

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Way
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Rally Day Sunday

September 13, 2026

Virtual Prayer and Preaching

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**the CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

We bless the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who pours love into our hearts  
and healing upon the earth. **Amen**



Confident that God justifies us by grace through Christ's faithfulness,  
we confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate God, **we confess that we struggle to give witness to your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen**

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen**

**CALL to WORSHIP and PRAYER of the DAY**

Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice, **and do what is right,**  
for soon my salvation will come **and my deliverance revealed.**  
For my house shall be called **a house of prayer for all peoples.**

The God of mercy is with you. **And also with you.**

Holy One, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**READING: Romans 12:1-8**

*In response to God's merciful activity, we are to worship by living holistic, God-pleasing lives. Our values and viewpoints are not molded by the time in which we live but are transformed by the Spirit's renewing work. God's grace empowers different forms of service among Christians, but all forms of ministry function to build up the body of Christ.*

This is a reading from Romans, the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Paul writes: I appeal to you therefore, beloved ones, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

This is God's Word, the seed and soil of faith.

### **HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35**

*When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Matthew, the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another follower sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?"

Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

"For this reason the realm of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him fifty million silver coins was brought to him, and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred silver coins, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my

heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive another of my followers from your heart."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 605 "Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive"**

- 1 "Forgive our sins as we forgive,"  
you taught us, Lord, to pray;  
but you alone can grant us grace  
to live the words we say.
- 2 How can your pardon reach and bless  
the unforgiving heart  
that broods on wrongs and will not let  
old bitterness depart?
- 3 In blazing light your cross reveals  
the truth we dimly knew:  
how trifling others' debts to us;  
how great our debt to you!
- 4 Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls  
and bid resentment cease;  
then, by your mercy reconciled,  
our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905-1987, alt.; Text © Oxford University Press 1969

**MESSAGE:**            **ACCOUNTABILITY**            *silence for reflection follows*

**the CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers,  
confident that God hears us. *A brief silence.*

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Help all those who've experienced extreme weather. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Raise up leaders like John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we remember today, to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need. 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, George, Irma, the teachers, leaders, and families of St. Peter's Sunday School and Bible studies, our at-home worshippers, ... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Seeking our daily bread, 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**

Eternal God, our time, talents, and treasures are gifts from you. Receive what we offer, and all that you entrust to us, until, hungry no more, all the world is fed, through Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior. **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.

**John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, died 407**

John was a priest in Antioch and an outstanding preacher. His eloquence earned him the nickname "Chrysostom" ("golden mouth"), but it also got him into trouble. As bishop of Constantinople he preached against corruption among the royal court. The empress, who had been his supporter, sent him into exile. His preaching style emphasized the literal meaning of scripture and its practical application. This interpretation stood in contrast to the common style at the time, which emphasized the allegorical meaning of the text. Chrysostom's skill in the pulpit resulted in the description of him as the patron of preachers.

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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 my grandfather,
Ernest Grimm's September 18th birthday.
Given by his granddaughter, Carole Grimm.

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

In Loving Memory of Jim Frederick, III's birthday, September 19<sup>th</sup>.  
Given with love by Janice Frederick.

In Loving Memory of Wilhelmina Weinreich.  
Given by the Mills family.

In Honor of Donna Mills' September 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by the Volz family.

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Attendance for Sunday, September 6, 2026: 38

Learning, Serving, and Fellowship Opportunities

Commissioning of Sunday School Teachers and Study Leaders: On Sunday, September 13th at the 8:45 am. service we will be commissioning St. Peter's Sunday school teachers and study leaders. Please pray for our teachers, leaders, and students as we enter a new year learning.

St. Peter's Pet Blessing Sunday is October 4th between services. Pets are invited, as long as they behave. Pictures of pets can also be brought. We will gather on the front lawn, weather permitting.

Community Yard Sale: Saturday, September 12th 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 their own table/chairs and submit registration and payment by 9/6. Questions, contact Amanda Hartman at 443-271-3291 or amandaportera1@verizon.net.

LGBTQIA+ and Allies Potluck Dinner: Sunday, September 13th at 5 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran Church Parlor (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Bring a dish to share. Fried chicken will be provided.

Gift Card Bingo: Thursday, September 17th at 6:30 pm. (Doors open at 6 pm.) at Christus Victor (9833 Harford Rd., 21234). Admission is \$15 and includes 1 book of 15 games. Available for purchase: extra game books, special games, daubers, 50/50 raffles, concessions. Cheese or pepperoni pizza available for PREorder! Call 410-668-8089 for tickets and more information.

Flea Market: Saturday, September 19th from 8am.-1pm. at Prince of Peace (8212 Philadelphia Rd., 21237). Household items, clothes, kid's corner & retail vendors. For information or reserve a spot contact the church at 410-866-8766. All spots are at least 10'x10' (\$20 each). Breakfast available 8am.-1pm. Join us for Live Music in the picnic area 11am.-1pm. Lunch available.

Flea Market/Craft Fair: Saturday, September 19th from 8 am.-2 pm. (rain date 9/26) at St. Michael (9534 Belair Rd., 21236). We're looking for local crafters, vendors, bakers, makers, and flea market sellers to join us. If you sell handmade crafts, seasonal décor, baked goods, small-shop items, vintage finds, or unique treasures, this is a great opportunity to connect with the community and meet new customers. Vendor spaces are \$25 each. Call 410-256-6441 to register and for more information.

Annual Crab Feast: Saturday, September 26th from 2-5pm. at Christus Victor (9833 Harford Rd., 21234). Cost \$50 (or \$35 with no crabs). Menu: Steamed crabs, crab soup, pit beef, pit turkey, potato salad, macaroni salad, tomato & cucumber salad, baked beans, cole slaw, deviled eggs, Caesar salad, soda, iced tea & lemonade. BYOB. Music, quilt raffle, door prizes. Tickets on sale: August 30-September 20. Call 410-668-8089 to reserve your tickets.

Gift Card Bingo: Saturday, September 26th from 2-6 pm. (Doors open at 1:30 pm.) at St. John's, Essex (518 Franklin Ave., 21221). Admission is \$20 and includes 20 games of bingo and a Jackpot cash prize. Additional bingo cards and refreshments will be available for purchase. There will also be a 50/50 raffle. Contact the church office at 410-687-4621 for tickets and more information.

13th Annual Car Show: Sunday, October 4th from 10am-2:30pm (rain date 10/18) at Joppatowne Shopping Plaza (1006 Joppa Farm Rd. & Pulaski Hwy.). Baltimore Cancer Support Group invites you to a fun-filled afternoon for car buffs! Entry donation is \$20 with registration from 10am-12pm the day of the event. Food and concessions by Towne Grille & Pub, 50/50, raffles, and door prizes.

Designer Bag & Gift Card Bingo: Sunday, October 4th (doors open at 12 pm., games begin at 1 pm.) at Epiphany Lutheran Church (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Prizes include bags, gift cards, raffles, specials, 50/50! \$25/person. Lunch and snacks available for purchase. Call 410-485-7654 for tickets.

A Golden Hour of Melodies: Saturday, October 10th from 4-5 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran Church (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Enjoy a private concert of singer/songwriter favorites by our talented music director, Tate Armstrong. A free-will offering will be collected to benefit the church's music fund.

Fall Dance: Saturday, November 7th from 6-10 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran Church (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Due to popular demand, Epiphany will host a Fall Dance featuring "Sound Storm" a dynamic band playing your favorite Motown, R&B, rock and funk hits. Tickets are \$25. Attendees should be 21 and over and are welcome to bring their own bottle or food. Reserve your tickets early! Contact Amber at 443-579-5191.

Merry & Bright Vendor & Craft Fair: Saturday, November 14th from 9 am.-2 pm. at St. John's, Essex (518 Franklin Ave., 21221). This great event features the Yuletide Tree Jubilee, where you can take a chance to win your favorite decorated tree! For more information contact the church office at 410-687-4621.

Christmas Bazaar: Saturday, November 21st at Epiphany Lutheran (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Vendors needed – contact Linda Cruzs at 443-500-7549 or email lindadruzs116@gmail.com. Vendor spaces are \$20 each and include a 6' table.

Ann's Toy Closet Cookie Walk: Saturday, November 28th from 9 am.-2 pm. at St. John's, Essex (518 Franklin Ave., 21221). Stroll through tables of delicious cookies, fill a container full and take home to enjoy!

34th Annual Bull Roast Fundraiser for Baltimore Cancer Support Group is Saturday, November 7th from 7:30pm-midnight at Columbus Gardens (4301 Klosterman Ave., 21236). Menu includes oysters, pit beef/ham/turkey, entrees, salads, dessert, and beer and soda (or BYOB). Music by DJ Danny Jahn, cash bar, door prizes, auction, raffles, and photo booth! Tickets are \$65 per person and can be purchased through PayPal. No tickets will be sold at the door. Contact Geri Booker (410-852-3688) or Karen Haughey (410-960-1148).

Christmas Bazaar: Saturday, November 21st from 9am-2pm at Epiphany Lutheran (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Vendors and crafters wanted! \$20 for 6' table. Space is limited. Email LindaGruzs116@gmail.com or call 443-500-7549.

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).

St. Peter's Family Goods Center: We are just about ready to restock the FGC! Repairs from the flood damage are almost complete. 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. 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

It's not too late to enroll your child for the 2026-27 school year! Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions or want to schedule a tour. Referrals are always welcome!