

Bethesda Episcopal Church

The Confession of St Peter

18 January 2026

8.00 Holy Communion

*The order of service is printed on the laminated card.
The Reading, Gospel, and Prayers of the People can be found below.*

10.00 Sung Eucharist

Organ

All stand as the choir and ministers enter.

The Entrance Hymn #522

From the Hymnal 1982

The Celebrant says

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Gloria in excelsis

Healey Willan (1880-1968)

Glo - ry be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

We praise thee, we bless thee, we wor - ship thee, we glo - ri - fy

thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glo - ry, O Lord

God, heaven - ly King, God the Fa - ther Al -

might - - y. O Lord, the on - ly be-got-ten

Son, Je - sus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the

Fa - ther, that ta - kest a - way the sins of the world, have mer - cy up -

on us. Thou that ta - kest a - way the sins of the world, re - ceive our

prayer. Thou that sit - test at the right hand of God the Fa - ther, have

mer - cy up - on us. For thou on - ly art ho - ly;

thou on - ly are the Lord; thou on - ly, O Christ, with the Ho - ly

Ghost, art most high in the glo - ry of God the

Fa - ther. A - - - - -

men.

Remain standing.

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.**

Let us pray. Almighty Father, who didst inspire Simon Peter, first among the apostles, to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the living God: Keep thy Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith, that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

All sit.

The First Reading

Acts 4: 8-13

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved." Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Remain seated. The Choir sings

The Gradual Psalm 23

John Goss (1800-1880)

The LORD is my shepherd; * I shall not be in want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures * and leads me beside still waters.

He revives my soul * and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

The Second Reading

1 Peter 5:1-4

As an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it-- not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

All stand.

The Alleluia



Verse: : I have prayed for thee, O Peter, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. **Alleluia.**

Remain standing.

The Holy Gospel

St Matthew 16:13-19

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.
Glory be to thee, O Lord.

When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

The Sermon

Fr Kriss

After the sermon, all stand.

The Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible;
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God;
begotten, not made;
being of one substance with the Father;
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,**

and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried:
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;
and he shall come again, with glory,
to judge both the quick and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;
who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

All kneel.

The Prayers of the People

In our prayers today, we remember the Anglican Church in the Province of the Congo, and in our diocese, Bishop Williamson and the people of St Peter's, Albany. We ask God's blessing on those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week; and those whose year's mind falls at this time.

Let us now join our prayers with those of our Savior Jesus Christ, seeking the Father's blessing, and the gifts of the Spirit, saying, Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, our great high priest, living for ever to intercede for us, pray for the Church, your broken body in the world. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, king of righteousness, enthroned at the right hand of your majesty on high, pray for this troubled world, and make it subject to your just and gentle rule. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, Son of Man, drawing humanity into the life of God, pray for your brothers and sisters in any need, distress or sorrow, especially Joe, Rolfe, David, Holly, Julie, Eric and Bethany. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, pioneer of our salvation, bringing us to glory through your death and resurrection, surround with your saints and angels those who have died trusting your promises. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, Lord over all things, ascended far above the heavens and filling the universe, pray for us who bear witness to your glory and power. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Celebrant: Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

The Confession and Absolution

Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against thee
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved thee with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in thy will,
and walk in thy ways,
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.**

The Celebrant says the Absolution.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All stand. During the exchange of the Peace, you may greet those around you in the name of the Lord.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And with thy spirit.**

Hymn at the Offertory #248

From the Hymnal 1982

Remain standing.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up unto the Lord.
Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
It is meet and right so to do.

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Through the great shepherd of thy flock, Jesus Christ our Lord; who after his resurrection sent forth his apostles to preach the Gospel and to teach all nations; and promised to be with them always, even unto the end of the ages. Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying,

The Sanctus and Benedictus

Healey Willan (1880-1968)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - - - ly, Lord God of Hosts:
Hea-ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo - ry be to
thee, O Lord Most High. Bless - ed is he that com - eth in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

All kneel.

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory. And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and

bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen.**

Our Father

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Fraction

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Prayer of Humble Access

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Communion is administered at the altar rail. Please move at the direction of the ushers.

The Agnus Dei from Communion Service in F William H. Harris (1883-1973)

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Motet Robert L. Pearsall (1795-1856)

Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam.
You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. (Matthew 16.18)

Hymn #234 (Remain seated or kneeling) From the Hymnal 1982

After Communion, all kneel.

The Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. **Almighty and ever living God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us**

thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Blessing and Dismissal

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Closing Hymn #555

From the Hymnal 1982

Organ

Notices

Welcome to Bethesda Church. Thank you for joining us this morning. If you are interested in becoming a member of the parish, please introduce yourself to an usher, or complete the form on the back page.

Thank you to Fr Gary Kriss for celebrating and preaching this morning, and to those reading and leading prayers: Lynne Priestley at 8am; Stephanie Lein and Judy Aronstamm at 10am.

Join us for **coffee and fellowship** following the 10am service. If you are able to provide refreshments in January and/or February 2026, sign your name on the sheet in the narthex.

Parish Office The office is open this week: Tuesday and Wednesday from 10-12.30pm; and Thursday 1pm– 3.30pm.

Our Annual Parish Meeting will take Sunday 1st February place following the 10am Sung Eucharist.

Holy Communion on Thursdays will resume on 5 February.

Special Monthly Envelope for January. The special monthly envelope for the month of January assists the church with the cost of fuel during the winter months. We are grateful for your assistance and generosity.

Forward Day by Day The latest edition of *Forward Day by Day* is available on the back table. Copies are \$2 each.

LAST DAY! Cathedral in Bloom from 16-18 January is the area's premier flower show. Enjoy the glory of the architecture of The Cathedral of All Saints in Albany combined with

the talents of the some of the Capital Region's and northeast's artists with dozens of displays, workshops and presentations will be offered by floral professionals. Guided and self-guided tours, a café, and a flower market will welcome you, along with organ recitals with music inspired by flowers. For tickets: cathedralofallsaints.org/cathedral-in-bloom

LifeWorks Community Action is a non-profit established in 1965 that works to alleviate poverty by assisting local families and individuals with a wide range of services. Bethesda is currently collecting canned foods (including those low in salt, fat & sugar and gluten free) and personal hygiene products (soap, toothpaste/brushes, shampoo, razors, shaving cream, deodorant). Donations may be left in the box by the side door entrance.

Parking The lot adjacent to the church, which is accessible via Congress Street, offers free parking for the first two hours.

Today's Feast: Confession of St Peter

When Jesus' disciple Simon confessed, "You are the Christ," Jesus responded, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." This fisherman and his brother Andrew were the first disciples called by Jesus. Peter figures prominently in the Gospels, often stumbling, impetuous, intense, and uncouth. It was Peter who attempted to walk on the sea, and began to sink; it was Peter who impulsively wished to build three tabernacles on the mountain of the Transfiguration; it was Peter who, just before the crucifixion, three times denied knowing his Lord. But it was also Peter who, after Pentecost, risked his life to do the Lord's work, speaking boldly of his belief in Jesus. It was also Peter - the Rock - whose courage helped the young church in its questioning about the mission beyond the Jewish community. Opposed at first to the baptism of Gentiles, he had the humility to admit a change of heart, and to baptize the Roman centurion Cornelius and his household. Even after this, Peter had a continuing struggle with his conservatism, for Paul, writing to the Galatians, rebukes him for giving way to the demands of Jewish Christians to dissociate himself from table-fellowship with Gentiles.

Though the New Testament makes no mention of it, the tradition connecting Peter with Rome is early and credible. According to a legend based on that tradition, Peter fled from Rome during Nero's persecution. On the Appian Way, he met Christ, and asks, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "I am coming to be crucified again." Peter thereupon retraced his steps, and was shortly thereafter crucified, head downwards. "I am not worthy to be crucified as my Lord was," he is supposed to have said. As we watch Peter struggle and stumble, love his Lord and deny him, speak rashly and act impetuously, his life reminds us that Jesus Christ did not come to save the godly and strong but to save the weak and the sinful.

Simon, an ordinary human being, was transformed by the Holy Spirit into the "Rock," and became the leader of the Church. Since 1908, the eight days between the feast of the Confession of Saint Peter and the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul have been observed ecumenically as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

From Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2024



Saint Peter
Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652)

This early work by Ribera (also known as Lo Spagnoletto) who was Spanish by birth but spent his career in Italy, is first mentioned in Rome in 1644 in the collection of Cardinal Benedetto Monaldi Baldeschi. The painting shows Saint Peter after he has denied Christ, his eyes red with tears and his hands clasped in prayer. The figure's pose embodies the crushing weight of his sin. Seen as a form of confession, such dramatic shedding of tears became central to Catholic devotional practices and was praised in poetry and song.

From the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



Please place this form in the collection plate if you would like us to get in touch with you:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Home address: _____

Preferred contact method: _____

Contact Reasons:

- ☐ Visitor or new resident
- ☐ Would like more information about the church and/or worship
- ☐ Interested in opportunities to serve
- ☐ Would like to speak with or have a visit from the priest
- ☐ Would like information about pledge envelopes or regular giving to Bethesda
- ☐ Other _____

The Reverend Charles Wallace, Rector

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