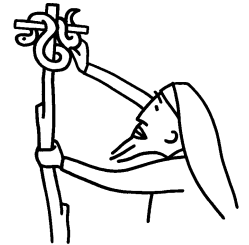


St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth,
Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 10, 2024
Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship



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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, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, 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: Numbers 21:4-9**

*Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.*

From Mount Hor the Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and

we detest this miserable food.” Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

This is Holy Wisdom, God’s Holy Word.

**SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:1-10** *Common English Bible*

*While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God’s grace at work in our lives.*

At one time you were like a dead person because of the things you did wrong and your offenses against God. You used to live like people of this world. You followed the rule of a destructive spiritual power. This is the spirit of disobedience to God’s will that is now at work in persons whose lives are characterized by disobedience. At one time you were like those persons. All of you used to do whatever felt good and whatever you thought you wanted so that you were children headed for punishment just like everyone else.

However, God is rich in mercy. God brought us to life with Christ while we were dead as a result of those things that we did wrong. God did this because of the great love that God has for us. You are saved by God’s grace! And God raised us up and seated us in the heavens with Christ Jesus. God did this to show future generations the greatness of his grace by the goodness that God has shown us in Christ Jesus.

You are saved by God’s grace because of your faith. This salvation is God’s gift. It’s not something you possessed. It’s not something you did that you can be proud of. Instead, we are God’s accomplishment, created in Christ Jesus to do good things. God planned for these good things to be the way that we live our lives.

This is Holy Wisdom, God’s Holy Word.

**HOLY GOSPEL: John 3:14-21** *Contemporary English Version*

*To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today’s first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.*

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

The Son of Man must be lifted up, just as the metal snake was lifted up by Moses in the desert. Then everyone who has faith in the Son of Man will have eternal life.

God loved the people of this world so that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people. God sent him to save them! No one who has faith in God's Son will be condemned. But everyone who doesn't have faith in him has already been condemned for not having faith in God's only Son.

The light has come into the world, and people who do evil things are judged guilty because they love the dark more than the light. People who do evil hate the light and won't come to the light, because it clearly shows what they have done. But everyone who lives by the truth will come to the light, because they want others to know that God is really the one doing what they do.

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 323 "God Loved the World"**

- 1     God loved the world so that he gave  
      his only Son the lost to save,  
      that all who would in him believe  
      should everlasting life receive.
- 2     Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,  
      who was made flesh and suffered death;  
      all who confide in Christ alone  
      are built on this chief cornerstone.
- 3     If you are ill, if death draws near,  
      this truth your troubled heart can cheer:  
      Christ Jesus rescues us from death;  
      that is the firmest ground of faith.
- 4     Be of good cheer, for God's own Son  
      forgives all sins that you have done,  
      and justified by Jesus' blood,  
      your baptism grants the highest good.
- 5     All glory to the Father, Son,  
      and Holy Spirit, Three in One!  
      To you, O blessed Trinity,  
      be praise now and eternally!

Text: Gesangbuch, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846-1923, alt.

**MESSAGE: JUDGE**      *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.*

Gracious God, your love unites. Give vision to the global church and foster cooperation in mission. Increase inter-religious understanding and ecumenical dialog. Make your church a sanctuary for all fleeing persecution, disaster, and war.

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

Creating God, your love enlivens. Restore balance to the earth's fragile habitats. Preserve wilderness lands, rainforests, and wildlife. Cleanse oceans and rivers. Make us good stewards of the earth.

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

Righteous God, your love liberates. We give thanks for those who courageously witness to your liberating love especially Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, renewers of society, whom we commemorate today. Free all people from the evils of racism, religious strife, and hatred.

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

Merciful God, your love heals. Care tenderly for all whose loved ones perished from pandemic disease in every nation. Strengthen health care workers, first responders, and caregivers. Relieve all who live with chronic illness and pain.

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

Incarnate God, your love enlightens. Open our hearts and minds to fresh understandings of our faith. Deepen our love for you and for one another. Teach us to pray for our enemies.

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

We especially pray for John, our at-home worshippers, Genevieve, Ruth, the Weinreich family, ...

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

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Abiding God, your love saves. Betty and those who died in the faith are made alive in Christ. We give thanks for your promise that we also will be raised to newness of life.

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, Nolan Weinreich on the passing of Betty (2/29), 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 my daughter,
Susan Johnson's March 14th birthday.
Given by Linda Heinbaugh.

In Loving Memory of
Frank and Gloria Barnes' March birthdays.
Given by Nancy Barnes.

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

In Honor of Lois and Fred Volz  
on their March 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary.  
Given with love by the Mills family.

In Honor of Brian and Jade Mills  
for their 4<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, March 14<sup>th</sup>.  
With love you both so much! Mom and Dad.

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Attendance for March 3, 2024: 57

Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities

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.

Penny Harvest: We're entering the final weeks of our Sunday school collection. If you've filled a jar with pennies, please return it to a Sunday school participant. If you need a penny container, see Heather Frederick. The Sunday school students agreed that the money collected would go toward purchasing Bibles for the Gideons. Please return all containers on Easter Sunday.

Scholastic Book Fair: The on-site book fair ends on Friday, March 8th, but you can still order books online at scholastic.com and search for St. Peter's Elementary School under the "Book Fair" tab. Online orders will be taken through 3/17.

Easter Egg Hunt: St. Luke Lutheran Church (7001 Harford Rd., 21234) on Saturday, March 23rd from 1-3 pm. This FREE event is for children ages 12 and under and includes the hunt, crafts, snacks, and prizes. For more information, contact 443-415-5824.

Weekly Sponsorship Available: Altar flowers for 10:15 am on 3/31 (contact Nancy Barnes).

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!

Holy Week Worship Schedule

Passion/Palm Sunday: 9:30 am., with 1st communion

Maundy Thursday: 11:30 am. in Grace Chapel, 7:00 pm. in the church

Good Friday: 7:00 pm. in the church

Easter Sunday:

6:30 am. – meet in Grace Chapel (this is a time change from the March newsletter)

8:45 & 10:15 am. in church

Pastor Lans will also be posting prayers throughout Holy Week on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.

Pancake Breakfast: All are invited to celebrate Easter from 7-11 am. in the fellowship hall on Easter Sunday. Enjoy fresh, hot pancakes with your favorite toppings!

Easter Break: The church office and school will be closed from March 28th to April 5th.

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" 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 is hosting an electronics upcycling/recycling event in March. Due to space constraints, we are requesting that donations be brought in Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. Items can be working and non-working electronics, including: computers, monitors, tvs, small kitchen appliances (blenders, toasters, etc.), electronic game devices, and much, much, more! For questions or a complete list of acceptable items, visit [upcyclellc.com](http://upcyclellc.com) or call them at 793-575-5800.

There will be standardized testing of our third through fifth graders March 11<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup>. Please pray for our students.

More information coming soon: Spaghetti lunch (4/7) and Family BINGO Night (4/28).