

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School

**Our Mission: Learn God's Truth,
Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.**

Third Sunday in Lent, March 3, 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.* Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only 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: Exodus 20:1-17** *Contemporary English Version*

*After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.*

God said to the people of Israel:

I am the LORD your God, the one who brought you out of Egypt where you were slaves.

Do not worship any god except me.

Do not make idols that look like anything in the sky or on earth or in the ocean under the earth. Don't bow down and worship idols. I am the LORD your God, and I demand all your love. If you reject me, I will punish your families for three or four generations. But if you love me and obey my laws, I will be kind to your families for thousands of generations.

Do not misuse my name thoughtlessly. I am the LORD your God, and I will punish anyone who misuses my name.

Remember that the Sabbath Day belongs to me. You have six days when you can do your work, but the seventh day of each week belongs to me, your God. No one is to work on that day—not you, your children, your slaves, your animals, or the foreigners who live in your towns. In six days I made the sky, the earth, the oceans, and everything in them, but on the seventh day I rested. That's why I made the Sabbath a special day that belongs to me.

Respect your father and your mother, and you will live a long time in the land I am giving you.

Do not murder.

Be faithful in marriage.

Do not steal.

Do not tell lies about others.

Do not desire to possess anything that belongs to another person—not a house, a wife, a husband, a slave, an ox, a donkey, or anything else.

This is Holy Wisdom, God's Holy Word.

**SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25** *Contemporary English Version*  
*The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.*

The message about the cross doesn't make any sense to lost people. But for those of us who are being saved, it is God's power at work. As God says in the Scriptures,

"I will destroy the wisdom of all who claim to be wise.

I will confuse those who think they know so much."

What happened to those wise people? What happened to those experts in the Scriptures? What happened to the ones who think they have all the answers? Didn't God show that the wisdom of this world is foolish? God was wise and decided not to let the people of this world use their wisdom to learn about God.

Instead, God chose to save only those who believe the foolish message we preach. Jews ask for miracles, and Greeks want something that sounds wise. But we preach that Christ was nailed to a cross. Most Jews have problems with this, and most Gentiles think it is foolish. Our message is

God's power and wisdom for the Jews and the Greeks that God has chosen. Even when God is foolish, he is wiser than everyone else, and even when God is weak, he is stronger than everyone else.

This is Holy Wisdom, God's Holy Word.

### **HOLY GOSPEL: John 2:13-22**

*Jesus attacks the commercialization of religion by driving merchants out of the temple. When challenged, he responds mysteriously, with the first prediction of his own death and resurrection. In the midst of a seemingly stable religious center, Jesus suggests that the center itself has changed.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to John, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

The Judeans then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The leaders then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

### **HYMN of the DAY: #803 "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"**

- 1     When I survey the wondrous cross  
      on which the prince of glory died,  
      my richest gain I count but loss  
      and pour contempt on all my pride.
- 2     Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
      save in the death of Christ, my God;  
      all the vain things that charm me most,  
      I sacrifice them to his blood.
- 3     See, from his head, his hands, his feet,  
      sorrow and love flow mingled down.  
      Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
      or thorns compose so rich a crown?

- 4     Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
         that were a present far too small;  
         love so amazing, so divine,  
         demands my soul, my life, my all.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

**MESSAGE: IDOLS**     *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.*

You alone are God. We thank you for the gift of sabbath rest. Awaken the church to the mystery of your presence and give us glad hearts as we receive the good news of your deliverance.

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

You renew creation. Drive out those who would make the earth a marketplace. Protect rainforests, mountaintops, oceans, and wilderness areas from commercial exploitation. Unite nations, policymakers, and businesses in efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

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

You judge the nations. We pray for an end to war and strife in every land. Strengthen international efforts to negotiate peace and provide humanitarian aid to people fleeing from conflict.

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

You bring healing and hope. We give thanks for physicians, nurses, researchers, therapists, and public health workers who prevent and treat illness. We pray for any who are sick.

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

You abide with your people. Sustain any in this community undergoing life transitions: marriage, divorce, childbirth, adoption, moving, graduation, employment change, or a death in the family. We pray for those preparing for baptism.

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

We especially pray for John, Betty, Louisa, Nancy, Agnes, Beth, Genevieve,  
...

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

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

You bring life from death. We remember our loved ones who have died, confident that they have new life in you. May we trust that nothing can separate us from your love.

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 Loving Memory of Ruth Richter
for her birthday, March 3rd.
Given with loving memories by
Betty and Nolan, and family.

In Honor of our granddaughter, Olivia Mills,
on her 3rd birthday, March 8th.
Love, LaLa and Pop.

Rose Vase

In Loving Memory of Elmer Diepold
for what would have been his 103rd birthday, March 7th.
Given with love from his wife, Ruth.

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

In Loving Memory of Wilhelmina Weinreich  
for her birthday today.  
Given with love by the Mills family.

In Loving Memory of Gilbert Kreisel's March 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by the Volz family.

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Attendance for February 25, 2024: 34

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

Pancake Brunch: PACE is hosting this delicious event on Sunday, March 3rd in the hall following the 10:15 am. worship. All are welcome to attend!

Lutheran Schools Week begins 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. Our students and faculty will celebrate with special events throughout the week.

Scholastic Book Fair Week is finally here! Looking for a last-minute Easter basket stuffer? Come browse at the in-house book fair after Sunday's worship. The fair will also be open daily (March 4th – 8th) from 9 am.-3 pm. or search for our on-line book fair at scholastic.com. On-line orders will be taken through March 17th.

We have exciting news! You can now 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.

Mid-week Lent Worship & Prayer: Join us in Grace Chapel (lower level, elevator access) for worship and prayer at 11:30 am. on Wednesdays through March 20th. 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. Join us for good fellowship and meaningful mid-week devotion!

Annual Meeting Booklets: A limited number of leftover booklets are available in in the back of the church.

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

Reminder: Daylight Saving Time begins next weekend! Spring forward.

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

"Open Enrollment" for the 2024-25 school year continues. Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions, want to schedule a tour, or to register. Referrals are always welcome!

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

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

There will be standardized testing of our third through fifth graders March 11th through 15th.