

The Net

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St. Peter's by the Sea Lutheran Church

Church Phone: 619-224-2894

Preschool Phone: 619-224-1689

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Worship Services

Sunday Worship: 9:30 a.m. onsite
& live-streamed

Staff

Rev. Bekki Lohrmann, pastor

pastor@stpetersbythesea.org

Janine Morrow, Office Administrator

office@stpetersbythesea.org

Dori Hoadley, Preschool Director

preschool@stpetersbythesea.org

Joe DeMers, Music Minister

Music.minister@stpetersbythesea.org

Betty Wells, Hospitality Coordinator

Hannah DeMers, Newsletter Editor

2025 Council

Pat Hendrickson, President

Ellen Schmeding, Vice-President

Allison Crews, Secretary

Richard Nielsen, Treasurer

Sandra Boelter; Greg Lommen; Liz Medina; Jacquelyn Romero; Betty Wells

Dear People of St. Peter's,

Every day I am bombarded by images of starving and wounded children in Gaza. I sit at my own dinner table with my own children and feel the insane dissonance between the lives of my two kids. So, we turn to scripture for our grounding.

In Genesis 18, God and Abraham have a famous conversation. It starts like this:

20 Then the Lord said, "How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! 21 I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me, and if not, I will know."

22 So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the Lord. 23 Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" 26 And the Lord said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake."

From there, Abraham (like a pesky child) negotiates with God. What if there are 45 righteous people? What about 40? Until he gets God to agree that even if there are just 10 righteous people, God will not destroy the city.

As I see the events of the starvation and killing of innocent people in Gaza through the lens of this story, it holds up for me just how unacceptable this war is because of the way that there is no distinction between the starvation of the righteous from the wicked. (As a Christian, I have thoughts about even the validity of killing or starving the wicked,

what with the whole commandment not to murder and the fact that ALL people are made in the image of God, but we can save that for another day.)

Last week we felt the horror of gun violence in the United States as two children were killed at their school in Minneapolis. In Gaza, on average 28 children die every day due to bombardments, starvation, malnutrition, or lack of services. That's an entire classroom of kids, every single day. It is not okay.

Our legacy is to follow in the way of Abraham. To beg, plead, negotiate, advocate and GET OBNOXIOUS in our perseverance to insist on the safety of these innocent Palestinian children.

Here are the phone numbers for our representatives:

Representative Sara Jacobs - 202-225-2040
 Representative Darrel Issa - 202-225-5672
 Representative Scott Peters - 202-225-0508
 Senator Alex Padilla - 202-224-3553
 Senator Adam Schiff - 202-224-3841

Save these numbers into your phones and call them every week. It only takes a few minutes. Leave a message letting them know that it is important to you that they support legislation that will get food and safety to the children of Gaza. Look up bills that you can specifically ask them to support. Google call scripts if you're not comfortable without one. Ask me and I can help you if you've never called your legislator before!

Consider giving money to World Central Kitchen (wck.org/relief/chefs-for-gaza) or Save The Children (<http://www.savethechildren.org>) or Lutheran Disaster Response (elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response).

Pray that the world will be infected with the fervency of Abraham who would not stop until he had the assurance from God that innocent lives would be protected.

You don't have to be an expert to take a small step to ensure that Palestinian children are protected and fed.

Peace,
 Pastor Bekki

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

Save the Date
 Blessing of the Pets
 Saturday, October 4
 Time: 10:00 a.m.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Sunday School and Confirmation Class resume
 September 7!

ST. PETER'S MAILBOX

Dear St. Peter's Endowment Committee,

Thank you so very much for the generous gift of \$500, which will help us serve the growing number of those needing food.

May God reward St. Peter's by the Sea for your compassion and financial aid.

Sincerely,
 Pat Katka,
 OBEF Board Member

Meet the Architect!

On Monday August, 25th the church council voted to select Studio E Architects as the firm that we will begin working with to design our sanctuary remodel.

Studio E Architects' mission statement states, "We design places that cultivate community, enhance well-being, and make the best use of resources. We listen carefully, uncover opportunity and expand possibility."

We came to work with them through a recommendation from Bishop Dave, who worked with them when Christ Lutheran Church in Pacific Beach remodeled their sanctuary in 2000. He writes, "We chose Studio E for the remodel of Christ Lutheran Church in 2000 based on their portfolio and the fact that they had not worked on a sanctuary before. (We wanted a firm that would not bring previous concepts for a worship space into our project.) They were attentive, creative, willing to change directions, and ultimately, they delivered an amazing product. The fact that their design still feels fresh 25 years later is a testament to their work."

We are thrilled to be working with this firm and their talented, energized, creative architects! It is likely that you will meet them at the end of this initial design phase when they have renderings ready to present to us. In the meantime, they will be interfacing with the steering committee to create a design that will best fit our needs and position us to share the love of God well into the future.

August Council Meeting Highlights:

Approved a recommendation from the Finance Committee to designate \$187,000 as seed money for the sanctuary remodel project. The funds are coming from the church operating fund balance, the preschool fund balance, the employee retention credit trust fund, and the building fund balance.

MUSIC NOTES

Gimme that Old Time Religion

I've seen numerous movies and TV shows that contain pious church people trying to sway sinners to their side and especially to their church. One of the most common tools to depict this is through the singing of specific hymns, most likely "Give Me That Old Time Religion." We hear that and immediately we know what religion they are talking about, don't we?

The original version of this hymn is deeply rooted in the African American culture, using the same tune as "Tis the Old Ship of Zion," an earlier spiritual. However, "...Old Time Religion" holds significant influence in white southern gospel revival culture primarily emphasizing saving the lost, rather than sustaining the faith of slaves and former slaves. It became recognized as a traditional folk song of 19th century rural South USA, especially Southern Baptists, where "old-time religion" reflects conservative cultural values and literal biblical interpretation.

Verses have been added and subtracted by various publications and singers over the years. "It was good for our mothers . . . It's good enough for me" or "It has saved our fathers ... It's good enough for me" or "It will do when I am dying . . . It's good enough for me." It has even been used for temperance with verses like "It will make me leave off drinking . . . And 'tis good enough for me" and "I'm for state-wide prohibition."

It is interesting to note, however, that despite this being about "Old Time Religion" none of the many verses contain any reference to Jesus or God, though referencing biblical characters such as Paul, Silas, Daniel, Hebrew children. Perhaps that is appropriate because it is a song about "religion"—cultural values and practices rooted in the past—and not about a relationship with the living God.

Joe DeMers, Music Minister

NEWS FROM THE TREASURER

The Congregation Council held their monthly meeting on August 14, 2025. The following reports are from the treasurer :

Budget Recap	July Actual	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Budget	Difference Actual:Budget
Income	\$22,447.09	\$237,070.58	\$231,204.19	\$5,866.39
Expense	\$30,530.01	\$213,529.45	\$231,204.26	<\$17,654.81>
Difference	<\$8,082.92>	\$23,541.13		

All Are Welcome – Restoration and Renovation Campaign

	July 2025
Beginning Balance	\$139,326.10
Income	\$629.92
Expense	\$0
Ending Balance	\$139,956.02

PRESCHOOL NEWS

Dear St. Peter's Preschool friends and families,

Whew, we made it through the first few weeks of school and are settling in to our routines and new classes. We have had some changes and are settling into our new roles:

- Teaching PreK in the Sea Star room is Miss Josey
- Teaching UTK Prep in the Flying Fish room is Miss Leslie
- Teaching a UTK prep/Combo class in the Otter room is Miss Alanna
- Teaching the younger 3s and older 2s in the Dolphin room is Miss Heather
- Teaching the 2s in the Sea Lion room is Miss Jess
- Our amazing floating aides are Miss Veronica and Miss Jessica
- Also joining us as a floating science/resource teacher is Miss Bekah



We are so blessed with this incredible staff and looking forward to a wonderful year.

We will be CLOSED Monday September 1 for Labor Day.

Lastly, please join us on September 22 for the Classics Malt Shop fundraiser from 3 to 7 p.m.
[3625 Midway Dr Ste B, San Diego, CA 92110](https://www.classicsmalt.com/3625-Midway-Dr-Ste-B-San-Diego-CA-92110) They will donate 10% of their profits to our scholarship fund!

Warmly,

Dori Hoadley
 Director, St. Peter's Preschool
preschool@stpetersbythesea.org
 619-224-1689



Dear Friend of TACO,

We are reaching out with urgency today. Third Avenue Charitable Organization (TACO) is facing a critical moment. Right now, we only have enough funds to cover about one month of operations.

The need in our community continues to grow at an unprecedented pace. Three years ago, 385 people used TACO's address to receive their mail for essential documents like IDs, benefits, and medical correspondence. Today, more than 1,400 people rely on us for this lifeline. Our social worker is booked with clients every day, helping individuals navigate housing, benefits, and other urgent needs. At the same time, more and more individuals are coming to our meal services, showers, and social support.

Meanwhile, costs have skyrocketed while donations have dropped:

- Three years ago, a case of eggs cost \$32, and we needed 2 cases for breakfast. Today, eggs are \$69 per case, and because of growing demand, we now require 4 cases each week.
- Our food banks, which once provided proteins and other commodities, no longer have these critical items available for our meal service.

To keep TACO running each month, it costs \$27,000. In July, we received only \$5,481 in donations. This shortfall has already forced us to cut staff hours, even as the demand for services continues to climb.

Despite these challenges, TACO remains committed to serving over 250 people at each of our community meals, ensuring no one is turned away. But without immediate help, we risk cutting back the very services that so many depend on.

We urgently need your support to keep TACO strong. Your gift today will help us continue providing meals, dignity, and hope for our unsheltered and low-income neighbors in Downtown San Diego.

Please consider donating today.

Every dollar makes a difference. Together, we can meet this moment and ensure that TACO remains a place of compassion and stability for those who need us most.

With deep gratitude,

Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer
Board President
On behalf of the Board of Directors
Third Avenue Charitable Organization (TACO)

Lorena Galligan
TACO Director

[DONATE TODAY](#)

We are now at the midpoint of my six-year term as bishop of the Pacifica Synod, so this seems like a great moment to pause, evaluate where we are, and set whatever course corrections are needed to accomplish our mutual goals.

In my [first newsletter article to the synod](#), I outlined seven themes that I wanted to shape my time in this office. They were to be my guiding stars as I navigate the myriad demands of this office. These are the themes:

1. Radical Inclusivity
2. Setting and Context Matter
 - We are a border synod
 - We are a coastal synod
 - We are a diverse synod
3. Decentralizing our synod staff is more effective.
4. Innovation is essential.
5. The parish is more important than the congregation.
6. Self-care is not selfish.
7. Love is at the center of all we do.



We have made some headway on many of these themes while others are still in process. Here are a few accomplishments that I celebrate:

- We have a deployed staff model with our Regional Assistants to the Bishop. These excellent leaders help with mobility, DEI, Youth ministry, First Call Accompaniment, and our Regional Gatherings and Synod Assemblies.
- We have created a new Assistant to the Bishop for Anti-Racism Coordination position. That position is currently open, and we pray for a new leader to build on the work that we have done so far.
- We have a new position that will strengthen and expand our ministry in Spanish-speaking communities in the Assistant to the Bishop for Latiné Ministry. A new synod strategy is being developed by the leaders of these congregations.
- Our focus on the border has increased. The [Day of Theological Reflection](#) and our increased involvement in Border Church have educated and inspired many to action.
- The combination of a shortage of full-time calls and a lack of ministry candidates have moved us to innovate new ways to fill our pulpits. Currently, many congregations are exploring a new model we call Cooperative Ministry Communities that will share pastoral staff and raise up synodically authorized ministers in local congregations.
- We have added resources to help with spiritual guidance and coaching for ministry.
- We opened more avenues for lay education by expanding the use of the [Cathryn Wright funds](#).
- We have seen the birth of [Tapestry retreats](#) for people in the LGBTQIA+ communities.
- We have started Regional Gatherings every other year to share and listen more effectively to the people in our congregations.
- We are encouraging rostered leaders to renew their ordination vows in Chrism Services held each Holy Week.
- The synod council has accepted several congregations into synodical administration or synodical preservation and we are walking with these communities through a time of discernment.
- We continue to manage our resources well and give away grants for ministries throughout our synod. We continue to pass along 51% of our mission support to the ministries of the wider ELCA.
- When disaster struck in Maui, we raised over \$140K to support relief work.
- We have worshipped together, marched together, prayed together, sung together, and laughed and cried together.
- We have restarted the [Middle School Youth Gathering](#), and we had the coolest shirts in New Orleans at the High School National Gathering!

There are some other themes that did not get the attention they deserve. We were not as deliberate when it came to our environmental stewardship. Being a coastal synod, we have been called to bear witness to the health of the ocean and the ecosystems of Southern California and Hawai'i.

We could also do a better job of helping each other keep love at the center of all we do. In these challenging times, it is easy to get judgmental and not see people with whom we disagree as children of God instead of enemies. This requires a deep spiritual practice. It is my pledge to you to make sure that I am engaged in this practice and to help our synod do the same.

I would love to hear what you think. As I reach this midpoint in my term, what is the synod doing that is helpful for you? What are we missing? How can I better serve your ministry as your bishop? Below is a link to a survey that will allow you to provide some helpful feedback. Please take 5-10 minutes and let us know how we are doing and how we can serve you more effectively.

[You can take the survey here.](#) Your responses are automatically anonymous unless you supply us with your name and email address.

Finally, let me thank you all for the privilege of serving as your bishop. I love this synod and I love our leaders! We have been uniquely positioned at this time to do significant ministry together. I find great joy in this call. I am so deeply grateful for my staff colleagues and for you, my partners in the gospel.

Peace,
Bishop Dave

BIRTHDAYS

September B-days

Day

- | | |
|----|-----------------|
| 1 | Rosemary Sutter |
| 6 | Lara Alvar |
| 9 | Lyle Boelter |
| 10 | Elaine Lauger |
| 12 | Ann Zegler |
| 12 | David Zegler |
| 14 | Shea Slaughter |
| 15 | Darlene Truver |
| 17 | Colleen Doering |
| 18 | Samantha Box |
| 21 | Patty Lewis |
| 26 | Ian Smart |
| 27 | Shawn Morrow |



IN OUR PRAYERS

We keep the following members of St. Peter's in our prayers:

Darlene M-T, Joan, Patty L.

Our homebound members and those in care facilities:

Keith, Janet, Jane H., Carolyn, Dante, Diane B., Carmell

Our members with on-going concerns:

Ann Z., Babette, Lily, Carlos, Lora

Our military, police, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare providers, and all who work for peace.

To request prayer, please contact the church office or write your request on a Welcome Card on Sunday. Names of loved ones require regular updates to remain on our prayer list. Thank you.



ST. PETER'S BY THE SEA LUTHERAN CHURCH**1371 SUNSET CLIFFS BLVD.****SAN DIEGO, CA 92107-3845**

EVENTS OF INTEREST

September 6	SC Auto Show
September 7	God's Work. Our Hands.
September 7	Confirmation Class

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Sundays	8:30 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal
	9:30 a.m.	Worship Service, live-streamed
	7:00 p.m.	Al-Anon Meeting "Courage to Change"
Tuesdays	9:30 a.m.	Church Mice/Christian Service
	4:00 p.m.	AA Meeting "Sobriety Seekers"
First Tuesday	9:30 a.m.	Prayer Shawl Ministry
Third Tuesday	6:30 p.m.	Women's Book Study
Thursdays	5:30 p.m.	NA Meeting "Eleven-11"
First Friday	8:30 a.m.	St. Peter's serves at TACO
Second Friday	6:00 p.m.	Hand & Foot Card Game
Second Saturday	Bicycling Group (moved to Sept. 21 this month)	
Fourth Saturday	Hiking Group (time & location varies)	