



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

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost *September 27, 2026*

Our mission:

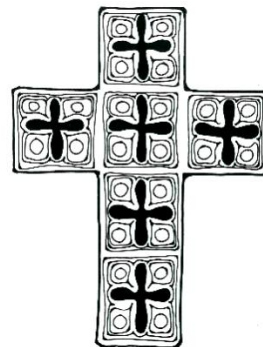
*to spread the Word of Salvation through Christ,
honor God, serve others, and grow in faith.*

Welcome. The complaint that God's not fair isn't just a debating point raised by modern skeptics of religion. Even believers have gotten in on the act. "You say the way of the LORD is not just!" (Ezek.18:25) God's Word is clear in teaching the principle of individual accountability before Him. This is a gracious thing! Rather than lump the good and the bad in together, God promises to judge each person by their own actions. Also, His desire is not to condemn, but to forgive and save. We know this because God kept His promise to send a Mighty Deliverer - Jesus the Messiah.

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 837 Lift High the Cross (st 1-3)

Mark 10:47

Pastor: In peace, in peace,

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

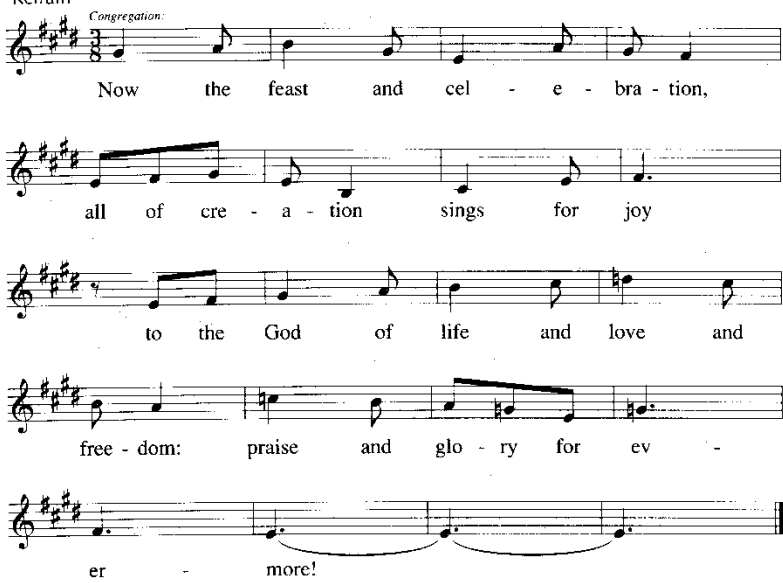
Pastor: For your people here, who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your Word...
(Refrain)

3

NOW THE FEAST

Refrain

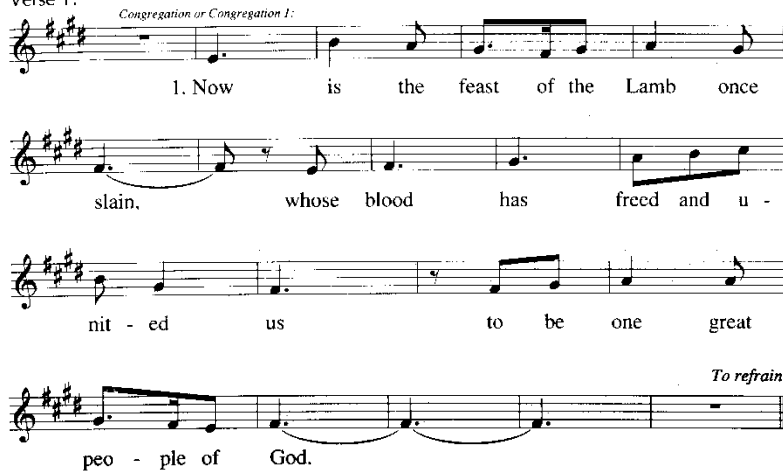
Congregation:



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
E

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God,

You exalted Your Son to the place of all honor and authority.

Enlighten our minds by Your Holy Spirit

that, confessing Jesus as Lord,

we may be led into all truth;

through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord,

who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever.

C

Amen



OLD TESTAMENT READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 (see back)

Psalm: Psalm 25:1-10 (spoken responsively)

P: To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

**C: O my God, in you I trust;
let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.**

P: Indeed, none who wait for you
shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed who
are wantonly treacherous.

**C: Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.**

P: Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long.

**C: Remember your mercy, O LORD,
and your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.**

P: Remember not the sins of my youth or my
transgressions;
according to your steadfast love
remember me, for the sake of your
goodness, O LORD!

**C: Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in the
way.**

P: He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.

**C: All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love
and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his
testimonies.**

**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: Philippians 2:1-4, 14 - 18

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 21st chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Matthew 21:23-27

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

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

CHILDREN’S SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY 729 I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus

SERMON

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.)

The Schmitt family *For comfort:*
death of father Newton

For those with health concerns:

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

For those with cancer:

Bob Maguire	Hilda Summers	Gerry Campbell	Herb Johns	Mary Anne
Howard Zahn	Steve Saumsiegle	Joe Campbell	Rich Knechel	Lance
Arlene Z.	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

David deDufour	Sept 28	Norm Klesat	Oct 2
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Anniversaries

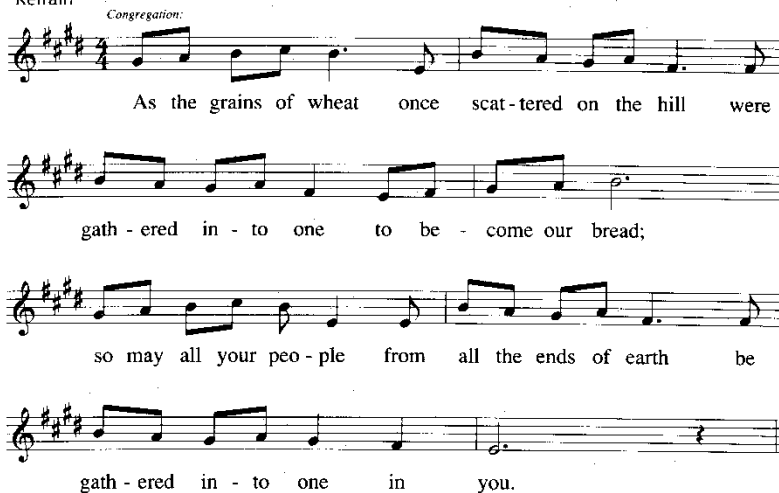
David and Lesley deDufour	Sept 29	Bob and Amy Van Hise	Oct 1
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GATHERING OF THE OFFERING AND OFFERTORY

OFFERING (continues on next page)

Refrain

Congregation:



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were

gath-ered in-to one to be-come our bread;

so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be

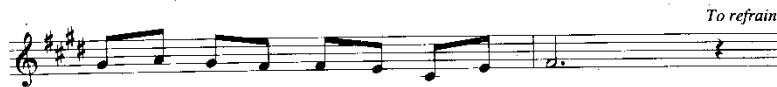
gath-ered in-to one in you.

OFFERING (cont'd)

Verses



1. As this cup of bless - ing is shared with - in our midst, _____
2. Let this be a fore - taste of all that is to come when _____



To refrain

may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

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

Matthew 6:9–13

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*

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
you are the bread of life for us
you are the way of jus - tice and

Congregation:



world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,
all:
peace:

Congregation: *Congregation or Assistant:*



mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you

Congregation:



take a - way the sin of the world: grant us peace,



grant us peace, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN 570 Just as I Am, without One Plea

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN 738 Lord of All Hopefulness

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace! Serve the LORD!

C: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE





Announcements – Week of September 27, 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 Steve deDufour (Communion Assistant), Jesse Dunbar (Reader), Thomas Cresap (acolyte), Mark and Liam McAllister (Ushers), Mark McAllister (Live-streaming), Leslie Klesat and Jeanne Hoppe (Communion and coffee set-up and clean-up).

Today's service will be live-streamed at this link: https://youtu.be/orQoj9yG_EY 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. Our passage for study this week will be **1 Corinthians 13:1-13**. In this familiar passage we often hear at weddings, Paul describes the character of authentic love. Love is to be the "seasoning" that flavors all that we do, because when our motivation is not love, our service can easily become self-centered and self-serving. Only God is capable of this perfect love; but as His children we strive to imitate Him.

Sunday Bible Study: Desert Spirituality. This Sunday at 8:15am we'll continue our 10-part series on Desert Spirituality as we talk about the common vice of anger and its counterpart, serenity. We'll learn about the life of Abba Moses and how he found serenity through times of silence and stillness listening to the voice of Christ. All are welcome!

Introducing Children's Church at St. Peter! We are currently putting together plans for a children's ministry that will take place during the 9:30 worship service. Children's Church is an opportunity for children, age 2 thru 5th grade, to sing songs, pray and learn Bible stories together. During the opening hymn, children will be ushered into the fellowship hall by their teachers for Children's Church and return to the sanctuary prior to Communion. Our goal is to minister to young families and give their little ones age-appropriate access to God's Word on a weekly basis. Children's Church will begin on Sunday, October 11th. If you have questions, please visit with Pastor Jon.

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

Weekly Schedule:

TODAY (9/27)	8:15a Bible Study; 9:30a Worship; 11a Discussion Group; 4:00p IMPACT Youth Fun Hike (weather permitting!)
TUESDAY (9/29)	7:00p Confirmation Class
WEDNESDAY (9/30)	7:30p Zoom Bible Study
THURSDAY (10/1)	9:45/11:40a Nursery School Chapels
SUNDAY (10/4)	8:15a Bible Study; 9:30a Worship; 11:00a Discussion Group

Impact Student Ministry Kickoff - TODAY 4p-7p. Calling all students in **8th–12th grade!** Join us today as we walk the Point Mountain Peak Trail near Washington, NJ. We will enjoy the beauty of God's creation, and share a devotion together by the river. Contact Pastor Jon with questions. Come ready to have fun and connect with friends as we begin a new year of **Impact Student Ministry!**

Celebrate Life and Parents at the 2026 NJ March for Life. You are invited to join other New Jersey LCMS congregations at the 2026 NJ March for Life on Thursday, October 8, at the State House Annex in Trenton. Marching is a concrete way that together we can stand up for human dignity and encourage parents in their noble and challenging vocation of raising children. People from several central Jersey LCMS congregations will meet at 10:00 that morning at Messiah in [Princeton \(407 Nassau St;](#) plenty of parking available on Cedar Lane) and ride the bus to Trenton together. If you'd like to do that or if you have questions, email Pastor Martin Erhardt at LCMprinceton@gmail.com . Roundtrip bus fare will be covered by Messiah. Hope to see you there!

"Loudly Lutheran" District Youth Event. Join us on Sunday, October 18 from 2-6pm at Somerset Hills Lutheran in Basking Ridge for a Reformation-themed party. This event is open to grades 6-12. There will be games, worship, a service project, new friends to meet, and (as always) great food! Please see the sign up on the church bulletin board. And talk to Pastor Jon if you need a ride to the event.

Service and Other

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 Dave and Lesley deDufour's anniversary.

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.

Faithfulness Report: Sep 20: Attendance: 42 / 5 online Gen Fund (plate and electronic): \$4036
Debt relief: \$50 *Weekly giving needed for budget: \$6890*

Food Pantry. We support the Lambertville Food Pantry with donations of food and other needs. **October's** collection is **Pasta** – any varieties of pasta, sauce, mac 'n' cheese, 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)

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Old Testament Reading: Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32

¹The word of the LORD came to me:
²“What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge’? ³As I live, declares the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die. . . .

²⁵“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? ²⁶When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. ²⁷Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. ²⁸Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, are my ways not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?

³⁰“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live.”

Epistle: Philippians 2:1–4, 14–18

¹If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any

affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. . . .

¹⁴Do all things without grumbling or questioning, ¹⁵that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. ¹⁷Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 21:23–27

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus answered them, “I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?” And they discussed it among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘From man,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”