

# The Confession of Peter

January 21, 2024



*Christ Handing the Keys to St Peter*, by [Pietro Perugino](#) (1481–82)

# St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

[www.stpaulsyork.org](http://www.stpaulsyork.org)

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[www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com](http://www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com)

Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George

YouTube: St. Paul's Lutheran Church - South George St. York

**WELCOME** Thank you for being with us.

*This morning we extend a joyful welcome to the members and friends of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, N. George St. and to Pastor Schlegel for their companionship through the Epiphany season (8:00am liturgy).*

**We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition** (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 187 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

**Offerings** Offerings are received during the liturgy. They are presented along with gifts of bread and wine at the altar. You may also donate via our website at [www.stpaulsyork.org](http://www.stpaulsyork.org)

**Postlude** It is our tradition to remain seated for the postlude. If you need to leave we ask that you do so reverently. This tradition developed as a result of our livestream. We want anyone viewing to be able to listen to the postlude without unnecessary distraction. Thank you.

**Restrooms** are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex (George St). Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms as well as in the nursery.

**An AED/Defibrillator** unit is located in the Good Shepherd room. It is placed on the wall left side of the Springettsbury door exit.

**The Nursery** is accessed through the front right double doors. The liturgy is live-streamed into the Nursery. Parents are asked to stay with their children. Quiet activities are also available in the Narthex for infant through preschool children to use with an adult.

**Please be aware** that there is a rise in individuals loitering at church buildings and asking for money. This is panhandling and it is illegal. Please do not give money. Simply direct them to contact the Pastor at a time other than during worship. Thank you.

**Parents**, please do accompany your child to the restroom during the liturgy and wait with them. This is a way for us to practice good safety protocol within our building.

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	<a href="mailto:st.paulsyork@comcast.net">st.paulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	<a href="mailto:kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net">kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net</a>
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**The Confession of Peter**  
**January 21, 2024**  
**Holy Communion 8:00 AM & 10:30AM**  
 Lutheran Book of Worship Setting 1

**PRELUDE**

*Here I Am Lord*

Robert Buckley Farlee

**ENTRANCE HYMN**

*Christ is Made the Sure Foundation (WOV 747)*

1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ, our head and  
 2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O Lord of  
 3 Grant, we pray, to all your faith - ful, all the gifts they  
 4 Praise and hon - or to the Fa - ther, praise and hon - or

cor - ner - stone, cho - sen of the Lord and pre - cious,  
 hosts, and - stay; come with all your lov - ing - kind - ness,  
 ask to gain; what they gain from you, for - ev - er  
 to the Son, praise and hon - or to the Spir - it,

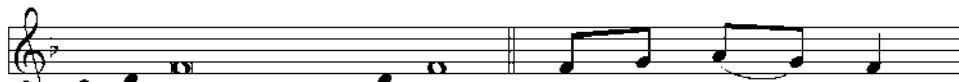
bind - ing all the church in one; ho - ly Zi - on's  
 hear your peo - ple as they pray; and your full - est  
 with the bless - ed to re - tain; and here - af - ter  
 ev - er three and ev - er one: one in might and

help for - ev - er and our con - fi - dence a - lone.  
 ben - e - dic - tion shed with - in these walls to - day.  
 in your glo - ry ev - er - more with you to reign.  
 one in glo - ry while un - end - ing a - ges run!

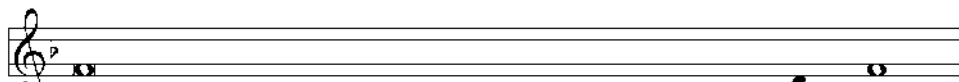
## APOSTOLIC GREETING

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.**

## KYRIE



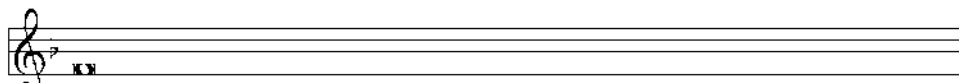
**A** In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



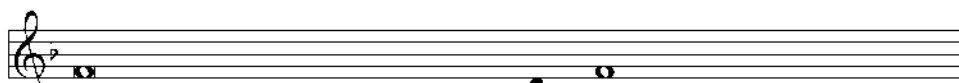
**A** For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



**G** Lord, have mer - cy.



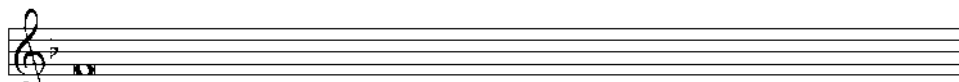
**A** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



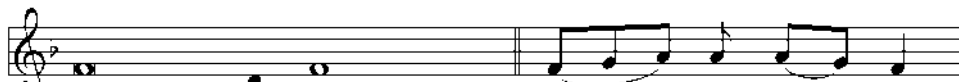
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



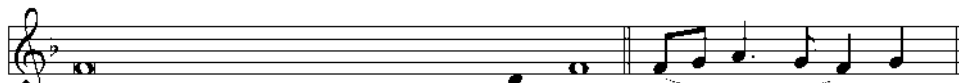
**G** Lord, have mer - cy.



**A** For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



**A** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra-cious Lord. **G** A - men

## HYMN OF PRAISE



♩ A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



♩ Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and Fa - ther:



We wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - - men

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. . . . Almighty God, you inspired Simon Peter to confess Jesus as the Messiah and Son of the living God. Keep your Church firm on the rock of this faith, that in unity and peace it may proclaim one truth and follow one Lord, your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen**

*Sit*

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

### FIRST READING Acts 4:8-13

<sup>8</sup>Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup>if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, <sup>10</sup>let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. <sup>11</sup>This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.'

<sup>12</sup>There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

<sup>13</sup>Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus.

### PSALMODY Psalm 18: 1-7, 17-20 *spoken responsively by verse*

<sup>1</sup> I love you, O | LORD my strength,\*

O LORD my stronghold, my crag, | and my haven.

<sup>2</sup> **My God, my rock in whom I | put my trust,\***

**my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my refuge: You are worth- | y of praise.**

<sup>3</sup> I will call up- | on the LORD,\*

and so shall I be saved | from my enemies.

<sup>4</sup> **The breakers of death rolled | over me,\***

**and the torrents of oblivion made | me afraid.**

<sup>5</sup> The cords of hell en- | tangled me,\*

and the snares of death were | set for me.

<sup>6</sup> **I called upon the LORD in | my distress\***

**and cried out to my | God for help.**

<sup>7</sup> He heard my voice from his heav- | enly dwelling;\*

my cry of anguish came | to his ears.

<sup>17</sup> **He reached down from on | high and grasped me;\***

**he drew me out | of great waters.**

<sup>18</sup> He delivered me from my strong enemies and from those who | hated me,\*

for they were too might- | y for me.

<sup>19</sup> **They confronted me in the day of | my disaster;\***

**but the LORD was | my support.**

<sup>20</sup> He brought me out into an | open place;\*

he rescued me because he delight- | ed in me.

## SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 10:1-5

<sup>1</sup>I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup>and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup>and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup>and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup>Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

*Stand*

**VERSE Sung by all**



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

## HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 16:13-19

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup>Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" <sup>14</sup>And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." <sup>15</sup>He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" <sup>16</sup>Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." <sup>17</sup>And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup>I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

*At the conclusion of the Gospel.*

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sit*

**SERMON**

**10:30 AM HANDBELL CHOIR** Hydrom, Hydrom Trad. Czechoslovakian Carol

*Stand*

**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;**

**by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**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.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He 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**

United with the great cloud of witnesses throughout the ages, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

Merciful God, let your forgiveness and salvation be spoken in every language and tongue. Bless missionaries and mission organizations as they accompany and empower communities in your name. Defend your church against all peril. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Bring healing rains to places of drought and bring gifts of sun and wind to flooded lands.

Calm stormy seas and renew the face of the earth. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Lead nations in doing justice and loving mercy. Show compassion to those who are imprisoned and liberate those who are wrongfully held captive. Deliver us from the hands of those who would wish us harm. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Embrace any who are rejected or have lost their way. Release the anxious. Encourage the sick. Make your healing power known to those for whom we pray this day (*especially*).

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Reconcile us to one another, O God. Bring unity to your church. Bring peace to our relationships. Teach us to show grace to one another. When we cause harm, give us humble hearts to confess our shortcomings and ask for forgiveness. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*



We praise you for Peter and for all your faithful people who have proclaimed Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Make bold our confession of faith. Give us confidence that we too will come to the fullness of your promise of salvation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

In the company of your saints we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your eternal mercy and love; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## PEACE

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

*The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

*Sit*

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

8:00 AM *Antienne dans le Mode Phrygien Ecclesiastique*

Eugene Gigout

10:30 AM Chancel Choir *O Splendor of God's Glory Bright*

David Ashley White

## OFFERING



☞ Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our



cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the



seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.



Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the



prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Merciful Father,

**we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**


## DIALOGUE *Sung by Pastor and congregation*



P The Lord be with you. ☩ And al - so with you.



P Lift up your hearts. ☩ We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



☩ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

## PREFACE *The preface appropriate to the day is sung.*

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through the great shepherd of your flock, Christ our Lord; who after his resurrection sent forth his apostles to preach the Gospel and teach all nations, and promised to be with them always, even to the end of the age. And so, with patriarchs and prophets, with the apostle, Peter, and with all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

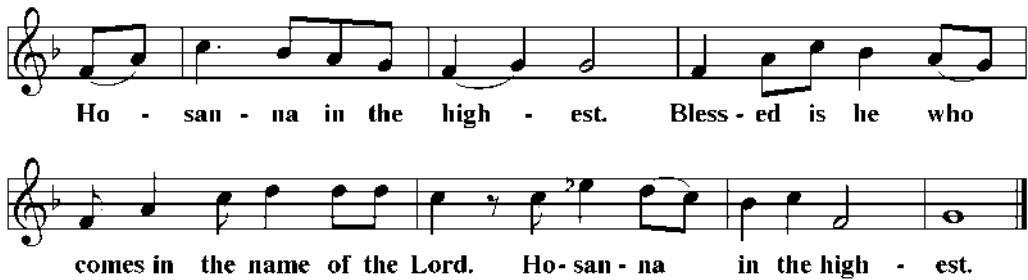
## SANCTUS *Sung by all.*



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



Heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san-na. Ho - san-na.



## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:

Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.

You have filled all creation with light and life;

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Through Abraham you promised to bless all nations.

You rescued Israel, your chosen people.

Through the prophets you renewed your promise;

and, at this end of all the ages, you sent your Son,  
who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom  
and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

Therefore, gracious Father, with this bread and cup  
we remember the life our Lord offered for us.

And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his coming in power  
to share with us the great and promised feast.

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,

the spirit of our Lord and of his resurrection,  
that we who receive the Lord's body and blood  
may live to the praise of your glory  
and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

**Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place,  
and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest  
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

**Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory  
is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**THE 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**

**FRACTION RITE** *A brief silence is kept.*

**AGNUS DEI** *Sung by all.*



**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.**

**Sit**

*The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.*

## COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

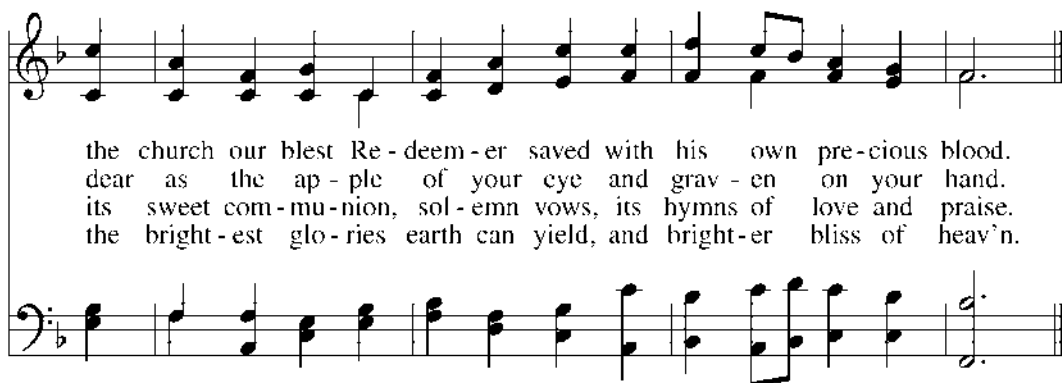
Our Communion is “open” to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist.

1. Come to communion using the center aisle (about 10 adults per side).
2. Communion glasses are placed on credence tables at the front pews (left and right side).
3. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.
4. Take your place along the chancel step. The ministers will bring the bread and wine to you.
5. Extend your hands to receive the communion host.
6. Consume the communion host.
7. Hold the communion glass with both hands at chest height so that the communion assistant can easily pour the wine into the glass.
8. Consume the wine before you leave the chancel edge.
9. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.
10. Return to your pew using the side aisle.

## COMMUNION HYMN     *I Love Your Kingdom, Lord (LBW 368)*



1 I love your king - dom, Lord, the place of your a - bode:  
2 I love your church, O God! Its walls be - fore you stand,  
3 Be - yond my high - est joy I prize its heav'n - ly ways,  
4 Sure as your truth shall last, to Zi - on shall be giv'n



the church our blest Re - deem - er saved with his own pre - cious blood.  
dear as the ap - ple of your eye and grav - en on your hand.  
its sweet com - mu - nion, sol - emn vows, its hymns of love and praise.  
the bright - est glo - ries earth can yield, and bright - er bliss of heav'n.

*Stand*

**POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

**POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray. Almighty God, as we have commemorated St. Peter in this most Holy Sacrament you have brought us near to an innumerable company of angels, apostles, martyrs, and saints. Keep us in fellowship with them until at last we may attain to our eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**BLESSING**

Almighty God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Bless you now and forever. **Amen**

**HYMN**     *Built on a Rock (LBW 365) next page*

**DISMISSAL**

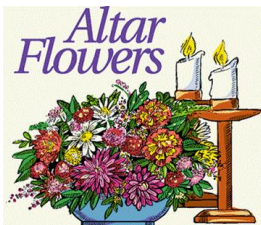
Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

*Sortie Adoramus in aeternum*

Eugene Gigout

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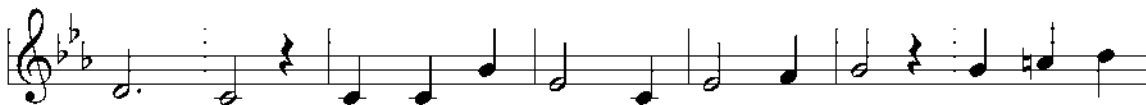


*Today's Altar Flowers are presented to the Glory of God  
in loving memory of husbands Clarence Nicolaysen and William  
Eisenring; daughter Elise Harris; and parents Herman and Meta  
Wacker by Irmgard Nicolaysen  
And in memory of Kathryn and Elaine Mummert by Jim Mummert*

# Built on a Rock



1 Built on a rock the church shall stand, e - ven when stee - ples are  
2 Not in our tem - ples made with hands God, the Al - might - y, is  
3 We are God's house of liv - ing stones, built for his own hab - i -  
4 Yet in this house, an earth - ly frame, Je - sus the chil - dren is  
5 Through all the pass - ing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are



fall - ing; crum - bled have spires in ev - 'ry land, bells still are  
dwell - ing; high in the heav'n's his tem - ple stands, all earth - ly  
ta - tion; he fills our hearts, his hum - ble thrones, grant - ing us  
bless - ing; hith - er we come to praise his name, faith in our  
ring - ing, man - y may come to hear God's Word where he this



chim - ing and call - ing— call - ing the young and old to rest, call - ing the  
tem - ples ex - cel - ling. Yet he who dwells in heav'n a - bove deigns to a -  
life and sal - va - tion. Were two or three to seek his face, he in their  
Sav - ior con - fess - ing. Je - sus to us his Spir - it sent, mak - ing with  
prom - ise is bring - ing: I know my own, my own know me; you, not the



souls of those dis - tressed, long - ing for life ev - er - last - ing.  
bide with us in love, mak - ing our bod - ies his tem - ple.  
midst would show his grace, bless - ings up - on them be - stow - ing.  
us his cov - e - nant, grant - ing his chil - dren the king - dom.  
world, my face shall see; my peace I leave with you. A - men

*Serving the Lord with Gladness*

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Set-up & Altar Clean-up
01/21	8:00 AM	Jennifer Ports	Ken Hinkle	Lois Ann Schroeder		Bob & Connie Reed	Sammy Barnes, John Monk, Sheridan Palmer	Kathy Monk, Lois Ann Schroeder
01/21	10:30 AM	Geoffrey Simon	Janet Fitch	Larry Gross		Deb Becker, Sandy Dickensheets	Darren Smith, Sandy Dickensheets, Dan Garber	Ann Anstadt, Jill Streiberg

**This Week at St. Paul's**

Church office open 8:00 a.m.—4pm Mon—Thurs

**Sunday, January 21**

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist  
 9:15 AM Sunday School for All  
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist—Live Stream  
 6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

**Monday, January 22**

6:00 PM Christian Ed—Youth Rm  
 7:00 PM Mutual Ministry  
 7:00 PM Worship & Arts—Good Shepherd Rm.

**Tuesday, January 23**

9:30 AM Pantry  
 6:00 PM Property Committee—In House  
 6:00 PM CREATE—Preschool—Grade 6

**Thursday, January 25**

6:30 PM Handbell Choir—Chancel  
 7:30 PM Chancel Choir—Choir Room

**Sunday, January 28**

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist  
 9:15 AM Sunday School for All  
 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist—Live Stream  
 3:30 PM Bridge of Hope—Christ Hall

**Sunday Morning Classes 9:15-10:15 AM**

**Preschool through Grade 6 children** will meet upstairs in their age grouped classrooms where they will be learning about Jesus' early life including the coming of the Wisemen, Jesus' baptism, the calling of the disciples, and some of Jesus' miracles. Often children get to act out the stories, wonder about the characters and how they might have felt, and discuss ways that they can grow their own walk as Christians. This is a great time to start your child in a class. Some of the best stories are explored during this winter and spring season. Come!

**Adult Sunday Morning Classes: Christmas is for Martyrs  
 January 7 – February 11**

Few people associate Christmas with going to prison for their beliefs, but the Bible does... and so do many, many Christians around the world today. Join the Adult Class to discover where and how the Church suffers in witness to Jesus Christ today. We will be helped by "The Voices of the Martyrs" a ministry begun by a Lutheran pastor after he was released from a communist prison. All are invited, and we will gather in Christ Hall during the Sunday school hour at 9:15 AM. The sessions will be led by Jonathan Jenkins.



## Announcements and Up-dates for the week January 21, 2024

*Pastor Reep will be away from the parish this week preparing for the upcoming season of Lent. Please direct all Pastoral emergencies to Patee in the church office. Thank you.*

**2024 Offering Envelopes** are available in the Good Shepherd Room . Please take yours along with you.

**St Paul's is collecting clothing for Union Lutheran Church's Clothing Ministry.** Union collects 'gently used' clothing (and shoes) for its clothing closet and offers it **free of charge** to needy families in the York City community. A bin has been placed in the Good Shepherd room to collect any clothing you would like to donate. These donations will surely be a blessing to our neighbors. Union's volunteers are very appreciative of our cooperation and our help.

**St. Paul's Book Club:** We meet at Panera Bread on South Queen Street on Jan. 25, 4:00-5:00 PM and will discuss *Zookeeper's Wife* by Diane Ackerman.



You may get information regarding closures at our website [www.stpaulsyork.org](http://www.stpaulsyork.org) or on our Facebook page: St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George.

### 2024 Flower Chart

The 2024 flower chart is posted on the Springettsbury vestibule bulletin board. The cost of the flowers is **\$35 per vase**. You are welcome to sign up to provide one or both vases. After you have signed up, simply make a check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and mark it altar flowers. This is a great way to honor someone, celebrate a milestone in life, or remember a loved one. The flowers may be taken home with you at the conclusion of the last liturgy or you may have them given to someone who is sick, shut it, or hospitalized. If you wish, you can contact the office to reserve a date, and to provide us with all of the correct information for inclusion in the Sunday bulletin.

### Food Pantry—January

**Items needed: Canned fruit.** This has been difficult for the pantry to get. Please put your donations in the shopping cart in the Good Shepherd Room. We also need paper grocery bags with handles and plastic bags. Money donations are gratefully accepted. Please place cash or check in a "special" envelope marked "Pantry". Volunteers are needed: Tuesday mornings to help our neighbors shop, some Sundays to stock shelves and some Thursday mornings to receive deliveries. Contact Patty Snyder, Ken Hinkle , Teresa Rohrbaugh or the church office (717-843-8155) to volunteer.



## **SAVE THE DATE:**

Witness Committee is planning a Valentine's Dinner for our young adults and young couples with children 12 and under. Childcare will be provided for the children. The date is Friday, February 9 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Invitations and detailed information are being sent out.

### **Witness Committee to Host Senior Luncheon**

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is quickly approaching and the Witness Committee invites our seniors (65 and over) to lunch after the Ash Wednesday service, February 14, 2024. The service will begin at 11:00 a.m. and be followed by lunch. The menu will be a baked spaghetti casserole, salad, bread, dessert, and beverages. If you don't drive and would like to come, we will arrange for your transportation. Come and socialize with friends. Please contact Patee [st.paulsyork@comcast.net](mailto:st.paulsyork@comcast.net) or (717) 843-8155, let her know if you are coming, if you have any dietary restrictions and if you will need a ride to and from church. The deadline to respond is February 9.

### **The Season of Lent Begins on Ash Wednesday**

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, with liturgies at 11:00 AM and 7:00 PM. The liturgy begins with Psalm 51, a plea to God, to create in us clean and honest hearts. We quickly move to an in-depth confession enumerating the ways in which our hearts have not been clean and honest toward; God, creation, neighbor or self. With the imposition of ashes on our foreheads we remember that we are dust and to dust we shall return. The stark reminder or words spoken and cross prominently displayed underscores the shortness of human life and of the need for us to live each day in deeper relationship with God, creation, neighbor and with self-awareness. To aid us in our Lenten season devotional books are available in the narthex on the oval library table and in the Good Shepherd Room on the breakfront. Following the morning liturgy a luncheon will be held in Christ Hall. The Witness committee planned and prepared for the luncheon as a way to strengthen relationship within the congregation. A sign-up sheet indicating your intentions to attend the luncheon will circulate on Sunday morning during the time of the announcements. Senior members of the congregation who may wish to attend but need transportation should contact Earline Jones. Please begin the season of Lent by attending an Ash Wednesday liturgy.

**The Long-term Recovery Committee** in York is looking to find volunteers interested in helping empty out the basement of a home in need of repairs from Hurricane Ida. It is not muck and gut work. It is carrying things that were stored down there and putting them in a dumpster. We are trying to coordinate a day or two when volunteers would be available to help. Pastor Glenn Beard, (717) 471-1067, [gbeard@lutherare.org](mailto:gbeard@lutherare.org)

**Confession of St. Peter January 21 (Transposed from January 18), 2024**  
**Acts 4:8-13 1 Corinthians 10:1-5 St. Matthew 16:13-19**

*Modern American Fiction*, it had a certain ring to it, a certain appeal as an elective to complete a literature requirement. It sounded like just the sort of elective that any college student would want to take. Like most courses the titles of the class can be deceptive. They can have a catchy ring to them and then leave you questioning why you ever selected the class in the first place. Then there are other classes where the title is dull as a door nail but the instructor makes the class so engaging that you can't imagine why you didn't have it listed among your first choices. Occasionally you hit the jack pot and land the great sounding class and the enthusiastic professor.

That was the situation with the freshman literature class with Mrs. Johnson. It was a class that students never wanted to miss. She made participants believe that anything was possible and that grasping the fundamentals of literary analysis was the beginning of a joyful existence of discussion, debate, conversation, that would accompany you through your entire life. It was with Mrs. Johnson that identifying the "turning point" in each story became a standard part of all of my future reading; stories, articles, and later church history and even the sacred scriptures.

The "turning point" is just that. It is the point in the story where a significant change occurs, a decisive moment. There is a change in direction or motion. Once it takes place there is no turning back.

The "turning point" in the story is part of what today is all about. Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah. Sure it's a confession story, but in addition to that, it serves to move the listener from Jesus' Galilean ministry to his journey to Jerusalem to suffer and die. With Matthew and his cohorts Luke and Mark, each of them have the confession of Peter as the "turning point" in the flow of their material. Jesus' earthly ministry centers in Galilee. He teaches in Galilee. He heals in Galilee. He prays in Galilee. He is known mainly to the inhabitants of the region of Galilee. When Jesus goes to Jerusalem it is for one purpose only, to suffer and be put to death.

This is markedly different from the Gospel of St. John. John has Jesus going back and forth between Galilee and Jerusalem almost as though he is a modern day commuter. John's approach underscores that Jesus was a devout male Jew and as such he would have made a minimum of three trips to the Temple in Jerusalem annually. So in John the turning point is different. Even when Peter gets his new nick name, Peter the Rock, that story is different.

The turning point in Matthew's gospel account has Jesus ask the disciples who people say that he is. He asks not to evoke a full range of opinions, or to enumerate a list, but to provide for the disciples faith to come to expression. That is after all what Peter does. His faith comes into expression. He confesses Jesus as "*the Messiah, the Son of the living God.*"

It will be through Peter's preaching that he will open the doors of life for those who believe. That's the story that we heard a portion of in the reading from Acts. Peter is preaching. In this section of scripture Peter has the joyful task of leading people into the kingdom

of God. But we also know that while Peter was bold to confess, he was also timid and denied his relationship to, and knowledge of, Jesus that night in the court yard of the High Priest. The text underscores the Divine disclosure. For whatever the reason God has chosen Peter to preach and lead and guide and open the doors so that through faith others will give expression to Jesus, the Messiah, who he is and what he does and what he will do.

And that leads us to today. Today is a turning point for us. In our lives who do we say that Jesus is? I ask not to evoke a full range of opinions from those of us gathered here for worship, or to enumerate a list for publication on the website or to print up as a banner to hang along George Street. I ask to allow your faith to come to expression. For whatever reason God has chosen you in Baptism; to preach (maybe not from the pulpit, but maybe God is calling you to do just that) and to lead (among the community of faith or in the larger community) and to guide (a baptismal sponsor, Sunday school teacher, prayer partner) and to open doors (be a greeter is one way but there are so many doors to open).

The opening doors part reminds me of a short video that circulated right before Christmas of the little boy in a car seat presumably on the way home from the first Church Christmas pageant rehearsal. He is overjoyed with the part that was assigned to him. So his mom asks; “*are you Joseph?*” “*No*” replies the boy. “*One of the shepherds?*” she presses. “*No*” he enthusiastically answers. “*One of the Wise men?*” she thought for certain this part was right for her son. And still the boy joyfully responds with “*no!*” In a last ditch effort she says “*I know you are one of the angels.*” The response remains the same “*no mom, better than all of that!*” Sounding a bit perplexed “*What then?*” she asks. The boy blurts out with delight “*I am door holder number 3!*”

All of these aspects flowing from Holy Baptism are important; preaching, leading, guiding, and opening doors so that through the expression of your faith, others will come to give expression to who Jesus is and what Jesus does and what Jesus promises to do. Perhaps the question posed to us creates a sort of “turning point” in each of our lives. Moving us from where we have been, turning us away from sin and darkness and all that weighs us down, toward Jerusalem, the cross and resurrection, towards forgiveness, reconciliation, hope, love, and a new beginning in Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Peter was given the joyful task to preach and open and lead. To preach the “good news of Jesus” to open the door to life lived forgiven and to lead others to the joy of God’s kingdom where all are welcomed and fed and where hope abounds.

Today is a turning point for us. We are about half way between the celebration of the birth of Jesus and the beginning of Lent. We are about half way between the wise men making known the birth of the Savior and the Devil tempting Jesus in the wilderness. We are at the point where we hear that we are loved and forgiven, a significant change has occurred through God’s divine choosing the likes of you and me, and we embark on a new tomorrow. But right now we confess, like Peter, that Jesus is the Messiah the Son of the living God. We open ourselves to his teaching, his healing, his praying and his journey to Jerusalem, to suffer and die, for us. To confess him as Messiah and Son of the living God extends good news, opens doors, and welcomes others to God’s kingdom. Amen.