

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, July 26, 2026

Virtual Prayer and Preaching

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**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

We bless the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
living with us in love, peace, and joy,  
whose compassion and faithfulness  
are with us forever. **Amen**



We confess our sin to God, our guide and guardian.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.* Compassionate God,  
**we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot  
free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy  
and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In  
Christ's name we pray, Amen**

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy  
burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and  
Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

We gather as the people of God to hear words of grace,  
to be fed with love, and to go into the world  
to work for Christ's justice and peace. **Amen**

The Christ of God is with you. **And also with you.**  
Holy One, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* Beloved and sovereign God,  
through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your realm  
of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may  
treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12**

*Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his  
enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people  
well.*

This is a reading from 1 Kings, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God  
said, "Ask what I should give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown  
great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked  
before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart  
toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and

have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?"

It pleased the LORD that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

### **HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52**

*Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Matthew, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter. Jesus put before the crowds another parable: "The realm of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

He told them another parable: "The realm of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

"The realm of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

"Again, the realm of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

"Again, the realm of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." And Jesus said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the realm of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 793 "Be Thou My Vision"**

- 1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
- 2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,  
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
- 3 Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,  
thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,  
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- 4 Light of my soul, after victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860-1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880-1931

**MESSAGE:**        **TREASURE**        *silence for reflection follows*

**the CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

God our wisdom and our song, we pray for bishops, candidacy committees, those preparing for seminary, those awaiting call as deacons or pastors, and all who see to lead your disciples in any way. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our breath and our heartbeat, help us to recognize signs of your presence among us. Protect and support diverse eco-systems, from national parks to family farms, from ranches to wild places. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our peace and our guide, help civic leaders hear all their peoples' stories with compassion and curiosity, and remind us of your love from which we can never be separated. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our redeemer, may we trust your love above and beyond all else that distracts, annoys, frightens, exhausts, or divides us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our intercessor and our lawgiver, dismantle the barriers to care and recognition of all who live with chronic illness, mobility struggles, pain, and uncertainty. We pray for ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry, Bishop Bill Gohl, Ebenezer Grace Worship Center, St. Peter's Elementary School, those hospitalized or recuperating at home, Greg, John, Lori, Mary Lue, Bea, Fred, Joel, those participating in our Vacation Bible School, our at-home worshippers, ... God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God who seeks, finds, and saves, for our community's part in the ongoing gift of creation, and for the riches of faith and hope which came before, we give you thanks. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant race of Christ Jesus. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Seeking God's will, 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.* Gracious God, you bless us with gifts of guidance, new life, growth in grace, and fruitful labor. Accept the first fruits of time and toil that we return to you. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen**

#### **BLESSING**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God,  
bless, heal, and hold us, today and always. **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.

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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 Audrey Robinson.  
Given with love by the Mills family.

In Loving Memory of my dad on his July 31<sup>st</sup> birthday.  
Given by Doris Alkire.

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

In Loving Memory of my husband, Abert, for his birthday.
Given by Linda Heinbaugh.

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Attendance for Sunday, July 19, 2026: 26

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

**Rainforest Falls VBS** is THIS WEEK (27-30) from 6-8 pm. Registration forms are available through the church office or in the Narthex. Want to volunteer? Contact Karen Yelovich or Ashley Kane. Please pray for our volunteers and participants to have a great week!

**Sponsorships Needed:** Altar flowers for 8/2 & 9 and bulletins for 8/30. Contact the church office to sponsor.

**BRCA/Previvors Group:** This is an off-shoot of Baltimore Cancer Support Group where previvors discuss navigating the ins and outs of receiving their cancer diagnosis. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 7-8:30 pm. at St. Peter's. For more information, contact Geri (410-852-3688) or Molly (410-227-4692).

**The Chalice Circle:** Thursday, August 6th at 6 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran Church Parlor (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). The Chalice Circle is a place where you can share life experiences, make deep and lasting connections and deepen your spirituality through shared practices. This is a small group experience and we would love to have you with us. If you would be interested in learning more about joining us, please contact Jennifer Simms at 443-386-8469 or jennifersimms1@gmail.com. Refreshments will be served.

**Steak Shack Fundraiser:** Wednesday, August 12<sup>th</sup> from 10 am. – 11 pm. at Steak Shack (1 East Joppa Road, Towson, 21286). Just mention Donation Day at the register or drive-thru at checkout and 25% of your total meal purchase will be donated to Christus Victor!

**Spa Day Creations:** Saturday, August 15 from 6-7pm at Zion (400 E. Lexington St., 21202). Take a break from the busy pace of life and treat yourself to an evening of creativity and relaxation! Join us for a hands-on Bath Salt Crafting Experience and Create your own custom bath salts using all-natural, skin-approved ingredients and design a unique blend that's perfect for you. No crafting experience is necessary—just bring your creativity! Learn a simple bath salt crafting technique, create your own unique blend, choose from a variety of colors. \$25 per person, space is limited, so reserve your spot today!

**Crab Feast:** Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> from 2-6 pm. at Annapolis Evan. Lutheran (38 W. Central Ave., Edgewater, 21037). Get ready to pick some crabs while supporting the ongoing work of Lutheran Mission Society Compassion Place! Tickets are \$70 pre-purchased (\$75 at the door), \$25 for kids 9-13, and kids 8 and under are free. Call 410-636-0123 to order tickets and for more information.

**Food Truck Nights:** Wednesdays at 5pm at Ascension Lutheran (7601 York Road, 21204). Continues weekly through August.

**Brats & Beer:** Fridays July 31<sup>st</sup> and August 28<sup>th</sup> from 4-8 pm. in the Garden at Zion Lutheran (400 East Lexington Street, 21202).

**Community Yard Sale:** Saturday, September 12<sup>th</sup> from 8 am.-1 pm. at St. John's, Parkville (8808 Harford Rd., 21234). Spaces are \$20 for 1 or \$30 for 2. Vendors should bring thier own table/chairs and submit registration and payment by 9/6. Questions, contact Amanda Hartman at 443-271-3291 or amandaportera1@verizon.net.

**Secretary Position Available:** Part time, 20 hr./week, 4 days/week. Applicants must demonstrate proficiency with Microsoft Office applications, have good organizational skills, be able to work independently and with others, and 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!

### ***Summer Children's Programs & Vacation Bible Schools***

Youth Drop-Ins: Mondays from 2-4 pm. (through August 3rd) at Epiphany Lutheran Church (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206, 410-485-7654). Do you know some youth (6-12th graders) in walking distance of Epiphany? Any youth 6th grade and up are welcome to stop by. We request no use of devices (they go in a bucket on the way in) and follow reasonable instructions of adults. Games, puzzles, ping pong, books will be available. Contact the church office with any questions!

Travel to Rome – Paul & the Underground Church VBS: July 27th-31st from 11 am. – 2 pm. Christus Victor (9833 Harford Rd., 21234, 410-668-8080). For ages 4 and up. Lunch will be served.

Kids Summer Arts Camp: July 27th-August 7th (Monday-Friday) from 9 am.- 3 pm. St. Luke (7001 Harford Rd., 21234, 410-444-5171). For kids who've completed 1st-5th grades. Includes lunch & snacks, fun & creative activities, music making, dance & movement, making art, dinner & closing performance. Professional staff. Registration is \$250/student and is open now!