



PEACE
NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN CHURCH

February 2021



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Where do we go from here? A nation divided has a new president and a sizeable percentage of the nation believes the election was illegitimate. Is there a way that the Christian faith can help this nation to heal?

I was pondering this question when I came across a story shared by Gregory E. Sterling, Dean of Yale Divinity School. He wrote about his childhood in the 1960s and how faith helped his parents overcome a potential partisan divide that today seems insurmountable. The following are his words:

“I grew up in a conservative American home. My parents were committed Republicans who held traditional values. My father was a minister for 46 years. Twice in my boyhood during the tumultuous year of 1968, my mother woke me with the news that an American leader had been slain. The first was the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and the second was Sen. Robert Kennedy during his run for the White House.

Both times our household was devastated. When I [recently] told a friend the story of how my mother was visibly shaken as she told me about Kennedy, he wondered why she was so upset if she would not have voted for him? My answer was an easy one: She was a better American than she was a Republican. And she was a better Christian.

It is time for us to be Americans, whatever our party affiliation or views on specific issues. It is also time for those of us who are Christians to speak out against the misuse of Christianity as a legitimating force for evil. Democracy is a treasured value and quite fragile. We need to protect it, and given recent events [January 6, 2021], we need to pray for it.”



**SENIOR PASTOR
STEVE HARTTEN**

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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.

Lent begins February 17th on Ash Wednesday



COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, January 18, 2021

6:30 p.m.

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

Also Present: Pastor Hartten

Call to Order

Bev So called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Open Devotion/Prayer Pastor Steve Hartten

Pastor Hartten’s devotion was based on Psalm 146. “Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life, I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground, on that very day their plans come to nothing. Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God. He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the seas, and everything in them--he remains faithful forever. He upholds the cause of the oppressed, and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free, the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked. The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord.” Praising the Lord takes our minds off of our problems. We appreciate God’s character, Where is God leading us? Pastor prayed.

Approval of January agenda

Bev So

Virgil made a motion to approve the January agenda and Brian seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Approval of December 2020 minutes made via email.

Treasurer’s report

Jon Kooiman (acct. mgr)

December	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Offerings	\$30,676	\$15,450	\$15,226
Thrivent Choice	-	\$67	(\$67)
Soup Kitchen	-	\$33	(\$33)
Fellowship	-	\$25	(\$25)
Misc.	-	\$35	(\$35)
Interest	\$4	\$16	0
Total	\$30,680	\$15,066	\$15,614

Year-to-Date

	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Offerings	\$192,188	\$185,400	\$6,788
Thrivent Choice	\$556	\$804	(\$248)
Soup Kitchen	\$500	\$396	\$104
Fellowship	\$1,027	\$300	\$727
Misc.	-	\$420	(\$420)
Interest	\$157	\$192	(\$35)
Total	\$194,428	\$187,512	\$6,916

2021 Proposed Budget

Shawn Cahill

Ed made a motion to approve the 2021 proposed budget Teresa seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Old Business

COVID-19 update and discussion

Bev/Pastor

The first in-person worship service with communion went very well. 45 people attended in person.

Office administrator update

Pastor

Brandi is understanding and progressing in her new role, asking questions to gain a better understanding of our church.

Gutter replacement

Bev/Pastor

In evaluating the basement seepage problem, it has been agreed to add two additional gutter downspouts to run water away from the building. The estimates received were between \$480 and \$650.

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An anonymous individual offered to donate the money for the 2 downspouts. Bryan made a motion to accept the estimate from Genesis at \$480, and Herb seconded the motion. The council voted and approved the work.

Roof re-shingling/repair discussion
Virgil/Bev

All three roofing estimates received include tear-off of old roofing material, shingle replacement, new flashing, debris haul-away and permits. Not included in the estimate is the cost for replacement of any damaged plywood discovered beneath the old roofing. Rich made a motion to accept the estimate from Future Construction and Virgil seconded the motion. The motion was passed and will be presented at the Congregational Meeting for final approval.

Samaritas request **Bev/Pastor**

Last month the council discussed the request from Samaritas (a Lutheran social services group) to use our building for a safe place for parent/child meetings. Council set ground rules for Samaritas to only use the building between the hours of 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Virgil made a motion to approve the use of our building by Samaritas and Bryan seconded the motion. Virgil agreed to write up the usage rules and send an email for final approval by the council.

Discussion/worship w/ both pastors
Bev/Rich/Barb

The executive committee scheduled a meeting with Pastor Hartten and Pastor Schmidt to discuss the council's desire to include both pastors in our worship services. The two pastors will either deliver the sermon or give the liturgy, and also participate in the distribution of Holy Communion. This was discussed with the rest of the council during the council meeting. The council also decided the pastors should arrive at the worship service on Sundays no later than 9:30 a.m. Pastor Hartten and Pastor Schmidt will have a meeting together to plan a schedule. This will start sometime in March.

Standing Committee Reports
Worship **Ken Berry**

The Worship Committee proposed that Ash Wednesday will be in person with singing and imposition of ashes. Wednesday Vesper services using Joyous Light begins February 24th through March with singing. February 21 will be the first Sunday with singing. Liturgy will be spoken. The worship committee made a suggestion to look into having a weekly children's Bible book reading online. All that would be needed is a laptop and webcam. Bryan will look into the cost of purchasing a laptop and also if there are any copyright laws or licensing requirements. This may help to draw families into our church.

Fellowship **Bev**

The fellowship committee took down all the Christmas decorations.

Building and Grounds **Virgil/Bev**

The furnace was having an issue and Virgil called Joe Mashak, Heating & Cooling. He replaced the fan motor and ignitor for a total of \$461.00. Bob Phillips, Rich and Jim Steinbauer put a new light on the flag and it looks and works great. There is still a need for a Ground's facilitator. Council is discussing some of the roles and responsibilities for the facilitator. Bev will send the council members an email outlining some of the roles and responsibilities for this person and ask for other suggestions.

Pastor's Report **Pastor Hartten**

The summary of the pastor's activities are as follows: Dean Phone Calls, Church Council via Zoom, Executive Committee Meeting, Lutheran Text Study (Zoom), Tuesday Prayer Meeting (Zoom), Home Visits, Office Visits, Worship Committee, Sunday On-Line Worship

Last week the executive committee met with Pastor Hartten for his annual performance review. The council asked him to provide goals for the coming year. His goal is for Peace to become a congregation whose building and grounds are a tool for ministry in the community.

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This may include outside groups being permitted to use the existing space, members to be engaged in the community through service projects, small groups of members addressing neighborhood needs, establishing a small group ministry of weekly study and prayer time. The North Property would be utilized in a manner that attracts people.

New Business

Greeters for February and remainder of January

- January 24 - Bev and Virgil
- January 31 - Rich and Ed
- February 7 - Theresa and Herb
- February 14 - Bob and Bryan
- February 21 - Rich and Ed
- February 28 - Barb and Virgil

Pastor Hartten's evaluation **Bev/Rich/Barb**

Bryan made a motion to approve an \$1,800 raise for Pastor Hartten, Bob seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Soup Kitchen annual report **Barb Berry**

Barb passed out a packet showing the 2020 soup kitchen menus, expenditures and money/gift cards left in the Soup Kitchen account. Because of COVID, we have only been able to assemble sack lunches for the people since April. Therefore we have depleted most of our cash and gift cards. Our pantry is still full of food from the February of 2020 food drive just waiting for the future when we are able to cook meals in the soup kitchen again. Therefore, we will be asking for money and gift cards only for the 2021 food drive since we do not know how much longer we will be assembling sack lunches.

Congregational meeting, January 31 (live stream) **Bev**

The congregational meeting will be held on January 31 in the sanctuary. All attendees will

wear masks and practice social distancing. This will also be live streamed to be seen from home. Participants that are live streaming will be able to ask questions with the chat button, but will not be able to vote. The live stream will be deleted later in the day on January 31.

Congregation communication via phone
Pastor Hartten

At Peace, MailChimp is used to send Monday's "This Week at Peace" as well as the monthly newsletter or unanticipated announcements. Only 40% of these emails are being opened. Our sister congregation, St. Paul, Ewart, MI, has been using an automated phone service called One Call Now. They believe more people are staying connected with automated phone calls. They are averaging about 80% connection between live answer and answering machine/voicemail. One Call Now is an automated calling system that allows an organization to record a personal message in a member's voice. Then the calls are made automatically by machine to member phone numbers. The cost for using One Call Now to input up to 150 phone numbers is \$534 per year. Ed made a motion to purchase the One Call now. Vigil seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn
Bryan made a motion to adjourn.

Closing prayer **Pastor Hartten**

Pastor Hartten led the council in praying the Lord's prayer.



For Everything There is a Season

Pastor's Message

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Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another." (John 13:34)

Faith can help us see the other as a fellow human loved by God.

It can overcome the prejudice and hate speech that demonizes those we disagree with.

It was faith that caused Sterling's mother to grieve for a person whose ideology she didn't share. May our conduct as Christians follow the example Jesus taught and set, so that we value one another, even when we disagree. Not only are we to value, but we are to love them for who they are. That is at the heart of our American values, and the core of Christianity.

Soup Kitchen Drive

Peace prepares the lunch for the Soup Kitchen in Benton Harbor on the 2nd Friday of February, April, June, August, October, and December. During "normal years" we meet at the soup kitchen, prepare the meal, and serve to the clients. This year has definitely been the exception.

Starting in April, we have prepared 120-140 sack lunches. The sack lunches include a ham and cheese sandwich, chips, fruit, dessert and a bottle of water. We think this practice will probably continue throughout the summer.

In the past, we asked for food donations in addition to cash and gift cards. This year we are only asking for cash and GFS/Meijer/Aldi gift cards. Our cost each time is approximately \$150.00. The Flour Shop has been very gracious and continues to donate desserts and often containers. Without those donations, our costs would be much higher.

Please find it in your heart to donate during the month of February to our continuing outreach to help the Soup Kitchen. Cards and cash may be

placed in an envelope in the offering and marked Soup Kitchen. If writing a check, please designate Soup Kitchen in the memo.

Thank you,
Barb Berry and Bev So

Ten Signs You Are Doing Well In Life

1. You have a roof over your head.
2. You ate today.
3. You have a good heart.
4. You wish good for others.
5. You have clean water.
6. Somebody cares for you.
7. You strive to be better.
8. You have clean cloths.
9. You have a dream.
10. You are breathing.

Be thankful for the little things, for they are the most important!



Ash Wednesday

The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, February 17th. There will be Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion. Ash Wednesday will also mark the start of congregational singing in worship. We will begin with hymns, the liturgy will still be spoken. Masks will be required for singing to minimize the spread of aerosols which could contain the COVID virus.

Mid-Week Lenten Series

Peace Lutheran will hold in-person mid-week Lenten services on Wednesdays at 7:00. These services will be held February 24th through March 24th. This year's theme is The Hands of the Passion. Themes for each week are:

February 24 Hands of Betrayal (Judas)
March 3 Hands of Misguided Zeal (Peter)
March 10 Hands of Hypocrisy (Caiaphas)
March 17 Hands of Brutality (Soldiers)
March 24 Hands of Preservation (Pilate)

We will be using the liturgy, Joyous Light, the Vespers/Evening Prayer service that we have used the past couple of years. This will provide us with an opportunity to start singing during worship as we typically have less than thirty people attending mid-week worship. Masks will still be required when we sing. Soup Suppers will not be held due to the ongoing pandemic.

The Parable of a Kitten

A minister had just brought home a kitten for his family when it climbed up a tree in his yard and was afraid to come down. The tree was small and not sturdy enough to climb, so the pastor decided to throw a rope over the upper branches, tie it to his car bumper and carefully bend the tree down so he could then reach up and grab the kitten. Well, it was working until he drove a bit too far, and the rope broke. The tree went "boing" and the kitten shot through the air like a slingshot clear across the block.

The pastor felt terrible.

He walked all over the neighborhood trying to find the kitten but couldn't, so he finally prayed, "Lord, I commit that cat to Your care."

A few days later he was at the grocery store and met one of his members. "Pastor," she said, "the strangest thing happened. My little girl has been begging me for a cat, but I kept saying no. She begged and begged and one day she asked me that if God gave her a cat, could she keep it? I said, 'yes' to that, thinking I was safe. Then I watched her go out in the backyard, get down on her knees to pray, and pastor, a kitten came flying out of the sky and landed right in front of her! Only thing is, whenever the kitten sees a tree, it runs and hides."

THIS MONTH'S READINGS



Sun., Feb. 7 - Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
Isaiah 40:21-31, Psalm 147:1-11
1 Corinthians 9:16-27, Mark 1:29-39

Sun., Feb. 14 - Transfiguration of Our Lord
Exodus 34:29-35, Psalm 50: 1-6
2 Corinthians 3:12-13, 4:1-6, Mark 9:2-9

Wed., Feb 17 - Ash Wednesday
Joel 2: 12-19, Psalm 51
2 Corinthians 5: 20b - 6:10, Luke 18: 9-14

Sun., Feb. 21 – First Sunday in Lent
Genesis 22:1-18, Psalm 25:1-10
James 1:12-18, Mark 1:9-15

Sun., Feb. 28 - Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 5:1-11, Mark 8:27-38

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5 Office closed	6
7 10:15 Worship w/communion 6:30pm Galatians Bible Study Zoom	8 9-12 Office Hours 1pm Galatians Bible Study In- Person	9 9-12 Office Hours 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	10 9-12 Office Hours	11 9-12 Office Hours	12 Office closed	13
14 10:15 Worship w/communion 6:30pm Galatians Bible Study Zoom	15 9-12 Office Hours 7p Worship Mtg 1pm Galatians Bible Study	16 9-12 Office Hours 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	17 9-12 Office Hours Ash Wednesday	18 9-12 Office Hours	19 Office closed	20
21 10:15 Worship w/com 6:30pm Galatians Bible Study Zoom	22 9-12 Office Hours 6:30p Council Mtg 1pm Galatians Bible Study	23 9-12 Office Hours 7p Prayer Mtg via Zoom	24 9-12 Office Hours	25 9-12 Office Hours	26 Office closed	27
28 10:15 Worship w/communion 6:30pm Galatians Bible Study Zoom						

Birthdays

1 Raymond Lietz
6 James Chapman Jr.
7 Maria Tallman
11 Jacob Tallman
12 Alison Adkins
13 Rebecca
Carpenter
20 Berkeley Davis
21 Debra Kroening
21 Autumn McCune
25 Bob Philips
28 Rev. Ronald
Schmidt

Anniversaries

20 Blaine & Sue
Baum

Military

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

Shut-In's

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

Ruth Retzke
Elaine Sirk
Mildred Wantz

Emergency Shelter Services in Need of Donations

The shelter for women and families in Benton Harbor has just endured an unexpected expense, and is in desperate need of our community's help. The sewage line from the shelter broke, and, due to the location of the breakage, the repairs will cost \$25,000 which is a cost they cannot afford. Because they are the only women and family shelter in Berrien County, they have no choice but to allow the workers to begin repairs immediately so the shelter can remain operable. PLEASE consider helping by donating. They have until February 19th, 2021 to pay the \$25,000 in full for the repairs being made. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Reshella Hawkins (Interim Director of ESS) at 269-925-1131 ext 101.

Ways to Donate:

1. Through Facebook
2. www.essberrien.org/donate
3. Shop the ESS Resale Store
4. Mail checks to: 645 Pipestone St. Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Collection for Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen!

February is the month Peace traditionally collects non-perishable foods for the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. This year, due to COVID, we are asking for donations of gift cards instead of non-perishables. The gift cards can be used at Gordon Foods to purchase napkins, lunch sacks, plastic sandwich bags, etc. used to distribute sack lunches. The soup kitchen has not served hot meals since March, and the need for sack lunches will continue for some time. Watch for further details.



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