



APRIL 2025



*Worship Service—Sunday 10 a.m. Sunday School—Sunday 9 a.m.
Sunday Bible Study—11:30a.m. Adult Bible Study—Thursday 10 a.m.*

8867 Kent Street, Portland, MI 48875 Office Phone: 517-647-4473

Email: portlandstandrew@gmail.com

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Rev. Roger Straub, Transitional Vacancy Pastor

Mark Haworth, Vicar

Pastor's Phone: 517-230-3872

Vicar Mark's Phone: (517) 526-1153

Home of Wee Grow Christian Preschool

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Members and Friends of St. Andrew:

Paul wrote in his First Letter to the Corinthians: *"If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep"* (15:19-20).

"Firstfruits" are the earliest portion of a harvest, offered to God in thanksgiving for the full harvest to come. "Fallen asleep" is another way of saying "died." But, for those in Christ, death is but a sleep. The hope and joy of Easter is the hope and joy of eternal life in Christ. As God promised, through the prophet Isaiah: *"behold, I create new heavens and a new earth ... be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create"* (65:17, 18).

Easter Sunday, April 20 this year, is not just a one-day celebration. Easter is a fifty-day season running from the Day of our Lord's Resurrection to the Day of Pentecost, June 8 this year. The Easter season is a victory celebration, a time for Christians to live our faith confidently and share boldly our faith in a risen, living, and victorious Savior. "Christ is risen!" "He is risen, indeed!" Victorious over sin, death, and the power of Satan!

Leading up to Easter, we round out the preparatory season of Lent with Palm Sunday worship including palm crosses and Holy Communion on Sunday, April 13 at 10 a.m., Maundy Thursday worship with Holy Communion on Thursday, April 17 at 6:30 p.m. and Good Friday worship on Friday, April 18 at 6:30 p.m.

On Easter Sunday, April 20, we begin with Easter breakfast at 8:45am and join in Easter worship with Holy Communion at 10am.

The Thursday Morning Bible Study Group has completed its lengthy, reflective review and study of the most recent revision of *Luther's Small Catechism*. Everyone agreed that it was an enlightening and worthwhile study. After a well-deserved break, we will begin a chapter-by-chapter study of the Book of Revelation beginning Thursday, April 3, and continuing on Thursday mornings, 10am – 11am. All are invited to join.

Vicar Mark has successfully completed his second SMP class in February and has begun his third class in March. He continues to assist in worship leadership, and has preached twice, once in both February and March. Your support in spirit and special offerings is greatly appreciated and a sign that the Holy Spirit is moving among us. Our second Vicar support offering realized \$2,110!

And, finally, thank you to Chris Roof for volunteering to serve as St. Andrew's lay delegate to the Michigan District Convention, June 22-24 in Ann Arbor. Please keep Chris, myself, and our District in your prayers as we look forward to convention.

A blessed Easter celebration and season to all!

In Christ,

The Rev. Roger K. Straub,
Transitional Vacancy Pastor

APRIL SCHEDULES

Acolyte

- 6 Bella Roof
- 13 William Roof
- 17 Bella Roof (Maundy Thursday)
- 18 William Roof (Good Friday)
- 20 Zach Roof (Easter)
- 27 Bella Roof



Fellowship

- 6 Jack & Mary Sandborn
- 13 Jeff & Elena Brooks
- 20 **Easter Breakfast 8:45**
- 27 Joe & Mary Latusek

Greeters

- 6 Dave & Marty Frick
- 13 Jeff & Elena Brooks
- 20 The Roof Family
- 27 Jeff & Elena Brooks

Worship Readers

- 6 Jeff Brooks
- 13 Jeanne Bauer
- 17 Elena Brooks (Maundy Thursday)
- 18 Chris Roof (Good Friday)
- 20 Joe Latusek (Easter)
- 27 Elena Brooks

Music

Judy Nobis



Altar Guild

Jeanne Bauer & Mary Sandborn

Elders

Jeff Brooks & Chris Roof

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The Sunday morning (11:30 a.m.) Bible Study group is continuing their study of Luther's Small Catechism. The Thursday morning (10 a.m.) Bible Study group is starting the Book of Revelation this month. 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 20th is our regular 3rd Sunday Food collection day and will benefit the Portland area Food Banks.



NOISY OFFERING

On Sunday, April 13th, the Noisy Offering will go to The Beacon of Hope.

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."



Palm Sunday

April 13, 2025 ~ 10 a.m.

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

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Maundy Thursday

April 17, 2025 ~ 6:30 p.m.

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APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 17 Mary-Kate Mossner



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 25 Pastor Roger & Karin Straub



VICAR'S THOUGHTS

Grace, Peace and Mercy from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

April Fool's Day! The origins of playing harmless pranks on others can be traced back to the early 1300's. Today, every April 1st, much of the world partakes in fun pranking others. However, a fool to Jesus was far from harmless or a prank.

In Luke 11:39-41 Jesus is clear who the fools are:

"Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. 40 You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also? 41 But give as alms those things that are within, and behold, everything is clean for you."

In Matthew 23:16-17 Jesus again is clear who the fools are:

"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, if anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath." 17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred?

Additionally, are we all not fools? Satan is the best liar. It is a daily struggle not to compare ourselves to others. Often, we may think I am smarter, have more money, look and talk better, do more good works, have less sin or feel superior to others.

When we compare ourselves to Jesus, we all look like fools! Scripture is clear, declaring Jesus Christ as our messiah and savior is the only way for God the Father to also not see us as complete fools. Thus, receiving the Holy Spirit through Holy Baptism, the Lord's Supper and asking for repentance makes us appear not as fools to God but as His saved children.

Therefore, during the month of April let us rejoice in God's mercy and love. For Satan is obviously the true fool.

Humbly Christ's Servant, Vicar Mark

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Having the Right Priorities

What are your top priorities in life? To whom or to what do you give the most time and attention? Jesus said, *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"* (Matthew 6:21). Where we prioritize our time and money, will reveal our most important priorities and the condition of our hearts.

By God's grace, we see that the priorities the world promotes contrast with God's priorities. The world's focus is on self-promotion, power, and the accumulation of an abundance of possessions. Success is of utmost importance. The world tells people that happiness and security are found only in having more stuff. The acquisition of things demands a person's time, attention, and money to obtain and maintain.

God's Word does not condemn material wealth, but it does provide a warning that the riches of this world will not provide long-lasting peace, contentment, security, joy, or hope. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus said, *"For what good does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?"* (9:25).

Scripture provides numerous examples of people who had the wrong priorities. An example of having wrong priorities with time is the story of Mary and Martha. In Luke 10:40, we read, *"But Martha was distracted with much serving."* Mary and Martha were hosting Jesus. Martha became so preoccupied with preparing food and serving that she was distracted from the opportunity simply to sit and listen to Jesus' teaching. Mary *"chose the good portion;"* she sat at Jesus' feet to learn from Him. This highlights the importance of prioritizing spiritual growth and connection over mere physical acts of serving.

An example of having a wrong priority with money is the parable of the Rich Fool. The Rich Fool wanted to build bigger barns to store his crops. His goal was to *"eat, drink, be merry"* (Luke 12:19). Jesus called him a fool because he gave no credit to God for his success, nor did he show any interest for the welfare of others. He lived only for himself. In this parable, Jesus said, *"Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions"* (Luke 12:15).

Jesus directs us to *"...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you"* (Matthew 6:33). We are called to prioritize God's will and purpose above everything else. With the faith that God gives us, we are enabled to distance ourselves from the attitude of the world that glorifies the earthly life and its possessions, and we can trust that God will provide for our needs.

Good Friday

April 18, 2025
6:30 p.m.

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

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HE IS RISEN INDEED!

EASTER SUNDAY
April 20, 2025
Breakfast 8:45 a.m.
Worship Service 10 a.m.

ST. ANDREW LUTHERAN CHURCH
Roger Straub, Vacancy Pastor
Mark Haworth, Vicar

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LWML - WOMEN IN MISSION

Women in Mission in April are continuing with activities and mission projects on the zone level and locally here at St. Andrew.

Our St. Andrew ladies will continue quilting on Tuesday, April 22nd at 9:00 a.m. at the home of Judy Nobis. Thank you for your donations of sheets and materials for this project for Orphan Grain Train and LWR.

We collected mites along with a noisy offering in March. Thank you for your generous contribution to these Mission Grants – both National and our Michigan District – check for grant updates on the LWML board.

Our Spring Rally/Gathering will be held on Saturday, April 26th, at First Lutheran in Charlotte, with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m. The theme will be "Proclaim the Gospel to all Creation," based on Mark 16:15. We welcome speaker Becky Grossman from Lutheran Bible Translators who will share her travels and work in Liberia. Looking forward to having you join us for the morning, let Judy Nobis know if you need a ride. Please check the bulletin board flyer for in-gathering items which will benefit the Teen Center in Charlotte.

Our National Mission Grant emphasis this month is Grant #6 – Mobile Kitchen – Forged by Fire Services, Gulf States Region - \$85,000: Forged by Fire Services strives to actively make known the love of Jesus Christ through its action and words by providing warm meals, bottled water, and spiritual care to people in times of need following a disaster. They also pray with those in need and offer resources such as devotionals and Bibles to those they serve. This grant will allow the purchase of a mobile self-contained kitchen trailer unit to provide meals to those affected by disaster. This mobile kitchen will benefit small communities that are often overlooked. Thanks for your support of all mission grants through the giving of your mites.

*We give thee but thine own, whatever the gift may be;
All that we have is thine alone, O Lord, from thee. LSB #781*

LADIES GROUP

Our next meeting will take place on May 18th 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 *Seven Perfect Things*, by Catherine Ryan Hyde. Our Book Talk will take place on Saturday, April 12th 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!



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.campconcordia.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!

COLLEGE PALS

We continue to send a note and or card, with a little love, to our college students each month. We remind the students that we are thinking of them and praying for them and that Jesus loves them. College Pals is a ministry of the Ladies Group.

BAPTISMAL BLESSINGS

On Sunday, March 9th, we were blessed to welcome Johnny Vaughan Latusek into God's family through Holy Baptism. Johnny's parents are Joseph and Mary Latusek, and his sponsors are Chris and Laura Roof. Please keep Johnny, his family, and his God parents in your prayers as together they encourage his growth in the Christian faith God placed in his heart at his baptism.



FROM THE TREASURER

Church Finances – February 2024

For the month, income exceeded expenses by \$47,822.31. \$44,000 was transferred to the Church Extension Fund savings account. The February checkbook balance is \$7,861.17. The savings account balance is \$153,954.29. The Temple Scholarship fund balance is \$23,983.47.

March was a time to learn about Spring! We celebrated by creating kites, making grass head people, and painting spring pictures with kool-aid. Our bible story was about Jonah and the Whale. The children learned that Jonah should have listened to God, but after being swallowed by the whale he prayed to God and decided to obey God and went to Nineveh and told the people about God.

The 4's class learned how to make pancakes, had fun in the pancake station and read the book, "If You Give a Pig a Pancake." After the pancake station, the pizza center was out. The children made pizzas, and we made our own pizzas as a snack.

Both classes went on field trips during March. The 4's class went to Woldumar Nature Center to learn about our 5 senses and the 3's went to Impression 5 Museum. They had a chance to explore the museum and had a special class about force and motion.

In April, our Bible stories 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 preschool will also host Grandparents' Day. Our special guests will celebrate Spring with us. They will make picture frames, create a frog habitat with play dough, explore different types of flowers, and play bingo. Everyone will make trees out of their child's handprint, create flowers out of chocolate covered Oreos, and enjoy a bird station. Our guests will also play in the frog jumping station and play a bean bag toss flower matching game. We will serve brunch together and the guests will receive a "thank you" gift that their child made for them.

Registration is officially open to the public for the 2025-26 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!

The Staff of Wee Grow



APRIL EVENTS CALENDAR

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

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