

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH and ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, July 12, 2026

Virtual Prayer and Preaching

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**The CHURCH'S GATHERING**

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

We bless the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
living with us in love, peace, and joy,  
whose compassion and faithfulness  
are with us forever. **Amen**



We confess our sin to God, our guide and guardian.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.* Compassionate God,  
**we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot  
free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy  
and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In  
Christ's name we pray, Amen**

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy  
burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, ☩ Son, and  
Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love. **Amen**

**CALL to WORSHIP and PRAYER of the DAY**

Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice, and do what is right,  
for soon my salvation will come and my deliverance revealed.  
For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

The God of mercy is with you. **And also with you.**

Holy One, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* Almighty God, we thank you for  
planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it  
with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through  
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

**GOD'S WORD**

**READING: Isaiah 55:10-13**

*God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing  
precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by  
singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.*

This is a reading from the prophet Isaiah, the 55<sup>th</sup> chapter.  
For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven  
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose  
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.  
For you shall go out in joy  
and be led back in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song,  
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;  
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle,  
and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial,  
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.  
This is holy Wisdom, God's holy Word.

**HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23**

*In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.*

This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Matthew, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. If you have ears, hear!"

Later, when his disciples came and asked him about the parables, Jesus said, "Hear, then, the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the realm of heaven and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 681 "We Plow the Fields and Scatter"**

- 1 We plow the fields and scatter  
the good seed on the land,  
but it is fed and watered  
by God's almighty hand,  
who sends the snow in winter,  
the warmth to swell the grain,  
the breezes and the sunshine,  
and soft refreshing rain.

*Refrain*

All good gifts around us  
are sent from heav'n above.  
We thank you, Lord,  
we thank you, Lord,  
for all your love.

- 2 You only are the maker  
of all things near and far.  
You paint the wayside flower,  
you light the evening star.  
The winds and waves obey you,  
by you the birds are fed;  
much more to us, your children,  
you give our daily bread. *Refrain*

- 3 We thank you, our creator,  
for all things bright and good,  
the seedtime and the harvest,  
our life, our health, our food.  
No gifts have we to offer  
for all your love imparts,  
but what you most would treasure—  
our humble, thankful hearts. *Refrain*

Text: Matthias Claudius, 1740-1815; tr. Jane M. Campbell, 1817-1878, alt.

**MESSAGE:**        **GROWTH**        *silence for reflection follows*

**the CHURCH PRAYS**

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE**

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

God our gardener, you scatter grace like seed across the world. Continue to cultivate the garden of your church with your abundant Spirit. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our joy, your bountiful creation reflects your commitment to life despite our actions disregarding its wonder. We look toward Isaiah's vision, when all creation rejoices, and the trees will clap for joy at your salvation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our life, you give us the same Spirit by which you raised Christ from the dead. Set our minds on that Spirit whenever violence, fear or condemnation overwhelm the world: wars in Ukraine & Russia, Iran, Sudan, Yemen, Cambodia & Thailand, & throughout Southwest Asia: Israel, Lebanon, Gaza. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our source, tend this assembly with your grace throughout this summer season. May those who travel for work or recreation do so safely, and may visitors find refreshment among us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our host and table, we pray for children who hunger and rely on school meals, for all who toil under the hot sun without refreshment, for the chronically ill who have exhausted their resources, and for local concerns. We pray for ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry, Bishop Bill Gohl, Ebenezer Grace Worship Center, St. Peter's Elementary School, those hospitalized or recuperating at home, Greg, John, Lori, Mary Lue, Bea, Fred, our at-home worshippers, ... God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We give you thanks that the roots of your goodness run deep throughout history. We remember those saints who have gone before us in faith, with Bishop Nathan Söderblom, whom the church commemorates today. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant race of Christ Jesus. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Seeking God's will, 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**

Holy God, hear our prayer. *A brief silence.* Gracious God, you bless us with gifts of guidance, new life, growth in grace, and fruitful labor. Accept the first fruits of time and toil that we return to you. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen**

### **BLESSING**

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God,  
bless, heal, and hold us, today and always. **Amen**

### **PEACE**

We are sent to share Good News,  
forgiven and reconciled with all God's people.  
The peace of Christ is with you always.

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Nathan Söderblom, Bishop of Uppsala, died 1931

In 1930, this Swedish theologian, ecumenist, and social activist received the Nobel Prize for peace. Söderblom saw the value of the ancient worship of the church catholic and encouraged the liturgical movement. He also valued the work of liberal Protestant scholars and believed social action was a first step on the path toward a united Christianity. He organized the Universal Christian Council on Life and Work, one of the organizations that in 1948 came together to form the World Council of Churches.

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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 all the birthdays in July.  
Given by Janice Frederick.

*Rose Vase*

In Honor of Jacob Frederick's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by his grandmother, Irma.

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

In Honor of Jacob Frederick for his July birthday.
Given by Mom-Mom, Janice Frederick.

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Attendance for Sunday, July 5, 2026: 31

***Learning, Serving, and Fellowship Opportunities***

**The church office will be closed on Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup> and Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup>.**

**Rainforest Falls VBS** is July 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 pm. Registration is happening now! Forms are available through the church office or in the Narthex. Want to volunteer? Contact Karen Yelovich or Ashley Kane.

**Sponsorships Needed:** Altar flowers for 8/2 & 9 and bulletins for 8/30. Contact the church office to sponsor.

**BRCA/Previvors Group:** This is an off-shoot of Baltimore Cancer Support Group where previvors discuss navigating the ins and outs of receiving their cancer diagnosis. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 7-8:30 pm. at St. Peter's. For more information, contact Geri (410-852-3688) or Molly (410-227-4692).

**Christmas In July:** Saturday, July 25 from 3-7 pm. at St. John's, Essex (518 Franklin Ave., 21221). Traditional spaghetti dinner and dancing to the music of the Monaldi Brothers family band. Admission is \$20/person and a new unwrapped toy. Please call 410-687-4621 for tickets, and note that there are steps to the parish hall.

**The Chalice Circle:** Thursday, August 6th at 6 pm. at Epiphany Lutheran Church Parlor (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206). The Chalice Circle is a place where you can share life experiences, make deep and lasting connections and deepen your spirituality through shared practices. This is a small group experience and we would love to have you with us. If you would be interested in learning more about joining us, please contact Jennifer Simms at 443-386-8469 or jennifersimms1@gmail.com. Refreshments will be served.

**Spa Day Creations:** Saturday, August 15 from 6-7pm at Zion (400 E. Lexington St., 21202). Take a break from the busy pace of life and treat yourself to an evening of creativity and relaxation! Join us for a hands-on Bath Salt Crafting Experience and Create your own custom bath salts using all-natural, skin-approved ingredients and design a unique blend that's perfect for you. No crafting experience is necessary—just bring your creativity! Learn a simple bath salt crafting technique, create your own unique blend, choose from a variety of colors. \$25 per person, space is limited, so reserve your spot today!

**Food Truck Nights:** Wednesdays at 5pm at Ascension Lutheran (7601 York Road, 21204). Continues weekly through August.

**Brats & Beer:** Fridays from 4-8 pm. in the Garden at Zion Lutheran (400 East Lexington Street, 21202). Continues monthly through August.

**Secretary Position Available:** Part time, 20 hr./week, 4 days/week. Applicants must demonstrate proficiency with Microsoft Office applications, have good organizational skills, be able to work independently and with others, and have good communication skills. Interested parties should call St. Matthew Lutheran Church office (410-335-4210).

**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***

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

### ***Summer Children's Programs & Vacation Bible Schools***

Youth Drop-Ins: Mondays from 2-4 pm. (through August 3rd) at Epiphany Lutheran Church (4301 Raspe Ave., 21206, 410-485-7654). Do you know some youth (6-12th graders) in walking distance of Epiphany? Any youth 6th grade and up are welcome to stop by. We request no use of devices (they go in a bucket on the way in) and follow reasonable instructions of adults. Games, puzzles, ping pong, books will be available. Contact the church office with any questions!

Travel to Rome – Paul & the Underground Church VBS: July 27th-31st from 11 am. – 2 pm. Christus Victor (9833 Harford Rd., 21234, 410-668-8080). For ages 4 and up. Lunch will be served.

Kids Summer Arts Camp: July 27th-August 7th (Monday-Friday) from 9 am.-3 pm. St. Luke (7001 Harford Rd., 21234, 410-444-5171). For kids who've completed 1st-5th grades. Includes lunch & snacks, fun & creative activities, music making, dance & movement, making art, dinner & closing performance. Professional staff. Registration is \$250/student and is open now!