

# The Fishnet

**St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Hilltown, PA  
December 2023**

*Although masks are not required, the use of masks during Services is up to the attendee.  
In addition to "in-person" worship, Services are viewable live each Sunday morning on St. Peter's Facebook page and on St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Hilltown, PA YouTube page after the Service.*



“Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” With those words, the angel Gabriel addressed Mary and told her that she would “conceive in her womb and bear a son.” Her child would be named Jesus, meaning in Hebrew, “the Lord saves.” He would be the Son of the Most High, reigning over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom would have no end. *The complete story may be found in Luke 1:26-38.*

Gabriel’s announcement may have been more than Mary wanted to hear at that moment in her life. She was barely out of adolescence, still trying to figure out who she was and what her role in the world might be. She had little to list as

personal accomplishments, yet now she was thrust into something unprecedented and unknown. What she had going for her was that she was now declared by God to be a “favored one.”

Like Mary, we too are favored, and the Lord is with us! To be favored is a good thing. Yet, so much of what we associate with the popular holiday season seeks to tell us that we are favored, but only if we do this or that, only if we give the most perfect and expensive gifts, only if we meet the expectations that others place upon us. What we hear behind the subtle message of advertisers is that we are not good enough, not rich enough, not loved enough, unless we do what they suggest, and that is a dangerous trap.

God offers us something different. What sets the Christian celebration of the holiday season apart from the popular one is that we are favored not because of what we do or say but simply because God declares it so. Just as the angel Gabriel told Mary that she was favored, so God tells us. We are favored because God says so, and that’s it! Perhaps then we can relax a little bit in this holiday season, knowing that God has already given us the greatest gift ever, the gift of his abundant and unconditional love in Jesus Christ our Lord. No ifs, ands, or buts. God loves us just as we are.

Greetings, favored ones! The Lord is with you. What more do we need to hear?

Wishing all of you a Blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas,

Pastor Raymond Miller

## Looking Ahead to December

Whether we believe it or not, Advent is just around the corner. The First Sunday in Advent is **December 3**.

As we have done in the past, we are offering three Services of Evening Prayer, all at 7:00 p.m., on the Wednesdays in Advent. These services will be offered “in person” or by livestream. If you are unable to attend “in person,” we extend a special invitation to join us by livestream. These services promise to enhance your observation of the holiday season. With that in mind, we have selected topics of holiday interest for each Wednesday in Advent.

**December 6** is Saint Nicholas Day. That evening, we will consider the true story of Saint Nicholas from the perspective of children, through the telling of an original story titled “Who’s the Real Santa Claus?”

On **December 13**, we tell a story that originated in Mexico, “The Legend of the Poinsettia,” explaining how the poinsettia became a prominent decoration during the holiday season. Meet two Mexican children, Pepita and Pedro. Did you know that December 12 is *National Poinsettia Day*?

On **December 20**, as we did last year, we conclude our Wednesday Advent observance with a Swedish tradition known as the Lucia Fest. Join us as we visit a modern Swedish-American home on the eve of St. Lucy’s Day, which is actually December 13. Meet St. Lucy and her court.

**Because Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, we are offering only one service on Sunday, December 24.** Join us for St. Peter’s Festive Service of Christmas at 3:00 p.m.

On Sunday, **December 31**, we will offer a Service of Lessons and Carols at 9:00 a.m.

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### **Upcoming Dates (please mark your calendar)**

December 3	9:00 am -	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent
“	10:00 am -	Congregational Meeting following Service
December 6	7:00 pm -	Midweek Advent Service: St. Nicholas story
December 10	9:00 am -	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent
“	3:00 pm -	Holiday Concert in sanctuary
December 13	7:00 pm -	Midweek Advent Service: Poinsettia story
December 17	9:00 am -	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent
December 20	7:00 pm -	Midweek Advent Service: Lucia Fest
December 24	3:00 pm -	Christmas Eve Service
December 31	9:00 am -	Lessons and Carols Service

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### **Holiday Concert**

St. Peter’s Lutheran Church will hold a Holiday Concert, led by Bill Gottshall, on Sunday afternoon, December 10 at 3:00 in the sanctuary. All are invited and encouraged to attend. Bring family; bring friends. A free will offering will be taken.

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### **Holiday Events**

‘Tis the season when there are live nativities, holiday concerts, and festive bazaars. The bulletin board outside Dorcas Hall has posted some of the many local events. Take a few minutes to scan the advertisements and take advantage of one or more of them. Enjoy!!

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## Treasurer's Report

The October and year-to-date financial results are shown below.

Thank you for your continued support of St Peter's.

Ken Shanks, Church Financial Officer

### *Monthly results 10/1/2023 to 10/31/2023:*

Actual Weekly Offering Income	\$6,828	Budget Weekly Offering Income	\$10,355
Actual Total Income	\$9,791	Budget Total Income	\$13,510
Actual Expenses	\$10,948	Budget Expense	\$12,397
Actual Net Income	(-) \$1,157	Budget Net Income	\$ 1,113

### *Year-to-date results 1/1/2023 to 10/31/2023:*

Actual Weekly Offering Income	\$102,731	Budget Weekly Offering Income	\$112,832
Actual Total Income	\$134,576	Budget Total Income	\$143,402
Actual Expense	\$132,133	Budget Expense	\$148,328
Actual Net Income	\$ 2,442	Budget Net Income	(-) \$ 4,926

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## Memorial Committee

The Memorial Committee is actively seeking input from the Saint Peter's congregation on where we can most effectively use some of St. Peter's Memorial funds.

Each quarter the Memorial Committee will offer a general area of interest, such as The Environment, First Responders/ Military, Animal Shelters, etc. We will then ask for the congregation's specific suggestions on where the donations from St. Peter's may best be used. These general areas are meant to spark ideas for the use of funds, and as always, we would always welcome requests for the use of Memorial Funds outside of the quarterly areas of interest. The committee will then view and explore the requests for recommendation to the Council.

Thank you. We look forward to making this a Congregational Project for the betterment of our Church, Community, and World.

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## Canned and dry goods for FISH

Canned and dry goods donations may be placed in the marked receptacle under the mail boxes in the hallway.

Food larders are receiving less donations but have more people than ever needing the larder's support. Please help – a can here, a box of cereal there: Every little bit helps.

Even if you're unable to attend Sunday Service, someone is in the church office Monday through Thursday mornings. Just ring the doorbell.

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# Christmas Decoration



## Fund



Please consider making a donation to the Christmas Decoration Fund this season. Your donation will be used to purchase items such as flowers (poinsettias), candles, etc...) that will be used to decorate the sanctuary for the holiday season. On the form below, please indicate who the donation is in honor/memory of, your name(s), and if you would like a poinsettia to take home with you. Please return the forms to Sue in the church office no later than Thursday, December 8th. Thank you!

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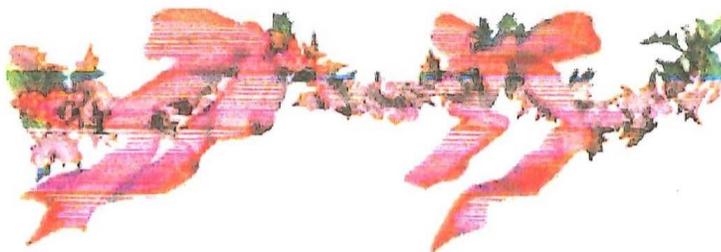
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

In memory / honor of \_\_\_\_\_

(circle one)

Donation Amount (circle one): \$10 \$15 \$20 other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to take a poinsettia home with me \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO



## **Congregational Staff**

- **Rev. Raymond Miller, Sr. Pastor** 215-822-9108  
stpeterslc@comcast.net
  - **Sue Fellman Jacob, Parish Administrator** 215-822-9108  
[stpeterslc@comcast.net](mailto:stpeterslc@comcast.net)
  - **Laurel Tackett, Organist**
  - **Bill Gottshall, Keyboard**
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## **St. Peter's Congregational Council**

**Rick Daubert**, President (term ends: December 2023) 2<sup>nd</sup> Term

**Diane Gall**, Vice-President (term ends: December 2023) 2<sup>nd</sup> Term

**Scott Fischer**, Secretary (term ends: December 2025) 2<sup>nd</sup> Term

**Ken Shanks**, Treasurer

**Lisa Bell** (term ends: December 2024) 1<sup>st</sup> Term

**Lori Groves** (term ends: December 2025) 1<sup>st</sup> Term

**Karin Rebnegger** (term ends: December 2024) 1<sup>st</sup> Term

**Dave Reice** (term ends: December 2025) 1<sup>st</sup> Term

**Judy Smith** (term ends: December 2024) 1<sup>st</sup> Term



## PRAYER CONCERNS as of November 26, 2023

(\* = new addition to list)

### **God's Protection and Safety:**

On all who drive buses, trains & planes. For all the service men & women especially:

**Petty Officer First Class Abigail L. Gall**, US Coast Guard, daughter of Diane & Chris Gall

**CAPT. Walker Gall**, US Air Force, son of Diane & Chris Gall

### **God's Healing:**

**Parishioners:** Wally Simpkins, Heather Jerasa, Eleanor Peitzman, Dave Leslie, Ron Beerkircher, Brian Blackburn, Joan Gerhart, June Bair, Sheryl Gladfelter, Reed Jerasa, Janet Owens, Don Jerasa, Kim Jerasa, Jim Lynch, Sharon Senigo, Mary Ettore, Sandie Driscoll.

### **God's Healing:**

#### **Friends and family:**

Bill Treichler (brother of Hope Garrett & Shirley Treichler), Diana Christianson (niece of Elaine, BBLC), Helene Bell (mother of Lou Bell), Denise Sanders (friend of Deb Detweiler), Patti Stover (coworker of Deb Detweiler), David Hallman (friend of Rita Bixler), Judy Johnson (daughter of Marv & Betty Rohrs), Tammy Owens (daughter-in-law of Janet Owens), Rev. Erika Wesch, Adele Hodgman (cousin of Pastor Miller), Rhelda Warriner (sister of Rita Bixler), Sue Warfield (friend of Donna Blackburn), Lindsey Hollingswoth (niece of Lori Groves), Rochelle Fly (friend of Rita Bixler), Caitlin(Cate) Fishman (relative of Lori Groves), Jean Scull (Rev. June Bair's future mother-in-law), Jane Hastings (friend of Deb Detweiler), Jim Trucksess (nephew of Donna Blackburn), Ann Sellers (Pastor Miller's mother-in-law), David Yarns (brother of Tammy Daubert), Kay Moyer (friend of Hope Garrett), Danni Tyrrel (great-niece of Kim Jerasa), Terri Lewis (cousin of Lori Lewis), Terri Jewett-Larkin (sister of Patti Dowse), Aidan Drakeley (Carol Barringer's grandson), Beverly Goheen (sister of Maureen Simpkins), George Yarns (father of Tammy Daubert), Pat Daubert (sister of Rick Daubert).

### **God's Comfort & Peace:**

For our homebound members: **Joe Haenn and Ethel Geist** (Lutheran Community at Telford), **Esther Saylor and Tillie Murray** (Hidden Meadows on the Ridge).

### **God's Grace for the Family & Friends who mourn the death of:**

Larry Donis (uncle of Lori Lombardo), +Janet Nebhut, Elsie Stoud (Deb Detweiler's sister), +Norman Geist, Herb Brenner (brother -in-law of Laurel Tackett), Melanie Lewis (sister-in-law of Lori Lombardo), +Julia Detweiler, Mary A Reice (mother of Dave Reice), Robert Bell (father of Lou Bell), Mary Palko (sister of John Snyder).

**[+indicates a member of St. Peter's. Names will stay on the printed list for 1 year]**

## December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
<b>3</b> 9 am Worship Service Congregational mtg following Service	4	5	<b>6</b> 7 pm Advent Evening Prayer – St. Nicholas	7	8	9
<b>10</b> 9 am Worship Service 3pm - Concert	11	12	<b>13</b> 7 pm Advent Evening Prayer – Poinsettia story	14 <span style="color: red;">Newsletter input due</span>	15	16
<b>17</b> 9 am Worship Service 10 am – Greening the church	18 7 pm Council meeting	19	<b>20</b> 7 pm Advent Evening Prayer – Lucia Fest	21 <span style="color: red;">Newsletter mailed</span>	22	23
<b>24</b> 3pm Christmas Eve Worship Service	25 <span style="color: blue;">Christmas Day Church office closed</span>	26	27	28	29	30
<b>31</b> 9 am Worship Service-Lessons & Carols	Jan 1 <span style="color: blue;">New Year's Day Church office closed</span>					

## Monthly Assisting Ministers Calendar – December 2023

Date	Time	Usher(s)	Acolyte	Advent Wreath	Crucifer	Scripture/ Prayer	Server	Altar Guild	Counters
<b>Dec 3</b> 9 am	9:00 am	D & S Texter	L Lombardo	E & K Rebnegger	P Abaza	L Ertel	P Abaza	P Abaza & E Rebnegger	J Snider & S Davenport
<b>Dec 6</b>	7:00 pm					L Ertel			
<b>Dec 10</b>	9:00 am	J & D Snyder	D Gall		N Driscoll	K Rebnegger	P Tackett	D & S Texter	P Dowse & N Driscoll
<b>Dec 13</b>	7:00 pm					L Grove			
<b>Dec 17</b>	9:00 am	J & J Gerhart	Lisa Bell	Park Family	P Dowse	Lou Bell	L Bell	R Bixler & L Lombardo	R Bixler & J Smith
<b>Dec 20</b>	7:00 pm					S Fischer			
<b>Dec 24</b> <b>Christmas</b> <b>Eve Service</b>	3:00 pm							P Dowse & E Rebnegger	D & S Texter
<b>Dec 31</b>	9:00 am	S & E Rebnegger	J Snyder		L Groves	T Daubert	S Fischer	D & S Texter	D & S Texter

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- If you are unable to participate on your scheduled Sunday, please call one of the other individuals on the list and arrange to switch dates.