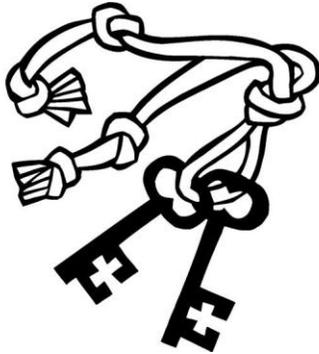




St. John's of Hatboro

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Faith - Service - Community



Second Sunday after Epiphany

Confession of Peter

January 18, 2026

The Good News for Today: The gates of hell will not withstand Christ's church.

Thank you for worshiping with us at St. John's. Please fill out your yellow attendance card and place it in the offering plate when we collect the offering later in the service.

Peter's confession, that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," is rock solid. Jesus is the stone rejected by the builders that has become the cornerstone. The psalmist celebrates God as "my rock in whom I put my trust." Paul refers to Christ as the "spiritual rock" that followed the children of Israel in the wilderness. Even the Greek petros, from which Peter's name comes, means stone. The assembly gathers again today to honor the Son of the living God and longs to be recognized as companions of Jesus.

Gathering Music

STAND

Hymn: Arise, Your Light Has Come! — ELW 314 (Red Book)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Arise, your light has come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.</p> <p>2 Arise, your light has come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.</p> | <p>3 Arise, your light has come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.</p> <p>4 Arise, your light has come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.</p> |
|---|--|

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

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Confession and Forgiveness

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.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Mighty God, lover of justice,

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.

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.

Amen.

Welcome & Greeting

Welcome to St. John's, where we are building a loving, accepting community centered on growing in Christ, and giving people a place to belong at any stage of their journey with God.

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

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray... Almighty God, you inspired Simon Peter to confess Jesus as the Messiah and Son of the living God. Keep your church firm on the rock of this faith, so that in unity and peace it may proclaim one truth and follow one Lord, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

SIT

The Readings

Isaiah 49:1-7

Here the servant, identified as Israel, speaks for herself and describes her honored mission. Called before her birth like Jeremiah and John the Baptist, the servant is not only to restore Israel. The servant's ultimate assignment is to bring news of God's victory to the ends of the earth. God in faithfulness has chosen Israel for this task.

The first reading is from the forty-ninth chapter of Isaiah:

¹ Listen to me, O coastlands;
pay attention, you peoples from far away!
The Lord called me before I was born;
while I was in my mother's womb he named me.

² He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
³ And he said to me, “You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”
⁴ But I said, “I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my cause is with the Lord
and my reward with my God.”
⁵ And now the Lord says,
who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of the Lord,
and my God has become my strength—
⁶ he says,
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”
⁷ Thus says the Lord,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,
the slave of rulers,
“Kings shall see and stand up;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,
because of the Lord, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

The Word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 40:1-11

We will now read responsively from Psalm 40:

- ¹ I waited patiently upon the Lord,
who stooped to me and heard my cry.
- ² **The Lord lifted me out of the desolate pit, out of the miry clay,
and set my feet upon a high cliff, making my footing sure.**
- ³ The Lord put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God;
many shall see, and stand in awe, and put their trust in the Lord.
- ⁴ **Happy are they who trust in the Lord!
They do not turn to enemies or to those who follow lies.**

⁵ Great are the wonders you have done, O Lord my God! In your plans for us, none can be compared with you!

Oh, that I could make them known and tell them! But they are more than I can count.

⁶ **Sacrifice and offering you do not desire; you have opened my ears: burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required.**

⁷ And so I said, “Here I am; I come.
In the scroll of the book it is written of me:

⁸ **‘I love to do your will, O my God; your law is deep within me.’”**

⁹ I proclaimed righteousness in the great assembly;
I have not restrained my lips, O Lord, you know.

¹⁰ **I have not hidden your righteousness in my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your deliverance; I have not concealed your steadfast love and truth from the great assembly.**

¹¹ You are the Lord; do not withhold your compassion from me;
may your steadfast love and your truth continually keep me safe.

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Though God’s church in Corinth is a fractious congregation beset with many conflicts, Paul opens this letter by spotlighting the multiple ways God has enriched and sustained its life as part of the divine call into the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The second reading is from the first chapter of First Corinthians:

¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

² To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶ just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: Built on a Rock — ELW 652 (Red Book)

- 1 Built on a rock the church shall stand,
even when steeples are falling;
crumbled have spires in ev'ry land,
bells still are chiming and calling—
calling the young and old to rest,
calling the souls of those distressed,
longing for life everlasting.
- 2 Surely, in temples made with hands
God the Most High is not dwelling—
high in the heav'ns his temple
stands,
all earthly temples excelling.
Yet God who dwells in heav'n above
deigns to abide with us in love,
making our bodies his temple.
- 3 Christ builds a house of living stones:
we are his own habitation;
he fills our hearts, his humble
thrones,
granting us life and salvation.
Where two or three will seek his face,
he in their midst will show his grace,
blessings upon them bestowing.
- 4 Yet in this house, an earthly frame,
Jesus the children is blessing;
hither we come to praise his name,
faith in our Savior confessing.
Jesus to us his Spirit sent,
making with us his covenant,
granting his children the kingdom.
- 5 Through all the passing years, O
Lord,
grant that, when church bells are
ringing,
many may come to hear your Word,
who here this promise is bringing:
"I know my own, my own know me;
you, not the world, my face shall see;
my peace I leave with you. Amen."

Text: Nicolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872; tr. Carl Doving, 1867-1937, adapt.
Text © 1958 *Service Book and Hymnal*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

The Apostles' Creed

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

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

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, gather the church into one great fellowship. Equip your people to work together for justice and peace, following the example of Martin Luther King Jr., renewer of society, whose birth we remember this week. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Creating God, sustain the web of life on this planet. Protect wild places, endangered species, and vulnerable habitats. Come to the aid of those affected by natural disasters. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Just God, you desire respect and equality for everyone. Raise up prophets who speak truth to the nations. Embolden leaders and those in authority to advocate for people in need. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Healing God, you lift up those who are bowed down by trouble, oppression, or illness. Bring an end to social injustice and inequities of every kind, so that all people may have abundant life. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Abiding God, you are present with this congregation. Keep us mindful of our mission and guide our ministries in this community. Kindle in us a desire to help one another. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Faithful God, you promise to be with us always. We remember with gratitude the faithful departed who now rest in you. Strengthen us to the end, that we may see you face to face. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share a sign of peace with one another.

SIT

Announcements

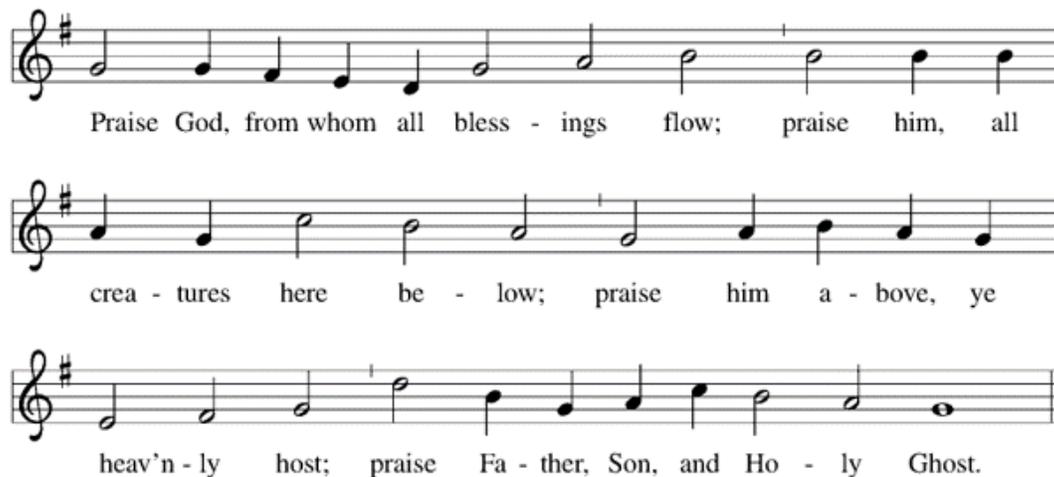
Printed copies of our weekly announcements are available at the usher's stand in the Narthex, and monthly newsletters are on the Hospitality Table. Please include your email address on your yellow attendance card to receive announcements electronically.

Children's Message

Offering

STAND

Offertory Hymn:



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Offering Prayer

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.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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. In being baptized by John in Jordan's waters, Jesus took his place with sinners, and your voice proclaimed him as your Son. Like a dove, the Spirit descended upon him, anointing him as the Christ, to bring good news to the poor and proclaim release to the captives, to restore sight to the blind and free the oppressed. We praise you that in our baptism we are joined to Christ and, with all the baptized, are called to share his ministry. Therefore we join our voices with all the baptized through all times and places, as well as all creation, both visible and invisible, to proclaim the glory of your name:

Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r 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.

Eucharistic Prayer

Without any doubt, the mystery of godliness is great:

Christ was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.

While on earth, to the very end, Jesus loved those whom he had been given, and prayed that his love, his joy, and his closeness with his heavenly Father might be in them. On the night he was betrayed, he took bread, and having blessed it, he broke it and gave it to his beloved friends, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body which was given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took wine and, having given thanks for it, poured it out and gave the cup to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you. This is my blood which is poured out for you and for all. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

God, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

Amen.

And now, as Christ our Savior has taught us, we are bold to pray:

The Lord's Prayer

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.

SIT

Invitation to Communion

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table; taste and see.

Distribution of the Elements

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.

STAND

Post-Communion Blessing

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you keep you in his Grace.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

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.

Amen.

Blessing

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

Amen.

Hymn: Brightest and Best of the Stars — ELW 303 (Red Book)

- 1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.
- 2 Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining;
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
angels adore him in slumber reclining,
maker and monarch and savior of all.
- 3 What shall we give him, in costly devotion?
Shall we bring incense and off'rings divine,
gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?
- 4 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
vainly with gifts would his favor secure;
richer by far is the heart's adoration,
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.
- 5 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.

Text: Reginald Heber, 1783-1826, alt.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

Thanks be to God.

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The Candles for the Month of January are given to the glory of God.

The altar flowers are dedicated by Cappy and Pat Adduci in honor of the many agencies, teams, and kind individuals who reach out to give shelter, blankets, food, and a kind word to our homeless brothers and sisters, especially during these frigid temperatures.

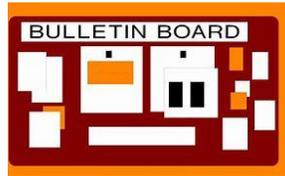
There are two red roses on our altar this weekend: One is dedicated by Ted Smoyer in honor of Audrey Smoyer's 88th birthday. The other is dedicated by Ellen Mertz-Yoesron in loving memory of her husband, Rachmat Yoesron, on his birthday.

Today's reader is Bruce Roper.

Ask the Pastor: Why do Roman Catholics use today's Gospel text to say that the Bishop of Rome is the representative of Jesus on earth?

In Matthew 16, after Peter confesses Jesus to be "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," Jesus renames him Peter ("Rock") and states that "on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not withstand it." Jesus then tells Peter singularly that he is giving Peter keys to the kingdom of heaven to bind and loose, and what he says goes. Martin Luther made this 'rock' more about Peter's confession and not about Peter himself, I think the most straightforward reading of this passage and the rest of the New Testament does seem to indicate a leadership role for Peter which other leaders respect. The New Testament also records Peter being seriously wrong on one occasion and rebuked by Paul (Galatians 2). This is fine in Catholic theology, which does not hold that Peter or any pope is perfect or infallible. However, as to the claim that Peter was the Bishop of Rome and that his successor bishops of Rome are therefore the singular leaders of the worldwide Christian church who must be obeyed by all Christians, there is no biblical merit for that and it is dubious historically. We must continue to follow the New Testament and be a "kingdom of priests" (1 Peter 2.9) who need to work things out together with the Holy Spirit's help.

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St. John's Community Bulletin Board:

To dedicate flowers or candles, please complete a form that is on the table in the Narthex along with \$25 and place it in an envelope either in the offering plate or the Office mailbox in the Church Library. Make checks payable to St. John's Lutheran Church. **Please take the flowers with you after the service.**

Thank you to Pastor Bo and the congregation for the altar flowers, delivered to us by Carole DePue. Thank you to Carole as well for bringing us home communion as homebound members. – Bob and June Crippen

Dear friends, Thank you for the prayers, cards and altar flowers during this past year. Hopefully I am at the end of my "medical adventures" and looking for better health in the new year! Blessings, Joe Wolf

The Community Outreach Ministries Committee would like to thank the congregation for their generous giving from our "Giving Tree". We collected about \$1000 in gift cards and gifts that were given to a Woman's Place, Valley Youth House in Warminster, and The Breathing Room. They were very much appreciated. Thank you for your continued support of our Outreach Ministries.

Thank you again to our "Greens Crew" for all your hard work in putting our sanctuary back to normal. We couldn't have done it without you! Delores, Carolyn, Debbie & Karl, Linda, and our new "star guy" Dylan. Hope to see you all next year on 11/28/26!
Sincerely, Tracy & Stephen Kirner.

End of 2025 Operating Budget Update

Year-to-Date Financial Status through 12/31/25	
Income	\$405,313.30
Expenses	\$420,427.06
Deficit	\$15,113.76**

** This is the deficit in the **Operating Budget** which we have been tracking all year.

This chart does not include donations to the Capital Improvement fund, which is not part of the operating budget. Our apologies for any confusion we may have caused.

Remember! Prayer squares are available on the Hospitality Table. Give one to anyone in need. Prayer shawls are also in bags in the Narthex.



Prayer requests may be made on your yellow attendance cards or through the church office. Members stay on the list until they ask to be taken off, and loved ones remain on the list for 6 weeks.

Prayers for Our Members

Ben Bannister, Matt Berntsen, Denise Betz, Nancy Boyle, Sue Cern, June Crippen, Judy Divver, Lillian Dube, Al & Grace Farrell, Valerie Holmes, Stephen Imre, Carolyn Kircher, Jeff Kyack, Wendy Larson, Marlene MacKrell, Ellen Mertz-Yoesron, Anne & Bob Michel, Natalie Notarianni, Joan Nubbemeyer, Jan Paul, Carole Pfeiffer, Pat Ross, Laurie Schenfelt, Schree Schumacher, Barb Sheppard, Emilie Sloan, Audrey Smoyer, Andrea Trout, Alyssa Troy, Nancy Walbert, Mary Anne Whitehead, Joe Wolf, Jim Yankowski.

Prayers for Our Loved Ones

Walter Braithwaite (added by Floss Braithwaite), The Campman Family (added by Carol Schlegel), Kathleen Coleman (added by Ron & Cathy Wesemann), Tim Gagne (added by Matthew Berntsen), The Goldberg Family (added by Maryanne Sweeney), Tessa Goodrich (added by Pastor Bo), Jon Kummery (added by Linda Eickhoff), Gerry Lattuca (added by Linda Eickhoff), Donna Michael (added by Gerry Flynn), The Pacitti Family (added by Audrey Gobetz), Mary Joan Pellishoti (added by Ellen Mertz-Yoesron), The Silas Family (added by Gerry Flynn), Nadine Sisson (added by DorisAnn Wachsmuth), George Steinbrom (added by Floss Braithwaite).

Prayers for Our Homebound

Richard Betz, Wendy Larson, Elma Lester, Mary Lou McNickel, Bob Michel, Rosemarie Mueller, Joan Nubbemeyer, Kenneth & Judith Oliver, Rosemarie Rieck, Lisa Schroeder-Savory, Mary Anne Whitehead.

Prayers for Those Who Are Grieving

Lee Boer and Family on the passing of Rod Boer.

The Clayton Family on the passing of Joy Clayton's father, Joe Burns.

Lisa Fritz and Family on the passing of her sister, Debbie Smith.

Jeannette Heath and Family on the passing of Wilson Heath.

Mary Anne Whitehead and family on the passing of her nephew, Stephen Hood.

Prayers for Those Who Are Actively Serving Our Country

A1C Gavin W. Briggs, LCpl Justin Bupp, CDR Dan DeAngelo, LT Matthew Fritz, Matthew Hilliard, Captain Josh Hunt, Sam Keller, Connor McNamee, Ssgt Aidan Orth, Ryan Valera.

Prayers for Other Churches in the Lower Bucks Conference

This week we pray for Redeemer Lutheran Church and Interim Pastor Heidi Rodrick-Schnaath in Jamison, PA.



January 24 – Pasta Dinner

January 25 – Youth Sunday

January 31 – Karaoke Night

February 1 – Annual Congregational Meeting