



PEACE
NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 2021



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

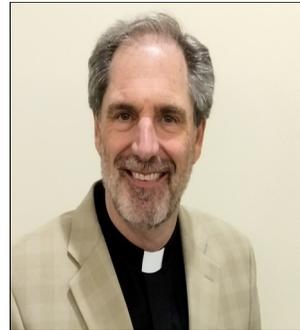
I've sensed a growing awareness among some members that Peace is losing members to death faster than we are receiving new members either by transfer or baptism. Statements like, "We need more people" or "We know what the main problem is, people staying home watching worship on livestream" are honest attempts at naming the reason for our continued decline. I appreciate these efforts, for they demonstrate a love and concern for this congregation. As I've thought about these and similar statements, I have come to realize that in trying to solve our declining attendance, we are turning to the Law and not the Gospel.

Law, in Lutheran theology, tells us what we ought to do. To put it in colloquial terms, if having to choose between a carrot or a stick to motivate someone, the Law functions as the stick. It beats us into submission, we respond in order to avoid pain, not because we are enticed into action. Gospel focuses on what God does for us. Gospel tells us that we are a forgiven people- we can approach God not because we have asked for forgiveness, but because God first forgives us. God has set us free from the bonds of sin- not that we don't lapse back into behavior that is offensive to God and neighbor. God conquered sin and death

through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and his resurrection on Easter morning. This is the carrot that entices us, draws us to want to know more about God. Perhaps instead of trying to "get more people" we

could start praying that God create a hunger in the hearts of those who do not yet know Him and a hunger in the hearts of those of us who do. Are we hungry to share the Gospel message with others (Gospel) or are we looking for more bodies to perpetuate the congregation (Law). Putting a Gospel focus on our efforts means making changes in how we reach out to our neighbors. The goal no longer is to get people onto the property and into the building. The goal is to tell the "old, old story of Jesus and His love." There is a place for the Law in the life of a congregation; the third commandment is "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." God didn't give us a "suggestion," God gave us an "ought." Yet the desire

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**SENIOR PASTOR
STEVE HARTTEN**

Peace Lutheran Church
3590 Lincoln Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: 269-556-7000
Church Office Email:
PeaceLutheranStJoe@sbcglobal.net
Church Website:
Peacelutheranstjoe.org

Church Office Hours:
Monday through Thursday
9 a.m.—12 p.m.

Pastoral Contact Info:
Rev. Steve Hartten
Senior Pastor
Phone: (H) 281-0307
(C) 303-638-7598

Rev. Ronald Schmidt
Staff Pastor
Phone: (H) 983-2590

Audio/Video Requests:
For Audio CD call:
Josh Lochner 429-4415
For Video DVD call:
The Church Office 556-7000

Weekly Worship & Praise Opportunities:
Sunday
10:15 a.m. Worship
also streamed on Facebook Live or YouTube Live
Permission to podcast/stream the music in our services obtained from One License with license #A-722704.

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be at 6pm on December 24th.



COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, November 15, 2021
6:30 p.m.

Members present: Barb Berry, Herb Kroening, Bob Phillips, Bryan Sorensen, Rich Steinbauer, Ed Zajac

Absent: Virgil Bennett, Teresa Hogan

Also Present: Pastor Hartten, Ken Berry, Brenda Engel

Call to Order: Ed Zajac called the meeting to order at 6:36pm.

Open Devotion/Prayer Pastor Steve Hartten
 Pastor Hartten based his devotion on Psalm 47 since next Sunday is Christ the King Sunday. God says to “Rejoice and be happy; the King of Israel is also the King of all the Earth.” We should respect God. As we are looking at the budget, we need to remember that God is in charge. Pastor prayed.

Approval of November agenda
 Brian made a motion to approve the November agenda and Herb seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Approval of October 2021 minutes made via email.

Treasurer’s report Brenda Engel (acct. mgr)
 All transactions have been taken out of Quickbooks and transferred to CDM.

Curr.	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Offerings	\$12,936.00	\$15,666.66	(\$2,730.66)
Honor/Mem.	\$1,220.00		
LWR	\$50		
Thrivent Choice		\$45.83	\$45.83
Soup Kitchen		\$33.33	\$(33.33)
Fellowship	\$15.00	\$11.67	\$3.33
Non-Bud. Items.	\$97.16		
Interest	\$67.98		\$67.98
Total	\$14,386.14	\$15,757.50	(\$1,371.36)

Year-to-Date	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Offerings	\$138,803.65	\$156,666.70	(\$17,863.05)
Honor/Mem.	\$6,819.00		
Missions	\$584.00		\$584.00
LWR	\$155.00		\$155.00
Thrivent Choice	\$1,240.00	\$458.30	\$781.70
Soup Kitchen	\$1,160.00	\$333.30	\$826.70
Fellowship	\$492.73	\$116.70	\$376.09
Non-Bud. Items	\$3,516.44		\$3,516.44
Interest	\$67.98		\$67.98
Total	\$152,838.86	\$157,575.00	(\$4,736.14)

Old Business

COVID-19 update and discussion

The council stands by the original decision to recommend masks for worship. However, it is not mandatory. According to the CDC, 16.9 percent of tests taken are coming up positive for COVID in our area. Anyone over 55 can schedule a booster.

Update Tree Lighting December 5th Bob

Brandi is handling the advertising for the tree lighting the same as trunk or treat was advertised. Martins has agreed to put copies of our advertisement in grocery bags at the store. We will take 250 to each of the Martins in St. Joseph and Stevensville. Bryan will also take the information to the radio station.. Choir is interested in leading the singing for the lighting. In addition to the hot chocolate and candy canes, we are giving out cookies. Brandi will make a sign-up sheet and put in the narthex to sign up.

Monday Evening Services Pastor Hartten

The cost will be about \$83 per week to add the service and fellowship can provide a small meal for a cost of about \$400 per month. Target date will be in March 2022 and time will be 6:00 p.m.

Standing Committee Reports

Worship Ken Berry

Worship committee took a poll for advent and decided Peace will have one midweek service on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Wayne suggested cancelling the live stream worship to see if people will come back for in-person worship. Council

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discussed it and decided to continue the live stream worship services.

Fellowship

Greening of the church will be on December 5. Christine will put up a signup sheet for helpers. They will be ordering pizza. Each family is asked to bring a dozen cookies to share. Fellowship will also be assembling Christmas baskets for the shut ins.

Building and Grounds

Ken

The grounds committee plans to dig out and replace many shrubs. Ken suggested gift certificates from Barbotts if anyone would like to give a donation. Ken was asked by council to put together the amounts he needs in 2022 in all categories for upkeep of the grounds and present it to council next month.

Pastor’s Report

Pastor Hartten

The summary of the pastor’s activities are as follows: Church Council, Confirmation Instruction, Dean’s Responsibilities, Forgiveness Class, Home Visits, Lutheran Text Study, Mekane Yesus Advocacy Team, Office Visits, Retirement Luncheon for Pastor Zornow, Trunk or Treat, Tuesday Prayer Group, Vacation, Worship Committee, Sunday Worship, Zoom Meeting with St. Paul & Living Hope, Zoom Dean’s Meeting with Dr. Wendel, Zoom PCAT follow-up with Bethel.

New Business

Discuss Mailmax Ad for Christmas Service

Rich

Bryan made a motion to purchase ¼ page in Mailmax for the Christmas service Herb seconded the motion and the motion carried. The cost will be \$175.

Discuss Date for Pastor Ron’s Retirement Party

The council decided March will be the target date for Pastor Ron’s retirement party. There will be a committee formed to be in charge of the planning.

Greeters for December

Barb

December 5 Bryan & Bob
December 12 Barb & Rich
December 19 Herb & Virgil

December 24 Bryan & Barb
December 26 Eddie & Teresa

Rides to Church

Bob

Bob talked to a disabled veteran. He would like to come to church, but does not have a ride. Should our church find volunteers from Peace that may be willing to pick up people to bring them to church? This is something for our congregation to think about.

Property Insurance

Pastor Hartten

Our property insurance is due. We have different options to pay, but the option for twice a year will save us money versus quarterly or monthly. Bryan made a motion to pay the property insurance twice a year, Herb seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Motion to Adjourn

Bryan made a motion to adjourn.

Closing prayer

Pastor

Pastor Prayed

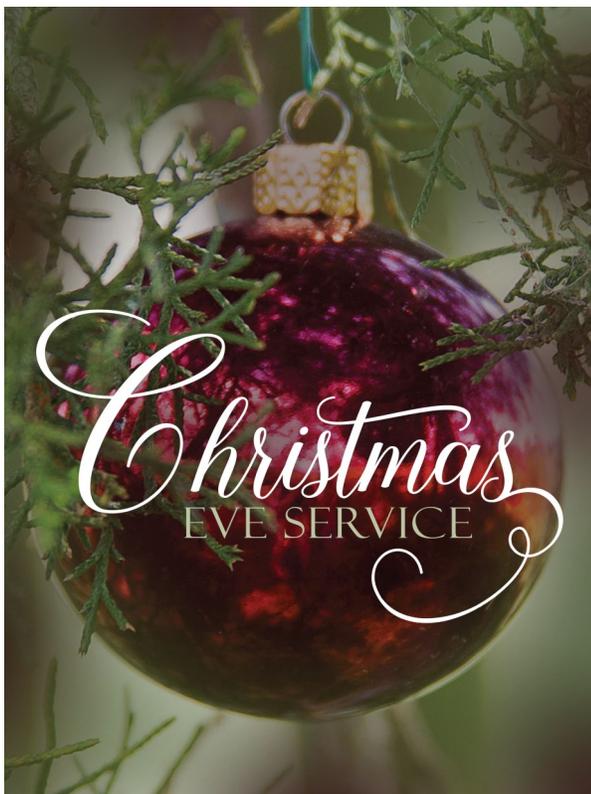


Come join the Fellowship Committee in decorating the church for Christmas! After worship service on Sunday, December 5th, we will be decorating the church. Pizza will be served; bring your favorite Christmas cookie for dessert! The sign-up sheet is on the podium in the narthex.

Christmas Eve 6:00pm

Over the past several years worship attendance on Christmas Eve has been declining. Despite this decline, the Church Council continued to offer two worship services to accommodate families and to make it easier for visitors to worship on Christmas Eve. This year when the Worship Committee recommended changing to one worship service on Christmas Eve, the recommendation was accepted in the Committee's report without comment.

There has been a desire to have a full Sanctuary on Christmas Eve, to once again have the church full enough that the singing resounds in the rafters. A compromise start time of 6:00 p.m. was chosen for this year. While it will mean altering family plans, it is hoped that adjustments can be made and the community will gather to hear God's word and sing His praise.



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Pastor's Message

to keep this command flows from the love we have received from God; we joyfully gather to worship not out of fear but in thanks for what God has done for us.

May we ask God to create in our hearts a hunger to share the Gospel with those around us, while also praying that God create a hunger to better know the One who creates, sustains, and sanctifies this world. Such a prayer would result in the questions, "How do we reach people with the Good News of Jesus?" and "What might we as a congregation offer to satisfy the hunger within a person who is searching for God?" When answering these questions become our focus, the numbers will take care of themselves

THINK SCRIP THIS CHRISTMAS!!

GIVE GIFT CARDS AS GIFTS ...

Give Scrip to Teachers, Teens and hard to buy for folks who love to do their own shopping! Cards range in value from \$5 up. *While supplies last, 18 vendors are offering cards starting at \$5 and \$10 (Amazon, Applebees, Home Depot, Meijer, Panera, Walmart, Starbucks plus 10 more vendors)*

PURCHASE GIFT CARDS TO BUY GIFTS ...

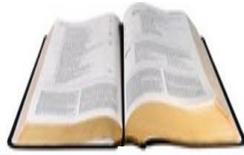
Purchase gift cards to use when you want to purchase the gifts yourself. We have cards for over 250 vendors from all the major department stores, specialty stores, restaurants, gasoline, groceries..... you name it... we probably have it!

USE SCRIP TO PAY YOUR KOHLS BILL! Did you know? You can pay your Kohl's credit card bills with Kohl's Scrip cards? You can use the store card to get the extra 'in-store bonus offers' and then pay your bill with a Kohl's Scrip card.... instantly earning a 4 percent tax-deductible rebate for the church.

REMEMBER! ... by using Scrip you benefit Peace by earning a rebate on every purchase. You also benefit yourself if you itemize on taxes because the rebate you earn becomes a TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION to Peace!

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR WANT TO PURCHASE CARDS, PLEASE SEE SHARI AFTER WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS OR BRANDI, IN THE CHURCH OFFICE, MONDAY—THURSDAY BETWEEN 9 A.M. AND NOON

**THIS MONTH'S
READINGS**



Sunday, Dec 5 - Second Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-7b, Psalm 66:1-12
Philippians 1:2-11, Luke 3:1-20

Sunday, Dec 12 – Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3: 14-20, Psalm 85
Philippians 4: 4-7, Luke 7:18-35

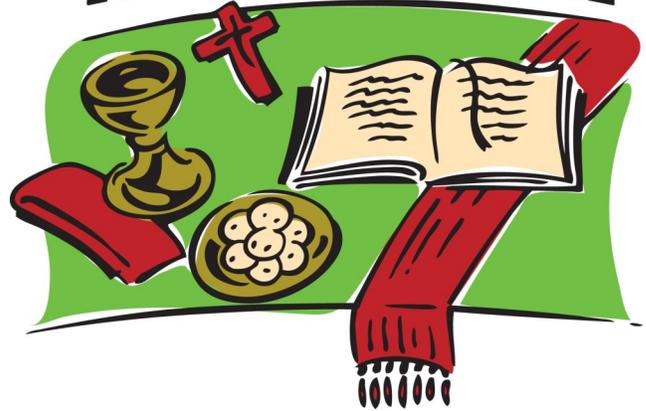
**Sunday, Dec 19 – Fourth Sunday of
Advent**

Micah 5:2-5a Psalm 80:1-7
Hebrews 10: 5-10, Luke 1:39-56

**Sunday, Dec 26 - First Sunday of
Christmas**

Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15, Psalm 111
Colossians 3: 12-17, Luke 2:22-40

Altar Guild



We are looking for Altar Guild helpers; are you interested?

Being able to serve is very easy: you are committed to serve just one Sunday every other month. Duties include setting up before church service., filling the trays with wine and grape juice, adding wafers to the paten. You would also make glasses of water for the Pastors. After service there is clean up that takes about 15 minutes. Please contact Ginger if you're interested; she would be more than happy to help you with the first time.



12/5 Bryan Sorensen & Bob Phillips
12/12 Barb Berry & Rich Steinbauer
12/19 Herb Kroening & Virgil Bennett
12/24 Bryan Sorensen & Barb Berry
12/26 Eddie Zajac & Teresa Hogan



Tree Lighting & Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long

Sunday, December 5, 2021 @ 6:30 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church 3590 Lincoln Ave St. Joseph

Join us as a large evergreen tree is lit on the congregation's front lawn. The Christmas Story from Luke 2 will be read and Christmas music will be sung.

Please dress warmly!

Hot Chocolate will be served, along with candy canes and Christmas cookies!

www.peacelutheranstjoe.org



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Advent Service	2 9-12 Office Hrs 7p - Choir	3 Office Closed	4
5 10:15 Worship w/communion 6:30p Tree Lighting Service	6 9-12 Office Hrs 6:30p Fellowship Committee	7 9-12 Office Hrs 7p: Bible Study	8 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Advent Service	9 9-12 Office Hrs 1145 Choir to sing @ Senior Center 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	10 Office closed	11
12 10:15 Worship w/communion	13 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Worship Committee	14 9-12 Office Hrs 7p: Bible Study	15 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Advent Service	16 9-12 Office Hrs 7p - Choir 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	17 Office closed	18
19 10:15 Worship w/communion	20 9-12 Office Hrs 630 Council Mtg	21 9-12 Office Hrs 7p: Bible Study	22 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Advent Service	23 9-12 Office Hrs No Choir 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	24 Office closed 6p Candlelight Service	25
26 10:15 Worship w/communion	27 Office closed	28 Office closed 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	29 Office closed	30 Office closed No Choir	31 Office closed	

DECEMBER



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

2 Marilyn Riley
5 Laurie Quardokus
7 Josh Lochner
9 Jesse Spiker
10 Larry Coffey
12 Sharon Schmidt
22 Olivia Carpenter
24 Marilyn Hettig
31 Jerry Schlutt

Anniversaries

1 James & Elaine Chartrand
11 Larry & Karen Coffey

Shut-In's

To keep our shut-ins safe, please call the church office for mailing addresses.

Leona Barowicz
Andrea Barowicz
Thomas Boozer
Harold Lick
Ruth Retzke
Gloria Siewert

Mid-Week Advent Worship

There will be one service at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays in Advent. The congregational survey did not produce enough interest in having an afternoon service to compliment the traditional evening service. Worship will be an Advent Vespers Service arranged by Pastor Mathew Magera. The weekly themes will explore the theology contained within traditional Advent and Christmas hymns which will be sung after the homily.

December 1
December 8
December 15
December 22

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus
What Child is This?
Hark the Herald Angels Sing
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



6 p.m. December 24th

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