

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, July 5, 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.* You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**READING: Zechariah 9:9-12**

*The coming messianic king will inaugurate an era of disarmament and prosperity. Because of God's covenant with Israel, the people are designated as "prisoners of hope."*

This is a reading from the prophet Zechariah, the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter.  
Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!  
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!  
See, your king comes to you;  
triumphant and victorious is he,

humble and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.  
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim  
and the war horse from Jerusalem;  
and the battle bow shall be cut off,  
and he shall command peace to the nations;  
his dominion shall be from sea to sea  
and from the River to the ends of the earth.  
As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,  
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.  
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;  
today I declare that I will restore to you double.  
This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

**HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30**

*Jesus chides people who find fault with both his ministry and that of John the Baptist.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Matthew, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter. Jesus spoke to the crowd saying: "To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;  
we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

"For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Humanity came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

Then Jesus began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?

No, you will be brought down to Hades.

"For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you."

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 697 "Just a Closer Walk with Thee"**

*Refrain*

Just a closer walk with thee,  
grant it, Jesus, is my plea;  
daily walking close to thee,  
let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

1 I am weak but thou art strong:  
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;  
I'll be satisfied as long  
as I walk, let me walk close to thee. *Refrain*

2 Through this world of toil and snares,  
if I falter, Lord, who cares?  
Who with me my burden shares?  
None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. *Refrain*

3 When my feeble life is o'er,  
time for me will be no more;  
guide me gently, safely o'er  
to thy kingdom shore, to thy shore. *Refrain*

Text: North American traditional

**MESSAGE:**            **HUMILITY**            *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.*

Gathering God, send your Spirit on the church you have called out from every nation. Knit us together into one body and heal the divisions we have caused. Overcome our timidity to witness and act in the public square when your purpose is being thwarted. Bless rostered and lay leaders with clarity and courage as they center your people in the gospel. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

All your works praise you, O God. From the Arctic to the Caribbean, from the Atlantic to the western islands, these lands and waters have sustained its

peoples over many centuries. As we take our part in creation's praise, revive our wonder at what you have fashioned, and enliven our will to ensure its health for future generations. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Holy Trinity, you show us the splendor of diversity and the beauty of unity in your own divine life. We come from many nations with many languages; make us a united people that delights in our many different gifts. As the United States of America marks its declaration of independence, give those whom we have entrusted with authority the spirit of wisdom, and curb every abuse of that trust, so that both here and abroad, justice, humility, and peace may flourish. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our guide, we do not always have the strength to do the good we wish to do. Free us from the cycles of violence that bind us, that all know your liberation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You are the Mother of exiles, O God. Extend your arms to all who are tired, who live with poverty, the tempest-tossed, all who yearn to breathe free. Embrace people seeking refuge; those incarcerated, detained, or disappeared; and neighbors fearing those they once trusted. Give healing and hope to people in any oppression and need, especially these we name before you now. 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, our at-home worshippers, ... God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We remember before you those who have died in every generation: Jan Hus, executed for protesting the ecclesial system; Benedict, teacher of a prayerful life; and those who have died ensuring the freedoms of this country: people in the armed services, peace officers, advocates, and activists. (*Here specific names may be mentioned.*) Gather us, together with those who have gone before us (*especially*), and with saints of every tribe and nation, into the holy city you have prepared. 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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National Songs & Statements for the 250th Year of US Independence

SONG: “My Country, Tis of Thee”

- 1 My country, 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty, Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died, Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From ev'ry mountainside Let freedom ring!
- 2 Our fathers' God to Thee, Author of liberty, To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright, With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by Thy might, Great God our King.

Declaration of Independence
In Congress, July 4, 1776

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,
When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. ...We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States....

SONG: "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory"

- 1 Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
he is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
he has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword:
his truth is marching on.

Refrain:

Glory, glory! Hallelujah! Glory, glory! Hallelujah!
Glory, glory! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

- 2 In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
with a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me.
As he died to make men holy, let us live to make men free,
while God is marching on. *Refrain*

The Constitution's Preamble

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

SONG: "Now Thank We All Our God"

- 1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.
- 2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt – "Four Freedoms"

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is **freedom of speech and expression**—everywhere in the world.

The second is **freedom of every person to worship God in their own way**—everywhere in the world.

The third is **freedom from want**—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is **freedom from fear**—which, translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

January 6, 1941, Washington, D.C.

SONG: "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

Lift ev'ry voice and sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith
that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope
that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr – "I Have a Dream" [adapted]

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you today my friends — so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi — from every mountainside.

Let freedom ring. And when this happens — and when we allow freedom to ring — from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children — black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics — will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

August 28, 1963, Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C.

SONG: #888 "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies" all stanzas

- 1 O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,
for purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain:
America! America! God shed his grace on thee,
and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea.
- 2 O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,
who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life:
America! America! May God thy gold refine,
till all success be nobleness, and ev'ry gain divine.
- 3 O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years
thine alabaster cities gleam, undimmed by human tears:
America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw,
confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law.

Text: Katherine L. Bates, 1859-1929

A Prayer for the Nation [from "A Prayer Book for the Armed Services"]
Almighty God, you have given us this good land as our heritage.

**Make us always remember your generosity
and constantly do your will.**

Bless our land with honesty in the workplace,
truth in education, and honor in daily life.

Save us from violence, discord, and confusion;

**from pride and arrogance;
and from every evil course of action.**

When times are prosperous, **let our hearts be thankful;**
and, in troubled times, **do not let our trust in you fail.**

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Go in peace. Seek liberty and justice for all!

We give our thanks to God! Amen

Today's Sponsorships

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

In Loving Memory of my mother, Vi Grimm,  
for her July 6<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by her daughter, Carole Grimm.

In Honor of our Goddaughter, Tabby's birthday.  
Given by Cathy and Mark McQuade.

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

In Loving Memory of Grace Dohmeier
for her July 5th birthday.
Given by her husband, Jerry Dohmeier.

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Attendance for Sunday, June 28, 2026: 23

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

**The church office will be closed on Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> and Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup>.**

**Rainforest Falls VBS:** July 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 pm. at St. Peter's. See attached registration form.

**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).

**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.

**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](mailto:jennifersimms1@gmail.com). Refreshments will be served.

**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!

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

**Brats and Beer:** Fridays from 4-8 pm. in the Garden at Zion Lutheran (400 East Lexington Street, 21202) Continues monthly through August.

**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 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 and 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!

David VBS: July 10th from 5:30-7:30 pm. – Kick-off party with a movie about David. July 11th from 10 am.-3 pm. – Crafts, games, and learn more about the David story. Second Presbyterian Church (4200 St. Paul Street). Children from 4 years old to those who've just completed 5th grade are welcome to attend. A \$10 donation per child is requested. For more

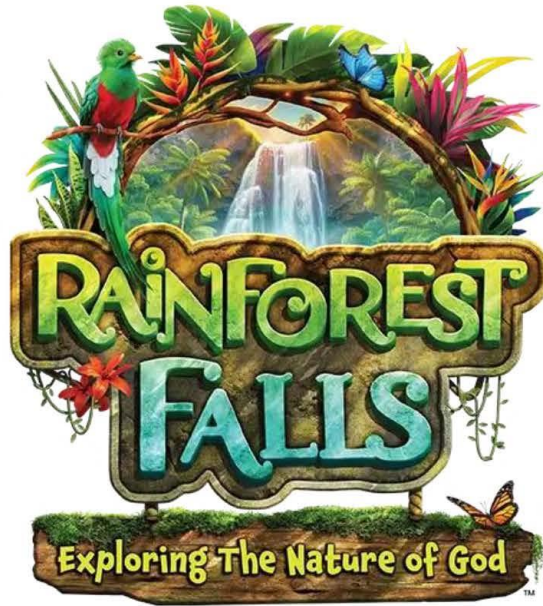
information and to register go to: <https://secondpresby.org/vbs-2026-registration/>.

Travel to Rome – Paul and 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 and snacks, fun and creative activities, music making, dance and movement, making art, dinner and closing performance. Professional staff. Registration is \$250/student and is open now!

# St. Peter's Lutheran

July 27 - 30, 2026  
6:00pm to 8:00pm  
All children welcome



Click the QR code  
to register online  
or complete form  
below



**Complete one form per child attending or teen/adult volunteering  
e-mail to [kyelovich@spesmd.org](mailto:kyelovich@spesmd.org) or return to  
St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 7910 Belair Road, Baltimore, MD 21236. (410-665-7300)**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone# \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Entering \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies/Medical Conditions/Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Adult #1: Name \_\_\_\_\_ email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Cell or Work # \_\_\_\_\_

Best way to contact: Home \_\_\_ Cell/Work \_\_\_ email \_\_\_ **\*\*I would like to volunteer M T W Th**

Adult #2: Name \_\_\_\_\_ email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Cell or Work # \_\_\_\_\_

Best way to contact: Home \_\_\_ Cell/Work \_\_\_ email \_\_\_ **\*\*I would like to volunteer M T W Th**

We are: \_\_\_ Members of St. Peter's \_\_\_ Sunday School participant \_\_\_ School affiliate  
 \_\_\_ Members of another church Name of church: \_\_\_\_\_