

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

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21, 2025

Our mission:

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

Welcome! One of the most meaningful ways we can show love to a person is by our willingness to spend time and share space with them. If you've ever had someone clear their schedule so you could talk or sit by your bedside in the hospital, then you know what an impact that kind of love has. Jesus is our Immanuel - God committing Himself to stay by our side - through every hill and valley of life. He is God's gift to Mary and Joseph, and for the whole human race. This miracle child is our Savior!

A special welcome to all our visitors this morning. 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.

The Preparation

Prelude: “Wachet auf uns ruf du Stimme” – 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 unto 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

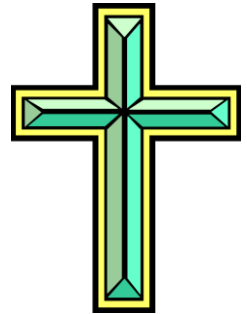
P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord,
and come and help us by Your might,
that the sins which weigh us down
may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy;
for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.



Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 7:10-17 (see back cover)

Psalms 24 (spoken responsively)

P: The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein,

C: for he has founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the rivers.

P: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

**C: He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false
and does not swear deceitfully.**

P: He will receive blessing from the LORD
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

**C: Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

P: Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

**C: Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle!**

P: Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

**C: Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory!**

**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: Romans 1:1-7 (see back cover)

Advent Verse: 357 vs 1,7 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind In one the hearts of all mankind;
 Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of Peace.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

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: 356 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

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.)

Potts/Lauricella Families	<i>For comfort:</i>	
Cadwalder Family	death of Freda	Lauricella
Vossler Family	death of Bob	Teschke
	death of Margery	Gewecke

For those with health concerns:

Columbia McDevitt	Eric Teschke	Bill Hotaling	Grant
Clara McMahon	John O'Neill	Sid	Noah
Don Hammond	Carla Behnfeldt	Jan	Zane
Sue Lauricella	Bob Aneskievich	Claire	Brennan
Shirley Yost	John Tarlo	Pat Dietz	Susan
Pete Seronew	Rick Wright	Beverly	
Catie Lauricella	Kay Compton	Claire	
Judy Dito	Jeff Corelli	Carlie	
Sue Bridenbough	Norma Runkle	Rose	

For those with cancer:

Isla Brummel	Robert Miller	Gerry Campbell	Howard Zahn	Trudy
Carol Tezla	Steve Saumsiegle	Joe Campbell	Rich Knechel	Lance
Kim McCollough	Nancy Gilliland	Aunt Jean	Mary Anne	Joe
Andrea(Andy) Hoteling	Kaleigh Moore	Sally Ashmen	Dora	Jerry
Rich deDufour	Logan Mattessich	Frank Cignus	Doris	Dawn
Aaron Kline	Brad Hoppe	Judy Bacorn	Lynn J.	Lynn

Joan Rawls
Tom Sullivan

Rosalie Reinbacher
Terry Dunbar

Carol Storr
Keith Watson

Dana
Jason

For those serving in the armed forces:

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

For St. Peter Lutheran Nursery School:

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

Birthdays:

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

Anniversaries:

Siggy and Claire Haenisch Dec 23

Gathering of the Offering and Offertory (p. 192)

Instrumental Offertory "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland" – J. Vetter

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: 353 Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring

Post-Communion Cantic: 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

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

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

Benediction page 202

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

Closing Hymn: 348 The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

Announcements

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude: "Prelude in B-flat Major" – J. S. Bach





Announcements – Week of December 21, 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: Fred Grube (Communion Assistant), Jesse Dunbar (Reader), Andy Wright (Acolyte), Joe Scheblein and Bob Maguire (Ushers), Amy Van Hise (Live-streaming), Judy Grube and Amy Van Hise (Communion and coffee set-up and clean-up).

Today's service will be live streamed on You Tube at this link: <https://youtube.com/live/2jpBSehM3b0>
If you miss the service live, watch it whenever you like! The services are also posted to the church's website.

Sunday Bible Study: Matthew's Account of the Birth of Christ. This Sunday we are studying Matthew 1:18-25 (also the Gospel reading for our worship). In this familiar birth narrative of Jesus, we'll talk about its main theme: God's wisdom is not like human wisdom. Without divine revelation, we cannot understand His plan of salvation. Joseph's trust and obedience are a model for every Christian facing unexpected challenges. There will be no morning Bible study on Sunday, Dec. 28th.

(Wednesday evening ZOOM bible study is on break during the holiday season.)

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

Weekly Schedule:

WEDNESDAY (12/24)	5:00p & 7:00p Christmas Eve Services
THURSDAY (12/25)	10:00a Christmas Day Service
SUNDAY (12/28)	9:30a Worship; 11a Discussion Group

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.

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.

Service and Other

Faithfulness Report: Attendance 12/14: (Snow – no in-person worship)
Gen Fund from 12/10 (plate and elec): \$22,120

Youth Advent Service thanks. Many thanks to all of the youth who were able to participate in Wednesday's Advent Service last week, and to Hope for spear-heading the service. What a blessing it was to have the opportunity to enjoy the gifts God has given each of them and which they shared with us in such a meaningful way!

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.

Food Pantry. We continue to support the Lambertville Food Pantry with donations of food and other needs. December's collection is baking and cooking products – flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, baking soda, oil, vinegar, etc. You can sign up on the bulletin board to deliver items by month as well. Any questions, please see Leslie Klesat.

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".

Other Important web links:

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod lcms.org

NJ District LCMS njdistrict.org

LCMS World Relief and Human Care lcms.org/ca/worldrelief

The "Lutheran Hour" Broadcast lhm.org



M A T T H E W 1 : 2 1

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 7:10–17

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz,
¹¹“Ask a sign of the LORD your God;
let it be deep as Sheol or high as
heaven.” ¹²But Ahaz said, “I will
not ask, and I will not put the
LORD to the test.” ¹³And he said,
“Hear then, O house of David!
Is it too little for you to weary
men, that you weary my God
also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord him-
self will give you a sign. Behold,
the virgin shall conceive and bear
a son, and shall call his name
Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds
and honey when he knows how
to refuse the evil and choose the
good. ¹⁶For before the boy knows
how to refuse the evil and choose
the good, the land whose two
kings you dread will be deserted.
¹⁷The LORD will bring upon you
and upon your people and upon
your father’s house such days as
have not come since the day that
Ephraim departed from Judah—
the king of Assyria.”

Epistle: Romans 1:1–7

¹Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus,
called to be an apostle, set apart
for the gospel of God, ²which he
promised beforehand through his
prophets in the holy Scriptures,
³concerning his Son, who was
descended from David according
to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be
the Son of God in power according
to the Spirit of holiness by his resur-
rection from the dead, Jesus Christ
our Lord, ⁵through whom we have
received grace and apostleship to
bring about the obedience of faith
for the sake of his name among all

the nations, ⁶including you who
are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷To all those in Rome who
are loved by God and called to
be saints:

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

Holy Gospel: Matthew 1:18–25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ
took place in this way. When his
mother Mary had been betrothed
to Joseph, before they came
together she was found to be with
child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And
her husband Joseph, being a just
man and unwilling to put her to
shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.
²⁰But as he considered these
things, behold, an angel of the
Lord appeared to him in a dream,
saying, “Joseph, son of David, do
not fear to take Mary as your wife,
for that which is conceived in her
is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will
bear a son, and you shall call his
name Jesus, for he will save his
people from their sins.” ²²All this
took place to fulfill what the Lord
had spoken by the prophet:

²³“Behold, the virgin shall
conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name
Immanuel”

(which means, God with us).

²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep,
he did as the angel of the Lord
commanded him: he took his
wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she
had given birth to a son. And he
called his name Jesus.