



'TIDINGS OF PEACE' from

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
411 EAST 6TH STREET  
MCCOOK, NE 69001

TO:

Three vertical lines for an address.

# TIDINGS OF PEACE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH

January 2021

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

As I write to you this morning the year 2020 has just hours remaining, and as I think back on the whirlwind of a year that it has been, some events of this past year seem like a lifetime ago. In that way, I have come to the conclusion that this past year was not unlike many other years. Granted, twenty-twenty has had its own unique issues and difficulties; and for some of us, life will be forever changed, but as I reflect on the last twelve months, I challenge myself to look to the good—President Abraham Lincoln once said, “If you look for the bad in people, expecting to find it, you surely will.” I suppose the same goes for other things, like this past year.

As I challenge myself to consider the positive conclusion of President Lincoln’s wisdom; I invite you to wade, with me, through the turbulent waters of the past, that we may find good; much has changed—much has been endured—life will never be the same as it once was, but please know that God is still with you; His blessings are still new every morning. And He knows what He is doing!

Every day has had its challenges, and yet, if we look for the good, expecting to find it, we surely will. Some

experiences may leave us asking “Why.” In some experiences, the good may seem impossible to find—the good may take years to come to the surface—or perhaps the good is not meant for our eyes to see in this lifetime.

In these experiences God’s strong hand holding tightly to ours may be the only good we can find, but if we choose to look for it, we may also find that this good is present in every experience for those who love Him;

God has brought you safely thus far, and He will see you safely home. The Lord stands in the coming year with His mighty hand extended to you, bidding you to take courage; He is with you in all things—He will make you steps secure.

God bless you and yours in this new year.

King David wrote; “I waited patiently for the Lord; He inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord. Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust...”  
Psalm 40:1-4a

Your servant in Christ,  
Pastor Felcher

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## FROM AN ELDER

### "A New Shepherd"

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:8-12)

I wonder why God chose shepherds to be Jesus' first visitors. Maybe it's because they were awake at night? But that seems too simple. Is it just because they were humble people? That would fit in well with the rest of the story. Nothing about this birth was glorious—except, I suppose, the angels singing!

But I keep coming back to the fact that these were shepherds—caretakers, protectors, providers. And that's one way God talks about Himself in the Old Testament—He calls Himself "the Shepherd of Israel" and calls His people His flock (see Psalm 80:1).

So what were the shepherds coming to see that night? A new shepherd, just like them. Their *own* new shepherd, born to protect and provide and rescue them and us both. The Good Shepherd, who would lay down His life for God's flock on the cross, rescuing us from the power of sin and death. Our Lord Jesus, "the Great Shepherd of the sheep ... (whom) the God of peace who brought again from the dead," to share everlasting life with everyone who trusts in Him (see Hebrews 13:20).

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Adrianna Gass	1/1	Patricia Hagan	1/13	Tempie Krause	1/19
Diane Gohl	1/1	Benjamin Hanchera	1/13	Hailey Unger	1/19
Kyle Novak	1/1	Ryland Peters	1/14	Vickie Blaisdell	1/20
Joylyn Rippen	1/1	Amanda Rawn	1/14	Ron Aufrecht	1/21
Camryn Yilk	1/3	Kassidy Gillen	1/15	Chance Koetter	1/22
Breann Cerda	1/4	Tanna Felcher	1/16	Bobbie Ziebell	1/22
Michael Fidler	1/5	Eric Leibrandt	1/16	Stephen Post	1/22
Logan Kircher	1/6	Aaron Nielsen	1/16	Clayton Skolout	1/24
Daphne Tidyman	1/6	Jean Sehnert	1/17	Myra Stoney	1/24
Edward Unger	1/8	Roland Carlson	1/18	Darrell Eckhardt	1/26
Melissa Critchfield	1/9	Keith Oetting	1/18	Eugene Custer	1/27
Patricia Leibrandt	1/11	Jeannine Rinehart	1/18	Ronda Wurm	1/29

## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Brian & Anne Wiemers	1/12/2002	19	Darrell & Kirstine Eckhardt	1/31/1964	57
Loren & Lois Brown	1/18/1958	63			

We apologize if we have made a mistake. Please contact the office so we may get it corrected.

Check out our Facebook page! Don't forget to "Like", "Follow" and "Share" it! You can find us at Peace Lutheran McCook NE.

If you feel compelled to give, offering can be brought into the church office, mailed to P.O. Box 240 or direct deposited.

## OUR FINANCES AT A GLANCE

	Week to Date (December 27-January 2nd)	Month to Date (Dec 6th-Jan 2nd)	Actual Year to Date (January 5th-January 2nd)
Offerings	\$6,003.00	\$38,482.00	\$236,378.00
Expenses	\$3,063.00	\$14,049.00	\$243,511.00



### WELCOME INTO GOD'S FAMILY

Please welcome our newest member. Porter Lee Rice was received by the waters of baptism Saturday. Porter is the son of Andrew and Alyssa Rice. Proud Grandparents are Joel and Linda Smith. Welcome Porter!



### THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who brought cookies on December 16, for the school of religion children. You were showing the love of Christ with every cookie. The children, teachers, and families were delighted by the homemade treats. The students received the cookies as part of a take home meal.

### JANUARY READINGS

Date	Season	First Reading	Epistle	Holy Gospel
3rd	The 2nd S. after Christmas	1 Kings 3:4-15	Ephesians 1:3-14	Luke 2:40-52
10th	The Baptism of Our Lord	Genesis 1:1-5	Romans 6:1-11	Mark 1:4-11
17th	The 2nd S. after Christmas	1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	John 1:43-51
24th	The 3rd S. after Christmas	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	1 Corinthians 7:29-31 (32-35)	Mark 1:14-20
31st	The 4th S. after Christmas	Deuteronomy 18:15-20	1 Corinthians 8:1-13	Mark 1:21-28



### The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article – January 2021

It's a new year. It's a time when we take stock of the year past in order to improve the year to come. It's a time when we sit down to plan and implement what we want to accomplish and even change. Part of that is planning our stewardship for the coming year.

Often, we find this difficult and daunting and even joyless, but it doesn't have to be. In fact, it is really quite simple and full of joy. So, here are some tips to make that planning less stressful. You begin by answering these three questions:

- Who are you?
- To whom do I give?
- And how much?

So, who are you? The Table of Duties in the *Luther's Small Catechism* informs us. Are you a hearer of God's Word? Are you a citizen of society? Are you a member of a family? Stewardship covers these three estates: church, society, and family. We don't particularly struggle to give to society or family. Our struggles, our difficulties, and our questions arise in giving to the Church.

So, what is our duty as members of the Church with regard to giving? Again, the Table of Duties, gives us a guide. If you are a hearer – a member of the Church who receives instruction – St. Paul taught: "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches" (Gal. 6:6). This means the local congregation is primary.

Your pastor is the one called to preach the Gospel to you and administer the Lord's blessed sacraments to you. Your congregation is the place where those things happen. Thus, when God calls us to give to the Church, He has the local congregation in mind. For "the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14).

How much do we give to the local congregation? Our only instructions are to give:

- Regularly (1 Cor. 6:1-2);
- Proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:12);
- Generously (2 Cor. 8:20);
- Of our first fruits (Gen. 4:4; Prov. 3:9; Lev. 27:30); and
- With a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

In other words, giving to the Church is not to be an afterthought, given after everything else is spent. In this way, it is deliberate. We give regularly – weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly – keeping in mind our own strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. We set it aside beforehand – before anything else is spent.

From those first fruits, we set aside a proportionate and generous amount. Ten percent was the standard for the Israelites. This was a command for the ancient Israelites. We can give as much as we want, but ask yourself: Do we really want to be less generous than was commanded of the Israelites? Is the job of the New Testament Church bigger or smaller than the job given to Israel?

And how are we to give it? We give it with eagerness and earnestness. We give it cheerfully and with love, not out of compulsion. For through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, God has made us His children, forgiven us all our sins, given us grace upon grace, promised us life everlasting with Him in His kingdom, and filled us with His own Spirit, the Holy Spirit. This makes giving a joy, as Jesus said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

It's that easy. And it is joyful. For in stewardship, our gracious and giving Lord invites us to take part in the work that He accomplishes here on earth, providing for the ongoing preaching of the Gospel as well as those who are in need. Taking part in that makes all our work holy – work that is done in service to the Lord as priestly members of His kingdom.



## BOARD OF EVANGELISM

The Board of Evangelism would like to wish everyone a blessed new year and as we wrap up the year, we give thanks for all the abundant blessing God has poured out on us in 2020. December was one again a busy, but beautiful month for our Board as we celebrated the Advent and birth of our Savior. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way to make this year's Living Nativity a success. The comments have been so positive and it is exciting to see how this has become such a congregational project and a beautiful evangelism tool. Thanks, also, to everyone who shared the love of Jesus this Christmas by adopting the 19 Angel Tree families. Much thanks to those of you who have supported the Adopt A Chaplain Program since Peace took it on, but especially to all who helped with the Christmas mailings and to Linda Nielsen and Jane Schuster for heading up the project. We mailed out a total of 50 boxes to two different chaplains. A care package was mailed out to the one college student we received an address for. The Voter's Meeting will again be in January. Please prayerfully consider using your gifts in the kingdom work here at Peace through serving on one of the boards. We will undoubtedly continue to face challenges in 2021. Please remember and reach out to those who are still isolated. Our Board continues to meet monthly and our regular activities remain unchanged. Respectfully submitted, Cathy Broz, Nancy Rippen and Deb Gleason.

## ADOPT-A-CHAPLAIN

Members of Peace support deployed military troops by sending care packages to the chaplains who minister to them. Each month we are able to support 2 chaplains, we adopt those that are in areas of greatest tension. The soldiers appreciate that Peace Lutheran cares about them. Many of the chaplains are given to us to adopt because they don't have a home congregation supporting them. Because of overwhelming support from Peace and the surrounding communities, we were able to send many boxes at Christmas. The Christmas cards and snacks were given out to hundreds of young men and women. Packages were sent to chaplain Joshua Porter in Iraq and chaplain Andrew Baird in Korea. Chaplain Baird is coming home and we are applying to adopt another chaplain. Help is always appreciated, especially in writing notes of support "to a soldier", donating snacks or money used for postage, or by helping pack. Next packing day is Tue, Jan 12, at 1:00 pm.



## TOOLS FOR STEWARDSHIP and EVANGELISM

### SHUT INS

Please remember those who are unable to worship with us for one reason or another.

**Hillcrest:** Pam Leibbrandt, Ruth Woodhams, Martin Fortkamp, and Darlene Leibbrandt.

**Kinship Pointe:** Walt & Jean Sehnert, Paul & Ruby Ahrens, Betty Harms, Shirley Lichty, and Barbara Klein.

**Highland Park:** Harlan & Bernita Reiners

**McCook:** Mark Cummins

**Arapahoe:** Joyce Stupka

**York:** Joyce Hofman

**Lincoln:** Carla Bales

### ELDER VISITATION

In order to facilitate better connection between the church and members, the Elders are well into a program whereby they have been assigned specific sections of the city and make contact with all members within their assigned area. The purpose of these visits is to not only make contact, but also update contact information and discuss spiritual needs that our members may have. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Elders – Ron Aufrecht, Harold Carlson, Phil Bamesberger, Victor Lauer, Fritz Hubert, Curt Swanhorst or Fred Gleason.

### FOOD PANTRY

At the November 2013 meeting of the Ministerial Association, one of the topics discussed related to support to the food pantry by the McCook congregations. One of the pastors put together a spread sheet based on the regular needs of the food pantry – the staples. The spread sheet identified an emphasis that each congregation can focus on for each month of the year to help stock the pantry. **Of course all donations are welcome (like cake mixes, icing, condiments, etc.),** but this provides an idea of their specific needs. As discussed at our meeting, here are the items for Peace to place an emphasis on, by month. **January – soup or stew,** February – crackers, March – Mac & Cheese, April – canned meats, May – canned vegetables, June – flour & sugar, July flour & sugar (again), August – Peanut butter, September – canned fruit, October – pork & beans, November – dry pasta, and December – beans.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Preschool to 5th grade children are invited to Sunday School each Sunday from 9:15-10:15am downstairs. We have snacks, playtime, opening prayer, Bible study, and closing prayer. Currently our Bible time involves learning about the various people of the Bible and their influence on passing along God's Word to us today. Parents are always welcome to join us.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE

<u>Altar Flowers</u>	<u>KNGN Sponsor</u>
3rd-Available	3rd-Available
10th-Available	10th-Available
17th-Available	17th-Available
24th-Available	24th-Available
31st-Available	31st-Available

Note: Cost to sponsor a "Your Hour of Worship" program on KNGN 1300AM Radio is \$45. If you are interested in sponsoring a program, please call the church office for available dates.

<b>January 3rd</b>	
Elder on duty	Victor Lauer
Organist	K. C. Eckhardt
Audio	Cathy Broz
Greeter	Deb Shields
Greeter	
Usher	Dennis Chipman
Lay Reader	Randon Peters
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Jeff Pinkerton
<b>Late Service</b>	
Greeter	Myra Tietz
Greeter	Jane Schuster
Usher	Jim Dejonge
Lay Reader	Fred Gleason
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Ben Schow

<b>January 10th</b>	
Elder on duty	Ron Aufrecht
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Russ Ankersen
Greeter	Gant Pfanstiel
Greeter	Charlene Pfanstiel
Usher	Harold Carlson
Lay Reader	Renelle Mooney
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen
<b>Late Service</b>	
Greeter	Cindy Swanhorst
Greeter	Curt Swanhorst
Usher	
Lay Reader	Nick Nothnagel
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen

<b>January 17th</b>	
Elder on duty	Harold Carlson
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Paul Sellers
Greeter	Elaine Polly
Greeter	Jeff Polly
Usher	Gary Buk
Lay Reader	Mike Nielsen
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Tina Cummins
<b>Late Service</b>	
Greeter	Donna Hall
Greeter	Jim Hall
Usher	Ben Schow
Lay Reader	Sarah Risenhoover
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	

<b>January 24th</b>	
Elder on duty	Fritz Hubert
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Harold Carlson
Greeter	
Greeter	
Usher	Eugene Custer
Lay Reader	Jerry Calvin
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Tina Cummins
<b>Late Service</b>	
Greeter	Patsy Fisher
Greeter	Pat Penner
Usher	Curt Swanhorst
Lay Reader	Curt Swanhorst
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Gary Hunkins

<b>January 31st</b>	
Elder on duty	Curt/Phil
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	NEED VOLUNTEER
Greeter	Sue Carlson
Greeter	Harold Carlson
Usher	Eugene Custer
Lay Reader	Randon Peters
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	
<b>Late Service</b>	
Greeter	Karen Berry
Greeter	NEED VOLUNTEER
Usher	Steve Post
Lay Reader	Phil Bamesberger
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	NEED VOLUNTEER



PEACE TALK

For months, I have been longing to gaze at the year 2020 in the rear-view mirror. Churches and businesses closed or had to nearly shut down because of the pandemic. Not only did we see this disease escalate, we witnessed a derecho, hurricanes, and fires, all of which destroyed homes and threatened people's lives. If that wasn't enough, we had to watch needless riots, political battles, and attacks on law enforcement. All this was going on while small businesses were facing financial stress, we were advised not to travel or visit loved ones, we constantly were being told what we can or cannot do. Then compile this with all the anxieties from personal difficulties or the loss of a loved one. Goodbye 2020; BUT WAIT. I have done nothing but focus on bad things I observed in this rear-view mirror. God's people were the same way while they were wondering in the wilderness. They were feeling sorry for themselves; they were tired of eating manna; they were tired of their presumed hardships and they were frustrated with Moses. They had clearly disregarded what God has done, continues to do, and His promise to them. They wanted to go back to the way things were in Egypt. The Israelites needed better vision. How about you and me? What if I use 2020 to look forward with 20/20 vision? I must confess, I pray more and feel closer to God when things are in an upheaval. I'm sure we all have felt stricken, smitten, and afflicted; but it is in these moments when we are at our weakest and most vulnerable point. The point where we are drawn closer to God. The Apostle Paul describes it best when he confessed that God had given him the GIFT of a thorn of suffering to keep him humble and to remind him of the common humanity he shared with all other people. We can relate with Paul and the Israelites, sharing weakness, trials, tribulations, and yes... sinfulness. God said through Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness," (2 Corinthians 12:9). As we are weak, God is strong. But Paul says he is thankful even for the thorn because it is only in weakness that Christ is glorified. There is power in weakness because it is only through suffering that God's grace is made clear. We can say, like Paul, that our troubles are given to us as opportunities to come closer to God, to rely upon our faith to place all our trust in God. As we triumph over our adversities, we are empowered by God working in us. Now we can glance in the rear-view mirror and give thanks to God, who has given us 20/20 vision to see the promise He gives to all who believe and trust in Him, everlasting life. And if these sufferings bring us closer to God then we can be eternally grateful. Lord, thank you for using a thorn in my side to help me see clearer the path I need to follow. Help others to use their thorn to embrace your Grace as well, Amen.



**Peace Lutheran Church**

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 McCook, NE 69001  
 PH (308)345-2595

# January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 <i>Office Closed</i>	2 7:00am Men's Bible Study
3 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	4  PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	5 9:00am Worship Committee 6:30pm Board of Elders	6 6:00pm School of Religion	7	8	9 7:00am Men's Bible Study
10 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	11  PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	12 1:00pm Adopt-A- Chaplain packing 6:30pm Board of Elders 7:00pm Council	13 6:00pm School of Religion	14  PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE (WINKLE)	15	16 7:00am Men's Bible Study
17 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship 1:00pm Voter's Meeting	18  PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	19	20 6:00pm School of Religion	21	22	23 7:00am Men's Bible Study
24 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	25 2:00pm LWML  PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	26	27 6:00pm School of Religion	28	29	30 7:00am Men's Bible Study
31 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship						