



IN THE LOOP



Nebraska District LCMS

Administrators Newsletter of the Nebraska District LCMS

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From the Superintendent's Desk

Graduation

I have a friend who used to joke about his graduation day. He said, "Some graduated Summa Cum Laude, some Magna Cum Laude, and some Cum Laude; I graduated! Thank you Lord!" (pronounced more closely to Laude than Lord)

Graduation is a memorable milestone as people move through life. It means the conclusion of the preparation and a beginning of something new and exciting. Whether it is a kindergarten graduation, eighth grade graduation, high school graduation, or college graduation, the anticipation of what wonderful things will follow runs high. It is a time for celebration and prayer.

Ascension Day might be described as graduation day for the disciples of Jesus. Though they didn't seem quite ready for it, Jesus showed them that their time of preparation was over; it was time for them to do new and exciting things. The confused disciples gathered for a time of prayer.

Jesus had told them in Acts 1:4-5 "On one occasion, while he was eating with

them, he gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"

Again in Acts 1:7-8 "He said to them: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'"

So, guess what? In Acts 2:1-4 "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." Talk about new and exciting!

Lutheran educators work every day to help the human race understand what Paul wrote in Romans 8:10-11, "But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of

righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you." This same Spirit of Pentecost lives in God's people today!

Some Lutheran schools participate in the National Day of Prayer on the first Thursday of May each year to help get this message across. Most have some celebrations on Ascension Day, officially celebrated on the 40th day of Easter, or 39 days after Easter Sunday, to help teach the truth. I trust that all celebrate Pentecost on the 50th day after Easter when the apostles were praying together and the Holy Spirit descended on them. What a graduation celebration!



St. Peter, Davenport

97 Years of Blessings

St. Peter's Lutheran Church and School is located in rural Thayer County. The community is mainly an agricultural community founded more than 100 years ago as a town on the historic ABC railroad.

St. Peter's Lutheran Church was founded in 1912, and because the members felt that Christian education was important, the school was established in 1913. The first pastor, Reverend Oswald Graebner, also served as the first teacher. In 1919, when Pastor Graebner accepted a call, the congregation called Reverend L. E.

Ernst to serve. He also served as the teacher for the Christian day school until 1923. At that time, a full-time teacher was called and the congregation has employed at least one teacher since that time. In 1931, the voters of St. Peter's decided that the room at the rear of the church where school was held was no longer large enough. A separate building for a school was constructed by the men of the congregation and was ready for use that fall, being dedicated on September 6, 1931. Throughout the years of the Great Depression and World War II the congregation continued to grow. It was decided in 1959 that the numbers warranted the building of a new church

Upcoming Events:

- **Synodical Convention**
Houston, Texas
July 10-17
- **Prairie Fire**
Qwest Center, Omaha
July 24
- **Celebration of Discipling**
St. John Lutheran, Seward
August 7
- **Educators' Conference**
Christ and Lutheran High
Northeast, Norfolk
October 21-22
- **Peacemaker/Reconciliation Workshop**
The Leadership Center, Aurora
November 7-12

and school. The members of the congregation again came together to build an A-framed structure, two classrooms, and a parish hall. The new church and school were dedicated on August 5, 1962. During this time, the school employed two full-time teachers with an average of 35-40 students. In 1983, a preschool and kindergarten were added. With the addition of these new classes, a part-time teacher was employed. St. Peter's again added on to the north of the church building with a new classroom for the upper grades in 1991. With that addition, another full-time staff member was added and the classes divided accordingly. At one time, there were as many as 50 students attending preschool through 8th grade. For many families, 2 to 3 generations have attended St. Peter's Lutheran. The congregation continues to support the Christian day school and only non-members pay a small tuition fee.

Over the years, many dedicated professionals have provided excellent, Christ-centered instruction at St. Peter's. Teachers have included recent graduates of Seward, Concordia, pastors' wives, and teachers called from the field around the nation. Some teachers have married local residents and stayed in the community. In recent years, a number of staff have received honors for their service as Lutheran school teachers. In 2005, Mr. David Saeger retired as the principal and was honored for 40 years of teaching service in the LCMS with a special retirement celebration. Many other former teachers are still teaching in Lutheran schools throughout the United States. Mr. Todd Voss, former principal, served at Concordia University as their head Women's Basketball coach and is currently at Drake University.

Currently, St. Peter's has 10 wonderful young students. Most have been students here for all of their school years. They have become very close brothers and sisters in Christ throughout their school years. Many students have, or have had in the past, a sibling attend school with them. They have learned to cooperate with each other and work together with students of all ages in many situations. The students especially have a heart for prayer and missions. The St. Peter's students are sometimes referred to as "Prayer Warriors." For the past few years they have kept a daily prayer journal of prayer requests. These requests encompass family, friends, community, state, and national issues. Each week they choose a family/families from the congregation who are on their prayer list for the week. The journal helps remind them of God's answers to those prayers. The members of the congregation are also blessed each year with a homemade birthday card signed and designed by the students.

The students continue to share the gospel with others with their chapel offerings and special projects. Over the years they have donated selflessly to various missions. Donna Meyer, also a former student of St. Peter's and Mrs. Haake's sister, is now on the mission field in Indonesia, and she keeps the students informed about how their offerings are being used. The students have also raised funds for St. Peter's orphanage they sponsor in Russia. Pastor John Reehl, a former pastor of St. Peter's and whose children attended there, continues to visit the students to share how their offerings are being used in Russia. He has even brought a special guest, Nicoli, to speak with the students. The past two years the students have hosted three taco meals with the funding going to the Russian orphanage and Haiti disaster relief.

For this current school year, St. Peter's employs two full-time teachers and one part-time teacher. Mrs. Karen Haake teaches the third and fourth grade students and math classes for all



Students dressed for "Play Day" Back row: Noah Burger, Rebecca Prince, Jill Schroeder, Joel Prince, Kalli Schroeder, McKenna Schardt, Betsy Maschmann. Front Row: Logan Schroeder, Garrett Schardt, John Christensen.

students. Mrs. Michelle Prince conducts classes for the sixth through eighth grade students, music classes, and third and fourth grade science. Mrs. Sherry Burger continues to work part-time as the art instructor and head teacher. Both Mrs. Haake and Mrs. Burger are also former St. Peter's students. Pastor Prince leads the weekly chapel services and confirmation classes. Parents and volunteers also help keep the school running. In order to provide a hot lunch program, the parents and some grandparents take weekly turns serving lunch which is transported from the public school. These same parents and grandparents also have helped with the library, various projects, field trips, and fundraisers.

One of the highlights of every school year is "Play Day" at Friedensau Church. This is a day when the local Lutheran schools compete in a friendly old fashioned track meet – complete with sack races, three-legged races, and ball throw. This tradition has been going on for over 50 years (no one can seem to remember when the first play day was). At that time, there were as many as five



Rebecca Prince and McKenna Schardt, in the three-legged race.



Logan Schroeder in the football toss.

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area Lutheran schools competing. This year marked the last year for St. Peter's, Davenport to compete in this day. Many former students probably remember those memories of play days long ago and the "good old Lutheran fellowship" it brought.

St. Peter's school has always felt like an extended family for many. Just a few years ago this was really demonstrated when one of the students experienced a serious accident. That student had a fractured leg. Many prayers were offered for healing and those prayers were answered. With the help of many, that student was able to come back to school and participate – classes were just moved to the youth room where the couches were. To make the matter even more unusual, two other students also had injuries at that time – a broken arm and knee surgery. Parents, teachers, and students worked together so that those students were able to attend school comfortably and not miss many classes.

One event that yearly touches the community is the "Friendship Soup." For many years (usually close to Valentine's Day), the students have worked together to make large roasters of soup at school. As part of this project, they also decorate cookies and make greeting cards. The school is filled with the smell of soup as it cooks. In the afternoon, the soup is ladled into containers and then teachers, parents, and volunteers help distribute the soup to elderly residents of the community. Many residents look forward to those deliveries and visits – the soup warming not only bodies but hearts as well. The goal throughout these years at St. Peter's has been to provide a Christ-centered education to the students. The staff, school board, parents, and congregation have worked together to provide a curriculum that

centers on Christ. The joy in teaching His love and salvation in all subject areas is the heart of Christian education. The sound of young voices learning about Him has resounded within the walls of St. Peter's in Davenport for 97 years. The Lord be praised for those years and the students who have benefitted from the many hands that have served to pass on the faith to the next generation.

There is a special celebration service scheduled for May 23. The day will begin with a 10:00 worship service, luncheon to follow, and special activities following the luncheon. Former teachers, students, and others are invited to join in the celebration of 97 years of St. Peter's Lutheran School.

The following four pictures are St. Peter students and staff volunteering at Orphan Grain Train in Norfolk.



Students preparing gift bags for Grandparents' Day.



Don Heinrichs (Sherry Burger's dad) sharing memories at Grandparents' Day.



More memories shared at Grandparents' Day.



Entertainment at Grandparents' Day.



Students preparing Lenten meals



Upper grade students that competed at Woodman Speech Contest.

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