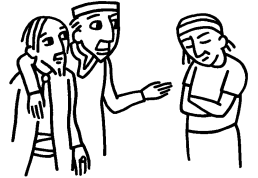


St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship
Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 30, 2025

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**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**



**WELCOME** *Theme of the day, Prayer concerns, & Praise time:*

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

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

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love. *Silence is kept for reflection.* Compassionate One,  
**you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen**

Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In † Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever. **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

God's abundant mercy, love, and strength  
are with you always. **And also with you.**

Holy God, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, 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**

**HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

*Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Luke, the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.' So he divided his assets between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living.

When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to his senses he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' "

So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.'

Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!'

Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 779 "Amazing Grace"**

- 1     Amazing grace! how sweet the sound  
      that saved a wretch like me!  
      I once was lost, but now am found;  
      was blind, but now I see.
- 2     'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
      and grace my fears relieved;  
      how precious did that grace appear  
      the hour I first believed!
- 3     Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
      I have already come;  
      'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
      and grace will lead me home.
- 4     The Lord has promised good to me;  
      his word my hope secures;  
      he will my shield and portion be  
      as long as life endures.
- 5     When we've been there ten thousand years,  
      bright shining as the sun,  
      we've no less days to sing God's praise  
      than when we'd first begun.

Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt., sts. 1-4; anonymous, st. 5

**MESSAGE: ABUNDANCE**

*silence for reflection follows*

**The CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need. *A brief silence.*

God of faithful promise, make your church a new creation in Christ. As you reconcile us to yourself, guide us also in your way of reconciliation, that through confession and forgiveness, repentance and reparations, your church may bear witness to your love. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of new beginnings, restore balance to the earth. Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of prodigal grace, unite the nations as fellow members of the human family. Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

God of radical inclusion, widen human circles to welcome all who are excluded. Bless the work of disability ministries, ministries by and with neurodivergent people, and multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries; that the welcome of Jesus be extended to all. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

God of boundless love, receive with open arms any in need of compassion. Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. We pray for John, Greg, Lori, Mary Lue, Joe, George, the Kiley and Gadsby families, our at-home worshippers, ... God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died. We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found. God, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

We pray for Christ's forgiveness, as he has 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, 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**

God our tender parent, God the crucified one,  
God † the reconciling Spirit, bless you now  
and forever. **Amen**

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At the time of this writing, please keep the following in your prayers: ELCA
Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Synod Bishop Bill Gohl, those hospitalized or at
home recuperating, and our at-home worshippers.

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Attendance for March 23, 2025: 35

## ***Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities***

**Lent 2025:** Lent mid-week services will continue on Wednesdays, at 11:30 am. in Grace Chapel, through April 9th. Our gatherings will be followed by fellowship and lite lunch. If you're staying for lunch, please bring your sandwich, we'll provide the drinks and side dish. Pr. Lans will upload a mid-week message on our YouTube channel and Facebook page in lieu of an evening mid-week service.

**Sponsorships Available:** Altar flowers for 8:45 am. worship on 4/6 & 27, and bulletins on 4/20 (contact the church office). Altar flowers for 10:15 am. worship on 4/6 (contact Nancy Barnes).

**Prayer Group:** AH! The Fruit of the Month is the Spirit of GENTLENESS — Awesome! The spring brings soft, gentle breezes, and the daffodils, tulips, and fragrant hyacinths peek gently through the soil!! As always, we love to hear your thoughts about Gentleness working in our lives. We'll try to be gentle when we pick your brain, lol! Join us on Wednesday, April 2 @ 11 am, in Grace Chapel (lower level, elevator access) followed by a brief Lenten service & lite lunch. Bring a sandwich (drinks & side provided) as we gather around the Lenten table.

**Indoor Flea Market:** April 5 & 6 from 9 am.-noon at Prince of Peace Lutheran (8212 Philadelphia Rd., 21237). Everything must go!

**Easter Egg Hunt:** Saturday, April 12th from 10-11:30 am. at St. John's, Parkville (8808 Harford Rd., 21234). The egg hunt begins at 11 am. Ages 2-5th grade are welcome to crafts, games, storytime, and the egg hunt – rain or shine! Bring your basket or bag. For more information, call 410-665-1234.

**Easter Egg Hunt:** Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 pm. at St. Luke's (7001 Harford Rd., 21234). Enjoy the hunt along with crafts, snacks, and prizes. For more details, call Kim at 443-415-5824.

**Designer Purse Bingo:** Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at St. Luke's (7001 Harford Rd., 21234). Doors open at noon and games begin at 1 pm. Tickets are \$25/person in advance or \$30 at the door. There will be 20 games of regular bingo, specials, door prizes, and a 50/50. Food and drinks will be available for sales; BYO beer or wine. To purchase tickets or for more information, contact Kim at 443-415-5824 or the church office at 410-444-5171.

**Neighbor In Need:** There is a nearby neighbor who is in need of someone to do minor repairs and ongoing work (ie., yard work, light cleaning, food shopping, etc.). If you are able and interested in helping, please contact Joy in the office (410-665-7300) for contact information.

**Clothes Needed:** Lutheran Mission Society's Compassion Place HQ is in need of children's clothes and men's large clothes. Donations can be dropped off at 601 Hammonds Ln., 21225.

**Studio Apartment for Rent:** First floor of a two-story brick house. Studio has two-rooms, includes full bathroom and a full kitchen. It has a private laundry room/utility room and a parking pad. Rent includes utilities: heat, air conditioning, water & internet. Security Deposit \$1,250 and first month's rent \$1,250 due up front. Located in Parkville section of Baltimore. Interested: 410-444-5171.

**For every NEW regular deposit account** opened at Eastern Savings Bank (Fullerton branch only) St. Peter's Lutheran Church receives \$5! Visit the Fullerton branch at 4113 Wholesale Club Drive, Suite 130 or go to EasternSavingsBank.com.

**On-line Giving:** As an alternate way of submitting your offering, you can make donations 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.

### ***News from St. Peter's Elementary School***

Please welcome Mrs. April Blahut, the new principal of St. Peter's Elementary School! An introductory letter from Mrs. Blahut is available from the school office (410-665-4521).

Enrollment for the 2025-26 school year has begun! Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions, want to schedule a tour, or to register. Referrals are always welcome!

Art Show & Science Fair on Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. SPES is excited to present artwork and science projects completed by our students! The show and fair follow a brief PACE meeting that begins at 6:30 pm.

Chuck E. Cheese night, Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>! More details to come.