



# Blackberry Beacon

“Let your light shine before others,  
so that they may see your good works  
and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

December 2025

St. Peter Lutheran Church  
17877 W. State Route 579  
Martin, OH 43445

Phone: 419-836-8903  
Email: stpeterblackberry@gmail.com

Web: stpeterblackberry.org  
facebook.com/spblackberry

## The Minor Prophets: Malachi

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During the 2025, we have been journeying together through the minor prophets. This month I invite you to read the ok of Malachi.

When I was reading through Malachi this year, it struck me how the themes in Malachi are a fitting end to the Old Testament, setting us up to hear the story of the New Testament and the coming of Jesus as the Messiah. (“Messiah” is the Old Testament word for “Christ.” Both words mean “anointed one.”)

The setting for Malachi is about 100 years after the people of Israel have returned to Jerusalem from their Exile in Babylon. The more things change, the more they remain the same! The people still have hard hearts. And God remains persistent in his covenant of love and justice.

The book of Malachi is a series of “conversations” between God and his people. Each begins with a claim of God, followed by the people’s dispute with God or accusation against God, followed by God’s response. You can listen in detail about these disputes here:  
<https://bibleproject.com/videos/malachi/>.

Malachi ends with a reminder of how the Scriptures are God’s gift to us and by pointing us toward a hopeful future. I can’t think if a better way to end the year!

+ Pastor Matt

P.S. A new church year begins on November 30, the first Sunday of Advent. After reading Malachi, take some time during the month of December to read the Gospel of Matthew. We will be hearing from this Gospel a lot during the next year.

## Stewardship Reflections

### CHRISTMAS DAY

Read Luke 2:8-14

***The angel said to the shepherds, “Your savior is born today in David’s city. He is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:11 (CEB)***

My two young grandchildren arrived three days before Christmas to celebrate the holiday at my house. In the dining room, I had set out a decades-old nativity scene, except I left the manger empty. Baby Jesus' absence greatly concerned my four-year-old granddaughter. Straightaway, she asked, "Where's the Baby?" I told her he would arrive Christmas morning, but she was not consoled.

Several times over the next three days she walked by the manger and commented. "There's no baby." Eventually, she took the matter into her own hands and placed the tiniest figure from my nesting doo in the crib. I told her that was the baby Jesus and she replied, "I know that," and merrily went on her way. On Christmas Eve, after my granddaughter went to sleep, I switched the nesting doll with the baby Jesus. I was sipping coffee at the kitchen table early Christmas morning when I heard my granddaughter shout over and over. "He's here! Baby Jesus is here!" She ran through the house to wake her family to the "good news of great joy." She paid no attention to her overflowing stocking or gifts from Santa. Her exuberant reaction helped me experience anew the good news of the arrival of the Christ child. Indeed, he is here! Baby Jesus is here!

**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:** Today and every day I can experience anew the joy of finding Jesus.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord God, may our hearts overflow with joy and praise this Christmas morning as we celebrate the gift of Christ Jesus. Amen.

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Outreach Ministry is always looking for ideas and input for direction and opportunities that we can focus on. Please let any member of this ministry know of your thoughts and possible ideas we can implement during 2026. Member include Rufena Hartford, Claudette Allred, Pam Frayer, Jean Witt, Cindy Bench, Steve and Barb Yunker, and Pastor Matt.

Our next meeting is January 7, 2026 at 11:30 at St. Peter's



## Phillip the Blue Barrel

Thanks abound for all of your generosity in providing items for our area Food Pantries. You always donate above and beyond and when the items are delivered they are SO APPRECIATED.

December's collection is Canned Soups to be shared with the Elliston Food Pantry. January's Blue Barrel Collection is donors choice going to Lutheran Social Services.

## 2025 Picture Board

Notice that the 2025 Picture Board is filling up with memories of all of our various church activities. Feel free to add pictures you may have. This is a fun way to remember all of the business that goes on in our congregations.

## Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign

Help us ring in the Christmas Season. The Salvation Army has their Red Kettle Campaign going on and members of the Outreach Ministry are helping with the ringing of the bell at Millers New Market in Genoa. The bell is rung in 2 hour increments from 10 AM - 6 PM on Wednesday's, and Friday and Saturday from 10 AM – 8 PM. If you would like to lend a hand in this worthwhile collection, please see Rufena Hartford, Claudette Allred, or Cindy Bench for slots that are available. This is a grand time to show St. Peter's and St. Luke's community involvement. All funds raised stay in Ottawa County.

## Lutheran Home of Mercy

We are collecting items for the Lutheran Home of Mercy. You will find a copy of their "WISH LIST" in this newsletter as well as copies on the table in the narthex. PLEASE do not wrap these but simply place them under the Christmas tree beside Pastor's office door. Some other items are listed on the "ornaments" that are on the tree. Feel free to take one from the tree that you want to provide as a reminder of the requested item.

## Caring Shepherds

Caring Shepherds will gather at St. Luke's January 11, 2026 at 11:30. Anyone interested in helping to reach out to our homebound, hospitalized, etc. are welcome to come. Planning for the year and for direction the group wants to go will be discussed. This ministry can really become something great, but we need your help. Questions? Contact Pam Frayer or Cindy Bench.

**Abigail Circle**

Monday, December 15  
7:00 PM @ St. Peter

**Hannah Circle**

Thursday, December 9  
11:00 AM @ Bonny Ottney's

**Sew Group**

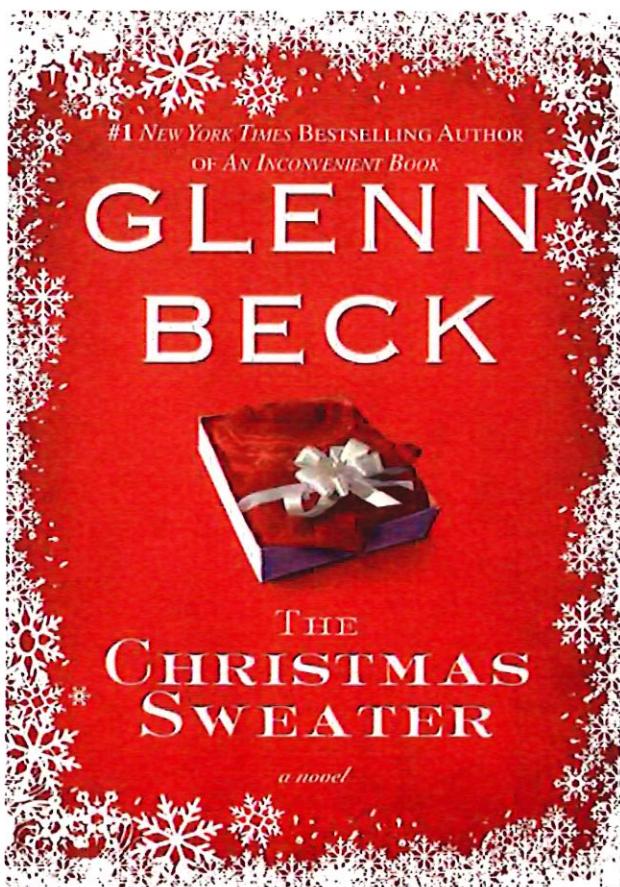
Every Tuesday  
9:00 AM @ St. Peter  
No sewing Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Bible Study**

Wednesday, December 3  
12 Noon @ St. Peter

**Book Club**

Wednesday, December 10  
10:00 AM @ St. Peter



December  
Book Club Selection  
*The Christmas Sweater*  
By Glenn Beck

If you could change your life by reversing your biggest regrets, sorrows, and mistakes...would you?

When Eddie was twelve years old, all he wanted for Christmas was a bike. He knew money had been tight since his father died, but Eddie dreamed that somehow his mother would find a way to afford that dream bike.

What he got from her instead was a sweater. A stupid, handmade, ugly sweater that young Eddie left in a crumpled ball in the corner of his room.

Scarred deeply by the fateful events that transpired that day, Eddie begins a dark and painful journey toward manhood. It will take wrestling with himself, his faith, and his family—and the guidance of a mysterious neighbor named Russell—to help Eddie find his life's path and finally understand the significance of that simple gift his mother had crafted with love.

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# December



## BIRTHDAYS

2 - Karson Lajti  
Karter Lajti  
3 - Jean Witt  
5 - Derrick Siefke  
8 - Joseph Goulette  
10 - Sydney Overmyer

12 - Desiree Behlmer  
Marcia Foss  
Amber Miller  
13 - Melissa Antry  
14 - Nancy Sabin  
Jacob Wolf

19 - Geraldine Hetrick  
20 - Christina Starkey  
21 - Steven Connor  
22 - Glen Lepper  
28 - Susan Behlmer  
30 - Margo Wolff

## ANNIVERSARIES

12 - Larry & Karen Schanke  
20 - Pastor Matt & Cindy Musteric

# December 2025

## Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																							
	1 9:00 AM Sew Quilts	2 12:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM AMA Meeting	3	4	5	6 9:30 AM Advent Brunch @St. John, RR																																																																																																							
7 8:45 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School 12:00 PM-1:15 PM Catechism 2nd Sunday of Advent	8 6:30 PM Finance 7:30 PM Council	9 9:00 AM Sew Quilts 11:00 AM Hannah Circle @Bonny Ottney's	10 10:00 AM Book Club 8:00 PM AMA Meeting	11	12	13 2:00 PM-4:00 PM Youth Ringing Bells @Miller's NewMart, Genoa																																																																																																							
14 8:45 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School Aluminum Can Collection Day	15 7:00 PM Abigail Circle @St. Peter	16 9:00 AM Sew Quilts Education Meeting	17 8:00 PM AMA Meeting	18	19	20																																																																																																							
21 8:45 AM SS Christmas Program during Worship 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School 12:00 PM-2:00 PM Caroling for Our Shut-Ins	22 No Quilt Sewing	23 Christmas Eve Services 4 PM & 9 PM	24	25 HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS! MERRY CHRISTMAS	26	27 12:00 PM-4:00 PM Diefenthaler's in Fellowship Hall																																																																																																							
28 8:45 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School	29 No Quilt Sewing	30 31		<table border="1"> <tr><th colspan="7">Nov 2025</th></tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1"> <tr><th colspan="7">Jan 2026</th></tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </table>	Nov 2025							S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							Jan 2026							S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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## ST. PETER LUTHERAN COUNCIL MEETING

Sunday, October 19, 2025 at Church

Attendance: Cindy Bench, Gary Diefenthaler, Al Gahler, Judy Gahler, Wes Gahler, Jody Kapp, Jon Overmyer, and Pastor Matt Musteric

The meeting was opened by Pastor Matt with a prayer.

Cindy made a motion seconded by Judy to approve the minutes from the September 15, 2025 council meeting. MC

Jon made a motion seconded by Cindy to file the September 2025 Treasurer's Report for audit. MC.

Pastor's Report: Worship: Pastor will give a more detailed report at our November meeting. Only thing he had to report is that he will be out of town at Parent's Weekend 10/25-10/26.

President Report: Mark is working on the budget for next year. Jared Diekman has agreed to co-chair the finance committee with Mark. Jon and Gail Overmyer should be getting added as signers for Ameriprise.

Vice-President Report: No report

Executive Committee: No report

Congregational Life: There will be no Pork Chop BBQ, due to not having a location and racks to cook. We have looked into other options or places, but have come up empty with anything that would work for us. If anyone has any ideas for other meals or other fund raisers that we can do as a church, please get ahold of Judy Gahler. We typically bring in several thousand dollars to help cover many expenses at church each year with our BBQs. Judy made a motion to have a collection basket out for Lutheran World Relief Sunday, October 26th and Sunday, November 2nd. Jon seconded, MC.

Education: Rally Day was successful this year. We held a Sunday School Teacher's meeting a couple weeks ago and things seem to be going well.

Finance: No report

Property: Fall inspection was done and there were 5 work order recommendations. 3 of them pertained to AC units, 2 pertaining to Boilers. Al made a motion and Judy seconded that we move forward with the boiler work orders and leave the AC work orders for later. MC

Outreach: Blue Barrel collection October for LSS is Thanksgiving Foods. Caring Shepard's chair is Pam Frayer and she is working on doing some recruiting for the group. Instant Church Directory is coming along nicely thanks to Jean Witt and Pastor for their continued work. Salem Thanksgiving Meal is November 18th, will need turkey cookers, cooks at Salem, servers at Salem, clean up at Salem and desserts, will put sign-up sheets out for congregation to sign up for. Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign begins November 21st and runs through December 24th. Claudette and Rufena are in charge and will have sign-up sheets out for congregation to sign up for to ring at Miller's. Outreach is planning to do an angel tree for Christmas gifts for LHOM Residents. Next meeting is November 5th at 11:30 am.

Worship: No report, have not met.

Women of the Church: There is a women's conference in Bowling Green November 1st, we should have 1-2 attending.

Old Business: Church website discussion, Gary said he only had one person reply to his question that was sent out with last month's newsletter. We will be added to the Annual Meeting Agenda.

New Business: Cindy moved and Jody seconded that the Annual Congregational meeting date be November 16th in the fellowship hall following service. MC

It was reported by a lawyer passing through to the church office that our handicap parking signs are too short. Judy Gahler bought and replaced screws for the toilet seat in the women's middle bathroom as there had been a note on the stall saying it was out of order for a few weeks. Bring ideas to next meeting for Endowment money to vote on at annual meeting, a few ideas brought up were Isaiah House and Urban Wholistics. Have AC info ready for discussion at Annual Meeting.

Gary made a motion seconded by Cindy to adjourn the meeting. MC. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

NEXT MEETING: November 10, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. Jody Kapp



A BIG THANK YOU to all who helped to make Salem's annual Thanksgiving Meal a success. For those who volunteered their time cooking, serving, and cleanup, cooked turkeys, made desserts, or contributed to the effort, the folks that received the meal were very grateful. You are all so very AWESOME!!! We ALL have so very much to be Thankful For!!!!

THANK YOU to Jared and Christy Diekman for giving our Sunday School students a "cool" Experience. They donated 3 fans to be used in the Education Unit to circulate the air up there.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM will be held during worship service on December 21, 2025. The Sunday school department will hold practices a few weeks ahead of the program, during Sunday School.

The Mitten and Hat tree is up in the Narthex. Please consider donating some items to the tree. The items will be distributed to local schools, helping to warm youth in need. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.

### Sunday School Bible Verse

December's Bible verse is: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace goodwill to men." Luke 2:14.

Alan Graening has been diagnosed with cancer and is in Hospice care. For anyone wishing to send a card or note to Alan, his address is: Alan Graening, 4205 Meadowfield Ct., Batavia, OH 45103.

Mary Tarr has a new address:

Mary Tarr  
The Landings  
3450 Seaman Street  
Oregon, OH 43616

## FUN FACT

### St. Peter Lutheran Church Patriarch:

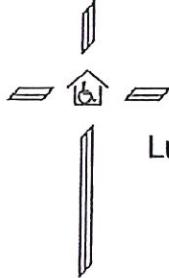
Did you know that Robert (Bob) Behlmer is the Patriarch of St. Peter Lutheran Church? Bob loves the honor that was bestowed onto him, he says the best part is being the oldest. Bob is the youngest of 8 children born to John and Sophie Behlmer. He was born at Toledo Hospital and raised in Rocky Ridge. (He calls himself a Ridge Runner). Bob was baptized and confirmed at St. John's Lutheran Church in Oak Harbor. Bob has had a few exciting things happen to him in his younger days. When he was in grade school a train that had Harry Truman it, (he was campaigning), was standing on the outside on the caboose waving as he went through town. As a kid, Bob liked to play and hangout with the town kids. In 1958 Bob met the love of his life, Marlene, and were married in 1961 at St. Peter. Soon afterward he was drafted into the Army for 2 years. He was at Fort Knox and Fort Hood, he was in the Armored division. One of Bobs biggest thrills when he was in the service in 1962 at Fort Stewart, Georgia, he got to shake hands with John F. Kennedy. (how exciting) After he was honorable discharged in 1963 he transferred to St. Peter in 1964. Together Bob and Marlene built their home, some of it with their own hands in 1967, and still live there today. Bob and Marlene have two children, David and Susan. They also has three grandchildren, Raymon, Cody and Desiree. Bob was a Heavy Equipment operator for most of his adult life working for such companies as Harmeyer, Pierce and Gradel, just to name a few. Bob and Marlene loved to go to Amish Country and just loved the Amish ways. Bob had to retire due to health issues. Bob is a wonderful husband, father and grandfather. Raymon is following in his footstep going into the service. Bob is and always will be a God worshipping man. That is how he lives his life and raised his family. For fun, Bob liked to mow grass and play cards for relaxation. To this day he and Marlene still attend church in person when possible. You will always see a smile on his face. What a pleasant man and what a wonderful legacy he is making.

We extend our sympathy and condolences to the family of Noda Marlene Deuschle.

Noda Marlene Deuschle, 90 of Oregon, Ohio passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on Thursday, November 20, 2025 at Hospice of Northwest Ohio, Perrysburg Campus. She was born on November 14, 1935 to Ralph and Florence Mitchel. She was a devoted wife, mother, and sister whose life was centered on caring for the people she loved.

Marlene was married to her first husband, Marvin Base, for 45 year until his passing in 1998. Together they raised two daughters who were the heart of her world. In 2013 she married the late Joseph Deuschle, and they shared 12 years of companionship, laughter, and everyday comforts.

Surviving is her daughter, Renee (Alan) Bowser; grandson, Dustin (Jess) and Thomas (Jessie) Bowser; great-grandsons, Leland, Louis, and her third great-grandson, who is expected to arrive in February 2026; sister, Veda Jacobs; niece, Cindy (John) Duncan and Marya Jacobs; son-in-law, Mark Lasko; step-son Mark Deuschle; and step-daughters, Mary Jo (Mark) Slowinski and Donna (Tim) Robinson. Marlene was preceded in death by her parents, Ralph and Florence Mitchel; husbands, Marvin Base and Joseph Deuschle; daughter, Connie Laso; brother-in-law, Richard Jacobs; and step-daughter-in-law, Madonna Deuschle. Funeral services were held at Eggleston Meinert & Pavley Funeral Home, Oregon Chapel, interment will be at Elliston Cemetery. Those wishing to make an expression of sympathy in Marlene's name are asked to consider donation to the Alzheimer's Association or C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.



Luther Home of Mercy

# Wish List

## Arts & Crafts

Art Supplies: (pom poms, stencils, paint markers, googly eyes, beads and string, feathers, buttons, decorative edge scissors, pipe cleaners)  
Bulletin Board Paper  
Coloring Books (Kids & Adults)  
Construction Paper (All Colors)  
**Craft Kits** (easy/medium skill level)  
Crayons/Colored Pencils/Markers (washable)  
Hot Glue Gun & Glue Sticks  
Glue Sticks & Glue Dots  
Moon / Kinetic Sand  
Playdough / NeeDoh  
Sequin Art/Diamond Art  
STEM Kits - wooden (build & paint)  
Stickers (All Sizes)  
Watercolor Paints  
White Art Paper

## Personal Hygiene

Bar Soap/Body Wash  
Lotion  
Deodorant  
Electric Razors (male & female)  
Fingernail clippers, files  
Fingernail Polish, Cotton Balls & Remover  
Paper Towels  
Shampoo & Conditioner  
Socks (male & female)  
Toilet Paper  
Toothpaste & Toothbrushes

### Donation Drop-Off

5810 N Main St, Williston, OH  
Administration Building

## Games & Toys

**Basketballs** (full size)  
**Educational** (play money, workbooks, clocks to learn how to tell time, Skillmatic cards, etc)  
**Games/Cards for 5 & under** (Old Maid, UNO (cards/Attack game), Trouble, Connect Four, Sorry, bean bag toss, bowling, matching/memory games, Montessori Busy Board, Yahtzee, toss across, indoor scavenger hunt, retro toys, Lite-Brite, Legos, Lincoln Logs, Kids Monopoly etc.)  
**XL Yard Games** inflatable bowling set, Tic Tac Toe  
**Sensory Toys** (sound/touch, fidget, V-Tech)

## Miscellaneous

Adult Bibs  
Birthday Decorations & Gift Wrap  
**Bubbles and Bubble Machines**  
**Carnival prizes**  
**Disco Party Strobe Light**  
**DVD Player**  
Radio Headphones (wireless, over-the-ear, AM/FM)  
Lunch Tote  
Karaoke Machine  
Movie Tickets  
Portable Radio/CD Player

## Kitchen

Baking Pans (all types & sizes)	Keurig
Blender	Mixing & Serving Bowls
Cookie Sheets	Oven Mitts
Cookware Sets (Pots & Pans)	Towels, Dishcloths, Scrub
Crockpot	Daddy sponges
Electric Can Opener	Utensils (cooking & serving)
Hand Mixers	

### Shipping

Luther Home of Mercy  
Attn: Melissa  
5810 N Main St  
Williston, OH 43468

