

**ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
***Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways***  
**Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 10, 2026**

Virtual Prayer and Preaching

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**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

Alleluia! Christ † is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**  
Holy One, we bring our sins to you, trusting in the cross and resurrection that wiped them away through Christ our Savior.  
*A brief silence.*



Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior. Amen**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. Salvation belongs to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb! **Amen**

**PRAYER of the DAY**

The risen and ascended Christ is with you. **And also with you.**  
Holy One, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**FIRST READING: Acts 17:22-31**

*In Athens, Paul faces the challenge of proclaiming the gospel to Greeks who know nothing of either Jewish or Christian tradition. He proclaims that the "unknown god" whom they worship is the true Lord of heaven and earth who will judge the world with justice through Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead.*

This is a reading from the Acts of the Apostles, the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. For as I went through the city and

looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, one who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is God served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since God himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor God made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and God allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed God is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we, too, are his offspring.'

"Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because God has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this God has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

### **SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:13-22**

*The author of 1 Peter encourages Christians to remain faithful even in the face of defamation and persecution. In baptism we are made clean to act in accordance with what is right.*

This is a reading from Peter's 1<sup>st</sup> letter, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect. Maintain a good conscience so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight lives, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the

resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

**HOLY GOSPEL: John 14: 15-21, 27**

*In final words to his disciples on the night of his arrest, Jesus encourages obedience to his commandments and speaks of the Spirit, who will be with them forever.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to John, the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter. Jesus said to his friends: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me, and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them....

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 804 "Come Down, O Love Divine"**

- 1     Come down, O Love divine;  
      seek thou this soul of mine  
      and visit it with thine own ardor glowing;  
      O Comforter, draw near;  
      within my heart appear  
      and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.
  
- 2     Oh, let it freely burn,  
      till worldly passions turn  
      to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;  
      and let thy glorious light  
      shine ever on my sight,  
      and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

- 3 Let holy charity  
mine outward vesture be,  
and lowliness become mine inner clothing--  
true lowliness of heart,  
which takes the humbler part,  
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.
- 4 And so the yearning strong,  
with which the soul will long,  
shall far outpass the pow'r of human telling;  
no soul can guess Love's grace  
till it become the place  
wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.

Text: Bianco da Siena, d. 1434; tr. Richard F. Littledale, 1833-1890

**MESSAGE:**        *Loving*                      *silence for reflection follows*

**the CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, we pray for the needs of all creation. *A brief silence.*

God of new life, you call us through the waters of baptism to be in relationship with you and one another. Guide the church and its leaders to proclaim Christ's righteousness throughout the world. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

You create the world and all that is in it. Shelter budding plants and young animals, provide unpolluted habitats and clean water, and raise up stewards for the environment. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

You set civil servants in the places where we live. Instill truth and equity among judges and lawyers, gentleness and courage among first responders, and peace among leaders of towns and nations. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

You are love and you desire that we love one another. As a mother hen cares for her chicks, bless all who provide motherly care in our lives, and inspire us to care for one another. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

You provide comfort in times of trouble. Heal those who are sick, shelter any who are unhoused, feed those undernourished, and accompany and console all who are lonely, bereaved, anxious, or ill. We pray for ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry, Bishop Bill Gohl, Ebenezer Grace Worship, those hospitalized or

recuperating at home, Greg, John, Lori, Mary Lue, Will, Bea, Kathy, Linda,  
our at-home worshippers, ... Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of new life, your steadfast love endures forever. Inspire us by the  
example of the faithful departed, who clung to your promises of life,  
forgiveness of sins, and salvation. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good  
news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.  
**Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Blessing God's holy name, we pray as Jesus 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.* Holy One, through the Word of  
the resurrected life of Christ Jesus, you have made your home among us and  
are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to  
love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of  
Jesus, **Amen**

#### **BLESSING**

God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,  
Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,  
and their Spirit, our advocate and peace,  
bless † us now and forever. **Amen**

#### **PEACE**

We are sent to share Good News,  
forgiven and reconciled with all God's people.  
The peace of Christ is with you always.

**Today's Sponsorships**

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

In Loving Memory of the women in our family:  
Pauline, Elizabeth, Margaret, and Gail.  
Given by Linda Gasiorowski and family.

*Rose Vase*

In Honor of Katie Sykes for her Christian birthday, today.  
Given with love from Aunt Donna and Uncle Joe.

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

In Honor and Memory of our special mother,  
grandmothers, Godmothers, and aunts on Mother's Day.  
Given with love by the Mills family.

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

***Blessings to all of the women who are and are like "moms" to us!***

**The Small Catechism** Zoom gatherings will continue intermittently throughout the next few months. Upcoming dates are: 5/14, 21, & 27, and 6/4 & 11. June 18<sup>th</sup> TBD. All information will be sent out by email on the afternoon of each Zoom date.

**REMINDER:** The church office will be open from 9am.-12pm. the week of 5/4-8.

**Mother's Day Flower Sale & Yard Sale:** Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> from at St. John's, Essex (518 Franklin Ave., 21221). In the event of inclement weather, the flower sale will be indoors, but the yard sale will be cancelled. If you're interested in selling at the yard sale, spaces are \$15 each. Contact the church at 410-687-4621 for information or to reserve a space.

**The Chosen (season 4):** Tuesdays from 5:15-7 pm. Season 4 explores faith, loss, courage, and what it truly means to follow Christ when the way forward is uncertain. Invite a friend and come for a lite dinner and fellowship at 5:15 pm. followed by a viewing of this uplifting series. May 12 at Ascension (7601 York Rd., 21204); May 19 at St. Luke (7001 Harford Rd., 21234); May 26 & June 2 at Christus Victor (9833 Harford Rd., 21234).

**Flea Market & Craft Fair:** Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 am.-12 pm. at St. Michael, Perry Hall (9534 Belair Rd., 21236). Vendors are wanted – information and to register, go to [www.stmichaelperryhall.org](http://www.stmichaelperryhall.org) (\$25/space). Rain date 5/23.

**Women's Prayer Breakfast:** Saturday, May 23 from 9:30 am.-12 pm. at All Saints' (4215 Loch Raven Blvd., 21218). Guest preacher, Rev. Lamont Brown will be presenting. Join us for a relaxed morning of food, connection, and spiritual encouragement. Cost is \$30/person. To purchase tickets, contact Donna Jolley at 443-743-4762 or [jolleydonna941@yahoo.com](mailto:jolleydonna941@yahoo.com).

**Free Community Health & Wellness Fair:** Saturday, May 30 from 10 am.-2 pm. at Epiphany (4301 Raspe Ave.). Learn the importance of healthy eating habits, mindfulness, staying active, and utilizing helpful resources.

**Afternoon Tea Bus Trip:** Thursday, June 18th, hosted by St. John, Brooklyn (226 Washburn Ave., 21225). Tea Trolley Tearoom in Delta, PA with first stop at The Markets of Shrewsbury. Cost \$110 (food, transportation, tax, gratuity and driver tip included). The bus will leave St. John parking lot at 10 am. and return at 5 pm. Information and reservations, contact Leslie at 410-969-0129. Deadline for Reservations and payment in full due by June 14. This is an annual fundraiser to support the programs and ministries of St. John.

**Christmas In July:** Saturday, July 25 from 3-7 pm. at St. John's, Essex (518 Franklin Ave., 21221). Traditional spaghetti dinner and dancing to the music of the Monaldi Brothers family band. Admission is \$20/person and a new unwrapped toy. Please call 410-687-4621 for tickets, and note that there are steps to the parish hall.

**Save the Date:** St. Luke (7001 Harford Rd., 21234) will be hosting their annual Summer Music & Arts Camp July 27<sup>th</sup>-August 4th from 9 am.-3 pm. Registration will be open in mid-late May.

**Sponsorships Needed:** Altar flowers for 5/17 & 7/12, and bulletins for 6/7. Contact the church office to sponsor.

**Clothing Shed:** St. John's, Parkville (8808 Harford Rd., 21234) has a clothing shed. Please consider donating gently used clothes, linens, shoes, belts, blankets, purses, and stuffed toys (no housewares).

**Secretary Position Available:** Part time, 20 hr./week, 4 days/week. Applicants must demonstrate proficiency in Word and PowerPoint. Applicants must also have good organizational skills, be able to work independently and with others as well as have good communication skills. Interested parties should call St. Matthew Lutheran Church office (410-335-4210).

**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***

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

**Family Fun Day** is scheduled for Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> from 12-4 pm. All are invited!