



'TIDINGS OF **PEACE**' from

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

TO:

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January 2026  
**TIDINGS OF PEACE**  
A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH  
LUTHERAN CHURCH



2025  
Live  
Nativity



[www.plcmccook.org](http://www.plcmccook.org)

**PLC Shepherd**

Pastor Lonnie Felcher  
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**Family Life Minister**

Hanah Nothnagel

**Creative Preschool Director**

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**Congregational President**

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**Congregational Vice President**

Russ Ankersen

**Elder Chairman**

Fritz Hubert

**Council Secretary**

Linda Smith

**Treasurer**

Melissa Hanchera  
plctreasurer1908@gmail.com

**Financial Secretary**

Sarah Risenhoover  
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**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

Adrianna Gass	1/1	Patricia Kohmetscher	1/13	Vickie Blaisdell	1/20
Kyle Novak	1/1	Ryland Peters	1/14	Ron Aufrecht	1/21
Joylyn Rippen	1/1	Kassidy Gillen	1/15	Cale DeWester	1/22
Michael Fidler	1/5	Tanna Felcher	1/16	Chance Koetter	1/22
Logan Kircher	1/6	Eric Leibrandt	1/16	Bobbie Ziebell	1/22
Daphne Tidyman	1/6	Aaron Nielsen	1/16	Steve Post	1/24
Ed Unger	1/8	Wade Bedore	1/18	Myra Stoney	1/24
Melissa Critchfield	1/9	Keith Oetting	1/18	Darrell Eckhardt	1/26
Kole Hamilton	1/11	Jeannine Rinehart	1/18	Dee Ziebell	1/26
Patricia Leibrandt	1/11	Hailey Unger	1/19	Eugene Custer	1/27
Benjamin Hanchera	1/13				

**JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Darrell & K.C. Eckhardt	1/31/1964	62			

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.

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 (Dec. 16th-Dec. 21st)	Month to Date (Dec. 7th-Dec. 21st)	Actual Year to Date (Jan. 5th-Dec. 21st)
Offerings	\$23,651.00	\$33,507.00	\$289,762.00
Expenses	\$11,696.00	\$19,993.00	\$295,375.00



## 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.

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](mailto:mycreativepreschool@gmail.com).

Thanks!

Kelsey and Dani

## JANUARY READINGS

Date	Season	First Reading	Epistle	Holy Gospel
4th	The 2nd S. after Christmas	1 Kings 3:4-15	Ephesians 1:3-14	Luke 2:40-52
11th	The Baptism of Our Lord	Isaiah 42:1-9	Romans 6:1-11	Matthew 3:13-17
18th	The 2nd S. after the Epiphany	Isaiah 49:1-7	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	John 1:29-42a
25th	The 3rd S. after the Epiphany	Isaiah 9:1-4	1 Corinthians 1:10-18	Matthew 4:12-25



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
Stewardship Ministry  
Newsletter Article – January 2026

*"And he who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new. Also, He said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true'" (Revelation 21:5).*

In January there is a great deal of "new" talk. Parties are held to ring in the "new" year. "New" year's resolutions are made to set a "new" course of life in the "new" year. There is date forgetfulness as checks and other forms are filled out without using the "new" year on the dateline.

We use all this "new" talk because there is very often so much wrong with the old in us. We think back to the "new" resolutions from the previous year that only lasted a few weeks. That "new" person did not shed any pounds and instead, picked up a few. The "new" habits of going to the gym were soon replaced by even more time on the couch binging on Netflix. The "new" person who does not lose their temper, use sarcasm as a lethal weapon and spend more money than necessary, but who worships, prays and serves the Lord and the neighbor, never seemed to stick around. We need "new" talk because the Old Adam is alive and well within every one of us.

But this promise of "new" is a matter of stewardship. It is the Lord Himself who makes the promise of all things being new. These words recorded by St. John are not pious wishes or hopeless promises. They do what they say. YOU, that one baptized into Jesus' death and resurrection, are NEW! These words are indeed trustworthy and true. This "new" comes to you in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It comes free of charge, even without our prayer.

This stewardship of "new" is not a vague, someday kind of stewardship either. You are NEW now! Forgiven. Reborn from above. The old is gone, nailed to Calvary's cross and buried and rotting in a tomb that was only borrowed by Jesus for His resurrection rest. The Gospel is what makes us NEW every morning. Remembering your baptism, you are new. Confessing your sins and receiving absolution makes you new. Hearing the Gospel filling your ears makes you new. Feasting on Christ's body and blood in the Holy Supper makes you new.

These mercies, totally undeserved as they are, are entrusted to us to steward TODAY even as we long for the Last Day. But we know how often we fail in this stewardship. We hoard God's creation as if it belongs to us. We belittle and devalue our neighbor because they look or sound or act in a way that we do not like. We seek to make the Holy Word of God softer and more palatable for those, or even ourselves, who refuse to confess sin as sin and repent. We value our comfort over truth, our reputation over faithfulness and our treasure over making sure that people get to hear of the Jesus who has done so much for the world and us.

We, as stewards of the Gospel, need to be made new every day. This is exactly what the Lord does. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel last year, so He gives us a new year. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel yesterday, and He gives us a new day. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel in the last few minutes, and yet in mercy our newness comes with each tick of the clock! Because that is how the Lord works.

As we see this working of all new things in us, it then calls us to be stewards of this newness to the world. This starts right in our own homes. It radiates out to our neighbors. It beams out from our congregations. This newness is teamed at the circuit, district and Synod levels all to shine the newness of the Gospel to those who need it.

Your new talk starts in the newness of the Gospel. Steward this treasure in this new year and this new day. It starts with a new you in Jesus. This is indeed trustworthy and true.



## BOARD OF EVANGELISM

We have a board on the wall in the narthex that we would like to use as a getting to know you spot for new members, and for members of St. John's, Ash Creek who have been attending here at Peace. Please email a photo of yourself, or your family, to [office@plcmccook.org](mailto:office@plcmccook.org). Also, please let us know a little bit about you and your family, such as what town you reside in; the ages names and grade level of your child(ren); where you work; what your interests are. Please send this information along with your picture.

## SUPER BOWL PREDICTION PARTY

There will be a youth Super Bowl prediction party during the Sunday School hour on January 11th. There will be a bible study about Keeping Jesus In Sports also.

## SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Just a reminder that School of Religion will resume January 7<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm. We hope you have had a very blessed Christmas season.

## ADOPT-A-CHAPLAIN

This program supports US military deployed overseas and the chaplains who care for them. In 2025, our group adopted 3 Iowa National Guard Chaplains who are deployed to the Middle East, and mailed care packages to each. Recently some of their soldiers were attacked in Syria, 2 were killed, others were injured. The Iowa National Guard and their families are saddened by the loss. The families are asking that we write letters or cards to the soldiers who remain in Syria and Iraq. Please write a note of encouragement and leave it in the labeled tubs by the church mailboxes or at Bob & Joann Nemechek's front door, 404 West 3<sup>rd</sup> street. The cards and letters will reach the soldiers by way of their chaplains. Supplies for the care packages are also needed. The Adopt a Chaplain care packages go out once a month, next packing day is Wed, January 14 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, Karen Berry and Betty Harms.

**Kinship Pointe:** Lois Brown.

**Highland Park:** Harlan & Bernita Reiners and Ken Polly

**Benkelman:** Mark Cummins

### 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 – Fritz Hubert, Brandon Kuykendall, Harold Carlson, Nick Nothnagel, Lee McConville, Russ Ankersen or Curt Swanhorst.

### 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

**January 4th**

Elder on duty	Fritz Hubert
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Cathy Broz
Greeter	Grant Pfanstiel
Greeter	Charlene Pfanstiel
Usher	Gene Meints
Lay Reader	Harold Carlson
Acolyte	Emmett Felcher
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Cathy Broz

**Late Service**

Greeter	Jane Schuster
Greeter	Myra Tietz
Usher	Gary Hunkins
Lay Reader	Nick Nothnagel
Acolyte	Avery Davidson
Acolyte	Cooper Davidson
Powerpoint	Ben Schow
Live Stream	Ryker Mooney

**January 11th**

Elder on duty	Nick Nothnagel
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Russ Ankersen
Greeter	Deb Shields
Greeter	
Usher	Harold Carlson
Lay Reader	Randon Peters
Acolyte	Will Kunkee
Acolyte	Hunter Kunkee
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen

**Late Service**

Greeter	Cindy Swanhorst
Greeter	Curt Swanhorst
Usher	Harold Carlson
Lay Reader	Sarah Risenhoover
Acolyte	Raegan Kisker
Acolyte	Amaya Ely
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen
Live Stream	Jackson Hartwell

**January 18th**

Elder on duty	Harold Carlson
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Paul Sellers
Greeter	Elaine Polly
Greeter	Jeff Polly
Usher	Eugene Custer
Lay Reader	Rylee Mooney
Acolyte	Brayden Watts
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Tina Cummins

**Late Service**

Greeter	Donna Hall
Greeter	Jim Hall
Usher	Ben Schow
Lay Reader	Renelle Mooney
Acolyte	Paxton Messinger
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	
Live Stream	Ryker Mooney

**January 25th**

Elder on duty	
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Harold Carlson
Greeter	
Greeter	
Usher	Eugene Custer
Lay Reader	Russ Ankersen
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Harold Carlson

**Late Service**

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



## PEACE TALK

Have you ever gone up the down escalator? I recall undertaking this task in my youth, motivated by the desire to reach the top despite the difficulty involved. If you have ever tried or even thought about going up the down escalator, you might agree that it would take a lot of intentional steps. If you stop for even a moment, then you will soon find yourself back at the bottom. As I thought about going up this down escalator, I likened it to leading a Christian life. Too often people think being a Christian is like riding the escalator the proper way and gently stepping off when the next level is reached. Truth to be told however, it takes a lot of intentional steps along the way. Like going up the down escalator. The world in which we live begs for us to pause long enough to find ourselves back at the bottom again. To lead a Christian life, we must be intentional in our walk with God. 2 Peter 1:5-7 says, "Make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love." My friends, that is quite a few steps. How am I going to accomplish this task set before me? I'm not sure I can take that many steps to make it to the top... We cannot do it alone, so it might be best if we just take one step at a time. Start that first intentional step by studying God's Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Take the next step by praying (James 1:5). Remembering that we can turn to Jesus for strength when we feel like pausing (Philippians 4:13). Then, seeking encouraging support through a church community, by taking those steps together with fellow believers (Hebrews 10:24-25). Through faith then, each intentional step towards a Godly life will keep you and me on the rise against downward forces (Hebrews 12:1). Best of all, it gives us the assurance that Jesus is with us every step of the way. Knowing He is there during each pause in our spiritual walk, when we start drifting the wrong way. With this confidence, there will be a sense of accomplishment found in each small step. Each step forward then, becomes a victory worth celebrating knowing He is there (Matthew 28:20). Consider identifying strategies today to thoughtfully enhance and supplement your faith. Then you will find that going up the down escalator will become effortless when you are filled with the kindness and love of God. And when the downward forces of the world darken your day, the light found in Jesus' love will fill your heart with joy knowing He will take you to the next level. Dear Jesus, help me to live my life according to your ways and give me the courage to walk up the down escalator. Amen.

Peace, Love, and Unity  
Phil Barnesberger



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 YouTube: Peace Lutheran Church McCook

# January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 <i>Office Closed</i>	2	3 7:00am Men's Bible Study
4 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	5	6 9:00am Worship Committee	7 6:00pm School of Religion 6:30pm F.I.R.E.	8	9	10 7:00am Men's Bible Study
11 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 9:15am Sunday School 9:15am F.I.R.E. 10:30am Worship	12	13 2:00pm Hillcrest Bingo 6:00pm Board of Elders 7:00pm Council	14 1:00pm Adopt-A-Chaplain packing 6:00pm School of Religion 6:30pm F.I.R.E.	15	16	17 7:00am Men's Bible Study
18 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	19	20	21 6:00pm School of Religion 6:30pm F.I.R.E.	22 1:30pm Hillcrest service 2:30pm Kinship Pointe service	23	24 7:00am Men's Bible Study
25 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 9:15am Sunday School 9:15am F.I.R.E. 10:30am Worship	26 2:00pm LWML	27	28 6:00pm School of Religion 6:30pm F.I.R.E.	29	30	31 7:00am Men's Bible Study