



**APRIL 2024**



*Worship Service—Sundays 10 a.m. Sunday School—Sundays 9 a.m.  
Adult Bible Study—Sundays 11:15 a.m. & Thursdays 10 a.m.*

8867 Kent Street, Portland, MI 48875 Office Phone: 517-647-4473  
Email: portlandstandrew@gmail.com Website: www.portlandstandrew.com

**Rev. Roger Straub, Vacancy Pastor**

Pastor's Phone: 517-230-3872

**Home of Wee Grow Christian Preschool**

**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK**

Dear Members and Friends of St. Andrew:

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

When Jesus appeared to his disciples on the evening of Easter, the day of his resurrection, Thomas was not among them. When they told Thomas, "We have seen the Lord," Thomas replied, "unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." Eight days later, Thomas was with them when Jesus appeared to them again. He invited Thomas to put his finger into the marks of the nails in his hands and to put his hand into his side where the spear had been thrust. Thomas' response was, "my Lord and my God!" And, Jesus said: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:28 & 29)

That's us. We were not there. We have not seen the risen Jesus with our eyes. We have not touched him with our hands. Nevertheless, we have seen him with eyes of faith and grasped him in our hearts through faith; faith implanted, inspired, and nurtured in us by the Holy Spirit. That makes us "blessed!"

John goes on to write in chapter 20 of his Gospel: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name" (John 20:30-31). Life, forgiveness, heaven, purpose.

A bit further down the road, Luke writes of the early Christians: "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). Those were the basics. Those are the basics. For them. For us.

The Easter season in our church year is fifty days long. This year, it encompasses the entire month of April and part of May. Our calendar for April is basically engaged in the basics: worship, prayers, the Lord's Supper, fellowship, and Bible study. No apologies for the lack of other activities. God's Word and sacraments are the means of grace. Word and sacraments are the vehicles of the Holy Spirit who is the source of saving faith in Christ, crucified, and risen. Through faith we experience forgiveness and eternal life. In faith, we love and serve God and others in the spirit of our risen Lord and God.

The current interim/vacancy period for St. Andrew, though at present is status quo, is moving forward. Mark Haworth is moving forward in the process of becoming Specific Ministries Pastor (SMP) for St. Andrew. He has completed interviews with our Michigan District President and the District Director of SMP Ministry. Mark is moving along on the path to beginning his studies in the Fall, when he will be enrolled as Vicar. Please continue to keep Mark and St. Andrew in your prayers.

In Christ,

The Rev. Roger K. Straub,  
Vacancy Pastor

## APRIL SCHEDULES

### Acolyte

- 7 Bella Roof
- 14 Zach Roof
- 21 William Roof
- 28 Bella Roof



### Fellowship

- 7 Dave & Marty Frick
- 14 The Roof Family
- 21 Jack & Mary Sandborn
- 28 Jeff & Elena Brooks

### Greeters

- 7 Jack & Mary Sandborn
- 14 Dave & Marty Frick
- 21 Tracy Wineland
- 28 The Roof Family

### Worship Readers

- 7 Elena Brooks
- 14 Jeanne Bauer
- 21 Jeff Brooks
- 28 Chris Roof

### Music

Judy Nobis

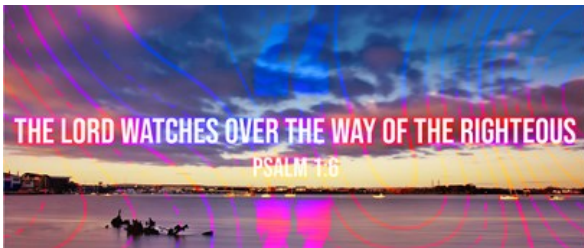


### Altar Guild

Elena Brooks & Jeanne Bauer

### Elder

Jeff Brooks & Chris Roof



## ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Sunday morning & Thursday morning Bible Study groups are continuing their study of Luther's Small Catechism.

Reflecting on the Holy Spirit's work in the early church is insightful for a congregation like St. Andrew in transition. Come out and join in!



## FOOD DONATIONS FOR APRIL

April 21<sup>st</sup> is our regular 3rd Sunday Food collection day and will benefit the Portland area Food Banks.



## TWO NOISY OFFERINGS

On Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, the Noisy Offering will go to The Beacon of Hope. A second Noisy Offering will be on April 28<sup>th</sup> when the Wee Grow Preschool children will be singing for the church again.



Save your change (and bills) and bring them to church and drop them in the buckets to help us "Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord."

## INVITATION TO WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AT OUR SAVIOR

### You be You: Embracing Your Identity in Christ

Ladies, join us as we take an inspiring journey together in the rich promises of God's Word unveiling your need to lean on Christ, your vine, as He reveals who you are as one of His branches. Karen Reincke and Tricia Foster will lead this inspiring journey in the rich promises of God's Word.

Karen Reincke is the Lead Family Life Minister at Immanuel Lutheran Church. Teaching Bible studies, planning community events, and facilitating women's groups are what specifically give Karen joy. Tricia Foster is a women's leader, Dementia Care Educator, nurse. She is passionate about connecting women through discipling, prayer, and community events.

This women's conference will take place on Saturday, April 13, 2024, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 7901 E. St. Joe Hwy., Lansing, Michigan. Cost is \$35 per person and includes lunch. Reserve your spot by using this link: <https://www.oursaviorlansing.org/events/>.

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

None



## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

25 Pastor Roger & Karin  
Straub



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## STEWARDSHIP CORNER

### Our “Journey on to Heaven”

For the past few generations, Martin Luther, who was a pastor, theologian, author, hymnwriter, and professor, has been and continues to be one of the most referenced or quoted spiritual leaders of all time. Luther was a prolific writer, so he has a wealth of articles, books, and essays to quote. The following amazing paragraph from Luther does not reference the word stewardship or steward, but it conveys foundational truths of Christian stewardship.

Therefore, we must use all these things upon earth in no other way than as a guest who travels through the land and comes to a hotel where he must lodge overnight. He takes only food and lodging from the host, and he says not that the property of the host belongs to him. Just so should we also treat our temporal possessions, as if they were not ours, and enjoy only so much of them as we need to nourish the body and then help our neighbors with the balance. Thus, the life of the Christian is only a lodging for the night, since we have here no continuing city, but must journey on to heaven, where the Father is.

Martin Luther aptly points out that, while on earth, we are God’s guests. God is the creator, sustainer, and owner of all things. Both the food we eat and the homes we live in are provided by God. God makes it possible for us to plant food to eat, because He provides the seeds, ground, sunlight, and rain. He gives us the intelligence, strength, and energy to harvest the crops that He makes possible for us to plant. The meat we eat comes from the animals that live in the fields which God has provided along with the food He makes possible for them to eat. God also provides the materials for our homes. Our lives are in God’s hands. As His stewards, we receive His blessings with thanksgiving.

Luther’s perspective on temporal possessions is totally opposite of what our society promotes. Our society tells us that we create and have control over all we have. Our happiness and security are dependent upon having things. Our status is determined by what we have so we work long and hard to have big homes, new cars, and large investment accounts. In contrast, Luther reminds us that things, both necessities and luxuries, are God gifts on loan to us. Luther encourages us to be satisfied with enough to provide for our needs and to use the rest to support our neighbors and God’s kingdom.

Luther reminds us that “the life of the Christian is only a lodging for the night.” Likewise, the Apostle Paul tells us that “our citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:20), so we “press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). Our earthly journey is merely temporary until we rest in our permanent home with Jesus. By God’s grace, Luther knew that this life is a “journey on to heaven.” We do as well.



The LORD is my *Shepherd*;  
I shall not want.

He maketh me to  
lie down in green pastures:

He leadeth me beside the still waters,  
He restoreth my

*soul*:

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness  
for His name’s sake. Yea though I walk through the  
valley of the shadow of death.

*I will fear no evil:  
for Thou art with me;*

Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies

Thou anointest my head with oil; My cup runneth over  
Surely goodness & mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life;

And I will dwell in the house

of the LORD

*forever.*

- Psalm 23

## SUMMER CAMPS STARTING JUNE 9, 2024

Camp Concordia exists to provide opportunities for children, youth and their families to encounter Christ in the midst of God's creation: Enriching Body and Soul and resulting in strong missional skills and actions. Information about Camp is posted in the narthex or you can go to the following link: [https://www.campconcordia.org/uploads/1/1/2/3/112309127/2024\\_summer\\_1-page\\_w\\_links.pdf](https://www.campconcordia.org/uploads/1/1/2/3/112309127/2024_summer_1-page_w_links.pdf)



## BEACON OF HOPE 18<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GOLF FUNDRAISER

Pastor Filter and Joe Latusek will again be participating in the golf marathon for Beacon of Hope counseling ministry which provides free Christian counseling to anyone in the Portland area. This year's event is Tuesday, April 30th at Clearbrook golf course in Saugatuck. Forms for you to make a commitment or donation will be available at the church or Pastor will have a Facebook fundraiser post available as well if you want to donate electronically. Pastor and Joe's minimum goal is again \$1000. The event has been raising over \$40,000 annually for 18 years and Pastor Filter has been supporting it for around 15 years with your help! Please try to make your commitment or donation by April 9th Pastor will email forms to those who have donated in the past. Pray for great weather and generous hearts to fund this great ministry.



## LWML - WOMEN IN MISSION

Many thanks to all who helped us tie quilts in March. We will take the month of April off and resume quilting again on Tuesday, May 14th. Please feel free to join us.

Reminder ... LWML spring Fling (Rally) will be held Saturday, May 4th at Ascension Lutheran Church in East Lansing. Our speakers will be Randy and Cheri Carlson from Youth Haven Ranch in Jackson. They will share their message in Word and song about the ministry at the ranch to students. Mark your calendar and hope you can join us for Worship, Bible Study, and Fellowship. The Ascension Ladies will serve lunch.

Last month we noted the Mission Grant for Haiti where there has been much turmoil in recent weeks. Please keep the Haitian people and the workers in the churches in your prayers as they deal with these crisis issues.

Our National Mission Grant focus for this month is Grant # 13 - Water and the Word - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya - \$80,000

Students in schools and orphanages sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK) lack clean water and regular access to pastoral care. After evaluating a school's needs, the Water and the Word initiative will install water harvesting equipment (rain gutters and tanks), locally sourced filters, hand washing stations, and clean water storage systems. Students and staff are taught about personal hygiene, handwashing, and the importance of drinking only clean water. After installation, an ELCK pastor visits the schools to ensure that the water system is working, visits with the children and provides needed pastoral care. This grant helps provide clean water and travel expenses for pastoral care to students in 12 additional schools and orphanages in Kenya.

Thank you for your continued generous support and prayers for all these Mission Grants.

*You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God, and I will exalt you.*

Psalm 118:28

## **LADIES GROUP**

Our next meeting will take place on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 9 a.m. in the Conference Room. All ladies are welcome to join us as we plan activities, events and more to support the ministry of St. Andrew.

## **BOOK TALK**

Our next book is *Lullaby Sky* by Carolyn Brown. Our Book Talk will take place on Saturday April 20th at 9:15 a.m. at Fabiano's in Portland.

You can visit the Book Talk website at <https://standrewbooktalk.weebly.com/> to learn a little about the book and the author. Our club is very casual and welcoming. Please plan to join us whether you read the book or not. We do discuss the book, but it's also about fellowship. The more the merrier! We hope you will consider joining us!



## **WEEGROW PRESCHOOL SINGS**

Wee Grow Preschool students will sing during worship service on April 28th. All preschool students and siblings, along with all youth, are invited to enjoy making fruit kabobs after the service during fellowship time. The Ladies Group will provide the supplies for this, sure to be a fun event.

## **EASTER GOODY BAGS FOR PRESCHOOLERS**

Before Wee Grow Christian Preschool students left for spring break, an Easter goody bag was tucked into their backpacks! The Easter goody bag was filled with a 'He Is Risen' bracelet, 'Rejoice He Lives' bubbles, an Easter egg filled with a cross necklace along with chocolate eggs. The Ladies Group was pleased to provide these for our preschoolers to remind them that Jesus Christ Is Risen!



## **CAMP CONCORDIA SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Ladies Group is once again pleased to offer scholarships to our youth who will attend Camp Concordia, located in Gowen, Michigan. A \$50 scholarship per youth is available. Visit the Camp Concordia website at <https://www.camconcordia.org/> to view camp dates, find registration information and to learn more about the camp.

Once your youth is registered for camp, please see Laura or Elena to receive the scholarship. It's that simple!

## **FROM THE TREASURER**

### **Church Finances – February 2024**

For the month, income exceeded expenses by \$47,753.57. A large contribution was received and \$35,000 was transferred to the discretionary fund. Two fixed rate notes were purchased to take advantage of higher interest rates and to lock in the interest rates. The February checkbook balance is \$14,230.22. The discretionary fund balance is \$109,484.18 consisting of CEF-extension plus demand balance of \$59,484.18, a 12-month fixed rate note of \$25,000 and a 15-month fixed rate note of \$25,000. The Temple Scholarship fund balance is \$22,132.49. We still have \$6,823.14 in the checking and discretionary accounts of storm insurance money, which will be used for the shed in the Spring of 2024. The Council approved the purchase of a shed for up to \$8,000.

We started out the month of March celebrating Dr. Seuss' Birthday. We read *Cat in the Hat*, *My Many Colored Days*, *1 Fish-2 Fish*, and *Sam I Am*. We celebrated with special snacks, eating green Jello eggs, crafts, *Cat in Hat* activities, and painted with frozen watercolors. We made a new hat for the cat and won a free book at our book walk from the Ionia County Collaborative Group.

March was also a time to learn about Spring! We celebrated by creating kites, planting grass, and painting spring pictures with Kool-Aid. We made Easter Baskets and celebrated the Easter Season. Our Bible stories this month were based on Palm Sunday, how Jesus washed the Disciples' feet and how Jesus died on the cross for us. After Spring Break, we will be talking about the Resurrection of Jesus.

## The Staff of Wee Grow

### APRIL

### MAY

1-7 - Spring Break	1 - Field Trip Boulder Ridge (Both Classes)
12/13 - 4's Conferences	8 - Beach Day 4's
17 & 18 - Grandparent's Day (4s & 3s)	9 - Beach Day 3's
28th - Sing in Church	20 - 4's Graduation @ 6:30 p.m.
	21 - 3's End of Year Program @ 6:30 p.m.

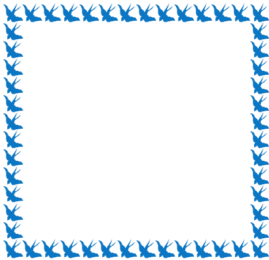
Registration is officially open to the Community for the 2024-25 school year. We offer a three-day program on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for 4-year-olds and a two-day program for 3-year-olds on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Scholarships are available. If you know of someone that would like information, please let me know! Thanks for supporting our programs!



# APRIL EVENTS CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 8:45am - Easter Breakfast 10am - Easter Service 11:15am - Fellowship & 11:30am - Bible Study	1 Altar Guild: Jeanne & Elders: Jeff B & Chris R	2	3	4 10am - Adult Bible Study @	5	6
7 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship & 11:30am - Bible Study	8	9	10	11 10am - Adult Bible Study @	12	13
14 9am - Sunday School 10am - Noisy Offering - 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship & 11:30am - Bible Study	15	16	17 6:30pm - Council Meeting	18 10am - Adult Bible Study @	19	20 9:15am - Book Talk
21 Food Collection Day Newsletter Deadline 9am - Ladies Group 9am - Sunday School 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship & 11:30am - Bible Study	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 9am - Sunday School 10am - Preschool Singing 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship & 11:30am - Bible Study	29 Altar Guild: Judy & Mary S Elders: Jeff B & Chris R	30	1	2 10am - Adult Bible Study @	3	4

**ST. ANDREW LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
Home of Wee Grow Christian Preschool  
8867 Kent Street  
Portland, MI 48875



LOVE   
*one another*  
AS I HAVE  
*loved*  
 *you*  
John 13:34