(5 weeks) in 2023. She said average number of contributors rose to 29 vs. 26 last year.

Old Business:

- 1) Alarm System: Dennis and Craig reported fixes to wiring improved issues.
- 2) Pastor reported that District office were to meet last month to review By-Law & Constitution changes but they haven't responded yet. Pastor will follow up if they respond soon.
- 3) Safety/Security Team: Dennis and Eric reported progress on survey items. Dennis noted additional fire extinguishers and escape ladder in choir loft were installed, and that 8-camera security system has been donated and will be installed as soon as details can be worked out.
- 4) Business credit card & Amazon business accounts: Star met with PNC Bank and recommended going with them for business credit card: no fees, 1.15% cash back on purchases, and up to 5 cards. A motion was made to have Star begin application process and 2nd. Motion passed. Persons named as 5 signees: Star, Pastor, Craig (Build & Grounds), Peggy, and Ken (Stewardship) to be updated yearly. Work on exploring Amazon account ongoing.
- 5) Learning Center: Amy is still finalizing details on 60x60 foot fenced in outdoor Learning Center with several stations for learning activities. Cost to be paid for by Phase 4 Grant Preschool has received.
- 6) Pastor said there is no updates on 3 families' intensions on possible membership

New Business:

- 1) Annual Meeting: Sunday, May 19 @ 10:45am. Reports, election of officers, and approving budget.
- 2) Church Picnic: Sunday, August 11, 12-4pm @ Townline Park, North Perry.
- Captains Game Outing: Friday, June 14, cost \$30 includes meal and seat. Money into Dale by June 1st. Zion & Faith again have been invited.
- 4) Jenn reported OSLS has hired a teacher to fill a vacancy, and has issued a call for a principal. OSLS Golf Outing will be June 29 and St. Paul's will again furnish lunch.

Next meeting: Wednesday, June5 @ 6:30pm.

Highlights from Annual Congregational Meeting

The minutes from Nov. Semi-Annual Meeting were read and approved as were the various reports detailing the many activities and progress made over the past six months The following were chosen to fill council positions in 2024-25: President-Dennis Concoby, Vice-President-Eric Drake, Secretary-Erin Cardina, Treasurer-Russ Walton, Education-Jenn Drake, Stewardship-Diane Wayner, Financial Secretary-Terry Wakelee, Preschool Chair-TBD by Preschool Board, 2 Preschool Board-Matt Chaffe and Jeff Troutman. Thanks to those willing to serve.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING continued

Russ presented and explained the Proposed Budget for 2024-25. He expects weekly offerings to be \$3650 next year up from last year's expected \$3500 (Fiscal YTD average is \$3808). His proposed budget for 2024-25 runs \$202,810 up from last year's 201,922, with most items similar remaining about the same--notable exceptions being payroll fees and maintenance(increases) and insurance costs(lower). Russ expects a resulting deficit of \$9,889, but with a healthy cash position of \$49,000 and a conservative estimate of offerings he feels we are in good financial shape. The proposed budget was approved.

Preschool Director Amy Marizek reported the Preschool has completed its NLSA Accreditation process with a rating of 94+% and is being recommended for re-accreditation. Pastor Sundbom has been nominated for the School Shepherd Award for his service, encouragement, and support of the school. She also gave an outline of the proposed outdoor Learning Center to be funded by a Phase 4 Stabilization Grant of \$38,760 they received.



WE'RE HIRING!

St. Paul's Preschool Job Opportunity

St. Paul's Preschool is accepting resumes for anyone interested in working in our preschool program. We are interviewing candidates for assistant teachers. The opportunity is part time and preschool experience is preferred but not required. If you or someone you know is interested in being a part of this ministry, please contact our Preschool Director, Amy Marizek at <u>preschool@splcpainesville.org</u> or (440)354-3000.

2024-2025 Preschool Registration

Registration for St. Paul's Preschool 2024-2025 is now open. There are currently openings in the Pre-K class and the 3's class, If you are interested in your child attending St. Paul's Preschool in the fall please pick up a registration form located at the back of the sanctuary next to the double doors. If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Marizek at 440-354-3000. If you



know someone who has a preschool aged child please pass a registration form on to them.



June Anniversaries

Russ and Roxanne Walton Carl and JoEllen Graziadei Keith and Karen Krueger Tom and Erin Cardina 30 years on Jun 4 44 years on Jun 14 43 years on Jun 20 24 years on Jun 24



Emma Grace Wilhelm

Whatever you do, Do it all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Those Who Serve: June 2024

ELDERS:

6:00 P	Saturday	Aaron Lindrose
9:30 A	Sunday	Craig McConnell

LECTORS:

06-01-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Dave Murphy
06-02-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Jack Lelle
06-08-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Dale Kerver
06-09-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Ken Chaffe
06-15-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Pastor Sundbom
06-16-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Eric West
06-22-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Pastor Sundbom
06-23-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Terry Wakelee
06-29-24	6:00 P	Saturday	Dave Murphy
06-30-24	9:30 A	Sunday	Pastor Sundbom

Terry Wakelee, Kelly Hines, Matt Chaffe

COUNTERS:

Sign up in June to greet your fellow disciples.

Sign-up sheet located an the double doors at the back of the Sanctuary.



Scripture Readings for June

Jun 1/2 Deuteronomy 5:12-15 2 Corinthians 4:5-12 Mark 2:23-3:6

Jun 8/9 Genesis 3:8-15 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1 Mark 3:20-35

Jun 15/16 Ezekiel 17:22-24 2 Corinthians 5:1-17 Mark 4:26-34

Jun 22/23

Job 38:1-11 2 Corinthians 6:1-13 Mark 4:35-41

Jun 29/30

Lamentations 3:22-33 2 Corinthians 8:1-9, 13-15 Mark 5:21-43





Play this puzzle online at: <u>https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/7128568/words-of-june/</u>

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St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church



June 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
COMMUNION SERVICE	Sunda	SHIP SCHEDULE Saturdays - 6:00pm Sundays - 9:30am ay School - 10:45am -8:30am & 10:45am	Bulletin Announcements Due Wednesdays June Birthstone Alexandrite, Pearl & Moonstone	Office Hours Monday-Friday 9:00am-12:00pm June Flower Rose	National Safety Month Men's Health Month	1
2	3 World Bicycle Day	4	5 6:30 pm Council Meeting	6 D-Day Anniversary	7 National Chocolate Ice Cream Day	8
9 •	10	11	1 Z 6:30 pm Elder's Meeting	1 3 6:30 pm Outreach Meeting	14 6:00 pm Captains Baseball Game & Picnic	15
16 HAPPY *FATHER'S DAY!	1 7 6:30 pm Preschool Board	18 International Picnic Day	19	20 first day of SUMMERS!	21 July Newsletter Articles and Announcements Due LWML District Convention	22 P LWML District Convention
23 🍷 30	24	25	26	27	28	29 12:00 pm OSLS Golf Outing