

# St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

Hopewell Township, N.J.

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Rev. Jon Dunbar, Pastor (402) 641-4813

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## Second Sunday in Advent

*December 10, 2023*

### **Our mission:**

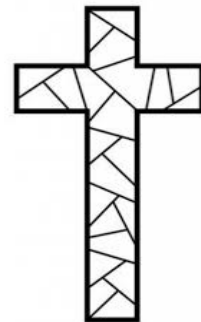
*to spread the Word of Salvation through Christ,  
honor God, serve others, and grow in faith.*

**Welcome!** "Prepare the way...!" say Isaiah and John. As we prepare our homes to receive guests, we may find ourselves covering up more than we actually clean up. Piles of laundry, yet to be folded, are stashed out of sight. A quick wipe-down of surfaces is enough to give the impression of tidiness. But when God calls us to "make straight His paths", He is not asking us to dress up and pretend. Like the crowds of John's day, we are invited back to the waters of our baptism, to make a true confession of our sins, hiding nothing, and trusting that - for the sake of Christ - those sins, in the moment they are confessed, will be dissolved in the holy fire of God's love.

**Welcome guests!** We are delighted you are with us for worship this morning. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Jon, sign the guest book next to the front doors, and let us know how we can be of service to you. The order of service is printed in this bulletin starting on page 2. A cryroom is available at the back left of the sanctuary for families with young children if there is a need.

**Communion Note:** We believe that our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us. Because unworthy reception of the sacrament can be harmful, those who are not yet instructed, are uncertain or doubtful, or hold to a different confession should speak to the Pastor before participating.

## *The Preparation*



**Prelude:** “Herr Christ, er einig Gottes Sohn” - J. G. Walther

### **Words of Welcome**

### **Invocation, Confession and Absolution**

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Beloved in the Lord. Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, imploring him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

C: **Who made heaven and earth.**

P: I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.

C: **And you forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

**O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to you all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended you and justly deserved your punishment now and forever. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray you of your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.**

(Silence for personal confession.)

P: Upon this your confession, I, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

### **Lighting of the Advent Wreath Litany – see insert**

## *The Service of the Word*

### **Prayer of the Day**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord,

to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son,  
that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds;  
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**



**Old Testament Reading:** Isaiah 40:1-11 (see back cover)

**Psalms:** Psalm 85



<sup>1</sup> LORD, you were favorable | to your land; \*  
you restored the fortunes of | Jacob.

<sup>2</sup> You forgave the iniquity of  
your | people; \*  
you covered | all their sin.

<sup>3</sup> You withdrew | all your wrath; \*  
you turned from your hot | anger.

<sup>4</sup> Restore us again, O God of our  
sal- | vation, \*  
and put away your indignation | toward  
us!

<sup>5</sup> Will you be angry with us for- | ever? \*  
Will you prolong your anger to all  
gener- | ations?

<sup>6</sup> Will you not revive | us again, \*  
that your people may re- | joice in you?

<sup>7</sup> Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD, \*  
and grant us your sal- | vation.

<sup>8</sup> Let me hear what God the | LORD will  
speak, \*  
for he will speak peace to his people,  
to his saints; but let them not turn  
back to | folly.

<sup>9</sup> Surely his salvation is near to those  
who | fear him, \*  
that glory may dwell | in our land.

<sup>10</sup> Steadfast love and faith- | fulness meet; \*  
righteousness and peace kiss  
each | other.

<sup>11</sup> Faithfulness springs up | from the  
ground, \*  
and righteousness looks down | from  
the sky.

<sup>12</sup> Yes, the LORD will give | what is good, \*  
and our land will yield its | increase.

<sup>13</sup> Righteousness will go be- | fore him \*  
and make his foot- | steps a way.

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son \*  
and to the Holy | Spirit;  
as it was in the be- | ginning, \*  
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

**Epistle Reading:** 2 Peter 3:8-14 (see back cover)

**Advent Verse:** 357 vs 3-4 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times didst give the Law In cloud and majesty and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou branch of Jesse's tree, Free them from Satan's tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save, And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel.

**Gospel Reading:** Mark 1:1-8

Acclamations (sung): **Glory be to you, O Lord.  
Praise be to you, O Christ.**

**Nicene Creed** (inside the back cover of the hymnal)

**Children's Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day:** 344 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

**Sermon**



**Prayers** After each petition of the prayer P: Lord in your mercy,  
**C: Hear our prayer.**

**Prayer Request List** (Names are placed on the list by request only.)

***For comfort:***

|                 |                 |         |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Garefino family | Death of Gloria | Teschke |
| McCough family  | Death of Frank  | Teschke |

***For those with health concerns:***

|                      |                 |                 |             |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Pastor John Babbitts | Claire Haenisch | Ursula          | Pat Dietz   |
| Bob Latimer          | Pat McSorley    | Phillip Trivett | Kay Compton |
| Doug Meckel          | Mina Ciquis     | Brennan         | Tom Reside  |
| Marge Carr           |                 |                 |             |

***For those with cancer:***

|                 |                    |                  |          |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------|
| Charlie Huebner | Yolanda Piekaoskey | Rich deDufour    | Lynn     |
| Rich Knechel    | Rose Bonecki       | Aaron Kline      | Linda    |
| Carol Tezla     | Karen Shevchuk     | Jane Chmielewski | Kathy    |
| Edward Keenan   | Kathy Lamkin       | Mary Ellen       | Mary Ann |

***For those serving in the armed forces:***

|            |              |                |            |                |
|------------|--------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
| Jake Grube | LJ Lupinacci | Carrick Porter | Nate Fiske | Daniel Gewecke |
|------------|--------------|----------------|------------|----------------|

***For those suffering around the world:***

|  |   |
|--|---|
| War in Europe                            | Prayers for peace and forgiveness         |
| Family of Olga Nichols living in Ukraine | Prayers for health, safety, and provision |
| War in Middle East                       | Prayers for peace and forgiveness         |

***Birthdays***

|                |        |
|----------------|--------|
| Sue Lauricella | Dec 12 |
|----------------|--------|

**Gathering of the Offering and Offertory** (p. 192)

**Instrumental Offertory**

**Congregational Offertory:** "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**

**Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.**

**Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation; and uphold me with Your free Spirit. Amen.**

## The Service of the Sacrament

### Order of Holy Communion page 194

P: The Lord be with you.                      **C: And also with you.**  
 P: Lift up your hearts.                      **C: We lift them to the Lord.**  
 P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God   **C: It is good and right so to do.**

P: It is truly good, right and salutary.... Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name evermore praising you and saying:

**C: (sung) Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory.**  
**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna, in the highest.**  
**Blessed is He, Blessed is He, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**  
**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

**C: (spoken) Our Father who art in heaven...**  
 Words of Institution (Consecration)

Pax Domini

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.   **C: And also with you.**

### Sharing of Christ's Peace

Agnus Dei page 198 (sung)

**O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy upon us.**  
**O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy upon us.**  
**O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us Your peace. Amen**

Distribution Hymn: 347 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Post-Communion Canticle: Lord, Now Let Your Servant Depart in Peace (p. 199 LSB)

**Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace according to Your Word,**  
**for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people,**  
**a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of Your people Israel.**  
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;**  
**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

Thanksgiving page 200

P: Oh, give thanks unto the Lord for He is good,   **C: and His mercy endures forever.**  
 P: (Prayer of Thanksgiving)                      **C: Amen.**

### Salutation and Benedicamus page 201

P: The Lord be with you.   **C: And also with you.**  
 P: Bless we the Lord.       **C: Thanks be to God.**

### Benediction page 202

P: The Lord bless you...                      **C: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn:** 919 Abide, O Dearest Jesus

### Announcements



P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: **Thanks be to God!**

**Postlude:** “Nun komm der Heiden Heiland” – P. Manz



## **Announcements – Week of December 10, 2023**

**Need assistance? The Church Office is staffed each week  
Tues, Wed. and Thurs. from 1:00 - 3:00 to help.**

**Worship, Sunday School, and Bible Study**

**Welcome!** Serving in worship today are: Bill Kianka (Communion Assistant), Joey Dunbar (Reader), Nathan Wilhelm (Acolyte), Tyson Wilhelm (Usher and Live-streaming), Hope Dunbar and Amy Van Hise (Communion and coffee set-up and clean-up).

**Sunday Bible Study.** Throughout the month of December, we will be studying a selection from one of the three readings assigned for that Sunday's worship service. This Sunday we will look at Mark 1:1-8. What was John the Baptizer's message to Israel? How did it help prepare people for Jesus? What's the difference between the baptisms of John and Jesus? Come and find out!

**Sunday School Classes** for all ages continue to meet during the adult bible study hour from 8:15-9:15am in the lower level of the church. Let's grow together in God's Word this year!

**Today's service will be live streamed** on You Tube at the following link:

<https://youtube.com/live/P3pMd0OfnA8?feature=share> If you miss the service live, watch it whenever you like! The services are also posted after the fact to the church's website.

**Wednesday Zoom Bible Study.** There will be NO Wednesday bible studies on December 6, 13, or 20 because of midweek Advent services. We'll resume on January 3, 2024! (You can find archived recordings of our studies on our church website - [www.stpeternj.org](http://www.stpeternj.org))

**Midweek Advent Services:** Advent is a season in the church year that helps prepare our hearts to celebrate Christmas. With so many distractions this time of year, the world needs Advent more than ever! In this year's midweek Advent services we'll learn about three historical figures who carried the hope of Christ in their hearts and helped manifest His Light in the world:

Wed. Dec 13 at 7:30pm - Lucia of Syracuse

Wed. Dec 20 at 7:30pm - Katharina von Bora Luther (Youth-Led Service)

## (Announcements cont'd)

**Youth-led Advent Service:** Young people of all ages are invited to participate in our youth-led Advent service on Wednesday, Dec.20th at 7:30pm. We'll have a couple of practices in December to get organized so look for more info coming on that. Ways to be involved include:

- ushering and acolyting
  - solo/group music and singing
  - reading
- sharing a written reflection on a reading  
- other creative ideas??

Talk to Pastor Jon or Hope if you're interested in participating. All are welcome!

### *Men's, Women's, Senior's, Youth and Family Ministry*

**Prayer Shawl Ministry.** The Prayer Shawl ministry team has distributed 18 prayer shawls during the month of October. Twelve of those were given to the Veteran's Hospital. What a blessing!

**Prayer Chain.** The Prayer Chain is ready to receive your prayer requests. Simply call Barbara Greenberg at (609) 512-1928 to start or update a prayer.

### *Service and Other*

**Live Nativity at Bethany, Ewing.** Bethany Lutheran Church in Ewing is hosting its annual live nativity on Sunday, Dec. 17th at 7:00pm. Come and hear the story of Jesus' birth reenacted by live performers, enjoy hot cocoa, and pet the animals!



**Crafts, Carols, and Christ,** a Nursery School and church collaboration. What a delightful and joyous celebration of the Christmas season we had on Saturday! It was a full house, with many families from the school as well as congregation members in attendance. Thanks to all who came to share in this special time.



**Poinsettias** may be purchased for \$10/pot to adorn the altar during this festive Christmas season. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board – you can choose red, white, or pink. They can be taken home following the Christmas service.

**St. Peter Christmas Caroling.** Sunday December 10th @ 2:30 PM – to visit some Homebound members. Come one, come all! Join us Sunday afternoon as we visit 2 homebound members, raising our Hearts and Voices in Christmas joy! See Bill Kianka or Bob Maguire for additional Caroling details.

**Operation Christmas Child.** As we look forward to next year's collection, we are focusing on certain supplies during each month. For December we could use **small stuffed animals (need 20)**, **wiffle balls (need plenty)** and **fun Christmas tchotchkes** while they're available, so if you can, pick up a few and drop them in the collection box in the narthex (next to the food pantry box).

**Flowers.** A Flower sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. Flower contributions can be made in honor of someone, in thanksgiving for God’s grace, or for a special occasion. The suggested donation is \$25.

**Lambertville Food Pantry.** Please grab some non-perishable items at the grocery store to add to our food pantry collection box in the narthex. December’s collection is BAKING AND COOKING PRODUCTS: flour, sugar, salt, cooking oil, vinegar, baking powder, baking soda, etc. You can also sign up to deliver the donations; see the bulletin board sign-up.

**Faithfulness Report** 12/3 Attendance: 48 Gen Fund: \$ 4191.98


(Weekly contributions of approx \$6,000 are needed to meet our Congregation-approved 2023 budget.)

**Website and Facebook.** Our website is at [www.stpeternj.org](http://www.stpeternj.org), and our Facebook page is Saint Peter Lutheran Church - the link is: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Saint-Peter-Lutheran-Church/337705479662612>. Come check us out!

**Weekly Schedule.**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| MONDAY (12/11)    | NOAH Seniors Event   |
| TUESDAY (12/12)   | Noon Elders Meeting; 4:30pm Confirmation Class   |
| WEDNESDAY (12/13) | 7:30pm Midweek Advent Service  |
| THURSDAY (12/14)  | 9:45/11:40 Nursery School Chapel   |
| SATURDAY (12/16)  | 9:30am Partners in Mission meeting (Princeton)   |
| SUNDAY (12/17)    | 8:15am Bible Study/Sunday School; 9:30am Worship;<br>7pm Live Nativity at Bethany, Ewing |

**A Look Ahead.** Mark your calendars!

|                           |                |                           |   |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Today, December 10</b> | <b>2:30 pm</b> | <b>Christmas Caroling</b> |  |
| Wednesday, December 13    | 7:30 pm        | Advent Services           |   |
| Wednesday, December 20    | 7:30 pm        | Youth-led Advent Service  |   |
| Sunday, December 24       | 9:30 am        | Sunday Advent Service     |   |
| Sunday, December 24       | 5 pm & 7 pm    | Christmas Eve Services    |   |
| Monday, December 25       | 10:30 am       | Christmas Day Service     |   |

**Other Important web links.**

- NJ District LCMS [njdistrict.org](http://njdistrict.org)
- The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod [lcms.org](http://lcms.org)
- LCMS World Relief and Human Care [lcms.org/ca/worldrelief](http://lcms.org/ca/worldrelief)
- “The Lutheran Hour” Broadcast [lhm.org](http://lhm.org)



## SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

### Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 40:1–11

- <sup>1</sup> Comfort, comfort my people,  
says your God.
- <sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that her warfare is ended,  
that her iniquity is pardoned,  
that she has received from the LORD's  
hand  
double for all her sins.
- <sup>3</sup> A voice cries:  
"In the wilderness prepare the way of  
the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a high-  
way for our God.
- <sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be  
made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.
- <sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD shall be  
revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spo-  
ken."
- <sup>6</sup> A voice says, "Cry!"  
And I said, "What shall I cry?"  
All flesh is grass,  
and all its beauty is like the flower of  
the field.
- <sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades  
when the breath of the LORD blows  
on it;  
surely the people are grass.
- <sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand  
forever.
- <sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good news;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;  
lift it up, fear not;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Behold your God!"
- <sup>10</sup> Behold, the Lord GOD comes with  
might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
behold, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.
- <sup>11</sup> He will tend his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms;  
he will carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead those that are with  
young.

### Epistle: 2 Peter 3:8–14

<sup>8</sup>But do not overlook this one fact,  
beloved, that with the Lord one day is as  
a thousand years, and a thousand years  
as one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow to ful-  
fill his promise as some count slowness,  
but is patient toward you, not wishing  
that any should perish, but that all should  
reach repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord  
will come like a thief, and then the heav-  
ens will pass away with a roar, and the  
heavenly bodies will be burned up and dis-  
solved, and the earth and the works that  
are done on it will be exposed.

<sup>11</sup>Since all these things are thus to be dis-  
solved, what sort of people ought you to be  
in lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting  
for and hastening the coming of the day  
of God, because of which the heavens will  
be set on fire and dissolved, and the heav-  
enly bodies will melt as they burn! <sup>13</sup>But  
according to his promise we are waiting  
for new heavens and a new earth in which  
righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, since you are wait-  
ing for these, be diligent to be found by  
him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

### Holy Gospel: Mark 1:1–8

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the gospel of Jesus  
Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

"Behold, I send my messenger before  
your face,  
who will prepare your way,

<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying in the wilder-  
ness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,"

<sup>4</sup>John appeared, baptizing in the wilder-  
ness and proclaiming a baptism of repen-  
tance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And all  
the country of Judea and all Jerusalem  
were going out to him and were being  
baptized by him in the river Jordan, con-  
fessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed  
with camel's hair and wore a leather belt  
around his waist and ate locusts and wild  
honey. <sup>7</sup>And he preached, saying, "After  
me comes he who is mightier than I, the  
strap of whose sandals I am not worthy  
to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized  
you with water, but he will baptize you  
with the Holy Spirit."