

**Sunday, February 8, 2026**  
**Lectionary 5, Year A**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Holy Communion 10 am**



**Introduction**

Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.

**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 community of faith committed to loving God and our neighbors. As a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Reconciling in Christ congregation joining with Reconciling Works, we gather for worship, study and service. 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. Come join us and experience the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ.

## **SERVING OUR CHURCH**

**February 8, 2026**

Preaching & Presiding:

Rev. Molly Haggerty

Musicians:

Spirit & Truth

Reader:

John Ponnett

**PRELUDE: Musical Selection**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MUSIC MEDITATION: Lean On Me** *by Bill Withers*

## **GATHER**

### **CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
the Word who spoke life into being,  
the Wind stirring the waters.

**Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Mighty God, lover of justice,

**you call us to life in community,**

**but we have served our own interests**

**at the expense of our neighbors.**

**We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.**

**We say the right words,**

**but our hearts are far from you.**

**Turn us to seek your face.**

**Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,**

**that we may do justice, love mercy,**

**and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away,  
and new things God now declares:  
Like a spring of water that never fails,  
God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,  
and forgives your sin in † Jesus' name.  
May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,  
and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN: Gather Us In** ELW 532 v 1-3

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: ELW Setting 3, pg 138**

**CANTICLE: This is the Feast** ELW Setting 3, p 140

#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

#### **WORD**

##### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:1-9a**

*Shortly after the return of Israel from exile in Babylon, the people were troubled by the ineffectiveness of their fasts. God reminds them that outward observance is no substitute for genuine fasting that results in acts of justice, such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and clothing the naked.*

<sup>1</sup> Shout out; do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!  
Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins.

<sup>2</sup> Yet day after day they seek me  
and delight to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness  
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;  
they ask of me righteous judgments;

they want God on their side.

<sup>3</sup> “Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day  
and oppress all your workers.

<sup>4</sup> You fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.

<sup>5</sup> Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the LORD?

<sup>6</sup> Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the straps of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

<sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

<sup>8</sup> Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you;  
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9a</sup> Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, “Here I am.”

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

## PSALM: Psalm 112:1-9

*Light shines in the darkness for the upright. (Ps. 112:4)*

<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Happy are they who <sup>1</sup> fear the LORD  
and have great delight in <sup>1</sup> God's commandments!

<sup>2</sup> **Their descendants will be mighty <sup>1</sup> in the land;  
the generation of the upright <sup>1</sup> will be blessed.**

<sup>3</sup> Wealth and riches will be <sup>1</sup> in their house,  
and their righteousness will <sup>1</sup> last forever.

<sup>4</sup> **Light shines in the darkness <sup>1</sup> for the upright;  
the righteous are merciful and full <sup>1</sup> of compassion.**

<sup>5</sup> It is good for them to be gener- <sup>1</sup> ous in lending  
and to manage their af- <sup>1</sup> fairs with justice.

<sup>6</sup> **For they will nev- <sup>1</sup> er be shaken;  
the righteous will be kept in everlast- <sup>1</sup> ing remembrance.**

<sup>7</sup> They will not be afraid of any <sup>1</sup> evil rumors;  
their heart is steadfast, trusting <sup>1</sup> in the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> **Their heart is established and <sup>1</sup> will not shrink,  
until they see their desire up- <sup>1</sup> on their enemies.**

<sup>9</sup> They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness  
stands <sup>1</sup> fast forever;  
they will hold up their <sup>1</sup> head with honor.

## SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12

*Though people such as the Corinthians are enamored with human philosophy and wisdom, Paul continuously presents God's hidden wisdom which is Jesus Christ crucified. True spiritual maturity involves judging ourselves and others in light of God's revelation in the cross.*

<sup>1</sup> When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come  
proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or  
wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus  
Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I came to you in weakness and in fear  
and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> My speech and my proclamation were made  
not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of  
the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might rest not on human  
wisdom but on the power of God.

<sup>6</sup> Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a  
wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being  
destroyed. <sup>7</sup> But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which  
God decreed before the ages for our glory <sup>8</sup> and which none of the

rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> But, as it is written,

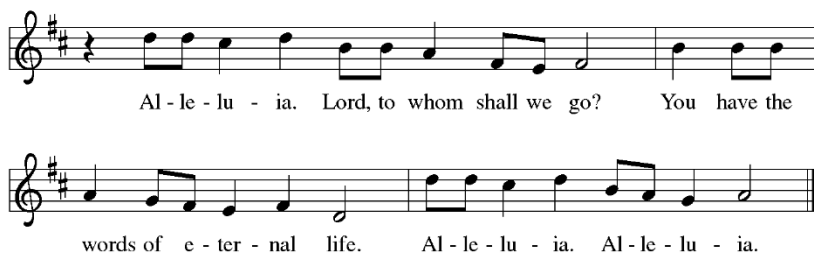
“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,  
nor the human heart conceived,

what God has prepared for those who love him”—

<sup>10</sup> God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God’s except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION setting 3 p142**

*Please stand as you are able.*



The Gospel according to Matthew the fifth chapter.

**Glory to you O, Lord**

### **GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20**

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus encourages his followers to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, doing good works and keeping God’s commandments.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>13</sup> “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

<sup>17</sup> “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **YOUTH TALK**

**SERMON:** Walk humbly and carry a big light!

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** Christ, Be Our Light ELW 715 v 1-3

**+PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:** *We will say the response together.*  
Merciful God, receive our prayer.

*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.**

## PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you all

**C: and also with you**

P: share that peace with one another

## MEAL

**MUSICAL OFFERING: Go, Make Disciples** ELW 540

### OFFERING PRAYER:

God of majesty,  
no eye has seen, no ear has heard  
what you have prepared for those who love you,  
yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy.  
Use what we have gathered  
to feed us with the reign of God come near,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

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

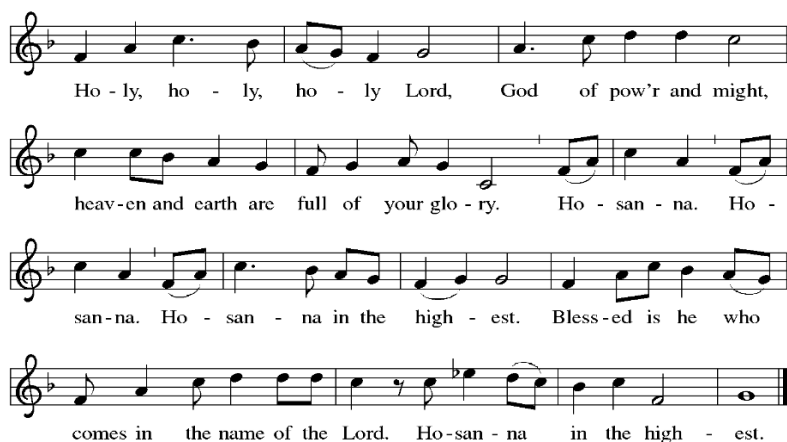
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ:  
our Good Samaritan, who tends the wounds of body and spirit  
with the oil of consolation and the wine of hope;  
the Sun of righteousness, who raises us to life on his healing wings.  
And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



## ELW Setting 3 pg 144



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. 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.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

## 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:** Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.

*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.*

### **COMMUNION SONGS:**

**Make Me a Channel of Your Peace** *by Sebastian Temple*

1 Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;  
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;  
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

2 Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;  
where there is darkness, only light;  
and where there's sadness, ever joy.

3 O Master, grant that I may never seek  
so much to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love with all my soul.

4 Make me a channel of your peace.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
in giving of ourselves that we receive,  
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Radiant God,

we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

In the sacrament of his body and blood  
you have drawn us to your heart.

Send us from this table with delight,  
that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,  
and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## SEND

### BLESSING:

The God of righteousness,  
who gives justice to the oppressed,  
who gives food to the hungry,  
who sets the prisoners free,  
✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

*Standing is optional.*

**SENDING: ELW 712 Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service**

**DISMISSAL:** Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE: Thy Word** *by Amy Grant*

**The bulletins are dedicated in memory of Mrs. H.R. Kleinfelter  
by William & Barbara Kleinfelter.**

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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:** Karen Hahn, Gerald Staub, Lynette Grim, Paula, Michele,  
Amelia, Nolan Smith, Gary Fichthorn, James Spedden, Jaiden  
Mullins, Jimmy & Cece Abromitis, Lynda Fitzpatrick.

**Those friends and members in need of continued prayers:** John  
Ziats, Josie Brewster, Michelle, Milton, Bruce, Jim White, Tina Polito,  
Patty & John Stewart, Karen Eckles, Barbara Henry, Emily Booth,  
Lucinda Sheaffer.

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

Justin Polito, Corbin Stetler, Gabriel Goldsborough, Jordane Mondeaux, Anthony Mondeaux, Edgar Lopez, John Pappas, Colton Stone, Aaron Williams

**SOUP-er Bowl Sunday food drive- February 8, 2026.** Please bring in canned soup for our food ministries. You can put your donated cans on the table for the team you are rooting for.

**Youth group bowling fun on Sunday February 15, 2026 at 12pm**  
Invite friends and join us at ABC East Lanes- 1001 Eisenhower Blvd.  
RSVP to Pastor Molly or Sam Starlipper.

**Holy Huddle- February 22, 2026 at 11:30am in Luther Hall**  
Bennett will be leading the discussion.

**Ash Wednesday services are on Wednesday February 18, 2026.**  
Join us for the 10am service in the chapel and 7pm service in the sanctuary.

Church Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.. Monday – Thursday

Enter through the Community Center doors

Phone Number: (717) 944-4651

Web site: [www.stpetersmiddletown.org](http://www.stpetersmiddletown.org)

E-mail address: [ParishMail@stpetersmiddletown.org](mailto:ParishMail@stpetersmiddletown.org)

WMSS 91.1FM broadcasts our service at 11am.

Facebook livestream: St Peter's Lutheran Church Middletown