



St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Highspire
Pentecost 11
August 9, 2026

Introduction

Elijah finds the presence of God not in earthquake, wind, or fire, but in the sound of sheer silence. When the disciples face a great storm on the sea, they cry out with fear. Jesus says: "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Amid the storms of life, we gather to seek the calm presence of Christ that soothes our fears. In comforting words of scripture and in the refreshing bread and cup of the eucharist, God grants us peace and sends us forth to be a sign of God's presence to others.

Overview

Silencing the Wind

In a world filled with noise and empty words, God comes to us as stillness and silence, even to the point that wind ceases (Matt. 14:32). Jesus walks over stormy waters to his disciples, entering their boat and being present with them despite their fears and doubts. Today's readings encourage us to keep our words spare and meaningful, to lay aside our little faith with its wordy worries, and to listen for God, who comes to us as quieting comfort.

The wind blows us powerfully, frighteningly, making even familiar places seem strange, stirring up the water to obscure our vision and make our journey fearful and slow. Today Jesus comes to us in our drowning panic, quickly responding to our "Lord, save me!" (v. 30). The "little faith" (v. 31) of Peter (and our little faith) is not only a chiding to "do better" in our faith lives and respond to Jesus' call with discipline. It holds room for forgiveness. Even when we risk and screw up anyway, God's hand is there to reach out and catch us.

To command even the wind to be still is a powerful thing. If a very strong wind suddenly stopped near one of us, we would probably panic, wondering who did it, whether it was the calm eye of a storm, or whether a still bigger tornado is coming. But Jesus walked out upon the water and helped Peter in his fear to return to the boat's safety and security. Jesus gives powerful reassurance and the gift of presence. God is not distant from our fears, but close to keep us safe.

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE

Juliet Mitton

The Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

ELW p. 94

P In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

*GATHERING HYMN

"Shout to the Lord"***

ELW #821

*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 O God our defender, storms rage around and within us and cause us to be afraid. Rescue your people from despair, deliver your sons and daughters from fear, and preserve us in the faith of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

The Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading: 1 Kings 19:9-18

On Mount Horeb, where God had appeared to Moses with typical signs of God's presence—earthquake, wind, and fire—Elijah now experienced God in "sheer silence." God assured Elijah that he is not the only faithful believer. Seven thousand Israelites are still loyal. God instructed Elijah to anoint two men as kings and to anoint Elisha as his own successor.

9 At [Horeb, the mount of God,][Elijah] came to a cave and spent the night there.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10 He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

11 He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, 12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. 13 When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 14 He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." 15 Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. 16 Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel, and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. 17 Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill, and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. 18 Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 85:8-13 (read responsively)

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying. (Ps. 85:8)

8 I will listen to what the Lord God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

**9 Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

**11 Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

12 The Lord will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

**13 Righteousness shall go before the Lord
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

Second Reading: Romans 10:5-15

A right relationship with God is not something we achieve by heroic efforts. It is a gift received in the proclamation whose content is Jesus Christ. This proclaimed word creates our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence Christian proclamation is an indispensable component of God's saving actions.

5 Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." 6 But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say?

"The word is near you,

in your mouth and in your heart"

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), 9 because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For one believes with the heart, leading to righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, leading to salvation. 11 The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and

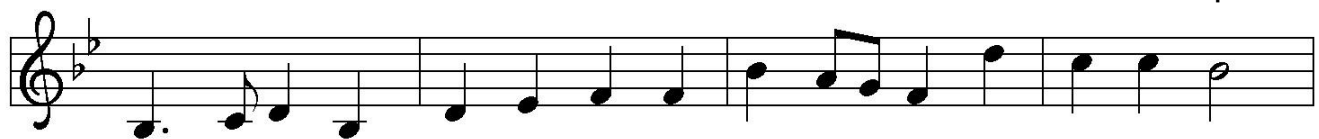
Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13 For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

14 But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? 15 And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION “Alleluia! Lord and Savior” ELW p. 205



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.

***GOSPEL Matthew 14:22-33**

Matthew's gospel typically portrays Jesus' disciples as people of "little faith," who fail despite their best intentions. In this story, Matthew shows how Jesus comes to the disciples when they are in trouble and sustains them in their time of fear and doubt.

P The holy gospel according to Matthew

C Glory to you, O Lord.

22 [Jesus] made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee,] while he dismissed the crowds. 23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24 but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. 25 And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

28 Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pastor Alex

SERMON

Pastor Alex

*HYMN OF THE DAY "Eternal Father, Strong to Save"

ELW #756

*APOSTLES CREED

ELW p.105

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 With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church,
those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

We pray for the servants of your gospel in every place, that your word
may be heard. Where your voice is scorned and your people
persecuted, strengthen the church in its faithful witness.
Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For this world you have created, that all life may flourish. Preserve biodiversity in all its variety and help ecosystems to survive the extremes of a changing climate. Move our hearts with compassion to join in this work. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For leaders of towns, states, nations, and organizations, and all who are in positions of authority, that they lead with justice and integrity. Teach us to respond with Christlike mercy to all who are afraid or in danger. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For all who struggle amid the storms of life, that they find peace and hope in your loving presence. Comfort any who are lonely and grieving and all who suffer, especially *Don Alsedek, Connie Barner, Rachel Benkovic, Rose Hoover, Samson Kennedy, Bernie Kunz, and Rob Lipsitt.* Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For this congregation and its ministries, that they reflect your love and life amid a turbulent world. Guide council members, elders, and other church leaders with your still, calm voice. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the faithful who have gone before us. Guide us in our earthly journey, that we may one day join them in your eternal kingdom. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

*PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

Hymn Sing

Hymn Sing with 3 of Our Congregations Favorites

(First and Last Verses only)

"This Is My Father's World"

ELW #824

"I Love to Tell the Story"

ELW #661

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

ELW #733

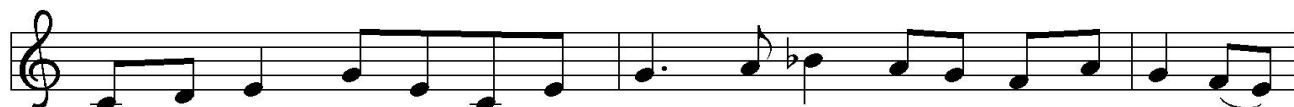
The Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*OFFERTORY HYMN

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

ELW #182



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles - sing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.

C Amen.

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW p.206

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.

*PREFACE

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,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW p.207



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.

*EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

*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.*

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C Amen.

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p.208

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

***SHARING THE MEAL**

P Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast.

COMMUNION HYMNS:

"Lamb of God"

ELW p.208

"Precious Lord Take My Hand"***

ELW #773

"Oh God, Our Help in Ages Past"

ELW #632

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.

C Amen.

The Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***BLESSING**

P Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God,
bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

C Amen.

SENDING HYMN** "What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine" ELW #774

***DISMISSAL**

A Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Juliet Mitton

We appreciate Juliet Mitton for sharing her musical talent with us this morning. Thank-you.

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Gathering Hymn - "Shout to the Lord" ELW #821 words & music - Darlene Zschech @1993 Hillsong Publishing, admin. Integrity's Hosanna! Music *** CCLI Song #1406918

Gospel Acclamation - "Alleluia! Lord and Savior" p. 205, setting 10

Hymn of the Day - "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" ELW #756

words - William Whiting music - John B. Dykes MELITA PUBLIC DOMAIN

Special Music - HYMN SING - 3 of Congregation Favorites (first & last verses)

"This Is My Father's World" ELW #824 words - Maltbie D. Babcock Music-Franklin L. Sheppard PUBLIC DOMAIN ***

"I Love to Tell the Story" ELW #661 words - Katherine Hankey music - William E. Fischer PUBLIC DOMAIN ***

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" ELW #733 words - Thomas O. Chisholm Music William M. Runyan @1923, ren. 1951 Hope Publishing Co. ***

Offertory Hymn - "Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful " ELW #182 words - John W. Arthur music - Richard Hillert @1978 Augsburg Fortress Publishers

"Holy, Holy, Holy" p.207, setting 10 ELW

Distribution of Communion - Lamb of God, p. 208 ELW

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand" ELW #773 words - Thomas A. Dorsey music - George Allen, adapt Thomas A. Dorsey @1938, 1966 Unichappell Music Inc. c/o Alfred Publishing Co., Inc. ***

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past" ELW #632 words - Isaac Watts music - William Croft ST. ANNE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Sending hymn - "What a Fellowship, What a Joy Devine" ELW #774 words - Elisha A. Hoffman music - Anthony J. Showalter PUBLIC DOMAIN***

***Congregation Favorite

St. Peter's Lutheran Church Highspire Contact Information:

Saint Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

240 Broad St., P.O. Box 97

Highspire, Pennsylvania 17034-0097

Office Phone: 717-939-3492

E-mail: stpetershighspire240@gmail.com

If you are in need of Pastoral care, please reach out to our church office at 717-939-3492 or by email at stpetershighspire240@gmail.com.

You can also reach out to Pastor Alex, at 717-434-5037.

Special Music for July, August and September

8/9/26 - Pentecost 11 - Hymn sing

8/16/26 - Pentecost 12 - Brian Keyser, solo

8/23/26 - Pentecost 13 - Caity Hawkins, solo

8/30/26 - Pentecost 14 - Hymn sing

9/6/26 - Pentecost 15 - Deb Dillane, Organ solo

Worship Participants for August 9, 2026

Presiding Minister	Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt
Music Director	Stephen Strauss
Worship Assistant	Brian Keyser
Musician	Juliet Mitton
Lector	Helene Hoch

Worship Participants for August 16, 2026

Presiding Minister	Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt
Music Director	Stephen Strauss
Worship Assistant	Karl Hawkins
Musician	Grady Daub
Lector	Mary Hunt

CENTERPIECE: Presented to the Glory of God by Layla Johnson in memory of her Great-Grandfather, Herbert Hickman. Layla's birthday and Herbert Hickman's birthday anniversary are on August 14th.

All are Welcome Bible Study

The All are Welcome Bible Study meets on Tuesday nights at 6:30pm. We are currently reading Isaiah.

We send out a weekly email with the Zoom link, as well as a brief summary of what we covered the previous week. To get the link for attending the Zoom session, or just to get on the weekly email list, please contact Matt and Mary Hunt at allarewelcomebiblestudy@gmail.com .

A Friendly reminder from Sally:

Please remember to take 1 or more Samaritan Bags to hand out to those who may be in need of this outreach .They are located in a basket in the back of the sanctuary to grab and keep available in your travels.

Come to church and stay for Fellowship every Sunday in the Parlor. Enjoy coffee and snacks and friendly conversation! If you would be interested in "Hosting a Sunday" please check the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board located in the hallway outside the Music Room/Church Office.