



**Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical
Lutheran Church**

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Rev. Ken Johnson
Interim Pastor
708-442-8511

David B. Richards, Parish Musician
Karen Rouleau, Administrative Assistant



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

During the Prayers of Intercession, you are invited to add your own prayer(s) either in speech or in silence as indicated by the line: "Other intercessions may be added here." You may wish to use this insert to write down your prayer(s) which you may then offer aloud during that time. If you wish to have your prayers added to the Prayer of the Church during the coming weeks, please remove and place this card in the offering plate.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 14th, 2025 ✚ 10:15 a.m.

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

HOLY COMMUNION
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP, SETTING TEN, PAGES 203-209

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME AND PRELUDE

“He Has Filled the Hungry” from *Magnificat*

J. S. Bach

***ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

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

Long-expected God,
**we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.**

**Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.**

God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
+ You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.
Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN** *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* ELW 242

***GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the refining fire of the Holy Spirit, and the peace of God, which surpasses understanding, be with you all.
And also with you.

***LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE**

Holy are you, God of brokenhearted and oppressed; you promised to send your chosen one who gives a garland instead of ashes to those who mourn; who brings down the powerful and lifts up the lowly. As we light these candles, open our lips to testify to the true light coming into the world who enlightens everyone. Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like streams in the desert.
Reveal your truth to us, and fill our mouths with shouts of joy that declare the great things you have done for us. Amen.

*KYRIE



- 1 Have mer-cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol-emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer-cy on us, Christ, and wash a-way our sin.
- 3 Have mer-cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de-part.



We come to hear your liv-ing word; it saves us from de-spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be-gin.
Re-new us with your sav-ing pow'r; cre-ate in us new hearts!

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

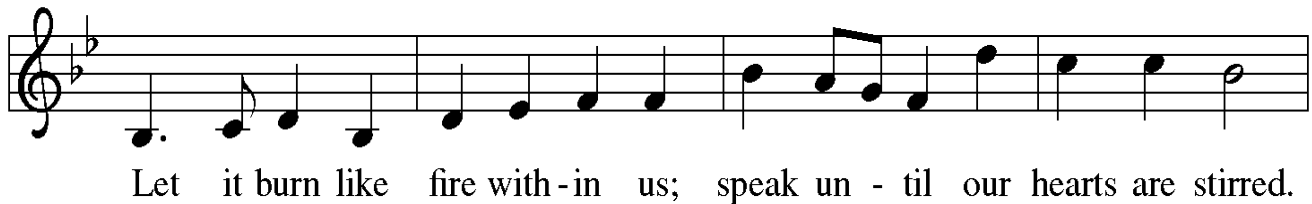
James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL READING

Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew...

Glory to you, O Lord.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

***CREED**

God has made us his people through our baptism into Christ, living together in trust and hope we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. We pray especially for In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant especially we pray for Global Refuge and Lutheran Social Services. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Other prayers may be added here in speech and silence.

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith especially Mary, mother of Jesus, John of the Cross and... . May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.
Amen.

***PEACE**

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING OF GIFTS

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **Amen.**

*DIALOGUE

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.



*PREFACE

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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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:

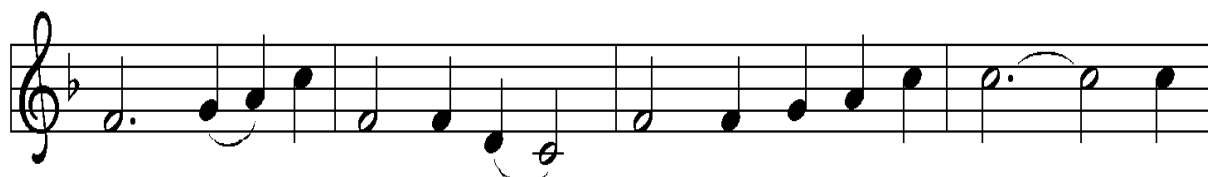
*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
Come, Holy Spirit.

**All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.
Amen**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**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

Here is life. God is with us. Come receive what God has promised.

DISTRIBUTION

Siciliano

J. S. Bach

*BLESSING

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

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*BENEDICTION

May God who comes among us,
Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.
Amen.

*SENDING HYMN

People, Look East

ELW 248

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Hallelujah

Beethoven

SERVING IN THE LITURGY

PREACHING AND PRESIDING MINISTER

Rev. Ken Johnson

ASSISTING MINISTER

Charles Matthies

MUSIC MINISTER

David Richards

FLUTIST

Linnea Nemec

SERVICE LEADER

Philip Painter

LECTOR

Philip Painter

GREETERS

Walter and Judith Cudecki

USHER

Walter Cudecki

LIVE STREAM

Fred Kuzel

ALTAR CARE AND SACRISTAN

Fred Kuzel

Christmas
at Sts. Peter and Paul



Christmas Eve
7:15 p.m., Festival Liturgy of
Holy Communion with Candlelight

Christmas Day
at Ascension Lutheran Church
400 Nuttall Road in Riverside
10:00 a.m. Lessons and Carols
with Holy Communion
(No liturgy here on Christmas Day)

PRAYER LIST

Members of the Congregation: Elaine Haase, Staci Harden, Luddy Kovalsky, Rev. James Kuemmerle, Fred Kuzel, Lois Mika, Mary Sasuta, Edward Sefara, and Gregg Valek. ***Friends and Relatives of the Congregation:*** Ann Boor, Rich Caliendo, Dan Costello, Becky Dice, Tom Doran, Barbara Dykes, Melissa Foe, Drew Janos, Ron Kelly, Michael Kerney, Jeff Kubik, Lisa Martin, Artem Molovkina, Eric Nehmzow, Greg Schaefer, Peter Spilotro, Marta Vrtichova, Geoff Vana, and Tom Zajac.

Welcome back and thank you to our Interim Pastor **Rev. Ken Johnson** for serving as the preaching and presiding minister in the liturgy this morning during our time of transition. Homebound members wishing a visit from Pastor Johnson can use the contact information below to arrange an in-person or phone visit. Pastor Johnson will serve as the presiding minister at our services on the second Sunday of each month as well as Christmas Eve. In the event of a pastoral emergency Pastor Johnson can be reached via e-mail or mobile phone at Ken6168@sbcglobal.net of 773-947-4488, or his home at 708-442-8511.



If you would like to **order a poinsettia** to help decorate the chancel of the sanctuary for the Christmas liturgies, a sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board at the in the dining hall at the lower west entrance. You may also contact the church office to place your order. The cost per plant is \$17 and the deadline for payment and sign-up is this Wednesday, December 17th.

Offering envelopes for 2026 are available for pick beginning today in the lower hallway adjacent to the dining hall. Please pick up envelopes for friends or relatives who are unable to do so. **Financial donations** made to the congregation need to be received in the church office no later than Tuesday, December 30th in order to be included in your end of the year financial statement. Also, **2026 calendars**, compliments of Hitzeman Funeral Home, are available at both entrances to the sanctuary and on tables in the dining hall. Please take copies for yourself, friends and neighbors.

Oplatky, a traditional wafer used at Christmastime in Central and Eastern European countries, is available throughout the season of Advent. A donation of \$1.50 per package (½ dozen) is appreciated. The *oplatky* is available on a table near the kitchen serving



“Will there really be a ‘Morning’”?
by Emily Dickinson

Will there really be a “Morning”?
Is there such a thing as “Day”?
Could I see it from the mountains
If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like Water lilies?
Has it feathers like a Bird?
Is it brought from famous countries
Of which I have never heard?

Oh some Scholar! Oh some Sailor!
Oh some Wise Man from the skies!
Please to tell a little Pilgrim
Where the place called “Morning” lies.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591

Sunday, December 14, 2025

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

Las Posadas (LLC)

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the "posadas," or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552

Saturday, December 20, 2025

Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.

Current, Benevolence and Freewill Offering December 7th, 2025

<i>Weekly Budgeted Offering for 2025:</i>	\$2,615.00
<i>Offering Received for the Above Categories:</i>	\$ 610.00
<i>Shortage:</i>	\$2,005.00

Donations are welcome via Zelle at donations@stspeterandpaulriverside.org.