

The Fishnet

**St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Hilltown, PA
December 2024**



(Historic photo from St. Peter's collection)

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, at St. Peter's website and on St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Hilltown, PA YouTube page after the Service.

Pastor's Message

My oh my, how time flies! It is hard to believe that this month we begin our observance of Advent and Christmas. Where has the year gone?

It seems at times that some of our neighbors have "jumped the gun" on decorating for Christmas. Halloween is barely over, and the Christmas decorations are already going up. What happened to Thanksgiving?

I used to fume about early Christmas decorating. "How dare people forget the reason for the season!" I thought to myself. As I have presumably gained some wisdom over the years, I have realized that perhaps what I am seeing is a teaching moment. The interest in Christmas that my neighbors are showing may offer an opportunity to share with them the deeper meaning of this holiday season. As Christians, no one has taken Christmas away from us. It is still our holiday – and our opportunity to proclaim: *To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord* (Luke 2:11).

Advent Begins on December 1

Join us on the four Sundays of Advent (December 1, 8, 15, and 22) as each week we light one (or more) candles as we "watch for Messiah." The color of the season is blue, suggesting a spirit of hope as we anticipate the celebration of Jesus' birth. We worship at 9:00 a.m., both in-person and by livestream.

Wednesday Advent Services Feature the Songs of the Season

Each Wednesday of Advent we gather for Evening Prayer. Join us in quiet praise at 7:00 p.m., either in-person or by livestream. The theme for the series of meditations will focus on *The Songs of the Season*:

- December 4, The Song of Mary (Magnificat), Luke 2:39-56
- December 11, The Song of the Shepherds (Gloria), Luke 2:8-20
- December 18, The Song of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis), Luke 2:22-25

Christmas Putz Opens

The much-anticipated Christmas Putz opens for viewing on Saturday, November 30, in Dorcas Hall. Rooted in the Moravian tradition, a Christmas Putz is an expanded Nativity scene, telling the story of the angel's visit to Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus, the visit of the Wise Men, and more, by making use of a multitude of figurines and decorative materials. The Christmas Putz will be open on Saturdays, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., and Sundays, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., November 30 through December 29. Children's activities will be available. Admission is open to the general community and is free. Spread the word!

Be Sure to Attend the Holiday Recital

We look forward to a delightful afternoon in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 8, 3:00 to 4:30 p.m., as Bill Gottschall's students and guest musicians offer a spectacular assortment of musical presentations, both voice and instrumental, for the holiday season.

St. Lucy Visits on December 15

For the past two years, we have observed St. Lucy's Day on one of the Wednesdays of Advent. This year, as a special treat, we will welcome St. Lucy near the end of the worship service on Sunday, December 15. The observance of St. Lucy's Day, also known as the Santa Lucia Fest, is a Swedish tradition, marking the beginning of the Christmas celebration. Join us at 9:00 a.m. as we hear St. Lucy's story and serenade her by singing "Santa Lucia."

Deck the Halls and the Sanctuary and the Narthex, and Enjoy the Fellowship

Our annual "hanging of the greens" for Christmas is planned for Sunday, December 22, following the worship service. Many volunteers are needed as we decorate the church for the Christmas season. Your help is much appreciated.

Celebrate the Birth of Our Lord and Savior Jesus

Join us on Christmas Eve (Tuesday, December 24) at 3:00 p.m. for a Festive Service of Holy Communion as we gather in joy and gladness to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The long waiting of the Advent season is over. We will sing many familiar Christmas carols, hear special music, reflect on the meaning of Christ's birth for our lives through the readings and sermon, find spiritual nourishment in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, and light candles while we sing together "Silent Night." Invite family and friends.

What? Christmas is Not Over

For those who cannot get enough of Christmas (and we hope that includes all of you), the celebration continues. Remember that the Christmas season consists of twelve days. On Sunday, December 29, we will continue our observance of Christmas with a Festive Service of Lessons and Carols with Reflections from Martin Luther. On Sunday, January 5, we will commemorate the visit of

the Wise Men to the Baby Jesus as we observe the Epiphany of Our Lord. Both worship services begin at 9:00 a.m.

In Case of Inclement Weather

As we enter the winter season, we face the possibility of snow and ice affecting in-person worship attendance. In the event that in-person worship is cancelled, St. Peter's members will be notified by the phone tree. (A decision on cancellation will be made by late Saturday afternoon.) As long as he has electricity at his home, Pastor Miller will offer an abbreviated service by livestream.

Congregational Meeting is December 8

St. Peter's active and confirmed members are urged to attend the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 8, following the worship service, as we elect members of the Congregation Council and consider a budget for the year 2025. This is an official meeting, and a quorum is required.

Pastor Raymond Miller

Upcoming Dates (please mark your calendar)

November 28	Thanksgiving Day	church office not open
November 30	2 – 4 pm	First day of putz viewing
December 1	9:00 am	First Sunday in Advent
December 1	10:00 am	Putz open after Service
December 4	7:00 pm	Evening Advent Service
December 8	9:00 am	Second Sunday in Advent
December 8	following Service	Congregational meeting for budget and election of Council members
December 8	3:00 pm	Holiday music recital
December 11	7:00 pm	Evening Advent Service
December 15	9:00 am	Third Sunday in Advent
December 18	7:00 pm	Evening Advent Service
December 22	9:00 am	Fourth Sunday in Advent
	10:00 am	Greening of church following Service
December 24	3:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service
December 25	no Service	The Birth of our Lord Jesus
December 29	9:00 am	Lessons & Carols Service
February 2, 2025	10:00 am	Congregational mtg following Service

Special Services Assisting Ministers

The Advent Season brings several special Services.

Assisting Ministers are needed for the Christmas Eve Service at 3:00pm. Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside Dorcas Hall as the Assisting Ministers calendar in this issue of *The Fishnet* doesn't list specific individuals for the Christmas Eve Service.

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. FISH remains in dire need of canned goods so every donation helps!

Treasurer's Report

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

The expenses are being kept in line with anticipated targets, but the drop in income – both regular giving and the revenue loss from the departure of Building Blocks Pre-School -- has put us in a deficit situation for the year.

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

Ken Shanks, Treasurer

Monthly results 10/1/2024 to 10/31/2024:

Actual Weekly Offering Income	\$ 7,109	Budget Weekly Offering Income	\$ 7,789
Actual Total Income	\$ 9,008	Budget Total Income	\$10,832
Actual Expenses	\$11,373	Budget Expense	\$11,224
Actual Net Income	(-) \$ 2,365	Budget Net Income	(-) \$ 392

Year-to-date results 1/1/2024 to 10/31/2024:

Actual Weekly Offering Income	\$ 90,685	Budget Weekly Offering Income	\$109,388
Actual Total Income	\$121,711	Budget Total Income	\$137,231
Actual Expense	\$135,111	Budget Expense	\$134,607
Actual Net Income	(-) \$ 13,400	Budget Net Income	\$ 2,624

Memorial Committee

The Memorial Committee has been designating a suggested area of interest or recipients for each quarter of the year to try to inspire ideas for Request for Memorial Funds. For this quarter of 2024, we have decided to focus on organizations that help the homeless, food banks and other groups that provide assistance with life's basic needs which many of us take for granted. With the cooler weather coming quickly, now is the time these organizations need to stock up on supplies and funds to handle the influx of clients they will see shortly. We often think of the homeless residents in Philadelphia and other large metropolitan areas but there are homeless people living in tents in Hilltown and our surrounding area. We also have people who struggle to provide three square meals a day for them and their families. Please forward any request for these groups or any other request for Memorial Funds to Judy Smith, Linda Ertel or Lou Bell.

Christmas Putz

We plan to begin a new tradition--a Moravian Christmas Putz (pronounced "poots") display. Please sign up for a Saturday afternoon of one or two hours and Sunday mornings for 90 minutes after the morning Service to welcome visitors to the Putz.

St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Hilltown Invites You to Visit Our Christmas Putz



Christmas Putz:

The Putz (rhyming with *foots*), rooted in the Moravian tradition, is a depiction of the story of Jesus' birth. It is more than a nativity scene. It is the Gospel in miniature form from Mary's annunciation to the visits of the Shepherds and Wise Men to the flight into Egypt to save baby Jesus from King Herod's murderous soldiers. It tells the story of the Nativity through music and small illuminated scenes nestled among moss, rocks, sand, and driftwood.



The Putz will be open for visiting **from Nov. 30 thru Dec. 29, Saturdays 2:00-4:00 p.m. and Sundays 10:00-11:30 a.m.**

Free, light refreshments will be served.

We will also have a craft for children to make.

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church
1530 Augsburg Drive, Hilltown, PA 18927 (near Hilltown Pike and Diamond St.)

Web page: <https://splchurch.net/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stpeterslchilltown>

PRAYER CONCERNS as of November 2024

(* = 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: *Leroy Gladfelter, *Spencer Butterwick, Kim Jerasa, Dave Reice, Heather Jerasa, Eleanor Peitzman, June Bair, Sheryl Gladfelter, Reed Jerasa, Janet Owens, Don Jerasa, Jim Lynch, Mary Ettore.

God's Healing:

Friends and family:

Paul Hershey (father of Chris Fellman), Jim Friling (cousin of Jerry & Joan Gerhart), Tom Korbas (brother-in-law of Jerry & Joan Gerhart), Marlon Cortolean (friend of Deb Detweiler), Emily Kuykendall (daughter of Bev Gottshall), Joseph Ferry, Heidi Beason and Ruth Miller (friends of Rita Bixler), Shirley Treichler (sister of Hope Garrett), Rich Welsh and John Moll (friends of Wally Simpkins), Keith Lewis (brother of Lori Lombardo), Tessa Bair (granddaughter of June Bair), Butch Trucksess (brother-in-law of Donna Blackburn), Bill Treichler (brother of Hope Garrett), David Hallman (friend of Rita Bixler), Judy Johnson (daughter of Marv & Betty Rohrs), Tammy Owens (daughter-in-law of Janet Owens), Rhelda Warriner (sister of Rita Bixler), Lindsey Hollingswoth (niece of Lori Groves), Rochelle Fly (friend of Rita Bixler), Caitlin(Cate) Fishman (relative of Lori Groves), 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** (Lutheran Community at Telford), **Esther Saylor and Tillie Murray** (Hidden Meadows on the Ridge), **Ethel Geist** (Arden Court, King of Prussia).

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

+Marie Slack, +Lorraine Leslie, Richard Bair (brother-in-law of June Bair), +Ron Beerkircher, Chase Yarns (nephew of Tammy Miskowski), Amos Good (nephew of Joan & Jerry Gerhart); Helene Bell (mother of Lou Bell), Denise J. Spier (daughter of Leroy & Shirley Gladfelter), Sara Beaumont Barton, +Kerry Keel Furiga, +Sandie Driscoll, Sue Warfield (friend of Donna Blackburn), Holly Seward (Jim Seward's sister-in-law).

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

December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9 am Worship Service Putz open 10-11:30 am	2	3	4 7 pm Advent Evening Prayer Service	5	6	7 Putz open 2 -4pm
8 9 am Worship Service 10 am-Cong. Mtg 3 pm -Recital Putz open 10-11:30 am	9	10	11 7 pm Advent Evening Prayer Service	12	13	14 Putz open 2 -4pm
15 9 am Worship Service Putz open 10-11:30 am	16 7 pm Council meeting	17 Newsletter input due	18 7 pm Advent Evening Prayer Service	19 Newsletter mailed	20	21 Putz open 2 -4pm
22 9 am Worship Service Greening of church Putz open 10-11:30 am	23	24 3 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Church office closed	26	27	28
29 9 am Lessons and Carols Service	30	31				

Monthly Assisting Ministers Calendar - December 2024

Date	Time	Usher(s)	Acolyte	Crucifer	Scripture/ Prayer	Server	Altar Guild	Counters
Dec 1 – 1st Sunday in Advent	9:00 am Service	G & E Miller	Lisa Bell	L Groves	T Daubert	P Tackett	P Abaza & E Rebnegger	P Dowse & N Driscoll
Dec 4,11,18 Advent Evening Services	7:00 pm Service							
Dec 8	9:00 am Service	S & E Rebnegger	J Seward	D Seward	K Rebnegger	S Fischer	P Abaza & E Rebnegger	
Dec 15	9:00 am Service	J & J Gerhart	Lisa Bell	P Dowse	P Abaza	Lou Bell	D & S Texter	D & S Texter
Dec 22	9:00 am Service	J & D Snyder	E Park	F Park	J Snider	P Abaza	R Bixler & L Lombardo	
Dec 24	3:00 pm Christmas Eve	See signup sheet	See signup sheet – 2 acolytes will be needed	See signup sheet	See signup sheet	See signup sheet	K Park & L Ertel	
Dec 29 Lessons & Carols Service	9:00 am Service	G & E Miller	D Texter	N Driscoll	J Smith	S Fischer	P Dowse & E Rebnegger	R Bixler & J Smith

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.