

# TIDINGS OF PEACE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH

LUTHERAN CHURCH

**H**ave you ever had anyone encourage you; "Go for it!" During my devotion time this morning, I learned of an evangelist who was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. This man was asked; if he could leave any message for believers, before he went to heaven, what would that message be? "Go for it!" he said.

As I ponder these three little words, I hear that man emphasizing our Lord's calling Christians be courageous in all things; and I hear God's call, as a Christian parent, to be a courageous encourager.

That's kind of a big thing for me, since I've been accused of being a helicopter parent; one who hovers in an effort to protect. But those three little words suggest that, when our kids are little, and they want to run at the park or climb an age-appropriate tree, perhaps I should offer a cautious "GO FOR IT," even if that means hovering a little less closely.

When our kids get a little older, this "Go for it." may mean stepping back a little bit more; allowing them to try new things that challenge a little bit more—cheering them on to success—and being there to dust them off and encourage them if they fail.

I had read a book while at

Seward, entitled "Wild at Heart," by author John Eldridge. One of the things this author did while his boys were growing, was that he would encourage them by calling them wild-men. If they were on a challenging hike, or when struggling to conquer a long hill while mountain-biking, as they challenged themselves, he would shout "Look at you! You are a WILD MAN!"

This was his way of letting his boys know that he recognized their challenge; and even if it seemed a little scary for them, this was his way of letting them know that he thought they could do it, and that he was there for them.

As our kids grow older and more mature; as they express their hopes and dreams; as they prepare for collage or career, or a family of their own; may the faith journey we walk with them now, equip them for life's challenges, and give us also, the confidence to say "Go for it."

As you experience life's up-hills and challenges, as you live the life of a courageous encourager, may you also be encouraged to; "Go for it!"

Thanks for reading.  
Pastor Lonnie

*"Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!" Psalm 31:24*

TO:

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'TIDINGS OF PEACE' from

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

**The Measure of Our Generosity**

If you open up the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8-11)

Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel."

The New Testament church's job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn't even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?

**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

Heath Bedore	12/1	Pat Schaffert	12/13	Sue Farenbruch	12/23
Lyle Brown	12/3	Nadia Schoup	12/13	Kevin Custer	12/24
James DeJonge	12/5	Carrie Götl	12/14	Preston Hueftle	12/24
Emmett Felcher	12/5	Eileen Hubert	12/14	Mardelle Miller	12/25
Nicole Koetter	12/6	Raymond Schow	12/14	Kimberly Pinkerton	12/25
Nancy Rippen	12/6	Jeff Pinkerton	12/16	Brent Rogers	12/25
Renee Brown	12/7	Donnie Rinehart	12/16	Leslie Fahrenbruch	12/26
Randall Götl	12/8	Kody Bedore	12/18	Karen Meints	12/26
Shane Prentice	12/8	Debra Shields	12/18	Cindy Shields	12/26
Mary Thorson	12/8	Fayann Barenberg	12/20	Keaton Loop	12/28
Cassidy Rogers	12/10	Racquel Bird	12/21	Andrew Ziebell	12/28
Brain Calvin	12/12	Ian Brown	12/22	Juliett Critchfield	12/30
Brayden Watts	12/12	Alex Hanchera	12/22	Jonathan Reiners	12/31
				Zachary Tidyman	12/31

**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Fritz & Jan Hubert	12/6/1981	42	Paul & Pat Schaffert	12/27/1968	55
Dan & Chelsey Hartwell	12/17/2005	18	Steve & Kandi Eckhoff	12/28/2016	7
Charles & Christina Coleman	12/26/1971	52			

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 (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 (Nov 26th-Dec 2nd)	Month to Date (Nov 5th-Dec 2nd)	Actual Year to Date (Jan 1st-Dec 2nd)
Offerings	\$9,888.00	\$18,773.00	\$218,936.00
Expenses	\$3,504.00	\$22,937.00	\$231,586.00



## CREATIVE PRESCHOOL

Dear Preschool Families,

It's hard to believe that the year is almost over already! We've had so much fun learning new things together and have lots of great things planned for the next few weeks.

The Christmas Program will be on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> in the church sanctuary. The Tuesday/Thursday class will perform at 6:30 pm and the Monday/Wednesday and 4-day will perform together at 7:00 pm. Family and friends are invited to come for this entertaining evening of seasonal poems and songs! We will have cookies and punch in the fellowship hall to the south of the sanctuary following the program. **PLEASE BRING ONE DOZEN COOKIES OR HOLIDAY TREATS TO SHARE.** Please label them with which class your child is in and take them into the kitchen before the program. Thanks! The front row will be reserved for teachers only so the kids can see us during the program. The second row of pews will be reserved for picture taking. Please keep it to one family member in these pews so that everyone can get pictures.

Christmas Parties will be on Wed, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> and Thurs, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> during the last hour of class. We have a sign-up sheet at the preschool for those who are willing to help. **Christmas Break will begin on Fri, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> and we will resume on Wednesday, Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>.** Please enjoy this joyous season with your families. Remember that "Jesus is the reason for the season" and take time to share this message as a family during this busy time!

Looking ahead, we will have "Muffins with moms" on Wednesday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 and Thursday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 and 2:30. "Donuts with dads" will be on Wednesday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 and Thursday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 and 2:30. We hope you can join us!

We are looking forward to another great month. We are blessed to have such a wonderful group of families to work with, thanks again for sharing your child with us. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please call 345-2595 or email mycreativepreschool@gmail.com

Merry Christmas!  
Kelsey, Dani and Lori

## DECEMBER READINGS

Date	Season	First Reading	Epistle	Holy Gospel
3rd	The 1st S. in Advent	Isaiah 64:1-9	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37
10th	The 2nd S. in Advent	Isaiah 40:1-11	2 Peter 3:8-14	Mark 1:1-8
17th	The 3rd S. in Advent	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
24th	The Nativity of Our Lord	Isaiah 7:10-14	1 John 4:7-16	Matthew 1:18-25
31st	The 1st S. after Christmas	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40



## THANK YOU

We wish to thank everyone who turned out for our Thanksgiving Dinner. The turnout was AMAZING. A big thanks to those who came and helped Friday, Saturday, and again on Sunday. To the F.I.R.E. kids and parents a BIG thankyou. We couldn't have done it without you. To all the ladies/gentlemen who brought pies and salads, WOW what a variety of pies, so delicious. A THANK YOU from the GOBBLERS!!







## ADOPT-A-CHAPLAIN

Thank you all for the tremendous show of support for the US servicemen and servicewomen who won't be home for Christmas. Through the Adopt a Chaplain program, the deployed troops are supported as we send care packages by way of their chaplains. This Christmas, the majority of the care packages will go to chaplains deployed to Poland, Korea, Syria, Iraq and Kuwait. Each of the chaplains care for 600 to 1000 troops. If we hear of military with Nebraska connections, we will get cards and packages mailed to them. One Army chaplain, formerly a pastor in Nebraska, is LCMS Chaplain David McCarthy. He helps in a hospital and clinic in Kuwait. He shares the boxes that we send each month. Another Nebraska connection is a Nebraska National Guard Unit, deployed to Somalia. They are: A company (airborne), 2-134<sup>th</sup> INBN. Using this information, you can Google their company, or follow them on Facebook. They number 90+, and these heroes don't have a chaplain. We will send boxes in care of one of the guardsman, with enough for all to share. Thank you for the donations and for giving the proceeds of the turkey dinner to the chaplain program, thank you for writing Christmas cards, thank you to all who helped attach Bible verses to the hundreds of snacks, and to all who helped pack. A special thanks to the FIRE group for packing boxes! You have brightened the holidays for deployed US servicemen and servicewomen who won't be home for Christmas. The next packing day will be in January, 2024!

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Everyone is invited to the Children's Christmas Program which will be held at 7pm, Wednesday, December 13th. All are invited for sub sandwiches and cookies after the program. Your family and friends are all welcome. The sub sandwiches are provided by Thrivent.

## LWML

LWML will be helping with bingo at Hillcrest the second Tuesday of the month, starting October 10th. If you are interested in helping, please contact Deb Shields.

## ANGEL TREE

The Angel tree is up and gift tags are on it. Please pick a tag and write your name beside the number on the clip board matching the tag number. The gifts need to be delivered by DECEMBER 18TH either to church or the Family Resource Center at the old police station. MERRY CHRISTMAS



## 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, Karen Berry, and Roland Carlson.

**Kinship Pointe:** Betty Harms, and Lois Brown.

**Highland Park:** Harlan & Bernita Reiners

**Benkelman:** 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

## December 3rd

Elder on duty	Brandon Kuykendall
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Cathy Broz
Greeter	Grant Pfanstiel
Greeter	Charlene Pfanstiel
Usher	Gene Meints
Lay Reader	Rylee Mooney
Acolyte	Zander Stewart
Acolyte	Maxson Stewart
Powerpoint	Cathy Broz

## Late Service

Greeter	Jane Schuster
Greeter	Myra Tietz
Usher	Gary Hunkins
Lay Reader	Nick Nothnagel
Acolyte	Kysen Hazlitt
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Ben Schow
Live Stream	Carter Hartwell

## December 10th

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	Hunter Kunkee
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen
Live Stream	Ian Brown

## December 17th

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	Layton Hinz
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Tina Cummins

## Late Service

Greeter	Donna Hall
Greeter	Jim Hall
Usher	Ben Schow
Lay Reader	Fred Gleason
Acolyte	Ryker Mooney
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	
Live Stream	Jackson Hartwell

## December 24th

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

## Late Service

Greeter	Pat Penner
Greeter	
Usher	Curt Swanhorst
Lay Reader	Curt Swanhorst
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Gary Hunkins
Live Stream	Tina Cummins

## December 31st

Elder on duty	Curt/Phil
Organist	
Audio	
Greeter	Sue Carlson
Greeter	Harold Carlson
Usher	Gene Meints
Lay Reader	Harold Carlson
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	

## Late Service

Greeter	
Greeter	
Usher	Steve Post
Lay Reader	Blayzon Mooney
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	
Live Stream	Layne Sarvela



## PEACE TALK

As winter quickly approaches, the aroma from burning fireplaces float in the air. A scent that signifies that old man winter is quickly approaching. As the fall work winds down, that is one of the things I look forward too as the evenings become cold and long. I'm not sure what there is about it, but crackling wood and dancing flames are magically calming. Mesmerized by the sensation of the fire as the flames jump like they are alive. But it doesn't seem like the relaxation lasts very long before the fire needs tended too. The fire dies down and I must add another log or "fan the flames" to keep the fire going. The longer I wait, the harder it is to get the flames roaring again. Is your fire burning hot? Or do your flames need fanned? I know I need to add another log quite often. At times the flames for my Lord are dancing, then before you know it, I need my flames fanned. Paul addressed this with Timothy as he encouraged him to keep his faith strengthened, "I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you." (2 Timothy 1:6). We all need reminded to fan the flames of our spiritual fire. When our spiritual gifts to serve God are running hot, we still need to keep adding fuel to the fire. If the fire goes out, then it takes tinder, kindling, and more wood to get the fire going again. "For lack of wood the fire goes out," (Proverbs 26:20). Without consistent attention, just like the fire in my fireplace, it slowly turns to a heap of ashes. Ashes of worldly desires that consume my time of self-centered passions that only serve me. Ashes of excuses, negative thoughts, or anger. The ashes just keep building up and need carried away. Each of us have these ashes that build up in our lives. But God is there to help us warm the cold places in our hearts. To get that fire burning again. If your fire went out or needs ignited once again, there are steps to take to get that fire going. Begin by adding "tinder" that ignites quickly, by sitting in Jesus' presence (Psalm 16:11) and listening to what His plans for you are. Next you need to add "kindling" that will catch on fire from the tinder. Add the kindling of His word, simple acts of kindness and prayer (John 14:13-14). Add in worship and praise to raise the heat even more (Hebrews 12:29). Finally, add the logs to your flame. Growing your fire through a relationship with Jesus. Logs of Bible study, fellowship, and acts of service. Jesus lives in our hearts and is there to help fan the flames into a blazing display of service to Him. Not only on a cold winter night, but all year long we need to sit near this flame. Absorbing His presence, and becoming mesmerized by the confident expectation of eternal life with Him. Lord, help me keep my fire burning hot for You through all my trials and temptations. Amen.

Peace, Love, and Unity  
Phil Bamesberger



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# December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	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 11:00am Midweek Advent 6:00pm School of Religion 7:30pm Midweek Advent	7 6:30pm Preschool Christmas Programs	8	9 7:00am Men's Bible Study
10 Communion Sunday 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship	11  PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	12 6:00pm Board of Elders 7:00pm Council	13 11:00am Midweek Advent 7:00pm Children's Christmas Program	14 5:30pm Board of Education	15	16 7:00am Men's Bible Study  LIVE NATIVITY 4 & 6PM
17 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship  LIVE NATIVITY 4 & 6PM	18	19	20 11:00am Midweek Advent 7:30pm Midweek Advent	21 1:30pm Hillcrest 2:30pm Kinship Pointe	22	23 7:00am Men's Bible Study
24 Communion Sunday 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship 6:00pm Candlelight service	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27	28	29	30
31 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Study 10:30am Worship  PASTOR VACATION						