

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
3rd Sunday in Advent, December 15, 2024
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 bless the God † of Incarnation, Advent, and Epiphany:  
alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen**

We confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.* God of mercy, **we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**  
God of might, **we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**  
God in our midst, **we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen**

**GREETING**

Almighty God, who is, who was, and who is to come  
is with you, now and always. **And also with you.**

**PRAYER of the DAY**

Holy God, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; 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**

**READING: Isaiah 12:2-6**

This is a responsive reading from the prophet Isaiah, the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter.  
Surely God is my salvation;

**I will trust, and will not be afraid,**  
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might,  
**and has become my salvation.**

With joy you will draw water  
**from the wells of salvation.**

And you will say in that day:

**Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name;**  
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations;  
**proclaim that this name is exalted.**

Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;  
**let this be known in all the earth.**

Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,  
**for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

This is the Word of God, word of life.

### **HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18**

*John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Luke, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, John proclaimed the good news to the people.

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 264 "Prepare the Royal Highway"**

1 Prepare the royal highway;  
the King of kings is near!  
Let ev'ry hill and valley  
a level road appear!  
Then greet the King of glory,  
foretold in sacred story:

*Refrain*

Hosanna to the Lord,  
for he fulfills God's word!

2 God's people, see him coming:  
your own eternal king!  
Palm branches strew before him!  
Spread garments! Shout and sing!  
God's promise will not fail you!  
No more shall doubt assail you! *Refrain*

3 Then fling the gates wide open  
to greet your promised king!  
Your king, yet ev'ry nation  
its tribute too may bring.  
All lands will bow before him;  
their voices join your singing: *Refrain*

4 His is no earthly kingdom;  
it comes from heav'n above.  
His rule is peace and freedom  
and justice, truth, and love.  
So let your praise be sounding  
for kindness so abounding: *Refrain*

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship  
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**MESSAGE: *Expectation*** *(silence for reflection follows)*

**The CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, we pray for all people  
and places that long for God's presence. *A brief silence.*

God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower  
your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim

the good news. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, flooding and drought here and throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here: in singing, praying, teaching, and creating blankets. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick. Show your compassion and remember your people in love. We pray for John, Greg, Genevieve, Mary Lou, Kathy, Maren & Joe, Lori, our at-home worshippers, ... Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

We pray that God's rule will appear, 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.* Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for our salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. **Amen**

### **BLESSING** from Philippians, ch 4

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in † Christ Jesus.

**Amen**

### **PEACE**

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 Celebration of Cathy McQuade's birthday.
Given by her family.

Rose Vase

In Honor of Ruth May's December 18th birthday.
Given by her cousin, Carole.

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

In Honor of the 18<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of  
Amy and James C. Williams, December 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Given with love from her mother, Marcia Darney.

In Honor of Ruth May's December 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by her cousin, Carole.

In Honor of our son, Eddie Volz,  
for his December 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by his parents, Lois and Fred Volz.

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Attendance for December 8, 2024: 46

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

Christmas Eve worship services are at 4:00 pm. and 10:30 pm.

Christmas Closings: The church office and SPES will be closed December 23rd – January 3rd, reopening on Monday, January 6th. We wish you all a blessed and safe Christmas and New Year!

Combined Worship: On Sunday, December 29th, we will be celebrating the new-born King together at 9:30 am. There will not be a pre-recorded service posted for 12/29. Regular worship times (8:45 & 10:15 am.) resume on Sunday, January 5th.

WELCA Christmas Candy: Received orders will be available for pick up on Sunday, December 15th. If you need to make special arrangements, contact Heather Frederick.

2025 Offering Envelopes are available. Please contact the church if you would like your envelopes mailed to you, or would just like your envelope number.

The SPES/PACE Penny Wars: Make sure all of your pennies (loose and rolled) and paper money are in by Wednesday, December 18th. Many thanks for participating in this "fun" fundraiser!

Sponsorships Available: Flowers for the 8:45 am. worship on 1/26 and bulletins for 1/5 & 12 (contact the church office). Flowers for the 10:15 am. worship on 1/5 & 19 (contact Nancy Barnes). **Sponsorships for 1/5 must be received by 12/18.**

On-line Giving: As the holidays and travel to family near and far approaches, remember that 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.

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.

News from St. Peter's Elementary School & PACE

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

The Poppin' Popcorn online fundraiser begins on Wednesday, December 18th and runs to January, 18th. The school earns 50% of sales! See the flier for details.

Join us on the 1st Wednesday of each month for a delicious fundraiser at Frank's Pizza & Pasta (6620 Belair Rd., 21206). Fliers with additional details are posted at the red awning door and the church office lobby. You can also obtain a flier through the school office (410-665-4521).

PLEASE NOTE: The January fundraiser night is Wednesday, January 8th.



**ST. PETER'S
ELEMENTARY
PAGE PRESENTS:**

DEC 18TH-JAN 18TH

HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER



Buttery Caramel, Cheddar Jalapeno, Chicago style, Cinnamon Toast,
Kettle Corn, Dill Pickle, Fruity, Movie Theatre, White Cheddar, Ranch,
Birthday Cake and Many More!

**SCAN QR CODE TO ORDER YOUR
POPCORN**



Group ID: CJAZUV