

THE NET

DECEMBER 2025

*“The child to be born
will be holy;
he will be called
Son of God.”*



Luke 1:35, NRSV



St. Peter's Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American

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Rev. Bettye Wolinski
Rev. Dr. Harry Wolpert, Pastor Emeritus
Mr. Elsworth Wheatley, Minister of Music
Mr. Keith Hall, Praise Team Leader
Ms. Amy Morgan, Office Manager

++Pastor's Letter to the Congregation++

by Pastor Bettye Wolinski

Friends,

The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come." - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

I begin with a quote from a favorite Lutheran Theologian who is attempting to grasp the essence of what it meant for human kind to look for and thus need a Savior from the beginning of time, the moment we were thrown out of the garden. This quote encapsulates the difficulties humankind has brought upon itself and is thus looking for someone to pull us out of our muck and mire.

The historic stories of the Old Testament beginning in Genesis tell us not only of the messes we made but of God's constant, love, care and planning to redeem us from ourselves. This Advent we will be looking at how God's plan for redemption unfolded throughout time bringing us to the moment of salvation in a manger.

Our Advent and Christmas themes are as follows:

REFLECTING ON THE SAVIOR, November 30th, ADVENT 1

Entering Advent we ask the question, "What does it mean to have a Savior?" We begin with the past promises to David and reflect on the generations of waiting.

PROMISE OF THE SAVIOR, December 7th, ADVENT 2

God's promise of a Savior to his people begins in the Old Testament. These stories have been told throughout the centuries reminding the faithful that God's promises ; real for all people.

ANTICIPATION OF THE SAVIOR, December 14th, ADVENT 3

As time passed and 42 generations waned in interest, some faithful Israelites held on to the anticipation of the coming of God's Messiah.

ANTICIPATION OF THE SAVIOR: SONGS OF PRAISE, December 21st, ADVENT 4

The songs of Mary and Zechariah heralded to the world their thanksgiving in the participation of God's promises fulfilled.

BIRTH OF THE SAVIOR, DECEMBER 24TH

"For unto us a child is born, for unto us a Savior is given"

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS, December 28th, Lessons & Carols

All are invited to share the journey to the manger with the faithful few.

All are welcome to the story of God's redemptive love!

"The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord." - Henri Nouwen
God's richest blessings to all!

Pastor Betty



++ST. PETER'S MINISTRY TEAMS++

ALTAR GUILD

by Maryanne Siegert

The Altar Guild has been and will be extremely busy with numerous parament changes, preparing for baptisms and first communions, and going into Advent season.

We will be decorating the worship center on Friday, December 5th at 9:00 am. The more hands we get to help, the quicker we finish. Watch your bulletin for dates to un-decorate in January. We do all of this with Joy.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

by Mary Lou Tietz

The Community Services Committee met on November 12th, welcoming our new members, the Ryans. We are always happy to have new members and welcome anyone else who wants to join. We meet the second Wednesday of each month at 2 following our feeding programs.

At this meeting, we reviewed our upcoming holiday programs, which include Thanksgiving dinners for those we support who are in need; and our Christmas program, where we not only provide a full dinner to the families we support throughout the year, but also give gifts to the children. We will support 7 families or couples this year and 20 children. Thanksgiving dinners will be transported to families on the 24th. The gift tree will be up in the church Narthex on November 23rd, full of Christmas stars that St. Peter's members can take to purchase a gift that is on the card and bring it back to the church by December 14th. The gifts need to be wrapped with the stars on each wrapped gift, so we know which child should receive it. Your support is much appreciated in making this a special Christmas for children in need!!

The committee also discussed a ministry that Steve Kiser and I visited that is located at the Baptist Church of Ocean City. St Peter's contributes to the

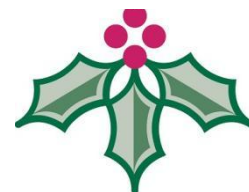
Crisis Ministry on an ongoing basis, as they counsel those who are homeless or in need of medicine, utility, and rental support, and the funds we send to them help them to meet this need. They have a very good counselor who works with them and takes referrals from St. Peter's when we come across an individual or family that can use the kind of support they are able to give. After discussing what we observed, the committee recommends increasing the amount of money we send to the Crisis Ministry and will present this to the council at its next meeting. We feel that partnering with them helps us serve them better than we could if people came to us, alone, with the same needs.

Our final discussion was the opening of our winter shelter, which opens officially on December 1 and will stay open through March. The purpose of the shelter is to provide a warm place for the homeless to sleep when temperatures are below freezing. Volunteer opportunities are open to anyone who wants to help with this life-saving program, but all volunteers must go through a training program before they help. Please call the church office if you would like to volunteer, and Amy will direct you to the right people to talk to. Last year was an especially cold winter, and we are grateful that we had the room to share with those who would be sleeping in the cold if they did not have St Peter's to come to for a warm place to stay.

Again, the type of outreach that we do through our committee is what we believe is so important in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. We could not do this without your help. Thank you, as we say so often, for your generosity. It is a true blessing.

Our next meeting will be on January 14th at the church, since we will be busy with the Christmas program in December. Please join us if you would like. We would love to have your help!

Mary Lou Tietz



OPEN DOOR FREE LUNCH MINISTRY

JOIN US FOR LUNCH ON WEDNESDAYS FROM 12-1:30 P.M.

We are serving a buffet lunch and giving out free groceries to anyone who joins us every Wednesday.

Thank you to Steve & Trish Kiser for leading the free lunch part of the Open Door Feeding Ministry; to Char Vanvick for leading the food pantry operations; our soup maker, Lee Creamer, and all the volunteers, supporters, and contributors who make this ministry possible.

We ask for your prayers, support, and volunteers are always welcome as we continue to grow and nurture this very important ministry.

FELLOWSHIP

Susanne Howard & Linda Grahe

As the cool weather settles in and the trees display breathtaking colors, we are reminded that the holiday season is quickly approaching. This time of year brings a sense of anticipation and warmth as we prepare for upcoming celebrations.

Bible Study Schedule Update:

Please note as we conclude our last two Bible studies of Acts in November, Pastor Bettye's Thursday Bible Study held in the CLC, will reconvene again in February. More information on dates and times will be shared as we get closer to the date.

St. Peter's Annual Congregation Meeting will be held on December 7, 2025, *with one service at 10:30am* (Traditional Worship Service) immediately followed by a luncheon in the CLC. You are invited to bring your favorite dessert to share with all.

We always welcome new volunteers to join the Fellowship Team and assist with preparations for various occasions. If you are interested in helping to serve St. Peter's and our community, please visit us in the CLC after services or contact Susanne Howard at 443-442-4285 or Linda Grahe at 443-614-3808.

Our Fellowship Team will continue to serve pastries, coffee, and tea after each of our services in the CLC.

God's blessings to all,
Susanne

FUND RAISING

By Linda Grahe & Susanne Howard

The Boscov's Friends Helping Friends 25% Discount Off Shopping Pass fundraiser held on Wednesday, October 22, 2025 raised a total of \$255.00 for St. Peter's Lutheran Church ministries. A BIG Thank You for your participation in this fundraiser. I hope you had a fun time shopping & maybe even started your Christmas shopping.

The O.C. Christmas Parade will take place on Saturday, December 6, 2025, starting at 11 A.M. The parade starts right in front of our church. If you would like to volunteer on this date or bake goodies for this event or for our church Christmas Bake Sale on Sunday, December 7th, please sign the sign-up sheet by the Information Desk, see me in the CLC after services, or call me at 443-614-3808. Thanks

RECYCLING

Recycling at St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

We have collected 336 empty medicine bottles (& over the counter bottles like Tylenol, vitamins, etc.) (for needy people) since October 5, 2025. Great Job!

Also, thank you for your donations of brown paper bags, plastic bags, and egg cartons. We use them as fast as they come in. Thanks

Have a Happy & Healthy Christmas & New Year!

RUTH CIRCLE

Women's Bible Study
by Joann Soult

Ruth Circle Bible study meets via Zoom on the first Thursday of the month. Our next Zoom gathering will be Thursday, December 4 at 2:00 pm. We'll finish "He Chose the Nails" by Max Lucado, studying Chapters 14 and 15 with Joann Soult leading (202-544-7981) or (jsoult624@gmail.com). Join us!

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY (S.A.M.)

by Susanne Howard & Bridget Foster

As the weather turns colder and the air becomes crisp, we sense that 2025 is ending, with Christmas

fast approaching. The Senior Adult Ministry is excited to announce one final big trip to end the year.

Thursday, December 4th – Clear Space Theatre, 11:00am showing of “A Christmas Carol” and lunch at Victoria’s. *A Christmas Carol* is a story that has defined the holiday season for generations, retold as a gorgeous, joy-filled musical for all ages to enjoy. After the show, we will enjoy lunch at Victoria’s Restaurant consisting of: First Course, Roasted Beet Salad, Entrée choice of: 1) Center-Cut Pork Chop, 2) Steak Frites, 3) Upside Down Chicken Pot Pie, 4) Sautéed Jumbo Shrimp. A delicious dessert will follow. Sign-up sheets and menu choice sheets are available on the Senior Adult Ministry bulletin board. Don’t forget to fill out your menu choice and include it with your payment and drop in the plate offering by Sunday, November 9th. Please make your check out to St. Peter’s and in the memo, line put “A Christmas Carol.” The cost of the trip is \$65 pp. We have purchased 50 tickets and have only 2 seats left. You don’t want to miss this fun filled afternoon of fellowship and laughter along with a delicious meal.

The Senior Adult Ministry is committed to providing enriching experiences that foster fellowship and connection. Members are encouraged to check the bulletin board regularly for updates and to reach out with suggestions or questions. Whether through historical tours, lively musicals, or festive outings, the ministry strives to create fellowship and memorable moments for all participants.

We warmly invite all members to attend future meetings and encourage everyone to bring their ideas and information about trips and outings. Our next meeting will be held on December 15, 2025, at 1:00pm in room 5. Everyone is welcome!

God’s Blessings to all,
Susanne

SON & SAND RETREAT CENTER

by Paul Grahe

It’s December, and we have come to a close of another blessed year for our retreat center. I am happy to report I was able to transfer \$17,000.00 from the Son & Sand Account to the Church General Fund. Also, many members have come forward to be trained as Son & Sand Greeters: Charlie & Vonnie Brown, Bob & Dianna Detwiler, Cyndi Gradwell, Betty Jubb, and Gene & Tina Palmer. I want to thank Susanne Howard for training these individuals. As I have said in the past, this ministry would

not be possible without their service. I want to thank them for their time and talents.

I direct your attention to my annual report for a more detailed report on the retreat center. It takes a group of dedicated support people to help keep the retreat center up and running. I thank them for their assistance.

Looking toward 2026, we have received 7 inquiries for dates. Some are repeats and some are new groups interested in coming on retreat.

As always, if you would like to learn more about this ministry I am available in the CLC on Sundays or you may email me at p.grahe@comcast.net or call me at 443-604-8068.

Blessed Christmas & Happy New Year!

WITNESS

by Evelyn Houston

It’s Advent. We wait to celebrate the hope and joy of the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. In the meantime, our lives continue, complete with injuries, illness, relationships, struggles, financial difficulties, work-related stress, and social and political upheaval. But perhaps today I will make a point to look beyond myself and beyond the worries of the moment.

Whatever you face this day, it is real; God sees it and sees you. Jesus knows your pain, be it physical or emotional, because He suffered the depths of human pain as well. But to the extent that we can do so, looking forward to Christmas amid difficult circumstances may prove to be a God-given tool for navigating tough times.

The world and our human wills pull at us continually, drawing us away from God’s ways. It’s easy to focus on personal wants and needs, petty disagreements, and material cravings, rather in the lives of love and service that we are calling to. Yet God comes to us again and again in love **and mercy and provides His word, and His Holy Spirit to teach and guide us. And although we stumble, He never gives up on us.**

During Advent, as we await the celebration of God **entering humanity, we are bombarded with messages, not of Christmas, but of the commercial consumerist, materialistic “Xmas.” In Word and Spirit, the Lord can draw us back to the miracle of His birth, which itself was an act of love, mercy and Service and all it means for learning and living in His ways.**

May this Christmas season bring you new reasons to love Him, new reasons to praise Him, and new reasons to thank Him for his love and faithfulness.

go above and beyond to give identified families a wonderful Christmas. As President of the Church Council, I cannot thank you enough for supporting this wonderful cause as we continue to meet the Mission of our Church.



++ ST. PETER'S NEWS ++

A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

by David Marzola

God's Peace and Blessings to the Congregation of St. Peter's Lutheran Church

I hope and pray that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving with Family and Friends. Now that the fall Holidays are behind us, we now prepare for the Advent Season to include the Birth of our Risen Savior Jesus Christ.

Just a reminder, the Call Committee Congregation Survey is due by December 5, 2025. If you have not submitted the survey, please take time to complete the survey and mail back or submit in person at church by December 5th. This survey is critical for completing the St. Peter's Mission Site Profile, which is a requirement for the Call Process.

While this is a busy season for everyone, the Church Council will hold our annual Congregation Meeting on Sunday, December 7th. During the meeting we will review and vote on our proposed 2026 Budget, vote on 2026 Council members, and provide an update on the Call Process. I hope that you can attend.

On December 6th, we will be conducting our annual fundraiser during the Ocean City Christmas Parade. The Fundraising Committee will be seeking baked good donations from the congregation as well as volunteer support for the day of the event. Any assistance you can provide will be deeply appreciated.

During the month, leading up to Christmas Day, the Community Service Ministry Team will again be identifying families in need during Christmas. Each and every year our congregation has given their treasures to support families with Christmas dinners and gifts for the children of the identified families. This year has found many families facing hardships and need our support and love. The members of St. Peter's Lutheran Church continue to

One year ago, during the Christmas season, our church was in peril as our retired and beloved Pastor Harry and Deacon Sharey moved to be closer to family and our senior Pastor, Pastor Frank decided to resign. This was a tough time for our Church. The Advent season was upon us, and we lost our Pastoral Leadership. This year is different! As I promised you, St. Peter's Lutheran Church is moving forward! We are blessed to have Pastor Bettye as our Interim Pastor. The Council is working in unison as a team. Our Call Committee is working hard to ensure our Mission Site Profile is completed with your input. Our congregation is growing with new members. This Advent season will be a Joyous season for all.

In closing, several members of our church family may be traveling to be with loved ones to celebrate the Christmas Holiday. Keep in mind what Christmas stands for, the birth of Jesus. Sing Happy Birthday to Jesus on December 25th. I hope and pray that each of you and your families have a safe and wonderful Christmas Holiday.

Sincerely,
David Marzola

AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

October - 76 per week (4 weeks)

MONTHLY CONTRIBUTION TOTALS

Total Contributions as of August 31, 2025
\$325,055.92 Year-to-Date Budget
\$320,101.46 Year-to-Date Received
(\$-4,954.46)Year-to-Date Difference

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OUR CURRENT REALITY AT ST. PETER'S

Life at St. Peter's

Our worship schedule offers a Contemporary Worship Service at 9:00 a.m. and a Traditional Worship Service at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday. We are offering Holy Communion at both services, handing you the bread and pouring red wine into your cup. We also have gluten free wafers and pre-filled cups of white grape juice for those who request/require them. Those who are not comfortable sharing in Holy Communion in this fashion are still in full Communion through the words of promise.

You are encouraged to share the "Peace of God" in whatever way you feel comfortable.

Both Services are in the Sanctuary with coffee and refreshments available in the CLC before and after each service.

Masks are not required for anyone, but you are encouraged to wear a mask if you are more comfortable doing so. Masks are available at the Greeter's Desk.

Hand sanitizer – available throughout the building.

We are looking for someone who would be willing to help with live streaming.

Please contact the church office if you have any questions



OTHER GATHERINGS, EVENTS, AND GROUPS

The church building is open for in-house meetings and choir practices.

St. Peter's Council meetings are being held in person.

Ministry Teams are meeting in whatever way they are most comfortable; either in person or via Zoom.

The building is open for outside groups. Those meetings/gatherings must make reservations coordinated through the church office.

Church office hours are Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. and Fridays 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Please contact Amy via phone, text, or email **during these hours.**

We will continue to stay connected and keep you updated with concerns and changes via the Constant Contact email system, the Call Multiplier automated prayer chain, and by mail for those who are not electronically connected.

We thank you for your continued support and partnership in the mission and ministries at St. Peter's.

ALTAR FLOWERS & COMMUNION ELEMENTS



If you would like to sponsor flowers for a Sunday morning worship service *in Memory* or *in Honor* of a loved one, you may do so by calling the church office to make those arrangements. The cost for both vases is \$95.

You may also sponsor Communion Elements for a particular Sunday in the same manner. The donation for sponsoring elements is \$20. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

MINISTRY OF THE MONTH

**Our November Ministry of the Month is
"Open Door Feeding."**



Due to effects of the government shut down and general need, our December Ministry of the Month is our "Open Door Feeding and Pantry Ministry." This is one way that we live out our Mission "To Feed the Physically and Spiritually Hungry in the world." We are blessed to serve weekly meals, as well as handing out many bags of

groceries to our Neighbors who don't have enough to eat. We ask you to prayerfully consider giving a special offering in December to help support this life saving ministry. Please mark your donation "Open Door Feeding Ministry." Each time you sit down for a meal, please pray for those who don't have enough to eat or someone to share it with.

Thank you for your support!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Karen Jones	12/04	Peggy Ellerman	12/19
Patricia Searle	12/05	Dianna Detwiler	12/20
Roger Hartmiller, Jr.	12/09	Frederick Kauffman	12/20
Carol Zimmerman	12/10	James Starck	12/21
Lindsay Myers	12/12	Voncella Brown	12/27
David Marzola, Jr.	12/17	Evan McDermott	12/29
Carol Lee Bell	12/19	Ted Vanvick	12/30
		Patti McDermott	12/31

CAN YOU HELP GIVE A RIDE?



We are looking for folks who are able to give other rides to worship or

medical appointments. If you are able to help with this from time to time please call the church.

We are also looking for a contact person to help coordinate rides when the need arises. If you are willing to be that person, please call the church office.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this very important ministry.



GIFTS & MEMORIALS



None Received in October

++NEWS OF THE CONGREGATION++



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Richard & Amy Gutowski	12/01
Beverly & Bill Jester	12/04
Frederick & May Lou Kauffman	12/27
Gary & Pamela Wagner	12/31

PRAYER CHAIN AND PRAYER LIST

I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.
Ephesians 1:16

The “**Call Multiplier**” automated prayer chain continues to be a valuable resource and blessing. If you, or someone you know, is in need of prayer, please text or call **Pastor Bettye at 410-292-2360** to have a prayer request sent out. If you are requesting prayer for someone else, you **MUST** have his/her permission before sending out the request. We can share as much, or as little, information as you want to be shared. When you receive a prayer call, you are asked to pause and offer prayer for the need presented. You are then asked to continue to hold that person/need in prayer. The Automated Prayer Chain will be active daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Please let Pastor Bettye know if you are not receiving the prayer calls and would like to be.

St. Peter’s prayer list: In order to keep our prayer list up to date, names that are on the prayer list (that are published in the newsletter and bulletins) will remain on the list for **one** month. If after that month, there is still a need for that person to be held in prayer, you will need to let the church office know so we can put the name back on for another month. While we want to be praying for everyone who needs our prayers, we also have to be able to keep that list current and up to date. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Hiewsky, Bob Swingler, Sandy Holthe, Mary Haynes, Sue Shoop, Terri Wheatley, Lynn Benach grandbaby due Jan, Ginny Hartmuller, Marjorie Hagood, Bob Coyner, Paul Tishuk, Pr. Harry & Carol Wolpert, Savannah Bona, Melissa Jester, Dex Stannard, Chuck Pyle, Matt Harry, Dan Barnhart, Mary Ann Holtzer, Dave Searle, Jen Anderson

Assisted Living: Fred Deily, Mim Fritz, Violet Green, Elsie Koehler, Betty Romig

In the Military: Justin Carter, Cal Cramer, Katie Cramer, Stephanie Dalocchio, Matthew Dennis, Noah Kauffman, Nicolas Nalbene, David Owens, Jarrett Patterson, Joshua Robinson, Nicholas Sorrentino, Jacob Sturgill

Our Bishops: Yahiel Curry & Bill Gohl

G-4 Church Partners:

- Community Lutheran Church (Frankford, DE)*
- Grace of God Lutheran Church (Longneck, DE)*
- Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church (Salisbury, MD)*
- St. Albans Episcopal Church*



PRAYER CONCERNS



Permission is needed to use your full name when publishing your request for prayers in both the bulletin and newsletter. Call the office.

Current needs: Family & Friends of Pat Pfannenstiel, Nancy Williams, St. Peter’s Call Committee, Dave Marzola, Nathan, Rachel Vaughn, Dyonna, Brenda Scheminant, Ava & Amelia Cuncell, Ada May Shipley & family, Mia Schultz, Brian Randall, Pat Trate & Patti Stevens, Nancy Starr, Chris Evans, Karen Southard

Ongoing needs: Caregivers, first responders and all on the front lines working to save lives, Bonnie



2025 COUNCIL

++FROM ST. PETER'S OFFICE++

**PASTORAL EMERGENCIES
CONTACT
PASTOR BETTYE
For emergencies or after hours
(c) 410-292-2360**

Pastor Betty Wolinski
President - Dave Marzola
Vice President - Mary Lou Tietz
Secretary - Susanne Howard
Treasurer - Dave Wolinski (Non-Voting member)
Financial Secretary -
Vonnie Brown, Marcie Ermer, Billy Haynes,
Jeannette Latzo, Evan McDermott, Tina Palmer,
Theresa Pyle, Mike Siegert, Charlene Vanvick

MINISTRY TEAMS & LEADERS

FROM THE OFFICE
Please inform the church office of any changes in your personal information: mailing address, email address, phone numbers, marriage, divorce, or new births so we can keep our records up-to-date

Altar Guild - **Maryanne Siegert**
Christian Education - **Pastor Bettye Wolinski**
Community Service - **Mary Lou Tietz**
Fellowship - **Susanne Howard**
Fundraising - **Linda Grahe**
Mutual Ministry -
Open Door Feeding Ministry - **Char Vanvick**
Personnel - **Vonnie Brown**
Property - **Steve Germeroth**
Senior Adult Ministry (S.A.M.) - **Briget Foster & Susanne Howard**
Son & Sand - **Paul Grahe**
Stewardship/Support - **Phil Ermer**
Witness - **Evelyn Houston**
Women of ELCA - **Evelyn Houston**
Worship and Music -

OFFICE HOURS

**Monday-Thursday
9:00am - 3:00pm**

**Friday
9:00am-1:00pm**

STAFF

The Rev. Bettye Wolinski,
emwolinski@msn.com
The Rev. Dr. Harry Wolpert, Pastor Emeritus
handcoc2003@yahoo.com
Mr. Elsworth Wheatley, Minister of Music
Wheatleymusic@aol.com
Mr. Keith Hall, Praise Team Leader
Soulendeavors.keith@gmail.com
Ms. Amy Morgan, Office Manager
amy.splcoc@comcast.net



DECEMBER BIBLE LESSONS

Sunday, December 7 2nd Sunday of Advent	Genesis 22:1-8 Psalm 91 Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7 Luke 1:5-25
Sunday, December 14 3rd Sunday of Advent	Luke 1:26-38 Psalm 16 Luke 1:39-45 Matthew 1:18-25
Sunday, December 21 4th Sunday of Advent	Luke 1:67-79 Psalm 145 (No second lesson) Luke 1:46-56
Wednesday, December 24 Christmas Eve	Micah 5:2-5a Psalm 96 Luke 2:1-7 Luke 2:8-21
Sunday, December 28 1st Sunday after Christmas	Isaiah 63:7-9 Psalm 148 Matthew 2:1-12 Matthew 2:19-23

