



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

May 2026

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

Phone: 419-836-8903

Web: stpeterblackberry.org
facebook.com/spblackberry

Email: stpeterblackberry@gmail.com

What NOT To Do With Money

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ at St. Peter and St. Luke's,

The New Testament has a few warnings about money. Essentially, we are invited not to put our trust in money, for the love of money is the root of all evil. The story that always captivates me is the story of the rich man in Luke 12:6-21. I think of it every time my own “stuff” surrounds me.

The man in the parable has an abundant harvest. And this harvest leads to hubris rather than humility. He decides to build bigger barns and to eat, drink, and be merry. In other words, he makes two fatal mistakes: 1. He decides to hoard his excess. 2. He forgets that it all belongs to God.

The parable indicts us on an individual level and on a communal level. On an individual level, are there resources that we are keeping to ourselves rather than being rich toward God? To be clear, being “rich toward God” does not simply mean giving to the church, but directing our resources to things in the world that are important to God. On a communal level, how does this parable confront the church? Are investments like endowments faithful ways of practicing stewardship or just fancy ways of hoarding? What do you think?

This month I invite you to pray about how the Holy Spirit is calling us as a community to be rich toward God.

Grace and Peace,
+ Pastor Matt

Affirmation of Baptism

On May 17 we will celebrate the service of Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation). At St. Peter, Mallory Amonette, Hope Musteric, and John Wolf will be affirming their baptism. At St. Luke's, Riley Dolt will be affirming his baptism. Join me in praying for these youth as they take a significant step in their faith journey.

Stewardship Reflections

ON THE MERRY-GO-ROUND READ PSALM 46:1-11

*God is not a God of disorder but of peace – as in all
the congregations of the Lord’s people.
1 Corinthians 14:33 (NIV)*

When I was a child, I loved riding the merry-go-round. Watching the world spin by in a blur was fun. Getting dizzy and trying to walk a straight line after hopping off brought laughter from all my friends. Life was simple and easy.

Years later, as a husband and father of three girls, my life was often complicated and confusing – even with the joys of family, college, and a new career. I sometimes felt overwhelmed by money worries and managing my family’s busy schedules; and by concerns about war, economic downturns, and political disagreements. Trying to keep up with the fast paced, spinning world was no longer fun, and dizziness was no longer enjoyable. Then I remembered something about riding a merry-go-round. At the edge, you move fast and things rush by. You have to hold on tight or be thrown off. At the center, however, it is calm. In the same way, when life seems out of control, God is unaffected by the speed, challenges, and complications of human life. God offers us a dependable and quiet refuge in a fast-changing and confusing world. Moving closer to God brings peace.

Prayer: Dear God, when we feel out of control, remind us to put you at the center of our lives. Help us to focus on you, our refuge, always. Amen.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: Kindness extended to others reflects the Lord’s care.



Our Outreach Ministry Members are Steve and Barb Yunker, Claudette Allred, Pam Frayer, Rufena Hartford, Jean Witt, Cindy Bench and Pastor Matt. Reach out to anyone of them if you have ideas.

Phillip the Blue Barrel

As always, you are so very generous with your donations. We do not have a final tally from the Glass Jar collection for Mlenga’s new church building. We will get you the total as soon as we know it. It was a great way to focus during Lent on others during Lent.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the Reverse Lenten Calendar program for the Family Advocacy Center of Ottawa County food collection. Charlie Jaeger had a car full of assorted basic items that are distributed in Ottawa County.

Last September we collected LOTS of Bingo prizes to use at LHOM for God's Work Our Hands. However, we helped the residents fish instead, so we put those prizes to good use April 11th. A group from St. Luke's and St. Peter met at Luther Home and played some lively rounds of Bingo with the residents. I'm not sure who enjoyed it more!!! They especially liked the stuffed animal prizes. Once again, thank you for your contributions.

What a wonderful meal was shared with the Salem Lutheran community post Easter. The crew made a ham, scalloped potatoes, corn and dessert meal that was enjoyed by over 250 folks. A BIG thank-you to all who donated delicious desserts, and who helped cook, serve, and clean-up. We have such awesome volunteers. St. Luke's and St. Peter work together so well in making events like this successful. Thanks for caring for others.

REMEMBER, if you or someone you know is in need of any kind of help and resources, please visit www.findhelp.org and enter your zip code. They offer a whole array resources for all kinds of needs. Feel free to share this with others.

The next Outreach Meeting will be held May 5th at 11AM.

GRACE ALONE MINISTRIES

Grace Alone Ministries received an action grant from Thrivent to help support Nuestra Gente food pantry. Linda Parra runs her ministry out of the vacant First English Lutheran Church on Broadway, Toledo, Ohio. Their food pantry is in need of several items: Eggs, beans, tortilla shells, canned tuna. This collection will begin May 1-10. Any donations of these items would be helpful with their food pantry. Whichever item we receive the least of, we will sue the action grant to purchase more items to fill their pantry. If there are any questions or more information is needed, please contact Jim Vermilyea: 419-862-2753

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: Sunday, May 10 in the fellowship hall after worship service. This special meeting is being called to discuss the roof/boiler loan.

Abigail Circle

Monday, May 18
7:00 PM @ St. Peter

Sew Group

Every Tuesday
9:00 AM @ St. Peter

Hannah Circle

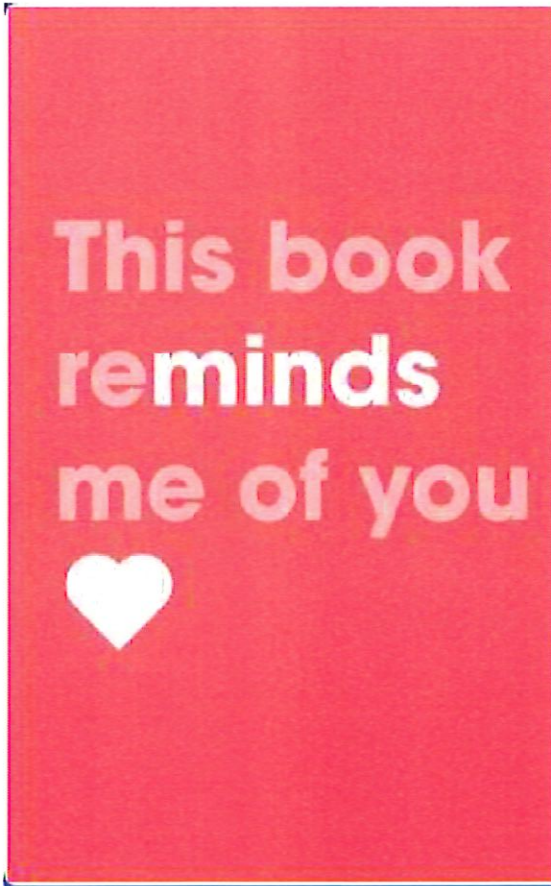
Tuesday, May 19
10:30 AM @ St. Peter

Bible Study

Wednesday, May 6
12 Noon @ St. Peter

Book Club

Wednesday, May 13
10:00 AM @ St. Peter



May's
Book Club Selection
This book reminds me of you.
By Libbey Paige

This engaging prompt journal is the perfect tool to build mother-child relationships. Kids can record memories, swap stories, compare perspectives, and explore common and unique interests with their moms! Interactive lists and letters back and forth invite both mom and daughter to reflect, write, and doodle about topics timely to their lives as kids, build self-confidence, and improve their penmanship.

MAY

BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 - Kim Reif | 17 - Thomas Reinhart, Jr. |
| 10 - Caitlin Lohner | 18 - Lila Goulette |
| 11 - Wade Kapp | David Reinhart |
| Jamie Lacer | 20 - Terry Lowe |
| Thomas Reinhart IV | Andrea Sorg |
| 15 - Nathan Moore | 23 - Caleb Wittman |
| Trenton Overmyer | 25 - Larry Schanke |
| 16 - Gregory Lowe | |



ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 - David & Dawn Bolen
- 10 - Mark & Becky Cuthbertson
- 21 - Rusty & Paulette Sekinger
- 25 - Tait & Amber Miller

It is with great joy that Bob & Becky Beyer announce the arrival of their First Grandchild, Grandson: Owen Michael, son of Charles and Nicole Moore.

Owen entered the world April 3, 2026 @11:38 PM at Promedica Toledo Hospital. He weighed in at 7lbs. 2-ozs, and 20-1/2 inches long.

Congratulations to the new parents and grandparents. May the Lord Bless Owen.



May 2026

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
	<table border="1"> <tr><td colspan="7">Apr 2026</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	Apr 2026							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			<table border="1"> <tr><td colspan="7">Jun 2026</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	Jun 2026							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							1	2
Apr 2026																																																																																																								
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																																																																																																				
Jun 2026																																																																																																								
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																																																																																																						
3 8:45 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School 11:00 AM Cong Growth Ministry 12 - 1:15 PM Catechism	4	5 9:00 AM Quilt Sewing 11:00 AM Outreach Ministry	6 8:00 PMAA Meeting 12 NOON Bible Study	7	8	9																																																																																																		
10 8:45 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM Property Ministry 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School MOTHERS DAY	11	12 9:00 AM Quilt Sewing	13 10:00 AM Book Club 8:00 PMAA Meeting	14	15	16																																																																																																		
17 8:45 AM Worship Service CONFIRMATION 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:15 AM Adult Sunday School 11:00 AM Flower Bed Work Day	18 6:30 PM Finance Committee 7:30 PM Church Council	19 9:00 AM Quilt Sewing Preschool decorating for Graduation in Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall	20 7:00 PM Precious Moments Preschool Graduation 8:00 PMAA Meeting Preschool decorating for Graduation in Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall	21 JUNE & JULY COMBINED NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	22	23																																																																																																		
24 8:45 AM Worship Service PENTECOST	25 Memorial Day (Observed)	26 9:00 AM Quilt Sewing	27 8:00 PMAA Meeting	28	29	30																																																																																																		
31 8:45 AM Worship Service SS Teacher Recognition 10:00 AM Family Brunch Potluck																																																																																																								

We want to thank-you for the prayers, phone calls, texts, visits, food, and cards. We have truly appreciated them all.

I would like to share with you some thoughts, that I had Easter weekend. I posted them on Facebook. I know, you aren't all on social media.

I woke up this morning with a song/hymn going through my head. It has been playing all day. It finally occurred to me that God wants me to share. So here goes.

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow.

Because He lives all fear is gone.

Because I know, He holds the future

And life is worth the living

Just because He lives.

Now you may think this is an appropriate hymn because of Easter. And it is, but that isn't the only reason why it is so important to me now.

I have been dealing with health problems for the last few years. I had to have two back surgeries. During that time you have to get pretesting done. My testing has shown conflicting results of possible heart problems. Well this past Friday, I had a heart cath. The widow maker was almost completely blocked. I had to stay in the hospital until Monday morning. I had by-pass surgery. It was successful. I may need a stint or two down the road, but for now, I'm healing. Things I learned through this: Apparently when you are diabetic, heart issues don't present themselves the same way. I didn't even realize I was short of breath. (Or the farmer genes in me says go till something stops you.) Any way I can't thank my heart doctors enough for not giving up and kept pressing the insurance company to do more testing. Toledo hospital was the best, I am so lucky to be alive. God has been with me the whole way.

Now you know why this hymn is so emotional for me now. If my posting this saves one person's life, it was well worth the time it has taken me to type this.

He is risen He is risen indeed.

And I want to thank my family for all they have done and will continue to do for me. Also all the prayers and well wishes have been appreciated.

Shirley and Ron Lajti and family

THANK YOU for all the "Get Well" cards that I received. I greatly appreciate the prayers and cards. Nonnie Harris

Sunday School Happenings

May's Sunday School Bible verse is: *Children, obey your parents in the Lord.* Ephesians 6:1.

Sunday School Aluminum Can Collection: Remember, aluminum can collection is the second Sunday of every month. May 10 is the next scheduled date.

Sunday School Wraps up for this Year:

The last day of Sunday School will be May 17, 2026. But stay tuned, there are several exciting events being scheduled that you can be involved in during the summer.

Sunday School Teacher Recognition:

We will be recognizing our Sunday School teachers on Sunday, May 31. It is very important to show our appreciation to our teachers as they guide our youth on the Christian journey.

THANK YOU for your dedication and work. Our teachers for the 2025-2026 school year are Christy Diekman, Lisa Diekman, LeAnne Butzin, Jim Vermilyea, Dawn Bolen, Wendy Millinger

and Charlie Jaeger. LeAnne Jaeger and Cindy Bench handled the Sunday School opening in the chapel.

Graduate Recognition Sunday has been set for Sunday, June 14, 2026. A letter will be sent to our high school graduating seniors, asking for various information to help with this recognition. If you are a graduating college senior, please reach out to the office so that we can honor you also.

Women of the Church

You are invited to Ottawa County Women of Faith Fellowship Brunch, **Saturday, May 9, 2026 *10:00 AM** at Elliston Zion United Methodist Church. Come enjoy a delicious meal, with devotions and gentle brunch music. Then, our program features our friend and award winning songwriter and musician—Kerry Patrick Clark. Please **RSVP by May 5th** by email to: ellistonzionpastor@gmail.com or call 419-250-1188. Tickets are \$10, Table of 6 \$50. You may pay at the door or pay online at www.ellistonzion.com and go to the online giving link.

FLOWER BED SPRING CLEAN-UP: We are looking for help (adults preferable) to help spruce up the flower beds and yard on Sunday, May 17th after fellowship. Please bring your favorite garden tool/s to use, i.e., work clothes, kneeling cushions, gloves, shovels, rakes, buckets, trimmers/pruners, etc., etc. Don't forget your water bottle!

MONETARY DONATIONS are being accepted for the next three Sundays, May 3, 10, & 17 to purchase geraniums and perennial plants will be used to spruce up the flower beds and around the church. Plants and geraniums be given in honor or in memory of your loved ones or simply as a gift of love and will be listed in the bulletin. Forms will be available in the Narthex, or call the church office.

Kisereny Kindergarten Update

Since St. Peter and St. Luke's began sponsoring Kisereny's Kindergarten, enrollment has grown from 35 children in 2022 to 42 children in 2026. Providing food for the children is the kindergarten's largest expense. The cost to feed one child for one year \$126. (That's a total of \$5,292 for 42 children currently enrolled). Our total goal this year is \$10,362 to fully-fund this mission project. We would like to have 42 or more donors, one for each child.

GIVING LEVELS

- \$42 – food for one child for 3 months
- \$84 – food for one child for 6 months
- \$126 – food for one child for 9 months (one school year)
- \$180 – one month teacher's salary
- \$588 – food for 42 children for one month
- \$1080 – one semester teacher's salary
- \$2160 – one year teacher's salary

If you would like to contribute, you may make checks payable to either congregation below with "Kisereny, Tanzania" in the memo line.

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

St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 20 S. Yondota Rd., Curtice, OH 43412.

Additional information is on the table in the Narthex.