

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, Admin Asst

Jennifer Garrow, Nursery School Director



Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 13, 2026

Our mission:

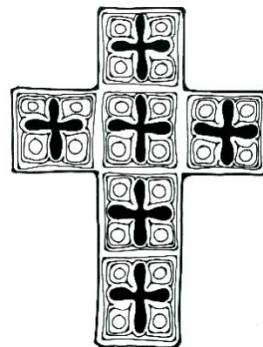
*to spread the Word of Salvation through Christ,
honor God, serve others, and grow in faith.*

Welcome. In this Sunday's readings we're reminded that forgiveness is a core value and essential practice of the Christian faith. We see this prefigured in the Old Testament with Joseph and his brothers (Gen.50). But it's in Jesus and his death on the cross that the floodgates of forgiveness come pouring down from heaven, forever changing our relationship with God...and one another. Every time we pray the Lord's Prayer, we confess the connection between God's gift of forgiveness and our duty to forgive others. In Jesus, we find the desire and strength to love as Jesus loves.

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.

PREPARATION



PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen

P If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your Holy name. 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.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

OPENING HYMN 807 (st 1-3) When Morning Gilds the Skies

Pastor: In peace, in peace,

Assistant: *Congregation:*

Let us pray to the Lord, have mer - cy,
 Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have
 mer - cy.

The musical score is written on three staves. The first staff is for the Assistant, and the second and third staves are for the Congregation. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: "Let us pray to the Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy." The Assistant's part is a single line of music. The Congregation's part consists of two lines of music, with the first line ending in a double bar line and the second line continuing the melody.

Pastor: For the Reign of God, and for peace throughout the world, for the unity of all... (Refrain)

Pastor: For your people here, who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your Word...
 (Refrain)

Pastor: *Assistant:*

Help, save and de - fend us, O God.

Congregation:

A - - - men.

The musical score is written on two staves. The first staff is for the Pastor, and the second staff is for the Congregation. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: "Help, save and de - fend us, O God." The Pastor's part is a single line of music. The Congregation's part consists of a single line of music with a long horizontal line indicating a sustained note.

NOW THE FEAST

Refrain

Congregation:

Now the feast and cel - e - bra - tion,
all of cre - a - tion sings for joy
to the God of life and love and
free - dom: praise and glo - ry for ev -
er - more!

Verse 1:

Congregation or Congregation 1:

1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once
slain, whose blood has freed and u -
nit - ed us to be one great
peo - ple of God.

To refrain

Verse 2

Congregation or Congregation 2:

Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and
might, all hon - or and glo - ry to Christ
for ev - er. *To refrain*

Verse 3

Congregation:

3. For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us peo - ple of God; to make
all things new. *To refrain*

SALUTATION and COLLECT OF THE DAY

P
C
P

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, our refuge and strength,
the author of all godliness,
hear the devout prayers of Your Church,
especially in times of persecution,
and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain;
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: Genesis 50:15-21 (see back)

EPISTLE: Romans 14:1-12

ALLELUIA VERSE:

Congregation:

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we
go? You have the words of e - ter - nal
life. Al - le - lu - ia! *Repeat optional*

HOLY GOSPEL

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Matthew 18:21-35

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

APOSTLES' CREED (Inside the back cover of the hymnal.)

HYMN OF THE DAY 861 Christ Be My Leader

SERMON

CONSECRATION OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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

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

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 safety and provision

For St. Peter Lutheran Nursery School:

For staff and families	For the strong start of school year
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Birthdays

Brian Lange Sept 14

GATHERING OF THE OFFERING AND OFFERTORY

Special Music "Forgiveness Waltz" by Jonathan Rundman

sung by Hope Dunbar

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.
P Lift up your hearts.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C And also with you.
C We lift them to the Lord.
C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary...
C Amen.

SANCTUS *Holy, Holy, Holy (LSB p. 208)*

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9

C Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;
Heaven and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;
Truly blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

LORD'S PRAYER *(Please note the alternate wording to be used today)*

Matthew 6:9–13

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our DEBTS,
as we forgive OUR DEBTORS;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25

PAX DOMINI *The Peace of the Lord*

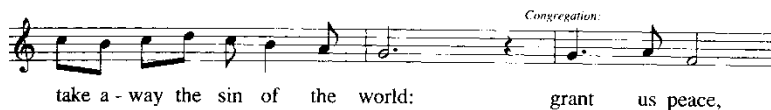
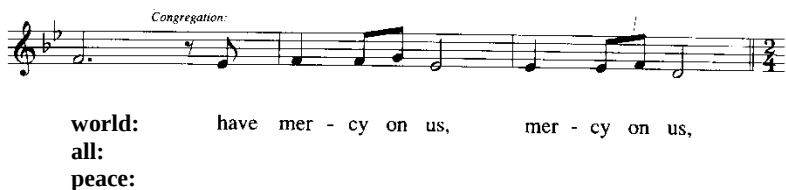
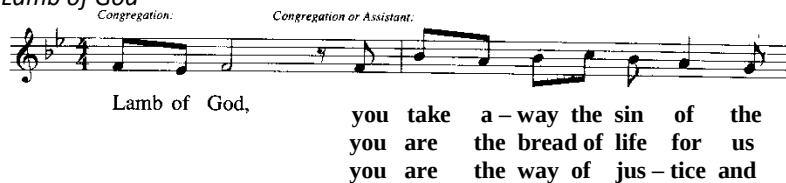
John 20:19

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C And also with you.

Sharing of the Peace

(Please greet one another, saying: “The peace of the Lord be with you,” responding “And also with you.”)

AGNUS DEI *Lamb of God*



DISTRIBUTION HYMN 547 The Lamb

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN 922 Go, My Children, with My Blessing

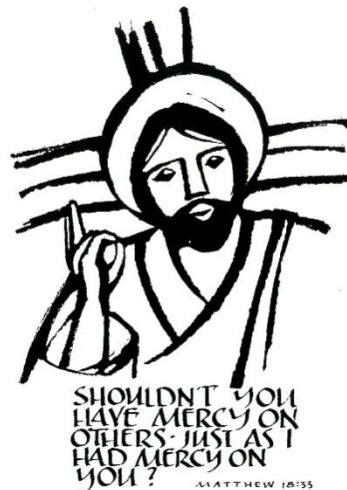
ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace! Serve the LORD!

C: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE





Announcements – Week of September 13, 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 Kevin Lauricella (Communion Assistant), Jenn Garrow (Reader), Emma Cresap (acolyte), Bob Maguire and Joe Gallagher (Ushers), Amy Van Hise (Live-streaming), Lillian Maguire and Bonnie Jean Gallagher (Communion and coffee set-up and clean-up).

Today's service will be live-streamed at this link: <https://youtu.be/OEFMko8UZtc> 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 at 7:00pm** as we discuss 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. This section describes how Christians were abusing the Lord's Supper in a way that divided congregations. Paul's instructions here emphasize the real presence of Christ in the sacrament and show how properly to prepare to receive him whenever we take Holy Communion. Join us!

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 (9/13) - 9:30a Worship w/Backpack Blessing; 11:00a Church Picnic
MONDAY-THURSDAY - Pastor Jon & Hope @ WALI Music conference in St. Louis
WEDNESDAY (9/16) - 7:00p Zoom Bible Study
SATURDAY (9/19) - 10:00a Women's Breakfast
SUNDAY (9/20) - 8:15a Bible Study; 9:30a Worship; 11a Discussion Group

Back-to-School Blessing for Teachers and Students. Today is our 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 TODAY FOR OUR ANNUAL PICNIC FOLLOWING THE SERVICE!



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!

Impact Student Ministry Kickoff - Sun, September 27 - Calling all students in **8th–12th grade!** Join us September 27 from **4–7 PM** as we kick off the new ministry year walking the Point Mountain Peak Trail near Washington, NJ. We will walk the trail, enjoy the beauty of God's creation, and share a devotion together by the river. If you have questions or need a ride, contact Pastor Jon. Come ready to hike, have fun, and connect with friends as we begin a new year of **Impact Student Ministry!**

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 Brett Gallagher's 24th birthday by his parents!

Service and Other

Faithfulness Report: Sep 6: Attendance: 55 / 4 online Gen Fund (plate and electronic): \$5260
Thrivent card for Operation Christmas Child: \$250 Flowers: \$40
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

The “Lutheran Hour” Broadcast lhm.org

[LCMS World Relief and Human Care lcms.org/ca/worldrelief](http://LCMS.org/ca/worldrelief)



**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.

***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.

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.

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.

SIGN-UP ON THE BULLETIN BOARD – RIDES AVAILABLE

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 50:15–21

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Epistle: Romans 14:1–12

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might

be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹for it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God."

¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:21–35

²¹Peter came up and said to [Jesus], "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

²³"Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³²Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."