

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

Hopewell Township, N.J.

(609) 466-0939 web site: stpeternj.org

pastor@stpeternj.org secretary@stpeternj.org

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

Chris Fusco, Music Director

Amy Van Hise, Office Administrator

Jennifer Garrow, Nursery School Director

Second Sunday after Christmas

Jauary 4, 2026

Our mission:

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

Welcome Message. While still a 12-year old boy, Jesus amazed the religious scholars of Jerusalem with his teaching. Not since the days of the great King Solomon had they heard such words of wisdom. This revelatory moment in Jesus' young life reminds us that God's Son came to bring us life-giving instruction. We too will grow in saving wisdom as we spend time in God's house and meditating on His Word.

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: “Noel” - C. d’Aquin

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: 381 Let Our Gladness Have No End

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.

Almighty God,

You have poured into our hearts the true Light of Your incarnate Word.

Grant that this Light may shine forth in our lives;
Through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Old Testament Reading: 1 Kings 3:4-15 (see back cover)

Psalm 119:97-104



⁹⁷ Oh how I | love your law!*
It is my meditation | all the day.

⁹⁸ Your commandment makes me wiser
than my | enemies,*
for it is ever | with me.

⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all
my | teachers,*
for your testimonies are my
medi- | tation.

¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the | aged,*
for I keep your | precepts.

¹⁰¹ I hold back my feet from every | evil
way,*
in order to | keep your word.

¹⁰² I do not turn aside from your | just
decrees,*
for you have | taught me.

¹⁰³ How sweet are your words | to my taste,*
sweeter than honey | to my mouth!

¹⁰⁴ Through your precepts I get
under- | standing,*
therefore I hate every | false 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: Ephesians 1:3-14 (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): The child grew and became strong, filled with / wisdom.
And the favor of God was up- / on Him. (Luke 2:40)*

C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:40-52

Acclamations: **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: 410 Within the Father's House

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 those with health concerns:

Judy Dito
Clara McMahon
Don Hammond
Sue Lauricella
Shirley Yost
Pete Seronew
Catie Lauricella

Eric Teschke
John O'Neill
Carla Behnfeld
Bob Aneskiew
John Tarlo
Rick Wright
Kay Compton

Bill Hotaling
Norma Runkle
Jeff Corelli
Sue Bridenbough
Bet Dietz

Grant
Noah
Zane
Brennan
Susan
Rose

Carlie
Claire
Beverly
Sid
Jan
Bob



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	Arlene Bodholt	Jerry
Rich deDufour	Logan Mattessich	Frank Cignus	Doris	Dawn
Aaron Kline	Brad Hoppe	Judy Bacorn	Lynn J.	Lynn
Joan Rawls	Rosalie Reinbacher	Carol Storr	Dana	Dora
Tom Sullivan	Terry Dunbar	Keith Watson	Jason	Frank

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 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:

John Miller Jan 5

Offering

Instrumental Offertory: “Von himmel hoch” - J. 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: 362 O Sing of Christ

Nunc Dimitis

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: 390 Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

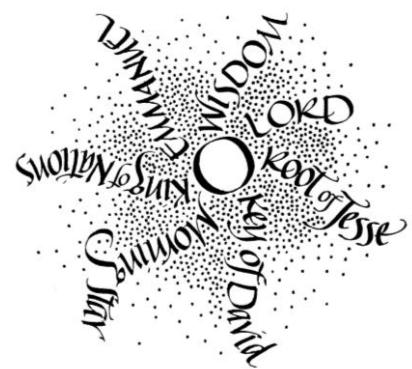
Announcements

Dismissal

P: Go in peace! Serve the LORD!

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude: "In dulci jublio" - J.S. Bach





Announcements – Week of January 4, 2026

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 and Reader), Juliet Behnfeldt (Acolyte), Dave deDufour and Stephen Behnfeldt (Ushers), Lesley deDufour (Live-streaming), Judy Grube and Lesley deDufour (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/P5BtdyhcjJM>
If you miss the service live, watch it whenever you like! The services are also posted to the church's website.

Sunday Morning Bible Study. This morning at our 8:15a Bible study we'll be studying the Magi's Visit to Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12). Epiphany is sometimes called "Christmas for the Gentiles". What do we learn in this passage about the scope of Christ's mission to save the world? What signs do we find of his kingship, and his future suffering? Join our discussion!

NEW Monday Evening Zoom Bible Study. Our evening Zoom Bible study will resume this week on Monday, January 5th at 7:30PM. (We are switching to Mondays for the months of January and February to work around Pastor's out-of-town dates.) Our topic of study will be the book of 1 Corinthians. This letter written by the apostle Paul tackles a variety of issues that troubled the early church, including cliques that formed around certain church leaders, conflicting ideas about what makes a person "wise", sexual immorality, and much more. Come and grow in God's Word with us!

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

Annual Voters Meeting. St. Peter will hold its annual Voters Meeting on Sunday, January 25 after the worship service. We invite and encourage all to attend! It's an important time to review the past year, discuss future plans for 2026, elect new leadership and approve a budget for implementing our goals. We'll give thanks for God's guidance and ask His blessing on all future endeavors. To God be the glory!

Weekly Schedule:

TODAY (1/4)	8:15a Bible Study; 9:30a Worship; 11a Church Un-Decorating
MONDAY (1/5)	4:30p Confirmation; 7:30p Zoom Bible Study
TUESDAY (1/6)	6a Men's Breakfast @ Orlando's
WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY	Pastor in Nevada for Synod Meeting
SUNDAY (1/11)	8:15a Bible Study; 9:30a Worship; 11a Discussion Group; 2p District Youth After Christmas Party

Help Needed Putting Away Christmas Decorations (NO Discussion Group Today). We will be taking down our church Christmas decorations after the worship service today and storing them away for next year. Many thanks to those who helped put them up! Please consider staying to lend a hand if you are able.



Thank-You from the Dunbars. We wish to thank the congregation for the Incredibly generous Christmas gift we were presented with last week. How blessed we are to have such support from our St. Peter family! God has been very good to us throughout the past year, and we look forward to what exciting plans lie in the year ahead!

District Youth: After-Christmas Party! On Sunday, January 11th our district is hosting a post-Christmas party for all students in the 8th-12th grades. There will be games, food and fun galore! The event runs from 2:00-6:00pm at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Westfield, NJ. Pastor Jon will be driving his van to this event. Talk to him if you're interested in attending and need a ride. See the bulletin board poster for more details.

Mid-winter Lecture: Christianity, Technology, and Education. On Sunday, February 15th at 3:00pm, St. Peter will be hosting a lecture entitled, "Shifting Sands, Stable Faith: Navigating Today's Technological & Educational Confusion". Our speaker will be Joshua Pauling. He is the headmaster & teacher at All Saints Classical Academy and vicar at All Saints Lutheran Church in Charlotte, NC. In two sessions, Vicar Pauling will talk about recent cultural changes in technology and education, and how our Christian faith can help us navigate through potential confusion around these topics. This event is sponsored by Partners in Mission. See the bulletin board poster for more details.

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 12/28: 48 / 6 Gen Fund (plate and elec): \$15499

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 this week in honor of Christine Dorsett's birthday by the Maguires!

Food Pantry. We continue to support the Lambertville Food Pantry with donations of food and other needs. January's collection is paper products – paper towels, toilet tissue, facial tissue, 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".

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Old Testament Reading:

1 Kings 3:4–15

⁴The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” ⁶And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

¹⁵And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Epistle: Ephesians 1:3–14

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his

glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Holy Gospel: Luke 2:40–52

⁴⁰The child [Jesus] grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

⁴¹Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴²And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. ⁴³And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

⁴⁷And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.” ⁴⁹And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?” ⁵⁰And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. ⁵¹And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

⁵²And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.