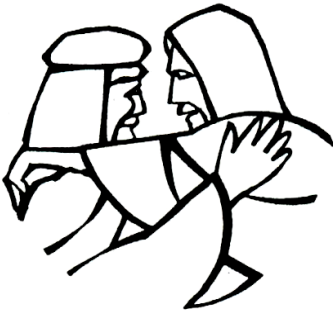




St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

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

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 6, 2026

Our mission:

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

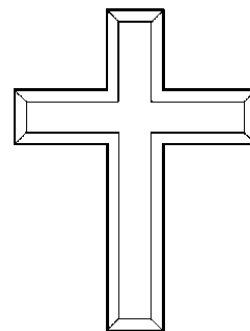
Welcome Message. "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen.4:9). The human desire to shirk responsibility to our fellow man goes back to Cain and Abel. Today's readings all emphasize our connectedness and mutual responsibility for one another within the Body of Christ. Ezekiel was called to be the "watchman of Israel". St. Paul instructs us on the proper relationship between citizens and government. And in our Gospel lesson, Jesus calls us to pay heed to those "little ones" and lost sheep who need our help. Indeed, we are our brother's keeper!

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

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: 537 Beautiful Savior

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 God, from whom all good proceeds,
Grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration,
that we may set our minds on the things that are right
and, by your merciful guiding, accomplish them;
Through 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 Ezekiel 33:7-9 (see back cover)



Psalm 32



¹ Blessèd is the one whose transgression
is for- | given,*
whose sin is | covered.

² Blessèd is the man against whom the
LORD counts no in- | iquity,*
and in whose spirit there is | no deceit.

³ For when I kept silent, my bones
wast- | ed away*
through my groaning | all day long.

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy
up- | on me;*
my strength was dried up as by the
heat of | summer.

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I
did not cover my in- | iquity;*
I said, "I will confess my
transgressions to the LORD," and you
forgave the iniquity | of my sin.

⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly
offer prayer to you at a time when
you | may be found,*
surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not | reach him.

⁷ You are a hiding place for me; you
preserve me from | trouble;*
you surround me with shouts of
de- | liverance.

⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the
way | you should go;*
I will counsel you with my eye
up- | on you.

⁹ Be not like a horse or a mule, without
under- | standing,*
which must be curbed with bit and
bridle, or it will not stay | near you.

¹⁰ Many are the sorrows of the | wicked,*
but steadfast love surrounds the one
who trusts | in the LORD.

¹¹ Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice,
O | righteous,*
and shout for joy, all you up- | right
in heart!

**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: Romans 13:1-10 (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): Blessed are the poor in / spirit, *
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

(Matt 5:3)

C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Holy Gospel

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

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

Matthew 18:1-20

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

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

Children's Sermon

Hymn of the Day: 686 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

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 in need of comfort:

The Teschke family	death of Valentina	Teschke
The Launchbaugh family	death of Lexi	Dunbar
The Shivers/Watson families	death of Paul	deDufour
The Troast family	death of Cathy	deDufour

For those with health concerns:

Carol Farley	Robert Mason	Emma Finan	Barbara Nixon	Jan
Rich Mount	Olivia Moorhead	Bill Hotaling	Liz Schorpp	Doug
Susan Miller	John O'Neill	Norma Runkle	Doug Schorpp	Claire
Mark McCracken	Sue Bridenbough	Jeff Corelli	Penny	Beverly
Lucy Borden	Lorraine Van Hise	Pat Dietz	Carlie	Sid
Judy Dito	John Tarlo	Asta Lynch	Susan	Brennan
Pete Seronew	Betty Bush	Frank Lynch	Zane	
Diane Pullen	Kay Compton	Harry Naylor	Grant	
Jane Schroeder	Alli Watson	Marge Keen	Noah	
Neuza Smukler	Eric Teschke	Mark McCracken	Dawn R.	

For those with cancer:

Bob Maguire	Hilda Summers	Gerry Campbell	Howard Zahn	Mary Anne
Carol Tezla	Steve Saumsiegle	Joe Campbell	Rich Knechel	Lance
Kim McCollough	Nancy Gilliland	Aunt Jean	Chris Legere	Joe
Andrea(Andy) Hoteling	Kaleigh Moore	Sally Ashmen	Rita Piratsky	Jerry
Rich deDufour	Logan Mattessich	Frank Cignus	Barbara Holzhauer	Frank
Aaron Kline	Brad Hoppe	Judy Bacorn	Trudy	Lynn
Joan Rawls	Arlene Bodholt	Carol Storr	Dana	Dora
Jane Forder	Terry Dunbar	Keith Watson	Jason	Lynn J.
Elvis Rowsey	Debra Mueller	Dave Elison	Doris	Michael B.
Robert Miller	John Farley	Herb Johns		

For those serving in the armed forces and their families:

LJ Lupinacci	Carrick Porter	Emily Arndt	Jake Grube	Christopher Ryan Callahan
Daniel Gewecke	James Bannon	Jim Buckman	Mike Bahney	

For those with needs around the world:

Seeing Eye program

For dogs' successful training and placement

Victims of flooding and weather disasters

For St. Peter Lutheran Nursery School:

For staff and families

For strong start of school year

Birthdays

Jonathan Yost Sep 6

Jenna Bloom Sep 8

Anniversaries

Greg and Patty Barrett Sep 6

Offering

Instrumental Offertory

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: 550 Lamb of God

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: 966 Before You, Lord, We Bow (st 1-3)

Announcements

Dismissal

P: Go in peace! Serve the LORD!

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude





Announcements – Week of September 6, 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), Jane Heebner (Reader), Thomas Cresap (acolyte), Scott Garrow and Jim Steimle (Ushers), Amy Van Hise (Live-streaming), Judy Grube and Cheryl Gewecke (Communion and coffee set-up and clean-up).

Today's service will be live streamed at this link: https://youtu.be/_0bTFHN6hss If you miss the service live, watch it on YouTube! The services are also posted to the [church's website](#).

Wednesday Zoom Bible Study on 1 Corinthians. Join us this **Wednesday, Sept 9th at 7:00pm** as we resume our study of 1 Corinthians, starting at chapter 11:1-16. In this section of Paul's letter, he addresses how Christians should conduct themselves in worship. We'll talk about Paul's instructions on head coverings for women worshippers, and how they apply today. No prior study is necessary, and all are welcome!

NEW Sunday Bible Study: Desert Spirituality. Join us starting on **Sunday, Sept 20 at 8:15am** as we begin a new study on a group of ancient Christian teachers known as the Desert Fathers. This 10-part series includes a short video each week that's followed by discussion. It's a very practical study looking at common vices that Christians struggle with (e.g. anger or pride), teaching habits that lead to a deeper life of virtue (e.g. serenity or humility), and grounding everything in the grace of Christ. Come grow with us!

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

Weekly Schedule:

TODAY (9/6)	9:30a Worship; 11a Discussion Group
TUESDAY (9/8)	5:30p Elders meeting
WEDNESDAY (9/9)	7:00p Zoom Bible Study
SUNDAY (9/13)	9:30a Worship w/Backpack Blessing; 11:00a Church Picnic

Back-to-School Blessing for Teachers and Students. Join us next Sunday, September 13th during our 9:30 service for a special Blessing of the Backpacks! As the new school year gets under way, we invite all students, teachers, and school staff to bring their backpacks, briefcases, or school bags to be blessed. 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!

JOIN US AT THE ANNUAL ST. PETER PICNIC ON SEPTEMBER 13.

Our annual picnic will take place following the service next Sunday, September 13. Sign up to bring specific needs (see list on the bulletin board) or just bring a side dish or dessert. It promises to be lots of fun - hope to see you there!



St. Peter Women's Breakfast Saturday Sept. 19. Since the guys have been meeting for breakfast for years now, it's time the women give it a shot! Please join us for a breakfast and Bible Study fellowship time Saturday, September 19th at 10am in the big room downstairs. The guys have offered to bring breakfast casserole, so we can bring baked goods and fruit! Bring yourself, bring a friend, see you there!



Saturday Outdoor Vespers Service. On Saturday, September 26 at 6:30pm we'll have an outdoor vespers service on the parsonage lawn. Bring your own chair and a flashlight (or phone). Join us as we set aside this special time of worship and fellowship to dedicate the fall season into God's hands with His beautiful creation. After the service we will enjoy ice cream and conversation. Don't miss it!

****Attention Lutheran Witness subscribers, and those who might want to try it out:**

It is time to renew, or initiate a subscription for, the Lutheran Witness, "the official flagship periodical of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Published 11 times a year, it provides news, feature articles, and commentary intended to help readers interpret contemporary life and culture from a traditional confessional Lutheran perspective. **Regular Features** include synod updates, Q&A sections, theological columns, and deep dives into Christian ethics and practice." There are several copies on the table in the narthex if you'd like to look it over.

The cost is \$25 for a 2026-27 subscription, which will begin with the November issue. Please put your payment in a labeled envelope in the offering basket, or you can put it on Amy's desk. Payment is due by next Sunday, 9/13.

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.

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 in honor of the birthday of Pastor Ben Mallepalle by his brother Julius.

Service and Other

Faithfulness Report: Aug 30: Attendance: 61 / 3 online Gen Fund (plate and electronic): \$3940
Debt relief: \$100 Missions: \$75 Flowers: \$140
Weekly giving needed for budget: \$6890

Food Pantry. We support the Lambertville Food Pantry with donations of food and other needs.
September's collection is **Breakfast items** – cereal, shelf-stable milk, breakfast bars, Pop Tarts, pancake mix, syrup, 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> .

St. Peter YouTube Channel. Increase St. Peter's online visibility by liking and subscribing to our YouTube channel (where we live-stream and record our worship services and Wednesday Zoom bible studies. It is linked to our church website, or go to YouTube and search "Saint Peter Lutheran Church".

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

You're invited to a Baby Care Package Assembly Event to benefit ChoiceOne Pregnancy Resource Centers!



When: Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026, 10am - 12:30pm (lunch provided)

Where: The Lutheran Church of the Messiah, 407 Nassau St, Princeton, NJ 08540
(park on Cedar Lane)

Who: **You** and many others. Bring family and friends -- people of all ages can help assemble the care packages, which will be donated to ChoiceOne.

What a great opportunity to join other NJ Lutherans in supporting new parents and their babies!
The care package supplies will be purchased ahead of time, so no need to bring any with you.

***However, if anyone would like to contribute supplies to benefit the families served by ChoiceOne, unopened packages of diapers (any size) or infant wipes are always welcome.
For information on obtaining volume discounts on diaper purchases, contact Messiah's project coordinator, Debbie Baer.

This project is funded by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church LWML (Somerset NJ), The Lutheran Church of the Messiah, the 2025 Partners in Mission Reformation service offering, and a generous matching grant from LCMS Life Ministry.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Old Testament Reading: Ezekiel 33:7-9

⁷"So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul."

Epistle: Romans 13:1-10

¹Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:1-20

¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ²And calling to him a child, he

put him in the midst of them ³and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, ⁶but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

⁷"Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! ⁸And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

¹⁰"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹¹For the Son of Man came to save the lost. ¹²What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? ¹³And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. ¹⁴So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

¹⁵"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."