

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways
Third Sunday in Lent, March 8, 2026
Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship

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**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

We bless the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever. **Amen**

We confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt  
and blots out all our offenses. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

To you, O God, **all hearts are open, to you all desires  
known. We come to you, confessing our sins. Forgive us in your  
mercy, and remember us in your love. Show us your ways; teach us  
your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your  
goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen**



God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in us, pours God's love into our hearts, and gives us life and peace. **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

Grace, mercy, and peace from God Almighty,  
Sovereign, Son, and Spirit, are always with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lamb of God, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through your Son, 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: Exodus 17:1-7**

*Because the thirsty Israelites quarreled with Moses and put God to the test, Moses cried out in desperation to God. God commanded Moses to strike the rock to provide water for the people. The doubt-filled question—"Is the Lord among us or not?"—received a very positive answer.*

This is a reading from Exodus, the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter.

From the wilderness of Sinai the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink."

Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?"

But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?"

So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me."

The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

### **SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-11**

*Though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, here Paul tells us that through Jesus' death God helps utterly helpless sinners. Since we who had been enemies are reconciled to God in the cross, we now live in hope for our final salvation.*

This is a reading from Paul's letter to the Romans, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely, therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

## **HOLY GOSPEL: John 4:5-42**

*Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to John, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)

The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"

Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back."

The woman answered him, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"

The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth."

The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us."

Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking

with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" They left the city and were on their way to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something."

But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?"

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

### **HYMN of the DAY: # 611 "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"**

- 1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
"Come unto me and rest;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down  
your head upon my breast."  
I came to Jesus as I was,  
so weary, worn, and sad;  
I found in him a resting-place,  
and he has made me glad.
  
- 2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
"Behold, I freely give  
the living water, thirsty one;  
stoop down and drink and live."  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
and now I live in him.

3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
"I am this dark world's light;  
look unto me, your morn shall rise,  
and all your day be bright."  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
in him my star, my sun;  
and in that light of life I'll walk  
till trav'ling days are done.

Text: Horatius Bonar, 1808-1889

**MESSAGE:**        *Thirst*                      *silence for reflection follows*

### **The CHURCH PRAYS**

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

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. *A brief silence.*

O God, when suffering arises, preserve your church. Give to pastors, deacons, bishops, and all servants of your gospel the endurance that produces character and the hope that will never disappoint. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

When the waters run dry, sustain this earth. Send water to places languishing with drought, and bring relief to places damaged by floods. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

When quarrels ensue, soften our hearts. Quell hostilities between nations and peoples, and reconcile all humans across the lines of race, class, nationality, moral conviction, religion, and all else that divides or oppresses. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

When we gather to worship, send us your Spirit. Renew our hearts through the joyful noise we make and bless the work of our church musicians and musical ensembles. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

When your people thirst, satisfy their needs. Send water and food to all who need nourishment. Grant welcome to all who are excluded. Show your mercy to any in need. We pray for ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry, Bishop Bill Gohl, Ebenezer Grace Worship, those hospitalized or recuperating at home, Greg, John, Lori, Mary Lue, Lynn, Will, Bea, Kathy, our at-home worshippers, ... Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

O God, when death draws near, we rejoice in the promise of life with you. We remember all who have entered eternal rest, and we pray that you bring us the hope of sharing in your glory. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

We pray for Christ's forgiveness, as he 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 One, hear our prayer. *A brief silence.* O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through the Word of God sent into this world, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen**

#### **BLESSING**

God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, & the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, bless us ☩ now & always. **Amen**

Forgiven and freed in Christ, we share his peace  
with neighbors & strangers, the poor & outcast – all God's children.  
The peace of Christ is with you always. **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 Honor of our granddaughter, Olivia Mills,
on her 5th birthday, March 8th.
Love, LaLa and Pop.

In Honor of Brian and Jade Mills
on their 6th wedding anniversary on March 14th.
We love you both so much! Mom and Dad.

In Loving Memory of Elmer Diepold's March 8th birthday.
Given by his daughter, Sharyn Diepold.

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*Today's Worship Folders are Given to the Glory of God*

In Honor of Lois and Fred Volz on their March 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary.  
Given with love by the Mills family.

In Loving Memory of Gilbert Kreisel's March 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by the Volz family.

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Attendance for Sunday, March 1, 2026: 34

Learning, Serving, and Fellowship Opportunities

A Message from Ruth May: I want to let all of you know that I am doing well and that I miss you all! Looking forward to seeing you on my next visit to Baltimore.

SPES Open House: Sunday, March 8th from 12:30-1:30 pm.

Please Note: The church office will be closed on Friday, March 13th.

Lent at St. Peter's: Pr. Lans will be presenting *The Small Catechism* via Zoom on Thursdays at 7 pm. Contact the church office for the link.

St. Peter's Annual Meeting: Sunday, March 15th between services.

Easter Flowers: Help decorate St. Peter's Easter "garden" on the altar! Please return the completed order form to the CHURCH OFFICE no later than March 15th. Order forms are available from the church office.

Concordia Choir Concert: Saturday, March 7th at 7:30 pm. at The Cathedral of Mary Our Queen (5200 N. Charles St., 21210). The world-renowned Concordia Choir of Moorhead, Minnesota, under the direction of Dr. Michael Culloton, will perform music of J.S. Bach to familiar hymn arrangements. The choir will amaze you with their technical mastery and incredible sound. Tickets can be purchased at ConcordiaTickets.com or at the door.

Camp Day at Mar-Lu-Ridge: Sunday, March 22nd from 1-4 pm. at the pavilion (3200 Mar Lu Ridge Rd., Jefferson, MD 21755). Everyone is welcome to join us for an afternoon of games, camp tours, snacks, crafts and activities for all ages. This day is for campers and families, or anyone interested in seeing what we have been up to recently! No RSVP necessary, just come join the fun.

Spring Work Day at Mar-Lu-Ridge: Saturday, March 28th from 8 am.- 3pm. (3200 Mar Lu Ridge Rd., Jefferson, MD 21755). It's that time of year again! Join us for projects and chores as we ready the camp for a busy spring and summer season. All ages and abilities welcome! Breakfast served at 8am in Agape Hall. Lunch served at noon. Please RSVP to mlr@mar-lu-ridge.org.

Rest & Recharge on the Ridge: Sunday, April 26th from 2-5:30 pm. Hiking, mindfulness, yoga, hymn singing, arts & crafts, hammocks, nature activity guides, and a light meal at 4:30. Mar-Lu-Ridge (3200 Mar Lu Ridge Rd., Jefferson, MD 21755) is hosting this free event for you to find a quiet space to reconnect with nature, engage in a favorite creative hobby & recharge your soul. Email mlr@mar-lu-ridge.org to RSVP.

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.

Give to St. Peter's On-line! Did you know that you can make offering donations and sponsorship payments 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. When submitting your donation or payment, you can note what it's for. It's THAT easy!

News from St. Peter's Elementary School and PACE

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

Upcoming Open House Dates: March 25th from 5-6 pm.; April 18th from 12-2 pm.; and May 7th from 6:30-7:30 pm. Contact the school to RSVP.

NEW THIS YEAR: Shadow Day! Wednesday, April 22nd from 9 am.-3 pm. Contact the school to RSVP.