

# TIDINGS OF PEACE

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP & OUTREACH

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

### Always New

It's the start of a brand new year. 2017 is upon us. Many look to this new year as a fresh start. Resolutions are made. Hopes and dreams are given renewed attention. It doesn't matter what happened in the past. This is a new year and it will be different.

Thoughts like these are pretty common this time of year, as people are looking around for hope and a new start. They hope that the health troubles a loved has been struggling with will resolve. They hope that the political situation in our country and in the world will become calmer. They hope that the personal problem they have been fighting will be conquered.

This new year is indeed a time of hope and newness.

As I was considering this desire for hope and a new beginning, I was reminded of a passage of Scripture that is so fitting as we begin the brand new year of 2017. The verses God brought to mind are a beautiful little gem of Gospel tucked into the middle of the sorrows and pains of the book of Lamentations. God, speaking through His prophet, says in Lamentations 3,

*"<sup>21</sup>But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: <sup>22</sup>The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; <sup>23</sup>they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. <sup>24</sup>"The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."*

Just as many were struggling to find hope in Jeremiah's day, when this passage was first written, people are still looking for hope today. And just like they did in Jeremiah's day, many people today still

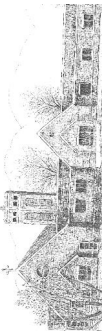


look for hope and a new beginning in all the wrong places.

As Christians we are blessed to know that the thing we are so desperately seeking is found only in the faithful, merciful love of God. Where is hope to be found? It is found only in the Lord. Where does newness come from? It comes from the steadfast love of the Lord and His never-ending mercies. These gifts of God are not just new every year, but every morning.

When I was just a little kid, my family went on vacation in northern Wisconsin and stayed in a cabin on Eagle River. For some reason, probably over excitement about being out in the woods, I woke up really, really, early. Since no one else was awake, I wandered out into the dimly lit living room to explore this new cabin. As I played in the grey, pre-dawn light, the room got brighter and brighter. Taking a break from discovering what treasures may have been buried the recesses of the couch, I looked out the big picture window that faced the river and saw the unmistakable beautiful orange glow of the sunrise. Mesmerized, I plopped down on that rustic old couch and just watched as the sun's glow grew brighter and brighter. I could feel that morning chill subside as the warmth of its rays poured into the room. There was light, warmth, and joy, as a new day was dawning.

As you can imagine, that sunrise has  
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'TIDINGS OF PEACE' from

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TO:



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### FROM AN ELDER

There was a man who had a small sign on his desk. The sign had only two words: "Perhaps Today." Those who knew the man and worked closely with him recall that hardly a day passed that he did not consider those words. Each day as he entered his office, that little sign, "Perhaps Today," provided a fresh reminder to him that the Lord Jesus Christ could come that very day.

That sense of heightened expectation certainly characterized believers in New Testament times. They were looking for Jesus to return at any moment, something that might be described as the imminent return of Christ. Like Abraham, they viewed themselves as strangers and pilgrims. They were looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Hebrews 11:10). As a result, their interest in things of this world took second place to spiritual priorities. They saw money and material possessions primarily as instruments by which they could advance the kingdom of God and through which they could fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 19-20).

Sad to say, most Christians today do not share their expectation concerning Christ's return. Let's face it, most present-day Christians are not anticipating or looking for Christ's return.

And this has affected how people view money and material possessions. Instead of seeing them as the means to fulfilling the Great Commission and as tools to further the kingdom of God, they see them as goods to be hoarded or spent on passing pleasures.

Jesus is coming again. In light of His return, will you live and give here at Peace so that others may hear the good news of salvation, so that others may experience the life changing grace of the Gospel.



### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Diane Gohl	1/1	Ryland Peters	1/14	Vickie Blaisdell	1/20
Kyle Novak	1/1	Amanda Rawn	1/14	Fern Reiners	1/20
Camryn Yilk	1/3	Kassidy Gillen	1/15	Ron Aufrecht	1/21
Breann Cerda	1/4	Eric Leibrandt	1/16	Chance Koetter	1/22
Logan Kircher	1/6	Aaron Nielsen	1/16	Bobbie Ziebell	1/22
Daphne Tidyman	1/6	Jean Sehnert	1/17	Stephen Post	1/24
Lois Boerger	1/7	Roland Carlson	1/18	Clayton Skolout	1/24
Ed Unger	1/8	Keith Oetting	1/18	Myra Stoney	1/24
Melissa Critchfield	1/9	Jeannine Rinehart	1/18	Darrell Eckhardt	1/26
Patricia Leibrandt	1/11	Tempie Krause	1/19	Eugene Custer	1/27
Patricia Hagan	1/13	Hailey Unger	1/19	Ronda Wurm	1/29

### JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	DATE	YEARS	NAME	DATE	YEARS
Loren & Lois Brown	1/18/1958	59	Darrell & K.C. Eckhardt	1/31/1964	53

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

*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.*

### OUR FINANCES AT A GLANCE

	Week to Date (Jan. 1st-Jan. 7th)	Month to Date (Jan. 1st-Jan. 7th)	Actual Year to Date (Jan. 1st-Jan. 7th)	Budget to Date (Jan. 1st-Jan. 7th) <i>1st week</i>
Offerings	\$2,480.42	\$2,480.42	\$2,480.42	\$4,738.50
Expenses	\$2,233.81	\$2,233.81	\$2,233.81	\$4,738.50

This month's Going Beyond Sunday is for the Christ Care Fund.

Going Beyond Sunday for the Coat Closet was \$135.00.



## CREATIVE PRESCHOOL

Happy New Year! We hope that you all have a wonderful Christmas break and are able to spend family time with your loved ones.

As was on our December newsletter, we will be having "Muffins with Moms" on Wednesday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 and Thursday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 and 2:30. We hope you can join us! We had a great turn out for "Donuts with Dads" and the kids were so excited to have their dad/grandpa here with them! We are looking forward to the same with our moms/grandmas!

We have a fun month of learning and playing in store for January so please check your calendars for special days and remember that they are intended to be a fun addition- so if your son refuses to wear pink/purple, or you don't have anything that's orange, that is just fine!

Don't forget about our website, it has our monthly calendars and newsletters under each class' tab, so if you need an extra copy you can print them from there <http://plcmccook.org/creativepreschool.html> Also, keep an eye on our **Facebook page** for classroom updates and weather closing information.

We have a fun-filled and educational month planned and 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 me at [mycreativepreschool@gmail.com](mailto:mycreativepreschool@gmail.com)

Thanks!  
Ms. Mandy

You can help out our own Creative Preschool by clipping UPC codes and box tops. It's as easy as cutting out the UPC code from "Campbell's" and "Our Family" products and any "Box Top" (Campbell's no longer accepts the full label.) UPC codes and Box Tops collected help buy various supplies needed for day to day operation of the preschool.



In the past these programs helped the preschool purchase supplies, the large color and shape carpet, books, science and math activities and many other items. The UPC codes and Box Tops can be returned to Kerri or the church office. Thank you for supporting Creative Preschool!



## JANUARY READINGS

Date	Season	First Reading	Epistle	Holy Gospel
1st	1st S. after Christmas	Numbers 6:22-27	Galatians 3:23-29	Luke 2:21
8th	The Baptism of Our Lord	Isaiah 42:1-9	Romans 6:1-11	Matthew 3:13-17
15th	2nd S. after Epiphany	Isaiah 49:1-7	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	John 1:29-42a
22nd	3rd S. after Epiphany	Isaiah 9:1-4	1 Corinthians 1:10-18	Matthew 4:12-25
29th	4th S. after Epiphany	Micah 6:1-8	1 Corinthians 1:18-31	Matthew 5:1-12



always stuck with me. Every time I think about that morning, I am reminded that with each moment, our life in Christ is made new. We are given a clean slate, a fresh start, a real and lasting hope that can never be taken away.

I don't know how 2016 has been for you and your loved ones. Maybe it was a good year and most things went smoothly for you. Maybe it was a tough year, where very few things were easy and there was a great deal of pain and suffering. Maybe you felt trapped with all of these things and find yourself praying that 2017 will be a better year. If this is you, you don't need to wait for a new year to have new hope. You don't need to wipe away a whole year to get a fresh start. Each and every morning, you have the light, the warmth, and the joy of Christ's forgiving love shining on you. What about that old sinful habit you resolved to quit? You have a clean slate every time you seek Christ's forgiveness, for His mercies are new every morning. What about that family trouble you had? You have hope, not just in this life, but the life to come, because the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.

I guess what I am saying is this: Our hope is not found in a new year or our own efforts. Our hope is found in God and His love. Our fresh start that we so desperately desire is not found as a new calendar is hung on the wall, but is found in Christ who was hung on a Cross. When we are found in Him, everything is always new. As the Scriptures say in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

And as a new year begins, we have so many wonderful opportunities to receive and share this merciful steadfast love of the Lord. We have new opportunities to gather together and receive the Word of God in worship and Bible Study. We have new opportunities to share real and lasting hope with the people in our community who have none. They are looking for a new beginning and fresh start, just as much as we are. But they need someone to point them to the truth of the Word of God, as the Holy Spirit works in their hearts to bring about that new beginning in Christ.

My brothers and sisters in Jesus, take heart and have hope this New Year's, for in Christ all things are always new, including you!

*In His Service,  
Pastor Brett*

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Preschool to 5th grade children are invited to Sunday School each Sunday from 9:45-10:45am in the basement. We have snacks, playtime, opening prayer, Bible study, and closing prayer. Currently our Bible time involves learning about the various people of the Bible and their influence on passing along God's Word to us today. Parents are always welcome to join us. [www.plcmccook.org](http://www.plcmccook.org)



## COUNCIL CORNER

## Council - At a Glance

Peace Lutheran Church Council met on Tuesday December 13<sup>th</sup> and opened with Nancy Rippen leading devotions. There were no guests present for open forum comments.

Reports for the various boards and council positions were available either in print or presented verbally for review, discussion and approval. Phil thanked Pastor for his visitations to members and stated we need to set a date for January voters meeting – after discussion and per our bylaws, it will be January 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm. Pastor Hinrichs reported he has been doing visitations and other pastoral duties on Tuesdays. VP mentioned the planning and rehearsals for Christmas program is on track. The Elders report included schedule and times for all the various services being held through the end of the year.

Discussion on unfinished business topics including: 1.) TCN (transforming church networks) update – A live nativity scene open to the community will be presented Dec. 21-24. 2.) Church Audit – Ann Teel has provided a checklist we can use for a self audit. Will schedule after the holidays. 3.) Fireworks – A final breakdown of money distribution was presented. 4.) PLC Clothing Logo – Several T-shirts were ordered and has been publicized that people can go in on their own to order from this point on. 5.) Nominations of Board Positions for 2017 – A ballot was presented with names of those willing to run. Will be posted prior to and then used at the January voters meeting for elections.

New business items/discussion: 1.) It was mentioned that Tina is doing a great job and we as a council need to make every effort to relay information to her that needs to be forwarded to the congregation.

There being no other business, meeting was closed with the Lords Prayer.

Vice President - Russ Ankersen



## TOOLS FOR STEWARDSHIP and EVANGELISM

## SHUT INS

Please remember those who are unable to worship with us for one reason or another.

**Hillcrest:** Willard & Carol Roedel, Don Smith, Don Bramer, Orian Fritz, Norman Leibrandt, Ruth Shields, and Joyce Stupka

**Brookdale McCook:** Edna Ficken, Erv Friehe, Barbara Klein, Dorothy Henton and Leona Wudtke.

**Highland Park:** Fern Reiners, Fred & Lois Boerger and Florence Potthoff.

**McCook:** Nancy Ott, Wallace Keen, Rod Berry and Adeline Kuhlmann

**Butte:** Don Kisker

**Grand Island:** Marie Alberts

**St. Paul:** Sandra Novak

## 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 – Curt Swanhorst (Head Elder), Paul Schaffert, Dee Traphagan, Ron Aufrecht, Grant Pfanstiel, Russ Ankersen or Phil Bamesberger.

## FOOD PANTRY

At the November 2013 meeting of the Ministerial Association, one of the topics discussed related to support to the food pantry by the McCook congregations. One of the pastors put together a spread sheet based on the regular needs of the food pantry – the staples. The spread sheet identified an emphasis that each congregation can focus on for each month of the year to help stock the pantry. **Of course all donations are welcome (like cake mixes, icing, condiments, etc.)**, but this provides an idea of their specific needs. As discussed at our 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.



<b>January 1st</b>	
<b>11:00am Service</b>	
Elder on duty	Dee Traphagan
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Cathy Broz
Greeter	Myra Tietz
Greeter	Jane Schuster
Usher	Eugene Custer
Usher	Robert Hull
Lay Reader	Sue Ankersen
Acolyte	Emily Kjendal
Acolyte	Peyton Doucet
Powerpoint	Jeff Pinkerton

<b>January 8th</b>	
<b>11:00am Service</b>	
Elder on duty	Paul Schaffert
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Russ Ankersen
Greeter	Deb Shields
Greeter	
Usher	Harold Carlson
Usher	Paul Sellers
Lay Reader	Grant Pfanstiel
Acolyte	Spencer Rogers
Acolyte	Zachary Tidyman
Powerpoint	Russ Ankersen

<b>January 15th</b>	
<b>11:00am Service</b>	
Elder on duty	Grant Pfanstiel
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Paul Sellers
Greeter	Janet Bamesberger
Greeter	Dale Bamesberger
Usher	Ben Schow
Usher	Brandon Smith
Lay Reader	Paul Schaffert
Acolyte	Need Volunteer
Acolyte	Landon Snyder
Powerpoint	Nadia Schoup

<b>January 22nd</b>	
<b>11:00am Service</b>	
Elder on duty	Ron Aufrecht
Organist	K.C. Eckhardt
Audio	Harold Carlson
Greeter	Need Volunteer
Greeter	Phyllis Berndt
Usher	Ed Rinehart
Usher	Dennis Chipman
Lay Reader	Russ Ankersen
Acolyte	Treven Critchfield
Acolyte	Alexander Nielsen
Powerpoint	Stacie Aufrecht

<b>January 29th</b>	
<b>11:00am Service</b>	
Elder on duty	
Organist	Charlene Pfanstiel
Audio	Jon Reiners
Greeter	Harold Carlson
Greeter	Sue Carlson
Usher	Gary Buk
Usher	
Lay Reader	Brandon Smith
Acolyte	Addyson Snyder
Acolyte	Delaney Critchfield
Powerpoint	Jon Reiners

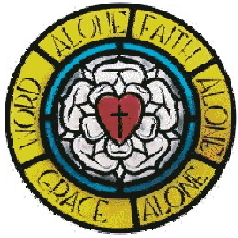
<b>Altar Flowers</b>	<b>KNGN Sponsor</b>
1st-Available	1st-Available
8th-Available	8th-Available
15th-Schuster	15th-Schuster
22nd-Available	22nd-Available
29th-Eckhardt's	29th-Available

*Note: Cost to sponsor a "Your Hour of Worship" program on KNGN 1300AM Radio is \$45. If you are interested in sponsoring a program, please call the church office for available dates.*



PEACE TALK

What is everywhere at once (Omnipresent)? What is immortal, infinite, and remembers all? What is Omniscient (all-knowing)? What can "do no evil" (Omnibenevolent)? Evidence of its existence is abundant. That's right you guessed it, GOOGLE! Now I admit that Google is not omnipresent traveling on 6&34 east of McCook in the bottom of those hills. I also know that mortals created it, chuckle about its "all knowing" capability and realize it can create EVIL, but I wanted to get your attention. Google has the ability to answer a multitude of questions, but when it comes to establishing a personal, loving and meaningful relationship with its users, the search engine falls short. Google is definitely not eternal, immortal or omnipresent. Don't get me wrong, I'm a Google fan, but it clearly fails in key areas of God's job description. In the past three years, Google has gone from processing 100 million searches per day to over 200 million searches per day. One company, which operates much of the Internet's infrastructure, was processing 600 million domain requests per day in early 2000. It's now processing nine billion per day. And you ain't seen nothin' yet (spell check didn't like that). We will be able to be both mobile and totally connected, thanks to the explosion of Wi-Fi. This means I will be able to find anything, anywhere, anytime. Do you ever approach God as if He were a giant search engine? Do you tell Him what you want and expect instant results? What if God doesn't give you what you're really looking for? Is what you're looking for needing direct attention? But God isn't this big search engine in the sky, and if he has something in mind for you, he won't substitute it for something that's second best or give you infinite options—even if it's something you really want or think you need. Here is what we all need to remember about God: God knows my deepest desires—and motives—before I ask: "O Lord, You have searched me and You know me. ... You perceive my thoughts from afar. ... Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely" (Psalm 139: 1-4) Even though God already knows my thoughts, don't forget to pray: "How much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him" (Matthew 7:11). Didn't get what you asked for yet? Maybe what you are searching for is not good for you: "Every good and perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). Our ultimate search should always be for God himself: "Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always" (Psalm 105:4) God isn't like Google. He won't give you something substandard just to satisfy your immediate desires. So keep asking, and seeking, and knocking—and know that he wants to give you the very best he has to offer. God is wireless, God is everywhere and God sees and knows everything. We must ask ourselves: What am I searching for and why? When or where should I pray? How do I know God will answer me? Open your bible and log in, let's be honest: Who or what are we more likely to place our faith in on a daily basis—God or Google?



**Peace Lutheran Church**

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# January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 11:00am Worship	<b>2</b> Office Closed	<b>3</b> 4:00pm Board of Ed 6:30pm Board of Elders  Pastor Hinrichs in the Office	<b>4</b> 6:00pm School of Religion	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> COUNCIL REPORTS DUE 9:00am Quilters	<b>7</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study Upper Fellowship Hall reservation
<b>8 Communion Sunday</b> 8:00am Prayer & Preaching 9:45am Bible Study 11:00am Worship 6:00pm 8th Grade Confirmation	<b>9</b> 7:00pm Woman's Bible Study	<b>10</b> 10:30 Worship Committee 2:30pm Hillcrest Bingo 6:30pm Board of Elders 7:00pm Council  Pastor Hinrichs in the Office	<b>11</b> 9:00am Lifelight 6:00pm School of Religion	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 9:00am Quilters	<b>14</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study
<b>15</b> 8:00am Prayer & Preaching 9:45am Bible Study 11:00am Worship 1:30pm Voter's Meeting 6:00pm 8th Grade Confirmation	<b>16</b> 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Woman's Bible Study	<b>17</b>  Pastor Hinrichs in the Office	<b>18</b> 9:00am Lifelight 6:00pm School of Religion	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 9:00am Quilters	<b>21</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study
<b>22 Communion Sunday</b> 8:00am Prayer & Preaching 9:45am Bible Study 11:00am Worship 6:00pm 8th Grade Confirmation	<b>23</b> TIDINGS REPORTS DUE 9:00am Quilters 6:00pm LWML 7:00pm Woman's Bible Study	<b>24</b>  Pastor Hinrichs in the Office am only	<b>25</b> 9:00am Lifelight 6:00pm School of Religion	<b>26</b> 1:30pm Hillcrest Service 2:30pm Brookdale McCook Service	<b>27</b> 9:00am Quilters	<b>28</b> 7:00am Men's Bible Study Upper Fellowship Hall reservation
<b>29</b> 8:00am Prayer & Preaching 9:45am Bible Study 11:00am Worship 6:00pm 8th Grade Confirmation	<b>30</b> 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Woman's Bible Study	<b>31</b>  Pastor Hinrichs in the Office				