

*125th
Anniversary*



*Upon This
Rock...*

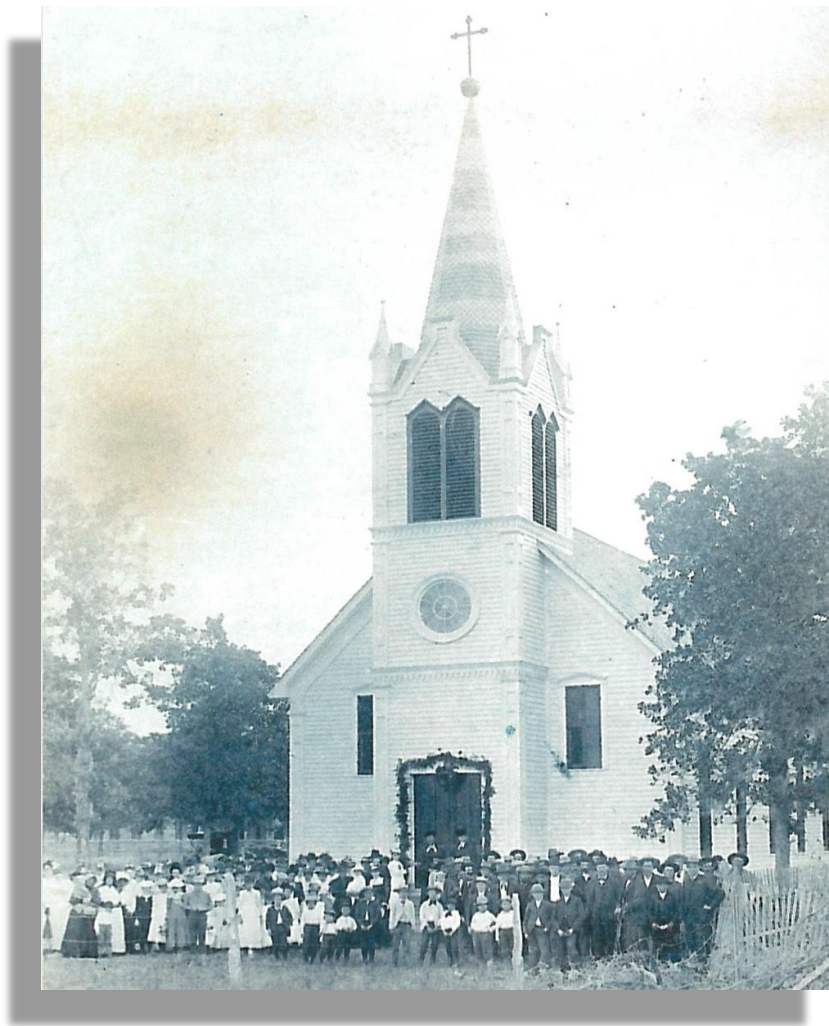
HISTORY OF ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH

The first Lutheran Church in Hallettsville, Texas, was formally organized on December 21, 1889, in the home of Franz Groeber. There were eight founding families that met in the Episcopal Church. Services were held in both English and German. Previous to this, Lutheran services were provided by Rev. Christoph Geiger, a traveling preacher, as early as 1868.



Pastor Geiger

The northwest quarter of block 38 in Hallettsville, Texas was purchased for the sum of \$ 150 for the first church in 1891. The cornerstone was laid on December 9th. However, that building's framework was destroyed by a storm. It was rebuilt, and the church was dedicated on June 19, 1892. The first church was a simple frame building, not sealed within, and with plain windows. The lot and structure was mortgaged to Pastor Geiger for \$ 500, and the debt was repaid to his widow in 1906. At this time, it was known as German Lutheran St. Petri Church. The first class was confirmed on April 30, 1893 with 39 members. After Rev. Geiger died, his ministry was carried on by his son-in-law the Rev. Frederick Wolfsdorff. The first Sunday School was established in 1902 by Pastor Wolfsdorff and the widow Anna Thekla Baessler.



The First Church

The first parsonage was built behind the church in 1902. A six month drive for finances to build the parsonage raised \$ 847.10 which was enough to construct the building. In 1906, the congregation purchased the southwest corner of block 38 and the existing house which belonged to Pauline Fertsch. That building was moved to the northwest corner and attached to the existing parsonage. The church building, in turn, was moved to the southwest corner.

Under Rev. Wolfsdorff, the congregation adopted their first official constitution. The text was in German and it governed the church, pastors, and matters related to the church. It retained the old regulations pertaining to women members, requiring them to be seated separate from the men during services and denying them a vote in matters of the church.

Rev. Wolfsdorff died on August 20, 1903, and Rev. P. Hild was installed on April 17, 1904. The congregation was served by Rev. Hild until 1906. Rev. Konzock also served St. Peter during this time. He was followed by Rev. G. Deisslinger from 1906-1910, Rev. R. Becker from 1911-1914, and Rev. M. Heinrich from 1914-1921. Rev. A.D. Rode began his ministry to St. Peter in 1922.

During 1928, the congregation began to think about building a new parsonage. The amount of \$ 2,000 was set aside for the parsonage, and the remaining \$ 1,500 was borrowed from Mrs. Emily Renger, widow of Dr. Paul Renger. The parsonage was dedicated on November 2, 1930. The old parsonage now became the assembly hall and was used for Sunday School. Before the parsonage was completed, Rev. Rode moved to Taylor. Rev. A.T. Kluge was called and he and his family were the first to live in the new parsonage. Rev. Kluge resigned in 1935 and was followed by Rev. A.D. Klages.



The Second Parsonage

The church membership grew under this young and energetic pastor, and the congregation soon began talking about building a new church. At the congregation meeting with Walter Heye presiding, the membership voted to construct a new church. The lumber from the old church was to be used and the new church was to have a basement to use for Sunday school classes. The expense was not to exceed \$ 15,000. The members of the congregation donated labor, and the new church was dedicated in the fall of 1942. The new church was laid out in the shape of a cross and the stained glass windows depicted the life of Christ. Otto Goedecke had been chairman of the building committee. While the new church was being built, services were held in the movie theater.



The Second Church

Rev. Klages left in 1953 after serving St. Peter for eighteen years. He was followed by Rev. George Krueger who served from 1954-1960. St. Peter was served by Rev. D. Lee Muehlbrad from 1960-1963.

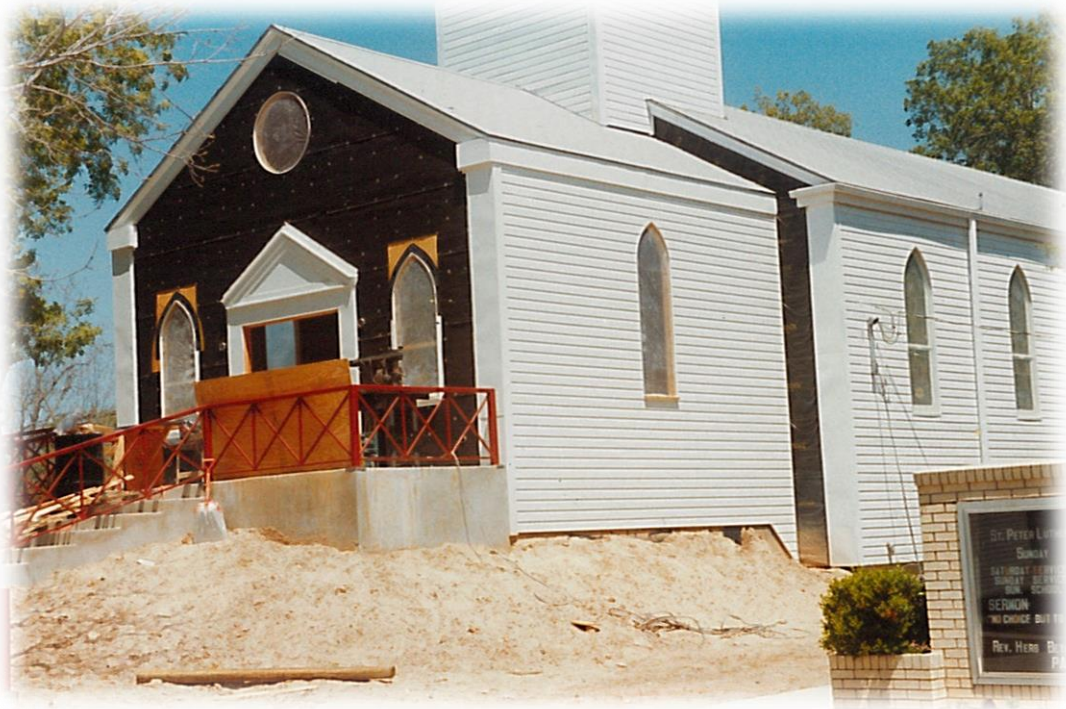
The Sunday school enrollment increased and soon there was a need for more space. The congregation voted to build an education building. Rev. D. Lee Muehlbrad was the pastor and Joseph Mikulenska was the congregation president. The 4,200 square foot education building was designed to serve 90 students, and cost \$ 49,510. The building was dedicated on May 16, 1965 with the Rev. O. K. Oelke in charge. Rev. Oelke served from 1964-1967.

Rev. Raymond Wolf took over at St. Peter in 1967, and served until 1974. He was followed by Rev. Harvey Bongers who served as our spiritual leader from 1974-1978. Rev. James Boyd was called to serve St. Peter in 1978, and served for six years. Rev. Kurt Hartmann also ministered to the church after Pastor Boyd left and before Pastor Beyer took over.



The congregation continued to grow. The parsonage was enlarged and air conditioned. A new pipe organ was purchased in 1980 for \$ 25,000. The congregation began to discuss expanding the church. The church had been blessed with the gift of a business place on the courthouse square by Abbey Strunk. This building was sold and the funds were eventually used toward the cost of the renovation of the church. The vestibule was enlarged, new and wider steps were

built, and the lawn on the north side was paved for a parking lot. The total cost of this project was \$ 62,344.67. This new addition was dedicated on July 5, 1987 with Rev. Herb Beyer in charge. In 1987, Rev. Robert E. Lee joined our congregation as an associate pastor. Rev. Lee retired in 2003.



Once again, more space was needed for education and office space. In 1988, the education building was expanded with an additional 2,520 square feet. The cost for this addition was \$ 68,169.

In 1995, the congregation voted to use our education building to house our Solid Rock Christian Learning Center. This ministry serves more than seventy children in our community.

In 2004, St. Peter Lutheran Church joined with Zion Lutheran Church of Moulton, United Lutheran Church of Shiner, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Witting, Zion Lutheran Church of Sublime, Faith Lutheran Church of Weimar, and Prairie Valley Lutheran Church in Fayette County to form the Tri-County Cooperative Ministry. This ministry continued until 2007 when St. Peter decided to withdraw from the TCCM and call its own pastor. St. Peter was served during the interim by Sister Carolyn Hellerich. Reverend Alan Williams began his ministry at St. Peter in 2008.

In 2009, the church received the present parsonage located on the corner of 3rd Street and Market Street, as a gift from the Allen family. The gift stipulated that the home always be used as a parsonage. Pastor Alan Williams was the first Pastor to reside in the home. The home was extensively remodeled in 2012/2013, prior to the arrival of Pastor Andy Taylor and his family.



The Present Parsonage

It was during the tenure of Rev. Williams that the congregation voted to leave the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and join both the Lutheran Churches in Mission for Christ and the North American Lutheran Church organizations. Pastor Alan Williams retired on December 31, 2012, and Pastor Andy Taylor was called to serve St. Peter on March 1, 2013.

After the education building was built, the church basement was used as a fellowship hall. But soon, it became too small and the congregation again began to raise funds to build a new fellowship hall. Many fund raisers were held. Many cakes and pies were sold, sausage dinners served, and Cowboys and Cupid fundraisers were held at Appelt's Hill Hall. The community and congregation generously donated, and ground was broken for a new fellowship hall in 2013. By the time the building was dedicated on May 4, 2014, the congregation had raised enough money to pay for this Fellowship Hall that cost just under \$ 1,000,000.



The Fellowship Hall

St. Peter Lutheran Church and its members are active in the Hallettsville community. The church started the St. Nicholas Ministry and is largely responsible for establishing the Lavaca Assistance Ministry (LAMB) and the Parish Nurse Program. Members of our congregation participate in the Festival of Lights Pageant and the National Day of Prayer on the Courthouse lawn. St. Peter Lutheran Church has active Men in Mission and Women in Mission organizations that host many activities. Some of the activities include the annual sausage supper, pancake supper, Country Store and Women's Tea. Sunday School is provided for both youth and adults. A weekly Bible Study is held, as well as weekly Prayer. The church reaches out to the children in our community with its annual Vacation Bible School and Solid Rock Center for Learning. Church services are held in our local nursing homes. Regular movie nights are held in the Fellowship Hall. Services are held on Saturday evenings at 5 p.m. and on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. followed by Sunday School. Approximately 140 members attend services each week.



St. Peter Lutheran Church would like to extend a thank you to all the members of the congregation who attended and those former members and friends who returned for our 125th Church Anniversary. Your support in services and prayers has encouraged our church family in more ways than one. We pray that many of you will return to worship with us in the near future. We are truly blessed with a loving, caring, hardworking, and willing congregation. This is part of our work in spreading the word of God and serving Jesus Christ.

FORMER PASTORS OF
ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Rev. Christoph Geiger	1871-1901
Rev. Frederick Wolfsdorff	1901-1903
Rev. P. Hild	1904-1906
Rev. Konzock	1904-1906
Rev. G. Deisslinger	1906-1910
Rev. R. Becker	1911-1914
Rev. M. Heinrich	1914-1921
Rev. A. D. Rode	1922-1929
Rev. A. T. Kluge	1930-1935
Rev. A. D. Klages	1935-1953
Rev. George Krueger	1954-1960
Rev. D. Lee Muehlbrad	1960-1963
Rev. O. K. Oelke	1964-1967
Rev. Raymond Wolf	1967-1974
Rev. Harvey Bongers	1974-1978
Rev. James Boyd	1978-1984
Rev. Kurt Hartmann	1985
Rev. Herb Beyer	1985-2007
Rev. Robert E. Lee	1987-2003
Sister Carolyn Hellerich	2008
Rev. Alan Williams	2008-2011
Rev. Andy Taylor	2012-Present

2014 Church Council Members:

Pastor Andy Taylor

Linda Smith – Chair

Rusty Wallace – Vice Chair

Carol Drozd – Secretary

Janie Andrews

Tommy Brandenberger

Lindsay Duty

Marilyn McAda

Donald Muehr

Janice Satsky

Carl Tieken

Jason Ward

Tramer Woytek

Sierra Wallace – Youth Representative

MEMORIES FROM OUR MEMBERS

Patricia Vollentine

"My first spiritual experience was at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in 1955. It was during Vacation Bible School that I felt the urge to go upstairs to the chancel. To a twelve year old, it was a sacred place. Going up the back stairs through Rev. Krueger's office, I encouraged a fellow classmate to go with me. Having come into the chancel area, we knelt by the altar on the pulpit side...I do not remember the words of my prayer, but it was the first of several times in my life that I felt the presence of God through the Holy Spirit."

Dorothy Ehler

"When the present church was being built, services were held downtown in Coles Theater on Sunday mornings. The Junior Choir with members Anna Marie and Fritz Treptow, Bobby and Dorothy Bonorden, Gaynelle Brown, Waltraut and Otto Ernest Goedecke and Eugene Klages sang at each service. I remember marching up that long isle at the end of the services always singing the doxology. Pastor Klages also served the Shiloh and Sublime churches. During the building of the new church, he did not hold confirmation. So the first class was a large one. There were 24 members from all three churches and Pastor referred to us as his two dozen rotten eggs. We were confirmed on Palm Sunday, all robed in white and sitting on chairs in the sacristy for the whole service."

Oscar and Elaine Harper

"St. Peter is our Church home and we have been members for over 25 years. We are most happy here at St. Peter Lutheran, and we hope to continue to grow and thrive in the future." Elaine said that they first attended St. Peter after being invited to come hear the Sunday School children sing.

Leroy Schroeder

"I have always attended St. Peter Lutheran Church. I attended Sunday School in the basement and the rooms the divided by curtains. Luther League was a group for us older kids. Our sponsors were Herminia Spies and Frieda Deem. I remember having a play on the basement stage to raise money through donations. Others who attended were Mildred Rother, Joyce Spies, Delton Koehn, Luther Lorring, Everett Appelt, Audrey and Clarence Teltschick, William and Wilbur Zapalac and Mary Hemmerlein. This is where I met my wife Mary. We were married at St. Peter by Pasor Oelke on April 24, 1965."

Mae Appelt Rother

"I was confirmed at St. Peter in 1947, and married my husband there in October, 1952. We moved to Victoria in 1952, but returned to Hallettsville in 1998. We rejoined St. Peter in 1999. We are very happy and like the people here. We especially like Pastor Taylor. His sermons inspire and enlighten us."