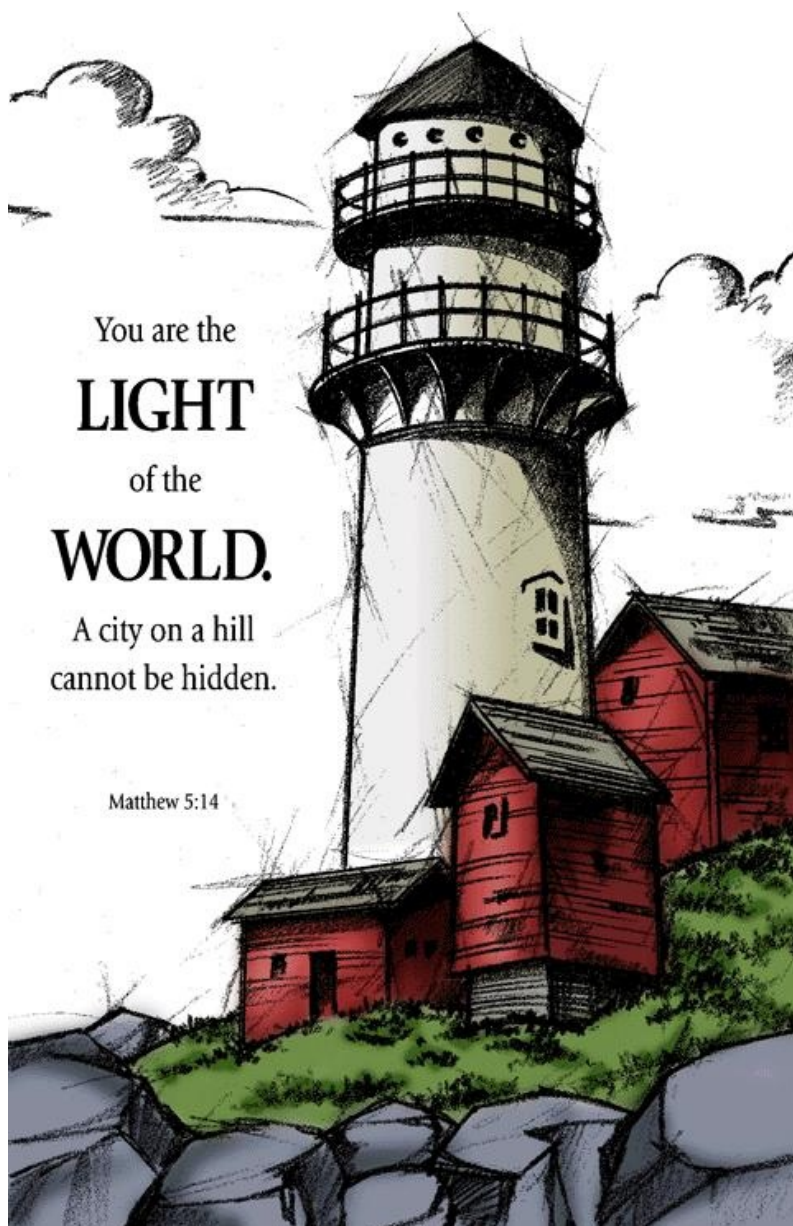


Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, February 8, 2026



*"Touched by the Gospel, we see to be instruments of God's Peace,
for the sake of the World."*

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

1747 W. Milham Avenue ♦ Portage, MI 49024

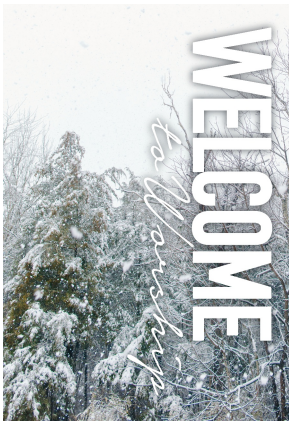
Pastor Rachel Laughlin

Church phone: 269/343-3453 ♦ fax: 269/343-2025

Website: popportage.org

Prayer-mail: prayer@popportage.org

Find us on Facebook: *Prince of Peace, Portage, MI-ELCA*



Welcome in the name of Christ

Worshiping with kids?

- ❖ We love having people of all ages and abilities worshiping together!
- ❖ There is a family restroom in the Gathering Space and a changing table in the nursery to accommodate your family's needs.
- ❖ The nursery is staffed from 9-12 on Sundays. You can drop your youngster off before faith formation or at any time during these hours.
- ❖ Children are invited forward during the Children's sermon, where they can hear the bible story told in words and context they can understand. Older siblings and other friends are welcome to accompany children if that would make them more comfortable.
- ❖ Children's bibles are available in the pews, and ushers can provide children's bulletins upon request.
- ❖ Wiggles and noise are welcome! If your child needs more room to move, feel free to take them to the Playground in the Gathering Space. This area is stocked with quiet activities, coloring pages, and kid-sized furniture. This is also a great spot to enjoy refreshments after the conclusion of the worship service!

Wondering about communion?

- ❖ We believe Christ is fully present in the meal and it is Christ who invites us to share it.
- ❖ All are welcome to share communion with us regardless of age or faith tradition.
- ❖ Gluten free bread and wafers, wine, and grape juice are available.

Want to know more about our community?

- ❖ We strive to be an open, welcoming place for all people.
- ❖ Pastor Rachel enjoys meeting people after worship but never wants anyone to feel pressured to talk to her. Come say hi!
- ❖ Visit the welcome table in the gathering space if you have questions about Lutherans, the Christian faith, or Prince of Peace; if you have a specific prayer request, or want to share your contact information so we can get back to you about something in particular.

Thank you for joining us for worship today. May God bless you and give you peace this week.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

Worshippers responses in bold.

Music for the Beginning of Worship

"Beach Spring"

arr. Mark Sedio

Welcome

Stand and face the font

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

All: **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor: Mighty God, lover of justice,

All: you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

Pastor: The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"Gather Us In"

No. 532

Greeting and Prayer of the Day

Pastor: The grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray,

All: Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Sit

The Children's Sermon

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading

Isaiah 58:1-12

Shout out; do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they want God on their side. "Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?" Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day and oppress all your workers. You fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 112:1-9

Reader: Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the Lord and have great delight in God's commandments!

High: *Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.*

Low: Wealth and riches will be in their house, and their righteousness will last forever.

High: *Light shines in the darkness for the upright; the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.*

Low: It is good for them to be generous in lending and to manage their affairs with justice.

High: *For they will never be shaken; the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.*

Low: They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; their heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.

Reader: Their heart is established and will not shrink, until they see their desire upon their enemies.

All: They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands fast forever; they will hold up their head with honor.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 2:1-12

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" — God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel Reading

Matthew 5:13-20

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 5th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot. “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

Sermon

Pastor Rachel Laughlin



1) Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, Je - sus, the Light of the World;
 2) Joy - ful, all you na - tions rise, Je - sus, the Light of the World;
 3) Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Je - sus the Light of the World;
 4) Hail the hea'vn - born Prince of Peace! Je - sus, the Light of the Word;

5 "Glo - ry to the new - born King," Je - sus, the Light of the world. __ We'll
 join the tri - umph of the skies; Je - sus, the Light of the world. __ We'll
 Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord! Je - sus, the Light of the World. __ We'll
 hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness! Je - sus, the Light of the World. __ We'll

9 walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light, come where the dew - drops of mer - cy are bright.
 walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light, come where the dew - drops of mer - cy are bright.
 walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light, come where the dew - drops of mer - cy are bright.
 walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light, come where the dew - drops of mer - cy are bright.

13 Shine all around us by day and by night, Je - sus, the Light of the world.
 Shine all around us by day and by night, Je - sus, the Light of the world.
 Shine all around us by day and by night, Je - sus, the Light of the world.
 Shine all around us by day and by night, Je - sus, the Light of the world.

Apostles' Creed

Asst: Joining the saints of every time and place, we confess our faith:

All: 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 the Church

Je - sus, name a - bove all names, beau - ti - ful

Sa - vior, glo - ri - ous Lord, Em -

man - u - el, God is with us, bles - sed Re -

deem - er, liv - ing Word.

After "Generous God," worshipers respond **"Pour out your Love."**
 Repeat **"Jesus, Name Above All Names"** after completion of the intercessory prayers.

WE SHARE IN HIS MEAL

Sharing the Peace

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: **And also with you.**

*Worshipers share a sign of God's peace with one another,
 greeting each other with words like "Peace be with you. . .and also with you"*

Sit

Offering

Please **date** and complete the fellowship registration pad

*For members of the Prince of Peace community, an offering is our expression of gratitude to God and a way we share
 God's love with the world. If you are visiting with us today, your presence is already a great gift.*

Offering Response

"This Little Light of Mine"
Stand for last verse

No. 677

Liturgical Hand Washing

*I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,
 and telling all your wondrous deeds. - Psalm 26:6-7*

Offering Prayer

Asst: God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in
 this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of
 God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Stand

Great Thanksgiving - Grace Before the Meal

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

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

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Pastor: . . . and join in their unending hymn.

Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow - er and might,
heav - en 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.

Pastor: You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all that is good; you bring joy from despair, life from death. We worship you for our lives and for the world you give us. We thank you for the new world to come and for the love that will rule all in all.

We praise you for the grace shown to Israel, your chosen, the people of your promise: the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the memory of the ancestors, the homecoming from exile, and the prophets' words that will not be in vain. In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son, who fulfilled and will fulfill all your promises.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

All: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Pastor: Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

All: Amen, amen, amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Pastor: With the confidence of the children of God, we are bold to pray:

All: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to the Meal

Pastor: If you desire to receive what God offers, come to this Table. Come with your faith and your doubt. Come with your questions and your hopes. Come with your grief and your love. Come taste the Lord's goodness. There is room for you here because this is Christ's table. You are welcome.

Sit

Holy Communion - the Lord's Supper

All are welcome at Christ's table regardless of age or membership status. All communion servers will have sanitized their hands before handling the communion elements. Ushers will direct you to come forward. The pastor and assisting minister will distribute the bread (gluten-free) and the other servers will distribute the wine (red) or grape juice (white). Individually packaged gluten free wafers and sets of completely sealed elements (wheat wafer and grape juice) are available on the stands near the bread distributors. You may pick one of those up yourself, if you prefer. You may place your empty cup in the baskets on the tables as you return to your seat.

If you would prefer not to receive communion, you are invited to come forward for a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest to indicate your preference to the servers.

Lamb of God

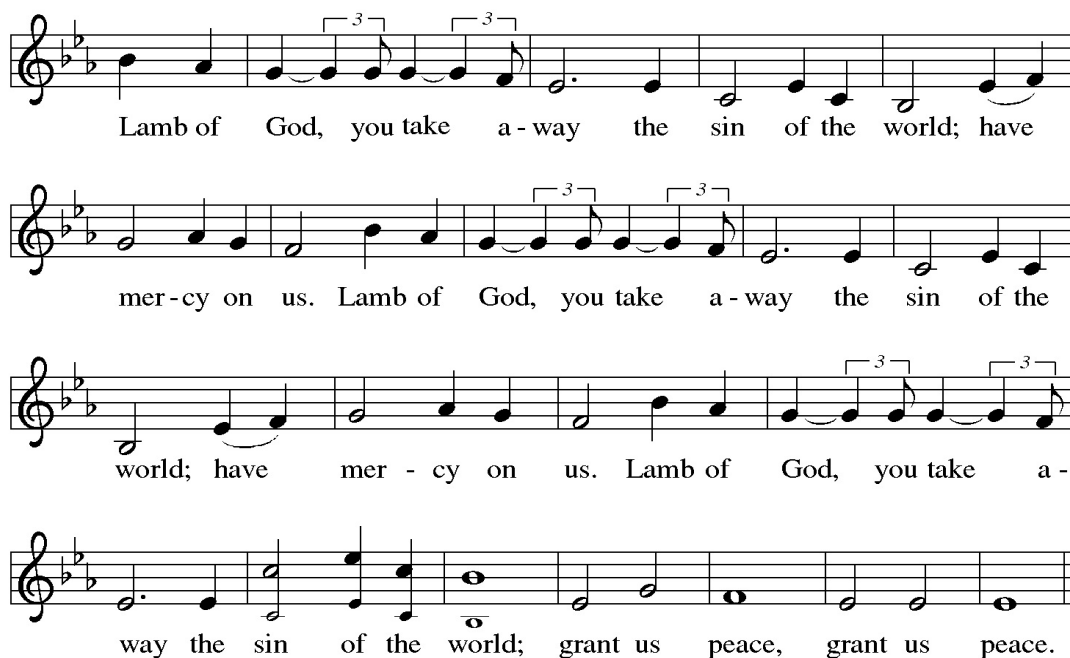


Table Blessing

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen.

Asst: Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: Amen.

Sending of Communion

Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent.

Pastor: O God, whose grace and truth are revealed in the Word-made-flesh, bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. Nourish and strengthen those who receive this holy communion, that through the body and blood of your Son, all may rejoice at his birth and in his presence among us now and forever.

All: Amen.

WE ARE SENT TO OUT TO SERVE**Announcements**

Worshipers are invited to share announcements not listed in the weekly Peace Proclamations:

*blessings: like anniversaries, birthdays, births or new jobs, prayer concerns and answered prayers. So that all present on person and livestreaming can see and hear you, **come up the ramp to the chancel then go to the pulpit** to give your announcement.*

Stand

Final Blessing

Pastor: May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise ✠ bless you now and forever.

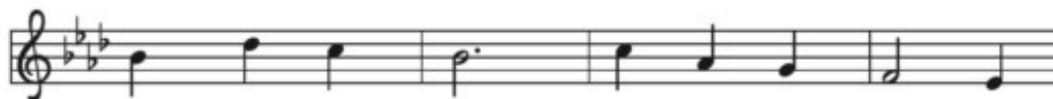
All: Amen.



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

Dismissal

Asst: Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

All: Thanks be to God.

Music for the Close of Worship

"Earth and All Stars"

arr. Michael Burkhardt

Today's Servers
February 8, 2026

Next Week's Servers
February 15, 2026

Worship Asst.: Harry Biles
Acolyte: Bette Stemaly
Reader: Darcy Banitt
Ushers: Ron & Erin Leversee
Technology: Mark Clyne, Paul Guthrie, Mike Whately
Prayer Station: Laurie Brown
Sacristy Asst.: Kathy Eklov
Communion Assts.: Gary Bischof, Randi Martin
Altar Guild: Sandy Bennett
Fellowship Host:
Fellowship Treats: Alex Baas-Peterson
Church Lockup: Judson Stemaly

Worship Asst.:
Reader: Sharey Biles
Ushers: Greg Guthrie
Technology: Jackson Seguin, Pual Swodzinski, Mike Whately
Prayer Station: Lynne Wathen
Sacristy Asst.: Marilyn Storch
Communion Assts.: Sandy Mertz
Altar Guild: Linda Timm
Fellowship Host:
Fellowship Treats: Jill Waggenger, Lynne Wathen
Church Lockup: Laurie Brown


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Hearing Aid Compatible Assistive Listening System



1. Use this  QR code connect to the "*pop_listen*" Wi-fi network.

2. Use this QR  Code to download the *Listen Everywhere* app, either from the Apple Store or the Google Play Store.



3. On your phone go to your settings. Tap on Connections, tap on Wi-fi, look for the "*pop_listen*" network and tap on it.

4. Then find your "*Listen Everywhere*" app, open it and tap on "*POP Service*"

5. After that you should be receiving audio in your hearing aids. If you need assistance, see an Usher.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Staff

Church phone: 269/343-3453

Staff

Pastor: Rachel Laughlin ext 11

Administrative Asst: Tamara Preston ext 10

Accountant: Marilyn Storch ext 14

Technology Manager: Mike Whately ext 13

Engagement Coor: Em Witteveen ext 12

Intern: Kathleen Robinson ext 15

Music Director: Janet Hill ext 16

Custodian: Steve Haddix ext 20

Nursery: Melissa Copeland & Megan Zimmerman ext 17

Care Team Email: prayer@popportage.org