

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
4th Sunday in Advent, December 22, 2024
Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship



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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

GOD'S WORD

READING: Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.

This is a responsive reading from the prophet Micah, the 2nd chapter.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure,
for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

This is the Word of God, word of life.

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 1:37-66 *Common English Bible*
Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Luke, the 1st chapter.

When the time came for Elizabeth to have her child, she gave birth to a boy. Her neighbors and relatives celebrated with her because they had heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy. On the eighth day, it came time to circumcise the child. They wanted to name him Zechariah because that was his father's name. But his mother replied, "No, his name will be John."

They said to her, "None of your relatives have that name." Then they began gesturing to his father to see what he wanted to call him.

After asking for a tablet, he surprised everyone by writing, "His name is John." At that moment, Zechariah was able to speak again, and he began praising God.

All their neighbors were filled with awe, and everyone throughout the Judean highlands talked about what had happened. All who heard about this considered it carefully. They said, "What then will this child be?" Indeed, the Lord's power was with him.

Luke 1:80

The child grew up, becoming strong in character. He was in the wilderness until he began his public ministry to Israel.

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

HYMN of the DAY: # 257 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (st. 1, 4-8)

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain*

5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. *Refrain*

6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

7 O come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
refresh the hearts that long for you;
restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*

8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

Text: Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

MESSAGE: Naming (*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 our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships
with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical

message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities: Honeygo, Gunpowder, and Patapsco state parks, Loch Raven reservoir, and the Chesapeake Bay shoreline. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill. We pray for John, Greg, Genevieve, Mary Lou, Kathy, Maren & Joe, Lori, Ruth, our at-home worshippers, the families of the victims of the school shooting in Wisconsin, ... Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, especially ... We praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. 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 a portion of Psalm 80

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;

shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,

stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O † God;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. **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 Loving Memory of Madeline Thrift  
on her December 24<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by Nancy Barnes.

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*A Donation to the Organ Fund has been made
In Memory of my mother, Dora Von Munchow,
by her daughter, Ruth Diepold.*

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Attendance for December 15, 2024: 42

## ***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 23<sup>rd</sup> – January 3<sup>rd</sup>, reopening on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>. We wish you all a blessed and safe Christmas and New Year!

**Combined Worship:** On Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 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 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Thank You** to everyone who sponsored poinsettias to decorate the altar for Christmas Eve worship! Poinsettias may be taken home following the Christmas Eve services. Any plants remaining after Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> will be given to a good home.

**2025 Offering Envelopes are available.** Please contact the church at 410-665-7300 if you would like your envelopes mailed to you, or would just like your envelope number.

**Prayer Group:** Need a warm, cozy, and uplifting break from winter? Join us on **Wednesday, January 8th at 11 am.** in Grace Chapel (lower level, elevator access)! KINDNESS is our Fruit of the Spirit for January. Our prayers and discussion will center around Random Acts of Kindness. Give us a try, we're people friendly and refreshing! Our gathering is under an hour and includes time for fellowship and sharing! Let's open our hearts to the Lord. Jump in and join us and bring your coffee or hot chocolate!

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

**PLEASE NOTE:** In 2025, pricing on floral arrangements will increase to be more in-line with pricing from the florist. Until pricing is finalized, please "pay as you go" using current pricing for floral sponsorships. Also, when you return the vases for Rose Vase sponsorships, the church receives a \$3 discount!

**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 runs to January, 18<sup>th</sup>. See the attached flier for details.

Join us on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup>.**





**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**