

partners

Peace Lutheran Church

Winter, 2023



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

 from the senior pastor

Advent and Christmas Are Coming!

Here we are again in November and out ahead there is Thanksgiving and then—*then*—Christmas. Does that sound exciting or, maybe....daunting? Well, that's probably because we remember the nervous energy that drives us through it all. The busyness. The hustle. The last-minute-wrapping. The beauty of the first snowfall (or at least the movie version on the *Hallmark Channel*). The delight of Christmas lights (after they are hung, of course). The would-you-stop-arguing-we're-supposed-to-be-making-memories moments! There is so much desire and longing wrapped up in every gift, every have-to-make recipe, and every required tradition. We hope to create a Christmas for our families and loved ones but we are tired even before we're finished imagining it.

But what if—*what if*—we could take all those dreams and plans and see what's underneath? What we would find, I believe, are our hopes for peace and joy and love for ourselves, our families, and for our world. And we say, "Lord, show us again how this goes? How can this busy, crazy time of year bless our lives and our lives together?"

One way is to live the seasons as the church has given them to

us. There is Advent, a season marked by expectation and preparation. What big life event does not need preparation? And what grand occasion doesn't have excitement and anticipation?

So too with Advent. It's the beginning of the church calendar. In the church, the year does not begin with resolutions for a "new me" in the new year, but with the hopeful anticipation of the birth of a little baby who will come to make all things new.

Advent has with it a certain tone. We hear it. The music of Advent expresses a longing, a thirst—and the relief we will experience when it is satisfied. Take this hymn, for example. It looks to Jesus not only as God's love expressed in human form in Jesus: "*Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free; from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.*" Advent music can capture the hard things about life here in the not-yet, before Christ comes to restore all things.

Then there's Christmas. We celebrate with a new kind of joy

this great turning upside down; not us reaching out, searching for God but God coming to Earth in the form of a human baby.

I invite you to Advent and Christmas at Peace! Come again with me as we draw near to all that is holy, all that is hard about Advent and Christmas. Come again to practice hope for the coming King. Celebrating generosity and love any chance we get. Come again to know how much God loves you. As Henri Nouwen once wrote: "*The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord.*"

—Pastor Mark Nelson



Seasonal Worship Guide

November

December

26

First Sunday of Advent, 9:30am

Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner

“Heaven and Earth: Surprised”

Reading: Mark 1:1-8

Lighting of the Advent Candle, Peace Choir, Holy Communion

Adult Education, Sunday School

3

Second Sunday of Advent, 9:30am

Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson

“Heaven and Earth: Light”

Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Lighting of the Advent Candle, Peace Choir, Holy Communion

Adult Education, Sunday School

6

Advent Midweek Worship, 6:30pm

Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson

“Pause”

Reading: Matthew 6:25-34

—

Supper (5:30) preceding worship

10

Third Sunday of Advent, 9:30am

Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson

“Heaven and Earth: Rejoice”

Reading: Luke 1:26-38

Lighting of the Advent Candle, Peace Choir; Holy Communion

Adult Education, Sunday School

13

Advent Midweek Worship, 6:30pm

Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner

“Prepare”

Reading: Luke 19:28-40

—

Supper (5:30) preceding worship

17

Fourth Sunday of Advent, 9:30am

Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner

“Heaven and Earth: A Service of Lessons and Carols” featuring the Sunday School Children

Various Gospel Readings

Lighting of the Advent Candle, Peace Choir, Sunday School, and Alleluia Singers

Cookie Reception and Fellowship

December Worship Guide continues on page 4



Seasonal Worship Guide

December

20	24	25	31
Advent Midweek Worship, 6:30pm	Christmas Eve, 4:00pm; 5:30pm	Christmas Day, 9:30am	First Sunday of Christmas
Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson
“Ponder”	“Joy of Heav’n to Earth Come Down!”	“Joy of Heav’n to Earth Come Down!”	“Christmas Continued....”
Reading: Luke 1:26-38	Reading: Luke 2:1-14	Reading: Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20; John 1:1-14	Reading: Luke 2:22-40; John 1:1-14
—	Stephanie Claussen, harp; Peace Choir (5:30), Holy Communion (5:30)	Holy Communion	Holy Communion
Supper (5:30) preceding worship	—	Christmas Fellowship	Fellowship

January

7	14	21	28
Baptism of Our Lord, 9:30am	Second Sunday after Epiphany, 9:30am	Third Sunday after Epiphany, 9:30am	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, 9:30am
Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson	Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson
Reading: Matthew 2:1-12	Reading: John 1:43-51	Reading: Mark 1:14-20	Reading: Mark 1:21-28
Holy Communion, Peace Choir	Holy Communion	Holy Communion;	Holy Communion; Alleluia Singers
Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Preview to Annual Congregational Meeting, Sunday School	Annual Congregational Meeting, Sunday School

Seasonal Worship Guide

February

4	11	14	18	25
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, 9:30am	Transfiguration of Our Lord, 9:30am	Ash Wednesday, 6:30pm	First Sunday in Lent, 9:30am	Second Sunday in Lent, 9:30am
Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner	Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner	Preacher: To be announced	Preacher: To be announced	Preacher: To be announced
Reading: Mark 1:29-39	Reading: Mark 9:2-9	Readings to be announced	Readings to be announced	Readings to be announced
Holy Communion; Sunday School Singers, Communion Education Recognition	Holy Communion	Holy Communion, Imposition of Ashes	Holy Communion, Rite of Membership	Holy Communion; Alleluia Singers
Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School	Lenten Supper preceding worship	Adult Education, Sunday School	Adult Education, Sunday School



Advent Worship Opportunities

Advent Sundays, November 26, December 3, 10, 17

“Heaven and Earth”

In the season of Advent, we recall and celebrate the God who has, in the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, come to us. Jesus' name means. “*God saves*,” which is a Bible way of saying that Almighty God has turned toward us. God is not restricted to heaven. God stoops toward us, showing up when we least expected it and in ways that surprise us. This Advent, we celebrate the life-changing good news that God comes and is coming, bringing “heaven to earth,”.....and changing everything!

It's not within our own power to make a fresh start. If we're to have a future different from our past, it must come as a gift. It must come from God. What

we need is a God who not only cares about us, but is willing to show up among us and do something with us here, now. It turns out that's just the sort of God we have.

I'd like to invite you to anticipate and celebrate the earth-shaking, life-transforming news God is coming to us. In this Advent/Christmas season, we'll celebrate and explore the reality of heaven coming down to earth; the joyful news of Christ's birth. and how because of that news we can expect God to show up *anywhere*, even to you and even to me. Even here and even now.

—Pastor Mark Nelson

Advent Sundays

First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, November 26, 9:30am

“Surprised”

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner

Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 3, 9:30am

“Light”

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 10, 9:30am

“Rejoice”

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson

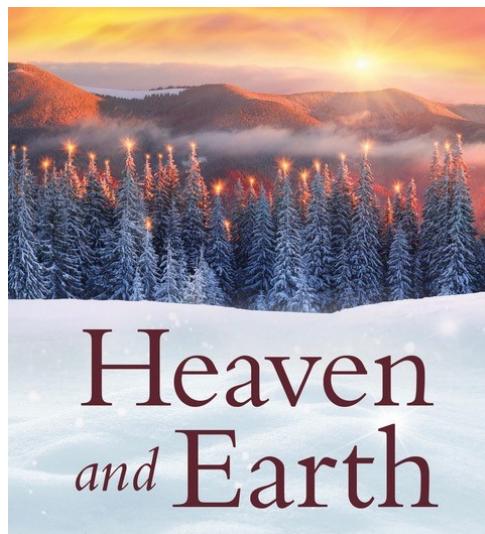
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 17—

9:30am

“Heaven and Earth: A Service of Lessons and Carols” (featuring the Sunday School children)

Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner



Advent Midweek Worship, December 6, 13, 20, 6:30pm

“Pause, Prepare, Ponder”

This midweek Advent series invites us to pause, to prepare, and to ponder. First is the call to spiritual introspection, prayerful waiting, and pausing from the constant busyness of our normal lives,...to prepare the way of the Lord....and to

ponder the beginning and end of all things...we prepare....we anticipate....a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness is at home. We pause, we prepare, we ponder.

—Pastor Mark Nelson

Advent Wednesday Night Suppers December 6, 13, 20 | 5:30-6:30pm

Join us for soup, salad, and bread on Wednesday nights during Advent! Stay for worship at 6:30pm then one of our many Wednesday night activities!

Advent Wednesdays

Wednesday, December 6,

6:30pm

“Pause”

Gospel: Matthew 6:25-34

Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson

Wednesday, December 13,

6:30pm

“Prepare”

Gospel: Luke 19:28-40

Preacher: Pastor Joe Orner

Wednesday, December 20,

6:30pm

“Ponder”

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Preacher: Pastor Mark Nelson

Advent Fellowship

Gingerbread Houses & Cookie Decorating

On **Friday, December 1, at 6:30pm** everyone is invited to this congregational event to create a graham cracker gingerbread house and decorate sugar cookies.

Please sign up at the information kiosk!

Lefse Making Congregational Event

Who doesn't love lefse? We'll meet in the Parish Hall for old-fashioned lefse-making on **Saturday, December 2 at 9:00am** until the dough is gone! If you have rolling pins, pastry cloths, lefse grill, lefse turner, or another lefse-making equipment, please bring those items. We'll divide up the lefse so that each participant will go home with some fresh lefse for their enjoyment. Norwegian heritage is not required! Sign up at the information kiosk!

Older Adult Christmas Luncheon and Sing-a-Long

Peace's members aged 80+ are invited to a Christmas luncheon followed by a sing-a-long on **Thursday, December 7 at 11:30am**.

At **12:15pm**, the entire congregation is invited to join the Christmas Carol Sing-a-long in the sanctuary! Invite your family and friends to raise your voices in joyful praise!



Sunday Adult Education

Sunday, November 26

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

Back by popular demand, we'll have the fifth and final discussion on the 20th century Lutheran pastor, martyr, prophet, and spy, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and what his Christian witness might suggest for us in our time and place.

Sunday, December 3

Oppenheimer and the Just War Tradition

In a world full of conflict, an understanding of the Just War Tradition is an important tool in navigating the morality of war. We'll be led in a video discussion by Matt Gobush, a former U.S. national security official and lay leader in the Episcopal Church. We will explore the question: Can war be justified through the lens of our Christian faith? For us all, the issue of war is complicated, and we rely heavily on our faith as a guide. The recent movie *Oppenheimer* raises important questions about the moral implications of war. Mr. Gobush explores how early theologians saw the tenets of Just War as an act of love, of using armed forces to love our neighbors by protecting them from harm.



Sunday, December 10

The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict: Some Thoughts and Discussion

In Israel and the Palestinian territories, there are many stories—many lived experiences, cultures, religions, and political perspectives. The horrific October 7th attack by Hamas on Israel has again brought this complex situation to our national attention. We'll discuss some of the basics of this long-time conflict.—*Pastor Mark Nelson*

Sunday, December 17

Enjoy a cookie reception and extended fellowship time!

Sunday, December 24

No morning worship. No Education Hour.

Sunday, December 31

Enjoy extended fellowship time!

Sundays, January 7 and 14

Barbie and Bible Women

Who would think that the movie *Barbie* and women in the Bible have so much in common? In this video-led discussion from the Episcopal Church, Rev. Sarah Kinney Gaventa explores the lives of Eve, Hannah, Esther, and Mary Magdalene using the movie *Barbie* as a springboard for

conversation. Rev. Gaventa will discuss topics such as creation and curiosity, dealing with loss, the effects of patriarchy, and outsiders as truth-bearers. Whether you saw the movie or not; liked it or not; this will be a thought provoking two Sundays!

Sunday, January 21

Annual Pre-Congregational Meeting Information Meeting

At this pre-meeting, we'll also discuss and review the results of the recent congregational survey.

Sunday, January 28

Annual congregational meeting.

Sunday, February 4

To be announced.

Sunday, February 11

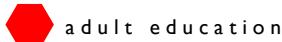
To be announced.

Sunday, February 18

To be announced.

Sunday, February 25

To be announced.



Wednesday Evening Adult Bible Study

Welcome to Midweek Evening Bible study at Peace! On Wednesday evenings from 6:00-6:55pm in the Parish Hall, we gather to read, study, and discuss God's life-changing Word. Join in!

During Advent we will not be meeting due to Advent Fellowship dinner and worship. We will resume Midweek Evening Bible study on Wednesday, January 3rd. Join in!

"The New Testament in Seven Sentences." January 3, 10, 17, 24, 2024

All of us have been on a car trip. We go through valleys and towns; going east, west, north, or south; and we're not really sure where we are and where we're going! Take a plane trip instead? It's all different! We can see with a larger lens how things are connected.

Something like that happens while reading and hearing the New Testament, too. We hear about Jesus' activities (a miracle, a confrontation) or his teaching (a parable, a conversation). But without a larger picture, those things lose their importance and we're not sure how they are connected. Only a view from 30,000 feet will help us to see the whole context with an accurate perspective and get some new meaning about our Christian faith.

In this 4-week session, we'll cover seven sentences that are essential if we are to understand the New Testament. Join in!

—Pastor Mark Nelson

No Bible study on January 31 and February 7.

Handbell Choir Forming

Peace is exploring starting a handbell choir to play periodically during the church year, potentially beginning in 2024.

If you are interested in playing handbells, please sign up to help us gauge interest. This is open not only for adults, but also for students in 5th Grade and up who are currently involved with a school instrumental program (band/orchestra) or who are studying privately (piano) and can read music.

We will contact you with information about an orientation meeting to learn more.

Please sign up at the information kiosk in the narthex or call the Church Office to be added to the list.

Questions? Please see Bruce Hudson after worship on Sundays.



Meaning-Making During the Holidays

What makes for a meaningful holiday season? Is it the snow? The gifts? The food? The decorations? The family time? The church services? Something else entirely?



The more I learn about creating meaningful experiences—as a family, in faith formation, or just in general—there are a few factors that remain true across the board.

First, it's important to build a solid foundation of consistency. We do this by creating steady rhythms and routines in our daily lives—the things that ground us and become habits and natural practices. For example, in the fall, we build the routine of going to school during the week, then coming home to eat dinner as a family, and saying a prayer together beforehand. In Advent we can mark the days and weeks with

an Advent calendar and lighting candles. There are many ways that we can be intentional about how we make meaning from what could be considered mundane.

Conversely, in order for something to feel special, there needs to be a break in the routine—it needs to feel different than usual. This is where Advent and Christmas come in. Starting with Thanksgiving and continuing through December, we have special meals together, with people who are special to us, gathered around a table. We take breaks from school and activities to dedicate to this holy act of being together. And yes, the giving and receiving of gifts adds to the excitement, fun, and joy as well.

Thus, in the end, it's a mix of all those aforementioned things.

There's a sense of magic when the snow falls; the decorations and lights fill us with wonder; the special church services and family traditions ground us in the past, present, and future; the people we spend quality time with remind us of the peace, hope, joy, and love that exists in our hearts and in the world.

So as we move into this beloved time of year, make it meaningful first in the everyday, building consistent ways of sharing love. And as you gather for Christmas festivities, keeping Jesus at the center, know that it will be special and memorable—not because any specific thing that happened or was given, but because of the intentionality and care put into celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Grace and Peace,

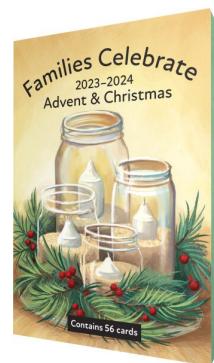
—Pastor Joe Orner

“Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas” Card Packs

“Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas” is a colorful card deck filled with prayers, reflections, and other simple faith practices for families. It’s flexible for busy schedules—you can create a new after-meal ritual, use them as decorations, or carry them on the go. Explore the entire season from Advent through Christmas and Epiphany.

Each Peace family will receive a card pack. Card packs will be available for pick up starting Sunday, November 26.

—Pastor Joe Orner



“Heaven and Earth: A Service of Lessons and Carols”

Featuring the Sunday School Children

Sunday, December 17 During Worship

We are very excited to announce that Sunday, December 17, during worship, the Sunday School children, Sunday School Singers, Alleluia Singers, and Peace Choir will be joining with you, the congregation, to present “Heaven and Earth: A Service of Lessons and Carols.”

On Sundays, students will rehearse in the sanctuary for the first half of the education hour, then enjoy lessons in their classrooms for the second half of Sunday School.

There will be a dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 16, from 10:00-11:30am.

—Pastor Joe Orner

Christmas Program Volunteers Needed

Volunteers of all ages are needed! We need help with costume preparation and staging coordination, assist with rehearsals, and help the children on the day of the program, among other things. Please look for a volunteer sign up sheet at the information kiosk.

Summer 2024 Camp Registration

The summer of 2024 will be filled with fun and great experiences for Peace's children, youth, and families!

All registrations except for Vacation Bible School will open on Monday, January 15, 2024 and close on Thursday, February 15, 2024.

Save the dates in 2024 for:

- June 20-23. Wilderness Canoe Base Family Camp. For families with children of all ages.
- June 24-27. Vacation Bible

School. For children from age 4 through those entering 5th Grade in the fall. Registration will open in April, 2024.

- July 15-20. ELCA's Triennial National Youth Gathering, New Orleans, LA. For students who are currently in 8th-12th Grades. Registration for the ELCA National Youth Gathering has concluded, and we will begin fundraising in the new year. Please consider supporting our students with your prayers and finances!

- July 28-August 2, Camp Wapogasset Youth Camp, Amery, WI. For youth who will be completing 4th-8th Grades this spring.
- August 2-4. Camp Wapogasset Seeds weekend in Amery, WI. For children who will be completing 1st-3rd Grades this spring. Children are invited to a weekend camp experience at Camp Wapogasset in Amery, WI.



Communion Education Class

Sunday, January 14, 2024, 12:00-1:30pm

Peace offers communion to everyone, just as Jesus freely gives his grace to all. And yet there is so much to learn about the holy sacrament of communion and what it means for us.

Students in 2nd grade and above are invited to take part in our Communion Education class on Sunday, January 14, 2024 from 12:00-1:30pm. All students who participate will be recognized in worship on Sunday, February 4, 2024.

Please plan to have a parent attend with your child.

Register by sending an email to Pastor Joe at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org.

Confirmation

On Friday, November 10th, our Confirmation students had the privilege of visiting Temple Israel, a Jewish synagogue in Minneapolis. Temple Israel describes themselves as an “urban congregation dedicated to serving a diverse community,” and it was actually the first synagogue established in Minneapolis. Additionally, it’s currently one of the ten largest Jewish congregations in the United States.

We began the evening with a tour of the synagogue and

some conversation time with our host, Jonathan. After, we joined them in worship for their Friday night Shabbat service. While most Christian churches gather for worship on Sunday mornings, Jews honor the Sabbath from Friday evenings to Saturday evenings. Temple Israel describes Shabbat as an invitation “to take a break from our daily lives to nourish our souls and reconnect with our community.”

Similar to Christians, Jews share the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament as a sacred text;

along with Christianity and Islam, they are an Abrahamic religion. However, though they are monotheistic, Jews are not Trinitarian—they do not believe in the Holy Spirit and consider Jesus only as a prophet.

We are grateful for Temple Israel’s gracious hospitality and for the wonderful experience we got to share together as a group!

—Pastor Joe Orner

High School Hangout

Peace is hosting monthly special events for our high school students. There’s a mix of service projects, fun events, and fellowship time in our local community. Each event is an opportunity to get to know God and one another better.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events:

- Sunday, December 3:
Sunday Study Break, 1:00-2:00pm, Starbucks

- Wednesday, January 3:
Feed My Starving Children, 6:45-8:45pm, Chanhassen
- Sunday, February 4, Skating at Centennial Lakes Park, 1:00-2:00pm

Trunk or Treat Thanks

Thank you to everyone who answered the invitation to participate in our 4th annual Trunk or Treat! While the weather was a bit chilly, it was so heartwarming to see all of the smiles and laughs that lit up our parking lot. Whether you hosted a trunk and gave out candy, attended as a



trick-or-treater, or just came to see what it was all about, your presence helped make the afternoon special. Thank you!

And as I reflect, events like this are just one of the many ways that we put our faith into action, extending radical

hospitality and unconditional welcome, and it served as a beautiful example of how we continue *growing a community that nurtures a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ*—sometimes simply by sharing one piece of candy at a time!

—Pastor Joe Orner

church life 

Annual Peace Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 28, 2024 (Preview, Sunday, January 21, 2024)

The annual congregational meeting of Peace Lutheran Church will take place on **Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 10:45am**. We will review our year of ministry; staff, Committee, and financial reports will be presented. A 2024 budget will be recommended for approval, new Council members elected, and any other new business will be presented to the

congregation for consideration.

We will have a preview and discussion of the annual meeting during the Adult Education Hour on **Sunday, January 21, 2024 at 10:45am**. Written annual reports will be available, the 2023 finances will be reviewed, and the 2024 budget will be first presented.

Also at this preview meeting, the tallied results from the fall

congregational survey will be discussed. An important note: as you may remember, these surveys were anonymous.

If you have, at any time, comments, questions, and/or concerns about ministry at Peace, don't hesitate to contact pastors and/or staff. We like to hear from you!

—Pastor Mark Nelson

Time, Talents, and Interest Surveys

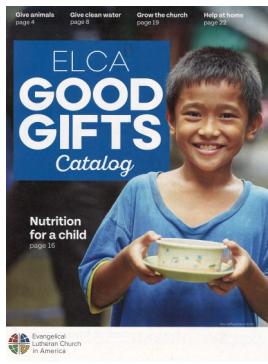
On Sunday, November 12 as part of Stewardship, we distributed Time, Talents, and Interest Surveys. If you did not have a chance to complete it, printed copies can be found at the information kiosk or click on the link to a PDF on Peace's website. Place your completed form in the staff office area.



Service & Mission

ELCA Good Gifts

December 3-25, 2023



ELCA Good Gifts provides over 50 gift-giving options that grow the church, fight hunger and

transform lives. These gifts, starting at just \$10, provide direct support for the churchwide ministries of the ELCA.

Copies of the 2023 catalog will be available at Peace starting Sunday, December 3 allowing you and your family to say "goodbye" to traditional gift-

giving and "hello" to meaningful gifts that save lives and really make a difference in the world.

Once you have selected a gift, there are several ways to make a purchase:

- Make a check out to Peace Lutheran Church for the Good Gift amount and write "Good Gifts" on the memo line.
- Make a check directly to "ELCA Good Gifts" and Peace will mail it in for you.
- Make a check out directly to "ELCA Good Gifts" and using the envelope provided with the catalog,

mail it directly to ELCA Good Gifts, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.

- Purchase your gift online at goodgifts.elca.org/all-gifts

Whatever means you use to make your purchase, please find a corresponding ornament in the narthex to hang on the Good Gifts Christmas tree.

The program will end on Christmas Day.

Together, we can celebrate Christmas and watch our Peace "Good Gifts" grow.

Harvest Pack Recap



Wow!!! In 60-minutes, over 100 Peace members packed 15,000

meals for Harvest Pack. Set up and cleanup were done in record time also. We're getting good at this!

Thank you, thank you, thank you to each and every one of you who showed up early to set up tables and equipment, and to all who packed meals, loaded them on the truck and cleaned up afterwards. Special thanks to our church Administrator, Lori Thomson for organizing the event and directing our activities.

The meals we packed will be distributed locally to hungry children in our area.

For us it was a fun event and one in which we could put our 'faith and stewardship into action.' Thanks be to God for this congregation and opportunity to serve.



Winter Coats for Refugees

For the second year, a Peace school teacher encountered refugee children from South America coming to school without winter clothing, and wanted to do something about it.

With your Benevolence money, she focused on 35 elementary students and volunteered to go on a shopping spree to buy new

coats, hats, mittens, snow pants, boots, and whatever else was needed, for those that had none. Every student was given the clothes they needed and the right sizes too.

A social worker in the school later remarked that the children liked their boots so much they didn't want to take them off. One third grader

didn't want the merchandise tags cut off; he had never had anything new before.

What a wonderful thing to do, and what a thrill it is to spread some joy in this world. Thank you Peace for consecrating some of your offerings to Benevolence, allowing us to be the Hands and Feet of Christ.



New Members

Welcome new members! On Sunday, October 15, 2023, seven new members joined Peace. Please welcome Harold and Carol Conradi, Mary Hanson, Bob and Mickey Larson, and John and Josefina Zech. We look forward to life and ministry together!



Harold and Carol Conradi



Mary Hanson



Bob and Mickey Larson



John and Josefina Zech

Next New Member Orientation Scheduled

Peace welcomes new members! On Sunday, February 11, 2024 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 on Sunday, February 18. 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.



Winter Fellowship

For Everyone of All Ages!

Date/Time	Event	Description
Friday, November 17, 6:00-7:30pm	Pizza and Game Night	Come join Peace members of all ages and families in the Parish Hall for pizza and game night! We'll enjoy popcorn while playing board games, card games, or Dominoes. If you have a favorite game bring it along. Sign up online using the link in the Friday e-Note or call the Church Office.
Sunday, November 19, 10:30am	Pie Fest	Celebrate your pledge to support Peace and its ministries with a pie fest! Please bring a pie to share if you are able.
Fridays, 7:00-8:30pm	Pickleball	Join us Friday evenings 7:00-8:30pm at Jefferson High School in the Activity Center, Court 3 (4001 W. 102nd Street, Bloomington). All ages and all skill levels welcome, anytime! No sign up needed. Please note, no pickleball on December 22.
Friday, December 1, 6:30-7:30pm	Gingerbread House & Cookie Decorating	Everyone is invited to join in the Christmas fun of creating and decorating a gingerbread house and decorating cookies. Look for more details on the sign up sheet at the information kiosk!
Saturday, December 2, 9:00am	Lefse-Making	Who doesn't love fresh lefse?! Sign up to make lefse at Peace. (See page 7 for more information.) Sign up at the information kiosk to help us know how much lefse dough to make.
Friday, January 26, 6:30-8:00pm	White Elephant Bingo	Join in the fun—and surprise—of a White Elephant Bingo. Bring an unwrapped White Elephant prize for bingo winners. Be creative - a box of chocolates, a gently-used item that someone may love, a duplicate toy that you might have, etc. Regifting encouraged! Look for a sign-up sheet at the information kiosk.
Sunday, February 25, 2:00-3:00pm	Outdoor Winter Fun	Let's get outside for some fresh air and fun at Brookside Park (10000 Xerxes Ave. S., Bloomington). Bring your skates and sleds! When it gets closer, look for a sign up sheet at the information kiosk.

For 20 - 30 Somethings

Date/Time	Event	Description
Sunday, December 10, 1:00pm	Christmas Party at Peace	Join us at Peace for some Christmas cheer! Please RSVP to Pastor Joe at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org .
Sunday, January 7, 12:30pm	Bowling and a Brew	Come and strive to “bowl a turkey!” Join us at Pinstripes (3849 Gallagher Drive, Edina) on Sunday, January 7 at 12:30pm. Please RSVP to Pastor Joe at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org .
Tuesday, February 6, 6:30pm	Trivia Night	Sharpen your wits and gather those random bits of knowledge for trivia night at Steel Toe Brewing (4848 West 35th Street, St Louis Park). 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 winter meeting dates will be December 16, January 20, and February 17. Questions? Please contact Cynthia Fossan at cindikf@gmail.com.

For Older Adults (80+)

Date/Time	Event	Description
Thursday, December 7, 11:30am	Christmas Luncheon and Christmas Carol Sing-a-long	<p>Join us for a Christmas luncheon at Peace! It will be a great way to see one another, see our “snow birds” before they depart, and celebrate the Christmas season!</p> <p>After lunch (around 12:15pm), we will gather in the Sanctuary for a Christmas carol sing-a-long accompanied by Bruce Hudson. The entire congregation and guests are invited at 12:15pm to join in the singing!</p>

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



Life Passages

Births

- **Gianna Nicole Ford** born to Donovan and Nicki Ford on November 3, 2023. Gianna is the great-granddaughter of Darrell and Karen Bramer.

Baptisms

- **Connor Hansen Dorn** baptized on September 10, 2023. Connor is the son of Robert and Erin Dorn and Jon and Betty Hansen's grandson. Connor's sponsors are Stacy Dorn-Bauler and Matt Bauler, and Lauren and Matt Toppin.
- **Hudson Hayes Vander Stelt** baptized on October 22, 2023. Hudson is the son of Jason Vander Stelt and Toni Davidson. Hudson's sponsors are Jermey and Melissa Martin, and Aaron and Brenda Vander Stelt.
- **Olivia Kaye Erstad** baptized on November 12, 2023. Olivia is the daughter of Travis and Megan Erstad, and Bob and Cindy Stucky's granddaughter. Olivia's sponsor is Carey Curran.

Thank You

Peace thanks Bev Viken for leading the Peace Quilters! They have continued to make baby quilts for the newly baptized whether babies, toddlers, or adults. Starting December 2023, the Peace Quilters will be lead by Bev Schlink. They will continue to meet every-other Tuesday at 10:00am to cut, stitch, tie, and drink decaf. All are welcome and you do not need to have sewing skills to join in!

Weddings

- **Alyssa Welle and Connor Myhre** were married on September 2, 2023 in Alexandria, MN. Connor is the son of Justin and Kim Myhre.
- **Elizabeth Leppart and Giang (Kenny) Hoang** were married on September 2, 2023 in Minong, WI. Elizabeth is the daughter of Jerry and Ginny Leppart.
- **Chelsea Alger and Riley Kellum** were married on September 9, 2023 in St. Paul, MN. Chelsea is the daughter of Dawn Alger.

Grieving

- **Joe and Jackie Waller** upon the death of Jackie's mother, Priscilla Eckblad who died on September 2, 2023.
- **Virginia Johnson** on the death of her niece, Deborah Corgan on September 13, 2023.
- **Larry Ekegren** upon the death of his mother, Evelyn Ekegren who died on October 23, 2023.

Milestones

- Birthday wishes to **Virginia Johnson** who turned 103 on September 5, 2023!

partners

Winter 2023

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On The Cover
“Savior of the World”
Outreach Media

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: A (Not-So) Perfect Christmas

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." –Philippians 4:7

How about a short Christmas quiz? How engaged are you with the Advent/Christmas season? Yes or no:
 1.) I own more than one Christmas sweater (bonus point if they are ugly). 2.) I have Christmas-themed earrings. 3.) Even my pets have stockings. 4.) I watch 11+ Christmas movies in December. 5.) I force my family or friends to wear matching pajamas, and 6.) I drive around for more than an hour to find Christmas lights.

Now, add up your score. If you didn't answer "yes" to any, you're a Christmas Grinch. If you scored, 0-3, you're a great Christmas Cindy Lou Hoo (Remember her from *How the Grinch Stole Christmas?*) and you have a good balance of managing this over-the-top season with a calm spirit. If you said "yes" to 4-6 items, you are the spirit of Christmas...in the flesh!



As we experience Advent and Christmas, there is something of that Christmas spirit in each of us. We want the Christmas season to feel like magic. But then life happens. The dog or cat pulls down the Christmas tree. Or I am in too much pain to go to the Christmas gathering. Or a flight gets canceled. Or the traditional family fight causes everyone to leave the room. The magic of the season doesn't erase our regular problems. The chronic pain or doctor's appointments or alcoholism or mental health issue.

The chaos of Christmas can feel anything but peaceful or perfect. And yet, this is the season we celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace, a peace that is put in place, not through armies or laws but through the tiny baby, Jesus. Truly that is peace that surpasses understanding. So this is the Christmas we actually have—sometimes messy, sometimes frustrating, and sometimes wonderfully joyful. May we make room for the Prince of Peace in every imperfect moment.

—Pastor Mark Nelson

Staff and Contact Information

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- Pastor Mark Nelson—Senior Pastor; pastor.nelson@peacebloomington.org
- Pastor Joe Orner—Associate Pastor, pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org
- Bruce Hudson—Peace Choir Director and Accompanist (Organ, Piano)
- Lori Thomson—Administrator, lori.thomson@peacebloomington.org
- Daina Sivanich—Communications Specialist, daina.sivanich@peacebloomington.org

PEACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Sunday Worship: 9:30am



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

Christmas Worship at Peace

Sunday, December 24

4:00pm, Worship

- Children's Message

5:30pm, Worship

- Children's Message
- Holy Communion

Sunday, December 31

9:30am, Worship

- Children's Message
- Holy Communion
- Fellowship following worship

Monday, December 25

9:30am, Worship

- Holy Communion
- Fellowship following worship