



**PEACE**  
NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**December, 2020**



## *PASTOR'S MESSAGE*

The past two months I've discussed four of the five key areas for reversing decline in a congregation. These are: Prayer, Humility, Calling and Focus. This month I'll cover the fifth and final characteristic: Inquisitiveness.

It is often stated that men don't like to ask for help. I'm not so sure women like it any better, but they seem more willing to engage in the process. No man is an island and no congregation exists unto itself. Learning from each other is one of the gifts of being in the Church – for we are each one small part of God's kingdom, one little outpost among many. Asking for help from others who have been through something similar is not only refreshing, it strengthens the Body of Christ as we learn to relate to each other.

Asking for help from congregations who have successfully reversed the trend of declining membership and giving is a good place to start. Hiring an organization to help our membership understand what needs to change is a good use of resources. Sometimes a person or an organization becomes stuck; the person or group does not

know how to proceed. There is no shame in this, the shame is in not asking for help. Growing congregations ask for assistance when they become stuck and it allows them to keep growing.



**SENIOR PASTOR  
STEVE HARTTEN**

Turning around a declining congregation is incredibly difficult work. It begins with prayer, not just by the leadership, but by the membership. It requires a humble spirit, the ability to acknowledge that things need to change. It takes effort to discern exactly what God has called the specific congregation to be, to define the God-given mission, and to focus exclusively on that mission. Finally, the leadership needs to be inquisitive, willing to learn from and draw upon the experiences of others.

Peace Lutheran has been in decline for many years. Do we have what it takes to reverse the trend, or is it time to make plans on how best to close our doors?

**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.*

The Church Office and Sanctuary will remain open even though public worship is suspended. If you would like to visit the Sanctuary to pray you are welcome to do so during office hours, Monday—Thursday 9:00 a.m. till 12:00 p.m.



# COUNCIL MINUTES

**Peace Lutheran Church  
Council Minutes  
Monday, November 16, 2020  
6:30 p.m.**

**Members present:** Barb Berry, Teresa Hogan, Herb Kroening, Bob Phillips, Bev So, Bryan Sorensen, Rich Steinbauer, Ed Zajac

**Absent:** Virgil Bennett

**Also Present:** Pastor Hartten

**Call to Order**  
Bev So called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**Opening Devotion/Prayer**      **Pastor Steve Hartten**  
Pastor Hartten offered the opening prayer asking for wisdom and guidance in council's discussions and decision making.

**Approval of November agenda**      **Bev So**  
Bryan made a motion to approve the November agenda and Ed seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Approval of October 2020 minutes** made via email.

**Treasurer's report**

September	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Offerings	\$14,476	\$15,450	(\$1,313)
Thrivent Choice	-	\$67	(\$67)
Soup Kitchen	-	\$33	(\$33)
Fellowship	-	\$25	(\$25)
Misc.	-	\$35	(\$35)
Interest	\$4	\$16	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,480</b>	<b>\$15,626</b>	<b>(\$1,134)</b>

Year-to-Date	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Offerings	\$146,760	\$154,500	(\$7,740)
Thrivent Choice	\$556	\$670	(\$114)
Soup Kitchen	\$500	\$330	\$170
Fellowship	\$632	\$250	\$382
Misc.	-	\$350	(\$350)
Interest	\$149	\$160	\$11
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$148,597</b>	<b>\$156,260</b>	<b>(\$7,663)</b>

**Old Business**

- Outside Christmas tree decorating      Bob Phillips/  
Eddie Zajac

Town and Country Electric Co. repaired the outlet next to the sign. The electrician also looked at the light for the flag pole and determined a new fixture is needed. Rich suggested purchasing a commercial grade flood light from Kendall Electric. Bob donated two 100' extension cords and a solar photo sensor switch. Also donated are LED lights and nine strings of 25' lights. The plan is to decorate the tree Sunday after church on November 22. The Christmas tree lighting event will take place the 1st Sunday of December at 6:00 p.m. The committee will look into advertising the event. The plan is to serve hot chocolate and candy canes. They encourage the church members to invite others. The reading will come from the 2nd chapter of Luke, which tells the entire Christmas story, with Christmas songs in between. The event will last about 30-45 minutes.

- Covid 19 update and discussion      Bev  
The council made the very difficult decision to close the church for in-person worship services after Sunday, November 22, but will continue the on-line worship. The motion to close in-person worship services was made by Ed. Bryan seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Church will resume in-person worship when the COVID numbers flatten. Council will keep everyone informed of future plans.

- Christian Copyright Solutions( CCS)      Bev  
Our current license has limited streaming options and we are using music that is now public domain (generally written before 1923). Council was asked by Maria to add CCS (ChristianCopyright Solutions) license for a fee of \$259 per year and a one-time set up fee of \$25. This would give Maria many more options for music. Council discussed this in October and tabled the decision until November. Barb made a motion to purchase the CCS license in January to be included in the 2021 budget. Bryan seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

- Update on office administrator replacement      Rich

# Council Minutes

*Continued from Page 2*

- Basement update Virgil Bennett/  
Pastor Hartten

In the quest to get estimates for the water problem in the basement, the last contractor that checked out the basement feels it is a landscaping problem. He offered some suggestions and Virgil will get estimates. This will be a congregation decision after all the information is gathered.

- Roof re-shingling/repair discussion Virgil/  
Bev

Council feels there is an urgent need to replace the roof. There are three proposals to present to the congregation for the new roof. Two weeks following the resumption of public worship, a date will be set for a congregational meeting to discuss hiring a roofing contractor. Also the basement problem will be discussed at this meeting.

## Standing Committee Reports

- Fellowship  
Decorating the sanctuary for Christmas Bev  
The fellowship committee will decorate the tree on Saturday, December 5. The orders for poinsettias will still be taken even if the church is not open. The poinsettia plants can then be picked up after Christmas. The poinsettias will look very festive in the on-line services.
- Worship  
Minutes sent via email Ken Berry  
If our church is open by Christmas Eve, the Worship Committee has come up with a simple plan to worship and still stay safe.
- Building and Grounds Virgil  
Nothing new to report.

## Pastor's Report

Pastor Hartten

The summary of the pastor's activities are as follows: Betty Robbins Funeral, Bishop Selbo one-

on-one meeting, Church Council, Joining Jesus Book Study, Lutheran Text Study, Mutual Ministry Committee, National Dean's Meeting, Tuesday Prayer Meeting, Home Visits, Office Visits, Worship Committee, Sunday Worship

## New Business

- Greeters for December Bev

The council did not discuss this at this time. This is tabled until resumption of public worship

- Budget concerns Bev/Rich Steinbauer  
Major expenses for the roof and the basement are coming up very soon for our church. There are several options to pay for them. This will also be discussed at the congregational meeting.

## Motion to Adjourn

**"CELEBRATION OF THE HARVEST"**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS  
SUPPORT OF THIS COMMUNITY SERVICE  
OPPORTUNITY.**

**Contributions of \$525 were converted to  
Scrip Cards and personal care products  
(donation est. \$125) were delivered to St.  
John's Lutheran, Baroda for**

**Interfaith Action Group**

**THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR BLESSINGS  
and for joining in our "Faith In Action"  
efforts at  
Peace Lutheran Church.**

Find us Sundays at 10:15 a.m.  
on the Church Facebook Page:  
**Peace Lutheran Church NALC**  
or on the church YouTube channel:  
**Pastor Peace**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeIz8L41wJIGdyn8Ki818dA>

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## NALC Advent Devotional

Once again the North American Lutheran Church has prepared a daily devotional for its members to use during the Advent Season (Nov. 29-Dec. 24, 2020) This year the Sunday devotions are written by Bishop Selbo. Visit the NALC's website to access the devotional. There are multiple options for how to access the devotional materials. You can sign up for a daily email, you may download an e-book, or subscribe for a daily text message. Visit <https://thenalc.org/advent-devotional-2020/> for more information.



## Tree Lighting Ceremony with Hot Chocolate – Dec 6th

A new event is being held at Peace this December. We will gather at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> to light one of the evergreen trees on our front lawn. It will be an opportunity to gather and sing favorite Christmas Carols, hear the Christmas Story and sip some hot chocolate. Since this is an outdoor event, please dress warmly and bring a flashlight! It is also advisable to wear masks and maintain social distancing. This is an excellent opportunity to invite a friend or neighbor to come to Peace!

## Portals of Prayer are in!

The Daily Devotional *Portals of Prayer* for January—March 2021 have arrived. You may pick up a copy in the narthex during office hours, Monday—Thursday 9:00 a.m.—noon.

## Significant Questions to Ask Yourself and Your Friends as 2020 Comes to a close

What is your greatest desire in life?  
What do you see as your greatest gift?  
What is your biggest frustration in life?  
Where would you like to be five years from now?  
What difference has Jesus made in your life?  
What do you like most about yourself?  
What present would you most like to receive?  
If you had what you wanted, what would it be?  
Who has most changed your life and how?  
What is your favorite way of spending time?  
What makes you anxious?  
Afraid?  
Discouraged?  
Happy?  
If you had the power to change something, what would it be?  
What do you think will be most important to you 100 years from now?

## THIS MONTH'S READINGS

### Sun., Dec. 6 - Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85  
2 Peter 3:8-14, Mark 1:1-8

### Sun., Dec. 13 - Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11, Psalm 126  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28

### Sun., Dec. 20 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16, Psalm 89:1-5, 19-29  
Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

### Thurs., Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

Isaiah 7:10-14, Psalm 110:1-4  
1 John 4:7-16, Luke 2: 1-21

### Sun., Dec. 27 - First Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Psalm 111  
Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:22-40

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9-12 Office Hours 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	2 9-12 Office Hours	3 9-12 Office Hours	4 Office closed	5
6 10:15 Worship on-line 6:00 Tree Lighting & Carols	7 9-12 Office Hours 6p Fellowship Committee Mtg	8 9-12 Office Hours 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	9 9-12 Office Hours	10 News Due 9-12 Office Hours	11 Office closed Soup Kitchen	12
13 10:15 Worship on-line	14 9-12 Office Hours 7p Worship Committee Mtg	15 9-12 Office Hours 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	16 9-12 Office Hours	17 9-12 Office Hours	18 Office closed	19
20 10:15 Worship on-line	21 9-12 Office Hours 6:30p Council Mtg	22 9-12 Office Hours 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	23 9-12 Office Hours	24 Office Closed for Christmas Eve	25 Office closed	26
27 10:15 Worship on-line	28 Office closed	29 Office closed	30 Office closed	31 Office closed		

## Birthdays

2 Marilyn Riley  
7 Josh Lochner  
9 Jesse Spiker  
10 Larry Coffey  
12 Sharon Schmidt  
16 Gary Richardville  
22 Olivia Carpenter  
24 Marilyn Hettig  
31 Jerry Schlutt

18 Jim & Pam  
Bauer

Marian Hogue  
Ruth Retzke  
Elaine Sirk  
Mildred Wantz

## Military

**Lt/jg Chad Knipschild**  
301 Maple  
Edgewater, MD  
21037

## 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.*

## Operation Christmas Child



In years past, Peace has generously donated gifts to families through the Salvation Army. This year, in order to eliminate the need for shopping in crowded stores with potential health risks, we are taking a different approach. Samaritan's Purse, is a nondenominational organization founded by Franklin Graham. It is an outreach program which includes their Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry. The concept is simple and easy. It is all done online. You are able to pick the gender and age of the child. You are able to choose from a variety of items for that particular child, and it automatically goes into your shoebox and they send it off! You can leave a message in the box if you wish and if you are really computer savvy, you can post your picture! The cost of one filled shoebox is \$25.00. There is a tree in the narthex with tags. Take a tag with instructions or visit [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org) to start building your box!

**Join us for worship on  
Christmas Eve**

**Tentative Times**

**4:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.**

**Watch "This Week at Peace" and the  
Marquee Sign on Lincoln Avenue for  
updates regarding in-person worship**



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St. Joseph, MI 49085

