

# St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

Hopewell Township, N.J.

(609) 466-0939 web site: [stpeternj.org](http://stpeternj.org)  
[pastor@stpeternj.org](mailto:pastor@stpeternj.org) [secretary@stpeternj.org](mailto:secretary@stpeternj.org)

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

Chris Fusco, Music Director

Amy Van Hise, Office Administrator

Jennifer Garrow, Nursery School Director

## Third Sunday in Advent

*December 15, 2024*

### **Our mission:**

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

**Welcome!** "Rejoice!" is the traditional theme for this third week in Advent. But there are many reasons why we may not feel much like rejoicing this time of year. Perhaps an overly full calendar, seasonal depression, or missing loved ones has Advent joy feeling like an out of reach dream for you. John the Baptist struggled to find joy in Jesus due to his imprisonment (Luke 7). Yet Jesus assured him that the Savior had come to save his people - not by fixing all our immediate troubles, but by delivering us from our greatest enemies of sin, death, and Satan. In that, we can rejoice!

**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:** “Nun komm der Heiden Heiland” – J. S. Bach

### 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  
unto

God our Father, beseeching 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 unto the Lord.

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

P: O almighty God, merciful Father,

C: **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to you all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. 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.

Lord Jesus Christ,

we implore You to hear our prayers

and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation;

for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**



**Old Testament Reading:** Zephanaiah 3:14-20 (see back cover)

**Psalm:** Psalm 85 (spoken responsively)

P: LORD, You were favorable to Your land; You restored the fortunes of Jacob.

**C: You forgave the iniquity of Your people; You covered all their sin.**

P: You withdrew all Your wrath; You turned from Your hot anger.

**C: Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away Your indignation toward us!**

P: Will You be angry with us forever? Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

**C: Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?**

P: Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us Your salvation.

**C: 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.**

P: Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land.

**C: Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other.**

P: Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky.

**C: Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.**

P: Righteousness will go before Him and make His footsteps a way.

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen**

**Epistle Reading:** Philippians 4:4-7 (see back cover)

**Advent Verse:** 338 Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us, Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art,  
Dear desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver; Born a child and yet a king!  
Born to reign in us forever, Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all-sufficient merit Raise us to Thy glorious throne.



**Gospel Reading:** Luke 7:18-28

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

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

**Children's Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day:** 334 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You (v 1-4)

**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:*

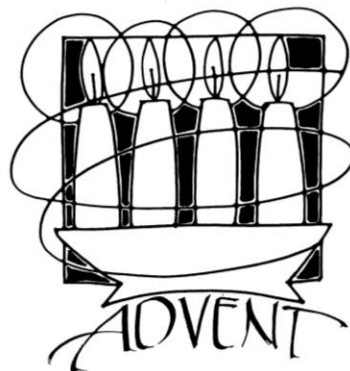
The Yoder family	Death of Betty	Yoder/Zelkovsky
The Gering/McCarthy families	Death of Larry	Dunbar

*For those with health concerns:*

Janis	Janice Nuneviller	Barbara	Carol Farley
Chris	Zane	Brennan	Valerie Nebbie
Beverly	Pete Serone	Carol Yost Band	Grant and Noah
Ursula	John O'Neil	Sid	Allison
Kay Compton	Claire	Rose	Lolly Hoagland
Cambria	Robert Bauer	John Tarlo	Steve Hauptman
Mariah Martinez	Judy Nanni	Joe	Suzanne
Nicholas Wilhelm			

*For those with cancer:*

Rosalie Reinbacher	Lance	Rich deDufour	Lynn
Rich Knechel	Rose Bonecki	Aaron Kline	Dick Butterfoss
Carol Tezla	Karen Shevchuk	Jason	Kathy
Barbara	Kathy Lamkin	Mary Ellen	Mary Anne
Andrea(Andy) Hoteling	Nancy Gilliand	Lexi Launchbaugh	Linda
Trudy	Kaleigh Moore	Steve Saumsiegle	Doris
Jane Fry	Jerry	Gerry Campbell	Brad Hoppe
Barbara Howard	Dottie	Dave Bond	William
Sonia	Barbara	Henry J.	Logan Mattessich
Linda	Karen Radcliffe	Marci Fehlhafer	Dora



***For those with needs around the world:***

Government officials and people of our nation	Prayers for peace, unity, safety, and wisdom
Those coping with hurricane/drought/disaster	Prayers for provision and help
Those in need of employment	Provision of jobs
Wars in Europe and Middle East	Prayers for peace, forgiveness, and guidance
Family of Olga Nichols living in Ukraine	Prayers for health, safety, and provision

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

LJ Lupinacci	Carrick Porter	Nate Fiske	Jake Grube	Jim Buckman
Daniel Gewecke	James Bannon	Harper Usiskin	Jesse Sowell	Mike Bahney

***For St. Peter Lutheran Nursery School:***

For staff and families of the school	For enrollment
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**Birthdays:**

Judy Grube	Dec 18	Tom Dorsett	Dec 19
Annie Allardice	Dec 20		

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

**Instrumental Offertory:** “Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottes-Sohn” – J. G. Walther

**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 Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.**

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

***The Service of the Sacrament***

**Order of Holy Communion** page 194

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And with Thy spirit.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them up unto the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God **C: It is meet 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 Thy glory.**

**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna, in the highest.**

**Blessed is He, Blessed is He, Blessed is He that cometh 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, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world; have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world; have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world; grant us Thy peace. Amen**

Distribution Hymn: 359 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

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

**Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy Word,  
for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people,  
a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of Thy 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 endureth forever.**

P: (Prayer of Thanksgiving) C: **Amen.**

**Salutation and Benedicamus** page 201 *(sung)*

P: The Lord be with you. C: **And with Thy spirit.**

P: Bless we the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

**Benediction** page 202 *(sung)*

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

**Closing Hymn:** 333 Once He Came in Blessing

## Announcements

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: **Thanks be to God!**

**Postlude:** "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland" – J. G. Walther





## **Announcements – Week of December 15, 2024**

**Need assistance? The Church Office is staffed each week**

**\*MON, TUES and WED from 1:00 - 3:00\***

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

**Welcome!** Serving in worship today are: Norm Klesat (Communion assistant), Amy Van Hise (Reading), Juliet Behnfeldt (Acolyte), Joey Dunbar and Joe Scheblein (Ushers), Lesley deDufour (Live-streaming), Shirley Yost and Hope Dunbar (Communion/coffee set-up and clean-up)

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

<https://youtube.com/live/Pz7eOwfQp8o> If you miss the service live, watch it whenever you like! The services are also posted after the fact to the church's website.

**Bible Study on Gospel of Luke.** This Sunday at 8:15am we continue a 12-week study of selections from Luke's Gospel. **Our study lesson for this Sunday will be Luke 1:57-80, "The Birth of John the Baptist"**. Luke tells us how Zechariah's muteness was lifted after he fulfilled God's command to name his son John. The Holy Spirit moved him to break out in song, praising God with words we still sing today as the Benedictus. How does this song reveal the bigger picture of what God was doing through John and Jesus?

**After-Service Sermon Discussion today!** Join us after service in the fellowship hall for a lively discussion!

**Wednesday Zoom Bible Study.** Our Wednesday evening Bible study is now on break until January 8 of the New Year.

### **Weekly Schedule:**

MONDAY (12/16)	5:30pm Planning Council; 7:00pm Nursery Board
WEDNESDAY (12/18)	7:30pm Youth-led Advent Service
THURSDAY (12/19)	9:45/11:15am Nursery Chapel
SUNDAY (12/22)	8:15am SS/Bible Study; 9:30 Worship; 11:00 Discussion Group

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

**Caroling for friends and shut-ins – Today, 3 pm.** Join us as we bless our shut-ins and friends of the congregation singing some familiar Christmas carols and spreading good cheer! All are welcome – let Pastor Jon know if you can come along!

**Youth Candlelight Service Wednesday Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>.** This year's final midweek Advent service will be led by the youth of our congregation. The group rehearsal for our service will be held after church today. Lunch will be provided. Please let Hope Dunbar know if you have a son or daughter interested in participating. All ages are welcome. Also, if you plan to prepare a musical piece, let Hope know that as well. There will be a group choir piece, but also many speaking parts to fill!

**The Prayer Shawl/Lap Blanket Ministry** is a prayerful ministry which reaches out to those in need of comfort, and also to share the joy of those celebrating a marriage or the birth of a child. Blessings are prayed into the items for the recipients. These items are meant to be given away unconditionally and are NOT to be sold. Since the beginning of the ministry in 2015, we have given away a total of 384 items which include shawls, lap blankets, baby caps, and baby blankets. In addition to individuals, we have contributed lap blankets and shawls to the Disabled American Veterans Hospital; baby caps to hospitals; fidget blankets to Alzheimer patients; and red, white and blue blankets to Hospice in honor of WWII veterans. Finally, we would like to thank those of you who have contributed to this ministry for the purchase of supplies.

**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**

**Christmas Poinsettias.** We will once again have red, white and pink poinsettias in front of the Christmas altar. If you would like to sponsor (\$10) one or more poinsettias there is a signup sheet on the bulletin board. You can take these home after the Christmas Day service.



**Opportunity to give toward Helene Disaster Relief through NJ District.** The NJ District continues to match dollar for dollar any individual/family gift given through the District up to \$250. A designation has been set up on the District website ([njdistrict.org](http://njdistrict.org)) where people can give online. Once you are on the website scroll down and click on the "Give Now" button. Scroll down and click on the Hurricane Helene Disaster relief icon.

**Flowers.** If you would like to have flowers placed on the altar in honor of someone, in thanksgiving for God's grace, or for a special occasion, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board to do so. Suggested donation is \$25. You may take the flowers home following the service on the day you select.

**Lambertville Food Pantry.** Please grab some non-perishable items at the grocery store to add to our food pantry collection box in the narthex. **SPECIAL NEED – toilet paper! December's collection is Baking and Cooking** – flour, sugar, salt, cooking oil, vinegar, baking powder, baking soda, spices...

**Faithfulness Report:** Attendance 12/4: 28      12/8: 62      Gen Fund (plate and elec): \$11681  
Loan angel: \$250      Youth Gathering: \$237



**Website and Facebook.** Come online to check us out! 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>.

**Other Important web links:**

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod [lcms.org](http://lcms.org) NJ District LCMS [njdistrict.org](http://njdistrict.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)



**TAKE IT FURTHER: Today’s Distribution Hymn: 359 Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming**

*This beautiful and familiar carol dates back to 15<sup>th</sup> century Germany. Its author is unknown. It actually began as a Catholic hymn, which referred to Mary as the “rose that enveloped the Christ Child.” However, in 1609 when Michael Praetorius, a Lutheran church musician, included it in his collection of hymns, he altered the lyrics to place the emphasis on Christ and referring to Him as the Rose. It begins with the interjection ‘Lo!’, calling for the singer to “Look! Pay attention! The prophecy we have waited for is fulfilled!” This is an Advent message that bears repeating.*

-Concordia Publishing House. *Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns.* (2019), p. 5-9

***Memory Verse Challenge: Philippians 4:6-7***

...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.





*Advent and Christmas at St. Peter*

*December:*

*Sun 15 3:00 pm Christmas Caroling for shut-ins/friends*

*Wed 18 7:30 pm Youth-led Advent Service*

*Tues 24 5:00/7:00 pm Christmas Eve Services*

*Wed 25 10:00 am Christmas Day Service*



## THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

### Old Testament Reading:

#### Zephaniah 3:14–20

<sup>14</sup>Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;  
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,  
O daughter of Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup>The LORD has taken away the judgments  
against you;  
he has cleared away your enemies.

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in  
your midst;

you shall never again fear evil.

<sup>16</sup>On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

“Fear not, O Zion;  
let not your hands grow weak.

<sup>17</sup>The LORD your God is in your midst,  
a mighty one who will save;  
he will rejoice over you with gladness;

he will quiet you by his love;  
he will exult over you with loud  
singing.

<sup>18</sup>I will gather those of you who  
mourn for the festival,  
so that you will no longer suffer  
reproach.

<sup>19</sup>Behold, at that time I will deal  
with all your oppressors.  
And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their shame into  
praise  
and renown in all the earth.

<sup>20</sup>At that time I will bring you in,  
at the time when I gather you  
together;  
for I will make you renowned and  
praised  
among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your eyes,” says the LORD.

### Epistle: Philippians 4:4–7

<sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always; again I  
will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup>Let your reasonableness  
be known to everyone. The Lord is  
at hand; <sup>6</sup>do not be anxious about anything,  
but in everything by prayer and  
supplication with thanksgiving let your

requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And  
the peace of God, which surpasses all  
understanding, will guard your hearts  
and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### Holy Gospel: Luke 7:18–28

<sup>18</sup>The disciples of John reported all  
these things to him. And John, <sup>19</sup>calling  
two of his disciples to him, sent  
them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the  
one who is to come, or shall we look  
for another?” <sup>20</sup>And when the men  
had come to him, they said, “John the  
Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are  
you the one who is to come, or shall  
we look for another?’” <sup>21</sup>In that hour  
he healed many people of diseases and  
plagues and evil spirits, and on many  
who were blind he bestowed sight.  
<sup>22</sup>And he answered them, “Go and tell  
John what you have seen and heard:  
the blind receive their sight, the lame  
walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf  
hear, the dead are raised up, the poor  
have good news preached to them.  
<sup>23</sup>And blessed is the one who is not  
offended by me.”

<sup>24</sup>When John’s messengers had gone,  
Jesus began to speak to the crowds  
concerning John: “What did you go  
out into the wilderness to see? A reed  
shaken by the wind? <sup>25</sup>What then did  
you go out to see? A man dressed in  
soft clothing? Behold, those who are  
dressed in splendid clothing and live in  
luxury are in kings’ courts. <sup>26</sup>What then  
did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes,  
I tell you, and more than a prophet.  
<sup>27</sup>This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before  
your face,  
who will prepare your way before  
you.”

<sup>28</sup>I tell you, among those born of  
women none is greater than John. Yet  
the one who is least in the kingdom of  
God is greater than he.”

WEEK 3

A  
Little Child  
SHALL  
Lead Them



Melody..... Hark, the Glad Sound

Now in God's time, our Lord arrives.  
We put our faith in him.  
Our ev'ry thought and deed and word  
Become for us a hymn.

- ℓ *The little Lord Jesus came when the time was right to save us from all evil.*
- ☐ With faith in him, we know that all things will work together for our good.
- ℓ *We were once under the law of sin,*
- ☐ But we have been redeemed by Christ.

When we were lost, we disobeyed  
The law our Lord decreed.  
Found by the Lord, our God and King,  
We from all sin are freed.

- ℓ *Jesus paved the way for us to follow in and take each step by faith.*
- ☐ In good times and bad, we put our trust in him.
- ℓ *By his birth and perfect life, our Savior took the place that we deserved upon the cross.*
- ☐ His sacrifice for us was prepared by God from the beginning.

Jesus was born and lived perfectly.  
He said he came to save.  
In faith we trust eternally.  
His holiness he gave.

- ℓ *When Jesus was born to us, he provided a path to paradise.*
- ☐ Heaven is ours because of him.

Guided by Christ, we go with him  
To ev'ry place and thing  
That points the way to hope in Christ,  
As saints and angels sing.

*(Light three candles on the Advent wreath.)*

LEADING TO FAITH

*(Daily Bible readings for the third week in Advent.)*

Sunday.....	Galatians 4:4-7
Monday.....	John 3:16-21
Tuesday.....	1 Corinthians 6:9-11
Wednesday.....	1 Thessalonians 5:14-24
Thursday.....	Jeremiah 31:1-6
Friday.....	John 14:27-31
Saturday.....	2 Corinthians 6:1-10

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