



Graduation SUNDAY

Saint Peter's Lutheran Church

May 17, 2026

2570 St. Peter's Church Road, Salisbury, NC 28146

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Seventh Sunday of Easter May 17, 2026

* Indicates to stand as you are able. P=Pastor, C=Congregation, A=Assisting Minister, L=Lector

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prelude

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

*P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

***C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

*P: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!

***C: Amen.**

*P: Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

*P: Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that nourish us (*local waters may be named*). Blessed are you.

***C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

*P: Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow. Blessed are you.

***C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

*P: Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you.

***C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

*P: Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever.

***C: Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

O God Beyond All Praising

ELW 880

APOSTOLIC GREETING

*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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

*P: Let us pray. O God of glory, your Son Jesus Christ suffered for us and ascended to your right hand. Unite us with Christ and each other in suffering and in joy, that all the world may be drawn into your bountiful presence, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*C: **Amen.**

GOD SPEAKS TO US

L: First Reading

Acts 1:6-14

L: A reading from Acts the 1st chapter:

⁶When [the apostles] had come together, they asked [Jesus], “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. ¹³When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying: Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

L: The word of the Lord **C: Thanks be to God**

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

¹ Let God arise, and let God's enemies be scattered;
let those who hate God flee.

² **As smoke is driven away, so you should drive them away;
as the wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the
presence of God.**

³ But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God;
let them also be merry and joyful.

⁴ **Sing to God, sing praises to God's name; exalt the one who rides
the clouds;**

I AM is that name, rejoice before God!

⁵ In your holy habitation, O God,
you are a father to orphans, defender of widows;

⁶ **you give the solitary a home and bring forth prisoners into
freedom;**

but the rebels shall live in desert places.

⁷ O God, when you went forth before your people,
when you marched through the wilderness,

⁸ **the earth quaked, and the skies poured down rain, at the presence
of God, the God of Sinai,**

at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

⁹ You sent a bountiful rain, O God;
you restored your inheritance when it languished.

¹⁰ **Your people found their home in it;
in your goodness, O God, you have made provision for the
poor. R**

³² Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;
sing praises to the Lord.

³³ **You ride in the heavens, O God, in the ancient heavens;
you send forth your voice, your mighty voice.**

³⁴ Ascribe power to God,
whose majesty is over Israel; whose strength is in the skies.

³⁵ **How wonderful you are in your holy places, O God of Israel,
giving strength and power to your people! Blessed be God!**

Second Reading

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

L: A reading from 1 Peter the 4th & 5th chapters:

¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are

reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

^{5:6} Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. ⁸ Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. ¹⁰ And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

L: The word of the Lord **C: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.

Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.

Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

*P: The Holy Gospel According to St. John the 17th chapter.

*C: **Glorify to you, O Lord.**

The Holy Gospel

John 17:1-11

*B: ¹ After Jesus had spoken these words [to his disciples,] he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me is from you, ⁸ for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

*P: The Gospel of our Lord. *C: **Praise to you, O Christ**

Children’s Sermon

The Sermon

Bishop Emily Hartner

HYMN OF THE DAY

My Jesus, I Love Thee

Insert

BLESSING OF OUR GRADUATES

P: I would like to invite our graduates forward.

Mady Ames

Emma Cornelison

Joshua Hastings

Carson Pucket

Maggie Ridenhour

Ian Shue

Tori Shirley

We are delighted to honor you as you graduate from *high school & college*.

We are proud of you! It is our privilege to affirm you as members of this congregation. You have completed an important phase of your lives and you are entering another.

The graduates stand. The leader addresses the graduates.

P: I ask you to affirm your commitment to a life of faith in the body of Christ.

Graduates, as you celebrate your achievements and prepare for your new endeavors, do you thank God for the many ways your faith has been your strength and guide?

Response: **With God's help, I do.**

P: As you consider the next steps of your journey of life, do you acknowledge God going with you, before you, behind you, below you, above you, and within you?

Response: **With God's help, I do.**

P: As you make choices about your new endeavors, will you offer your gifts to the world as part of the body of Christ and welcome the support of a family of faith?

Response: **With God's help, I will.**

The assembly stands. The leader addresses the assembly with these or similar words.

*P: People of *St. Peter's Lutheran Church*, listen: Do you claim these graduates as siblings in Christ, called to ministry according to their talents?
In God's love, we claim them.

*P: As their home congregation, do you promise to support them, take an interest in their future, be with them in their celebration and sadness, and welcome them whenever they return to *name of congregation*?
In God's love, we support them.

*P: Do you promise to faithfully pray for these young people, placing their futures into God's loving hands as they make their choices?
In God's love, we pray for them.

*B: Let us pray. Gracious God, you bless your servants with many achievements. We give thanks especially today for the milestones that these graduates have attained. As they begin new phases of their lives, may they know your love in all the experiences they have. Bless the parents of these students, who have raised their children and nourished them in Christian faith. Give them strength in your holy presence, and give them many joyful reunions with their children, those who are leaving home to go far away, and those staying close by. In Jesus' name we pray.

***C: Amen.**

***B:** Go out into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

***C: Amen.**

***APOSTLES' CREED**

***A:** Let us profess our faith using the words of 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

***A:** Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

A brief silence.

O God, your people sing praises throughout the church. By your Holy Spirit, inspire musicians, deacons, pastors, and bishops to proclaim the gospel of Jesus. Merciful God,

***C: receive our prayer.**

Your creative power fills the universe. Bring favorable weather, nurture plants and animals, protect us from natural disasters, and guide us to care for all you have made. Merciful God,

***C: receive our prayer.**

Your justice is exercised in society by those in authority. Instill in political leaders, business leaders, school administrators, and all who care for others a desire for peace and equity. Merciful God,

***C: receive our prayer.**

Your compassion and care come through the gifts of medicine and relationships. Soothe the anxious, protect widows and orphans, comfort those living with memory loss and their families, and heal the sick. We especially pray for Guy & Betty Puckett, Jim & Phyllis Cornelison, Jerry Sides, Ernie & Linda Cooper, Phil & Carol Boyette, Brenda H. Trexler, Judy Peeler, Lynn DeBerry, Marcia Ritchie, Jean Holshouser, Phyllis Trexler, Sue Misenheimer, Thelma Barger, Buddy Waller, Ronnie Pierce, Bobby Lambirth, Mary Miller, Barbara & Frank King, friends of St. Peter's, and those we hold in our hearts or speak aloud now... *(pause)*. Merciful God,
***C: receive our prayer.**

Your love radiates from communities gathered in your name. Bless those experiencing significant transitions in life such as graduation, retirement, new employment, and accompany us in our prayers during these times. Merciful God,
***C: receive our prayer.**

O God, your promise of eternal life is certain and sure. Inspire us by the steadfast faith of those who have gone before us, so that we may be confident in the assurances you give. Merciful God,
***C: receive our prayer.**

***P:** God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.
***C: Amen.**

PEACE

***P:** The peace of Christ be with you always. ***C: And also with you.**

***P:** Let us share the peace with one another.

THE OFFERING

Anthem

Offering Hymn

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

ELW 182

OFFERING PRAYER

***A:** Let us pray. Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day

when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus,

***C: Amen.**

MEAL

PREFACE DIALOGUE

*P: The Lord be with you.

***C: And also with you.**

*P: Lift up your hearts.

***C: We lift them to the Lord.**

*P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*P: 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, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***C: 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

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

*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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

*P: Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

*C: **Thanks be to God.**

LAMB OF GOD



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION BLESSING

*P: The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. Amen.

POST COMMUNION HYMN

Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise

Thank-ful hearts and voic-es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done. Let
ev - 'ry-one who seeks the Lord re - joice and bear the name of Christ.
Send us with your prom - is - es and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with
shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927
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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*A: Let us pray. Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus,

***C: Amen.**

SENDING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

BLESSING

*P: God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ✠ bless you now and forever.

***C: Amen.**

BLESSING OF THE MEAL

***SENDING HYMN Go, My Children, With My Blessing ELW 543**

THE DISMISSAL

*A: Rooted in the love of Christ;

***C: We grow in grace and joyfully branch into a broken world!**

*P: Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

***C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**