

Welcome to
St. Peter's Lutheran Church



Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 15, 2026

10:15 Worship Service

Pastor Brandon Johns

BELL RINGING

The Lenten Cross Garden will grow each week as a different symbol of Christ is added at the foot of the cross. Its stark beauty prepares us for the extravagant beauty of the Resurrection Garden on Easter Morning.

WINE *When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished".*
– John 19:30

Feasts and festivities have been marked by the sharing of wine for millennia. On the cross, Jesus was offered vinegar wine as an insult to mock his suffering. As God's suffering servant, Jesus bore every insult and pain that human sin could produce and in return, offered his own lifeblood so all could share in the feast without end.

We pause to reflect as the wine and grapes are added to the cross garden.

GATHERING LITANY***Mercy, Passion, and Joy: Mercy Made Manifest***

In your ministry, O Lord, you fulfilled the words of the prophet:

to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners,

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God,

to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn in Zion—

to give them a garland instead of ashes,

the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

You healed many who came to you hurting in body, mind and soul,
and that mercy is manifest in our lives today as you continue to grant us healing.

You taught good news to those who had once heard only bad,
and your mercy is manifest in the Good News of your salvation spoken from your Holy Word.

You brought freedom to those who were imprisoned by their sins, **and your mercy is manifest in the freedom we experience each time we partake of your body and blood in the bread and wine of Holy Communion.**

You brought comfort to those who were in pain of any kind, **and your mercy is manifest in the help and support we receive from family and friends, doctors and nurses and all others who care for us when we are sick or injured.**

Your crown of thorns grants us a crown of glory in heaven with you, **where joyous praises will be sung to the Lamb who was slain.**

(We sing the indented lines together. For the first verse we begin after it is played through once.)

***God, who came to dwell among us,
God, who suffered our disgrace;
from your own heart, grieved and wounded
come the riches of your grace.***

***Come, O Christ, among the ashes,
come to wipe our tears away,
death destroy and sorrow banish;
now and always, come and stay.***

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

SENIOR CHOIR

A Lenten Walk

Hal H. Hopson

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

¹The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” ²Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’” ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” ⁴Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” ⁵He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is now before the Lord.” ⁷But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL: John 9:1-41

The holy gospel according to John, the ninth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Our gospel reading is on page 871 in the Bibles located in the pews.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

now am found; was blind, but now I see.
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

God, our shepherd, we pray that you guide the church. Lead Christians in our community and across the globe in right paths for your name's sake.

The response for each petition is:

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

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

OFFERING

Our offerings are made processionaly, which means dropped into the plates located near the entrances to the nave.

CANTICLE OF THANKSGIVING



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right



spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take



not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of



your sal - va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Merciful God, **receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving and the offering of our lives, that following in the way of the cross, we may know the joy of the resurrection; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

DIALOGUE

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.

THE PROPER PREFACE *(It is indeed right... join their unending hymn)*

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting

and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life:

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.

Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.

Breathe new life into us.

Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

With your holy ones of all times and places,

we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and help us to pray:

**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

Come to Christ, broken and poured out for you.

LAMB OF GOD (sung as the distribution of the sacrament begins)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION

The Sacrament will be offered with these words:

The body of Christ, given for you.

And The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Optional responses **Amen or Thanks be to God or Renew us, Lord**

BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate



- 1 O Christ, your heart, com - pas - sion - ate, bore ev - 'ry hu - man pain.
- 2 As once you wel - comed those cast down and healed the sick, the blind,
- 3 O Christ, cre - ate new hearts in us that beat in time with yours,
- 4 O Love that made the dis - tant stars, yet marks the spar-row's fall,



Its beat - ing was the pulse of God; its breadth, God's vast do - main.
so may all bruised and bro - ken lives through us your help still find.
that, joined by faith with your great heart, be - come love's o - pen doors.
whose arms stretched wide up - on a cross em - brace and bear us all:



The heart of God, the heart of Christ com - bined in per - fect rhyme
Lord, join our hearts with those who weep that none may weep a - lone,
We are your bod - y, ris - en Christ; our hearts, our hands we yield
come, make your church a ser - vant church that walks your ser - vant ways,



to write God's love in hu - man deeds, e - ter - ni - ty in time.
and help us bear an - oth - er's pain as though it were our own.
that through our life and min - is - try your love may be re - vealed.
whose deeds of love rise up to you, a sac - ri - fice of praise!

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923–2007

Music: ELLACOMBE, German melody, 18th cent.; adapt. X. L. Hartig, *Melodien zum Mainzer Gesangbuche*, 1833

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SHARING FOR SERVING: Mission Notices and Birthdays

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live that others might praise the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Prayers

Charles Sergisson

Our Monthly Benevolent Cause for March: Camp Lutherlyn

If you would like to support this cause, please mark the “Other” line on your contribution envelope Lutherlyn.

Prayers Have Been Requested Recently for the Following:

Cole Barkley	Luke Clawson	Mary Fulghum
Stephanie Hogan	Berty McMillen	Rick Reifenstein
Annastyn Hogan	Marshall White	Noel Critchlow
Chris Merrison, Sr.	Donna Daugherty	

*Today's Altar Flowers
are given by Frank Miller
in honor of the continued health
of his mother, Marcella Miller.*



*Today's Eternal Candle is
presented by Teresa O'Malley
in loving memory of
Jerome O'Malley*

A special thank you – Scott and I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, calls, and cards during my multiple myeloma cancer. Currently, I am in remission and now have another ‘speed bump’ to hurdle – pancreatic cancer. Please continue praying for us. As James 1:17 says, “Every good action and perfect gift is from God.” Thank you all and God bless. Berty & Scott McMillen

Featured Food Cupboard Donations – The featured item for our congregation in March is condiments.

Fish Fry – Friday, March 20th from 4 - 6:30 pm. Please have **all donated items to church by March 19th**. Cash donations can be given to Bev Critchlow.

Meager Meals – Thanks to all who have brought soup & bread, who will be bringing it, and for those setting up & cleaning up the dinner! Weekly on Thursday nights in March at 6pm. All are welcome!

Lent Special Offering – Our offerings made during Meager Meals and in the Lent Special Offering envelopes will go to Priority Projects.

Fasting for Change – As part of your Lenten journey, you are invited to donate the money you would have spent on what you have given up to support Lutheran Service Society. Coin boxes are available or you are welcome to mark the Other line on your contribution envelope. There is a glass vase on the main bulletin table to be used for our fasting donations and coin boxes.

Pirates Game Fellowship Outing – Come join us at the Pirates game, Saturday May 30th. All tickets must be reserved by April 12th. There is a sign up on the table with the red table cloth. Ride sharing is available, too.

Keeping the Word Alive Reading & Prayer Vigil (April 3-5)

For about thirty-six hours, we will read continually through this year's lectionary gospel, Matthew, broken only by readers taking time for prayer or using other provided devotional material to reflect on the magnitude of Jesus' sacrificial love for us. Our thirty-six hour vigil represents the time Christ lay dead in the tomb, but giving audible voice to God's Word reminds us that death is not the victor in this battle. Also this time of incarnating the Word teaches us that we not only play a part in Jesus' death but in the on-going life of his Body. The sign up is available on the table with the red table cloth.

Please consider this opportunity to live into Jesus' request of the disciples at Gethsemane to remain with him and stay awake with him (Mt 26:38), and if you have any questions please talk to Pastor or the Worship Committee.

Although reading from the sanctuary offers some of the deepest spiritual benefits, we will again offer the opportunity to read from home through Zoom. Please indicate which method that you will use, which helps keeps the flow of readers more smooth as each reader knows how to expect to greet their replacement.





ST. PETER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*is a congregation of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).*

ELCA Presiding Bishop

The Rev. Yehiel Curry

SWPA Synod Bishop

The Rev. Melissa Stohler

Pastor

The Rev. Brandon Johns

Organist & Music Director

Marlene Domhoff

Sexton

Joe Ludwik

Acolyte

Owen Price

Asst. Minister

Janice Hogan

Bell Ringer

Ryan Bonicky

Greeters

Rob & Lisa Burr

Lector

Melissa Bonicky

Ushers

Brenda & Vic Pepper

Nursery

Staci Bettencourt

Tech Support

Adam Price

St. Peter's Upcoming Events:

Mon. – Fri.	4:00 – 6:00 pm	After School
Mon. March 16	7:00 pm	Boy Scouts
Tues. March 17	7:00 pm	WELCA General Mtg.
Wed. March 18	10:00 am	Community Quilters
	5:30 pm	Manna Night
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice
Thur. March 19	10:00 am	Quilters Group
	6:00 pm	Meager Meal
	7:00 pm	Lenten Service
	8:00 pm	Bible Study
Fri. March 20	4:00 – 6:30 pm	Fish Dinner
	6:00 pm	SPY
Sat. March 21	6:30 pm	Game Night

Today marks the 10th Anniversary of Pastor Johns's first service with us as our pastor here at St. Peter's. A warm thank you to him for his leadership and service among us.

Welcome to St. Peter's

We are thankful that you are here to worship with other Christians today. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray that your worship experience will fill you with the grace and mercy of Almighty God through his Holy Spirit.



Newcomers and Guests

New to St. Peter's? Please sign the GUEST REGISTER behind the last pew. You are welcome to commune with us if that is your practice. A handicapped accessible RESTROOM is located near the Van Buren Street entrance (through Luther Hall, past the kitchen, restroom is on the left in the foyer).

Nursery – is staffed by a volunteer and available for children and caregivers. Exit the rear of the nave and follow the steps to the basement, the nursery is on the left. The service can be heard through an intercom in the nursery. There are activity bags in the back of the sanctuary and children's bulletins geared for children ages 5 and up are at the nave entrances.

Offering – Thank you for supporting our ministries! Plates are available at the front and rear of the nave to receive offering, or you if you prefer, we have Venmo as an option. If you choose to use Venmo, please note how you would like the funds to be designated, like for Current Fund, etc.



Staying in Touch:

Office hours are Monday through Friday from 9 am until noon.

Please feel free to contact us by phone or internet:

Church Office: 724.538.5810

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Pastor Email: rev.brandonjohns@gmail.com

Church Website: www.stpeterslutheranevanscity.org

RECOGNITION OF ARTISTS:

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