

ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

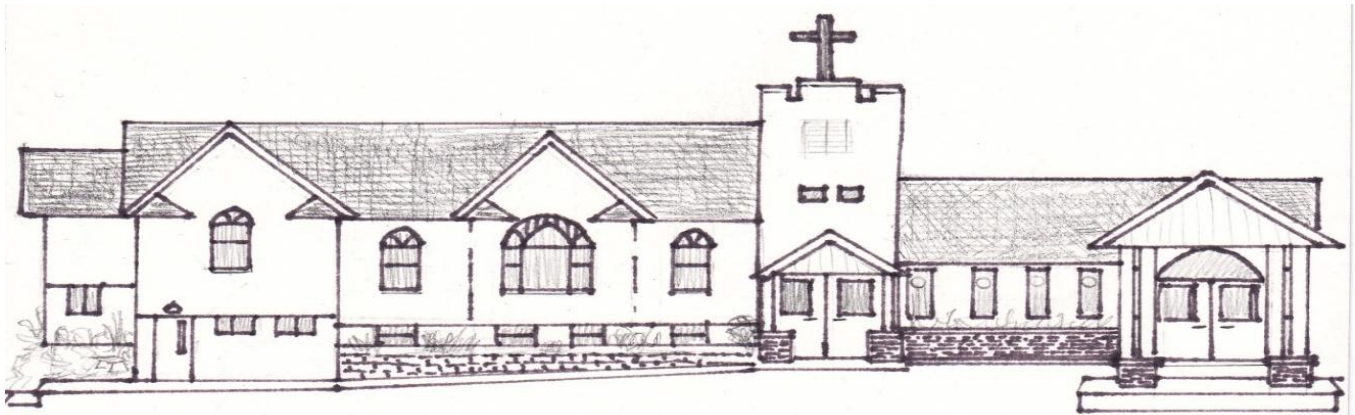
Stpeterlutheranchurch.net

13221 W. Todd School Rd.

Glasford, Illinois 61533

309-389-5342

Pastor Raymond Barclay



Sketch drawn by Alice Diver

Sunday, September 14, 2025

‘Holy Cross Sunday’

Outdoor Worship Service

PRELUDE: ORGAN / CLAVINOVA

[*] REQUESTS YOUR RISING IF COMFORTABLE

CALL TO WORSHIP BY OUR CHURCH BELL

GREETINGS

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE DAY



Introduction to the Worship Service

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.

***INVOCATION (WOV p. 46)**

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 You are the treasured people of the LORD,

C **a people holy to the LORD our God.**

P Keep the words of the LORD in your heart; teach them to your children.

C **Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.**

P One does not live by bread alone,

C **but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.**

***SCRIPTURE SONG (WOV p. 47)**



☐ Sal-va-tion be-longs to our God and to Christ the Lamb for-ev-er and ev - er.



☐ Great and won-der-ful are your deeds, O God of the u-ni-verse;



just and true are your ways, O Rul - er of all the na-tions.



Who can fail to hon-or you, Lord, and sing the glo-ry of your name?



☐ Sal-va-tion be-longs to our God and to Christ the Lamb for-ev-er and ev - er.



☐ For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One. All



na - tions will draw near and wor - ship be - fore you,



for your just and ho - ly works have been re - vealed.



☐ Sal-va-tion be-longs to our God and to Christ the Lamb for-ev-er and ev - er.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY (WOV p. 16)**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of your grace, that, pursuing what you have promised, we may share your heavenly glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

FIRST LESSON: Exodus 32:7-14

A reading from Exodus.

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.

READER The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 51:1-10

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

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

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

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

⁴ **Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil | in your sight;
so you are justified when you speak and right | in your judgment.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECOND LESSON: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

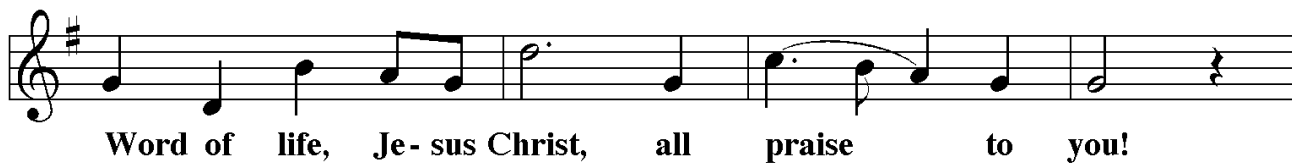
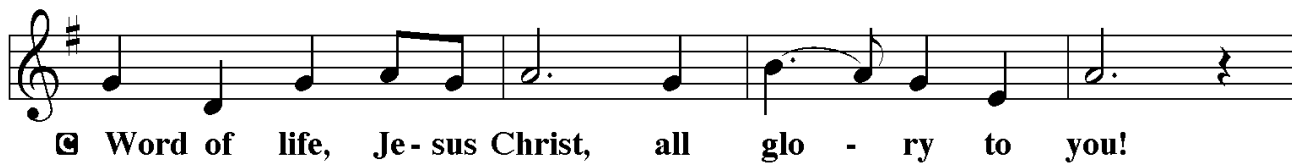
A reading from 1 Timothy.

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.

READER The word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (WOV p. 48)**



***GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-10**

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 15th chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON: ‘The Greatest Story EVER Told’

HYMN OF THE DAY *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound* (LBW 448)

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and

now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807

Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

***RESPONSE TO THE WORD: CREED AND CONFESSION (WOV p. 49)**

P In Christ, you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

C **We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.**

P 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 into hell.

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**

P Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

C **pray in the Holy Spirit.**

P Keep yourselves in the love of God;

C **look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

P If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

C **Everything old has passed away; behold, everything has become new!**

P God has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another.

Gracious God,

C **have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins,
known and unknown, things done and left undone.**

**Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life,
to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Amen

P The almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins.

C **Amen**

***PEACE (WOV p. 50)**

P Sisters and brothers, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us share God's peace with one another.

***OFFERTORY (WOV p. 50)**



Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;
ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.
Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;
yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

P Let us pray.

God, our Creator,

C you open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature. With these gifts we bless you for your tender nurture and care. Help us to delight in your will and walk in your ways, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

***THE PRAYERS**

- P Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.
- P Merciful God, pour out your grace upon your church. Forgive us for the times when we have been unfaithful, and renew our commitment to your gospel of love. Empower us to live as a community of mercy. God of grace,
- C receive our prayer.**
- P Merciful God, we ask forgiveness for the ways we have neglected and harmed this earth and its creatures. Confirm our commitment to care for all you have made, and grant us wisdom and strength to take action toward restoring your creation to its fullness. God of grace,
- C receive our prayer.**
- P Merciful God, govern all who hold positions of power and authority. Instruct them to make just decisions that serve the common good. Make them instruments of your mercy in the world, working to heal divisions and promote peace. God of grace,
- C receive our prayer.**
- P Merciful God, we lift up all who suffer. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to those who are sick, grieving, or in pain (*especially*). Give us compassionate hearts to accompany those who are hurting and courage to work for justice and mercy. God of grace,
- C receive our prayer.**
- P Merciful God, bind us together as a community of forgiveness and love. Supply us with humility to seek forgiveness when we have wronged one another and generosity to extend mercy when we have been wronged. God of grace,
- C receive our prayer.**
- P Merciful God, we remember in love those who have departed this life. Console those who mourn, and give them the hope of resurrection. God of grace,
- C receive our prayer.**
- P We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.
- C Amen.**

***LORD'S PRAYER (WOV p. 25)**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**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.**

***BENEDICTION (WOV p. 53)**

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

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen

REFLECTION

1. Do you recall a story about your family's history that was told to you as a child?
2. John 3:16 is well known by practically every Christian, do you have it memorized?
When do you remember first hearing this verse?
3. How do you have 'eternal life' pictured? And, what exactly is 'eternal life' all about:
healing, happiness, universal peace... etc?

P Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome in the name of Jesus Christ. Thank you for coming!

~ Strength & Healing Concerns~

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Pam Rabe	Judy Livingston	Pat Janssen	Bill Juraco	Phyllis Fischer
Lyle & Mary Lou Nannen	Judy Wyss	Virginia Mahan		Richard Sathoff
Cyndi Benson	Carl Satterlee	Dave Kroepel		Linda Meyer
Grant Blaza	Doug Rabe	Alice Lopez		Heather Hayden
Marsha Shafer	Greg Strickfaden	Linda Hollenback		
Kendall Manwaring	Bobby Creamer	Becky Pfahl		

~ THANK YOU ~

Music: Marilyn Strickfaden
Reader: Greg Strickfaden
Greeter: Ladies'

The WELCA "Project Promise" continues its next phase for the fall months by collecting donations for the Community Christmas Baskets in September, October, and November. Containers will be available in the Narthex to collect the following items:

❖ **Peanut Butter & Jelly**

~ **ST. PETER HAPPENINGS** ~

Sept. 14th – Non-Communion Service @ 10am

Outdoor Worship Service – weather permitting

9am Confirmation Classes begin

Sept. 20th – 8am Men's Breakfast @ Glasford UMC

Sept. 21st – Communion Service @ 10am

WELCA General Meeting @ 3pm

Sept. 23rd – Ladie's Night Out @ Gils' – 5:30pm

Sept. 28th – Non-Communion Service

**WELCA General
Meeting Sunday
September 21st at 3pm**

If anyone would like to send a card with well wishes and let Gabe know you are thinking of him, please send him a card. Only a simple note and send your prayers. His address is:

**Gabriel A. King
c/o Peoria County Jail
301 N Maxwell Rd
Peoria, IL 61604**

Ladies Night Out:
There will be two more nights out at Gil's. Tuesday, September 23rd and Tuesday, October 21st @ 5:30pm, then we will start again in the spring. Please let me know by Tuesday, September 16th if you are attending for Sept. 23rd. I will ask about reservations for October in October. Come and enjoy a fun evening again.

**Caryn Alonzo
309-678-7484**

~ **Attention Please** ~

Beginning in October, I will no longer be mailing messengers to members unless they are homebound, in a nursing home, or do not have access to the internet. The Church Council decided in 2022 that the cost of mailing monthly messengers was becoming quite the expense. At that time, we had minimal members request a paper copy. Over time, that number has begun to rise. I put the monthly messenger (and the previous month) on our church website www.stpeterlutheranchurch.net and I make paper copies and leave them in the back of the church for your taking. As prices continue to rise for postage and necessary supplies to mail messengers, I have decided (with the approval from Alice) to go back to only mailing messengers to members who are homebound, in a nursing home, or do not have access to the internet. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact myself, or Alice Diver.

Thank you.
Aletta Cookson

GOSPEL MESSAGE

September 14, 2025

LECTIONARY 24

God Gathers Us

The sense of heartache that sets in when a treasured keepsake goes missing can be profound. How many times have we panicked when searching for a special item that is not where we think we left it? We may spend hours, days, *months* searching for what was lost, even when the trail goes cold.

We ourselves tend to get lost from time to time. We forget where we belong. We lose track of our belovedness. We grumble and complain, and the joy that once sustained us slips away. This sort of separation is hard on our hearts. It is hard on our spirits. And it is hard on our relationships. But these are exactly the places where Jesus meets us and regathers us into God's love. No matter where we find ourselves wandering, Jesus is there already, turning over every last piece of furniture in the cosmic house to find us when we've gotten lost, to free us when we've gotten lodged in difficult places. And when we are found, the heavens celebrate with us, breaking bread and pouring wine and giving thanks for the chance to be together again. What a remarkable thing!

Indeed, God has drawn near to us already. In bread and wine, in water and word, we know the faithfulness of a God who won't rest until we all are cared for and all of life's relationships are made right. We are, each and all, recipients of the generous love of the Christ who eats with us, who seeks us out when we are lost, and who gathers us back again and again to celebrate abundant life, togetherness, and the joy of restorative community.

Thanks be to God, who goes with us along the way and never ceases to gather us back into such divine folds of love.

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