



'TIDINGS OF **PEACE**' from

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

TO:

Three vertical lines for an address.

February 2026

# TIDINGS OF **PEACE**

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

*H*ello again,

Are you familiar with the word; "druthers?" It's an old American English term that refers to a person's choice or preference. I'm not sure if this word is used much anymore, but it was a word often used by my parents. For example, when, at age seven, I had the chickenpox over Christmas break, and I complained that I couldn't go outside and play in the snow, my Mom would say; "If I had my druthers, you'd be well enough to go out and play, but you're not so get back in bed."

Along this same line, I received a bunch of Bible related games as a Christmas gift this Christmas. Among these games, intended to be used for middle school class on Sundays, was a book entitled; "Would You Rather." The book is full of druthers; for example; "Would you rather taste the manna that fell from heaven; or taste the bread that was multiplied to feed the 5,000?" (Exodus 16 & John 6). "Would you rather easily forgive your siblings; or easily confront your friends?" (Matthew 5 & Matthew 18). If you had your druthers; which would you choose?

These druthers are pleasant to consider, because we know their context, and their outcome, but the folks involved did not know how things would turn out for them; they were forced to trust that the Lord was on their side. The

hungry multitude in the wilderness made it very clear that if they had their druthers—they'd be back in Egypt sitting around pots of food.

As Joseph forgave his brothers for the evil they had done to him; his tears revealed that if he had his druthers, he would have preferred a way that did not involve being separated from family. Yet in every situation the Lord stayed with His people and saw them through.

As I consider these things, I've come to realize that when I say; "If I had my druthers..." it's because I am in the midst of uncertainty, or something that is beyond my control. But I've also come to believe that when faced with the uncertainties of life, I can trust the Lord to see me through.

If you find yourself thinking; "If I had my druthers..." then take heart; the Lord is on your side, and He will not abandon you, but will see you through. God's peace to you. Pastor

*Jeremiah 29:11; "For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord. 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

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**FROM AN ELDER****Promise made, promise kept!**

Now into another year that God has granted, we often look back at what we accomplished the previous year. But, at this point we can't do anything about it, but we can look ahead and ask God to guide us in all that we think, do and say in this present year. As we read this, we are into February and the approaching season of Lent, which starts on February 18th. While some religious denominations acknowledge the Lenten season, they don't necessarily see it as a practice of importance.

The Lenten season is much like the season of Advent, where our hearts and minds are being prepared for Christmas, but not the commercial version. While we prepare for the birth of Jesus Christ, we celebrate this occasion, knowing that is was God's plan to provide this infant for our behalf.

So, also, we need to prepare our hearts for this season of Lent, knowing that it was God's plan to provide His only begotten Son to take our place for the sins we commit. While Good Friday is weeks away, the occasion that we meditate of Jesus dying a horrible death on the cross should make us aware of what He did for us. But more so, what comes after that, the resurrection, that not only He accomplished, but the promise made available to all who believe. That glorious reunion in heaven is a promise that we can be assured. Let us all keep in mind the assurance that we have.

**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

|                 |     |                      |      |                  |      |
|-----------------|-----|----------------------|------|------------------|------|
| Bernita Reiners | 2/1 | Renelle Mooney       | 2/9  | Rhonda Vetrovsky | 2/19 |
| Roger Ziebell   | 2/2 | Ruth Ann Klein       | 2/10 | Brandon Smith    | 2/21 |
| Russ Ankersen   | 2/3 | Nick Nothnagel       | 2/11 | Sarah Bird       | 2/23 |
| Karen Ziebell   | 2/3 | Maddyn Sharp         | 2/12 | Samantha Turpin  | 2/23 |
| Thomas Broz     | 2/4 | Alyssa Bauer         | 2/13 | Amity Loop       | 2/24 |
| Donna Hall      | 2/7 | Bob Nemechek         | 2/13 | Merwin Potthoff  | 2/24 |
| Keslie Hazlitt  | 2/7 | Barry Mooney         | 2/14 | Nathan Nielsen   | 2/25 |
| Scarlett Turpin | 2/7 | Myra Tietz           | 2/14 | Ellie Hartwell   | 2/26 |
| Barb Hoffmann   | 2/8 | Aimee Hazlitt        | 2/19 | Heddy Reiners    | 2/26 |
| Brooke Brown    | 2/9 | Elizabeth McConville | 2/19 | Larry Richards   | 2/26 |
| Nikki Hamilton  | 2/9 |                      |      |                  |      |

**FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

| NAME                   | DATE      | YEARS | NAME                   | DATE      | YEARS |
|------------------------|-----------|-------|------------------------|-----------|-------|
| John & Eileen Hubert   | 2/6/1949  | 77    | Barry & Renelle Mooney | 2/24/1996 | 30    |
| Robert & Carol Stecker | 2/11/2011 | 15    | Dwain & Donna Curtis   | 2/26/1977 | 49    |
| Ed & Marilyn Unger     | 2/17/1963 | 63    |                        |           |       |

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<br>(January 25th-January 31st) | Month to Date<br>(January 4th-January 31st) | Actual Year to Date<br>(January 4th-January 31st) |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| Offerings | \$3,255.00                                  | \$15,139.00                                 | \$15,139.00                                       |
| Expenses  | \$3,001.00                                  | \$26,960.00                                 | \$26,960.00                                       |



## CREATIVE PRESCHOOL

Dear Preschool Families,

It's hard to believe that it's already almost February! We have a very busy, fun-filled month ahead of us! We will be having Silly socks and sunglasses day for S week.

Our Valentine's Day Parties will be on Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. We would like each child to decorate their own Valentine's box or bag at home with their families and bring it with them for the Valentine's Day Party. We encourage you to make this a family project and have everyone pitch in! It is great handwriting practice for your preschooler to write out his/her own valentines if they can. I will send home a list of your child's classmates, please bring one valentine for each child in the class.

Winter Break will be on Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup> for the 4-day class. The Tues/Thur class will not have school on Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> but there WILL be afternoon class that day.

Please call me at 345-2595 or email me at [mycreativepreschool@gmail.com](mailto:mycreativepreschool@gmail.com) with any questions or concerns.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Ms. Kelsey and Ms. Dani

The Preschool is working with New Life Christian book store to hold a book fair here at Peace March 22nd through March 29th. Stay tuned for more information!



## FEBRUARY READINGS

| Date | Season                          | First Reading   | Epistle                  | Holy Gospel          |
|------|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1st  | The 4th S. after the Epiphany   | Micah 6:1-8     | 1 Corinthians 1:18-31    | Matthew 5:1-12       |
| 8th  | The 5th S. after the Epiphany   | Isaiah 58:3-9a  | 1 Corinthians 2:1-16     | Matthew 5:13-20      |
| 15th | The Transfiguration of Our Lord | Exodus 24:8-18q | 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 | Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 |
| 22nd | The 1st S. in Lent              | Genesis 3:1-21  | Romans 5:12-19           | Matthew 4:1-11       |
|      |                                 |                 |                          |                      |



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

### Table of Duties: The Forgotten Stewardship Tool

Luther's Small Catechism is a magnificent tool. Joined with a well-used copy of the Holy Scriptures and an orthodox hymnal, and the Christian is well equipped to live a life of faithfulness to the Lord and service to the neighbor. First in German and now in English and just about any language known to man, this handy masterpiece has introduced generations of people to the central doctrine of justification by grace, through faith, on account of Jesus Christ. The Six Chief Parts have proven to be a faithful framework for a clear confession of the truth of the Gospel for nearly five hundred years!

But more than a textbook, the Small Catechism also serves well as a handbook for Christian living. As a part of its treasure, there is an element that teaches an extraordinarily strong message of stewardship. That hidden treasure that needs to be rediscovered is called the Table of Duties.

The Table of Duties is really nothing more than a categorized gathering of Bible verses. These verses are set apart for "various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities." Addressing pastors and people, government and citizens, husbands, wives, children, youth, workers and so many more, it very clearly lays out what faithful stewardship looks like. Even better, these assembled passages teach one important truth: we are stewards of one another!

The Table is much more than a "how-to" tool; it also lays out the interconnectedness that exists within the body of Christ. Pastors are described by what they are to be as stewards of the Word. 1 Timothy 3 highlights the characteristics of a faithful pastor. Even more, Titus 1 highlights the need for the pastor to be faithful for the sake of those under his care.

Those who hear the faithful preaching of the pastor are stewards of the pastor as well. 1 Corinthians 9 talks about the need for the people to support the livelihood of the pastor. Galatians 6 talks about how the hearers share in the good things that the pastor teaches. 1 Timothy 6 talks about the honor that is owed to the pastor, not because of WHO he is, but rather WHAT he is teaching! Hebrews 13 shows the impact of this stewardship on the pastor, that they perform their duties with joy. Joyful pastors and people are always going to be better stewards of the Gospel!

Outside the church this interdependent stewardship is on display as well. Romans 13 highlights the respect necessary for the governing authorities. As citizens, the faithful steward is called to pay taxes (Matthew 22), pray for their leaders (1 Timothy 2) and that they should be ready to serve in the civil realm (Titus 3), because they are in these positions by God's direction (1 Peter 2).

These steward duties are in the home too! 1 Peter 3 and Colossians 3 shape the husband steward. Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3 shape the wife steward. Ephesians 6 form parental stewards and child stewards.

The Table of Duties is a wonderful place for the individual steward to learn how much our stewardship is more than just a "me and Jesus thing!" In fact, it ends with these words: "Let each his lesson learn with care, and all the household well share fare." This is interdependent stewardship on clear display. As each learns stewardship in this way, the more faithful we will be as a family, congregations, communities and the church at large.

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## 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.

## ADOPT-A-CHAPLAIN

This program supports US military deployed overseas and the chaplains who care for them. Care packages are sent once a month to chaplains in the Middle East, Poland, Korea, and a Navy Ship. Thank you for the donations, for writing cards, and all the help setting up tables and packing. All are welcome to help sort supplies or pack the boxes. Next packing day is Wed, February 11th at 11:00 am

## SUPER BOWL PREDICTION RESULTS PARTY

There will be a youth Super Bowl prediction results party during the Sunday School hour on February 15th. There will be prizes and a bible study focused on "What is winning and losing in the eyes of Jesus" also.

## ELECTION RESULTS

Those elected or reelected at the January 19th voters meeting are: President—Russ Ankersen; Vice President—Phil Bamesberger; Church Elder—Victor Lauer and Jim Dyer; Board of Education, Jerry Calvin; Board of Evangelism—Deb Shields; Board of Trustees—Chance Koetter; Finance Committee—Steve Post, Roger Stupka, Pat Penner and Sandy Lauer. Thank you for your commitment to Peace Lutheran Church! The installation of these members will be Sunday, March 1st at the 10:30am service.

## WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

A 4 week Lenten women's bible study "Body Of Proof" will be offered Friday or Sunday mornings. Starting Friday, February 27th at 8:30am and March 1st at 9:15am. Please contact Hanah at 308-737-1905 by February 11th so materials can be ordered.

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## 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.*

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## SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE

**February 1st**

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Elder on duty       | Brandon Kuykendall |
| Organist            | K.C. Eckhardt      |
| Audio               | Cathy Broz         |
| Greeter             | Grant Pfanstiel    |
| Greeter             | Charlene Pfanstiel |
| Usher               | Gene Meints        |
| Lay Reader          | Sue Ankersen       |
| Acolyte             | Emmett Felcher     |
| Acolyte             |                    |
| Powerpoint          | Cathy Broz         |
| <b>Late Service</b> |                    |
| Greeter             | Jane Schuster      |
| Greeter             | Myra Tietz         |
| Usher               | Gary Hunkins       |
| Lay Reader          | Nick Nothnagel     |
| Acolyte             | Ellie Hartwell     |
| Acolyte             |                    |
| Powerpoint          | Ben Schow          |
| Live Stream         | Jackson Hartwell   |

**February 8th**

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Elder on duty       | Fritz Hubert      |
| 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     |
| <b>Late Service</b> |                   |
| Greeter             | Cindy Swanhorst   |
| Greeter             | Curt Swanhorst    |
| Usher               | Harold Carlson    |
| Lay Reader          | Sarah Risenhoover |
| Acolyte             | Raegan Kisker     |
| Acolyte             | Amaya Ely         |
| Powerpoint          | Russ Ankersen     |
| Live Stream         | Tina Cummins      |

**February 15th**

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Elder on duty       | Lee McConville   |
| 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     |
| <b>Late Service</b> |                  |
| Greeter             | Donna Hall       |
| Greeter             | Jim Hall         |
| Usher               | Ben Schow        |
| Lay Reader          | Renelle Mooney   |
| Acolyte             | Paxton Messinger |
| Acolyte             |                  |
| Powerpoint          |                  |
| Live Stream         | Ryker Mooney     |

**February 22nd**

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Elder on duty       | Nick Nothnagel     |
| Organist            | Charlene Pfanstiel |
| Audio               | Harold Carlson     |
| Greeter             |                    |
| Greeter             |                    |
| Usher               | Eugene Custer      |
| Lay Reader          | Jerry Calvin       |
| Acolyte             |                    |
| Acolyte             |                    |
| Powerpoint          | Harold Carlson     |
| <b>Late Service</b> |                    |
| Greeter             | Pat Penner         |
| Greeter             |                    |
| Usher               | Curt Swanhorst     |
| Lay Reader          | Curt Swanhorst     |
| Acolyte             | Avery Davidson     |
| Acolyte             | Cooper Davidson    |
| Powerpoint          | Gary Hunkins       |
| Live Stream         | Tina Cummins       |



## PEACE TALK

"Dee-fense... dee-fense!" This chant will frequently echo across a sports arena, especially when the game at hand becomes intense. This prominent cheer of enthusiastic sports fanatics is often prompted by someone holding up a sign with the letter "D" in one hand, and the picture of a "fence" in the other. However, defense is only half of the equation. Every team must also play offense. This sets up opposing sides for the argument... Is having a good defense the best offense? Or is a good offense the best defense? In the world of sports strategy, the debate between offense and defense is ongoing. Coaches and players alike often emphasize one over the other to secure a victory within athletic battles. This brings me to my case in point... which side of the ball is more critical in my spiritual battles? In this context, the Apostle Paul can be seen on the sidelines holding up his "D-fence" sign. In his letter to the Ephesians, he says to play defense by arming yourself with the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20). Just as in sports, spiritual defense requires vigilance, preparation, and the courage to stand firm against challenges. Paul says this defensive strategy in our daily trials of life include the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and the shield of faith. When we use this defensive strategy, God will protect us from our evil opponent (2 Thessalonians 3:3). But what about offense? Paul also explains that part of our defensive armor is standing firm in the Gospel, putting on the helmet of salvation, and using the sword of God's Word to cut through the enemy lines. This defense suddenly becomes our best offense. Paul's letter invites us not only to guard our hearts, but to press forward with an offensive attack, armed with faith and conviction, ready to share hope and love in a world filled with conflict. But keep in mind, we cannot do this alone. We can only accomplish these scoring drives with Christ (John 15:5). You see... in spiritual battles, victory is not found merely by blocking the attacks, but by responding actively... through prayer, kindness, and seeking justice (Micah 6:8). Then thanks be to God, victory will be found through Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57). Through Christ, every challenge becomes an opportunity for triumph, and every moment invites us to press onward, no matter what lies ahead (Philippians 4:13). So, whether in the roar of the stadium or the quiet moments of contemplation, the balance between defense and offense thus shape the outcome of our most important struggles. By embracing both, we participate fully in the game of life, equipped for whatever may come. And when the game is over, our victory will be filled with high fives and celebration (Psalm 100). Knowing that our offense is backed up by our Lord's defense (Psalm 18:2). Dear Lord, thank you for giving me a victorious game plan as you guide my offense and defensive strategies, through the gift of faith. Amen.

Peace, Love, and Unity  
Phil Barnesberger



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 Facebook: Peace Lutheran McCook NE  
 YouTube: Peace Lutheran Church McCook

# February 2026

| Sunday   | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday  | Saturday   |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>1</b><br>8:00am Worship<br>9:15am Bible Studies<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:30am Worship  | <b>2</b><br><br>PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE                 | <b>3</b><br>9:00am Worship Committee  | <b>4</b><br>6:00pm School of Religion<br>6:30pm F.I.R.E.   | <b>5</b>  | <b>6</b><br>1:00pm LifeLight                                | <b>7</b><br>7:00am Men's Bible Study<br>Upper Fellowship Hall<br>reservation |
| <b>8 Communion Sunday</b><br>8:00am Worship<br>9:15am Bible Studies<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>9:15am F.I.R.E.<br>10:30am Worship                          | <b>9</b><br><br>PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE                 | <b>10</b><br>2:00pm Hillcrest Bingo<br>6:00pm Board of Elders<br>7:00pm Council | <b>11</b><br>11:00am Adopt-A-Chaplain packing<br>6:00pm School of Religion<br>6:30pm F.I.R.E.                              | <b>12</b>   | <b>13</b><br>1:00pm LifeLight                               | <b>14</b><br>7:00am Men's Bible Study  |
| <b>15</b><br>8:00am Worship<br>9:15am Bible Studies<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:30am Worship   | <b>16</b><br><br>PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE                | <b>17</b>   | <b>18</b><br>11:00am Ash Wednesday service<br>6:00pm School of Religion<br>6:30pm F.I.R.E.<br>7:30pm Ash Wednesday service | <b>19</b>   | <b>20</b><br>1:00pm LifeLight                               | <b>21</b><br>7:00am Men's Bible Study  |
| <b>22 Communion Sunday</b><br>8:00am Worship<br>9:15am Bible Studies<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>9:15am F.I.R.E.<br>10:30am Worship<br>12:00pm Young Adults | <b>23</b><br>2:00pm LWML<br><br>PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE | <b>24</b>   | <b>25</b><br>11:00am Midweek service<br>6:00pm School of Religion<br>6:30pm F.I.R.E.<br>7:30pm Midweek service             | <b>26</b><br>1:30pm Hillcrest service<br>2:30pm Kinship Pointe<br>service | <b>27</b><br>8:30am Women's Bible Study<br>1:00pm LifeLight | <b>28</b><br>7:00am Men's Bible Study  |