

St. Peter Lutheran Church
208 Newtown Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06851



PARISHSCOPE

JANUARY 2022



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Pastor's Ponderings

On December 17 I was in Simsbury for the wedding of Ritchie Shane and Emily Spriegel. While eating breakfast at 6:00 that morning in the dining area off the lobby in the beautiful Simsbury Inn (thank you, Shane's, for the wonderful accommodations!), I took off the bookshelf next to me a copy of the 1972 World Book Year Book. (I always have to read something while I eat breakfast.) Top articles were: "Taming the Inflation Beast" and "Crime In Paradise," which was about the 300% rise in serious crime in the U.S. over the previous decade. My, how things have changed over the 50 years since then, haven't they? Thank goodness we no longer have to worry about inflation or crime!

Moses, the writer of the first five books of the Bible, also wrote one Psalm. He begins Ps. 90:

Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth or ever You had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

What a comfort to know, in this ever-changing – or not changing – world that the eternal God is our dwelling place!

Moses goes on to say in the Psalm:

Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Return, O Lord! How long? Have pity on your servants! Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil. Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!

As we enter into this New Year, a year in which we know not what may happen in our lives, we can rejoice that the Creator of all and our eternal Father is with us to show us His work and satisfy us with His steadfast love. Even more than earthly problems like inflation and crime remain part of our lives, the Lord remains with us to continue to show His work to us; above all, His work of forgiving us and renewing our lives through His eternal Word and Sacraments week after week after week.

In this new year of 2022, then, let us confidently pray with Moses: *"Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom... Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days... Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!"*

In Christ Jesus, our Lord,

Pastor

THANK YOU FROM PASTOR

On Christmas Eve Fay Sobottka presented me with a card and gift from the congregation for Lorayne and me. Your kindness and generosity are so very much appreciated by both of us. It is a privilege and a joy to serve you with the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. It is also a joy and a blessing to join you in worshiping our good Lord and receiving His good gifts. All praise and thanks to Him who makes us one in Christ and renews us with eternal life in Him!

Confirmation Essay: Confession & Absolution by Christian Eklund, read in church on 9/5/21

One of the fantastic things we have in our church service is confession. But what exactly is that? Well, confession has 2 parts; the first is when a person confesses their sins. This means that they admit and acknowledge that they have sinned against God. The second is when they receive absolution. Absolution is forgiveness from the pastor as if from God himself. Confessing our sins means that we acknowledge we have sinned and that we get forgiveness from God.

Doesn't this seem like a depressing way to start off the service? After all what we are basically saying is I know I am a sinful person and I have done many things wrong. But no! It is not a depressing way to start the service. Every week we are freeing ourselves from sin. We are confessing our sins therefore they are all forgiven and we start out our church service cleansed!

Through the Divine Service we confess our sins against God, and then pastor forgives all of our sins in the name of God. This is an amazing way because it cleanses us from all of our sins. There could not be a better way to start church.

As most of you probably know, the Divine Service confession and absolution goes like this.

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

If we say we have no sins we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father. Most merciful God we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. 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."

Then, the Pastor says:

"Almighty God in his mercy has given his Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority. I therefore forgive all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

So in short when we confess our sins through the Divine Service, we are saying we have sinned

against God, we are saying we deserve eternal punishment, and we are asking for forgiveness.

One thing you might be wondering is if you don't feel sinful, should you still speak the confession in church? Yes, you should. Because even if we don't feel sinful, we are. This is said in the Divine Service setting one. The Divine Service states "If we say we have no sins we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins God who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Because of this, we know that we sin, and if we acknowledge this, our sins are forgiven. Even the sins that we can't recall will be forgiven.

On another topic, how do we know who we should confess a particular sin to? What sins should we confess to God? The answer? All of them. We should confess all of our sins to God. This does not mean you have to remember every single time you have sinned and confess each one. All you have to do is speak the words of confession in church, and ask for forgiveness. For example when we say the words "forgive us our trespasses" in the Lord's Prayer, or when we speak the words in the Divine Service, all of our sins are forgiven.

You should also confess some of your sins to your neighbor. We should confess to our neighbors the sins that were against them. If we sin against them we should recognize the harm our sin has done to our neighbor and we should confess and seek their forgiveness.

Lastly, what sins should we confess to our Pastor? If we have sinned and we are particularly troubled by our sin and its consequences in our lives, we can talk to Pastor in private confession and absolution.

There is a difference between private confession for Catholics compared to Lutherans. Every Catholic has private confession with the pastor when they turn a certain age, while Lutherans only have private confession when they feel the need to.

But how come the Catholics all have private confession? Well to explain that I am going to tell some history on confession. During the first centuries of Christianity there was no such thing as confession. There was just "reconciliation" in the congregation or Christian community. If a person had committed a huge crime like murder, the leader would then ask the congregation if they wanted to let the person stay or if they wanted that person to be kicked out. Then the congregation would make a vote for the person. This way of confession broke down with the Roman Empire. After this the new way of confession was someone talking to the leader who would give spiritual direction for the person. It was not until the year 1215 when people started to have

private confession every year in the Catholic Church. During this private confession they have to confess all of their sins. In contrast, Lutherans do not have mandatory private confession because we believe that we could not possibly confess every one of our sins, and because we believe that all of our sins are forgiven during confession and absolution in each church service.

If you choose to have private confession you do not have to worry about anyone besides the pastor hearing it. The pastor promises before God not to share anything said in the private confession.

Confession means so much to me. I know I am a sinner. While I try my best to follow the Ten Commandments, I know I fall short. I have thought things I shouldn't, done things I shouldn't, and I've left many things undone. And all of these are forgiven through just a few words said in church. We get cleansed of all of our sins and our sins have disappeared before God.

So to sum everything I have said today, there are a few vital steps to be forgiven. First we need to confess our sins. The way we do this is confessing our sins through the Divine Service confession. The next thing that happens is the pastor speaks the absolution in the Divine Service. After the pastor speaks the absolution all our sins are fully and completely forgotten by God. In addition you should confess all your sins to God, some sins you should confess to your neighbor, and some sins you should privately confess with your pastor. You should always speak the confession in church because you are always sinful, and there is no better way we could start church than cleansing ourselves of sin.

COUNTERS

JAN. 2
JAN. 9
JAN. 16
JAN. 23
JAN. 30



SCHEDULE TBD

CHANCEL SCHEDULE

Jan. 1 - 16 Nancy Sayler, Judy Soos

Jan. 17-30 Lorayne Beinke, Gerry Wash

Jan. 31- Feb. 13 Kathy and Tom Collins

USHERS

JAN. 2 S. Yuen, I. MacKenzie, J. Soos

JAN. 9 D. Cakavell, C. Mathis, J. Orban

JAN. 16 O. Brown, S. Sabol, S. Yuen

JAN. 23 I. MacKenzie, J. Soos, D. Cakavell

JAN. 30 O. Brown, C. Mathis, S. Sabol

BIBLE STUDIES

On Sunday mornings we will be continuing our focus on eternal life. The study begins at 8:45 AM, and meets in church. It is also on zoom, the link for which I send out by email every week. If you don't receive my emails it is because I don't have your address. Please send it to me by emailing me at stpeterlcpastor@yahoo.com.

On Thursday mornings from 10-11:30 there is an in-person Bible study that meets at church in the room behind the offices. We will probably be finishing up a Bible study on Jeremiah that began before Covid impacted us. Wonderful goodies are brought and shared every week in this class, so come and enjoy with us!

Finally, there is also a zoom-only Bible study on Thursday's at 7:00 PM. The focus of this study is the Scriptures that will be read in church on the coming Sunday. This study is a blessing for those who join in, as it helps to prepare them for hearing God's Word on Sunday, and is also a blessing for Pastor, as it helps him with his sermon preparation. So: be served, and serve, by joining in!

WILL THERE BE A SERVICE TODAY? You might wonder about this when the weather is bad. To find out, call the church office, as pastor will leave a message on the answering machine. Also, you can check the notices on channels 8 & 12 on TV. Finally, Pastor also sends out a text message to those whose cell phone numbers he has. If you would like to receive a text message, make sure Pastor has your number.



MISSION OF THE MONTH **Mid-South District Tornado Relief**

Tornado survivors are truly overwhelmed by the vast destruction that resulted from the 200 mph winds from the December 10th tornadoes that struck multiple communities in the Bluegrass State. Many survivors lost everything, or almost everything. Many lost their homes or the roofs to their homes, or are being confronted with property damage that demands immediate repair.

To assist with the relief effort, the Mid-South District has established a Disaster Relief Fund. Donations directed to this fund will be used for relief efforts in the tornado-ravaged communities. If you would like to contribute to this fund, you may make a gift online or by check. Please note "**Disaster Relief Fund**" on any checks. When donating online, please designate your gift as "**restricted**" for the Disaster Relief Fund.

THANK YOU FROM ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH, GREENWICH

Pastor Beinke and the dear saints of St. Peter,

I've sat down a number of times to write this note and found myself at a lack of words to adequately say "thank you." There are no words, only prayer and thanksgiving for the very generous gift to St. Paul to help us with our flood recovery. We have been able to take care of immediate needs and are beginning to plan the demolition and rebuilding of our kitchen. We're looking forward to being able to cook for our Wednesday evening program, and for our traditional community dinners.

Your support is very much appreciated.
In His Service, on behalf of our members and board,
Laura Dianis

PARKING

Although only 2 spaces are officially marked as “handicap” parking, on Sundays please be considerate of the members needing to avoid stairs and long walks and reserve all upper parking lot spaces for all those who need them. If God has blessed you with better mobility, park in the lower lot and enjoy the walk!



Special Voters’ Meeting

Please be prepared to attend a Voters’ Meeting in January to hear and approve a motion for additional funding for the Renovation to cover the cost of asbestos remediation. The date for this meeting will be scheduled upon receipt of the proposal from the asbestos remediation contractor. The proposal will be provided after the testing of the material samples and measurement of the impacted area is complete. Meeting will be held immediate following the Sunday Divine Service.



* RENOVATION *

Join us on January 8 at 9:00 am to move all items including chairs, tables, furniture, coat racks, shelving units, filing cabinets, misc. items, wall hangings, bulletin boards, and the piano from the carpeted areas to the tiled classrooms.

We need both volunteers with strong arms and backs to move the furniture, and volunteers with patience to remove the contents of bulletin boards and wall hangings.

In January the floors in the downstairs areas will be replaced. Before this, the old carpet flooring must be removed – and unfortunately asbestos has been discovered. To support the asbestos remediation process, we need to remove EVERYTHING from the rooms with carpeted floors (fellowship hall, library, hallways) and store it in rooms with tile floors (classrooms).

Once the asbestos remediation is completed, we will schedule workdays to pack up items for moving back and forth across the hall during the flooring installation.

* CAUTION *

During the asbestos remediation, DO NOT enter the downstairs area. This will be a HAZARDOUS AREA with SERIOUS RISK to your health. Asbestos fibers are easily inhaled once they become airborne – we must wait until the remediation company has confirmed through air testing that it is once again safe.

Don’t worry, asbestos is only dangerous when airborne and we have been safe as the tiles have been undisturbed below the carpet squares for years. We need to be careful removing the carpet squares so that we remain safe. During the remediation the area will be completely contained, and the sanctuary and offices will remain safe.

BIBLE READINGS FOR JANUARY 2022

January 1: Genesis 1:1 -- 2:25 Matthew 1:1 -- 2:12 Psalm 1:1-6 Proverbs 1:1-6	January 12: Genesis 26:17-- 27:46 Matthew 9:1-17 Psalm 10:16-18 Proverbs 3:9-10	January 23: Genesis 46:1--47:31 Matthew 15:1-28 Psalm 19:1-14 Proverbs 4:14-19
January 2: Genesis 3:1 -- 4:26 Matthew 2:13 -- 3:6 Psalm 2:1-12 Proverbs 1:7-9	January 13: Genesis 28:1--29:35 Matthew 9:18-38 Psalm 11:1-7 Proverbs 3:11-12	January 24: Genesis 48:1--49:33 Matthew 15:29--16:2 Psalm 20:1-9 Proverbs 4:20-27
January 3: Genesis 5:1 -- 7:24 Matthew 3:7 -- 4:11 Psalm 3:1-8 Proverbs 1:10-19	January 14: Genesis 30:1--31:16 Matthew 10:1-25 Psalm 12:1-8 Proverbs 3:13-15	January 25: Gen.50:1--Exodus 2:10 Matthew 16:13--17:9 Psalm 21:1-13 Proverbs 5:1-6
January 4: Genesis 8:1 -- 10:32 Matthew 4:12-25 Psalm 4:1-8 Proverbs 1:20-23	January 15: Genesis 31:17--32:12 Matthew 10:26 -- 11:6 Psalm 13:1-6 Proverbs 3:16-18	January 26: Exodus 2:11--3:22 Matthew 17:10-27 Psalm 22:1-18 Proverbs 5:7-14
January 5: Genesis 11:1 -- 13:4 Matthew 5:1-26 Psalm 5:1-12 Proverbs 1:24-28	January 16: Genesis 32:13--34:31 Matthew 11:7-30 Psalm 14:1-7 Proverbs 3:19-20	January 27: Exodus 4:1--5:21 Matthew 18:1-22 Psalm 22:19-31 Proverbs 5:15-21
January 6: Genesis 13:5--15:21 Matthew 5:27-48 Psalm 6:1-10 Proverbs 1:29-33	January 17: Genesis 35:1 -- 36:43 Matthew 12:1-21 Psalm 15:1-5 Proverbs 3:21-26	January 28: Exodus 5:22--7:24 Matthew 18:23--19:12 Psalm 23:1-6 Proverbs 5:22-23
January 7: Genesis 16:1--18:19 Matthew 6:1-24 Psalm 7:1-17 Proverbs 2:1-5	January 18: Genesis 37:1--38:30 Matthew 12:22-45 Psalm 16:1-11 Proverbs 3:27-32	January 29: Exodus 7:25--9:35 Matthew 19:13-30 Psalm 24:1-10 Proverbs 6:1-5
January 8: Genesis 18:20--19:38 Matthew 6:25 -- 7:14 Psalm 8:1-9 Proverbs 2:6-15	January 19: Genesis 39:1--41:16 Matthew 12:46-13:23 Psalm 17:1-15 Proverbs 3:33-35	January 30: Exodus 10:1--12:13 Matthew 20:1-28 Psalm 25:1-15 Proverbs 6:6-11
January 9: Genesis 20:1-- 22:24 Matthew 7:15-29 Psalm 9:1-12 Proverbs 2:16-22	January 20: Genesis 41:17--42:17 Matthew 13:24-46 Psalm 18:1-15 Proverbs 4:1-6	January 31: Exodus 12:14--13:16 Matthew 20:29--21:22 Psalm 25:16-22 Proverbs 6:1
January 10: Genesis 23:1-- 24:51 Matthew 8:1-17 Psalm 9:13-20 Proverbs 3:1-6	January 21: Genesis 42:18--43:34 Matthew 13:47 -- 14:12 Psalm 18:16-36 Proverbs 4:7-10	
January 11: Genesis 24:52--26:16 Matthew 8:18-34 Psalm 10:1-15 Proverbs 3:7-8	January 22: Genesis 44:1--45:28 Matthew 14:13-36 Psalm 18:37-50 Proverbs 4:11-13	

ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH - JANUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 
2 8:45 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship Service	3	4	5	6 The Epiphany of Our Lord 10:00 am Bible Study 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study	7 4:00 pm Confirmation	8
9 8:45 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship Service 11:15 Council Meeting	10	11	12	13 10:00 am Bible Study 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study	14 4:00 pm Confirmation	15
16 8:45 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship Service	17 Martin Luther King Day 18 19 20 21 —————→ Pastor at Conference at Ft. Wayne Seminary ←————					22
23 8:45 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship Service	24	25	26	27 10:00 am Bible Study 6:30 pm Zoom Bible Study	28 4:00 pm Confirmation	29
30 8:45 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Study 10:00 am Worship Service	31 Pastor at NED office					