

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
BAPTISM of CHRIST

January 11, 2026, *Virtual Prayer and Preaching*

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**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

We bless the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
the Word who spoke life into being,  
the Wind stirring the waters. **Amen**



We turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.* Mighty God, lover of justice,  
**you call us to life in community, but we have served our own  
interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit  
where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts  
are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and  
give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and  
walk humbly with you, our God. Amen**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares:  
Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness  
of Christ, and forgives your sin in ☩ Jesus' name. May their Spirit give you  
strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

The gracious love of God, the faithfulness of Jesus Christ,  
and their Spirit's overflowing joy, is with you all. **And also with you.**  
Holy One, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* O God our Father, at the  
baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him  
with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their  
calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit,  
through Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior, who lives and reigns with you  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 42:1-9**

*God's servant is endowed with God's spirit in order to bring justice to the  
nations. The servant will not exercise authority boisterously or with violence,  
nor will weariness ever prevent the fulfilling of the servant's task. God's old  
promises have been fulfilled; the servant's new assignment is to bring light  
to the nations.*

This is a reading from the prophet Isaiah, chapter 42.  
Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
    my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon him;  
    he will bring forth justice to the nations.  
He will not cry or lift up his voice,  
    or make it heard in the street;  
a bruised reed he will not break,  
    and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
    he will faithfully bring forth justice.  
He will not grow faint or be crushed  
    until he has established justice in the earth;  
    and the coastlands wait for his teaching.  
Thus says God, the LORD,  
    who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
    who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
    who gives breath to the people upon it  
    and spirit to those who walk in it:  
I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness,  
    I have taken you by the hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
    a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
    from the prison those who sit in darkness.  
I am the LORD, that is my name;  
    my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols.  
See, the former things have come to pass,  
    and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth, I tell you of them.  
This is God's Word and our life.

**SECOND READING: Acts 10:34-43**

*Peter crosses the sharp religious boundary separating Jews from Gentiles and proclaims the good news of God's inclusive forgiveness in Jesus' name to Cornelius, a Roman centurion. As a result of Peter's preaching, Cornelius and his family become the first Gentiles to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

This is a reading from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 10.

Peter began to speak to Cornelius and his household: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy

Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

This is God's Word and our life.

### **HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 3:13-17**

*Before Jesus begins his ministry, he is baptized by John, touched by the Spirit, and identified publicly as God's child.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Matthew, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

### **HYMN of the DAY      "Hail to the Lord's Anointed"**

- 1      Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!  
Hail, in the time appointed, your reign on earth begun!  
You come to break oppression, to set the captive free,  
to take away transgression and rule in equity.
- 2      You come with rescue speedy to those who suffer wrong,  
to help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong;  
to give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,  
whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in your sight.
- 3      You shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;  
love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in your path to birth.  
Before you on the mountains shall peace, the herald, go;  
and righteousness in fountains from hill to valley flow.

- 4 Kings shall fall down before you, and gold and incense bring;  
all nations shall adore you, your praise all people sing.  
To you shall prayer unceasing and daily vows ascend;  
your kingdom still increasing, a kingdom without end.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.

**MESSAGE:**        ***Destiny**        silence for reflection follows*

### **The CHURCH PRAYS**

#### **PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

*A brief silence.*

Steadfast God, give courage to your servant church. Heal our divisions and unite us in mission. Uphold our lay leaders, missionaries, pastors, and bishops, and all who proclaim hope in a broken world. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Restoring God, cleanse the life-giving waters of rivers, seas, and springs. Create in us an urgent desire to preserve the beauty and bounty of your good creation. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Righteous God, you guide the nations. Reconcile warring enemies and end cycles of violent retribution. Defend the rights of prisoners, detainees, and all who flee from persecution. Sustain international aid workers and peacemakers. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Loving God, awaken the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation, that we may serve Christ by loving one another, our neighbors, and our enemies. We pray for travelers and those who are homebound. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, you care for all in distress. Provide safety and support for those seeking asylum or in need of shelter. Be near to the dying, and comfort all who are grieving or ill. We pray for John, Greg, Lori, Mary Lue, Lynn, Will, Ruth, Bea, our at-home worshippers, ... Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Promising God, in baptism we die and rise with Christ. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, and we trust that we will join them in your everlasting peace. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

We pray that God's rule will appear, as Jesus has taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as  
we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen**

### **SPIRIT'S SENDING**

#### **PRAYER for MISSION**

Holy God, hear our prayer. *A brief silence.* Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. You have drawn us to your heart. Send us with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior. **Amen**

#### **BLESSING and PEACE**

May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise, bless + you now and forever. Amen  
"Those who walked in the dark have seen a bright light.

**And it shines upon everyone who lives  
in the land of darkest shadows."**

The peace of Christ is always with you. **And also with you.**

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***Today's Sponsorships***

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Today's Altar Flowers are Given to the Glory of God

In Loving Memory of Janice Webb.
Given by Terri, Rich, Richie, Casey, and John Patrick.

In Memory of our mothers, Anna and Katherine.
Given by Cathy and Mark McQuade.

Rose Vase

In Honor of Everett Hohl Read
for his 11th birthday, January 16th.
With love from his grandmother Patty Read.

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Attendance for Sunday, January 4, 2026: 36

### ***Learning, Serving, and Fellowship Opportunities***

**Installation of Council Members:** On Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, we will be installing the 2026 council members at worship. Please pray for these “called” members as they work for God and St. Peter’s. Members are: Mark McQuade-President, Karen Yelovich-Vice President, Kathy Sykes-Treasurer, Bill Lauer-Financial Secretary, Lena Frankenfeld-Recording Secretary, Heather Frederick, Linda Heinbaugh, Rich Murphy, Patty Read, and Christy Sykes.

**2026 Offering Envelopes** are available in the Narthex. You may also contact the church office for your envelope number or to have your envelopes mailed to you.

**LGBTQIA+ Friends and Allies Pot Luck:** TODAY at 5 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). All are welcome to the parlor for the potluck to bring LGBTQIA+ friends and allies together to get to know each other. Fried chicken provided, bring a side dish or dessert. Reservations are not needed, but you can RSVP to Mary Catherine Day at 443-743-4717.

**Day of Renewal:** Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> from 9 am.-2 pm. at the Church of the Nativity & Holy Comforter (419 Cedarcroft Rd., 21212). The Synodical Women’s Organization invites all women of the ELCA to this event featuring as the speaker, Dr. Jennifer Houston McNeel, author of *Under Her Wings* and New Testament Professor at St. Mary’s Ecumenical Institute. Registration is \$8/person and due by January 31<sup>st</sup>. Contact Sallie Gartside at [sallieabn@aol.com](mailto:sallieabn@aol.com) or 410-218-2614. (Registration form available from the church office).

**Valentine’s Day Dance:** Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup> from 7-11 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Come celebrate Valentine’s Day a day early! Admission is \$20/person and includes: soda, wine, chips, pretzels, and live music by Rich and the RoadRunners! Guests are invited to bring their own beer, bottle and food. Tickets are limited so contact Elaine Wagenfuehr at [melainepenn@gmail.com](mailto:melainepenn@gmail.com) or 443-854-1490, or Denise Loverde at [trueblueforever2006@yahoo.com](mailto:trueblueforever2006@yahoo.com) or 410-207-6389.

**Sponsorships Available:** Altar flowers on 1/18 (contact the church office).

**St. Peter’s Family Goods Center:** If you are interested in volunteering for the Family Goods Center, please contact Bill Lauer. This is a great opportunity for service hours for your middle or high school student, and volunteer hours for SPES families. Please place donations in the shopping cart in the Narthex.

**On-line Giving:** As an alternate way of submitting your offering, you can make donations on-line through PayPal! Login to your PayPal account and search for our tag: @Spl367 or St. Peter's Lutheran Church and Christian Day School.

***News from St. Peter's Elementary School and PACE***

Open enrollment for the 2026-27 school year has begun! Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions or want to schedule a tour. Referrals are always welcome!

**Texas Roadhouse Fundraiser:** Dine-in or carry out, Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup> from 3-10 pm. at the White Marsh location (8207 Town Center Dr., 21236). St. Peter's ES earns 10% of all food purchases (when flier is presented). Fliers are in the church office lobby, the "Welcome" table in the back of the church, or by contacting the school.