

St. Peter's Lutheran Church
3rd Sunday in Advent

December 17, 2023

Welcome to All in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

✝ **Gathering** ✝

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.
We are awaiting the coming of Jesus at the glorious Day of the Lord.
We wait with Mary in hope, with confident faith, and in the joy of expectation.
Let us enter the presence of God in holy reverence.

Welcome & Announcements

Confession & Forgiveness

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

P: In the Name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: Lord Jesus, you are the promised Messiah, anointed to save God's people. Lord, have mercy. **C: Forgive us when we look to others for what you alone give. Lord, have mercy.**

P: Lord Jesus, you bring the kingdom of God to us and call us to repentance. Christ, have mercy. **C: Forgive us when we do not seek God's rule over our lives. Christ, have mercy.**

P: Lord Jesus, you are the Redeemer proclaimed by the prophets. Lord, have mercy. **C: Forgive us when we do not heed God's Word spoken to us. Lord, have mercy.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake, God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to each of you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

**Opening
Hymn**
#633
Blue

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - jice, re - jice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing,
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing,
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
 Music: RÉJOICE, RÉJOICE, Marty Haugen
 Text and music © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Apostolic Greeting & Prayer of the Day

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

P: Let us pray. . . Almighty God, you once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us, your people, the wisdom to see your purpose today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

✚ The Advent Wreath ✚

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible.

The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life.

The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree.

In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Stz. #3

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



- 1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
- 2 Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on
- 3 Oh, come, strong Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's
- 4 Oh, come, blest Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by your
- 5 Oh, come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times once gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
 heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,



Refrain

un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - jice! Re - jice!
 and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
 and close the path to mis - er - y.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
 Music: VIEN, EMMANUEL. French processional, 15th cent.

3rd Sunday in Advent *Use this blessing when lighting the third candle.*

P: Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and make sorrow and sighing flee away. Give us strength and patience to trust you to be true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer, with your wonders near at hand. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

✠ **Word** ✠

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.
 God engages us in holy conversation – speaking and listening.
 Let us open our ears and hearts to hear God’s voice in the words spoken to us.

First Reading — *Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

A reading from Isaiah

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to 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. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ⁵For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁶Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

P: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 126

¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
 then were we like those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
 and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

³Then they said a-¹mong the nations,
"The LORD has done great¹ things for them."

⁴The LORD has done great¹ things for us, and we are¹ glad indeed.

⁵Restore our for-¹tunes, O LORD, like the watercourses¹ of the Negev.

⁶Those who¹ sowed with tears will reap with¹ songs of joy.

⁷Those who go out weeping, carry-¹ing the seed,
will come again with joy, shoulder-¹ing their sheaves.

Second Reading — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from 1 Thessalonians

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

P: The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

#168 ELW

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

The cantor will sing the alleluia once alone and then the congregation repeats it.



Alleluia. I am sending my messen-¹ger before you,*
who will prepare your¹ way before you. *Alleluia.* [Matt. 11:10]

Holy Gospel — John 1:6-8, 19-28

P: The holy gospel according to St. John **C: Glory to you, O Lord**

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said, "I am the

voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

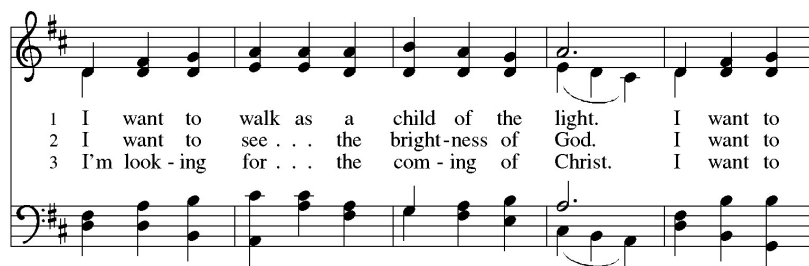
P: The gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Message

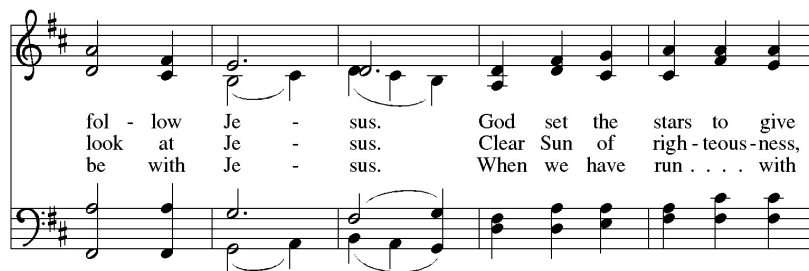
The assembly is seated. Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

Hymn
of the
Day
#649
Blue

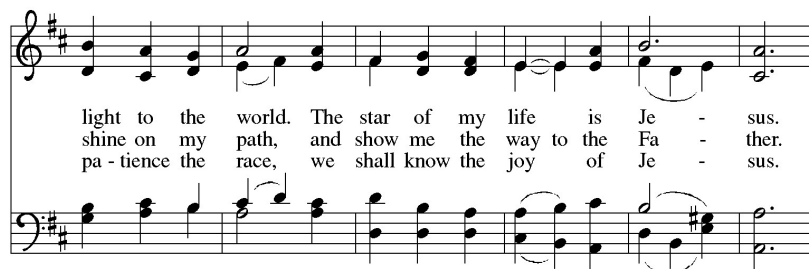
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain

In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934
 Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson
 Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration.

Nicene Creed

Together with the whole church, let us confess our faith:

**C: 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 the Church

P: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers to the Father for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

P: Gracious God, fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy as we bear witness to the great things you have done. Give your church a spirit of gladness as we gather and as we are sent back into the world. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

P: Protect forests, orchards, rainforests, and all wooded areas from disease and deforestation. Keep us grateful for the gifts of oxygen, food, shade, and shelter that trees provide. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

P: Grant your justice and favor to those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, and incarcerated. Give wisdom and compassion to those who work for public safety and all who work within prisons, jails, and courts, that mercy may increase and violence wither away. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

P: Give us strength to pray for our world without ceasing and provoke us toward love and good deeds for all who are in need, especially those we name now.... [*pause*]..... Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care. Empower us as helpers and advocates. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

P: Open our hearts to those who serve as truth-tellers in our church and in our society. Bless leaders in church and society in their task of proclaiming the truth of your Word. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

P: Accept our thanks as we rejoice in the saints who witnessed to your life in all circumstances, in whom your Spirit was not quenched, even in death. Through them, teach us always to hold fast to what is good as we wait for the day when joy will be complete. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

P: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

Peace

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection. God does not hold our sins against us. This is true peace, Like Jesus with his disciples, pastor shares the word of reconciliation from God to us.

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

We share Christ's forgiving and reconciling love with one another, binding ourselves to one another as community. As we are at peace with God, so we are also at peace with one another.

✚ **Thanksgiving** ✚ We respond to God's abundant grace and mercy

Support God's Mission

Offering *Please consider making your thank offering to God ...*

By Mail to St. Peter's Lutheran Church 947 N. George St. York PA

Or **SCAN HERE** >



Or **ONLINE** at www.StPetersLutheranYork.com.

In the **Purple** box, Click **Donate** button to set up a one-time or recurring donation.

Or **VANCO MOBILE App**—Download the app to set up a one-time or recurring donation. Search on "York". Available for Apple and Android.

Thanksgiving For the Word

P: Let us pray. Blessed Lord God, from the beginning you have created life and faith by the utterance of your mouth. Open our ears to hear you as you speak through the Sacred Scriptures which tell us of your faithfulness. Open our hearts to hear your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, who calls us to you, teaches us to trust, and shows us to love. Open our minds to receive your wisdom as the Holy Spirit comes into us with your Word to guide us and shape us into your image. Accept our thanks for the gift of your Word by which we know you as our God and Savior, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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

**C: 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.

✠ **Sending** ✠

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.
 Go! The Messiah is coming!

Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on
 you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠
 give you peace. **C: Amen.**

**Closing
 Hymn**
 #25
 Green

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'rings bore,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.

The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride-groom is at hand.
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907
 Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is near. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

The Altar Greens are given to the glory of God.

The Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God by Shelva Gise.

Council Meeting — Tuesday, DECEMBER 19, 7:00 PM

***Blue Christmas Service — [rescheduled]**

Thursday, DECEMBER 21, 6:30 PM

Hand Bells Rehearsal — Thursdays, DECEMBER 21, 7:30 PM

Portions of this service are from sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS000735. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission. Liturgical music and hymns are used with permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies annual License #20735 and OneLicense.net License #A-723788 and CCLI #11557761 and podcast license #20611432.

"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn" Text and music © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. OneLicense.net License #A-723788.

"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration. Used by permission OneLicense.net License #A-723788.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

***Thursday, DECEMBER 21, 6:30 PM**
St. Peter's Lutheran [rescheduled]
A service of healing and remembrance.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Sunday, DECEMBER 24
3:30 PM – St. Peter's Lutheran
7:00 PM – Christ, Manchester
10:00 PM – St. Peter's Lutheran

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Monday, DECEMBER 25
10:00 AM [NO 8:45am service]
St. Peter's Lutheran

POTLUCK BRUNCH PARTY AFTER SERVICE

1st Sunday of Christmas
Sunday, DECEMBER 31, 10:30 AM
St. Peter's Lutheran
Carol singing following to follow.



EPIPHANY WORSHIP

Sundays, JANUARY 7 thru FEBRUARY 11
At St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York
8:00 AM – Early Service [No 8:45 AM service at St. Peter's]
At Christ Lutheran, Manchester – 10:30 AM

-
- * **Ash Wednesday Service, 3:30 PM** – at St. Peter's
 - * * **Sunday, FEBRUARY 18** – Worship will resume at St. Peter's Lutheran



God's Has a Mission!

As disciples and stewards of Jesus Christ, we, the members of St. Peter's Lutheran Church are committed to the preaching and teaching of the Word of God to all people. We will reach out to one another and to others, giving and receiving, in worship, fellowship, and witness to Jesus Christ!



MEMBERS & FRIENDS

Susan Becker—Tom Bruson—Janice Cromer—Rich Davis—Don Gise—Shelva Gise—Bruce Harget—Cheryl Hibner—Samantha Hillker—Ken Humphreys—Marsha Humphreys—Lori Joseph—Shirley Lutz—Ron Malehorn—Fabian Marrero—Michele McFarland—Philip Michael—Pr Judy McKee—Brenda Croumer Miller—Charlie Neff—Rowan Neff—Scott Neff—Kathy Pugh—Dolores Rehmeyer—Betty Roach—Donna Roach—Bill & Rachel Sanders—Nancy Stough Miller—James Thompson—Vickie Toomey—Matthew Walters—Zach Weiland—Margaret Wiley—Dave Yates—Lois Yates—Stephen Young

REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Donna Arnold—Norma Buck—Evelin Burgos—Bill Everhart—Don Everhart—Helen Everhart—Doris Hoffacker—Ken & Joyce Innerst—Carla & Mike Lehr—John Lehr—Jean Leiphart—Joanne V. Martin—Marguerite Ness—Betty Roach—Lois Smith—Lois Snyder—Joyce Topper

DECEMBER 10, 2023

OFFERING

General \$ 1,680.25 HVAC \$ 85.00 Capital Improvement \$ 50.00
Masonry \$ 20.00 Christmas \$ 100.00 Eternal Candle \$ 10.00
Parish Visitor \$ 20.00

St. Peter's Lutheran Church

947 North George Street, York PA 17404

8:45 AM—Worship Service



Church Staff

The Reverend Beth A. Schlegel, *STS* Pastor
Terri Schroll Secretary
Kristen Hartman—Susan Hartman Sextons

Our phone number is: 717-854-0589

Our Website is: <http://www.stpeterslutheranyork.org>

Our Email Address is: stpeterslutheran@verizon.net

Pastor Beth Schlegel: Phone #: 717-495-8894

Email: pastorschlegel@live.com

This Week CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Thursday
8:00 AM — 1:00 PM

Friday
Office Closed