

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
16th Sunday after Pentecost, Harvest Time ~ Rally Day

September 8, 2024 – 8:45am

Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship

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**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

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

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

*We make the sign of the cross, which was marked on us at baptism.*

We bless the holy Trinity, Sovereign, Savior † and Spirit,

who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen**

In hope, we confess our sin and come to God for healing.

*Silence is kept for reflection.* Gracious God, have mercy on us. **We confess**

**that we have honored you with our lips, but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues. The cravings at war within us cause conflicts and disputes. In our desire to be first we make distinctions among ourselves. We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last. In your great mercy, forgive us our sins. Draw near to us with grace in time of need, and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Savior. Amen**

God promises to forgive our iniquity and to remember our sin no more. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, the source of eternal healing, your sins are forgiven. **Amen**

**CALL to WORSHIP** *from James, ch 1*

Every good gift, every perfect gift, comes from above.

**These gifts come down from the Father,  
the creator of the heavenly lights,  
in whose character there is no change at all.**

God chose to give us birth by the true word,  
and here is the result: **we are like the first crop  
from the harvest of everything God created. Amen**

**PRAYER of the DAY**

Holy God, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## **GOD'S WORD**

### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-9a**

*The image of the servant of the Lord is one of the notable motifs in the book of Isaiah. Today's reading describes the mission of the servant, whom early Christians associated with Jesus. Like Jesus, the servant does not strike back at his detractors but trusts in God's steadfast love.*

This is a responsive reading from the prophet Isaiah, the 50<sup>th</sup> chapter.

The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.

Morning by morning God wakens—

wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord GOD has opened my ear,

and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me,

and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord GOD helps me;

therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,

and I know that I shall not be put to shame;

the One who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me.

It is the Lord GOD who helps me;

who will declare me guilty?

This is the Word of God, word of life.

### **SECOND READING: James 3:1-12 Contemporary English Version**

*This text uses various images to illustrate how damaging and hurtful the way we speak to and about others can be. Not only are we to control our speech, but what we say and how we say it are to reflect our faith.*

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

My friends, we should not all try to become teachers. In fact, teachers will be judged more strictly than others. All of us do many wrong things. But if you can control your tongue, you are mature and able to control your whole body.

By putting a bit into the mouth of a horse, we can turn the horse in different directions. It takes strong winds to move a large sailing ship, but the captain uses only a small rudder to make it go in any direction. Our tongues are small too, and yet they brag about big things.

It takes only a spark to start a forest fire! The tongue is like a spark. It is an evil power that dirties the rest of the body and sets a person's entire life

on fire with flames that come from hell itself. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and sea creatures can be tamed and have been tamed. But our tongues get out of control. They are restless and evil, and always spreading deadly poison.

My dear friends, with our tongues we speak both praises and curses. We praise our Lord and Father, and we curse people who were created to be like God, and this isn't right. Can clean water and dirty water both flow from the same spring? Can a fig tree produce olives or a grapevine produce figs? Does fresh water come from a well full of salt water?

This is the Word of God, word of life.

**HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 8:27-38**

*This story provides the turning point in Mark's gospel. Peter is the first human being in the narrative to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, but he cannot accept that as the Messiah Jesus will have to suffer. Moreover, Jesus issues a strong challenge to all by connecting discipleship and the cross.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Mark, the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Jesus called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**MESSAGE: Wisdom** (silence for reflection follows)

**HYMN of the DAY: # 810 "O Jesus, I Have Promised"**

- 1 O Jesus, I have promised  
to serve you to the end;  
remain forever near me,  
my master and my friend.  
I shall not fear the battle  
if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway  
if you will be my guide.
- 2 Oh, let me feel you near me;  
the world is ever near.  
I see the sights that dazzle,  
the tempting sounds I hear.  
My foes are ever near me,  
around me and within;  
but, Jesus, then draw nearer  
to shield my soul from sin.
- 3 Oh, let me hear you speaking  
in accents clear and still  
above the storms of passion,  
the murmurs of self-will.  
Now speak to reassure me,  
to hasten or control;  
now speak and make me listen,  
O Guardian of my soul.
- 4 O Jesus, you have promised  
to all who follow you  
that where you are in glory  
your servant shall be too.  
And Jesus, I have promised  
to serve you to the end;  
oh, give me grace to follow,  
my master and my friend.

Text: John E. Bode, 1816-1874, alt.

**The CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

We pray for the church throughout the world. Form us into communities of forgiveness and grace. Help us to notice where you are calling us into new relationships, and give us courage to embrace the uncomfortable and unfamiliar. Hear us, O God. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the earth and all its inhabitants. Protect lands at risk of wildfire and heal dying forests. Where fire brings destruction, raise up new growth. Guide us in tending precarious ecosystems. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for those who govern nations, tribes, and cities. Open them to the cries of people in need. Direct them in shaping policies that prioritize the health and well-being of all who struggle with hunger and housing insecurity. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all who are ill, all who are lonely or anxious, and all who grieve. Draw them close to you and soothe them with the promise of your enduring love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for teachers, professors, librarians, school administrators, staff, and all who support the education of young people. Sustain them as they shape learning communities, rooted in equity and authenticity. We pray for children of all ages in their learning. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We especially pray for John, Greg, Genevieve, Mary Lou, Doris, Irma, Bärbel, Angela, Lori, our Sunday school and Elementary School staff and families, our at-home worshippers, ... Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We remember our beloved dead, who with the great cloud of witnesses bear witness to your saving grace. Accompany us in our pilgrimage of faith, that we too place our hope and trust in you. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

With the confidence of the children of God, 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.* Send us now to welcome others and to be at peace with one another, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

**BLESSING and PEACE**

Receive the blessing. *A brief silence.*

God all mighty, God most merciful  
bless you, keep you, ☩ and give you peace. **Amen**

The peace of Christ is always with you. **And also with you.**

*Please greet your household and friends online with Peace.*

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

In Honor of Amy Williams
for her September 14th birthday.
Given by her mother, Marcia Darney.

In Honor of my daughter, Sharyn Diepold's
September 11th birthday.
Love, Mom.

In Loving Memory of my husband, Frank,
on our September 8, 1963 anniversary.
Given by Doris Alkire.

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

In Honor of Fred Volz for his September 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by his wife, Lois Volz, and family.

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Attendance for September 1, 2024: 28

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

Rally Day Sunday is Sunday, September 8th! Join us in celebrating a new year of learning with the installation of our Sunday school teachers and staff at the 8:45 am. worship, and installation of the St. Peter’s ES teachers and staff, school board members, and PACE officers at the 10:15 am. worship. Students attending may bring their backpacks for a special blessing (both services).

Church Office Hours: Regular hours are Monday-Friday from 9am-3pm.

Sponsorships Available: 2 flower sponsorships for 9:30 am. service on 9/29, and bulletins on 9/29 (contact the church office). Flowers for 10:15 am. service on 9/22 (contact Nancy Barnes).

Hiding in Plain Sight is a youth mental awareness documentary that will be presented in 2 parts on Saturday, October 5th at Christus Victor Lutheran (9833 Harford Rd., 21234) beginning at 10:30 am. Counselors will be in attendance as the content of the documentary may evoke strong, emotional reactions. Attendees under 18 years of age must have a parent/guardian in attendance. To register, contact the church at 410-668-8089.

11th Annual Car Show: Sunday, October 6th from 10 am.-2 pm. (rain date 10/20) at Joppatowne Plaza (Rt. 40/Pulaski Hwy. and Joppa Farm Rd.). Music by DJ Danny and food by Town Grill & Pub. Proceeds benefit Baltimore Cancer Support Group. For more information or to register your car, call Geri at 410-852-3688 or baltimorecancersupportgroup.org.

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.

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**News from St. Peter’s Elementary School**

Enrollment for the 2024-25 school year continues. Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions, want to schedule a tour, or to register. Referrals are always welcome!

PACE/Church Picnic is Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> after the 10:15 am. worship. Bring a favorite dish to share. All are welcome to come!