

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways
Second Sunday in Lent, March 1, 2026
Virtual Prayer and Preaching Worship

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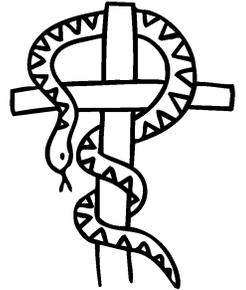
**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

We bless the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever. **Amen**

We confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt  
and blots out all our offenses. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

To you, O God, **all hearts are open, to you all desires known.**  
**We come to you, confessing our sins. Forgive us in your**  
**mercy, and remember us in your love. Show us your ways;**  
**teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for**  
**the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen**



God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in us, pours God's love into our hearts, and gives us life and peace. **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

Grace, mercy, and peace from God Almighty,  
Sovereign, † Son, and Spirit, are always with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lamb of God, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a**

*God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.*

This is a reading from Genesis, the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter.

The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you

will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him.

This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

**SECOND READING: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

*In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.*

This is a reading from Paul's letter to the Romans, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter.

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

**HOLY GOSPEL: John 3:1-17**

*A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.*

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

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, one of the Jewish leaders. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person."

Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the realm of God without being born from above."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the realm of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"

Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Humanity. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Humanity be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For so God loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him."

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:**            **Known**                    *silence for reflection follows*

### **The CHURCH PRAYS**

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

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. *A brief silence.*

Faithful One, you renew us by grace. As you have inspired faith through the work of church artists and hymnwriters throughout the ages like George Herbert whom the church remembers today, give your church the means to praise your beauty today. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Living One, you delight in this world. The sun and moon, the wind and the water declare your goodness. Preserve this earth, and protect conservationists, scientists, and all who labor in service to creation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Ruling One, you bless us to be a blessing. Open the hearts of all leaders to seek the flourishing of every person and lend your help to all who wait for justice, deliverance, and peace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Guiding One, you watch over our going out and coming in. Bless newcomers and new members in this assembly and accompany those who have recently left this community to journey elsewhere. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate One, you send your Son to save. Declare your word of acceptance to any who feel condemned and lift up any brought low by hatred and exclusion. Tend to all who are struggling with illness or loss. We pray for ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry, Bishop Bill Gohl, Ebenezer Grace Worship, those hospitalized or recuperating at home, Greg, John, Lori, Mary Lue, Lynn, Will, Bea, Kathy, our at-home worshippers, ... Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Eternal One, you neither slumber nor sleep. Be our keeper in life and in death. Thank you for our beloved who have died, and for your promise which saves this whole world by your love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

We pray for Christ's forgiveness, as he 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 One, hear our prayer. *A brief silence.* O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through the Word of God sent into this world, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen**

#### **BLESSING**

God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, & the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, bless us † now & always. **Amen**

Forgiven and freed in Christ, we share his peace  
with neighbors & strangers, the poor & outcast – all God's children.  
The peace of Christ is with you always. **And also with you.**

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**Today's Sponsorships**

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Today's Altar Flowers are Given to the Glory of God

In Honor of Steve Sykes' birthday, March 1st.
Given by Kathy Sykes.

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

In Loving Memory of Wilhelmina Weinreich  
on her March 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.  
Given with love by the Mills family.

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Attendance for Sunday, February 22, 2026: 41

Learning, Serving, and Fellowship Opportunities

Easter Flowers: Help decorate St. Peter's Easter "garden" on the altar! Please return the completed order form to the CHURCH OFFICE no later than March 15th. Order forms are available from the church office.

2025 Giving Statements have been mailed. If you don't receive yours by March 6th, please contact the church office.

Lent at St. Peter's: Pr. Lans will be presenting *The Small Catechism* via Zoom on Thursdays at 7 pm., beginning March 5th. The link will be sent out by email from the church office.

St. Peter's Annual Meeting: Sunday, March 15th between services.

Concordia Choir Concert: Saturday, March 7th at 7:30 pm. at The Cathedral of Mary Our Queen (5200 N. Charles St., 21210). The world-renowned Concordia Choir of Moorhead, Minnesota, under the direction of Dr. Michael Culloton, will perform music of J.S. Bach to familiar hymn arrangements. The choir will amaze you with their technical mastery and incredible sound. Tickets can be purchased at ConcordiaTickets.com or at the door.

Camp Day at Mar-Lu-Ridge: Sunday, March 22nd from 1-4 pm. at the pavilion (3200 Mar Lu Ridge Rd., Jefferson, MD 21755). Everyone is welcome to join us for an afternoon of games, camp tours, snacks, crafts and activities for all ages. This day is for campers and families, or anyone interested in seeing what we have been up to recently! No RSVP necessary, just come join the fun.

Spring Work Day at Mar-Lu-Ridge: Saturday, March 28th from 8 am.- 3pm. (3200 Mar Lu Ridge Rd., Jefferson, MD 21755). It's that time of year again! Join us for projects and chores as we ready the camp for a busy spring and summer season. All ages and abilities welcome! Breakfast served at 8am in Agape Hall. Lunch served at noon. Please RSVP to mlr@mar-lu-ridge.org.

Rest & Recharge on the Ridge: Sunday, April 26th from 2-5:30 pm. Hiking, mindfulness, yoga, hymn singing, arts & crafts, hammocks, nature activity guides, and a light meal at 4:30. Mar-Lu-Ridge (3200 Mar Lu Ridge Rd., Jefferson, MD 21755) is hosting this free event for you to find a quiet space to reconnect with nature, engage in a favorite creative hobby & recharge your soul. Email mlr@mar-lu-ridge.org to RSVP.

St. Peter's Family Goods Center: If you are interested in volunteering for the Family Goods Center, please contact Bill Lauer. This is a great opportunity for service hours for your middle or high school student, and volunteer hours for SPES families. Please place donations in the shopping cart in the Narthex.

Give to St. Peter's On-line! Did you know that you can make offering donations and sponsorship payments 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. When submitting your donation or payment, you can note what it's for. It's THAT easy!

News from St. Peter's Elementary School and PACE

Open enrollment for the 2026-27 school year is on NOW! Contact the office at 410-665-4521 if you have questions or want to schedule a tour. Referrals are always welcome!

Open House: Sunday, March 8th from 12:30-1:30 pm. Contact the school office for more information.