

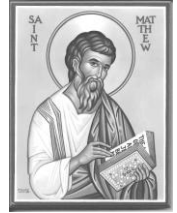
ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, MATTHEW, Apostle & Evangelist

September 21, 2025

Virtual Prayer and Preaching

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



**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

We bless the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
our maker, our helper, and our keeper. **Amen**

Trusting in God's mercy, we confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence is kept for reflection.* Merciful and loving God,  
**we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the needy. We grumble about your grace to others. We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen**

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of ☩ Jesus, your sins are forgiven! **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Holy Spirit, come; **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* God among us, we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**FIRST READING: Amos 8:4-7** *Contemporary English Version*  
*Amos was called by God to prophesy in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Peace and prosperity in Israel led to corrupt business practices and oppression of the poor. The prophet declares that God will not tolerate such a situation.*

This is a responsive reading from the prophet Amos, chapter 8.  
You people crush those in need and wipe out the poor.

You say to yourselves, "**How much longer**  
**before the end of the New Moon Festival?**

**When will the Sabbath be over?**

Our wheat is ready, and we want to sell it now.

We can't wait to cheat and charge high prices  
for the grain we sell.

**We will use dishonest scales  
and mix dust in the grain.**

Those who are needy and poor don't have any money.

**We will make them our slaves for the price  
of a pair of sandals."**

I, the LORD, won't forget any of this,  
**though you take great pride  
in your ancestor Jacob.**

This is God's Word, our hope.

### **SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 2:1-7**

*The pastoral epistles offer insight into how early Christians understood many practical matters, such as church administration and worship. The church's focused prayer for others is an expression of the single-minded passion God has toward us in Jesus.*

This is a reading from Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> letter to Timothy, chapter 2.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For

**there is one God;  
there is also one mediator between God and humankind,  
Christ Jesus, himself human,  
who gave himself a ransom for all**

—this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

This is God's Word, our hope.

### **HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 16:1-13**

*Jesus tells the curious story of a dishonest manager who cheats his employer and then is commended by him for having acted so shrewdly. Jesus wonders why his own followers are less creative and diligent in their stewardship given that they are managers of a far more valuable household.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Luke, the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter. Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.'

Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.'

So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.'

He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.'

Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.'

He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.'

And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

This is the Good News of Christ's victory!

### **HYMN of the DAY: # 793 "Be Thou My Vision"**

- 1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
- 2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,  
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
- 3 Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,  
thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,  
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- 4 Light of my soul, after victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860-1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880-1931

**MESSAGE:**        **What to Do**        *silence for reflection follows*

**The CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need. *A brief silence.*

O God, teach your church to act in solidarity with the poor, frustrating the efforts of those who trample on the needy and practicing justice in our own life and community. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Almighty Creator, we pray for an end to the misuse of the earth and its resources, that all people may benefit from your abundant gifts and that our stewardship of creation would be marked by justice and sustainability. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Holy One, embolden elected leaders to pursue policies of economic justice for the benefit of all, especially those who are most vulnerable and marginalized. Persuade them by your example of generosity and compassion. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

God of love, motivate our congregation to enact economic justice through tangible action, prioritizing the needs of our community and sharing resources generously through our outreach and justice ministries. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, we pray for all facing illness, those near death, or those grieving the loss of loved ones. May they find comfort and strength in your love. Prepare us to surround them with your healing care. We pray for ELCA Bishop Elect Yehiel Curry and Secretary Rev. CeCee Mills, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Bill Gohl, Ebenezer Grace Worship, those hospitalized or recuperating at home, John, Greg, Lori, Mary Lue, Lynn, our at-home worshippers, ... God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Gracious God, we give thanks for the saints especially Matthew and all who now join the heavenly chorus in praising your name. Lift us up from the dust of grief and remind us of your promise of new life. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. **Amen**

**OFFERING PRAYER for MISSION**

Holy Spirit, come; **hear our prayer**. *A brief silence.* Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

So that all the world may be fed, 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**

**BLESSING and PEACE**

The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed,  
who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free,  
bless ☩ you now and forever. **Amen**

*Paul wrote:* "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance,  
that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

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

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### **Matthew, Apostle & Evangelist**

Matthew ("Levi" in the gospels of Mark and Luke) was a tax collector for the Roman government in Capernaum. Tax collectors were distrusted because they were dishonest and worked as agents for a foreign ruler, the occupying Romans. In the gospels, tax collectors are mentioned as sinful and despised outcasts, but it was these outcasts to whom Jesus showed his love. Mathew's name means "gift of the Lord." Since the second century, tradition has attributed the first gospel to him.

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Today's Sponsorships

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*Altar Flowers are Given to the Glory of God*

In Honor of  
Dustin Tanasescu's birthday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>.  
Given by the Heinbaugh family.

In Celebration of my 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by Nancy Barnes.

### *Rose Vase*

In Honor of Harlan Donald Read  
for his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday, September 27<sup>th</sup>.  
Given by his grandmother, Patty Read.

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Worship Folders are Given to the Glory of God

In Loving Memory of
Lorraine Volz's September 23rd birthday.
Given by the Volz family.

In Honor of our granddaughter,
Alaina Mills' 1st birthday, September 24th.
Given with love by LaLa and Pop.

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Attendance for September 14, 2025: 31

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

**Prayer Group:** We are gathering at 11 am. in Grace Chapel (lower level, elevator access) on Wednesday, October 1<sup>st</sup> Our prayers and discussion will cover "whatever is TRUE." Please plan to join us – **ALL are welcome!**

**SPES Open House:** Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 pm. If you, or someone you know, is looking for quality Christian education, please plan to attend!

**Fall Festival:** Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at Prince of Peace (8212 Philadelphia Rd., 21237), weather permitting. The event also features a community flea market and craft vendors. Spaces are available for \$20. For more information or to obtain a space, contact the office at 410-866-8766 or Linda DeJong at bldejong@verizon.net.

**Pot Luck Dinner:** Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). All are invited and to get to know each other at the dinner event hosted by LGBTQ+ Friends & Allies. Fried chicken will be provided, please provide a side dish or dessert. For more information, contact Mary Catherine at 443-743-4717.

**Beachmont Corn Maze:** SPES invites you to join them at the Beachmont Corn Maze on Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup> from 5-9 pm. at Beachmont (6433 Mt. Vista Rd., Kingsville, 21087). Admission is \$18/person (guests 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult). Enjoy Beachmont's 6+ acre corn maze, hayride, carnival games, and more! Concessions are also available for purchase.

**12<sup>th</sup> Annual Car Show:** Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> from 10a-2:30p at Joppatowne Plaza (on the corner of Rt. 40 and Joppa Farm Rd.). Baltimore Cancer Support Group invites you to stroll down memory lane and browse through cars from yesteryear to today! Raffles, 50/50 and door prizes available, food by Towne Grill & Pub, and music by DJ Danny. Rain date is 10/12.

**Designer Bag Bingo:** Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> from 12-4pm. at Epiphany Lutheran (4301 Raspe Ave., 2106). This annual fundraiser features designer bags, raffles, and more! Doors open at 12pm. with games beginning at 1pm. Tickets are \$25/person (in advance) or \$30 at the door. Lunch and snacks will be available for purchase. For tickets and information, contact Diane Steimetz (410-218-1053) or Pat McGowan (410-262-4059).

**Murder on the Nile:** Artistic Synergy (Prince of Peace's own little Broadway) will be having their performances at Prince of Peace (8212 Philadelphia Rd., 21237) on Fridays, October 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>, Saturdays, October 11<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm., and Sundays, October 12<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm. Tickets are available at <https://www.artistic-synergy/net/tickets/>.

**Sour Beef & Dumpling Dinner:** Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 pm. at Prince of Peace (8212 Philadelphia Rd., 21237). Eat in or carry out. Menu includes sour beef, gravy and dumplings, red cabbage, applesauce, dessert, and beverages. Kid's meals include a hot dog, chips, applesauce, dessert, and drink. Tickets and reservations are required and are \$20/person or \$5 for kid's meal. For tickets and information, contact the church office at 410-866-8766.

**Crab Feast:** Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 pm. at St. Luke Lutheran (7001 Harford Rd., 21234). Tickets are \$65 in advance or \$75 at the door. Menu includes AYC crabs (from Parkville Crab), fried chicken, corn, salads, soda, tea, and lemonade. BYO beverage of choice. There will also be a 50/50 raffle. Contact Kim at 443-415-5824 for tickets and information.

**33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bull Roast:** Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup> 7:30p-12a at Columbus Gardens (4301 Klosterman Ave., 21236). Dress in costume and support Baltimore Cancer Support Group! Menu includes shrimp, pit beef, pit ham, pit turkey, entrees, salads, and desserts. Tickets are \$65/person and must be purchased in advance. Contact Geri at 410-852-3688 or Karen at 410-960-1148.

**Community Crafters:** All are invited to join the fun on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month at 12:30 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). Learn new crafts, share ideas and find your creativity! October's project is making Christmas decorations. You're also welcome to bring crafts you're already working on. For more information and to register, contact Robin Palmer at 443-857-9555.

**Help Wanted:** Elderly community neighbor is in need of heavy-duty cleaning/repair work (to start) and on-going light duties. If you are available and able, please call the church office for contact information.

**Make a Joyful Noise:** Do you enjoy singing, especially praising the Lord?? The choir and praise team are looking for YOU! Contact Bärbel for the choir or Richard for the praise team.



**Sponsorships Available:** Bulletins on 9/28, and 10/5 & 19(contact the church office). Altar flowers for 10:15 am. worship on 9/28, and 10/12 & 19 (contact Nancy Barnes).

**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.

**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 & PACE***

Although the school year has begun, it's not too late to enroll! Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions, want to schedule a tour, or to register. Referrals are always welcome!