



PEACE
NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN CHURCH

January 2022



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

At the beginning of Advent I gave a sermon on 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 where I suggested we adopt a portion of this text as our congregational New Year's resolution. "May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another. . ." (vs 12). This is a tall order, and based on our history, one that will be a challenge to live into.

In order to abound in love a person has to first empty him/herself so that the love of God has room to take root. This means having a willingness to put aside personal preferences when these preferences do not match the community's decisions or actions. Providing that the decision/action in question does not go against Biblical teaching or orthodox practice where one is called to make a stand for the sake of the Gospel, loving one's fellow believer means remaining connected to the community of faith. Yet too often this congregation's history repeats itself as members stop attending because they disagree with a decision. I have talked openly during my tenure about Family Systems Theory and how it applies to congregational behavior. In short, the systems set in place at the birth of a congregation will continue to resurface unless a deliberate effort is made to bring about change. Peace started in conflict; members did not agree

with the elected leadership's decision and left a congregation to follow a pastor. A key dynamic was woven into this ministry's DNA; when

there is disagreement there is separation if not outright severing of membership with the faith community. In the brief lifetime of this congregation there have been several "mass exodus" events as the community witnessed the key dynamic being played out over and over again. Instead of asking God to fill us with love for each other, there is a parting of the ways, a severing of the bonds of affection. Until we come to grips with our history, it will continue to plague us. The latest topic of disagreement is the recommendation to wear masks in worship. This recommendation came in October. I have heard it referred to as a 'mandate' though this isn't accurate. As I write this, Berrien County is experiencing 26.4 % positivity for COVID testing, Cass County 26.7% and Van Buren



PASTOR
STEVE HARTTEN

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Peace Lutheran Church

3590 Lincoln Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: 269-556-7000
Church Office Email:
PeaceLutheranStJoe@sbcglobal.net
Church Website:
Peacelutheranstjoe.org

Church Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday
9 a.m.—12 p.m.

Pastoral Contact Info:

The Rev. Steve Hartten
Pastor
Phone: (H) 281-0307
(C) 303-638-7598

Audio/Video Requests:

For Audio CD call:
Josh Lochner 429-4415
For Video DVD call:
The Church Office 556-7000

Weekly Worship & Praise Opportunities:

Sunday
10:15 a.m. Worship
also streamed on
Facebook Live
or
YouTube Live

Permission to podcast/stream
the music in our services
obtained from One License
with license #A-722704.

The Annual Congregational Meeting is on Sunday,
January 30th, immediately after worship service.



COUNCIL MINUTES

**Monday, December 20, 2021
6:30 p.m.**

Members present: Barb Berry, Virgil Bennett, Teresa Hogan, Herb Kroening, Bob Phillips, Bryan Sorensen, Rich Steinbauer, Ed Zajac

Also Present: Pastor Hartten

Call to Order: Ed Zajac called the meeting to order at 6:35pm.

Open Devotion/Prayer Pastor Steve Hartten
Pastor Hartten based his devotion on Psalm 98. Psalm 98 describes God's redemption of Israel and the rejoicing that will take place. The Psalm calls for celebration. Remember the past and what God will do in the future.

Approval of December agenda
Bryan made a motion to approve the December agenda and Herb seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Approval of November 2021 minutes made via email.

Treasurer's report Brenda Engel (acct. mgr)
There was no report this month

Old Business
COVID-19 update and discussion
Covid 19 update and discussion All Because of the rising cases of Covid and the new variant, the council has determined that we, as a church, will go back to the aggressive approach to stay safe. As of January 2, we will rope off every other pew for social distancing, ask parishioners to wear masks, choir will wear masks while singing, there will be no communion, and congregation singing will be limited. Teresa made the motion to put all of this in effect starting on January 2, Rich seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

2022 Budget

Richard/Pastor

The council looked over the tentative budget for 2022. After much discussion, Virgil made a motion to accept the budget to submit it to the Congregational Meeting in January for approval. Bryan seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Monday Evening Services

Pastor Hartten

Council will write a "Statement of Purpose" to help the congregation understand why a Monday Evening service may be beneficial for our church. Virgil, Ed and Marty Tallman will be in discussion about this. The music is coming together thanks to Deb Kroening, Maria Tallman and Pastor Hartten.

Standing Committee Reports

Worship

Ken Berry

The December worship committee meeting was cancelled.

Fellowship

Bryan is the only person in our congregation at the present that holds the certification for food service. Teresa plans on taking the course online to become certified.

Building and Grounds

Virgil

Virgil had nothing to report on building and grounds. He plans on purchasing chair feet for our chairs in the fellowship hall since many are broken or missing.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Hartten

Theology of Sacramental classes will be starting in January. There will be an open invite for all to take a series of classes to talk about worship, confirmation, etc. concerning the NALC. The discussions may prompt our church to make a change or maybe no change. The summary of the pastor's activities are as follows: Church Council, Confirmation Instruction, Dean's Responsibilities, Forgiveness Class, Nancy Cook Funeral, Home Visits, Lutheran Text Study, Mekane Yesus

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Advocacy Team, MI Mission District Zoom Meeting, Office Visits, Tuesday Prayer Group, Sunday Worship, Mid-week Advent Worship and Thanksgiving Eve Worship.

New Business

Update on Pastor Ron's Retirement Party Ed

The council is looking at a tentative date of February 27th for the party. Pastor Schmidt has been contacted to make sure this date fits in with his travel plans. Committee is needed to plan a budget. Beverly So has graciously agreed to check on venues and caterers for the event. Virgil, Barb, Bob and Bryan have agreed to be part of the planning committee.

January 2022 Congregation Meeting Ed

The January 2022 Congregation Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 30, after the worship service.

Greeters for January

Barb

January 2 Teresa, Bob
January 9 Bryan, Virgil
January 16 Herb, Rich
January 23 Ed, Barb
January 30 Bryan, Teresa

Motion to Adjourn

Bryan made a motion to adjourn.

Closing prayer

Pastor

The council joined together in praying "The Lord's Prayer"

Pastor's Message

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29.7%. This means over 1 in 4 people tested are positive. Spectrum Hospital System has reached 100% capacity while there are patients in hallways awaiting Emergency Room beds. People are still dying from the disease, while healthcare workers are exhausted, stressed and are experiencing compassion fatigue. Anticipating these conditions, the Church Council previously wrestled with the question, "What is a loving response?" The decision was to encourage mask wearing while gathered indoors in a closed space for worship.

If the mere suggestion of wearing a mask to potentially reduce the spread of a deadly virus so that already overburdened healthcare workers are not further overloaded, if the idea of protecting other elderly members by exercising an option to wear a mask is so offensive, then I wonder about our capacity to love one another, much less our ability to abound in love for one another. Love among the participants of the early churches is what caused them to grow, perhaps our decade-long decline and our latest topic of disagreement is indicative of a lack of love.



Thank you so much for your donations from the Charity BBQ this past Fall. We were able to contribute to three separate charities!

Berrien County Animal Control: \$206.81
Berrien County Cancer Service: \$264.81
Caring Circle: \$231.81

Free Counseling Services at Andrews University

The Andrews University Community Counseling Center (ACCC) will have openings for many new clients when they re-open in January, 2022, after the semester break (although individuals interested in services are encouraged to call now and leave a confidential voicemail message to get their name toward the top of the waiting list now). Graduate-level practicum students who provide these free counseling services at the ACCC have training in counseling adults, adolescents, and children. Counseling sessions are completely confidential.

During the pandemic, the need for mental health services is great and the need for physical safety is essential. Therefore, all counseling in-person sessions will require counselors and clients to wear a face mask covering the nose and mouth at all times, regardless of vaccination status. For those unable to attend in-person, some teletherapy services may also be available using confidential Zoom sessions.

All practicum counselors are doctoral- or masters-level students who have had at least preliminary counseling experiences, have been evaluated by licensed professionals as ready to provide counseling in a supervised clinic setting, and each practicum counselor provides services under professional supervision.

Types of referral issues accepted include, but are not limited to:

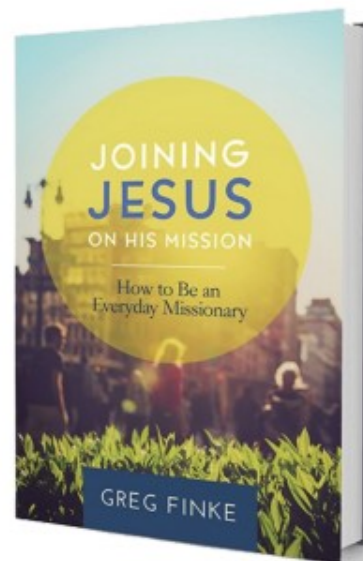
- loneliness and isolation
- relationship issues (e.g., marital and premarital counseling)
- grief and bereavement
- social skills problems
- behavioral problems
- bullying problems (victims and perpetrators)
- depression
- anxiety
- academic problems
- career guidance
- parent-child conflict
- personality assessments (for the purpose of treatment planning)
- and many others (including just needing a listening ear when social support is limited)

They cannot take on cases that involve court testimony, disability evaluations, custody

disputes, walk-in crises, or that require around-the-clock availability of intensive services (e.g., frequently actively suicidal or violent thought disorder).

A brochure and additional information is available online here: www.andrews.edu/counseling

Interested individuals may call the ACCC at 269-471-6238. For confidentiality and security reasons, client requests cannot be received by email. They will re-open January 10, 2022, and will start contacting clients within a couple of weeks after re-opening, but individuals may call now and leave a confidential voicemail message to get on the waiting list now.



Greetings friends! On behalf of the members of Christ Lutheran Church (CLC) in Warren, I would like to invite you to join us for a Saturday morning of Discipleship. You are welcome to bring your leaders at no cost. We are investing heavily in this opportunity to build a deeper and more effective Discipling culture at CLC.

The training will be held from 9AM to Noon on January 15th. If attending, please call the church office (586-293-0700) by Thursday noon (1/13) so that we can have adequate coffee and donuts!

God be with you in the holy and hectic days ahead!

In Christ's Service
The Rev. Dr. Brad Miller
Intentional Interim Pastor

A Message from the Church Council Regarding In-Person Worship

There are some important recent developments that affect all of us here at Peace Lutheran Church and the people of our community as well. After all we've experienced together, we had hoped that we were through with COVID. Sadly though, COVID is NOT through with us.

Omicron, a new and highly contagious variant, is among us and spreading rapidly across our country. COVID patients have filled our local hospitals to capacity and even made it necessary for hospitals to send new cases all the way to Kalamazoo for treatment.

On December 19th, our Church Council met at length to discuss this situation. We unanimously voted to return to the protective safety measures we used during the first COVID emergency in 2020. That is, occupying every other pew, safe social-distancing and wearing masks whenever we are in the building. Also, the distribution of Holy Communion will be suspended while the percent of positive tests hovers around 25%.

The Council will be watching the percent positivity testing rate in Berrien County as well as Spectrum-Lakeland's hospital census and code status to determine when it is appropriate to remove these worship restrictions. These new practices will begin January 2 of 2022.

Many of us personally know family and friends who have suffered from COVID. We take these precautions for them as well as for all others.

We all know that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ endured the agony of the cross for the sake of others. And the Council members know that the loving members of Peace Lutheran will accept these inconveniences also for the sake of others.

Hopefully, not long after the coming of the New Year, our sacrifices won't be necessary any more.

THIS MONTH'S READINGS



Sunday, Jan 2 - Second Sunday of Christmas

1 Kings 3:4-15, Psalm 119:97-104
Ephesians 1:3-14, Luke 2:40-52

Sunday, Jan 9 - Baptism of Our Lord

Isaiah 43:1-7, Psalm 29
Romans 6:1-11, Luke 3:15-22

Sunday, Jan 16 - Second Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalm 128
1 Corinthians 12:1-11, John 2:1-11

Sunday, Jan 23 - Third Sunday after Epiphany

Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10, Psalm 19:1-14
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a, Luke 4:16-30

Sunday, Jan 30 - Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Jeremiah 1:4-10, 17-19, Psalm 71:1-11
1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3, Luke 4:31-44



- 1/2 Teresa Hogan & Bob Phillips
- 1/9 Bryan Sorensen & Virgil Bennett
- 1/16 Herb Kroening & Rich Steinbauer
- 1/23 Ed Zajac & Barb Berry
- 1/30 Bryan Sorensen & Teresa Hogan



WHAT: No Regret's Men's Conference (includes *live speakers, live worship, simulcast sessions, resource booths, lunch, and meaningful guy time*)

WHERE: The Chapel (4250 Washington Ave., St. Joseph, MI)

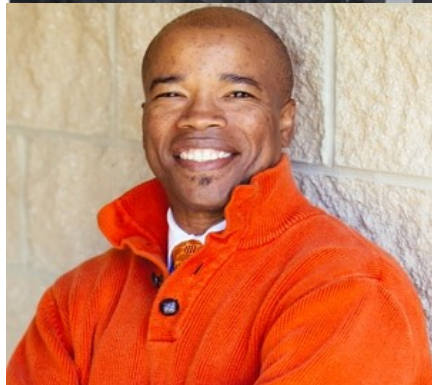
WHEN: February 5th, 2022

Breakout Session LOCAL LIVE Speakers:

(G)Race Relations: Bryant Bacon, Pastor, Mount Calvary Baptist Church, Niles & Matt Hickok, Pastor, Community EFC, Niles

The Men We Must Be: Rich Zeiger, Pastor, Real Life Community Church, Three Oaks

Protecting You and Your Kids from Pornography: Lyndon Azcuna, Executive Director, LifePlan



LIVE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Marvin Williams
Lead Pastor - Trinity Church, Lansing

A dynamic communicator of God's Word, and author and speaker for Our Daily Bread Ministries. He was our keynote speaker in 2018, and we are pleased to have Pastor Marvin back with us! Check him out on his website here: <http://marvinwilliams.com>.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:15 Worship w/communion	3 9-12 Office Hrs 6:30p Fellowship Committee	4 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Prayer Mtg	5 9-12 Office Hrs 645p Bible Study - Gospel of Mark	6 9-12 Office Hrs 745a: Men's Bible Study	7 Office closed	8
9 10:15 Worship w/communion	10 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Worship Committee	11 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Prayer Mtg	12 9-12 Office Hrs 645p Bible Study - Gospel of Mark 6p Dinner Club	13 9-12 Office Hrs 745a: Men's Bible Study	14 Office closed	15
16 10:15 Worship w/communion	17 9-12 Office Hrs 630 Council Mtg	18 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Prayer Mtg	19 9-12 Office Hrs 645p Bible Study - Gospel of Mark	20 9-12 Office Hrs 745a: Men's Bible Study	21 Office closed	22
23/30 10:15 Worship w/communion 30 Congregational Meeting	24/31 9-12 Office Hrs	25 9-12 Office Hrs 7p Prayer Mtg	26 9-12 Office Hrs 645p Bible Study - Gospel of Mark	27 9-12 Office Hrs 745a: Men's Bible Study	28 Office closed	29

JANUARY



Birthdays

7 Judy Konar
9 Jill Chapman
10 Dominic So
14 Denise Mahler
15 Dolores Kraklau
16 Evelyn Chevrette
18 Wayne
Schuermann
24 Hilde Boozer
30 Mohammed
Nurbhai

Anniversaries

26 Bob & Linda
Roberts

Shut-In's

To keep our shut-ins
safe, please call the
church office for
mailing addresses.

Leona Barowicz
Andrea Barowicz
Thomas Boozer
Darlene Gaul
Delores Gaul
Harold Lick
Ruth Retzke
Gloria Siewert

**Dinner Club is
Wednesday, January 12th
at 6pm at Grand Mere.
There is a sign-up sheet in
the narthex. We hope to
see you there!**



**CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING**

**The Annual Congregational
Meeting will take place directly
after worship service on Sunday,
January 30th, 2022.**

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St. Joseph, MI 49085

