

SAVIOR
SERVANT
FRIEND

Ash Wednesday:
Forgiver

I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father

I have made known to you. John 15:15

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Invocation and Call to Worship

Prelude

(please stand)

P: We gather together in the presence of the Triune God who has called us friends. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: A friend loves at all times,

C: And a brother is born for adversity. (Proverbs 17:17)

P: The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,

C: And he makes known to them his covenant. (Psalm 25:14)

P: A man of many companions may come to ruin,

C: But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24)

P: What a friend we have in Jesus,

C: All our sins and griefs to bear!

P: Precious Savior, still our refuge—

C: Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Confessional Hymn 609 Jesus Sinners Doth Receive (st. 1-3)

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Jesus, friend of sinners, hear us as we confess our sins.

C: My thoughts have been stained with sin and shame, not truth and righteousness.

P: O Lord, you have searched me and known me! (Psalm 139:1)

C: My words have been stained with lies and slander, not love and mercy.

P: Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. (Psalm 139:4)

C: My deeds have been stained with hate and hurt, not peace and kindness.

P: You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. (Psalm 139:3)

C: Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

(Silence for personal reflection)



P: Friends in Jesus: You have a Savior who has lived for you, died for you, and left the tomb empty for you. Your Servant Jesus has humbled himself to care for you. Christ Jesus, has cleansed you from all unrighteousness and washed away your sin. Jesus forgives you and loves you, now and for all eternity.

C: What a friend we have in Jesus!

(be seated)

Imposition of Ashes

(Participants are invited to come forward at the direction of the ushers to receive a mark of ashes.)

Hymns: 606 *I Lay My Sins on Jesus*

611 *Chief of Sinners, Though I Be*

Prayer of the Day

Old Testament Reading: Joel 2:12-19

¹² "Yet even now," declares the LORD,
"return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
¹³ and rend your hearts and not your garments."

Return to the LORD your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
and he relents over disaster.

¹⁴ Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the LORD your God?

¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion;
consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly;

¹⁶ gather the people.
Consecrate the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.



Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.

¹⁷ Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep
and say, "Spare your people, O LORD,
and make not your heritage a reproach,
a byword among the nations."^[a]
Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"

¹⁸ Then the LORD became jealous for his land
and had pity on his people.

¹⁹ The LORD answered and said to his people,
"Behold, I am sending to you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a reproach among the nations.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading: Colossians 1:9-14

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

(please stand)

Gospel Reading: Luke 7:36-49

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the eleventh chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

³⁶ One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. ³⁷ And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, ³⁸ and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." ⁴⁰ And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

⁴¹ "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" ⁴³ Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." ⁴⁴ Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷ Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." ⁴⁸ And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹ Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Sermon Hymn 570 Just As I Am, without One Plea

Sermon



Ash Wednesday

Prayers

P: Amid our trials, temptations and troubles, we have a friend who sticks with us. Where else can we find a friend so faithful? And, so, we take it to the Lord in prayer. Jesus, You know our every weakness and have promised to be our friend, so we lift our prayers and raise our petitions.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P: Deliver us from the mess of our sin, and let us never be defined by the messes we make.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P: Deliver this world from the mess of evil and injustice and befriend the vulnerable, the sojourner and all who need a friend.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P: Deliver the self-righteous from their delusions, and teach us to never underestimate the debts You have forgiven on our behalf.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P: Deliver us from death, and remind us that friendship with You means that we are more than mere dust.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P: Deliver us from sorrow, discouragement and pain by the power of Your abiding friendship.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P: Deliver us from apathy and anxiety so that we can befriend our neighbors with Your love.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P: Jesus, deliver us from isolation, and give us a seat at Your table where we receive Your body and blood.

C: **Jesus, what a privilege it is to be your friend. Amen.**

Gathering of the Offering and Offertory: Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful, Lord

C: **Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.**

Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.

Gather the hopes and the dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer now.

Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

The Service of the Sacrament

Order of Holy Communion (page 177)

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 right to give him thanks and praise.

P: It is truly good, right, and salutary... evermore praising you and saying:

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: Our Father who art in heaven...

Words of Institution

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed...

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

C: Agnus Dei (page 180)

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Distribution Hymn: 711 Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

Post Communion Canticle: Nunc Dimittis (page 182)

C: Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled.

My own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the sight of every people,

A light to reveal You to the nations and the glory of Your people Israel.

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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (page 183)

Benediction

P: Jesus has called you friends and made known to you all that he has heard from the Father. Go now in peace in the name of Jesus. Amen.

C: What a friend we have in Jesus!

Closing Hymn: 770 What a Friend We Have in Jesus

Postlude



St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

Hopewell Township, NJ (609) 466-0939
web site: stpeternj.org

Rev. Jon Dunbar, Pastor

pastor@stpeternj.org

Jenn Garrow, Nursery School Director

director.stpeter@gmail.com

Amy Van Hise, Office Manager

secretary@stpeternj.org

Chris Fusco, Music Director

Lenten and Easter Schedule

Wednesdays, March 12, 19, 26 and April 2, 9

Lenten Soup Suppers 6:30 pm

Midweek Lenten Services 7:30 pm

Tuesday, March 18 Service of Healing 7:00 pm

Thursday, April 17 Maundy Thursday Service 7:30 pm

Friday, April 18 Good Friday Service 7:30 pm

Saturday, April 19 NS Easter Egg Hunt 10:00 am

Sunday, April 20 Easter Services 8:00 and 10:30 am

Easter Breakfast 9:00 am

Easter Egg Hunt 10:00 am