

WELCOME TO HOLY SPIRIT LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, New Jersey Synod
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 Vicar Vince Piekarski can be contacted at any time for conversation or prayer
 through call or text at 412-225-0287, or through email at vpie8282@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH, 2026

ASH WEDNESDAY

5PM WORSHIP SERVICE WITH HOLY COMMUNION



THIS WEEK AT HOLY SPIRIT + NEXT SUNDAY							
Sun, 2/15	Mon, 2/16	Tues, 2/17	Wed, 2/18	Th, 2/19	Fri, 2/20	Sat, 2/21	Sun, 2/22
10:30AM Worship Service 2PM-4PM Day of Service, Community Feeding		6PM Church Council Meeting	5PM Ash Wednesday Service	10AM-1PM Food Pantry 6PM-8PM Church Office		10AM Mission District Meeting (Whiting, NJ)	9AM-10AM Confirmation Class 10:30AM Worship Service



We, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit, are People of God, who are called by the Holy Spirit to pray, worship, joyfully proclaim Jesus Christ, and compassionately witness and serve others in Christian Love.



We are glad that you joined us for Worship today! Thank you for enriching our time together! We would like to get to know you better, and for you to get to know us better too. Brochures, welcome gifts, prayer shawls, Bibles, and other items are available throughout the church. We would be happy to show you around and share about our ministries. Please do not hesitate to speak up and ask questions. Also, please make sure you sign-in on our clipboard on the podium in the lobby.



Our Worship Services are conducted in coordination with our Conference Call. Join us at 657-390-7423 or 701-802-5170, with access code 8221190#. You may need to dial 1 first depending on your phone plan. After logging in please announce your name and feel free to talk with others until we get started.

In Loving Memory



*Candles cost \$10 each.
 Sign-up sheets are located on the
 bulletin board between the
 church offices.*

SANCTUARY CANDLE FOR FEBRUARY

Given to the Glory of God & In Memory of JAMES P. ROONEY
 by Del McKenna & Children.

ALTAR CANDLES FOR FEBRUARY

Given to the Glory of God & In Memory of CLAIRE MILLER
 by Jean, Phil, & Bob Zimmerman.

CONFERENCE CALL CHECK-IN, WELCOME, & ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Vicar (V), Assistant (A), Reader (R), and Congregation (C).)

INTRODUCTION

A. On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

PRELUDE

(Music offered by our Organist at the start of our Worship Service.)

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

CHIMES

(Music offered by our Organist at the start of our Worship Service.)

I Surrender All

V. We invite you to stand as you are able.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

(All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.)

V. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

C. Amen.

V. Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt
and blots out all offenses.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

V. Gracious God,

C. have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

V. For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,

C. have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

V. For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God,

C. have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

V. For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

C. have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

V. For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,
and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

C. have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

V. For disregarding voices from the margin,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
Gracious God,

C. have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

V. For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,
and for disregarding Christ’s call to come forth to life:
Gracious God,

C. have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

V. God’s steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound.
Through faith, the free gift of God,
you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ.
In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.
The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead
dwells in you,
pours God’s love into your hearts,
and gives you life and peace.

C. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

(We invite you to sing along.)

Lutheran Book of Worship—Green Book
296—Just as I Am, without One Plea

APOSTOLIC GREETING

V. May 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.

KYRIE

V. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

V. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

V. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

V. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.

C. Lord, have mercy.

V. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

V. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

V. Let us pray,

Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. Amen.

INVITATION TO LENT

V. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the disciplines of Lent – self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love – strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

V. Ash Wednesday does indeed mark the beginning of our preparation for the renewal of our hearts, minds and spirits. Ashes are an extra-ordinary rich symbol, rooted in Jewish/Christian tradition. They suggest judgement and God’s condemnation of sin, and our total dependence upon God for life. The words used at their imposition are God’s word to Adam, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return” reminding us of our mortality. Moreover, ashes also suggest cleansing and renewal. They were once used as a cleansing agent in the absence of soap. So, ashes tell of both death and renewal.

V. If you can, please leave your pew and proceed forward on the right side of the aisle to the steps between the Communion Rail for the Imposition of Ashes. Please process back on the left side of the aisle as you return to your pew and be seated.

If you are unable to leave your pew for health or other related reasons, please raise your hand after everyone comes forward and have us come to you.

(This moment will be silent as we come forward and focus on the beginning of Lent.)

V. “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (Ecclesiastes 3:20)

(After everyone has received ashes please repeat after me.)

V. Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

C. that we may show forth your glory in the world.

V. By the Cross and Passion of Your Son, our Saavior,

C. bring us with all Your saints to the joy of His resurrection.

V. Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

C. Amen.

FIRST READING

Because of the coming Day of the Lord, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community reminds God of his gracious character and asks God to spare the people, lest the nations doubt God’s power to save.

R. Our First Reading is from the 2nd Chapter of Joel (Verses 1-2, 12-17).

R. 1 Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
 Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—
 2 a day of darkness and gloom,
 a day of clouds and thick darkness!
 Like blackness spread upon the mountains,
 a great and powerful army comes;
 their like has never been from of old,
 nor will be again after them
 in ages to come.

12 Yet even now, says the Lord,
 return to me with all your heart,
 with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
 13 rend your hearts and not your clothing.
 Return to the Lord your God,
 for he is gracious and merciful,
 slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love,
 and relenting from punishment.

14 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent
 and leave a blessing behind him,
 a grain offering and a drink offering
 for the Lord your God?

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 consecrate a fast;
 call a solemn assembly;
 16 gather the people.
 Consecrate the congregation;
 assemble the aged;
 gather the children,
 even infants at the breast.
 Let the bridegroom leave his room
 and the bride her canopy.

17 Between the vestibule and the altar,
 let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep.
 Let them say, “Spare your people, O Lord,
 and do not make your heritage a mockery,
 a byword among the nations.

Why should it be said among the peoples,
 ‘Where is their God?’ ”

R. This is the Word of the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM

R. Our Responsorial Psalm is from the 51st Psalm (Verses 1-17).

C. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)

R. 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 ever 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.

C. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)

R. 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 purer than snow.

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

C. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)

R. 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 spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from your presence,
 and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation
 and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

C. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)

- R. 13Let me teach your ways to offenders,
and sinners shall be restored to you.
14Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.
15O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
16For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.
You are not pleased with burnt offering.
17The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.

C. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)

SECOND READING

The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God’s reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.

R. Our Second Reading is from the 5th and 6th Chapters of 2nd Corinthians (5:20b—6:10).

R. 20bWe entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

6:1As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. 2For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! 3We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, 7truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; 10as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

R. This is the Word of the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

V. I invite you to stand as you are able, and I invite you to announce the Gospel Acclamation with me.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

C. Return to the Lord, your God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. (Joel 2:13)

GOSPEL READING

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.

V. The Holy Gospel According to Matthew, the 6th chapter. (Verses 1-6, 16-21).

C. Glory to you, O Lord.

V. [Jesus said to the disciples:] 1“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

2“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 3But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

5“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 6But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

16“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 17But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

19“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

V. This is the Gospel of the Lord,
C. Glory and Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

(We invite you to be seated.)

SERMON

(Delivered by Vicar Vince Piekarski.)

(Following the Sermon, we invite you to stand as you are able.)

HYMN OF THE DAY

(We invite you to sing along.)

Lutheran Book of Worship—Green Book
482—When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

APOSTLES’ CREED

V. God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope let us confess our faith together using the Apostles’ Creed.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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

V. Reconciled by God’s mercy and sustained by God’s presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

(A brief silence.)

A. Guide your church, O God. Accompany all Christians in this season of repentance, and renew our faith in the riches of grace you give to us in baptism. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A. Heal this earth, O God. Satisfy the needs of every parched place, every diverse ecosystem, every suffering creature. Though all return to dust, grant beauty and purpose to each living thing. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A. Restore the nations, O God. Let your healing spring up quickly across the world. Give all in authority the will to loose the bonds of injustice and let any who are oppressed go free. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A. Deliver your people, O God. Comfort any whose hearts are rent by grief, uphold any who are sick, bring food to those who hunger, and give housing to all without shelter. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A. Bless this assembly, O God. Reconcile us to one another and to you. Strengthen our resolve to fast from evil, open our hands in sharing, and quicken our prayer. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

A. Hold us forever, O God. We thank you for all who now know their treasure in heaven, and for (Martin Luther and) all who on earth proclaimed your abounding, steadfast love. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

(Here other intercessions may be offered.)

V. Watch over all of us who are worried and suffering, and especially those whose names we now say aloud or hold within our hearts (pause). Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

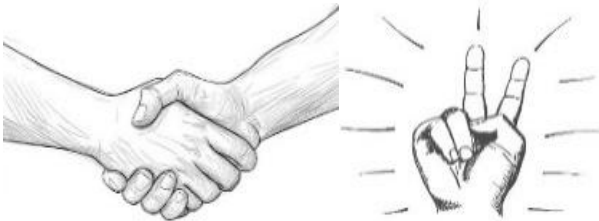
V. Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.
C. Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

V. May the peace of the Lord be with you always.

C. And also with you.

V. Now, let us share God’s Peace with one another.



(Please respect your neighbor if they desire to still only offer a peace sign or wave.)

(Following the Sharing of the Peace, we invite you to be seated.)

OFFERING

V. We now worship God with our tithes and offerings, wine and bread for use in holy communion, and monetary gifts to support our ministry for service in God’s name. Our Ushers will be around to your pews to pass the Offering Plates.

(Ushers come forward to get the Offering Plates from the Assistant.)

(Vicar and Assistant prepare the Altar for Communion.)

OFFERING SONG

(We invite you to sing along.)

Worship & Praise

156—What Have We to Offer?

1 What have we to of - fer? What have we to share?
2 What have we to of - fer? What have we to bring?
3 What have we to of - fer? What have we to give?

Coins from the cof - fer, hearts filled with care.
Love, ripe with laugh - ter; hope that we can sing;
Eyes that are wide o - pen; lies that we won't live;

God will not fal - ter; so let us dare
dreams of what we're af - ter; prom - is - es of when.
truth that must be spo - ken; jus - tice some - how.

lay it at the al - tar there.
Lay it at the al - tar then.
Lay it at the al - tar now.

4 What have we to of - fer? What have we to
give? Lives we will live.

Text: Ray Makeever
Music: LET US ENTER IN: OFFERTORY. Ray Makeever
Text and music © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress

(Usher(s) brings the Tithes and Offerings up front to the Assistant.)

V. We invite you to stand as you are able.

OFFERING PRAYER

V. Let us pray,

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
your steadfast love embraces all creation.
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
and bring forth its bounty.
Through these gifts of bread and wine,
draw us into the death and life of your Son,
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.
We ask this in Jesus' name.

C. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

V. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

V. Lift up your hearts.

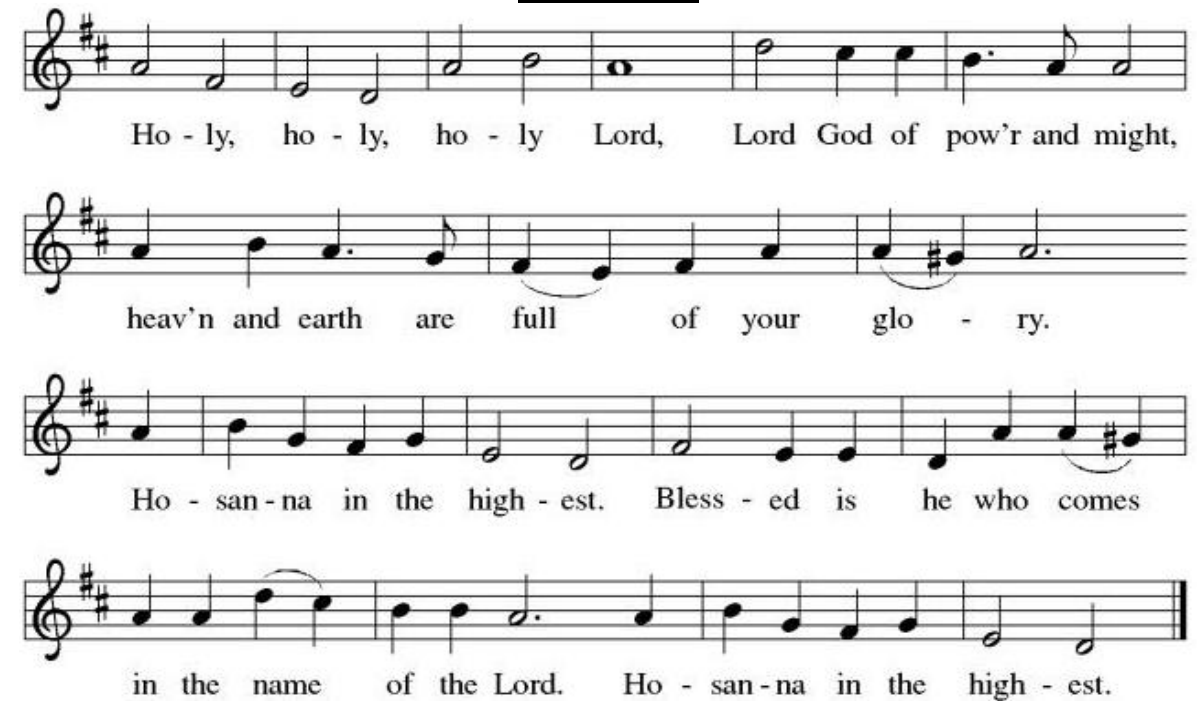
C. We lift them to the Lord.

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C. It is right to give him thanks and praise.

V. It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who rose beyond the bounds of death and, as he promised, poured out your Spirit of life and power upon the chosen disciples. At this the whole earth exults in boundless joy. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

V. Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, in mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as He comes to us in His holy supper.

C. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

V. In the night in which he was betrayed our Lord Jesus took bread,
he 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.

V. Again, after supper, He took the cup, he 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.

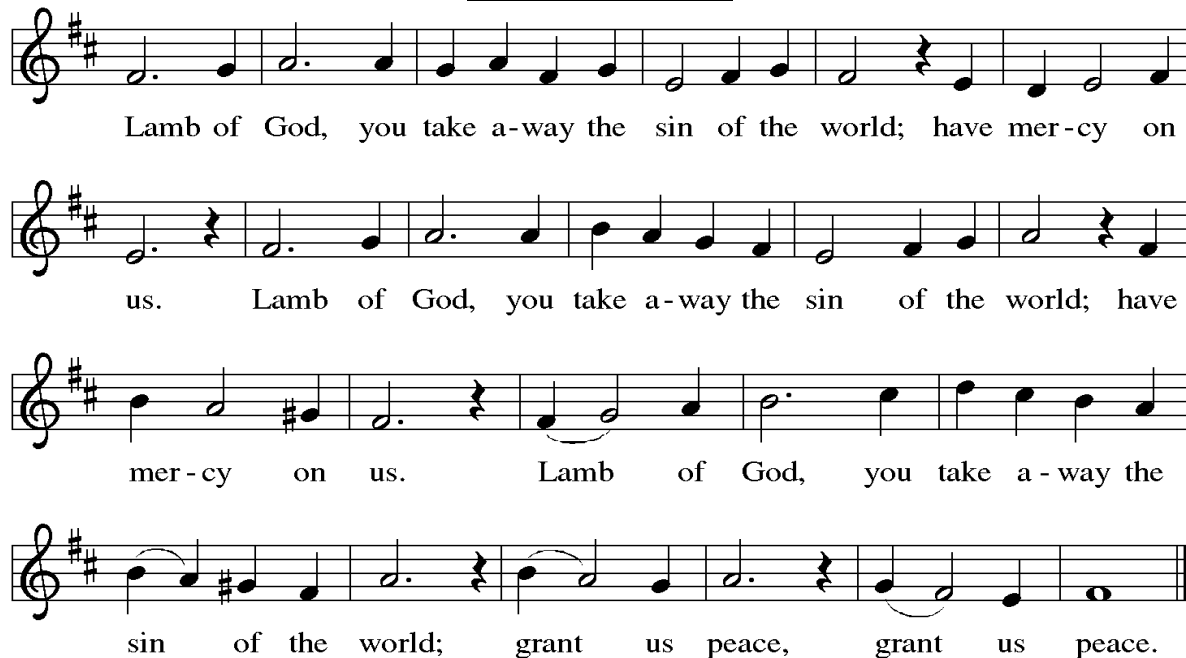
THE LORD'S PRAYER

(We ring the bell throughout the Lord's Prayer at all services to invite those in the community to join in praying the Lord's Prayer.)

V. May we now join with one another and pray together as Jesus has taught us.

C. 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.

LAMB OF GOD



(We invite you to be seated.)

HOLY COMMUNION

V. Communion here is pretty simple, and all who are baptized and believe in Jesus Christ are welcome at the table.

"Do this for the remembrance of me."

LUKE 22:19

Communion here is pretty simple. All who are baptized and believe in Jesus Christ are welcome at the table.

Bread or wafers are utilized, and the option of individually wrapped gluten free wafers is present. Pre-filled red wine and white grape juice cups are in the Communion Tray to choose from.

The Usher offers the option to leave your pew, and you can proceed forward on the right side of the aisle. Following Communion, place your empty cups in the basket and process back on the left side of the aisle.

Children who have not had their First Communion instruction, and adults who do not wish to receive Communion, are welcome to come forward and give a sign in order to obtain a special blessing.

If you are unable to leave your pew for health or other related reasons, please inform the Usher of your desire to remain in your pew and have us come to you.

Holy Spirit
Lutheran Church
SUNDAYS @ 10:30AM

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

V. Come to the table.

Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

C. Amen.

(Distribution of Holy Communion)

COMMUNION HYMN

(Please enjoy various music offered by our Organist during your quiet time, prayer, and reflection following Holy Communion.)

(Vicar and Assistant remove Communion Vessels from the Altar.)

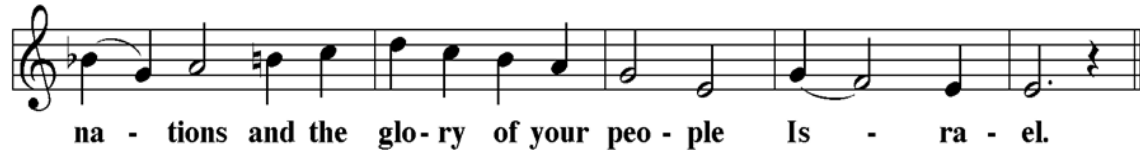
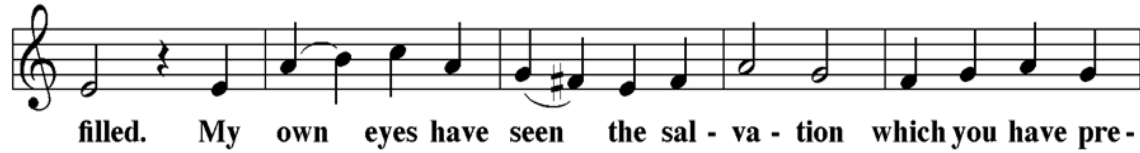
V. We invite you to stand as you are able.

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

V. May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us and keep us always in His grace.

C. Amen.

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- A. Let us pray,
God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.

Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C. Amen.

BLESSING

- V. Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:
God, who calls all things into existence,
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,
✠ bless you now and always.

C. Amen.

SENDING HYMN

(We invite you to sing along.)
With One Voice—Blue Book
776—Be Thou My Vision

(Assistant extinguishes the Altar Candles half way through the Sending Hymn.)

(Vicar processes out once the Altar Candles have been extinguished.)

DISMISSAL

- A. Go in peace. Believe the good news.
C. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

(Music offered by our Organist as we depart following our Worship Service.)
Take My Life and Let It Be

LICENSES & EXPIRATION DATES

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40 Days - 40 Items

Wednesday, February 18th will mark the first day of Lent. Join True Deliverance PWC & Holy Spirit Lutheran Church in our 40 Days - 40 Items Challenge. It's simple: for each day of Lent (you can include Sundays if you so desire) remove one item from your closet, drawers, chest etc. that you no longer wear or need and place it in a trash bag. On or before Easter Sunday (April 5, 2026) simply drop off your bags at the church. Call the church office at the number listed below for specific drop off times. All items will be donated to the Atlantic City Rescue Mission.

Holy Spirit Lutheran Church

1220 Bayshore Road
Villas, New Jersey
(609) 886-2414

*Prayer * Fasting * Giving*

Lent 2026

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

VICAR APPOINTMENT ON MARCH 19TH, 2023

A Memorandum of Understanding on the Matter of Pastoral Appointment
In Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) Candidacy
TO: Congregation Council, Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Villas
FROM: The Rev. Tracie L. Bartholomew, Bishop, New Jersey Synod

Dear Brother and Sisters in Christ,
This memorandum is in support of your discussions with Vincent Piekarski as pastor of Holy Spirit, Villas. Because this is not the usual pattern for completing the educational and candidacy requirements for ordination, it is my hope that this memorandum will both provide guidelines and engage in conversation with those who are invested in this process.

I would say at the outset that because Vincent is an outstanding candidate for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, we will all want to do whatever is necessary to assure that his placement serves the mission of the church in the best possible fashion.

The following notes reflect my own understanding of this matter:

- (1) The appointment for Vincent will begin on April 1, 2023. At this time, Vincent will assume all responsibilities of a regularly called pastor, including presiding at the Sacrament of Holy Communion and Baptism at Holy Spirit, Villas.
- (2) A pastoral appointment in the TEEM process is an option for completing seminary educational requirements and the steps of the candidacy process. Upon completion of the candidacy process and seminary education, the candidate may receive and accept a call to ordained ministry from the congregation where the appointment is being served.
- (3) This appointment is jointly supervised by the Office of the Bishop and the TEEM pastor's seminary. A mentoring relationship with a local pastor is required for the length of this appointment.
- (4) The synod of candidacy origin will be responsible for the approval process.
- (5) Upon approval for ordination, the congregation would be expected to extend a call to the pastoral appointee.
- (6) Compensation for the TEEM pastor will be according to the guidelines of the New Jersey Synod. All normal forms of compensation should be in place for the term of the appointment, including stipulation that base salary and housing shall be in accord with synod guidelines for first call at time of ordination.
- (7) The ELCA Portico benefit plan for lay persons in full-time church service should be used for the pastoral appointee up to the time of ordination, whereupon the benefit package is to be converted to the plan for ELCA clergy.

WHAT IS THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA?

The ELCA was formed in 1987 by the merger of three Lutheran Church bodies – the ALC (American Lutheran Church), the LCA (Lutheran Church in America), and the AELC (Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches). Learn more at elca.org.



New Jersey Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

The New Jersey Synod is a geographical grouping of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) congregations that share the mission and ministry of the Church on the New Jersey territory. It is one of 65 synods in the ELCA. The NJ Synod is comprised of 143 congregations, which include over 45,000 baptized members.

- (8) A decision for Pastoral Appointment is made with the agreement of a synod and its candidacy committee, and the ELCA, normally represented by the regional staff person of each in consultation with the seminary and its Director for Contextual Education.
- (9) Pastoral Appointment in a TEEM Candidacy is an option that is to serve the mission of the Church in a particular and vital way and is not to be viewed or used as a means to circumvent the normal candidacy process and/or first call placement process.

In the specific case of Vincent, the New Jersey Synod remains responsible for the candidacy and approval process, and has agreed to this proposal for Appointment at Holy Spirit, Villas.

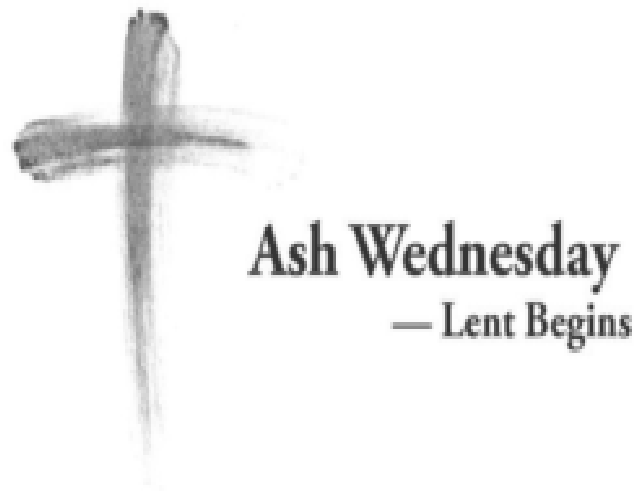
Continued blessings to both Holy Spirit and Vincent Piekarski as you embark on this journey of mutual ministry. As partners in ministry, we walk with you and rejoice in this new relationship.

VICAR VINCE'S DAY OF REST

A day of rest can have physical, mental, and spiritual benefits. "Mittwoch," German for mid-week, or Wednesday, is the day that Vicar Vince will use to recharge and do some other things. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is an emergency!

VICE PASTOR UPDATE

Pastor William Hodgetts continues to attend our Church Council Meetings and provides Supervision and Support to Vicar Vince.



CHURCH STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

VICAR

Vicar Vince Piekarski

VICE PASTOR

Pastor William Hodgetts

ORGANIST & PIANIST

Carol Amundsen

CHURCH OFFICE, SUNDAY SCHOOL, & FOOD PANTRY

Heather Piekarski

CHURCH COUNCIL PRESIDENT & CHURCH PROPERTY

Wayne Rand

CHURCH COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT & WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

Judy Brannan

CHURCH COUNCIL TREASURER

Bonnie Millard

CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY

Vicki Rinier

