

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School

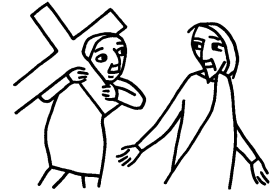
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth,

Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.

Second Sunday in Lent – February 25, 2024

Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship

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**WELCOME** *Theme of the day & prayer concerns*

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

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

We bless the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who writes the law on our hearts,  
who draws all people together through Jesus. **Amen**

Held in God's mercy, we confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God, **we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen**

Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through ☩ Jesus Christ. **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

God's mercy, grace, and love are with you all.

**And also with you.** We join in prayer. *A brief silence.* O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, 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: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16**

*As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.*

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly

numerous." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

This is Holy Wisdom, God's Holy Word.

**SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25** *Common English Bible*

*Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.*

The promise to Abraham and to his descendants, that he would inherit the world, didn't come through the Law but through the righteousness that comes from faith. If they inherit because of the Law, then faith has no effect and the promise has been canceled.

The Law brings about wrath. But when there isn't any law, there isn't any violation of the law. That's why the inheritance comes through faith, so that it will be on the basis of God's grace. In that way, the promise is secure for all of Abraham's descendants, not just for those who are related by Law but also for those who are related by the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all of us. As it is written: *I have appointed you to be the father of many nations.* So Abraham is our father in the eyes of God in whom he had faith, the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that don't exist into existence.

When it was beyond hope, he had faith in the hope that he would become the father of many nations, in keeping with the promise God spoke to him: *That's how many descendants you will have.* Without losing faith, Abraham, who was nearly 100 years old, took into account his own body, which was as good as dead, and Sarah's womb, which was dead. He didn't hesitate with a lack of faith in God's promise, but he grew strong in faith and gave glory to God. He was fully convinced that God was able to do what he promised. Therefore, it was credited to him as righteousness.

But the scripture that says *'it was credited to him'* wasn't written only for Abraham's sake. It was written also for our sake, because it is going to be credited to us too. It will be credited to those of us who have faith in the one

who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was handed over because of our mistakes, and he was raised to meet the requirements of righteousness for us.

This is Holy Wisdom, God's Holy Word.

**HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38** *Contemporary English Version*

*After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.*

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

Jesus began telling his disciples what would happen to him. He said, "The nation's leaders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law of Moses will make the Son of Man suffer terribly. He will be rejected and killed, but three days later he will rise to life." Then Jesus explained clearly what he meant.

Peter took Jesus aside and told him to stop talking like that. But when Jesus turned and saw the disciples, he corrected Peter. He said to him, "Satan, get away from me! You are thinking like everyone else and not like God."

Jesus then told the crowd and the disciples to come closer, and he said, "If any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about yourself. You must take up your cross and follow me. If you want to save your life, you will destroy it. But if you give up your life for me and for the good news, you will save it. What will you gain, if you own the whole world but destroy yourself? What could you give to get back your soul?"

"Don't be ashamed of me and my message among these unfaithful and sinful people! If you are, the Son of Man will be ashamed of you when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 796 "How Firm a Foundation"**

- 1     How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,  
      is laid for your faith in Christ Jesus, the Word!  
      What more can he say than to you he has said  
      who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?
- 2     "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,  
      for I am your God and will still give you aid;  
      I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
      upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

- 3 "When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply.  
The flames shall not hurt you; I only design  
your dross to consume and your gold to refine."
- 4 "Throughout all their lifetime my people shall prove  
my sov'reign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
and then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,  
like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

Text: J. Rippon, A Selection of Hymns, 1787, alt.

**MESSAGE: DENIAL** *silence for reflection follows*

### **The CHURCH PRAYS**

#### **PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need. *A brief silence.*

We turn to you for meaning, holy God. Nurture in your children the gifts of the Spirit poured out in baptism and let the mind of Christ guide the church. Give wisdom and discernment to our bishops, pastors, deacons, teachers, and leaders.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for renewal. Save lives and ecosystems threatened by pollution and a changing climate. Cleanse the earth's waters and restore the soil. Preserve rainforests, deserts, and wildlife, that generations to come may cherish your creation.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for justice. Uphold the worth and dignity of every person, especially any who experience hatred and rejection because of gender, ability, sexual orientation, color, ethnicity, or religion.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for healing. Send compassionate helpers to any who suffer because of war and violence. Shelter unhoused people, befriend those who are lonely, bring hope to any in despair, and console the bereaved.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for purpose. Remind us of your faithfulness to this congregation. Increase our trust in your guidance and keep us near the cross. Grant that our acts of service will express Christ's sacrificial love.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We especially pray for John, Betty, our at-home worshippers, Genevieve, ...  
Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We turn to you for peace. We honor the saints who lived in service to others especially Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, whom we commemorate today.  
Inspire us by their example until you gather us into your kingdom.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

So that evil may not tempt us, 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**

As we serve, we pray. *A brief silence.* Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior. **Amen**

#### **BLESSING**

Receive the blessing. *A brief silence.*

Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed.

God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy,  
fill you with courage, and give you ☩ peace. **Amen**

#### **PEACE**

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

*Please share the peace with those in your household or on our FB page.*

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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 the birthdays of Jimmy (February 19th),
Heather (February 26th), and Holly (March 4th).
Given with love by their mother, Janice Frederick.

For the Glory of God.

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

For the Glory of God.

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Attendance for February 18, 2024: 39

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

February Annual Meeting to discuss the missions and life of the church is scheduled for Sunday, February 25th. There will be one worship service at 9:30 am. with the meeting immediately following. Please plan to attend to find out about exciting upcoming events and plans for St. Peter's!

Easter Flower Sponsorships: Orders and payment are due to the church office no later than Sunday, February 25th. Order forms are available at the Welcome Table in the back of the church or by contacting the church office.

Prayer Group: This just in ... during Lent, the Prayer Group will be meeting at 11:30 am. every Wednesday, in conjunction with the mid-week worship service. Our gatherings will be followed by fellowship and lite lunch. If you're staying for the lunch, please bring your sandwich, we'll provide the drinks and side dish. Guaranteed: good fellowship and meaningful mid-week devotion! Join us! Try us! Meet new friends!

Mid-week Lent Worship: Join us in Grace Chapel (lower level, elevator access) for worship at 11:30 am. on Wednesdays through March 20th.

Weekly Sponsorships Available: 2nd altar flower sponsorship for Palm Sunday (contact the church office). Altar flowers for 10:15 am on 3/3 and 3/31 (contact Nancy Barnes).

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***

"Open Enrollment" continues, and we are receiving registrations every day! Pre-K, Kindergarten, First, and Third grades are expected to fill up early. Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions, want to schedule a tour, or to register.

Our weekly chapel services are every Wednesday at 9:15 am. Parents and families are always welcome to join us!

PACE is hosting a pancake brunch in the hall on Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> following the 10:15 am. worship. All are welcome to attend!

Lutheran Schools Week will be celebrated beginning Sunday, March 3rd! The theme this year is "On the Road", referencing Luke 24:13-35, "The Road to Emmaus." The focus is on our faith journey with Christ.

SPES is hosting a Scholastic Book Fair from Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup> in the school lobby, and on-line through March 17<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome to browse and shop!

SPES will be hosting an electronics upcycling/recycling event. More details coming soon!