



St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

Hopewell Township, N.J.

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

Chris Fusco, Music Director

Amy Van Hise, Office Administrator

Jennifer Garrow, Nursery School Director

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 7, 2025

Our mission:

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

Welcome. "The LORD is your life and length of days." (Deut 30:20) When we truly believe and hold fast to these words, it brings us eternal blessings and joy. But if we turn away from His Word to go chasing after fulfillment in other places it only leads to misery. The psalmist describes the righteous like a well-watered tree that bears fruit for the benefit of others (Ps 1). Paul shows a Christ-like advocacy for the runaway slave Onesimus. And Jesus reminds us that a Christian must be willing to renounce all that he has out of faithfulness to the LORD (Lk 14).

Welcome guests! We are delighted you are with us for worship this morning. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Jon and fill out a green visitor card (in the pewback). 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.

Divine Service, Setting Four

LSB page 203

Prelude: “Vater unser in Himmelreich” – J. S. Bach

Words of Welcome

Invocation, Confession and Absolution (page 203)

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

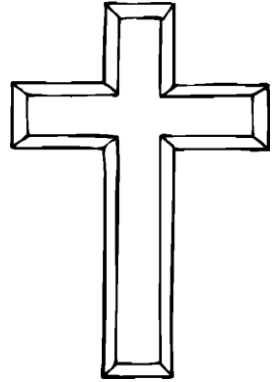
C: Amen.

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

P: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.



P: Since we are gathered to hear God’s Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

(Silence for reflection on God’s Word and for self-examination.)

C: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Opening Hymn: 837 Lift High the Cross (st. 1-4)

Kyrie (page 204)

P: In peace let us pray to the Lord...

C: Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

(The congregation sings this in response to each petition.)

Hymn of Praise To God on High Be Glory (page 204)

To God on high be glory And peace to all the earth.
Goodwill from God in heaven Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!
We praise and bless You, Father; Your holy name, we sing –
Our thanks for Your great glory, Lord God, our heav'nly King.

To You, O sole begotten, The Father's Son, we pray;
O Lamb of God, our Savior; You take our sins away.
Have mercy on us, Jesus; Receive our heartfelt cry,
Where You in pow'r are seated At God's right hand on high.

For You alone are holy; You only are the Lord.
Forever and forever, Be worshiped and adored;
You with the Holy Spirit Alone are Lord Most High,
In God the Father's glory. "Amen!" our glad reply.



Prayer of the Day (page 205)

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

O merciful Lord,

You did not spare Your only Son but delivered Him up for us all.
Grant us courage and strength to take up the cross and follow Him,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20 (see back cover)

Psalm 1



¹Blessèd is the man who walks not in
the counsel of the | wicked,*
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor
sits in the seat of | scoffers;

²but his delight is in the law | of the
LORD,*
and on his law he meditates | day and
night.

³He is like a tree planted by streams of
water that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not | wither.*
In all that he does, he | prospers.

⁴The wicked | are not so,*
but are like chaff that the wind | drives
away.

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in
the | judgment,*
nor sinners in the congregation of
the | righteous;

⁵for the LORD knows the way of
the | righteous,*
but the way of the wicked will | perish.

**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: Philemon 1-21 (see back cover)

Triple Alleluia page 205 (*sung before and after the Verse of the Day*)

C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Verse of the Day (Cantor): Far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord /
Jesus Christ,*
By which the world has been crucified to me, and I / to the world.
(Gal 6:14)*

Gospel Reading: Luke 14:25-35

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

Apostles’ Creed (see the inside back cover of the hymnal)

Children’s Sermon

Hymn of the Day: 688 “Come, Follow Me,” the Savior Spake (st. 1-3)

Sermon

Consecration of Teachers and Students

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 those with health concerns:

Tom Dorsett	Sandy Hammond	Carla Behnfeldt	Greg	Sid
Hank Van Beuzekom	Bill Akers	Lolly Hoagland	Noah	Susan
Fran Byrzkinsky	Pete Serone	John Tarlo	Grant	Chris
Claudia Zucker	John O’Neil	Phil Unetic	Adel	Rose
Gordon Anderson	Marge Keen	Catie Lauricella	Claire	Jan
George DiCostanzo	Tony Shiron	Rick Wright	Barbara	Mary
Katherine Eccleston	Kay Compton	Ursula Chirico	Zane	JoAnne
Linda Wright	Pat Dietz	Don Hammond	Anna	Joanne
Kay Compton	Mary Cobriere	Beverly	Irene	
Monica Benesch	John Bonasera	Kristin	Brennan	

For those with cancer:

Rich Knechel	Karen Shevchuk	Gerry Campbell	Howard Zahn	Trudy
Carol Tezla	Steve Saumsiegle	Brad Hoppe	Carol Storr	Lance
Kim McCollough	Nancy Gilliland	Aunt Jean	Aaron Kline	Linda
Andrea(Andy) Hoteling	Kaleigh Moore	Sally Ashmen	Dora	Jerry
Rich deDufour	Logan Mattessich	Frank Cignus	Doris	Lynn
Jane Fry	Frumi C	Judy Bacorn	Barbara	Dawn
Joan Rawls	Rosalie Reinbacher	Dave Bond	Dana	Joe
Tom Sullivan	Terry Dunbar	Keith Watson	Jason	Mary Anne

For those serving in the armed forces:

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

For those with needs around the world:

Persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ	For protection, strength, comfort, spread of Gospel
Government officials and people of our nation	For peace, unity, safety, and wisdom
Those coping with disasters/flooding	For provision and help
Those in need of employment	For provision of jobs
Wars in Europe and Middle East	For peace, forgiveness, and guidance
Family of Olga Nichols living in Ukraine	For health, safety, and provision
Those who are traveling	For safety and provision

For St. Peter Lutheran Nursery School:

For staff and families for '25-'26 school year enrollment

Birthdays:

Jenna Bloom September 8

Offering

Instrumental Offertory: "Liebster Jesu" – J. G. Walther

Order of Holy Communion (page 208)

- 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 God of Sabaoth adored;
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

P: Blessed are You, O Lord our God... Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

C: Our Father, who art in heaven...

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: O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.**

**O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.**

Distribution

Distribution Hymn: 629 What is This Bread

Nunc Dimittis

**C: O Lord, now let Your servant Depart in heav'nly peace,
For I have seen the glory Of Your redeeming grace;
A light to lead the Gentiles Unto Your holy hill,
The glory of Your people, Your chosen Israel.**

**All glory to the Father, All glory to the Son,
All glory to the Spirit, Forever Three in One;
For as in the beginning, Is now, shall ever be,
God's triune name resounding Through all eternity.**

Post-Communion Collect p. 212

P: Let us pray...

C: Amen

Benedicamus and Benediction (page 212)

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: The Lord bless you and...

C: Amen

Closing Hymn: 918 Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer

Announcements

Dismissal

P: Go in peace! Serve the LORD!

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude: "Jesu, meine Freude" – J. S. Bach





Announcements – Week of September 7, 2025

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: Jim Steimle (Communion Assistant), Allison Fog (Reader), Nathan Wilhelm (Acolyte), Stephen Behnfeldt and Tyson Wilhelm (Ushers), Tyson Wilhelm (Live-streaming), Audrey deDufour and Cheryl Gewecke (Communion and coffee set-up and clean-up).

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

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

NEW Sunday Bible Study: Jonah - God's Reluctant Prophet. Next Sunday, September 14 at 8:15am, we'll begin a new study of the book of Jonah. You probably know the prophet best from Sunday School as the man who tried to run away from God and got swallowed by a big fish! We'll dig deeper into the text and talk about God's mercy toward non-believers, the power of His Word to change hearts, and how Jonah's life bears a typological resemblance to Christ.

A Study of The Epistle of 1 John - NEW on Wednesdays via ZOOM. Join us on Wednesdays at 7:30pm as we read together 1 John. We'll discuss its main themes which include the perennial newness of Christ's "old" command to love one another, the source of a Christian's assurance of salvation, and the distinction between genuine and spurious faith. Look for an email with the Zoom link that will be sent out one week prior to our start date, or ask Pastor Jon to add you to his current email list.

*****Special Service September 20 - Outdoor Vespers** to take place on Saturday, September 20 at 7pm on the parsonage lawn. Bring your own lawn chair and a flashlight (or phone). Join us as we set aside this special time for worship and fellowship to dedicate the fall season into God's hands within His beautiful creation.

Weekly Schedule:

SUNDAY (9/7)	8:15a Adult Bible Study; 9:30 Worship; 11a Church Picnic
MONDAY (9/8)	Nursery School classes begin
TUESDAY (9/9)	6a Men's Breakfast @ Orlando's; Noon Pennington Clergy lunch
WEDNESDAY (9/10)	7:30p Zoom Bible Study
THURSDAY (9/11)	8a-1p Circuit Pastors Meeting @ Calvary, Medford; 5p Elders meeting
SATURDAY (9/13)	7:30a Men's Breakfast
SUNDAY (9/14)	8:15a Adult Bible Study; 9:30a Worship; 11:00a Discussion Group

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

JOIN US AT THE ANNUAL ST. PETER PICNIC TODAY following the service!

Back-to-School Blessing for Teachers and Students takes place today during our service. This is a wonderful opportunity to pray for God's protection, guidance and wisdom over all who are returning to school. Let's lift up our students and educators as they embark on another year of learning and growth

The Prayer Shawl/Lap Blanket Ministry. Join us in making special blankets to bless those in need of comfort or in celebration of a life event! Please speak with Barbara Greenberg at (609) 512-1928.

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.

Jam Afternoon: Country and Folk Tunes, coming soon - Sunday, September 14, 3-5pm! Are you a lover of music, singer of songs, player of instruments? Or do you just enjoy a fabulous get-together with folks who are ready to spend an afternoon lifting their voices together? Leave the stress behind and come share in good old-fashioned Country and American Folk sing/play-along!

IMPACT High School Youth Group starts up again this fall, beginning on Sunday, September 28 from 6:30-8:30pm at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Flemington. This group meets twice monthly and brings together high school youth from area churches. It is entirely youth-led and includes food, games, devotions and time to hang out and build Christian friendships. Talk to Juliet Behnfeldt or Pastor Jon if you'd like to learn more or are interested in carpooling.

New Jersey March for Life - September 25. On Thursday, September 25 you have the opportunity to show your support for parents, children and God's love for life at every stage by attending the New Jersey March for Life at the state capitol in Trenton. The event runs from 11:00am to around 1pm. Parking will be difficult, so participants are strongly encouraged to use public transportation. Pastor Jon welcomes you to carpool with him to Messiah, Princeton where we will meet up with a group from our Lutheran partner churches and ride the bus into Trenton. We did this last year, and it worked very well!

Seeking a Delegate to 2026 Synodical Convention. Next summer the LC-MS will be holding its triennial convention, to be held **July 18-23 in Phoenix, AZ.** St. Peter's has the opportunity to nominate a layperson from our membership who would *potentially* serve as a delegate representing NJ circuits 5 & 6. If elected by the circuits, this delegate would be responsible to attend the convention and report back on its proceedings. All expenses for the trip are covered by the NJ District. Please visit with Pastor Jon if interested.

Service and Other

Lambertville Food Pantry. Please grab some non-perishable items at the grocery store to add to our food pantry collection box in the narthex. September's theme is *Breakfast Items*: cereal, breakfast bars, Pop Tarts, pancake mix, syrup, etc.

Faithfulness Report:

Attendance 8/31: 41/ 6 online Gen Fund (plate and elec): \$2395
Special donation for generator for parsonage: \$16,508.47

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.

Flowers are placed on the altar today in honor of Jenna Bloom's birthday by Connie Hofer.

Website and Facebook. Come online to check us out! Our website is at 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> . Don't miss the **St. Peter YouTube Channel**, which is linked to our church website, or go to YouTube and search "Saint Peter Lutheran Church".

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Old Testament Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15–20

¹⁵“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, ²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

Epistle: Philemon 1–21

¹Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our beloved fellow worker ²and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and all the saints, ⁶and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. ⁷For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

⁸Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, ⁹yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus—¹⁰I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became in my imprisonment. ¹¹(Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.)

¹²I am sending him back to you, sending

my very heart. ¹³I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel, ¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own free will. ¹⁵For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother—especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me. ¹⁸If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it—to say nothing of your owing me even your own self. ²⁰Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

²¹Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

Holy Gospel: Luke 14:25–35

²⁵Now great crowds accompanied [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, ²⁶“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

²⁷Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’

³¹Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. ³³So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

³⁴“Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? ³⁵It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”