

partners

Peace Lutheran Church

Fall, 2023



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

from the senior pastor

A Welcome Invitation

What if I told you that you had, in your life, the power to help yourself, and to better love your families, your neighborhood, our country, and the world?



I believe you do. And it's this: coming to church for worship, fellowship, learning, and service and inviting others to do the same! Think about it: at church you hear this message: *"God so loved the whole world."* You hear from the Christmas angel, *"I bring you good news of great joy for all people that God moved in the world's direction in Jesus Christ."* The message of Jesus is for all people, all generations, for all time, regardless of what people are experiencing, regardless of what we fear, regardless of how they have been treated or what they have done. That's the message of Christianity.

That's our message at Peace, too. We, like any other church, don't get it perfect. Even so, when we attend church, we see and greet other people, we are encouraged in our faith, and are reminded of all we have for which to be grateful. We also have the chance to learn something new or contribute to the wellbeing of your community with others.

If you're in the habit of being at church regularly, fantastic! If you have not been making regular participation at church a priority, I encourage you to do so. You will feel better, and so will all those who get to see and interact with you. Our shared life together as a congregation is one of the most important activities we can do for God, for ourselves, and the world around us.

And then...one more thing: consider inviting a friend or family member to church, too! I know this makes some of us nervous, as we are wary of seeming "pushy" when it comes to faith. Yet when researchers asked church members what brought them to their current congregation, more than two-thirds responded that it was the personal invitation of a friend.

That invitation might be to a friend who is already a member but who hasn't been to church in a while. "I've missed seeing you at church. It's going to be a fun fall. I hope you'll come around." Recently, I read a poll that found that reported that when asked, nearly half of people no longer attending church said they would return if someone invited them. Younger respondents were even more

likely to favor an invitation, as nearly two thirds of those ages 18-35 said they would consider returning if someone they knew asked them to come back.

There are lots of people in our lives who aren't members of Peace who would also welcome an invitation. Most people seek out church because they sense something is missing in their lives, something a congregation like ours can offer: community, relationships, a sense of purpose, help in getting through life's challenges, a chance to contribute to the greater good, and hope about the future. People long to belong. And so often are just waiting for a sincere invitation. We're not scolding people for what they're not doing but inviting them to something we value and think they will, too. A constant refrain in John's Gospel is *"Come and see"* and offers an example of something we can do, too. Your welcoming invitation to church can change everything for you, for your families, and on and on.

Thank you for your faith, your welcome invitation, and your part in our wonderful congregation. And...see you at Church!

—Pastor Mark Nelson

Fall Sermon Series Announced

“Growing a Community...”

One of Jesus’ first acts of ministry was to gather a rag-tag group of 12 disciples to follow him. Apparently, Jesus doesn’t do ministry alone! Later, the Apostle Paul said, “God was making a body for Christ.” Christ didn’t have a regular one any more, so—again—he calls us into a group to be Christ’s hands and Christ’s feet right here and now. We call that group the “church.”

As we all know, group living in the church is not only a gift but can also be a challenge. The Apostle Paul knew that and offered his churches some help. That’s why the New Testament loves the phrase, “one another”: live in harmony with one another, wait for one another, build up one another, forgive one another, pray for one another, and put up with one another.

The challenge remains. How do we live and thrive with others in the community; be it a church or a family or a company?

Join us for the brief series, “Growing a Community.....” on Sundays, September 17 and 24.

—Pastor Mark Nelson

“Hard Sayings of Jesus”

Jesus was a great teacher, and he had an awful lot of things to say that were hard. There are a number of places in the Gospels where his disciples say, “Master, this is a hard saying.” In this series, we’ll look at four things he said that are hard, but also—oddly—wonderful.

Join us on these four October Sundays.

- Sunday, October 1
 - Sermon Title: “Shameless Prayer”
 - Gospel: Luke 11:5-13
- Sunday, October 8
 - Sermon Title: “I Came to Set the Earth on Fire”
 - Gospel: Luke 12:49-53
- Sunday, October 15
 - Sermon Title: “Loving Your Enemies”
 - Gospel: Luke 6:20-36
- Sunday, October 22
 - Sermon Title: “Giving to Caesar...Giving to God”
 - Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

—Pastor Mark Nelson

“Stewardship”

What is “stewardship” anyway? Isn’t it just a churchy word for fundraising? Actually, no. Stewardship is pretty much what it sounds like: being a steward, manager, or caretaker of another’s property. Fundraising is asking someone to donate their money to a cause. Stewardship stresses that what we have is not our own, but rather that everything we have—our time, relationships, talents, and money—are resources entrusted to us by God to manage and care for in a way that honors God’s intentions.

Part of our stewardship of God’s gifts is the stewardship of the mission of Peace. Peace is a strong church because for decades its members have given generously to support our mission. In this sermon series we’ll talk about stewardship of our church and our individual lives of generosity.

Join us for this series on Sundays, November 12 and 19.

—Pastor Mark Nelson



Seasonal Worship Guide

September

3	10	17	24
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Gathering Sunday; 9:30am	Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am
Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson
Sermon Series: "The Good Life: Joy"	Sermon: "Why Come to Church?"	Sermon Series: "Growing a Community..."	
Colossians 3:23-24 John 10:1-10	Romans 5:1-5 Matthew 28:16-20	Matthew 18:21-35	Matthew 20:1-16
Holy Communion	Connor Dorn Baptism; Holy Communion; Peace Choir	Holy Communion; Blessing of Sunday School Children; Commissioning Teachers	Holy Communion; Bibles for 3rd Graders
Fellowship	Adult Education, Sunday School Festival	Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education; Sunday School

October

1	8	15	22	29
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Reformation Sunday, 9:30am
Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner	Preacher:
Sermon Series: "Hard Sayings of Jesus"				—
Sermon: "Shameless Prayer"	Sermon: "I Came to Set the Earth on Fire"	Sermon: "Loving Your Enemies"	Sermon: "Giving to Caesar... Giving to God"	—
Luke 11:5-13	Luke 12:49-53	Luke 6:20-36	Matthew 22:15-22	Romans 3:19-28; John 8:31-36
Holy Communion	Holy Communion; Alleluia Singers; Sunday School Singers	Holy Communion; Rite of Membership	Holy Communion	Holy Communion; Peace Choir
Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School

November

5	12	19	26
All Saints Sunday, 9:30am	Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30am	Christ the King, 9:30am
Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner
—	Sermon Series: "Stewardship"		—
Hebrews 12:1-2; Matthew 5:1-12	To be announced	To be announced	Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46
Holy Communion; Alleluia Singers; Peace Choir	Holy Communion; Sunday School Singers	Holy Communion	Holy Communion
Adult Education, Sunday School	Harvest Pack; Sunday School (late start)	Fellowship with Pie Fest; Sunday School (late start)	Adult Education, Sunday School

Sunday Adult Education

Sunday, September 10—Gathering Sunday

After an extended fellowship time, we will preview the fall schedule of ministry at Peace.



deeper relationship with Christ.” In this hour, we will do the same and also discuss the questions, “How are we doing?” “What might God want to be doing with us?”

Sunday, September 17

“Teen Mental Health”

Pastor Joe will begin a discussion on Teen Mental Health, and how it affects our students’ daily lives.

Sunday, September 24

“Teen Mental Health”

Sandy Mortensen, formerly with Bloomington Public Schools, will return to Peace to discuss teen mental health and values.

Sunday, October 1

“Teen Mental Health”

Marguerite Ohrtman will join us for the conclusion of this series with a presentation on social media and mental health.

Sandy and Marguerite are both therapists at Next Adventure Counseling and Consulting. The link below provides background information on each of them.

www.nextadventurecounselingandconsulting.com/therapists

Sunday, October 8

Our Church Council is currently reviewing our mission statement, *“Growing a community that nurtures a*

Sunday, October 15

“Faith, Lies, and Spies: Bonhoeffer’s Life and You” Part 1 of 2

We’ll join on video Luther Seminary professor, Andrew Root, as he explores the life and work of pastor, martyr, prophet and spy, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and how we might bridge the gap between faith and meaningful societal engagement.

Sunday, October 22

“Faith, Lies, and Spies: Bonhoeffer’s Life and You” Part 2 of 2

We’ll again join on video Luther Seminary professor, Andrew Root, as he explores the life and work of pastor, martyr, prophet and spy, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and how we might bridge the gap between faith and meaningful societal engagement.

Sunday, October 29

On this Reformation Sunday, we’ll recall Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation from which we Lutherans are

born and discuss what that reformation of the church might mean for us and for our time.

—Pastor Mark Nelson

Sunday, November 5

On this All Saints Sunday, the church pauses to remember those who have died in the faith. What does our historic faith mean when we talk about the “communion of saints”? About “heaven”? About “life after death”? These and other topics will be discussed on this festival day.

—Pastor Mark Nelson

Sunday, November 12

No Adult Education. It’s the annual Harvest Pack in Parish Hall. Join in!

Sunday, November 19

On this, Stewardship Sunday, we will enjoy pie and fellowship in the Parish Hall.

Sunday, November 26

To be announced.

Wednesday Evening Adult Bible Study

Wednesdays, 6:00pm, Parish Hall

Wednesday, September 13-Wednesday,
October 18, 2023
“The Prodigal God”

You probably know the famous story Jesus told has been called for centuries, the “Parable of the Prodigal Son.” But the parable is more than a story about one son. It’s the story of a younger and an older brother. We are meant to compare and contrast them. If we don’t compare and contrast them the way Jesus wants you to, we’re going to miss the incredible message of this parable. With the help of the pastor and Biblical scholar, Tim Keller, and his brief presentations, we will discuss the remarkable message of Jesus’ words. It’s a message and story we’ve heard often but, with Pastor Keller’s insight, he opens up the Scripture to a new awareness of God’s grace for each of us. Join us!

- September 13th—The Parable
- September 20th—The People Around Jesus
- September 27th—The Two Lost Sons
- October 4th—The Elder Brother
- October 11th—The True Elder Brother
- October 18th—The Feast of the Father

—*Pastor Mark Nelson*

Wednesday, October 25-Wednesday,
November 15, 2023
“The Birth of Jesus”

As Advent and Christmas near, we will look at Luke’s beginning chapters of his story of Jesus. With the insight of the British Bible scholar, N.T. Wright, and short video presentations, we will discuss the setting of Jesus’ birth and, in turn, what God’s coming in Jesus Christ means for us.

No class on Wednesday, November 22 and November 29—Thanksgiving Break.



music 

Music

Peace Choir rehearsals begin Wednesday, September 6, 7:00-8:30pm in the front classroom. Regular, weekly rehearsals will continue the following Wednesdays starting at 7:00pm. A specific, Fall 2023 schedule will be available at the September 6th rehearsal. An open invitation to interested newcomers is extended to attend any and all rehearsals!

The choir will participate in the service beginning Sunday, September 10, Gathering Sunday.

Questions can be addressed to Bruce Hudson: bdhudson@prodigy.net.

—*Bruce Hudson*

Beginning with Gratitude

Fall is an exciting time of new beginnings. Among other things, it brings the start of the school year, the start of Vikings' football, and the start of changing seasons. These new beginnings can sometimes be hard, but my parents always taught me that the best way to start something is with gratitude—it makes you feel better and makes the situation feel lighter.

As many of you know, Reilly and I welcomed our son, Cameron, into the world on June 29th. On the second to last day of VBS, just before our "Cosmic Closing" time, I got the call that he was coming and quickly dashed out the door. It had already been a "Stellar" week, and it became even better when he was born around 4am the next morning.

While on my parental leave,



there were many of you who stepped up in my place—thank you! Pastor Mark handled all the Sunday worship and pastoral care responsibilities, wrote the weekly CYF Blast email, and made special visits to Camp Wapo. Lori Thomson and Ann Losinski led the Chicago service trip. Daina Sivanich and Jenna Trenbeath (from CCLC), along with nearly 40 volunteers, made sure the final day of VBS went smoothly and that the building was left better than we found it. Leaders from the CYF Committee made sure our Family Camp weekend at Luther Crest Bible Camp went smoothly. And these are just a few examples. I am so, so grateful.

And I am grateful to you too, Peace—for your well wishes, for your gracious support, and

for making sure this sacred time with my family was possible. Studies show that having both parents at home during the first months of life have a significant short-term and long-term impacts on the wellness of both the mother and the child. Parental leave was a blessing I deeply cherished and don't take for granted, and I am grateful that this congregation invests in its children, youth, and families in both word and deed—my own family included.

Lastly, I am grateful that both Reilly and Cameron are healthy, and that Cameron continues to grow. And as we move into this fall season and all of its new beginnings, I'm grateful to be stepping forward alongside each of you, sharing in ministry together.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Joe Orner

Sunday School, Confirmation, and High School Youth Activity Registration

Activity registration for the 2023/2024 school year is open! Please register online—scan the QR code, or click on the link in the Thursday CYF Blast, in Pastor Mark's Friday e-note, and on Peace's website.

The registration URL is <https://forms.gle/cMmi9yRUEMemPNUc9>.

Paper registration forms are available at the information kiosk if needed.



Summer 2023 Was a Blast!

As summer 2023 comes to an end, we had a wealth of experiences in which our children participated.

Summer kicked off with seven youth accompanied by two leaders traveling to Chicago for a week of service at five different sites. From fixing bikes, to playing with children to packing apples, they had a blast!

Camp Wapogasset Seeds weekend gave five Peace children who completed Grades 1-3 this spring a fun camp experience with crafts,

singing, Bible time, swimming and games.

Our Stellar VBS was held at Peace the last week of June. We launched kids on a cosmic quest shining Jesus' light to the world. Peace's Parish Hall and meeting rooms were transformed into rugged moonscapes and constellations complete with a lunar lander!

In July, several families traveled to Family Camp at Luther Crest in Alexandria on Lake Carlos. They did all the fun camp activities....as a family!

The first week of August saw nine Peace youth head to Camp Wapogasset's Youth Camp for a week. The days were filled with Bible study, chapel, cabin activities, free time, field games and campfires.

To cap off summer, Peace hosted a family mini-golf and ice cream outing at the Links at Dred Scott and the famed Scoops.

Stop by the scrapbook wall in the fireside area to see pictures of our fun summer!

Sunday School Preview

Sunday School Starts Sunday, September 10!

Sunday School is one of our best tools for growth and spiritual development in our youngest generation of Peace-goers.

Through Sunday School, we're able to fulfill the promises we make as a community in baptism: to live among God's faithful people, to bring them the Word of God and the Holy Supper, to teach them the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, to place in their hands the Holy Scriptures, and to nurture them in faith and prayer.

Throughout the year, the children will experience and better understand God's love, as we build and grow a firm foundation for their faith.

—Pastor Joe Orner

Sunday School Teachers

Are you interested in investing in the younger generations of Peace?

We are seeking adults and students 6th grade and up to help our students grow in their faith through our Sunday School program!

We are asking teachers to commit to teaching at least two Sundays per month. There will be at least two adult leaders assigned to each room plus 1-2 assistants to provide greater flexibility and support. Have a busy schedule? We also need substitutes to serve as needed, when it works for you.

If interested, please contact Pastor Joe at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org.



Alleluia Singers Returns!

Last year was the inaugural year for the Alleluia Singers, and we are so grateful to everyone who participated and made it possible. Peace is blessed with both an abundance of young people and many very talented singers. This year, we again invite all 2nd-5th Graders to be

part of this musical journey.

You don't need to be an experienced singer to join—just a desire to sing. We hope this opportunity helps our students develop a lifelong love for music and singing. The Alleluia Singers will also provide valuable leadership and

support with the Sunday School Singers.

The Alleluia Singers will rehearse starting Wednesday, September 20, 5:30-6:15pm. Come be a part of something special!

—Pastor Joe Orner

Confirmation Begins Wednesday, September 13th!

Orientation Meeting Wednesday, September 6, 7:00pm

Confirmation is central to our congregation's mission of "Growing a community that nurtures a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ." Confirmation gives us the opportunity to form community while we strengthen our relationships to God and one another.

Throughout our three-year program, we hope Peace is and will continue to be a community for your student to

question, challenge, celebrate, and experience all of the amazing ways that God shows God's love for us.

The Bible is full of amazing stories from our ancestors in the faith, yet sometimes they can seem strange and distant when we read them today. But questions and conversations regarding conflict, family, leadership, social justice, doubt, and hope have never been more relevant! As we

explore both the Old and New Testaments and dig into our theme, "My Story," we'll continue to discover together how our stories are all tied in with God's story.

Confirmation will meet weekly on Wednesdays from 6:30-7:30pm beginning September 13. All 6th-8th graders (members and non-members) are welcome to register!

—Pastor Joe Orner

High School Hangout Preview

Beginning this fall, Peace will begin hosting monthly special events for our students. There will be a mix of service projects, fun events, and fellowship time in our local community. Each will be an

opportunity to get to know God and each other better.

Our first event will be a Sunday study break at Starbucks (9250 Hennepin Town Road) from 2:00-3:00pm on Sunday,

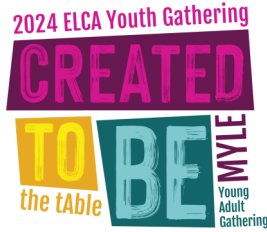
September 17. We'll cover the cost of beverages and hope to see you there!

—Pastor Joe Orner

2024 ELCA National Youth Gathering

Every three years, thousands of high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the **ELCA Youth Gathering**. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives.

Next summer, students who have completed 8th-12th grade will have the opportunity to



attend the ELCA National Youth Gathering **July 16-20, 2024** alongside 30,000 youth from across the United States in...**New Orleans!** The theme for the 2024 gathering is, "Created to Be" centered on Psalm 139:14.

We will rotate through program areas each day and will end each evening together at our Mass Gathering in the Caesars Superdome. More information will be available in September and registration will begin September 17!

Trunk or Treat Set for October 28

On Saturday, October 28 at 3:30pm we will host our 4th annual Trunk or Treat! The event combines the fun of trick-or-treating with the familiarity of all of the people in our parking lot.



(plus their families)—many of whom did not belong to Peace. It is a great community event and it builds visibility for Peace.

Instead of going from house to house at night, kids travel from car to car during the day to collect candy (or pencils, stickers, etc.). Each car's trunk is decorated, and trunk host(s) pass out candy.

In order to provide the best possible experience and hospitality, we need your help. Please consider coming to the event and hosting a trunk, even if (especially if!) you don't have younger kids. We will have prizes for the best costumes and the best trunks, and we expect this to be one of our biggest outreach events of the year.

This event has been a wonderful hospitality opportunity over the last few years, as we've welcomed well over 200 kids

—Pastor Joe Orner

CYF Sept Dates

Wednesday, September 6

- Sunday School Teacher Orientation, 6:00pm
- Confirmation Parent & Youth Orientation, 7:00pm

Sunday, September 10

- Gathering Sunday!
- Sunday School Festival, 10:45am
- 20 & 30 Somethings Gathering, 12:30pm, Wooden Hill Brewing Company

Wednesday, September 13

- Confirmation Starts, 6:30pm

Sunday, September 17

- Blessing of Sunday School Students and Commissioning Teachers, during worship
- Sunday School Starts, 10:45am
- High School Hangout, 2:00pm (Starbucks)

Wednesday, September 20

- Alleluia Singers First Rehearsal, 5:30pm
- Confirmation, 6:30pm

Friday, September 22

- Outdoor Movie Night, 7:00pm

Sunday, September 24

- Bibles Presented to 3rd Graders, during worship
- Sunday School, 10:45am

Wednesday, September 27

- Alleluia Singers, 5:30pm
- Confirmation, 6:30pm



Service & Mission Fall Initiatives

Harvest Pack Set for Sunday, November 12



Harvest Pack has a simple mission: healthy food on every table.

Harvest Pack is a non-profit organization that was founded in 2012. They address food insecurity through meal packing events then distribute that food to local communities.

Since 2018, our Parish Hall has been transformed annually into a packing site for members of all ages to participate as we strive to pack 10,000 oatmeal meals in about 2 hours which are then distributed to residents in Bloomington.

This fall, our Harvest Pack is set for Sunday, November 12 starting at 10:30am. We'll need

70+ people to pack these meals and there is a job everyone from affixing labels, to adding ingredients, to sealing bags to boxing up meals. It's fun, fast paced, and great for everyone to come together on a big project like this!

As the time gets closer, look for sign up sheets in the narthex!

Ongoing Outreach

VEAP



"Most Needed" items are needed more than ever. VEAP has said that they continue to hear from people that they "don't earn enough to make ends meet." The end of pandemic-era financial programs has dramatically increased the number of people relying on VEAP's food and community resources.

Peace continues to support VEAP helping our Bloomington neighbors by providing "most needed" items. Donations are delivered weekly to VEAP.

- Current "most needed" items are: laundry detergent, paper products (paper towels, toilet paper), dish soap, personal care items (shampoo, toothpaste, hand soap, toiletries), diapers, baby wipes, flour, sugar, and cooking oil. Visit veap.org/most-needed-items to see the complete list.
- Or, make a check out to Peace Lutheran Church and write "VEAP" in the memo line.

LWR Baby Kits



We are continuing to collect items and funds to create Baby Care Kits.

A shopping list and collection bin for your donations are in the narthex. If you would like to make a financial donation, make a check out to Peace Lutheran Church and write "LWR Baby Care Kits" in the memo line.

Items are being collected, stored, and periodically packed and driven over the LWR warehouse in St. Paul.

We thank you for your care for the littlest ones in need throughout the world.

Fall Fellowship

For Everyone

Date/Time	Event	Description
Tuesdays, 6:30-8:00pm	Pickleball	Join us Tuesday evenings 6:30-8:00pm at Westwood Park (3416 W 108th Street, Bloomington). Assuming good fall weather, we'll play continue to play outdoors. Please bring a lawn chair. All skill
Saturday, October 14, 6:00pm	Name That Tune Music Trivia Night (Adults 21+)	Test your musical knowledge from the 60's through the 90's (yes, you can still remember!) with fellow members. There will be prizes! Bring an hors d'oeuvre to share and your own beverage (wine, beer, and/or soda). You can sign up at the information kiosk later this fall, call the church office (952.944.6510) to be
Saturday, October 28, 3:30-4:30pm	Trunk or Treat	Kids will walk from car to car collecting candy, and people will host decorated car trunks to pass out candy. We need your help—please consider coming and hosting a trunk, even if (especially if!) you don't have younger kids. We will have prizes for the best costumes and the best trunks. This is one of our biggest outreach
Sunday, November	Pie Fest	Celebrate your pledge to support Peace and its ministries with a

For Families and Young Children

Date/Time	Event	Description
Friday, September 22, 7:00pm	Family Outdoor Movie Night	Grab a blanket and pillow or chairs and join us for an outdoor movie night under the stars in Peace's parking lot! The popcorn machine will be a poppin'! Sign up at the information kiosk this fall!
Saturday, October 28, 3:30pm	Trunk or Treat	Families (and the entire Peace congregation!), come participate in Trunk or Treat! Kids walk from car to car collecting candy, pencils, stickers, etc. Please consider hosting a trunk and certainly bring your children! Having a quick game at your trunk adds to the fun of the event. Prizes and bragging rights will be awarded for the best costumes and best trunk. Look for sign up information this fall.
Friday, November 17, 6:00-7:30pm	Family Game and Pizza Night	Come join Peace members of all ages and families in the Parish Hall for pizza and a game night! We'll enjoy popcorn while playing board games, card games, or Dominoes. If you have a favorite game bring it along. Look for sign up information this fall!



For 20 & 30 Somethings

Date/Time	Event	Description
Sunday, September 10, 12:30-1:30pm	Brewery Fellowship	After Gathering Sunday, join us for some fall brews and fellowship at Wooden Hill Brewing Company (7421 Bush Lake Road, Edina). Please RSVP to Pastor Joe at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org .
Tuesday, October 3, 7:00-8:30pm	Trivia Night at Town Hall Station	Match your wits and knowledge against other trivia night teams at Town Hall Station (4500 Valley View Road, Edina). Please RSVP to Pastor Joe at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org .
Sunday, November 12, 12:30-1:30pm	Harvest Pack at Peace then lunch and a brew	We'll start with worship at 9:30, stay on to pack meals for Harvest Pack at Peace at 10:30am. Once packing is done, we'll head over to Fat Pants Brewing (8335 Crystal View Road, Eden Prairie) for lunch. RSVP to Pastor Joe at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org .

For Adults 40+

Adults 40+ meet for coffee and conversation the third Saturday of each month at 10:00am at Peace. Our fall meeting dates will be September 16, October 21, and November 18. Questions? Please contact Cynthia Fossan at cindikf@gmail.com.

For Older Adults (80+)

Date/Time	Event	Description
Thursday, September 28,	Fall Luncheon	Join us for a fall luncheon at Peace! It's a great way to see one another and get to know newer Peace members.
Thursday, October 26, 11:30am	Harvest Luncheon	Join us for a harvest luncheon at Peace!
Thursday, December 7, 11:30am	Christmas Luncheon	Join us for a Christmas luncheon at Peace! It will a great way to see one another, see our "snow birds" before they depart, celebrate the Christmas season, and get to know newer Peace members.

Volunteers are welcome. If you would like to assist with transportation, serving, or cleaning up, please contact Daina Sivanich in the church office.

New Member Orientation

Peace welcomes new members!

On Sunday, October 1 at 11:45am we will host an orientation session. It's a great way to learn more about Peace, its resources, and meet other new members. New members will be received in worship two weeks later on Sunday, October 15. We strongly encourage you to attend both the orientation and the worship service.

Please call the church office at 952-944-6510 to register for orientation.

Many Thanks

Peace relies on many, many volunteers. From teaching our children and youth, to participating in Sunday morning worship (we have a minimum of six service assistants every single Sunday!), to participating or leading one of the many committees, to preparing Lenten meals, nearly everyone helps out in some way. In this issue, we'd like to thank:

- Thank You Weeders! Thank you to all who have given their time and weed-pulling talent this summer! It has been very much appreciated. Please feel free to continue pull the random weed or two that may pop up between our gardeners' visits!
- A heartfelt thanks to all the people who helped move the rock and mulch! Kelby Teer, Brece Teer, Dave Thoen, Sue Larson, Steve Larson, Jason Losinski, Jim Thomson, Lori Thomson, and anyone else who helped that we didn't happen to see!
- Thanks to Brian and Pam Sjoquist for washing Peace's table cloths and kitchen linens each week.
- Thanks to Denise Thoen for scrapbooking Peace's events with style and flair. See her work hanging on the wall in the fireside area.
- All the unsung heroes who enable ministry at Peace to thrive.



An Interview with Author, Photographer, John Noltner

Peace member, John Noltner is an author and award-winning photographer. John and his wife Karen have been members since 1997. John is home editing his latest book and



Peace had the opportunity to catch up with him.

How did you begin *A Peace of My Mind*?

I worked as a photographer shooting for magazines and Fortune 500 companies. During the 2008 recession I became frustrated with the quality of our national dialogue. I worried about all the division and was frustrated with things that ask us to look at what can separate us and wondered if I could use my photography and storytelling to remember what connects us.

It started out simply sitting down with a person and doing an interview. And because I'm a photographer, taking a photo. And that was interesting. So I did another. I had no intention of it becoming this life-consuming project, but it slowly started getting traction and now it's all that I do.

Tell us a bit about your upcoming book.

We're trying to have a

representative view of some of the social challenges that we're dealing with as a country, the people who are immediately impacted by those issues, *and* the people who are working to find creative solutions to those challenges.

In this next book, *Lessons on the Road to Peace*, we're talking about race in Mississippi. We're talking about environment and the Louisiana bayous. We're talking about housing security out in/on Skid Row in Los Angeles.

It's interesting moving across the country. Every time we leave a place, it feels like the work is incomplete. But, there's a beauty and a unique perspective that happens when you're able to move around and see issues up close and start to connect dots and see how some of the challenges that we're facing have commonalities. None of these is an exhaustive exploration of the issues, but it is a human exploration of the issues.

How is this upcoming book different from your other books?

The premise is the same-- interviewing and trying to find the common humanity, but the

methodology was a little different in this book. We intentionally dove into difficult issues that we're facing as a country.

It was launched by the experience of going to the site where George Floyd was killed in 2020 and realizing that, as our eyes were opening to some of the injustices in the world, there were all these issues, and others, that I didn't really have a full understanding of.

The difference for this book is that we went into the weeds and dug into many challenging issues: immigration, race, gender, environment. I think it's interesting to see, to understand why, what their stories are and what's driven people to either, be the way they are or to support the issues that they support.

There's an inclination in today's climate to look at someone who disagrees with you and think that they're foolish or they haven't thought something through or they just don't understand the world the right way. But that's a lot harder to do when you sit down with a person and get to know them. And hear their story and understand. For me, it leads to understanding the complexities of the world a little bit more. Black and white,

good and bad, us and them. The world is a really complicated, messy, and beautiful place because we're billions of messy, complicated people. Each of us by ourselves is all of those things and then you add it together and it gets, gets complicated very fast.

So from a faith standpoint..

I like to think of myself as a untrained, earthbound, vagabond, theologian. I am drawn to Jesus' call to love one another and what that means in today's world.

I often operate in the faith world speaking at churches and working with chaplains at colleges and so on. I also recognize that some of the stories that we talk about are really challenging for people of faith depending on where you fall in the political spectrum. This new book will include a story from Rev. Katey Zeh, the CEO of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice and I interviewed her right after the Dobbs ruling. I interviewed Darcelle, who was the oldest performing drag queen in the world. I interviewed a woman who works as a sex worker. These are not always the kind of conversations that we have in churches.

It feels like we're out on the edge, but then I remind myself that Jesus tended to live out at the edge. I think that a lot of people in today's world, had they known the historical Jesus, would have thought he was a

little radical. He intersected with people who were poor; he lived in regular proximity to "those people" and for me that's a holy journey.

Jesus hung out with the real people. There's a tendency in our world for us to talk about "those people" however you categorize "those people." It's an entirely different learning experience to engage with "those people." Not to talk about them, but to talk *with* them and to learn from them.

The entire methodology of this 2 1/2 years was to go into places where I didn't know much, where I didn't have a full understanding or, where the information that I did have was not necessarily accurate.

What would you say peace means to you?

My sense of peace is related to the common good. It relates to Dr. Martin Luther King's Jr.'s notion of beloved community which is to say that if I'm doing fine, but somebody next to me is struggling, I'm not really doing fine.

If there's work to be done, in part, it's probably my work to do. I think when we compartmentalize and segment things and we turn a blind eye because it's not our problem, we're missing the bigger picture. My sense of peace revolves around justice and making sure that everybody has the ability to and the potential to thrive.

Sometimes these issues of justice and equity and peace feel kind of heavy, but also, there's a lot of joy and there can be whimsy in it so I try to balance that with learning and understanding the world with joy and gratitude.

Sharing the Burden

Sitting in interviews with people who have experienced trauma in different ways, has weight to it. If you're paying attention, you wind up carrying some of that weight with you, but I also think that the ability to connect and the ability to share a human moment together carries an enormous amount of beauty, light, and joy. I try to walk that balance between two; sharing the burden.

Has your faith evolved?

I used to be more black and white with my answers, but have come to live more in the mystery and the wonder of the world and my faith. I'm pretty convinced that if we do an honest job of trying to get to the right answer, that if we land on this side or that side of a particular issue, that God has a little bit of grace with us. If we're trying to see God in an issue, good and honest people can come up with two different conclusions and still be welcomed in the kingdom of God.

—Daina Sivanich



Life Passages

Births

- **Cameron Joseph Orner** born to Pastor Joe and Reilly Orner on June 29, 2023. Cameron is also welcomed by brother, Lucas.
- **Sylvie Johnson** born to Kevin Johnson and Courtney Farland-Johnson on August 23, 2023. Sylvie is also welcomed by sister, Bergen.

Baptisms

- **Avery James Elling** baptized on June 4, 2023. Avery is the son of Rob and Kelsey Elling. Avery's sponsors are Kevin and Briana Fischer, and Chris and Mandi Nazy.
- **Kaibigan Hawkins Del Rosario Thomson** baptized on July 30, 2023. Kai is the son of Jimmy Thomson and Arielle Del Rosario and grandson of Jim and Lori Thomson. Kai's sponsors are Jeff Bayard, Dan Chin, Gianna Santelli, and Emma Thomson.

Weddings

- **Megan Olson and Andrew Cross** were married on June 23, 2023 in Nebraska City, NE. Andrew is the son of Gene and Deb Cross.
- **Ashley Enke and Timothy Platt** were married on June 24, 2023 in Minneapolis. Tim is the son of Jim and Anita Platt.

Grieving

- **Brian and Pam Sjoquist** upon the death of Pam's brother, Tim Ernst who died on January 27, 2022.
- **Mark, Sandy, and Johnny Reichel** on the death of Mark's mother, Emily Reichel on April 24, 2023.
- **Ken and Ann Ashton-Piper and family** upon the death of Ann's father, Rev. Dr. Wayne Stumme who died on May 24, 2023.
- **Todd, Susan, Caitlin, and Bennett Bordson** upon the death of Todd's mother, Darlene Bordson on July 7, 2023.
- **Ryan and Cecelia Byers and family** on the death of Ryan's grandmother, Lois Willer on August 17, 2023.

partners

Fall 2023

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On The Cover
"Encircled in His Arms"
Watercolor painting by Amy Jones, 2021

Submissions

Do you have an idea for a story or would love to write? Contact our Managing Editor with your submission, but please keep in mind the following guidelines: (a) Your article will be reviewed by the editorial 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: *Cable Car Prayers*

A few years back, my wife, Marcie, and I went on a gondola up to the base of Mont Blanc. On the way, and at the same time our cable car was hanging over the deepest part of the valley, it swayed, then stopped. No one said anything. But I sure was thinking, “Is this thing on tight?”

That’s a question for many similar circumstances. When you are hanging over the abyss and there’s nothing between you and whatever it is, the thing you’re thinking is: will this work out? Are we okay? That’s when we really start praying it is on tight.

Sometimes all we can do is pray. But what are we actually doing when we pray? And what did the writer of the book of James mean when he told his fellow Christians that “*the prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective*” (James 5:16)? Experience tells us that prayer isn’t a remote control we can use to change to our preferred circumstance. Sometimes we pray and nothing changes. As I think back on hanging out over a cliff, it would be a twisted God who said: “Be good enough and pray in the right way for it to be okay.” Lord, are you there? Was I supposed to do something special to get your attention?



The book of James offers practical advice to newly converted Christians about prayer. In their world, people prayed to chosen or local gods or goddesses. But James reminds them that they are not praying to angry gods who will punish them if they get irritated. We are under the care of the one true God who was revealed to us in Jesus; who knows us and loves us and hears our prayers.

This fact changed everything about prayer for first-century Christians, and for us. In prayer, we are brought into the presence of God who loves us. Just that. And so, in prayer, we are more whole, more alive, not through anything we have done but the sheer grace of God.

The mystery of prayer is that we may never understand exactly how it works, just that it draws us into the presence of a God who hears, even when we wonder, “How do we know that this is on tight?” We can expect, somehow, that God hears us and answers: “I know what you’re going through. I am with you.”

—Pastor Mark Nelson

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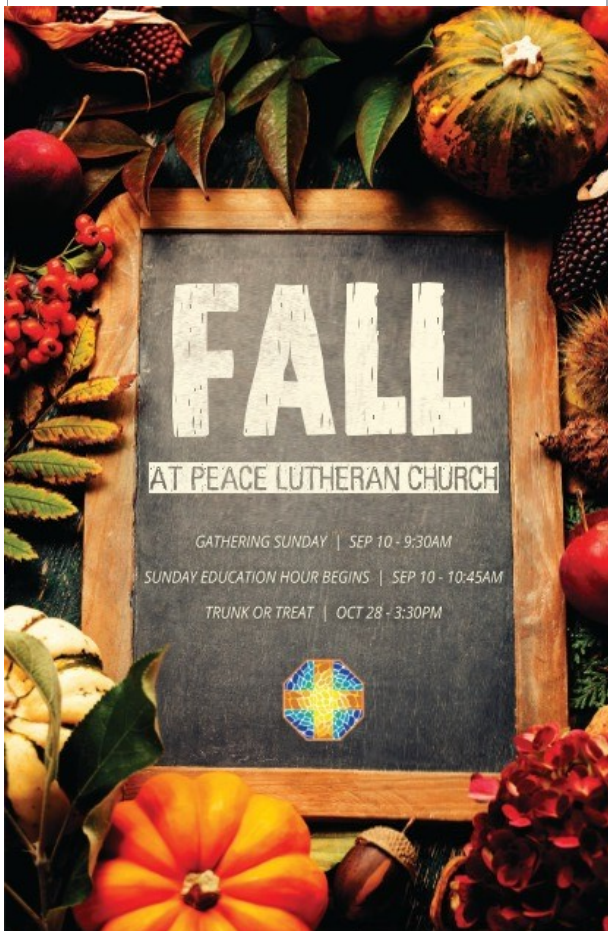
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Sunday Worship: 9:30am



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



Join us for
Gathering Sunday
September 10, 2023!

Worship - 9:30am
Fellowship - 10:30am
Education Hour - 10:45am

- Sunday School Festival for kids with games, activities, and snow cones!
- Fall ministry preview for adults.