

partners

Peace Lutheran Church

Spring, 2026



Growing a community that nurtures a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

Lenten Midweek “Echoes of Hope”

Wednesdays
February 25, March 4, 11,
18, 25

Dinner served 5:30-6:15pm
Worship 6:30pm



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Devotion

Lent, Easter, Pentecost

The church year at Peace begins in December with the season of Advent, a time to prepare for the birth of Jesus. The church year continues with the season of Christmas, the 12 day period when we celebrate the birth of our Lord. After that we celebrate the season of Epiphany through January and February, when we consider what it means for the Light of Christ to shine on us all.

LENT

Once we finish the season of Epiphany, Ash Wednesday ushers in the Season of Lent, also known as the “Springtime of the Soul.” The word “Lenten” literally means “Lengthen,” and is a reference to the lengthening of days during the springtime of the year. But the sense of lengthening also refers to the season of Lent being a season of renewal for our souls, when we dig deeper into the roots of our faith and grow in peace, hope, and love. The forty days of Lent are symbolic of other periods of time that also lasted “forty”... The rains lasted for forty days during the time of Noah... God’s people wandered in the wilderness for forty years before they reached the Promised Land... Jesus was tested in the wilderness for forty days before he began his

public ministry. And now for us, the season of Lent is a forty day period that prepares us for...

EASTER

Easter! The word “Easter” literally means “Dawn,” referring to the early morning hour when the women arrived at the tomb of Jesus to pay their last respects, only to discover that the tomb was empty. Jesus had risen from the dead! The women are greeted by angels who ask them this simple question: “Why do you seek the living among the dead? Jesus is risen, he is not here.” That simple statement changed everything – for the women, for the disciples, and for the world. Christ’s resurrection from death to life ushered in the new Kingdom of God, when the power of death would be overcome by the power of life. This power would soon be manifest fully when the Holy Spirit of God would be unleashed fifty days later.

PENTECOST

The season of Pentecost begins with the outpouring of the Spirit of God, as we read in Acts 2: “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there

came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit...” Christ’s rising on Easter morning was just the beginning – he would soon release his new life to all creation on Pentecost, not only on the first crowd who gathered that day, but eventually to all creation.

And that’s the story of these seasons of Lent, Easter, and Pentecost, as we move from the ashes of Ash Wednesday to the fire of Pentecost Sunday. I’m looking forward to celebrating all these events together in the days ahead!

—Pastor Jeff Engholm



Seasonal Worship Guide

February

1	8	15	18	22
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, 9:30am	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, 9:30am	Transfiguration of Our Lord, 9:30am	Ash Wednesday, 6:30pm	First Sunday in Lent, 9:30am
Matthew 5:1-12	Matthew 5:13-20	Matthew 17:1-9	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21	Matthew 4:1-11
Holy Communion; Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Imposition of Ashes, Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Sunday School Singers, Peace Choir
Annual Congregational Meeting, Sunday School/Service Project	Brunch & Bingo for all (No Sunday School)	Adult Education with Guest Speaker— Bishop Jen Nagel, Sunday School	Ash Wednesday dinner from 5:30-6:15pm.	Adult Education, Sunday School

March

1	8	15	22	29
Second Sunday in Lent, 9:30am	Third Sunday in Lent, 9:30am	Fourth Sunday in Lent, 9:30am	Fifth Sunday of Lent, 9:30am	Sunday of the Passion, Palm Sunday, 9:30am
John 3:1-17	John 4:5-42	John 9:1-41	John 11:1-45	Matthew 26:14-27:66
Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Peace Choir, Sunday School Singers
Adult Education Guest Speaker, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education Guest Speaker, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Fellowship Time, Sunday School, Easter Egg Hunt

April

2	3	5	12	19	26
Maundy Thursday, 6:30pm	Good Friday, 6:30pm	Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter Sunday, 9:30 and 11:15am	Second Sunday of Easter, 9:30am	Third Sunday of Easter, 9:30am	Fourth Sunday of Easter, 9:30am
John 13:1-17, 31b-35	John 18:1-19:42	Matthew 28:1-10 or, John 20:1-18	John 20:19-31	Luke 24:13-35	John 10:1-10
Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir, Rite of Confirmation
—	—	—	Adult Education Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School

May

3	10	17	24
Fifth Sunday of Easter, 9:30am	Sixth Sunday of Easter, 9:30am	Seventh Sunday of Easter, 9:30am	Day of Pentecost, 9:30am
John 14:1-14	John 14:15-21	John 17:1-11	John 20:19-23 or, John 7:37-39
Holy Communion, Peace Choir, Church Council Installation	Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion, Peace Choir, Sunday School Singers	Holy Communion
Adult Education, Sunday School, Cake celebrating Doris Earl's 100th birthday	Adult Education, Sunday School	Last Day of Adult Education and Sunday School	Fellowship

Sunday Adult Education

Sunday, February 15 **Review of Mission Site Profile with Minneapolis Area Synod, Bishop Jen Nagel**

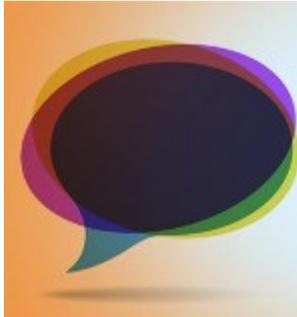
Join the Transition Team in welcoming Bishop Jen Nagel for a walk through of the Mission Site Profile. As the work on the Profile is concluding, the Bishop will be here to walk through the document with the congregation. The purpose is for the Bishop to become more familiar with our congregation and bring back to the Call Process Team information in order for them to understand the pastors who are the very best matches for our congregation.

Sunday, February 22 **Robin's Nest Children's Home Trip Recap**

Come hear about the recent mission trip to Robin's Nest. We will have pictures and reports from the attendees.

Sunday, March 1 **"What is Your Legacy?"**

Joe Sullivan, Regional Gift Planner with the ELCA Foundation, will discuss how you can support Peace and ELCA ministries by creating a



charitable gift plan. It's a meaningful way to make a lasting impact. Joe will provide an overview of how to make informed decisions while considering the current and future

needs for you and your loved ones. The ELCA Foundation can help you navigate your options to create a gift plan that benefits the ministries that mean the most to you, while also maximizing your financial and estate-planning goals.

Sunday, March 8

Enjoy time in fellowship.

Sunday, March 15 **Lutheran World Relief Impact Stories**

On this day we will welcome Rev. Brian Scott, Senior Advisor, Congregational Engagement, from Lutheran World Relief.

For 80 years, Lutheran World Relief has tackled global poverty by helping people adapt to the challenges that threaten their livelihoods and well-being. LWR provides aid in emergencies and help families restore their lives. They partner with local leaders to grow rural economies and build healthy communities. Rev. Scott will share stories about our

neighbors near and far who have been impacted by our generosity through LWR.

Sunday, March 22

To be announced.

Sunday, March 29—Palm Sunday

Enjoy fellowship time and watch Peace's children as they participate in an Easter Egg Hunt!

Sunday, April 5—Easter Sunday

Happy Easter! No Sunday Adult Education.

Sunday, April 12

To be announced.

Sunday, April 19

Today we'll pack 75 Lutheran World Relief Baby Care Kits. You can either join in the fun of packing or watch the activity!

Sunday, April 26

Enjoy time in fellowship.

Sunday, May 3

To be announced.

Sunday, May 10

To be announced.

Sunday, May 17

Final Sunday Adult Education Hour of the academic year. To be announced.

Sunday Adult Education is subject to change.

Lenten Sundays, 9:30am

February 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

During the season of Lent, we are called to put our priorities in order. Throughout the Lenten scripture readings, we receive the invitation to examine ourselves. Are we storing up treasure in heaven? Are we bringing our questions to Jesus with hearts wide open to being transformed? Are we being as rigorously honest in all our doings as the woman at the well?

Join us for Sundays during Lent—the forty-day reminder that it is God who saves.

Lenten Gospel Readings

- **Sunday, February 22**
Matthew 4:1-11, The Testing of Jesus
- **Sunday, March 1**
John 3:1-17, Nicodemus Visits Jesus
- **Sunday, March 8**
John 4:5-42, Jesus and the Woman of Samaria
- **Sunday, March 15**
John 9:1-41, A Man Born Blind Receives Sight, and,

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

- **Sunday, March 22**
John 11:1-45, The Death of Lazarus, Jesus the Resurrection and the Life, Jesus Weeps, and, Jesus Raises Lazarus to Life
- **Sunday, March 29, Palm Sunday**
Matthew 26:14-27:66, Jesus' Path to the Cross

Lenten devotional booklets will be available for pick up in the narthex on Sunday, February 15. Regular and large print versions will be available.

Lenten Midweek Worship: “Echoes of Hope,” Wednesdays, 6:30pm

February 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25

The word “catechism” literally means “to echo down.” During this season of Lent, we will recall how our faith has been “echoed down” through the ages, passed on from generation to generation through Luther’s Small Catechism. Our roots of faith are planted deeply in the Ten Commandments, the Apostles Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, Holy Baptism, and Holy Communion, and it is out this foundation

that our spirits grow in faith, hope, and love.

Join us as we work through parts of the Small Catechism each week of Lent.

A light supper will be prepared with serving starting at 5:30pm (\$5/person) and the brief 30 minute service will begin promptly at 6:30pm.

—Pastor Jeff Engholm

Small Catechism of Martin Luther

- **February 25**, The Ten Commandments, ELW p. 1160
- **March 4**, The Apostles Creed, ELW p. 1162
- **March 11**, The Lord’s Prayer, ELW p. 1163
- **March 18**, Holy Baptism, ELW p. 1164
- **March 25**, Holy Communion, ELW p. 1166

Sunday School News

This year the Children's Ministry Committee has tried to combine learning with "fun and games," continuing our goal of building up our community in Christ.

Our Christmas pageant was a great success—a bit different in tone and time—but our Fifth Graders and older participants were fabulous. Don't be surprised when you are called upon to perform in 2026 Christmas Pageant!

The children and young teens enjoy working with the adults of the congregation. This collaboration of age groups strengthens both young and old. It teaches our young people that church is important to all—that young people have a central place in the community of Peace.

Singing Sundays

The children will be singing on:

- February 22, the first Sunday of Lent
- March 29, Palm Sunday

- May 17, the last day of Sunday School

Special Services

All families are welcome to **Lenten Dinner Wednesdays**. A light supper will be served from at 5:30 to 6:15pm. We then join together to worship using "Holden Evening Prayer." The children have been learning some of this liturgy during Celebration Time!

On **Palm Sunday**, the children will be singing. After the service, we will be having our **Easter Egg Hunt**. (Don't forget to bring an Easter Basket from home.) Please invite your family and friends to join us for this worship service!

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for Monday, June 22 though Thursday, June 25. We are, again, partnering with Community of the Cross Lutheran Church, **and....VBS will be HELD AT PEACE!**

The entire congregation should mark their calendars for the evening of Wednesday, June 24 for a VBS mid-week celebration picnic with songs, displays and games for all ages!

—*Marcia Craig, Children's Programming Coordinator*



Confirmation Update

The Confirmation Program at Peace Lutheran Church continues as strong as ever! Each week we gather to hear the familiar basics of the faith, but we try to engage these fundamentals in new, refreshing ways.

The basics of the Small Catechism (Ten Commandments, Apostle’s Creed, Lord’s Prayer, Baptism, Communion) continue to be the foundation of our faith, but God is constantly doing a new thing among us, which means we are called to claim the promises of God daily in new ways. In summary, faith is “caught, not taught” by these kids as they watch all the adults in their lives every day.

This means that our confirmation kids are always

being formed in the faith, not only on Wednesday nights, but also when they...

- ...Help serve as Ushers and Greeters on Sunday mornings and observe how the congregation lives out their faith lives.
- ...Pack meals at the “Feed My Starving Children” site in Chanhassen.
- ...Participated in the Listening Session as part of Peace’s pastoral transition.
- ...And so much more!

On top of all that, sometimes we play a game I like to call “Stump the Pastor!” If we have time at the end of class, the students get to ask the pastor anything they want. Yes, anything. Sometimes the questions are goofy, like... “Did

you behave in school when you were a kid?” Sometimes the questions are personal, like... “When did you realize you wanted to be a pastor?” And sometimes the questions are quite deep, like... “When I feel like I am not doing enough to live out my faith, what should I do?” All of these questions reveal a deep, spiritual hunger in our young people, a hunger that reveals a deep, spiritual faith.

Many thanks to the congregation, parents, and students for making this a great year so far! Special thanks to Ryan Byers and Corrin Freemark for their steady support each Wednesday night.

—Pastor Jeff Engholm



VBS Coming to Peace this Summer!

June 22-25, 2026

Step through the mist into **Rainforest Falls**, overflowing with wild waterfalls, towering trees, and colorful creatures. Beneath a canopy of chattering birds and howling monkeys, kids will plunge into a lifelong adventure of discovering the nature of God. They'll explore what it means to be rooted in relationship with God, their creator, a safe place in life's storms.

Together with our friends at Community of the Cross Lutheran Church and **held at Peace**, we will learn that God is our creator, God knows everything (like really, everything!), God is our safe place, and God is love. Those daily Bible Points will be experienced and reinforced through engaging Bible stories, exciting games, meaningful service projects, and memorable music.

To make the week possible, we will need many volunteers to provide welcoming hospitality and ministry to all of the kids joining us this year. Volunteer roles include crew leaders, station leaders (Bible



Adventures, Imagination Station, Sticky Scripture, Wild Games, Treetop Treats), nursery leaders, registration and welcome squad, setup squad, and tech squad.

Mid-week during VBS, save the Wednesday evening for a Family Fun Night at Peace! Wednesday, June 24 for a VBS midweek celebration picnic with songs, displays and games for all ages!

Please send an email to marcia.craig@peacebloomington.org if you are interested in volunteering or, sign up online this spring when registration opens.

Your leadership makes a big difference in the lives of our young people!

—*Marcia Craig*



VBS Information

Ages: For children ages 3 (potty-trained) through those entering 5th Grade in the fall.

VBS Dates: June 22-25, 2026, 9:00am-12:00pm.

Where: At Peace!!

Registration: Registration will open in mid-April

Service & Mission

Spotlight On...Robin's Nest Children's Home Mission Trip

On Saturday, January 17th a group of eight Peace members, along with three members from other congregations, left for Montego Bay, Jamaica.



Our team served at Robin's Nest Children's Home for the week and had a wonderful time. Our days were filled with interactions with children and staff at the home, as well as many projects to help refresh their spaces. We provided the home with lots of supplies (clothing, soccer balls, vitamins, children's books, art supplies, health and beauty aids, etc.) thanks to our generous congregation.

Our team painted outdoor railings, weeded garden beds, cleaned up debris left over from Hurricane Melissa (Jamaican landfall on October 28, 2025), washed solar panels, assisted with washing dishes daily, laundry, and organized storage areas.

Our largest project that we worked on was painting the interior of "Jakes House," a dorm for boys aged 8-18. We painted all the walls of the

boy's bedrooms along with their large TV room. A few of our team then hand painted bible verses on the walls. We also touched up painting on a couple of walls that had large murals painted on them. The whole place looked amazing after we finished!

Of course, we had a bit of fun too! While we did stay onsite, there were games to play in the evenings, some jigsaw puzzle assembly, swimming in the pool, walks up and down the hill, shared meals together, and great conversations. This group of 11 really became a family while there, and I will be forever grateful in sharing this experience with them.

We hope you can attend the adult education hour on Sunday, February 22 to learn more about our experience, and ways you can support Robin's Nest in the future. Watch for scrapbook pages to go up soon in the Parish Hall.

Thanks to all of you that supported our trip with your donations and prayers!

—Venita Ditlevson



Another Christmas of “Good Gifts”

The Service & Mission committee was again humbled by the generous response to the ELCA Good Gifts project. The Christmas tree was covered with Good Gifts ornaments!



The ornaments also represented dollars sent for school uniforms and supplies, microloans for women, the cost of seminary for a week, and other needs too numerous to mention.

Once again, we have filled barnyards with chickens, roosters, pigs, sheep, cows and even a whole herd of goats!

Standing by the table, it was fun to hear how people chose animals for their grandchildren or involved children in choosing

how to contribute. The amount from Peace (\$8,630) does not reflect the total amount of giving since many donated online. The ornaments tell the story. Where there is need, Peace steps up. We hope you realize the difference you make in people’s lives.

—Joanne Vance, Co-Chair of the Service & Mission Committee

Service & Mission Winter 2025 Recap

It was a busy winter for Service & Mission activities at Peace!

On Monday, December 8, 2025 a group of women and men gathered to sort gifts and ultimately, packed 197 gift bags for **The Stocking Project**. Over the next week or so, those gift bags were delivered to four different women’s shelters.

Loaves & Fishes meals continued to be prepared and distributed on the third Tuesday each month this past winter as they are every month of the year.

On Sunday, November 2, 2025 the Service & Mission Committee announced a focused collection initiative

with **VEAP** to focus on **Baking Essentials** during November. All told, we delivered **602.2 pounds** of supplies in November plus monetary donations totaling \$3,377.26.

See above for the **ELCA Good Gifts** recap. Good Gifts ran from November 30-December 28, 2025.

Organizations Thank Peace

Your benevolence during Christmas was cast far and wide! Peace received the following thank you letters:

Women’s Advocates, a domestic violence organization, thanked Peace for our generosity and donation to their organization.

Lutheran World Relief thanked us for our gift of \$1,000.00 to the Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund.

VEAP thanked us for our gift of \$1,708.88 on November 13, 2025 and for a gift of \$693.00 on November 14, 2025. Our gifts enable VEAP clients to bring home healthy, nourishing food to their children, help

seniors living on fixed incomes stay safely housed, and neighbors are reminded that their community cares and that they are not alone.

Many thanks to each of you for your generosity.

Lenten Service Initiative

February 18-April 5, 2026

This is an unusual and heartbreaking time in Minnesota. We have all heard how people are afraid to leave home for work, medical appointments, food and laundry. At Peace most of us have never experienced such terror.

San Pablo Lutheran Church, an ELCA-member church, has spent over \$100,000 helping in the Phillips neighborhood. This is a neighborhood that is highly diverse, densely populated and predominately renter occupied. It's a community known for its international, working-class culture, with over a third of its residents being foreign born. Phillips residents have a median income significantly lower than the rest of Minneapolis. Like the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood that



we learned about recently, this is a place where immigrants get a start on their lives in America. They have been particularly hard hit by ICE and many cannot pay rent because they are afraid to go to work.

The Service & Mission Committee would like to focus Lenten giving this year on San Pablo, our neighbors, brothers, and sisters in Christ. **San Pablo needs money to pay people's rent.** If you feel moved to do

so, please write a check to Peace and indicate in the memo section "San Pablo Rent Initiative." Any amount will help!

In our congregational surveys people named "Community and Relationships" and "Welcoming and Inclusive Environment" as two of Peace's strengths. This is "church" and our committee is determined to make a difference, locally, nationally and internationally by wisely allocating our benevolence budget and your generous help.

—Joanne Vance, Co-Chair of the Service & Mission Committee

New Members Welcome Anytime!

The Service & Mission Committee is always seeking new members to augment our committee. We meet once a month, usually the last Tuesday, for about an hour to discuss ways our committee and congregation can serve not only our local community but globally, too.

We are a hands-on group looking for new ideas

while staying committed to our core organizations. If you are interested in joining our committee or have any questions, please contact Kris Holm at (507) 828-0578 or Joanne Vance at (760) 458-5850.

Our upcoming meeting dates are February 24, March 31, April 28, and May 26.

Peace Photo Diary



Immigration Forum, American Swedish Institute, January 24, 2026



Bloomington Conference Assembly
January 29, 2026



Children's Ministry Committee Meeting
January 27, 2026



Service & Mission Committee Meeting
January 27, 2026



Learn to Play Mahjong
January 27, 2026



Confirmants at Feed My Starving Children
January 28, 2026



Transition Team: A Time of Discernment

We're in a special time of transition at Peace Lutheran Church! It can feel a little uncertain as we leave behind what was familiar and look ahead to what God has in store.

This is a season of "discernment."

Discernment is a spiritual practice of pausing to listen—to God, to our inner selves, and to one another. It's about slowing down, noticing what's truly in our hearts, and being open to seeing things through others' eyes.

Discernment is deeply rooted in our baptism. Our call from the waters of Baptism as God's faithful people, is to share in the Lord's Supper, proclaim the good news, serve everyone following Jesus's example, and work for justice and peace. We all practice discernment throughout our lives. Whether we're seeking clarity for everyday choices or major, life-altering decisions, the path becomes clearer when we intentionally slow down, quiet ourselves, and listen deeply.

Both our congregation and the person we will call as Senior Pastor will be discerning. For a new leader, a "call" is generally seen as having two beautiful



Transition Team Meeting, January 26, 2026

components: an inner sense of knowing and an external confirmation from the community.

Peace has already been actively listening! Through our recent survey and listening sessions, we've intentionally sought to be open, attentive to one another, as we prayerfully consider the path God is inviting our faith community to walk.

Discernment invites us into prayer. Prayer is our way of communicating and being in communion with God—it's

how we enjoy God's presence, acknowledging our need for God and relying on God's guidance. Prayer takes on many forms. It can be communal, like when we gather for worship, confession, and praise, or silent, waiting for God's "still small voice." Even when no voice is heard, there can be a sense of inner knowing. Prayer can happen when we sing, walk, dance, write, or draw. Each of us finds the best fit for communion with God.

Let's move forward in a spirit of prayerful discernment, always listening for God's gentle direction in our lives.

Prayer:

Spirit of Love,
Guide us as we journey.
Quiet the inner chatter, fear,
and anxiety that surrounds us.
Open our hearts, minds and
spirits to you.
Lead us and guide us. Amen

—Tammy Devine submitted on
behalf of the Transition Team

Church Council News

Greetings from the Peace Lutheran Church Council to all our members!

In this update, there will be a listing of our current Church Council as well as the new and departing members of Council starting in May, 2026; an update on our financials through December, 2025 and a quick look at the approved budget for 2026; and an update on our current projects/activities.

An update from the Call Committee/Transition Team is provided on page. 15 so it will not be covered in this article.

2025-2026 Church Council Members Beyond

The 2025-2026 Church Council, along with their years of service and current roles, are as follows:

- Third Year: Holly Long (Secretary), Emily Sidhom, Dave Thoen (President)
- Second Year: Josh Braband, Andy Loeffler (Vice President), Cindy Olson
- First Year: Robin Kennedy, Michelle Stockinger, Tom Tisthammer (Treasurer)

Those in their third year, Holly, Emily, and Dave, will roll off Council in May and be replaced by Tammy Devine, Steve

Larson, and Ric Soderstrom. At the February 1st, 2026 Annual Meeting, these three new members were approved by the congregation!

Financial Update

With a full year of information available, a comparison of our 2025 approved budget can be made to the actual 2025 giving and expenses. It also provided a basis for preparing the 2026 budget.

On the giving side, with a budgeted giving amount through December 2025 of \$777k, we have had giving of \$722k, or approximately \$55k below budget.

On the expense side, expenses through December 2025 have been \$701k, or approximately \$76k below budget.

Therefore, through December 2025, while giving is below budget, it is not an issue as for the entire calendar year 2025, giving exceeded expenses by \$21k.

Two other financial updates are worth noting and were shared at the Annual Meeting:

1. We've increased the Reserve Amount to \$260k, which is approximately five months of expenses

2. We've placed \$20k into an Equipment Replacement Fund, which is intended to cover large equipment expenses such as carpeting or an air conditioning system. It is the intent to add to this fund annually to cover those large equipment expenses.

Thank you for everyone's financial gifts throughout 2025 and we pray for your continued generosity in 2026!

Peace Council Current Updates/Activities

In addition to some projects that we are continuing in 2026, such as Council Members wearing identification badges and having at least one member greet guests every Sunday, we are looking to increase Peace members' participation by adding some committees. This is being done not only to take tasks off the shoulders of Peace staff, to use the many, many talents of our Peace members, but also equip our new Pastor that we look to hire with many congregational resources to use.

The committees that we are looking to add in 2026 include:

- Finance

—Continued on next page—

- Stewardship
- Building/Property
- Technology
- Staff Support

among others. There is more information to come but once it does, we are hopeful that members of Peace will step up and take an active role in several of these.

Please reach out to any Council Member with any feedback you'd like to share.

Respectfully,

Dave Thoen, Peace Lutheran Church Council President



Annual Peace Congregational Meeting Elections

At our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, February 1, 2026 the following budget was approved and people elected. Copies of the 2025 annual report can be found at the information kiosk.

2026 Annual Budget

A proposed 2026 church budget of \$763,931 was approved.

Church Council

The following people were elected to serve a three-year term on the Church Council: Tammy Devine, Steve Larson, and Ric Soderstrom.

We thank outgoing council members Dave Thoen, Holly Long, and Emily Sidhom for their service to Peace.

Nominating Committee

Jason Losinski and Bev Viken were elected to the Nominating Committee.

We thank outgoing Nominating Committee members: Andy Loeffler, Dave Thoen, Emily Sidhom, John Kennedy, and Jim Thomson.

Auditing Committee

Kevin Johnson was elected to the Auditing Committee. We thank Gary Vig for his work on behalf of Peace.

Installation of the new council for 2026-2027 will be on Sunday, May 3, 2026 during worship.



2025 Annual Meeting Preview, Sunday, January 25, 2026

Fellowship at Peace

Back in September 2025, we kicked off a new fellowship committee. The members are, Denise Thoen (Chair), Lori Thomson (Secretary), Marcia Craig, Mary Kautto, Joy Kjeldahl, Rachel Kylo and Kim Myhre. There is always room for more; all are welcome to join.

We had a strong fall and winter with a wide variety of events. We would love to have your ideas and your participation. If you have any questions, please speak to any of the committee members. Our **next planning meeting** will be **April 20, 2026 at 6:30pm** to plan summer activities.

Here's a preview to a few upcoming spring events:



Join other Peace members for a **"The Night Before Easter"** concert on

Saturday, April 4 at 1:00pm at the Chanhassen Dinner Theatre. "The Night Before Easter" features traditional and contemporary gospel songs along with show tunes and assorted music. You're guaranteed to have a great time!

We will carpool from Peace at 12:00pm. Please sign up by **Friday, February 20** to secure a

spot. Peace has 12 tickets to this show; tickets are \$50 each. Payment should be made to Peace at the time of sign up. You can sign up either online or at the information kiosk.



Some of the greatest stories are those that span generations. Children's books hold special places in our hearts—mainly because of the frequency in which we read them. How many times have you read *Goodnight Moon* or another book that you could recite by memory? MPLS (imPulse) presents *Sing Me a Story*, a collection children's literature set to music. A perfect musical event for children and adults of all ages. Join other Peace members for this free concert on **Sunday, April 19, 3:00pm** at St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church (17205 County Road 6, Plymouth).



"Courting Harry" at the History Theatre on Thursday, May 26, 10:00am.

Trace the journey of Minnesota natives Chief Justice Warren Burger and Justice Harry Blackmun, from their roots in the St. Paul neighborhood to the pinnacle of the nation's

highest court. Two lifelong friends, their unbreakable bond now confronted with history-making decisions that will define their future. Dive into the dynamic tensions of the Supreme Court, where Nixon's appointees grapple with conflicting ideologies in the arena of America's most contentious legal battles. An insightful exploration of friendship, authority, and justice. Tickets are \$45. Sign up online or at the information kiosk.

We also have sprinkled in thought-provoking lectures. Both events are free.

- **Thursday, February 26** we will carpool downtown to a Westminster Town Hall forum to hear **James Comey**, former FBI Director discuss, **"Ethics & Government: Wrestling with Truth and Democracy."**
- **Thursday, April 16** we will carpool to St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church in Plymouth to hear **Francis Collins** present, **"Allies, Not Enemies."**

Take a look at the Life at Peace wall in the Parish Hall to see what's coming up!

—Denise Thoen

Spring Fellowship



Westminster Town Hall Forum, “Ethics & Government: Wrestling with Truth and Democracy” presented by James Comey,

former FBI Director. **Thursday, February 26**, depart Peace at **10:15am**. Free event. Sign up at the information kiosk.



Easter Egg Hunt for Kids on **Palm Sunday, March 29**. Bring an Easter basket from home to collect the hidden eggs! Youth, help hide plastic eggs that morning!



“The Night Before Easter” Concert: Join a group from Peace to enjoy this concert at the Chanhassen Dinner Theatre, **Saturday, April 4, 2026, 1:00pm**. Traditional and contemporary gospel songs and more.

Carpool from Peace at **12:00pm**, concert at 1:00pm. Tickets are \$50 each. **Sign up** on Peace’s website or at the information kiosk **by February 20**.



“Allies, Not Enemies” lecture presented by Francis Collins at St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church, **Thursday, April 16, 7:00pm**. We’ll carpool from Peace at 5:45pm. Sign up online or at the information kiosk.



Impulse Concert on **Sunday, April 19, 3:00pm**, St. Philip the Deacon Luth. Ch.



Age 80+ Spring Luncheon on **Thursday, May 7, 11:30am**. At **12:45pm**, the **Bloomingtones** will entertain us with songs and music. **Everyone is invited** to come to the sanctuary to listen to the concert.



“Courting Harry” at the History Theatre on **Thursday, May 26, 10:00am**. Trace the journey of MN natives Chief Justice Warren Burger and Justice Harry Blackmun, from their St. Paul roots to the nation’s highest court. Tickets are \$45. Sign up online or at the information kiosk.

Ongoing Fellowship

Knitting and Crochet Small Group

This group will resume meeting Monday, March 9. They meet on the **2nd and 4th Monday from 4:00-5:30pm** in the Fireside area. Bring a project to work on!

Yoga

Monday nights, 5:30pm. Join us for prayer, breath, movement and community in the Front Meeting Room. All levels of practice are welcome. Bring a yoga mat and a \$5 donation. Questions? Please contact Sandy McGurran at smcgurran03@gmail.com.

Tuesday Mornings at Peace

On the **1st, 3rd, and occasional 5th Tuesday of the month**, the quilters will meet to stitch and sew.

Book Group

The book group meets **monthly on the 2nd Thursday at 6:45pm**. New members are welcome! Contact Lori Thomson for more information.

65+ and Socially Single Group

This casual group for older singles who enjoy getting out and going places. We aim to gather on the **3rd Thursday of the month at 1:00pm!** See next page for upcoming activities.

Look for more information about each of these events on Peace’s website, in the Sunday bulletin, or in the Friday e-Note.

Sign up at the information kiosk or online this spring.

Age 65+ and Socially Single*

Does this headline sound like you?! If so, read on for fun activities coming up this spring.



On **Thursday, February 19**, we will meet at Peace at **12:30pm** and carpool to **Loma Bonita Supermercado** (140 West 66th Street, Richfield, aka Hub Shopping Center) to explore this Mexican grocery store. It is clean, bright, and well-stocked. There is a bakery, ice cream counter, huge meat counter, gifts and kitchenware, and even a florist. There is also a butcher shop, hot and cold deli with fresh made salsas. The restaurant area serves food cafeteria style—order your food from the overhead menu, grab a tray, and it'll be made to order to eat in or take out.

We will explore the market on our own then order some food or an agua fresca and we'll sit and visit. We'll return to Peace around 3:30pm or so.

In March, we will meet on **Thursday, March 19 for a tour of the James J. Hill House**, the gilded age mansion of "The

Empire Builder." Be prepared to



walk and stand. Then we'll have lunch at the St. Paul Grill. The tour is offered every 30 minutes and lasts one hour. Tickets for seniors are \$20 and can be purchased on site. Lunch is paid individually.

We'll meet in Peace's parking lot at 10:00am and carpool aiming for the 11:00am tour. Lunch at 12:30pm and we'll return to Peace at 2:00pm.



On **Thursday, April 16**, at **10:00am** we're taking a daytrip to **Red Wing** and will lunch at the St. James Hotel. After lunch we'll spend an hour at the Red Wing Pottery Mall with a variety of stores to shop. We'll leave Peace's parking lot at 10:00am aiming for lunch at 11:00am. Shopping 12:30-1:30 and we'll return to Peace between 2:00-2:30pm.

On **Tuesday, May 19**, experience the beautiful north woods of Wisconsin by taking a scenic train ride with the Wisconsin Great Northern



Railroad. The historic railroad recreates the atmosphere of rail travel using rebuilt cars from 1912-1918. Lunch (included in the price) will be served in the dining car. On the way home, we'll stop at the Burnett Dairy Cooperative store near Grantsburg, WI. Coffee, ice cream, cheese curds, and other items will be available for purchase. Please sign up individually through the Eden Prairie Senior Center using activity code 171358-01 (952-279-8050). We'll depart from the EP Senior Center (8950 Eden Prairie Road, Eden Prairie) at 7:15am. Cost is \$114/person. We'll return by 5:15pm. **Sign up early to get a spot!** Questions or need help registering? Please contact Gerry Dooley.

To RSVP for these events please contact: Gerry Dooley (612-298-5716) or Gary Vig (612-998-0883). Or sign up at the information kiosk.

*Socially Single: Operates independently in social situations rather than with a significant other.

Life Passages Grief Support

Births

- **Bodhi Caxias Maland** born to Micah and Sophie Maland on January 19, 2026. Bodhi is welcomed by sister, Isla, grandmother, Beth Maland, and the Rogers family, Logan, Kari, Asher, Ayla, Anja, and Ally.

Grieving

- **Rich and Rachel Kylo** upon the death of Rich’s father, Ralph Kylo on November 14, 2025.
- **Carolyn Bergum** on the death of her husband, Jim on November 25, 2025.
- **John, Robin, Emma, and Parker Kennedy** upon the death of Robin’s mother, Marianne Person on December 29, 2025.
- **Kelby, JaNae, Brece, and Benz Teer** on the death of JaNae’s father, Mark Altepeter on December 30, 2025.

Milestones

- Everyone is invited by the Earl family to join them in worship on **Sunday, May 3, 2026** when they celebrate **Doris’ 100th birthday**. During fellowship time we’ll enjoy birthday cake courtesy of the Earl family.

Churches in Bloomington and Richfield provide education and support for adults who are grieving the death of a loved one.

The spring series will meet on **Thursdays, April 9-May 28, 2026, 4:30-6:00pm right here at Peace!**

Every meeting starts with a 30-minute educational topic presented by guest speakers who share their own experience and professional knowledge on grief and loss.

The next hour is spent in small group conversation with the opportunity to share feelings and concerns with others who are also working through the grief process.

The information kiosk has brochures with the spring topics or visit Peace’s website for more information. There is no cost to participate and no pre-registration needed. You may attend one week or all weeks.

partners

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 Image courtesy of Adobe Stock

Submissions
 Do you have an idea for a story or would love to write? Contact Daina Sivanich with your submission, but please keep in mind the following guidelines:
 (a) Your article will be reviewed by Peace staff for suitability and may be edited for length and content. (b) Articles must fit the overall theme of the issue and reflect the mission of Peace Lutheran Church.

Devotion: “God Guided Immigrants Then As He Does Now”

All four of my grandparents were born in Sweden and emigrated to America at different times around the turn of the last century. The story I know best is the story of my father’s mother, Alice Olsson. She was born in 1902 and was the youngest in her family. But life was hard back then, and by the time she was 12 years old, both of her parents had passed away. Since none of her older siblings were able to take her in, she and her sister, Helga, emigrated to America to live with an older sister in Illinois. They boarded the ship called the “Hellig Olav” (translated as “Saint Olaf”) and made the two-week trip across the Atlantic to an unknown land, leaving behind everything and everyone they loved. Here are a couple entries from Helga’s journal:

(July 7, 1914) Today my sister Alice and I left Sweden to come to America. I was 16 years old and my sister Alice was 12. We said Good Bye to our relatives and good friends with tears in our eyes and looked back time and again as long as we could to see our dear familiar places.



Pastor Jeff Engholm’s grandmother, Alice (top) and her sister Helga (bottom).

(July 9, 1914) We were up early today to go to the dock – this was the first time we had ever been on a boat. Our sister, Selma, went with us to the boat and down to our little cabin. Soon it was time for her to leave us – she hugged us and we cried, as we didn’t know if we would ever see each other again. We had supper on the boat, but we had lost our appetite. We were four girls in

our tiny cabin, three were called Helga. We also had rats and cockroaches that were running around there.

I heard a similar story recently when I attended an Immigration Workshop at the American Swedish Institute. It’s the story about 9-year-old Génesis who recently left her home in El Salvador to come to the United States. Here is a part of her story:

Génesis drew a picture of her house with her mother, father, and six-year-old brother Rodrigo. While she was drawing, she named all the things she had to leave behind - her bike, shoes, towels, and toys – and said that she wishes she were home and that she misses everything. Unseen in her drawing is the gang violence that had caused her and her family to flee their home. As her mother described, they fled their home because the local gang had demanded an extortion payment of \$10,000. Their only way of escaping these threats was to sell their truck and flee to the United States.

Immigration is a major theme woven throughout scripture –

God calling Abraham and Sarah to leave their home in Genesis 12; Moses leading God's people to a new land in Exodus 14; Jesus, Joseph, and Mary leaving their home in Nazareth, traveling to Bethlehem, living as exiles in Egypt, and finally settling in Capernaum. And then we have the stories throughout history of people moving from one land to another, rarely because they are simply looking for a new adventure, almost always because they have no choice. The conditions of love, loss, and grief are universal over time and space.

We are hearing a lot these days about immigrants, and the situation is indeed complex. Fortunately, for those of us living as people of faith, scripture is clear as to how we are called to live with our

immigrant neighbors: Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt. (Exodus 22:21) Or put another way, we are simply called to live by the Golden Rule: Do to others as you would have them do to you. (Matthew 7:12)

The truth is that we are all immigrants. What's your immigrant story? How far back can you trace your history before it takes you to a foreign land? During these days of tension and turmoil, my prayer for our church, our community, and our nation is that we might all listen to each other's stories with ears of compassion, understanding, and hope, and then learn and grow together.

—Pastor Jeff Engholm



Pastor Jeff Engholm with Grandma Alice in her later years

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Sunday Worship: 9:30am



Growing a community that
nurtures a deeper relationship
with Jesus Christ.

2026 Lenten and Easter Worship at Peace

Ash Wednesday, February 18

Ash Wednesday Supper, 5:30-6:15pm

Ash Wednesday Worship at 6:30pm

Holy Week

Palm Sunday, March 29, Worship at
9:30am

Maundy Thursday, April 2, Worship at
6:30pm

Good Friday, April 3, Worship at 6:30pm

Easter Sunday, April 5, Worship at
9:30am and at 11:15am

Lenten Wednesdays,

February 25, March 4, 11,
18, 25

Lenten Supper, 5:30-6:15pm

Worship at 6:30pm

Confirmation, 7:00-7:30pm

Peace Choir Rehearsal, 7:00-
8:30pm

**Make plans to
worship at Peace
with your family!**