

Sunday, September 14, 2025
Lectionary 24, Year C
Holy Communion 10 am



Introduction

The grumbling of the religious leaders in today's gospel is actually our holy hope: This Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. That our

God seeks and saves the lost is not only a holy hope, it is our only hope. As the writer of 1 Timothy reminds us, "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Thanks be to God.

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

September 14, 2025

Preaching & Presiding:

Molly Haggerty

Musicians:

David Binkley, Paige Pavlishin, Gerry Leonard

Reader:

Avery Heckman

PRELUDE: Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

by Gilbert Martin

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MUSIC MEDITATION: Largo *by George Frederick Handel*

GATHER

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,
the one who fashions us,
the one who heals us,
the one who reforms us again and again.

Amen

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Source of all life,

Forgive us, when in our full and busy days we fail to share your love and grace with those around us.

Forgive us, when we fail to focus on the person speaking to us.

Forgive us, when we pass a neighbor and do not acknowledge them.

Forgive us, when the bounty you have given us, we fail to share with those in need.

Forgive us and guide us Lord, as we continue to live and grow into the people you formed us to be.

Amen.

God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us
and to empower our lives in the world.

Our sins are forgiven,

God's love is unconditional,
and we are raised up as God's people
who will always be made new,
in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN: Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing
ELW 807**

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

CANTICAL OF PRAISE: This is the Feast ELW Setting 3, p 140

PRAYER OF THE DAY: O God, overflowing with mercy and compassion, you lead back to yourself all those who go astray. Preserve your people in your loving care, that we may reject whatever is contrary to you and may follow all things that sustain our life in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Exodus 32:7-14

While Moses is on Mount Sinai, the people grow restless and make a golden calf to worship. Today's reading shows Moses as the mediator between an angry God and a sinful people. Moses reminds God that the Israelites are God's own people, and boldly asks for mercy for them.

⁷ The Lord said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; ⁸ they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' " ⁹ The Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. ¹⁰ Now let me alone so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, and of you I will make a great nation."

¹¹ But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your

people. ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.’ ” ¹⁴ And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

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

PSALM: Psalm 51:1-10

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your ¹ steadfast love;
in your great compassion blot out ¹ my offenses.

² **Wash me through and through ¹ from my wickedness,
and cleanse me ¹ from my sin.**

³ For I know ¹ my offenses,
and my sin is ev- ¹ er before me.

⁴ **Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil ¹ in
your sight;**

**so you are justified when you speak and right ¹ in your
judgment. R**

⁵ Indeed, I was born ¹ steeped in wickedness,
a sinner from my ¹ mother’s womb.

⁶ **Indeed, you delight in truth ¹ deep within me,
and would have me know wisdom ¹ deep within.**

⁷ Remove my sins with hyssop, and I ¹ shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be pur- ¹ er than snow.

⁸ **Let me hear ¹ joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken ¹ may rejoice.**

⁹ Hide your face ¹ from my sins,
and blot out ¹ all my wickedness.

¹⁰ **Create in me a clean ¹ heart, O God,
and renew a right spir- ¹ it within me. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

The letters to Timothy and Titus are called the pastoral epistles because they contain advice especially intended for leaders in the church. Here the mercy shown to Paul, who once persecuted the church, is cited as evidence that even the most unworthy may become witnesses to the grace of God.

¹² I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful and appointed me to his service, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶ But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience as an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. **Amen.**

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 Luke the fifteenth chapter. **Glory to you O, Lord**

GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-10

Jesus tells two stories that suggest a curious connection between the lost being found and sinners repenting. God takes the initiative to find sinners, each of whom is so precious to God that their recovery brings joy in heaven.

¹ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

⁸ “Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully

until she finds it? ⁹ And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

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

YOUNG WORSHIPERS' MESSAGE

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound
ELW 779

+PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: *We will say the response together.*
God of grace, 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: There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
ELW 588

OFFERING PRAYER

Lord of the harvest,
we return to you a portion of what you have given to us.
Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches,
but on you, who richly provides for us.
Multiply what we have gathered
to bless all who are suffering and in need,
through Jesus Christ our 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:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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 SONG:

O Christ, Our Light, O Radiance True ELW 675

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O God,

through this meal you have strengthened us

and appointed us to be your servants.

Send us to do good and to share our possessions
with all in need.

We ask this in Jesus' name. **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: Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us ELW 789

DISMISSAL: Go in peace. Do not lose heart. **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE: The Heavens Declare The Glory of God

by Benedetto Marcello

The altar flowers are dedicated in honor of all grandparents.

**“Love is the greatest gift that one generation can leave to
another.”**

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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: Larry Lingle Jr., Dianne Breining, Richard Brant, Mary Houser, Alex Norden-Mabee, Sue Stetler, Michelle, Milton, Bruce, Marie Fox, Betty Wise, Jenny Dimeler, Jim White, Lynda Fitzpatrick
Those friends and members in need of continued prayers: Tina Polito, Patty & John Stewart, Charles Brooks, Mitchell Hahn, Karen Eckles, Barbara Henry, Emily Booth, Lucinda Sheaffer, Ben Chappell.

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

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

Holy Huddle is Sunday September 14th at 11:30am in Luther Hall. Join us to enjoy a game of Bible Trivia!

Welcome Picnic: Sunday, September 21, 2025 at 5:00 pm

Are you new or curious about our ministries? Please come to an informal meal and conversation about the ministries of the church. This is a time to ask questions and for us to spend more time getting to know each other. RSVP to the office at 717-944-4651

The Community Band Trick-or-Treat Concert-

A festive trick-or-treat themed concert will be held in Luther Hall on Sunday, October 5 from 1-2:15pm. Guests are invited to join The Community Band by dressing in costumes!

Capture The Flag Spectacular at Kierchenwald

Sunday, October 5 3-5:30pm Invite your friends and family (parents too) to join in this CTF summer reunion event. Campfire worship to follow. This is a free event, but please RSVP by September 26 to 717-677-8211 or online at LutheranCamping.org

Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits St. Peter's is participating in providing health and school kits for Lutheran World Relief. We have all the items needed and have assembled the kits! We would appreciate any donations to help with the shipping costs

associated with mailing them. See Sharon Beard if you would like to donate to this cause.

Next food pantry donation days are Sunday October 5 and Wednesday October 8.

If you are interested in supporting the food pantry, please bring canned goods (canned veggies, fruit, soups, baked beans etc.) or hygiene items (soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant etc.) to the Worship Service. Thank you!

Fall Craft & Vendor Show October 4, in Luther Hall 9am-1pm
Come shop local and support our community.

Church Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – noon. Monday – Thursday

Enter through the Community Center doors

Phone Number: (717) 944-4651

Web site: www.stpetersmiddletown.org

E-mail address: ParishMail@stpetersmiddletown.org

WMSS 91.1FM broadcasts our service at 11am.

Facebook livestream: St Peter's Lutheran Church Middletown

