

TIDINGS OF PEACE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Hello again, As I write to you I am reminded of the approaching celebration of our nation's independence. As I revisited the Declaration of Independence; a document of the Congress on July 4, 1776, a unanimous Declaration of the original thirteen States of America—as I read these words, penned two hundred and fifty years ago, I asked myself, “Were these things for which our forefathers fought and died intended to bring freedom from something, or freedom to something. And the answer, as you probably already know, is both.

This July 4 we celebrate *“freedom to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitled them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind... Freedoms endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable Rights of Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”* Another word used in the Declaration of Independence; in which we celebrate is the word “Safety,” we celebrate our Freedom to live without fear. We celebrate our nation’s freedom to levy war, to conclude Peace, to contract Alliances, to establish Commerce, and to do all the things that independent states have the right to do.

And so as we celebrate our “Freedom to”; we also celebrate our “Freedom from”—Freedom from Despotism—that is, freedom from those who would exercise absolute tyranny over the masses.

But, sometimes I feel as if our people are beginning to lose sight of solemnness with which our first leaders entrusted the cause of freedom to the merciful guidance of God; with that, I share with you some of the concluding words of the Declaration of Independence; *“We, therefore, the Representatives of the united states of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intensions, do, in the name, and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and independent States... And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge our lives...”*

Have you ever considered the dictionary definition of that word “Providence?” That word, as used by our forefathers, declares that we are a nation begun by its people entrusted to the foreseeing care and guardianship and direction of God over His creatures. In God we trust! God bless your freedom to trust Him.

Pastor

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.”
Psalm 46:10-11



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PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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FROM AN ELDER

Don't call me Naomi, she told them. Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. Ruth 1:20

"I'm disappointed in God." Few Christians will say those words right out loud. They sound so harsh. But Naomi admitted her disappointed without flinching.

Life had dealt Naomi a cruel hand. Maybe at some time or another you've felt that bitterness. Maybe you're tempted to feel that way right now. The child who walked away, the friend who betrayed you. The job you wanted but couldn't land. The illness that won't respond to treatment.

These are all serious disappointments. Not even pious words can stop the pain or ease the anguish. Sometimes they may even make the bitterness deeper.

It is worth noting though, that even while Naomi suffered, even while she railed against the Lord, He still remained at her side. Not her honesty, not her doubt, not even her bitterness stopped His care for her. First through Ruth, then through Boaz, God provided for his beloved daughter. And, as we have seen, God provided the ultimate care for all of us and for her through her great-great-great-great grandson.....the Lord, Jesus Christ!

MOWING SCHEDULE

The Trustees are looking for some volunteers to help with the mowing this summer. There is a sign-up sheet on the buffet in the Narthex. They are asking that the lawn gets mowed weekly on Thursday, Friday or Saturday. The mower will be filled with gas prior to mowing, so you won't have to worry about that. Please message Heath Brown @ 340-0257, Chance Koetter @ 737-6850 or Barry Mooney @ 340-9694 when it is your week to mow. Thanks!

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Avery Doucet	7/1	Cole Garretson	7/16	David May	7/24
Cindy Soucek	7/2	Cody DeWester	7/17	Virginia Orman	7/25
Jaylee Dyer	7/3	Easton Gillen	7/17	Laney Peters	7/26
Kayla Koetter	7/4	Grant Pfanstiel	7/17	Karli Swink	7/26
Kover Schumacher	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	Karl Hueftle	7/19	Sharriea Burke	7/28
Cindy Swanhorst	7/8	Melissa Hanchera	7/20	Deb Lauer	7/28
Hannah Goltl	7/11	Sonja Thompson	7/20	Kristi Novak	7/29
Dennis Wudtke	7/11	Richard Thompson	7/21	Brigitta Post	7/29
Dawn Callander	7/13	Charles Coleman	7/22	Nate Schneider	7/30
Tyler Loop	7/15	Lila Leibrandt	7/22	Cathy Broz	7/31
Cason DeWester	7/16	Mark Cummins	7/24	Allee Malleck	7/31

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Jenna & Matthew Moench	7/1/2017	9	Andew & Bobbie Ziebell	7/21/2012	14
Kiley & Caitlin Roundtree	7/2/2011	15	Ron & Shirley Novotny	7/23/1978	48
Nate & Sarah Schneider	7/8/2006	20	Mark & Tina Cummins	7/27/1991	35
Lucas & Hannah Curl	7/10/2021	5	Phil & Janice Bamesberger	7/28/1979	47
James & Daphne Tidyman	7/17/1999	27	Jim & Sue DeJonge	7/29/1967	59
Allyx & Dillon Garretson	7/19/2008	18	Randy & Barbara Hoffmann	7/31/1982	44

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 21 st -June 27 th)	Month to Date (June 7 th -June 27 th)	Year to Date (January 4 th -June 27 th)
Offerings	\$2,525.00	\$11,473.00	\$127,104.00
Expenses	\$4,743.00	\$16,830.00	\$176,139.00

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



JULY READINGS

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

ADOPT-A-CHAPLAIN

Care packages are assembled at Peace Lutheran to support US military stationed overseas. The servicemen and servicewomen receive these care packages through the ministry of their chaplains. Thank you for the wonderful donations of money and supplies. The post office is opening up to some areas of the Middle East and we pray that will be able send care packages to that area soon. We are able to send packages to other areas of tension. We will not pack in July. All are welcome to help with the next packing day, Tues, Aug 18 at 1:00 pm.

GIFT CARD DRIVE

We are having a gift card drive for the youth. Gift cards they can use for supplies, snacks, outdoor activities, gas for travel and much more. Cards of any amount from any local business or well-known brands (Walmart, Casey's, Axe House, Lucy's Bakery, Subway, Heritage Hills, Shell, just to name a few) can be brought to the church and placed in the designated box on the buffet or given to Hanah or Tina. Thanks for your support!



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

Go ... Sell All You Have?
Originally published July 2023

“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

We would like to thank all of those who helped with our 2026 "Made to Magnify God" Vacation Bible School Program. A special "Thank you" to Pastor who provides the Bible Story lessons for our children. Check out our Team VBS 2026 display in the Narthex to see the many volunteers that helped make this year a great success. We had 75 children attend our three-day event and approximately 30 volunteers helped daily along with numerous individuals that donated snacks. Thank you all very much. Danielle, Kris & Jan.



SCHOOL OF RELIGION END-OF-THE-YEAR PARTY



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.

Highland Park: Harlan 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 – Brandon Kuykendall, Nick Nothnagel, Lee McConville, Jim Dyer, Victor Lauer, Phil Bamesberger or Russ Ankersen.

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 5th	
Elder on duty	Jim Dyer
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Cathy Broz
Greeter	Grant Pfanstiel
Greeter	Charlene Pfanstiel
Usher	Gene Meints
Lay Reader	Harold Carlson
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Cathy Broz
Late Service	
Greeter	Jane Schuster
Greeter	Myra Tietz
Usher	Gary Hunkins
Lay Reader	Nick Nothnagel
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Ben Schow
Live Stream	Jackson Hartwell

July 12th	
Elder on duty	Victor Lauer
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
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	Wade Hamilton
Acolyte	Kallen Unger
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen
Live Stream	Tina Cummins

July 19th	
Elder on duty	Brandon Kuykendall
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Paul Sellers
Greeter	Elaine Polly
Greeter	Jeff Polly
Usher	Eugene Custer
Lay Reader	Rylee Mooney
Acolyte	
Acolyte	
Powerpoint	Tina Cummins
Late Service	
Greeter	Donna Hall
Greeter	Jim Hall
Usher	Ben Schow
Lay Reader	Renelle Mooney
Acolyte	Raegan Kisker
Acolyte	Amaya Ely
Powerpoint	
Live Stream	Ryker Mooney

July 26th	
Elder on duty	Nick or Lee
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	Emmett Felcher
Acolyte	Kysen Hazlitt
Powerpoint	Gary Hunkins
Live Stream	Layton Hinz



PEACE TALK

"Return to sender." These words boldly appear on a returned letter or package when something goes awry with the delivery. Was the wrong address the culprit? Could it be that I failed to apply the correct postage? Regardless of what the reason might be, the delivery I sent out found its way back with a big red stamp pointing to my return address. That message makes it very clear that the mail delivery system had one problem or another with delivering the parcel I was trying to send. Like an unwanted package, returning it back to where it came from. I got to thinking... what might get returned to sender amid my walk with Jesus? Well, Luke shares with us that whatever compassion, kindness, or our behavior towards others will get returned to sender (Luke 6:38). We are also told that when we forgive, we will be sent back forgiveness (Mark 11:25); when we show mercy, mercy will be returned also (Matthew 5:7); and when we plant seeds of goodness in the lives of others, God has a way of sending blessing back to the very place it came from (2 Corinthians 9:6-15). However, unlike a parcel, what gets returned to sender in our spiritual life may not look like the package we sent. Additionally, like snail mail, it may also take some time to return. You see, there are times we send out fear and the Lord returns comfort (Isaiah 41:10). Sometimes we send out anger and the Lord returns love (Psalm 85:15). Then there are the many times we send out our sinful behavior and yet He returns forgiveness (Colossians 2:13-14). The truth is that our disobedience is like a letter ready to get rejected. But through our confession, Jesus takes what will separate us from God and return us to the Father ... cleansing us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). That is why we should rejoice with God as our eternal postmaster. He will not stamp shame across the heart of the believer. He stamps grace. He stamps mercy. He stamps our repentant hearts redeemed because Jesus paid the price. So, what will you send out today? Will you be mailing harsh words, impatience, judgement, or resentment? Or will you send out compassion, mercy, generosity, and forgiveness? From this day forward, let your heart be a sending place for the things of God. Send out kindness when the world is sharp. Send out mercy when judgment would be easier. Send out generosity when fear tells you to withhold. Send out forgiveness when bitterness begs to stay. And trust the Lord with the return. He knows you by name (John 10:3). His knowledge of us is complete, His grace is true, and His mercy is steadfast. His promise to us is He will not send us back like an unwanted package. Instead, through Christ, He receives us, restores us, and reminds us that we belong to Him. Dear Lord, help me be mindful of what I send out in the world, and let what returns draw me closer to You. Amen.

Peace, Love, and Unity
Phil Bamesberger



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July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:00pm GriefShare	2	3	4 7:00am Men's Bible Study
5 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 10:30am Worship	6 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	7 9:00am Worship Committee	8 6:00pm GriefShare	9	10 9:15am Women's Bible Study	11 7:00am Men's Bible Study
12 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 9:15am Women's Bible Study 10:30am Worship	13 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	14 2:00pm Hillcrest Bingo 6:00pm Board of Elders 7:00pm Council	15 6:00pm GriefShare	16	17 9:15am Women's Bible Study	18 7:00am Men's Bible Study
19 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 9:15am Women's Bible Study 10:30am Worship	20 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	21	22 6:00pm GriefShare	23 1:30pm Hillcrest service 2:30pm Kinship Pointe service	24	25 7:00am Men's Bible Study
26 <u>Communion Sunday</u> 8:00am Worship 9:15am Bible Studies 10:30am Worship	27 PASTOR IS OUT OF THE OFFICE	28	29 6:00pm GriefShare	30	31	