

Welcome to St. Peter Lutheran Church
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, December 24, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

In-Person Worship: St Peter at 9:00 am

Facebook Live, 9:00 a.m. at "St Peter Lutheran Church"

You Tube (Live) at "St Peters Lutheran Church Rockwell, IA"

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CALL TO WORSHIP (Please Stand)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn: *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (vs. 1-3) ELW# 283

- 1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:

Refrain

*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

- 2 The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing!

Refrain

*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: Refrain

GREETING (ELW p. 147)

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

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light.
Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day
wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

(Please be seated)

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7 (Congregation reads the bold print)

*This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth
of a royal child with a name full of promise.*

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,

**and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.**

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood,
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;

authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

**He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this
time onward and forevermore.**

Word of God, Word of life. **Thanks be to God!**

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, Word of life. **Thanks be to God!**

Gospel Acclamation: *"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"* ELW #282 (vs. 1)

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near
the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth,
good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

The holy gospel according to Luke, the 2nd chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to

whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.** (Please be seated)

Children's Sermon

Sermon - A Christmas Parable

Hymn of the Day: "What Child is This" ELW #296

- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
- 2 Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!
- 3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

Offering (Please be seated)

The Offertory: "Away in a Manger" ELW# 277 (vs. 1 & 3)

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Offertory Prayer:

Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let us be a blessing for others. It's in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, that we pray.

Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed...

...Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught:

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.

Communion Distribution (Please be Seated)

Prayer After Communion

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us and reveal your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Candle lighting and Reading of Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Congregation Song: "Silent Night" ELW# 281

1 Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

2 Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

3 Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Blessing:

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

Sending Hymn: "Joy to the World" ELW# 267 (vs. 1 & 4)

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

Dismissal:

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for joining us this evening for the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. If you are visiting, please take time to sign the guest book in the narthex. *Merry Christmas!*

Thank you to our Youth Group (LYO) for leading our Christmas Eve worship service tonight!

For the LYO Christmas Eve Service please make sure your checks are made payable to the LYO (Lutheran Youth Organization) and not to St Peter Lutheran Church. If your donation is *not* meant for the LYO and you want it to go to the regular church fund, then make your check payable to St Peter Lutheran Church. Thank you! *Juli*

There will be NO coffee served on Sunday, January 4th.

Mark your calendars for the St. Peter Annual Meeting on January 18th

For those of you that have information for the 2026 handbook I will need your information as soon as possible. Thank you, Christy

St Peter Sunday School and Confirmation will NOT meet for the next two Sundays (December 28th and January 4th). Classes will resume on January 11th.

There are sign-up sheets in the Narthex for ushers, greeters, and communion committees for the upcoming year 2025. This is your opportunity to volunteer or choose when you would like to help with one of these committees.

Memory Tree information on the back pages.