

**St. Peter's Lutheran Church & Elementary School**  
**Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – Independence Day Weekend**  
**July 5, 2020**

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The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

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You can say the **BOLD** words with Pastor.

**CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

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

We bless the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen**

Trusting in the mercy of God, we confess our sin. *Silence for reflection.*

Reconciling God, **we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen**

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through † Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

**GREETING and PRAYER of the DAY**

Gathered on the Lord's Day, we remember that we are baptized

**in the name of the Father, and of the † Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

Jesus promised his followers at his ascension:

I will be with you always, even until the end of the world.

**And we will follow all he has taught us,  
making disciples wherever we are.**

Join me in prayer. *A brief silence.* You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

## **SCRIPTURES, SERMON, & SONG**

### **READING: Romans 7:7-25**

*Life captive to sin is a catch-22 existence in which we know good but do not do it and do things we know to be wrong. Through Jesus Christ, God has set us free from such a futile existence.*

*Paul writes:* What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." But sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead. I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good. Did what is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

### **GOSPEL: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30 (CEV)**

*Jesus chides the people who find fault with both his ministry and that of John the Baptist. He thanks God that wisdom and intelligence are not needed to receive what God has to offer.*

P: This is the Good News of the victory of Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
as the Word was given to Matthew.

Jesus said to the crowd: You people are like children sitting in the market and shouting to each other,  
"We played the flute,

but you would not dance!  
We sang a funeral song,  
but you would not mourn!"

John the Baptist did not go around eating and drinking, and you said, "That man has a demon in him!" But the Son of Man goes around eating and drinking, and you say, "That man eats and drinks too much! He is even a friend of tax collectors and sinners." Yet Wisdom is shown to be right by what it does.

At that moment Jesus said:

My Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I am grateful that you hid all this from wise and educated people and showed it to ordinary people. Yes, Father, that is what pleased you.

My Father has given me everything, and he is the only one who knows the Son. The only one who truly knows the Father is the Son. But the Son wants to tell others about the Father, so that they can know him too.

If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest. Take the yoke I give you. Put it on your shoulders and learn from me. I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest. This yoke is easy to bear, and this burden is light.

**GOSPEL REFLECTION** [*for your own use, & for our Thursday Zoom Meeting*]

1 Why wouldn't someone dance when things are good, or mourn at losses we have? When is it good to be like John the Baptist, & when is it good to act like Jesus is describing himself?

2 What do you think people are missing when they dismiss what we **try** to live up to as followers of Jesus? How can we answer for our shortcomings?

3 When do you feel the burdens have been lifted from you? Are there things that have been difficult, but the burden does feel light?

**MESSAGE: Law & Sin**

1 of the most freeing words in the gospels is when Jesus offers an *absolution* while he is being nailed to the cross: *forgive them, Father; they don't know what they're doing*. Paul knows that, even tho this gospel was written after Paul was arrested & sent to Rome to die. **We** know this because we don't understand our actions either. How have things gotten to where they are these days? I could go on about prejudice, & how it is hurting our nation, but it occurred to me that it can be even more basic to being human. See, I don't always *get* why I might not **like** somebody. Sure, there are things that set us off against another because of how we're treated: You don't like the way I dress? **She swore at me!** They ran & hid from me so I couldn't play. *He called me a name that hurt my feelings*. See, a child can have very good reasons not to like someone, but some get over the slights they feel & still stay friends. But we understand why Paul would counsel his readers: don't

hold a grudge or stay angry with another; let go of your hate & forgive. But guess what? Some people just *annoy me*, so I will unfriend them! Have you heard of this act to 'cancel' someone you don't agree with? Is it any wonder we're not listening to each other? I'll take my marbles & go home... **Nyah!**

Paul has another example of a simple human flaw: 'I would not have known what it is to **covet**' –*unless I look it up in a dictionary!* So 'covet' means to yearn to possess or have something; & yes, that is a very human problem. So don't covet, or bear false witness, or take the Lord's name in vain! Have you heard the excuse that folks don't attend Bible studies because they don't want to be caught looking... **not** smart? Could it be that we use words like *covet*, or *hallow* the Sabbath, which are not in our daily vocabulary? The big word we Lutherans have pulled out from the book of Romans is *justification*, & outside of church, we might hear it in a courtroom or from a psychologist. "Why did you do that?" we might be asked by a lawyer or therapist, & we'd give our justification. It *sounds* like Paul is going thru analysis as he tries to make his readers understand what sin has done to us. That's why I thought it good to define some *church words*, as I like to call them, since it's always good to 'be on the same page.' There are 2 or 3 words that stick out as vital to Paul's argument here, & remember, I'm big on us following his thoughts.

'Sin' –this is the 1 word, & what it stands for, that gets in the way between us & God. & that is a central idea about sin: when we fail to do what we're commanded in the Law, then we break our relationship with God. We also hurt our relationship with others, & you can see that happening all the time in the world we're living in. But Paul is less concerned **here** with human problems as this deep divide that sin causes. Sin is not merely making a mistake or doing something that is bad or wrong. In Greek, it stands for 'missing the mark', that is, you aim for some goal & fail to do it. & what is the goal? As Paul, & Luther, have been saying, it isn't about our failure to make ourselves acceptable to God, as if we ever could—it is that we have rebelled against God, & constantly do so. In 14:23, Paul states: whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. Our faith & trust will always fall short; to be human is to doubt, but as Paul would say, God can overcome our doubts.

We fail, & we have doubts, because we are, as it says here, 'in the flesh.' It is tricky to get what the New Testament means in using this concept, here especially in Paul's theology. Sometimes *flesh* just refers to a human body: flesh & blood. & Jesus refers to his own flesh, saying, 'you can see that I have flesh,' as he shows himself alive on Easter, or, going a little deeper,

when he says: you must eat the flesh & blood of the Son of Man. Jesus also says, 'the flesh is weak,' & that gets at how Paul thinks of flesh. We humans are limited by our nature; we are selfish, which served us when prehistoric humans had to survive. Even when we learned to cooperate, that surface 'niceness' can be shattered in the heat of conflict. We have to admit, & we do each week in our confession, that we know what we ought to do, but then that *reptilian* part of our brain fights against our will to do what's right. We have this selfish desire, in our weak *flesh*, to **not** die. But here I need to make a distinction: Greek philosophy thought that having a body, being of flesh & blood, is **bad**, & that 1 should *strive* to be a spiritual being. Jewish, & so also Christian, thought believes that, from Genesis 1, God created bodies to be good & purposeful in conforming to the image of God. God creates, & in part so do we. When we die, Paul says in 1 Cor 15, our mortal bodies will put on immortality; what was weak will be raised in power to be with God.

3<sup>rd</sup> then is 'Law.' Paul says, "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good." Sin has corrupted us in our relationship to the law. In Genesis 3, Satan tempts Adam & Eve in wondering if something forbidden is actually a good thing: to know good & evil as God does. Simply put, sin tells us that **we** know what's best. Luther states that there are 2 functions of the Law; this is the 2<sup>nd</sup>, that it proves we are sinful, & need redemption from our violation of God's will. Faced with our own never-ending failures & rebellion, we must turn to Christ for the forgiveness we need. But Luther would not have us do away with the law. Its 1<sup>st</sup> function is to show us how to live with our neighbor & under God's rule. Being human, we are in a constant struggle to do what is right, *just because* it is good to do good. & we'll always deal honestly with our sinfulness in order to 'walk in newness of life.' According to the teacher & preacher, David Lose: we have a *responsibility* to be a good neighbor to all, & we live with an *identity*, pointed out by Law & Gospel, of being, thru all our lives, both saint & sinner. We find hope in 2 commands: to love God & neighbor, & to trust in God, & Christ, above all else, because God claims us: I have saved you from slavery to sin. We are freed by Christ.

**HYMN of the DAY: # 742 "What A Friend We Have in Jesus"**

**1 What a friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry  
ev'rything to God in prayer!  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit;**

**oh, what needless pain we bear--  
all because we do not carry  
ev'rything to God in prayer!**

**2 Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged--  
take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful  
who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness--  
take it to the Lord in prayer.**

**3 Are we weak and heavy-laden,  
cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge--  
take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do your friends despise, forsake you?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he'll take and shield you;  
you will find a solace there.**

*Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886*

**PRAYERS of the PEOPLE** [*please phone/email your requests by Wednesday*]

A: Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world. *A brief silence.*

We pray for the church. Sustain us as we share your word. Embrace us as we struggle to find our common ground. Lift up leaders with powerful and prophetic voices. Free us from stagnant faith. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the well-being of creation. Protect the air, water, and land from abuse and pollution. Free us from apathy in our care of creation and direct us toward sustainable living. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the nations. Guide leaders in developing just policies and guide difficult conversations. Free us from patriotism that hinders relationship-building. Lead us to expansive love for our neighbor. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all in need. For all who are tired, feeling despair, sick, or oppressed. Take their yoke upon you and ease their burdens. Give your consolation and free us from all that keeps us bound. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for this congregation. Bless pastors, deacons, and congregational leaders. Energize children's ministry volunteers, church administrators, and those who maintain our building. Shine in this place that we might notice the ways your love transforms our lives. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray especially for Jim, Fred, Marydel, George, Danielle, Lisa, Joe, Tonya, June, Chris, Vince, Nettie, Steve, Kalli, John, John & Ann, Bill & Nancy, Anita, Nancy, Stephine, Charles, Laura, John, Irene, Caroline, Allan, ... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Other intercessions may be offered here.*

P: We give thanks for those who have died in faith. Welcome them into your eternal rest and comfort us in our grief until we are joined with them in new life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### **APOSTLES CREED**

Together let us confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen**

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

*Thanks to all those of you who have mailed or dropped in their tithes & offerings, that believers may reach out to a world in need. Let us pray.*

O God of justice and love, we give you thanks that you guide our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your resurrection feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**      *From Romans 8*

'When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God,' and so we are bold to pray:

**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**

**BLESSING**      *From Romans 8*

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ, and Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless us and keep us in eternal love. **Amen**

**SENDING into MISSION**

Live in peace. Christ is with you.

**We will Learn God's Truth.**

**We will Share the Spirit's Healing.**

**We will Follow the Way of Jesus. Amen**

**PEACE**

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

*Please share words & gestures of peace with those near you,  
or in the comments of our FB page*



**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 homebound members.

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

In Loving Memory of my mother, Vi Grimm,  
for her July 6<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by her daughter, Carole.

In Loving Memory of John O. Yowell  
for his July 1<sup>st</sup> birthday.  
Given by the Kahl family

In Celebration of Tabitha Lauer's birthday.  
Given by Cathy and Mark McQuade.

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*Today's Bulletins are Given to the Glory of God*

In Loving Memory of Grace Dohmeier's July 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Given by her husband, Jerry.

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Attendance for June 28, 2020: 35

## ***Learning, Serving, & Fellowship Opportunities***

**Gospel Reflection Zoom:** Join Pr. Lans on Thursdays at 4 pm. on Zoom (web and phone) to discuss the previous Sunday's gospel and reflection questions. The link for joining was sent out via email on Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. If you'd like to participate, but didn't receive the link, contact the church office.

**The Quest:** Join Becca Plantholt, our Youth & Family Coordinator, for this on-line VBS bible study expedition to develop a deeper relationship with God. See the attached flier for time/date details on the kid-friendly and adult studies. Register by emailing Becca at [christedcoord@st-peterslutheran.com](mailto:christedcoord@st-peterslutheran.com).

**Synod Women's Organization Retreat** at Claggett Center is scheduled for September 11-13. Registration form attached.

**Baltimore Cancer Support Group's 7th Annual Car Show:** The car show, originally scheduled for July 12th, has been rescheduled for **Sunday, October 4th** from 10-2:30 pm. at the Joppatowne Shopping Center at the corner of Route 40/Pulaski Hwy. & Joppa Farm Rd. Raffles, prizes, and concessions!

**Bulletin Sponsorship Needed** for Sunday, **July 12**. Contact Anne Seeger at 410-821-6161.

**Flower Sponsorship Needed** for Sunday, **July 12**. Contact Nancy Barnes at 410-592-3922.

**Chair Request:** The school is looking for 2 chairs to be donated to place in the school lobby. Please contact the school at 410-665-4521 if you (or someone you know) can help.

**We are branching out on social media!** You can connect with us on Instagram and Twitter (search for [stpeterselcafullerton](#)) and on YouTube (search for St. Peter's Lutheran Church Fullerton).

**Amazon Smile:** When you shop on Amazon, please consider supporting St. Peter's Elementary School by using Amazon Smile. A portion of every purchase goes back to St. Peter's. To use Amazon Smile, please type in the following and sign in with your Amazon user name and password: [smile.amazon.com/ch/52-0796248](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-0796248).

**Internet Search:** Help St. Peter's church and school reach the top of the search engine results by typing our web address ([www.st-peterslutheran.com](http://www.st-peterslutheran.com)) directly into the search line/box (not the browser bar) on all of your devices!



St. Peter's Lutheran Church

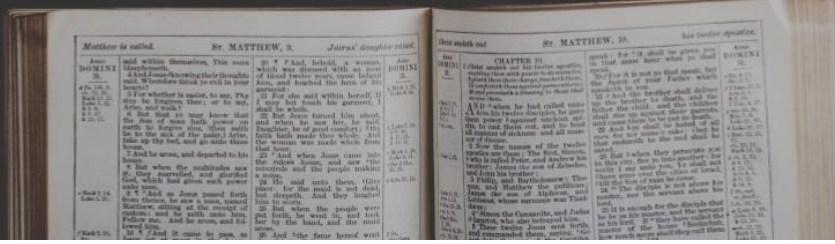
# BIBLE STUDY

## *The Quest*

*an expedition to a deeper relationship with God*

Kids: Saturdays @ 9:30am starting July 11th  
Adults: Sundays @ 6:30pm starting July 12th

CONTACT [christedcoord@st-peterslutheran.com](mailto:christedcoord@st-peterslutheran.com)  
to reserve your spot!



# SWO Retreat

September 11-12-13, 2020

Claggett Center  
3035 Buckeystown Pike  
Adamstown, MD 21710  
claggettcenter.org • (310) 874-5147

Speaker: Sara Mullin  
Theme: *Wild Women of the Bible*

Cost:  
Single Room \$250  
Double Room \$230

Deposit due July 15, 2020  
Total monies due August 1, 2020  
Check payable to SWO

Mail to check and form:  
Peggy Green  
71 Carroll View Avenue  
Westminster, MD 21157  
(410) 868-5188

## REGISTRATION FORM

|                                                   |                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| NAME                                              |                                                          |
| ADDRESS                                           |                                                          |
| PHONE                                             |                                                          |
| CHURCH                                            |                                                          |
| EMERGENCY CONTACT                                 |                                                          |
| FOOD ALLERGIES                                    |                                                          |
| ROOMMATE FOR DOUBLE ROOM                          |                                                          |
| FIRST TIMER?                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| SCHOLARSHIP NEEDED                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes -- please explain:          |
| Is this the first-time for a scholarship request? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |