

TIDINGS OF PEACE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH

LUTHERAN CHURCH



'TIDINGS OF PEACE' from

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

TO:

Three vertical lines for an address.

A

s I drove into the church parking lot this morning, it seemed so quiet. I thought to myself; "Wow, Christmas is over—it came and went so quickly. Christmas was a lot of fun; so many memories were made—memories to cherish. This Christmas, like every Christmas, was also a lot of work; in some ways I welcome the moments of quiet, but at the same time, the quiet seems so final". But does it have to be that way; or is there something I can do to keep a memory of this Christmas?

As our homes, our schedules, our lives begin the transition back to the normal flow of things, I also see our neighborhoods transitioning from the brightness of colorful twinkling lights that proclaim our Savior's birth, back to the cold darkness of winter.

As each house—each yard goes dark, I wonder, is it really over for that home? Having gone through the motions of Christmas, is it really back to the status-quo until next year? Has nothing changed?

I have considered leaving one of my Christmas candles shining in the front window of our home to help me remember the joy of this Christmas, because things have indeed changed; Christ has come into the world that we might have

peace with God. Each year that we celebrate the birth of Christ, brings us that much closer to the day He comes again in glory.

Things will NEVER be the same again. The light of God's mercy has come into the darkness, and though the darkness of winter can be overwhelming at times, seeming to last forever, the days are already growing longer—day by day, as the sun makes its course northward again; darkness gives way to light—and before we know it, spring will come and God's creation will again awaken before our very eyes.

In this new year of new opportunities, may you, in your own way, keep the memories of Christmas shining in your heart.

God's blessings to you in the new year,

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Felcher

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:1-5)



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FROM AN ELDER

The Children of Light

Einstein was not all that complicated. He answered the centuries-old question of whether light existed as particles or as a wave by saying, "Yes!" He said that light consisted of bundles of energy called photons, which when they are all zipping along together, behave as a wave. Simple!

The Bible was way ahead of Einstein. The Bible refers to Christians as "children of light" (Eph. 5:8). We are individuals, but the Bible never refers to a "child of light." We are all member of one body. As we "zip" along together as little Christian "photons", we are a wave of light, children of light, who can make a real difference in this world of darkness.

There is a particular darkness that we recognize this month. January 22 is the anniversary of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision by the Supreme Court that legalized abortion in our country. That decision has become increasingly dark as we have moved from abortion to late-term abortion top infanticide. We have moved from abortion laws to assisted-suicide laws to prime- time euthanasia. We have moved from legal to acceptable to laudable.

The darkness of *Roe v. Wade* gives the children of light some real opportunities to shine and this is an especially good month to think about that as January is also the month heralding *Epiphany*. Epiphany means to "show forth." The symbol of Epiphany is light. Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world."

How do the children of light respond to the darkness that is *Roe v. Wade*? The book of Hebrews offers two ways. "Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in the great contest in the face of suffering. Sometimes you were exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side-by-side with those who were so treated" (Hebrews 10:32-33). The children of light are to "stand against" and "stand with."

Stand Against. In an age of moral pluralism someone must take a stand and say, "Some things are morally wrong." In an age where abortion is called "a right" and "a choice", someone has to stand up and call it wrong. To be sure, this must be done in love and with the awareness of our own sinfulness and shortcomings, but it has to be done. If the children of light will not expose the deeds of darkness, who will?

Stand With. Many have already found themselves caught up in the false hopes and false promises of the darkness. Some of these are Christians, perhaps in our own congregation or even our own family. Those hurting need the children of light to stand with them in love and respect and choose the path of light. In the case of crisis pregnancy, help them choose life. In the case of men and women suffering the aftermath of abortion, love them and offer the forgiveness and hope of Jesus Christ.

It is not easy being children of light. It is not easy standing against the deeds of darkness. It is not easy standing with those hurting in the darkness. That's why it is important to remember what God knew long before Einstein. We are not alone. We are a wave of light and working together we can make difference in the darkness of our times.

Right is right, even when no one is doing it.
Wrong is wrong, even when everyone is doing it.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Adrianna Gass	1/1	Patricia Kohmetscher	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	1/24
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
Benjamin Hanchera	1/13				

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Loren & Lois Brown	1/18/1958	64	Darrell & K.C. Eckhardt	1/31/1964	58

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

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

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

OUR FINANCES AT A GLANCE

	Week to Date (Dec. 26th-Jan. 1st)	Month to Date (Dec. 4th-Jan. 1st)	Actual Year to Date (January 3rd-January 1st)
Offerings	\$11,563.00	\$47,221.00	\$269,731.00
Expenses	\$3,158.00	\$16,619.00	\$242,183.00



BOARD OF EVANGELISM

The Board of Evangelism met December 1, 2021. All members were present. Birthday and anniversary cards are sent to members. Please contact Tina at the church office to add a name or change an address. Meals can be requested for members recently hospitalized, including new parents. Contact Dorene Hoffman 345-2609 or Joann Nemechek 345-6816. Grief booklets are available. If you know of someone in need of receiving these please contact Pastor Felcher or Tina. Christmas cards were sent to shut-in members unable to worship with us. Advent devotionals were given to adults and children. Door hangers with Advent and Christmas worship schedules were distributed. Living Nativity information was sent to area churches. The "picture board" on the greeting card case is a neat collage of photos celebration Pastor Felcher, Tanna and Emmett's adoption of Teddy. Thank you all for supporting the Angel Tree. All of the families have been taken. The Family Resource Center commends the wonderful support that Peace Lutheran Church gives to this project. The Living Nativity was such a wonderful way for our congregation to Glorify God. Thank you for supporting this community outreach. We wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed new year. Respectfully submitted: Deb Gleason, Joann Nemechek, Nancy Rippen

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The Board of Education is looking for someone to direct Vacation Bible School this year.

HELPING HANDS RAMP BUILDING



JANUARY READINGS

Date	Season	First Reading	Epistle	Holy Gospel
2nd	The 2nd S. after Christmas	1 Kings 3:4-15	Ephesians 1:3-14	Luke 2:40-52
9th	The Baptism of Our Lord	Isaiah 43:1-7	Romans 6:1-11	Luke 3:15-22
16th	The 2nd S. after Epiphany	Isaiah 62:1-5	1 Corinthians 12:1-11	John 2:1-11
23rd	The 3rd S. after Epiphany	Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10	1 Corinthians 12:12-31a	Luke 4:16-30
30th	The 4th S. after Epiphany	Jeremiah 1:4-10(17-19)	1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13	Luke 4:31-44



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Stewardship Ministry
Newsletter Article – January 2022

'Tis More Blessed to Give Than to Receive

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " (Acts 20:35)

And indeed, it is. Does this not strike a chord that resonates in us all? Which of us can't recall the look of surprise and thanks for the Christmas gifts that we labored to give to those whom we love? And the joy written on their face when that gift is received with thanksgiving means more than all the gifts we have received. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Our Lord knew this because He practiced it. He gave of Himself – sparing not even His life in death – in order to give us back to our Father in heaven. He knew that in giving you get more because joy is multiplied in giving. The one who receives and the one who gives both rejoice in what is given and received. And, what is more, the one who receives only wants to give back to the one who gave so generously in thanksgiving.

So it is with our tithes and offerings in church. We want to give because we have received from God all that we are and all that we have. Our giving does not originate in what we must do to earn God's favor. We have God's favor because of His gift of His Son, given through Word and Sacrament. Thus, we are made free from the compulsion of giving so that our tithes and offering are freely given in thanksgiving for what God has so generously given to us.

Why then does the church struggle to make budgets? Why does the church always seem stretched so thin when it is the place where God continually gives us His forgiveness of sins? Why does the church struggle when God, out of love for us, generously pours out His grace and mercy?

It is because we are sinners. Our fallen nature makes us selfish and miserly. It leads us to believe that we can have our cake and eat it, too. Because of sin, we want God's grace and mercy; we want His blessings of body and soul. But we don't want to share it with those around us. We want to remain comfortable in our own self-contained, neat, and tidy lives – without the headaches of loving those around us by helping them in their time of need.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "Remember that God has placed you in a church, not only to receive His grace and mercy, but to press His eternal and temporal blessings into service to your neighbor.

Your tithes and offerings ensure that those around you have a pastor to preach the life-saving and life-giving Word of God. They ensure that the lights, heat, and air-conditioning are working. They ensure there is water for Holy Baptism as well as bread and wine for Holy Communion. They even ensure that your pastor has food and clothing and presents for his own family. The gifts of God are immeasurable. They multiply and redound to everyone's good as the fish and loaves in the feeding of the five thousand.

So, remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And remember the joy that attended the gifts you gave at Christmas. This same joy attends your gifts to the church.



CREATIVE PRESCHOOL

Dear Preschool Families,

Happy New Year! We hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas break and were able to spend family time with your loved ones.

As was on our December newsletter, we will be having "Muffins with Moms" on Wednesday, Jan. 12th at 11:00 and Thursday, Jan. 13th at 11:00 and 2:30. We hope you can join us! We had a great turn out for "Donuts with Dads" and the kids were so excited to have their loved ones here with them!

We have a fun month of learning in store for January so please check your calendars for special days and remember that they are intended to be a fun addition to learning our letters!

Also, tax season is just around the corner, so here is the federal tax ID number for the preschool in case you need it for your taxes.

Peace Lutheran Church Creative Preschool ID #47-0431644

Don't forget that our website has monthly calendars and newsletters under each class' tab, so if you need an extra copy you can go to our website.

The web address is: <http://plcmccook.org/creativepreschool.html>

We are excited to get back into the "swing of things"!!

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call me at 345-2595 or email mycreativepreschool@gmail.com.

Thanks!

Ms. Kelsey

ADOPT-A-CHAPLAIN

This program supports deployed military chaplains and the troops they serve. From Peace Lutheran, we send care packages filled with snacks, puzzle books and other items. At Christmas, with support from Peace Lutheran members and many others in southwest Nebraska, we sent care packages to troops in Iraq, Kuwait, Korea, Poland and a Navy Ship. We included hundreds of Christmas cards and notes of "thanks for their service". The Navy chaplain is an LCMS pastor, he writes "I do want to let you know that while our deployment is coming to an end shortly after the calendar year that your care and support has been abundantly helpful in maintaining the morale and perspective of my crew. Being underway on a ship away from ports (COVID restrictions) and even news sources (limited internet connectivity) can isolate us significantly. These types of touches--both of the stomach, and of the heart--bridge the gap where my sailors are reminded that they are appreciated and loved. You have supported my work on the ship, and for that I am extremely grateful and blessed. The work you are doing matters to us greatly; thank you, thank you!" In His Service, Pastor (Chaplain) Stephen DeMik In January, we are honored to be able to adopt a chaplain with a Nebraska National Guard unit that recently deployed to Qatar. The Chaplain is Dan Sauer and he is with the 734 th Combat Sustainment unit from Kearney. We will be putting together care packages for this unit, please join us at Tues, Jan 18, at 1:00pm. And please pray for all deployed military.



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, Darlene Leibbrandt, Jean Sehnert, and Barbara Klein.

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

Highland Park: Harlan & Bernita Reiners and Arthur & Elaine Soncksen

El Dorado Manor: Mark Cummins **Ulysses, KS:** 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 – Harold Carlson, Phil Bamesberger, Victor Lauer, Fritz Hubert, Brandon Kuykendall, Curt Swanhorst or Fred Gleason.

FOOD PANTRY

As discussed at a 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. **Of course all donations are welcome (like cake mixes, icing, condiments, etc.),**

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Preschool to 2nd grade children are invited to Sunday School each Sunday from 9:15-10:15am downstairs.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE

Altar Flowers
2nd-Available
9th-Available
16th-Schuster
23rd-Available
30th-Available

KNGN Sponsor
2nd-Available
9th-Available
16th-Schuster
23rd-Available
30th-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.

January 2nd

Elder on duty Brandon Kuykendall
Organist KC Eckhardt
Audio Cathy Broz
Greeter Grant Pfanstiel
Greeter Charlene Pfanstiel
Usher Gary Buk
Lay Reader Renelle Mooney
Acolyte Brayden Watts
Acolyte Tristen Watts
Powerpoint Cathy Broz

Late Service

Greeter Jane Schuster
Greeter Myra Tietz
Usher Jim Dejonge
Lay Reader Fred Gleason
Acolyte Jackson Hartwell
Acolyte Ellie Hartwell
Powerpoint Ben Schow
Facebook Blayzon Mooney

January 9th

Elder on duty Victor Lauer
Organist
Audio Russ Ankersen
Greeter Deb Shields
Greeter
Usher Harold Carlson
Lay Reader Grant Pfanstiel
Acolyte Abigail Schneider
Acolyte
Powerpoint Russ Ankersen

Late Service

Greeter Cindy Swanhorst
Greeter Curt Swanhorst
Usher
Lay Reader Nick Nothnagel
Acolyte Avery Davidson
Acolyte Emma McConville
Powerpoint Russ Ankersen
Facebook Renelle Mooney

January 16th

Elder on duty Harold Carlson
Organist Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio Paul Sellers
Greeter Elaine Polly
Greeter Jeff Polly
Usher Gary Buk
Lay Reader Randon Peters
Acolyte Laney Peters
Acolyte
Powerpoint Tina Cummins

Late Service

Greeter Donna Hall
Greeter Jim Hall
Usher Ben Schow
Lay Reader Sarah Risenhoover
Acolyte Jackson Hartwell
Acolyte Ellie Hartwell
Powerpoint
Facebook Ryland Peters

January 23rd

Elder on duty Fritz Hubert
Organist
Audio Harold Carlson
Greeter Nancy Rippen
Greeter
Usher Eugene Custer
Lay Reader Jerry Calvin
Acolyte Layton Hinz
Acolyte
Powerpoint Harold Carlson

Late Service

Greeter Patsy Fisher
Greeter Pat Penner
Usher Curt Swanhorst
Lay Reader Curt Swanhorst
Acolyte Zander Stewart
Acolyte Cale DeWester
Powerpoint Gary Hunkins
Facebook Layne Sarvela

January 30th

Elder on duty Curt/Phil
Organist
Audio NEED VOLUNTEER
Greeter Sue Carlson
Greeter Harold Carlson
Usher Gary Buk
Lay Reader Paul Schaffert
Acolyte Cassidy Rogers
Acolyte
Powerpoint

Late Service

Greeter Karen Berry
Greeter NEED VOLUNTEER
Usher Steve Post
Lay Reader Phil Bamesberger
Acolyte Brooklynn Tidyman
Acolyte Juliett Critchfield
Powerpoint NEED VOLUNTEER
Facebook Christien Kuykendall



PEACE TALK

Some things in life are hard to love, and one of those things for me is a roundabout. I am sure these are well thought out and make intersections quicker and safer, but all the same, I don't like them. Is it my turn to go? Do I have the right away? Why is that guy mad at me? What exit did navigation say to take again? Maybe it is because I like a well determined path from point A to point B. But upon reflection, my path has never been clearly defined and definitely not straight. In fact, my path has included dead ends, detours and a wrong way in a one way. Maybe I could have benefited from a roundabout. How clear is the path in your faith journey? I know there are many times in my mind that I am following the straight road that is mapped out for my life. Truth be told I have no idea what path that is. Am I really listening to God's direction? If I am truly following God's directions, why does it feel like I am wondering in the wilderness? It reminds me of the Israelite's journey in the wilderness. "When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea. Thus, the Israelites left Egypt like an army ready for battle." Exodus 13:17-18. There is a reason our paths are not clearly defined. God led the Israelite's in a roundabout way for reason. He includes roundabouts in our path for a reason as well. It doesn't necessarily mean it is because of sin and disobedience like the Israelites, but for strengthening of our relationship with Him. Other places in the Bible we learn about paths taken through a roundabout. Moses took the roundabout way to leading Israel, David took the roundabout way to becoming a king, Paul took the roundabout way to Rome, Jonah took the roundabout way to Nineveh. In each case God was guiding their path that would lead to a greater purpose. Moses learned steadfast obedience, David learned contrition, Paul learned patience, Jonah learned about forgiveness, all on the Roundabout Way. So, if you find yourself heading towards a roundabout, and are unsure of how to navigate it, you are not alone. There are many of us on the roundabout wondering what direction our life is going and what exit to take. But the good news is you and I are likely right where God wants us right now. Even though we might wonder what went wrong, or why we struggle to get on the right path, the lessons learned along the way is how God heals us in the roundabout way. Dear Lord, thank you for the path you have led us on, knowing you are preparing us as you did the Israelites, to be among the "army ready for battle." Amen.



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January 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:00am Worship 9:15am. Bible Study 10:30am Worship Upper Fellowship Hall reservation	3 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	4 9:00am Worship Committee 6:30pm Board of Elders	5 9:30am El Dorado 6:00pm School of Religion	6	7	8 7:00am Men's Bible Study Circuit Forum
9 Communion Sunday 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	10 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	11 6:30pm Board of Elders 7:00pm Council	12 6:00pm School of Religion	13 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE (WINKEL)	14	15 7:00am Men's Bible Study
16 8:00am Worship 9:15am. Bible Study 10:30am Worship 1:30am Voter's Meeting	17 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	18	19 6:00pm School of Religion	20	21	22 7:00am Men's Bible Study
23 Communion Sunday 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	24 2:00pm LWML PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	25	26 6:00pm School of Religion	27 1:30pm Hillcrest 2:30pm Kinship Pointe	28	29 7:00am Men's Bible Study
30 8:00am Worship 9:15am. Bible Study 10:30am Worship	31 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE					