

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

December 24, 2025, *Virtual Preaching and Prayer*

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Congregation responses in **BOLD**

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The CHURCH'S GATHERING

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

We gather together with the holy Trinity, Almighty Father,
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, ☩ Prince of Peace. **Amen**



Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection. Reconciling God,

we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair.
We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for
your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.

We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear.
We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our
participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our
reluctance to embody your good news.

Blessed Jesus, be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful
song of your salvation. Amen

God's grace upon grace flows over you. Christ's presence ☩ redeems the
whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
Alleluia and Amen!

GATHERING HYMN

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

- 1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!
- 2 The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!
- 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880,
sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY

The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God
sent from heaven above, is with you all. **And also with you.**

Almighty God, Leader of the Heavenly Hosts, **hear our prayer.**

A brief silence. All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into
our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness,
and empower us to proclaim the birth of 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: Isaiah 52:7-10

*Isaiah proclaims news of great joy: "Your God reigns!" Just as God saved the
people from oppression in Egypt, God delivers Israel from exile. All the earth
will witness the saving acts of God.*

The prophet Isaiah proclaims comfort for Israel, in chapter 52.

How beautiful upon the mountains

are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news, who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,

together they sing for joy;

for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem;

for the LORD has comforted his people,

God has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared his holy arm

before the eyes of all the nations;

and all the ends of the earth shall see

the salvation of our God.

This is God's Word and our life.

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14 *Common English Bible*

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

This is a reading from the letter to Titus, chapter 2.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people. It educates us so that we can live sensible, ethical, and godly lives right now by rejecting ungodly lives and the desires of this world. At the same time we wait for the blessed hope and the glorious appearance of our great God and savior Jesus Christ. He gave himself for us in order to rescue us from every kind of lawless behavior, and cleanse a special people for himself who are eager to do good actions.

This is God's Word and our life.

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20 *New Testament for Everyone*

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

This is the Good News of the Nativity of Our Savior Jesus Christ,
as the Word was given to Luke, in the 2nd chapter.

At that time a decree was issued by Augustus Caesar: a census was to be taken of the whole world. (This was the first census, before the one when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) So everyone set off to be registered, each to their own town. Joseph too, who belonged to the house and family of David, went from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judaea, David's city, to be registered with his fiancée Mary, who was pregnant.

So that's where they were when the time came for her to have her baby; and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him up and put him to rest in a feeding-trough, because there was no room for them in the normal living quarters.

There were shepherds in that region, out in the open, keeping a night watch around their flock. An angel of the Lord stood in front of them. The glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

"Don't be afraid," the angel said to them. "Look: I've got good news for you, news which will make everybody very happy. Today a savior has been born for you—the Messiah, the Lord!—in David's town. This will be the sign for you: you'll find the baby wrapped up, and lying in a feeding-trough."

Suddenly, with the angel, there was a crowd of the heavenly armies. They were praising God, saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,
and peace upon earth among those in God's favor."

So when the angels had gone away again into heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Well then; let's go to Bethlehem and see what it's all about, all this that the Lord has told us."

So they hurried off, and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the feeding-trough. When they saw it, they told them what had been said to them about this child. And all the people who heard it were amazed at the things the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured all these things and mused over them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told to them.

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

MESSAGE **Witnesses!** *silence for reflection follows*

HYMN of the DAY **"Silent Night, Holy Night!"**

- 1 Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
 round yon virgin mother and child.
 Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
 sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2 Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
 glories stream from heaven afar,
 heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
 Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!
- 3 Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
 radiant beams from your holy face,
 with the dawn of redeeming grace,
 Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885

The CHURCH PRAYS

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, we pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us, bringing life, love, and joy to a weary world. Gracious God, use our lips and our lives to proclaim the good news of your coming. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The earth rejoices and the coastlands are glad on the day of your birth. Bring life to barren wastelands, healing where we have caused harm, and bold hearts to respond to creation's call for justice. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Righteousness and justice are your foundation, O Holy One. Fill world leaders with your zeal for righteousness and your love for any who are marginalized and oppressed. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The heavens proclaim your glory and announce that we have been made your own people. Keep watch over all who are spending this holy day alone, alienated, or ill. Listen to the hope of our hearts for our loved ones in need Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Light dawns for the righteous and joy visits the upright in heart. Fortify us with your grace and fill us with zeal to proclaim the news of your birth to those who long for love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

From the nurturing darkness of the womb to the tender night of the tomb, you enfold us in your love. We remember with affection those who have died and now rest in your eternal embrace, as we bring them to heart... Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

As we await his birth among us, 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**

PRAYER for MISSION

We pray for the strength to do the works of love God sends us to do. *A brief silence.* Incarnate God, you are among us at this gathering. May we treasure the gifts you offer so freely and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. Amen

BLESSING and PEACE

The Holy One fill you with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. **Amen**

The angels declare: "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom God favors!"
The peace of Christ is always with you. **And also with you.**

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***Tonight's Sponsors***

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Altar Flowers are Given to the Glory of God

In Loving Memory of Marie Sueck for her December 24th birthday.
Given by Terri and Rich Murphy.

Rose Vase

In Loving Memory of Hazel Matz's December 24th birthday.
Given by her son-in-law, Jerry.

Rose Vase

In Loving Memory of Madeline Thrift's December 24th birthday.
Given by her family.

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*Worship Folders are Given to the Glory of God*

To Honor our Savior's birthday.  
We wish everyone a happy and blessed Christmas.  
Given by the Mills family.

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Announcements

***The staff of St. Peter's Lutheran Church & Elementary School
wish you all a very merry and blessed Christmas and New Year!***

Christmas Holiday Closing: The church office and St. Peter's Elementary School will be closed from 12/22/25-1/2/26, reopening on Monday, January 5th.

Poinsettias: Thank you to everyone who sponsored poinsettias to decorate our altar! Plants may be picked up after each Christmas Eve worship service. Please initial the "pick-up" paper on the lectern when you take your plants. Plants remaining after January 4th will be given to a good home.