

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
Reformation Sunday – 20th Sunday after Pentecost

October 26, 2025

Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship

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

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.* Faithful God,

**you have shown us the ways of your heart, yet we stray from your paths. We are stuck in sinful systems of oppression and do not embrace the freedom of your faithful promises. We ignore our neighbors. We exploit the earth. We reject your abundance, trusting our impulses instead of your steadfast love. Repair our relationships, restore what we have broken, renew our hearts, and bring us to new life. Amen**

Hear the good news: God the Faithful One loves you, ☩ in Christ Jesus your sins are forgiven, and by the power of the Holy Spirit you are set free.

**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.* Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, 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**

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

*The renewed covenant will not be breakable, but like the old covenant it will expect the people to live upright lives. To know the LORD means that one will defend the cause of the poor and needy (Jer. 22:16). The renewed covenant is possible only because the Lord will forgive iniquity and not remember sin. Our hope lies in a God who forgets.*

This is a reading from the prophet Jeremiah, chapter 31.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

This is God’s Word, our hope.

**SECOND READING: Romans 3:19-28** *New Testament for Everyone*  
*Paul’s words stand at the heart of the preaching of Martin Luther and other Reformation leaders. No human beings make themselves right with God through works of the law. We are brought into a right relationship with God through the divine activity centered in Christ’s death. This act is a gift of grace that liberates us from sin and empowers our faith in Jesus Christ.*

This is a reading from Paul’s letter to the church in Rome, chapter 3.

Now we know that whatever the law says, it is speaking to those who are “in the law.” The purpose of this is that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be brought to the bar of God’s judgment. No mere mortal, you see, can be declared to be in the right before God on the basis of the works of the law. What you get through the law is the knowledge of sin.

But now, quite apart from the law (though the law and the prophets bore witness to it), God’s covenant justice has been displayed. God’s covenant justice comes into operation through the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah, for the benefit of all who have faith. For there is no distinction: all sinned, and fell short of God’s glory—and by God’s grace they are freely declared to be in the right, to be members of the covenant, through the redemption which is found in the Messiah, Jesus.

God put Jesus forth as the place of mercy, through faithfulness, by means of his blood. God did this to demonstrate his covenant justice, because of the passing over (in divine forbearance) of sins committed beforehand. This was to demonstrate his covenant justice in the present time: that is, that God himself is in the right, and that God declares to be in the right everyone who trusts in the faithfulness of Jesus.

So what happens to boasting? It is ruled out! Through what sort of law? The law of works? No: through the law of faith! We calculate, you see, that a person is declared to be in the right on the basis of faith, apart from works of the law.

This is God's Word, our hope.

**HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 18:9-14**

*The coming reign of God will involve unexpected reversals of fortune with judgment rooted in mercy. Jesus tells a parable in which the one who humbles himself is exalted and the one who exalts his own righteousness is humbled.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Luke, the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Jesus also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other, for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

This is the Good News of Christ's victory!

**HYMN of the DAY: # 654 "The Church's One Foundation"**

- 1 The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord;  
she is his new creation by water and the word.  
From heav'n he came and sought her to be his holy bride;  
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.
- 2 Elect from ev'ry nation, yet one o'er all the earth,  
her charter of salvation one Lord, one faith, one birth:  
one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,  
and to one hope she presses, with ev'ry grace endued.
- 3 Though with a scornful wonder this world sees her oppressed,  
by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,  
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up: "How long?"  
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.
- 4 Through toil and tribulation and tumult of her war,  
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore;  
till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,  
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

- 5 Yet she on earth has union with God, the Three in One,  
and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.  
Oh, blessed heav'nly chorus! Lord, save us by your grace,  
that we, like saints before us, may see you face to face.

Text: Samuel J. Stone, 1839-1900

**MESSAGE:**        *Right Thinking*        *silence for reflection follows*

**the CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Renewed by God's everlasting grace, let us pray for the church, the world,  
and all creation. A brief silence.

Free your church, O God, with grace, mercy, and love to be transformed by  
your word. Direct your church to be united in word and deed so that all  
creation knows the uniting and transforming power of the gospel. God of  
grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Renew creation, O God, so that all living creatures thrive together. Guide  
those who work to restore and renew creation. Preserve and care for  
endangered species throughout the world. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Bring peace among the nations, O God, so violence and terror are not the  
norm on your earth. Inspire leaders of communities to work for peace and  
justice. Unite our politicians with a common mission and purpose. God of  
grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Forgive our sins, O God, and grant us your grace. Move us to understanding  
and reconciliation between people of other faiths and other Christian  
traditions in our community. Mend hurt feelings and heal wounds we have  
caused one another. God of grace,

**receive our prayer.**

Heal all who suffer, O God, and bring them peace. Draw near to people who  
are incarcerated. Give hope to people experiencing housing or employment  
insecurity, oppression, or discrimination. Heal those who are ill. Be our  
stronghold at all times. We pray for ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry, 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.*

We give you thanks, O God, for the life and witness of all your saints especially Phillipp Nicolai, Johann Heermann, and Paul Gerhardt. Give us hope in our son's victory through the cross. God of grace,  
**receive our prayer.**

We offer our prayers, O God, trusting in your everlasting grace and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **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 love of God the Sovereign strengthen you, God the Son save you,  
and God the Holy Spirit anoint you for the work ahead.  
The holy Trinity bless you ☩ and grant you  
a faithful and courageous heart, now and forever. **Amen**

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**Philipp Nicolai, died 1608; Johann Heermann, died 1647; Paul Gerhardt, died 1676; hymnwriters**

These great hymnwriters all worked in seventeenth-century Germany in times of war and plague. When Philipp Nicolai was a pastor in Westphalia, the plague killed thirteen-hundred of his parishioners. One hundred seventy people died in one week. His hymns "Wake, awake, for night is flying: (ELW 436) and "O Morning Star, how fair and bright!" (ELW 308) were included in a series of meditations he wrote to comfort his parishioners during the plague. The style of Johann Heermann's hymns moved away from the more objective style of Reformation hymnody toward expressing the emotions of faith. Among his hymns is the plaintive text "Ah, holy Jesus" (ELW 349). Paul Gerhardt lost a preaching position at St. Nicholas Church in Berlin because he refused to sign a document stating he would not make theological arguments in his sermons. The author of beloved hymns such as "O sacred head, now wounded" (ELW 351), some have called Gerhardt the greatest of Lutheran hymnwriters.

**Reformation Day - Friday, October 31, 2025**

By the end of the seventeenth century, many Lutheran churches celebrated a festival commemorating Martin Luther's posting of the Ninety-five Theses, a summary of abuses in the church of his time. At the heart of the reform movement was the gospel, the good news that it is by grace through faith that we are justified and set free.

***Today's Sponsorships***

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Altar Flowers are Given to the Glory of God

In Honor of Joey and Jennie's
2nd wedding anniversary, November 1st.
Given with love by Mom and Dad.

In Honor of Benjamin's birthday, October 30th.
Given by Siegfried and Barbel Otto.

In Celebration of our 40th wedding anniversary.
Given by Anita Gladstone.

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*Worship Folders are Given to the Glory of God*

In Honor of Brian Mills on his birthday today.  
Given with love by Mom and Dad.

In Loving Memory of parents and grandparents,  
Phillip and Genevieve Sacker.  
Given by Mr. & Mrs. James Lynch, and family.

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Attendance for October 19, 2025: 34

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

November Annual Meeting to discuss and vote on the 2026 budget, and elect council members and investment committee members will be held between services on Sunday, November 9th. Please plan to attend this very important meeting.

Trunk-or-Treat: Saturday, October 25th from 1-3 pm. SPES is hosting an afternoon of family fun! Costumes are encouraged (no weapons or scary costumes, please). Candy and treats from decorated trunks, and games and music for all.

Trunk-or-Treat: Saturday, October 25th from 6-7:15 pm. at St. John's, Parkville (8808 Harford Rd., 21234). Car decorating contest set-up begins at 5 pm. Sign up by October 20th at office@stjohnsparkville.org or 410-665-1234. Safe and fun trick-or-treating with sweet treats and tons of fun! Donations for our Food for Thought program are also welcome: tuna & chicken salad kits, applesauce pouches (no foil lids), and pudding cups (no peanut butter).

Reformation Sunday is October 26th. To celebrate the birthday of the Lutheran Church, please wear RED. Reformation Day is 10/31.

NYC Bus Trip Fundraiser: St. Peter's Elementary School is offering a chartered bus trip to New York City on Friday, December 5th for \$100 roundtrip. The bus will begin boarding at 7:30 am in St. Peter's parking lot, and will return at approximately 10:30 pm. All participants will be on their own to plan and pay for their food and activities while in New York City. Seats are limited so sign up as soon as possible; no later than Friday, October 31st. Contact Karen Yelovich at kyelovich@spesmd.org or 410-665-4521 to purchase tickets. Cash or check (payable to St. Peter's Elementary School) accepted. Flier with additional details is on the Welcome Table in the back of the church.

All Saints' Sunday is November 2nd. If you would like a loved one remembered, please contact the church office by Wednesday, October 29th. All Saints' Day is 11/1.

Prayer Group: We are gathering at 11 am. in Grace Chapel (lower level, elevator access) on Wednesday, November 5th to chat about "Whatever is NOBLE." Come find out what it means. Our prayers make a difference!

Multi-vendor Bingo: Saturday, October 25th at Prince of Peace (8212 Philadelphia Rd., 21237). Doors open at 5 pm., games begin promptly at 6 pm. Refreshments will be available for purchase. Wear your favorite Halloween costume and receive one free raffle ticket for a special Halloween raffle. Contact Linda DeJong bldejong@verizon.net for more information and tickets in advance, or contact the church office at 410-866-8766. Proceeds to benefit the 2026 Scholarship Fund.

Christmas Bazaar: Saturday, November 8th from 9 am.-1 pm. at Christus Victor Lutheran (9833 Harford Rd., 21234). Unique handmade crafts, seasonal decorations, baked goods, and more!

Christmas Bazaar: Saturday, November 8th from 9 am.-2 pm. at St. John's, Parkville (8808 Harford Rd., 21234). Food, crafters, jewelry & bake tables, homemade "goodies," quilt raffle, and more!

Merry & Bright Vendor and Craft Fair: Saturday, November 8th from 9 am.-2 pm. at St. John's of Essex (518 Franklin Ave., 21221). Event features the Yuletide Tree Jubilee - take a chance to win your favorite decorated tree!

33rd Annual Bull Roast: Saturday, November 8th 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.

2nd Annual Thanksgiving Food Give-a-way: Saturday, November 22nd from 9am – 2 pm. at All Saints Lutheran (4215 Loch Raven Blvd., 21218). Come join us for our "Food-Give-A-Way! Receive a box of groceries. Enjoy good hot dogs, hamburgers, music and fellowship. Everyone is Welcome!

Sponsorships Available: Altar flowers for 8:45 am. worship and bulletins on 11/30 (contact the church office). Altar flowers for 10:15 am. worship on 11/2 & 30 (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. Please place donations in the shopping cart in the Narthex.

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!

"From the wilderness of Koburg Castle, 8 July 1530

Honorable, kind, dear Sir and Friend!

Grace and Peace in Christ!

Since you ask whether my seal has come out correctly, I shall answer most amiably and tell you of those thoughts which now come to my mind about my seal as a symbol of my theology. There is first to be a cross, black, and placed in a heart, which should be of its natural color (red), to put me in mind that faith in Christ crucified saved us. For if one believes from the heart, he will be justified. ["For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved." --Romans 10:10] Even though it is a black cross, which mortifies and which also should hurt us, yet it leaves the heart in its natural color and does not ruin nature...that is, the cross does not kill, but keeps man alive. For the just shall live by faith, by faith in the Savior. ["This Good News tells us how God makes us right in His sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, 'It is through faith that a righteous person has life.'" --Romans 1:17]

Such a heart is to be in the midst of a white rose, to symbolize that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace. In a word, it places the believer into a white joyful rose, for this faith does not give peace and joy as the world gives. ["I am leaving you with a gift--peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn't like the peace the world gives. So don't be troubled or afraid." --John 14:27] Therefore, the rose is to be white, not red, for white is the color of the spirits and of all angels. ["..an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and rolled aside the stone and sat on it. His face shone like lightening, and his clothing was as white as snow." --Matthew 28:2b-3 and "She saw two white-robed angels sitting at the head and foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying." --John 20:12]

This rose, moreover, is fixed in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that such joy in the Spirit and in faith is a beginning of the future heavenly joy. It is already a part of faith, and is grasped through hope, even though not yet manifest.

And around this field is a golden ring, to signify that such bliss in heaven is endless, and more precious than all joys and goods, just as gold is the most valuable and precious metal.

May Christ, our dear Lord, be with your spirit until the life to come. Amen."

[Luther's Works - American Edition
- Volume 49, pp. 356-359]

