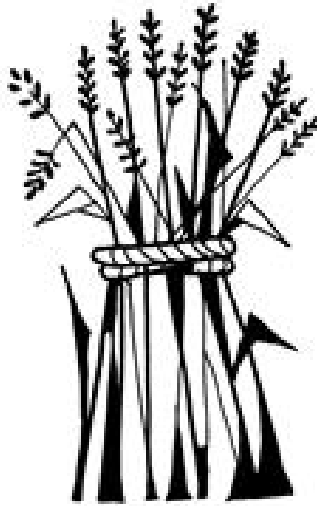


**Fifth Sunday in Lent  
Sunday, March 17th, 2024  
Holy Communion 10 am**



**Introduction**

God promises Jeremiah that a “new covenant” will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God’s heart through Christ and draws God’s love and truth into our hearts. We join together in worship, sharing in word, song, and meal, and leave strengthened to share God’s love with all the world.

***ST. PETER’S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
121 N. SPRING STREET, MIDDLETOWN, PA 17057  
Sunday Worship 10:00am and Wednesday 10:00am***

# THIS IS CHRIST'S CHURCH

## THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU HERE

St. Peter's is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Reconciling in Christ congregation joining with Reconciling Works.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we welcome and invite all of God's people regardless of age, race, ethnicity, physical or mental abilities, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or economic status.

### SERVING OUR CHURCH

**March 17th, 2024**

**Preaching & Presiding:**

Pr. Molly Haggerty

**Musicians:**

Spirit & Truth

**Reader:**

Daniel Kemper

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE:** I Will Follow *by Chris Tomlin*

### GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

### GREETING AND RESPONSE

The grace of Christ, the love of God, and the peace of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

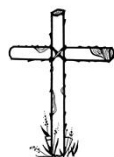
### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus. **Amen.** Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God,



**we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.**

Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through ✠ Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**GATHERING: There in God's Garden** ELW 342 v 1, 2 & 4

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **WORD**

### **FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

*The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.*

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their spouse, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me,

from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.  
Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

*We will sing the Psalm together.*

### **Psalm: Psalm 51**

*Create in me a clean heart, O God. (Ps. 51:10)*

**Create in me a clean heart oh God  
And renew a right spirit within me  
Create in me a clean heart oh God  
And renew a right spirit within me  
Cast me not away from Your presence oh Lord  
And take not Your Holy Spirit from me  
Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation  
And renew a right spirit within me  
And renew a right spirit within me  
And renew a right spirit within me**

### **SECOND READING: Hebrews 5:5-10**

*Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.*

<sup>5</sup>Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

“You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you”;

<sup>6</sup>as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,  
according to the order of Melchizedek.”

<sup>7</sup>In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup>Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; <sup>9</sup>and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, <sup>10</sup>having been

designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Holy is the Lord** *by Chris Tomlin*

**We stand and lift up our hands**

**For the joy of the Lord is our strength**

**We bow down worship Him now**

**How great how awesome is He**

**Holy is the Lord God Almighty**

**The earth is filled with His glory**

**Holy is the Lord God Almighty**

**The earth is filled with His glory**

**Holy is the Lord God Almighty**

**The earth is filled with His glory**

*Please stand as you are able.*

The Gospel according to St. John the twelfth chapter.

**Glory to you O, Lord**

**GOSPEL: John 12:20-33**

*Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Passover festival. Here Jesus' words about seeds planted in the ground turn the disaster of his death into the promise of a harvest in which everyone will be gathered.*

<sup>20</sup>Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup>They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." <sup>22</sup>Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Humankind to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup>Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, God will honor.

<sup>27</sup>"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—"God, save

me from this hour? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup>God, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” <sup>29</sup>The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” <sup>30</sup>Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. <sup>31</sup>Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup>And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup>He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **YOUNG WORSHIPPERS' MESSAGE SERMON**

**HOD: Beneath the Cross of Jesus** ELW 338

*Please stand as you are able.*

### **APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.\* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Please be seated for the prayers. We will say the response together.*

### **+PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Hear us, O God, **Your mercy is great.**

### **PEACE**

P: The peace of Christ be with you all

**C: and also with you**

P: share that peace with one another



**OFFERING: We are an Offering ELW 692**

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. **Amen.**

### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**SANCTUS: ELW setting 3 page 144**

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

#### **LORD'S PRAYER**

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; 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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

*All are invited to share in communion. It is Christ's table and all are welcome. The Ushers will bring you forward. The Pastor will give you the bread and the communion assistant will have a tray of wine. Please take one cup and drink it. An Acolyte will collect the empty cup. You can go to the rail for a silent prayer or return to your seat.*

### **COMMUNION SONGS**

**As the Grains of Wheat ELW 465**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life. **Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

The God of glory, ✠ Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

*Standing is optional.*

**SENDING: Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing** ELW 545

## **DISMISSAL:**

Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE:** In the Secret *by Sonic Flood*

**The Altar Greens are dedicated in memory of my  
grandparents by JoAnn Skovira  
&**

**In memory of James C. Kramer by his family.**

**The bulletins are dedicated in memory of Russell P.  
Madara by Nancy Swartz & family.**

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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*St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Middletown is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Susquehannock peoples and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this place their home.*



# **St. Peter's News**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:**

New to our prayer list this month: Kate Haggerty, Mae Stum, Thelma Thomas, Doris Arnold, Regina Heagy, Lucinda Sheaffer, Ben Chappell, Mary Houser, and Richard Brandt.

Those friends and members in need of continued prayers: Dorothy Murphy, Karen Ainsley, Ida Kramer, Betty Wise, Stephanie Kastelik, Brenda Stum, Kiersten Kwiatkowski, George Fuoti, Linda Holmes, Jim Hurst, and Tina Polito.

## **\*\*SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES\*\***

Gabriel Goldsborough, Jordane Cleckner, Edgar Lopez, John Pappas, Colton Stone, Aaron Williams

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

St. Peter's Sunday School program is back! We will meet in the café after church on the 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays at 11am. We ask parents to join us in the lessons and help the kids grow in their faith journeys.

## **THE CHOSEN SERIES**

Join Pastor Molly & Bennett on Wednesday evenings starting February 21<sup>st</sup> centered around the critically-acclaimed drama, "The Chosen," which portrays the story of Jesus through the perspective of his followers. We will meet in Luther Hall at 6:30pm for a meal of soup and bread while we watch the series followed by a discussion.

## **TOGETHER MENTOR**

TOGETHER is looking for male volunteer mentors to come in and help for an hour several days a week. We are asking this person to help with making meals, talking with the youth, and possibly playing games with the kids. The times would be from 3pm to 4pm. If you are interested, please reach out to Alex Mabee at her email [amabee@stpetersmiddletown.org](mailto:amabee@stpetersmiddletown.org) or call her at 832-752-6833.

## **SUMMER CAMP 2024**

Summer Camp programs and registrations forms are available for Kirchenwald and Nawakwa for the 2024 season. There are a variety

of programs available for a wide range of ages. Please see Sharon for more information and to learn how to get a discount on your registration. Pamphlets are available by the office.

## **SUMMER CAMP OPEN HOUSE**

Meet the Nawakwa or Kirchenwald staff on Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup> & Sunday April 14<sup>th</sup> from 2pm-4:30pm. You will tour the facilities and receive a \$10 coupon for the camp store for each new camper! For more information, visit [www.LutheranCamping.org](http://www.LutheranCamping.org) or call 717-677-8211

## **SPRING GARAGE SALE**

TOGETHER, St. Peter's Youth, and Hope Academy are hosting a garage sale fundraiser on April 12<sup>th</sup> from 5pm-8pm and on April 13<sup>th</sup> from 9am-3pm. If you have items you would like to donate to the sale or need help transporting your donations, especially clothes, household items, and games, please contact Alex at:

[AMabee@StPetersMiddletown.org](mailto:AMabee@StPetersMiddletown.org). Donations are accepted now to April 1<sup>st</sup>!

## **CELEBRATIONS**

If you have a special celebration you'd like to highlight in the bulletin, please email Jen at: [JKemper@StPetersMiddletown.org](mailto:JKemper@StPetersMiddletown.org) or call the office at: 717-944-4651. Birthdays and anniversaries will be printed monthly, but we would also like to highlight other special events in our congregation or community, such as graduations, academic honors, sports achievements, engagements, or any other notable event you'd like to share.

## **EARTH DAY CELEBRATION APRIL 27<sup>th</sup>**

Join TOGETHER at Hoffer Park on April 27<sup>th</sup> from 10am-1pm to learn about ways we can protect our planet. We will also be doing fun science experiments, playing games (including a bounce house), enjoying food trucks, and more!



## **MEALS ON WHEELS**

Please consider helping StPeters Middletown deliver meals for 2 to 3 hours per morning 3 to 5 days a week in Royalton and Middletown in June. To learn more about the delivering experience please talk with JoAnn Skovira, Carol Hahn, Barb or Allen Jacobs, Kristie or Aaron Young, Gail or Don Hossler. To sign up for June deliveries please call Gail at 717-944-2250.

## **COMMUNITY REQUEST**

A member of our community has requested the following items: 2 twin mattresses & twin mattress protectors, small kitchen table set, living room furniture, and a tv stand. If you can donate any of these items, please email Jen: [JKemper@StPetersMiddletown.org](mailto:JKemper@StPetersMiddletown.org)

## **LAMPa LUTHERAN DAY IN THE CAPITOL**

Join the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania on Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup> for a day of learning, inspirations, advocacy, and celebration for their 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We will also celebrate the ELCA World Hunger's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**To register or learn more: [lutheranadvocacypa.org](http://lutheranadvocacypa.org)**

## **HOPE ACADEMY NEW EXPLORERS**

Hope Academy PA Preschool at St. Peter's Middletown is enrolling new explorers for the '24/'25 school year and we need YOUR help to spread the word! Please share with anyone you know who has preschool aged children or works with families. Thanks to many generous donors, we have a scholarship program and are anxious to help as many children as possible have a quality preschool education! Email [jen@t4hope.org](mailto:jen@t4hope.org) for more information and follow us on Facebook at Hope Academy PA!

## **LUNCH & LEARN**

St. Peter's is happy to once again host the students of Penn State Harrisburg's course on aging beginning Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. Each week, we will meet in Luther Hall from 11am-1pm for a light lunch and conversation. We need volunteers to join the class in conversation. Please sign up with your name and phone number.

**Wed March 20: Support Systems (Sally Schonewolf)**

**Wed March 27: Finances in the Future (Kane High)**

**Wed April 3: Dying with Dignity (Gerry Leonard)**

**Wed April 10: Celebration & Pizza party**

*Please sign up on the table and see Pastor Molly with questions!*

## **DECENDANTS THE MUSICAL**

Our very own Avery Heckman is starring in the lead role (Mal) of Elizabethtown Area Middle School's production of *the Descendants: the musical* on Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 7pm & Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at 2pm & 7pm in the EAHS auditorium. Audiences will encounter a host of classic Disney characters from Maleficent to Beauty and the Beast. Through show-stopping numbers such as "Ways to Be Wicked," "Good Is the New Bad," and "Did I Mention," the musical celebrates the power of change, the importance of trust and honesty, and the goodness that lives within all of us.

Be sure to tell Avery to "break a leg" or cheer her on from the audience! Tickets for this production are on sale now. They can be purchased online at <https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/80649> or at the door one hour before performances. The price is a flat \$5, and cash and checks are only accepted at the door.

Questions? Email Amy: [AHossler77@yahoo.com](mailto:AHossler77@yahoo.com)

**EAHS: 600 E High st. Elizabethtown, PA 17022**

## **CLASS ACT FT. RITA**

You are invited to the Spring Fling at Seven Sorrows Church (360 E. Water St. Middletown, PA 17057) on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Enjoy 3 sets of music & dancing from 8pm-11pm performed live by Class Act featuring Rita. Jeremy and Bennett of our own Spirit & Truth band will be playing and singing! Tickets are \$30 per person and should be purchased in advance. Your ticket includes food, beer, wine, soda, and water. You may also BYOB. **To learn more or to reserve your tickets, contact Darlene: 717-991-4563 or Jan: 717-944-2340.**

## **SIGN UP TO READ**

Please consider signing up to read in church! The sign-up sheet is by the front office.