



'TIDINGS OF PEACE' from

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

TO:

TIDINGS OF PEACE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH

LUTHERAN CHURCH

July 2023

Hello again, as I write to you today, I am reminded of the beauty and wonder of God's creation. As the days get longer—the nights in Nebraska seem to become warmer and more humid. My cousins in South Dakota call it, "corn growing weather."

But since my days as a child in Brandon South Dakota, I have referred to the warmer and more humid nights as "Lightning Bug weather."

We moved to southern California when I was eight years old, and to my dismay, there are no lightning bugs there; the nights are plenty warm, but there is almost no humidity, so, no lighting bugs.

However, there was an occasion when, as an adult and father, Tanna and I had moved our family up into the Sierra Nevada Foothills—I remember sitting on the steps of our deck, enjoying the night air after a hot summer day, when I saw something out of the corner of my eye; a light near the ground. I thought; "Could it be a lightning bug?" When I got closer, all I found was a small caterpillar.

I thought; "Surely not!" but then it blinked—a small band of light wrapped around that little creature. I exclaimed that I thought glowworms only existed in children's songs and nursery rhymes, but there it was.

As a young boy transplanted from dirt-road South Dakota to Orange County California, the absence of lightning bugs was an annual reminder of the things I missed "back home." So now, every year when the nights become warmer and more humid, I watch with eager expectation, hoping to be the first to see the beauty and wonder of a bug with a built-in nightlight.

And as I consider these little creatures, I have always wondered two things; 1. What is the scientific explanation for their being able to produce light. And 2. Why did the Lord give them the ability to light up without batteries and without producing heat?

For a scientific perspective I read an explanation written by a man named Clyde Sorenson; a professor of Entomology, at North Carolina State University. Professor Sorenson suggests that; Bioluminescent Beetles, or "Fireflies" as he calls them, produce light in special

organs in their abdomens by combining a chemical called Luciferin with oxygen and an energy source stored at the cellular level—an energy source called ATP or Adenosine triphosphate. That's a fancy way of saying that the Lightning Bug can control their flashing by regulating how much oxygen they allow into their light producing organs.

So, that's man's explanation of why a lightning bug lights up.

It is written in the Bible, on the other hand, that; on the first day of Creation, God said, "Let there be light and there was light. On the fourth day of Creation, God said let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. He made the sun, moon, and stars on that day, but He had made vegetation the day before—so, for a day, plants that rely on light for life, flourished on the face of the earth, supported by light given directly from God.

But then He waited until the sixth day to make the things that creep along the ground; things like Lightning Bugs.

But while it's fun to think about when God created light, and when He created Lightning Bugs, I still haven't answered why; why did the Lord create those little creatures with the ability to light up?

Well, I don't recall scripture specifically talking about why God created Lightning Bugs; but for me, they are a reminder to take a moment, every once in a while, to slow down, and appreciate that perhaps He still does some things just for our enjoyment.

And, I think God created Lightning Bugs to produce light without producing heat; to remind us that He can—to remind us that "With man, it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible."

When you find yourself confronted with the difficulties of this life, may these little creatures be a reminder that God is with you, and that you can do all things through Him who gives you strength.

Thanks for reading.
Pastor.

"God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day."
Genesis 1:31

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FROM AN ELDER**"Freedom's Price Has Been Paid ...
Serve It Forward"**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Galatians 6:9-10

In the United States, on July Fourth, Americans celebrate Independence Day. One of the things that people need to be reminded of is that freedom isn't free. In this world, someone always pays the price for people to be truly free. In reading for this devotion, I went back to the very signers of the Declaration of Independence, all 56 of them. Did you know how much they risked for your freedom?

If they won the war with the British, there would still be years of hardship as a struggling nation. If they lost, they would face a hangman's noose. And yet there it is where it says, "We herewith pledge, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." They signed it, but did you know what price they paid for those signatures? In a broadcast on July 4, 1974, Paul Harvey reminded us

* that Carter Braxton, a wealthy planter and trader, after signing saw his ships swept from the seas to pay his debts. He lost his home and all of his property. He died in rags;
* that Thomas McKean of Delaware was so harassed by the enemy that he was forced to move his family five times in five months. He served in Congress without pay -- his family in poverty, and in hiding;
* that Thomas Nelson, Jr. of Virginia raised \$2 million on his own signature for provision for our allies, the French fleet. After the War he personally paid back the loans, wiping out his entire estate; he was never reimbursed by his government. He died bankrupt;
* that John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside while she was dying; his 13 children fled in all directions for their lives. His fields and gristmill were laid waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves and returned home after the War to find his wife dead, his children gone, his properties gone. He died a few weeks later of exhaustion and a broken heart.

Of the 56 signers of the Declaration, few were long to survive. Five were captured by the British and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes -- from Rhode Island to Charleston -- sacked and looted, occupied by the enemy, or burned. Two of them lost their sons in the Army; one had two sons captured. Nine of the 56 died in the War from its hardships or merciful bullets. They had learned that liberty is so much more important than security, for that they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. They fulfilled their pledge; they paid the price, and freedom was born. It's hard to imagine paying such a price so that others might be free. But then, we're reminded of the price Jesus Christ paid for our freedom, not just politically for the moment, but eternally for all time. In order to save us from our sins, God literally had come into our predicament, as the God-Man, to live our life perfectly, to pay the debt for our sin personally, and to give us the eternal life He earned as a gift, received by grace alone, through faith. When it comes to freedom, I pray that you yearn for the freedom that comes in Christ alone more than any of the other freedoms combined. You'll be blessed if you do!

**JULY BIRTHDAYS**

Avery Doucet	7/1	Tyler Loop	7/15	David May	7/24
Jack Seybold	7/1	Carla Bales	7/17	Virginia Orman	7/25
Cindy Soucek	7/2	Easton Gillen	7/17	Laney Peters	7/26
Jaylee Dyer	7/3	Grant Pfanstiel	7/17	Karli Swink	7/26
Kayla Koetter	7/4	Tristen Watts	7/17	Alex Sharp	7/27
Chelsey Hartwell	7/6	Michael Chipman	7/19	Roger Stupka	7/27
Dalton Downing	7/7	Melissa Hanchera	7/20	Deb Lauer	7/28
Cindy Swanhorst	7/8	Sonja Thompson	7/20	Kristi Novak	7/29
Hannah Götl	7/11	Richard Thompson	7/21	Brigitta Post	7/29
Elaine Soncksen	7/11	Charles Coleman	7/22	Nate Schneider	7/30
Dennis Wudtke	7/11	Lila Leibrandt	7/22	Cathy Broz	7/31
Dawn Callander	7/13	Mark Cummins	7/24		

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Jenna & Matthew Moench	7/1/2017	6	Allyx & Dillon Garretson	7/19/2008	15
Kiley & Caitlin Roundtree	7/2/2011	12	Andrew & Bobbie Ziebell	7/21/2012	11
Nate & Sarah Schneider	7/8/2006	17	Mark & Tina Cummins	7/27/1991	32
Breann & Christopher Cerda	7/10/2015	8	Phillip & Janice Barnesberger	7/28/1979	44
Lucas & Hannah Curl	7/10/2021	2	James & Susan DeJonge	7/29/1967	56
James & Daphne Tidyman	7/17/1999	24			

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

Check out our Facebook page (Peace Lutheran McCook NE)! Don't forget to "Like", "Follow" and "Share" it! We now have a YouTube channel (Peace Lutheran Church McCook) to view the Sunday services.

OUR FINANCES AT A GLANCE

	Week to Date (June 25th-July 1st)	Month to Date (June 4th-July 1st)	Actual Year to Date (Jan 1st-July 1st)
Offerings	\$2,549.00	\$13,757.00	\$132,925.00
Expenses	\$3,888.00	\$16,911.00	\$126,622.00



CALLING ALL COOKS



Peace Lutheran LWML is sponsoring a church cookbook. Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will go to mission projects within Peace Lutheran Church. Please submit your favorite recipes with your name on it or in honor of someone. We are accepting recipes from May 1st to September 1st. These would make wonderful Christmas gifts. If you would like to help with the cookbook, please contact Deb Shields at 308-340-4054. Recipes can be put in a box in the narthex or emailed to debrashields76@yahoo.com. Order forms will be put out at a later date.

WELCOME

Please welcome our newest members. Kamry Ann Crick, Reagan Reed Smith and Jaylee Mae Dyer were received by the waters of baptism. Kamry is the daughter of Bailey & Brandon Crick. Reagan is the daughter of Brandon & Aly Smith. Jaylee is the daughter of Jim & Kelly Dyer.

Welcome Kamry, Reagan and Jaylee!



Kamry Ann Crick



Reagan Reed Smith

JULY READINGS

Date	Season	First Reading	Epistle	Holy Gospel
2nd	The 5th S. after Pentecost	Jeremiah 28:5-9	Romans 7:1-13	Matthew 10:34-42
9th	The 6th S. after Pentecost	Zechariah 9:9-12	Romans 7:14-25a	Matthew 11:25-30
16th	The 7th S. after Pentecost	Isaiah 55:10-13	Romans 8:12-17	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
23rd	The 8th S. after Pentecost	Isaiah 44:6-8	Romans 8:18-27	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
30th	The 9th S. after Pentecost	Deuteronomy 7:6-9	Romans 8:28-39	Matthew 13:44-52



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article – July 2023

Go ... Sell All You Have?

"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" asked the rich young ruler. Jesus said, "You know the commandments." And he replied, "All these I have kept from my youth." And Jesus said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (Luke 18:18-22).

When we hear this story, this question comes to mind: is Jesus speaking to us also, or only to the rich young ruler? In other words, is Jesus telling us to sell all that we have and give it to the poor?

As good Lutherans, we answer, "No!" But why? Why should we not sell all that we have and distribute it to the poor? The simplest explanation is this: if we sold everything we have, our wife and our children would be neglected. In other words, to sell everything we have and give it to the poor would ignore, even abandon, those whom God has placed in our care. Our money, everything we have, is not to be used solely for the church. But that doesn't excuse us from using our money for the purpose God intends.

Everyone has three stations in life, three spheres in which we live and are to be of service to our neighbors. These stations are the church, the family and society. We are members of all three of these by birth. We are born into the church by water and the Word of God, and our duties to others in the church arise from our Baptism into the church. We are born into a family, and our duties to others stem from our birth into that family. Finally, we are born into society, which is simply a further extension of our birth into our family. The duties we have toward other members of society come from either our own birth or the birth of others into the same society.

All that we have and all that we are ought to be pressed into service for the church, the family and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and we would falter in fulfilling our duties.

So, consider your life and all that you have in light of these three stations. You pay taxes to support and help those in society. You save for college for your children, and provide food, clothing and shelter for the members of your family.

But the station that is usually thought of last is the church. Since the needs of the family and society are more immediate, the church is often given what is left over. This is not how it should be. Rather, we are to give of our first fruits, from off the top, the best, even as Abel gave the best of his flock.

This requires forethought. It means that you sit down and make a plan of what you will give from the beginning. It means sticking to it even when it seems that there are other more immediate and pressing things.

And this is all the more necessary now as we enter into periods of time where giving is low due to high unemployment or where restrictions on meeting in church limit opportunities to give. If we love God and His gifts of forgiveness given through the means of grace, which we receive at church and only at church, then we will support it, just as we love our country and our family. For all that we have and all that we are is given to us by our gracious God. He spared no expense for us and our salvation. He gave up His Son to death so that our sins are forgiven, and we will live. What's more, He provides for all that we need for this body and life. And our lives in this world, among these three spheres of church, family and society are to mirror the generosity of the one who gave us life in all three at birth.

Don't let the church, your divine family, be an afterthought or even ignored. It is nurturing you, bringing you up in salvation through Word and Sacrament.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



Peace Lutheran had an amazing week of Vacation Bible School, with over 80 children participating!! This is something we are incredibly proud of and it was incredible to watch faith in action with three days of treasured fun!

This would not have been possible without directors Kris Hanchera and Jan Hubert, Pastor Felcher's lessons and 33 awe-amazing volunteers!

Thank you to all who had a hand in VBS this year, whether it be dancing along to a song, preparing kid delicious snacks, praying over the program or simply bring your little one to enjoy the fun! Board of Education



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, Art Soncksen, and Karen Berry

Kinship Pointe: Betty Harms, and Loren & Lois Brown.

Highland Park: Harlan & Bernita Reiners and Elaine Soncksen

El Dorado Manor: Mark Cummins

Lincoln: Carla Bales

Ulysses, KS: Joyce Stupka

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 – Phil Bamesberger, Victor Lauer, Fritz Hubert, Brandon Kuykendall, Curt Swanhorst, Russ Ankersen or Barry Mooney.

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.)**

If you have an article, an announcement, pictures, etc... that you would like to submit for the "Tidings of Peace" newsletter, please bring it by the church office no later than the 4th Thursday of the month.



SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE

July 2nd	
Elder on duty	Brandon Kuykendall
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Cathy Broz
Greeter	Grant Pfanstiel
Greeter	Charlene Pfanstiel
Usher	Gene Meints
Lay Reader	Grant Pfanstiel
Acolyte	Layton Hinz
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Cathy Broz
Late Service	
Greeter	Jane Schuster
Greeter	Myra Tietz
Usher	Gary Hunkins
Lay Reader	Nick Nothnagel
Acolyte	Emma McConville
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Ben Schow
Live Stream	Carter Hartwell

July 9th	
Elder on duty	Victor Lauer
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Russ Ankersen
Greeter	Deb Shields
Greeter	
Usher	Harold Carlson
Lay Reader	Randon Peters
Acolyte	Clara Hurst
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen
Late Service	
Greeter	Cindy Swanhorst
Greeter	Curt Swanhorst
Usher	Harold Carlson
Lay Reader	Sarah Risenhoover
Acolyte	Ryker Mooney
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen
Live Stream	Blayzon Mooney

July 16th	
Elder on duty	Barry Mooney
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Paul Sellers
Greeter	Elaine Polly
Greeter	Jeff Polly
Usher	Eugene Custer
Lay Reader	Renelle Mooney
Acolyte	Tristan Watts
Acolyte	Brayden Watts
Powerpoint	Tina Cummins
Late Service	
Greeter	Donna Hall
Greeter	Jim Hall
Usher	Ben Schow
Lay Reader	Fred Gleason
Acolyte	Hunter Kunkee
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	
Live Stream	Ryland Peters

July 23rd	
Elder on duty	Fritz Hubert
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Harold Carlson
Greeter	Nancy Rippen
Greeter	
Usher	Eugene Custer
Lay Reader	Jerry Calvin
Acolyte	Avery Davidson
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Harold Carlson
Late Service	
Greeter	Pat Penner
Greeter	
Usher	Curt Swanhorst
Lay Reader	Curt Swanhorst
Acolyte	Cale DeWester
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Gary Hunkins
Live Stream	Layne Sarvela

July 30th	
Elder on duty	Curt/Phil
Organist	
Audio	NEED VOLUNTEER
Greeter	Sue Carlson
Greeter	Harold Carlson
Usher	Gene Meints
Lay Reader	Harold Carlson
Acolyte	Juliett Critchfield
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	
Late Service	
Greeter	Karen Berry
Greeter	
Usher	Steve Post
Lay Reader	Phil Bamesberger
Acolyte	Brooklyn Tidyman
Acolyte	Lexi Koetter
Powerpoint	NEED VOLUNTEER
Live Stream	Tina Cummins



PEACE TALK

Do not pass go. Do not collect \$200. I would get this card quite often it seemed while heading to jail in the game of Monopoly. A game where the strategy is to control profitable real estate and make the most "play money". The winner rises to the top when all the other players are driven into bankruptcy. Properties like Railroads, Boardwalk, Park Place, and many more create a boundary around the board. Buying houses and motels on these properties will then multiply the earnings. However, I cannot recall ever playing this game to completion. Either I, or a fellow competitor would ultimately get bored or frustrated, and the game would prematurely come to a screeching halt. Even though this was only a game, and the money was pretend, it eerily seemed that Monopoly would evolve into a competition of possession. The possession of properties become the most important thing. Come to think of it, I can't help but wonder how much of this reality is happening in modern society. People obsessed with wealth and material goods like in a game of Monopoly. One person blessed with an abundance of assets and another with none. No doubt going on today, but the difference is where the focus lies. In Monopoly, the winner is the one who ends up with the most, because that is where the focus lands. However, in the life of a Christian, one must focus on where it all comes from. Jesus gives us a get out of jail free card. He tells us in Luke 12:15, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." Jesus warns us of turning our life into a game of Monopoly. Letting greed control our destiny, thus blocking any relationship with God. God doesn't care if we profit from Boardwalk and Parkway and buy houses and hotels. So long as we do not sacrifice our relationship with Him. Getting wrapped up with that Monopoly mentality. As Jesus said in Luke 12:21, "A person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God." We can do this by praising God for everything we have. "Everything comes from God; everything exists by his power; and everything is intended for his glory," (Romans 11:36). Are you investing in your relationship with God? Positioning yourself to win against the greedy forces of the evil one. Seeking God, the one who gives us all things, as our strategy to win. You will find that once you seek Him first, all these other things will be added to you (Matthew 6:33). It's a matter of setting priorities, and God wants to be first in your life. So, regardless of not passing go, going straight to jail, or profiting from properties. We must focus our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). Dear Lord, forgive me when I get caught up in the Monopoly game of life. Help me reset my priorities and be a winner with my relationship with You. Amen.



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July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 7:00am Men's Bible Study Upper Fellowship Hall reservation
2 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	3 Office closed	4 Office closed	5 9:30am El Dorado 1:00pm Worship Committee 7:00pm Board of Evangelism	6 Board of Education	7	8 7:00am Men's Bible Study
9 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	10 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	11 6:00pm Board of Elders 7:00pm Council	12	13	14	15 7:00am Men's Bible Study
16 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	17 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	18	19	20	21	22 7:00am Men's Bible Study
23 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	24 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	25	26	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 AT CONVENTION						