



December, 2018

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

December is a difficult month for members of a Liturgical Church. A Liturgical Church follows a calendar that is independent of the culture's secular calendar. Sometimes the secular and the liturgical are in synch (ie: Halloween/All Saints Day) and sometimes the two do not line up at all (ie: Christmas). When there is harmony it is easy to affirm a liturgical worship style. When there is discord a choice has to be made: do members follow the rhythm of the liturgical year or do they follow the secular customs? To phrase it another way, how much should the Church let the culture dictate its worship patterns?

There is a radio station in South Bend that switches over to constant Christmas music Thanksgiving weekend. When I lived in Colorado, one radio station celebrated the 12 Days of Christmas beginning on December 12th. (The 12 Days of Christmas begin on December 25th) There are numerous Christmas parties to attend: both company sponsored and private through the first three weeks of December. It seems like the whole world is celebrating Christmas and the Liturgical Church hasn't caught on to the festivities. It plods along with the Season of Advent and doesn't get into the Christmas spirit until the rest of society is taking down the decorations and putting away the Christmas music.

I too feel the tension between the

Liturgical Calendar and our culture's practices concerning Christmas. There are times our being out of synch makes me uncomfortable. What I've come to appreciate is that this tension reminds me that I am in the world but not of the world. The Church calendar asks me to prepare for a celebration, to make ready my heart to receive the gift of a Savior. I hear the challenging words of The Baptist, "Repent!" and I'm forced to examine my life. It would be much easier to skip Advent and get right to the feel-good Season of Christmas. Doing so would also skip over the reason and need for a Messiah to come into the world. We wouldn't have to focus on sin, on our need to amend our ways, on the reasons Jesus was born in the first place.

I invite you to consider being in the world but not of the world this Advent Season. Attend the Christmas parties, decorate your homes according to your traditions, and then on Sunday morning be reminded that the Church and the culture are not always in harmony. There is a lesson for us to learn as we live through the discord.



SENIOR PASTOR
STEVE HARTTEN

Peace Lutheran Church

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Church Office Email:
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Church Website:
Peacelutheranstjoe.org

Church Office Hours:
Monday through Thursday
9 a.m.—12 p.m.

Pastoral Contact Info:
Rev. Steve Hartten
Senior Pastor
Phone: (H) 281-0307
(C) 303-638-7598

Rev. Ronald Schmidt
Staff Pastor
Phone: (H) 983-2590

Audio/Video Requests:
For Audio CD call:
Josh Lochner 429-4415
For Video DVD call:
Jim Damaske 769-3792

Weekly Worship & Praise Opportunities:
Sunday
10:15 a.m. Worship

Tuesday
11:30 a.m. Prayer Meeting

Wednesday
7 p.m. Advent Vespers

Thursday
7 p.m. Choir

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES



Peace Lutheran Congregational Meeting Sunday, September 30, 2018

Opening devotion

Pastor Hartten

The story of the Exodus.

The Israelites' grumbling was due to fear, fear that this God that brought them out of Egypt and would or could not provide for them. We have also been experiencing fear in this church. Fear is the opposite of faith. We can't see the hand of God working among us when we are constantly looking back. God loves each of us where we are, but God is not content for us to remain where we are. We must not let fear decide our future.

Quorum of Voters

President Kevin Kunst

A quorum was established at 11:40 a.m.

Approval of agenda

Gary Walker made the motion to accept the agenda. Herb Kroening seconded the motion. Motion passed.

January 28, 2018 congregational meeting minutes

Jerry Pliley made the motion to approve the minutes. Ed Zajac seconded the motion. The motion passed.

May 22, 2018 congregational meeting minutes

Ed Zajac made the motion to approve the minutes. Evelyn Chevrette seconded the motion. There was a mistake noted on the agenda that the May meeting was actually on May 20. Chuck Wilson made a motion to accept the minutes as May 20, 2018. Nan Hacker seconded the motion. The motion to accept the minutes as amended passed.

Election of Council

Kevin Kunst

Rich Steinbauer and Mark Carpenter will begin three year terms in 2019.

Financial Update

Becky Carpenter

	YTD	YTD Budget	Difference
Income	\$133,123	\$128,429	\$ 4,693

(Offerings and interest) (Including interest)

The congregation thanked Becky Carpenter for her service as the Treasurer.

Report

Kevin Kunst

We need to be reminded that God gives all of us time to serve Him. We need to work together and we need to accept each others' differences. The Lord wants us to work happily together without grumbling.

New Business

Listening Time - Proposal to Implement Weekly Communion

Pastor Hartten - The Worship Committee voted to implement weekly communion. The recommendation was forwarded to the Church Council. Council is seeking congregational input. Pastor encouraged the members to ask questions and make comments.

Elaine Chartrand - Who are the members of the worship committee?

Sandy Pliley suggested that a list of committee members be passed out during church and available on a regular basis.

Wayne Schuermann - Since your coming you have been pushing towards this.

Pastor replied that he has been working towards this. We had a trial period; during the Easter season through the first day of Pentecost, communion was served each Sunday. No one complained about it then.

Sandy Warren -It is up to each one of us personally whether we commune or not.

Barb Morgan - My concern is that it becomes an automatic process rather than a spiritual process.

Debbie Kroening - Would there be enough members of the altar guild to support it each Sunday?

Pastor - it was suggested that the Altar Guild work out alternatives to the scheduling.

Pat Nose - Will we still have seasons that we will not have communion?

Pastor - No. However, the Wednesday services during Lent and Advent would not be communion

Maria - Could you repeat the questions?

Sandy Schuermann - Wayne and I have experience with that. The concern of Barb Morgan is real. It can become rote. Not necessarily the human heart, but the human brain.

Having a kneeler installed would be nice.

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Congregational Meeting Minutes

Continued from Page 2

Staffing by the Altar Guild is a concern.

Sharon Schmidt - Communion is right with God, I've asked His forgiveness.... At times we may not have our hearts right. If so, I may not go to communion. No one needs to judge us if we do not go to communion. If we are not ready, we just stay seated.

Sandy Schuermann - Do we have enough people to serve communion?

Pastor - Yes

Ed - We've gone back and forth on a particular topic. There are times I cannot always be here. If I miss, I know I can go to communion the next time I am here.

Nan - As co-chairperson of worship committee, you need to know that communion would be offered each Sunday. However, you need to have the mind set that your neighbor may choose to not go to communion and that is ok.

Sharon Schmidt - I knew a lady one time. When communion came up, she said that while you are waiting to go up, pray for each person going up to communion. Make sure you are right in your heart with all in your life.

Pastor - speaking as "me", when I came here, I was told that people do not like change. Are you aware of how many things have changed in worship? A lot of the wordings have changed, due mostly to

copyright. We've introduced the Kyrie without the Hymn of Praise. We have been making the seasons more specific. We are looking at different liturgies that have similarities to what have been used for the last ten years. We just want the service not to be static. My door is open. I think this is a victory that we had such a great discussion.

Barb Morgan - everything in our life today has changed. If the change is meaningful, then it needs to be supported. We are so afraid to change things in our church, but is that God changing?

Marty Tallman - we've been talking about how this as a church. When visitors come, it would be nice for them to come to the table with us.

Chuck Wilson - I agree with Marty. Everything I have heard here today is a personal preference. We can make our own choices and yet welcome all to the Lord's table each Sunday.

2. Vote to use Scrip to pay for the anniversary party Kevin Kunst

Elaine Chartrand and Shari Schmidt stated that Scrip money is restricted for use on building and grounds. They did not want to change the precedent. Discussion that church funds should not be used to subsidize cost of party. Question called.

Voted - 16 in favor Opposed - 20
Motion did not pass.

Kevin said we would discuss at the next council meeting.

Nan Hacker made motion to adjourn.

The meeting closed with prayer.

SCRIP CARDS FOR CHRISTMAS - THE PERFECT SOLUTION !!!

GIVE GIFT CARDS AS GIFTS ... to teachers, teens and hard to buy for folks who love to do their own shopping with gift cards! Cards range in value from \$10 and up. *Special for the holidays, several retailers are offering cards for \$5 or \$10.*

PURCHASE GIFT CARDS TO PURCHASE GIFTS ... it's easy to purchase gift cards to use when you want to buy the gifts yourself. We have cards for over 250 vendors from all the major department stores, specialty stores, restaurants, gasoline, groceries.... you name it... we probably have it!

USE SCRIP FOR HOLIDAY TRAVEL NEEDS ...airline tickets, cruise tickets, hotel tickets, car rentals, gasoline.

USE SCRIP TO PAY YOUR BILL! Did you know? You can pay your Kohl's credit card bills with Kohl's Scrip cards. You can use the store card to get those extra in-store bonus offers and then pay your bill with a Kohl's Scrip card.... instantly earning a 4 percent tax-deductible rebate for the church.

REMEMBER! ... by using Scrip you benefit Peace by generating a rebate on every purchase. You also benefit yourself if you itemize on taxes because the rebate you generate becomes a TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION to Peace!

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR WANT TO PURCHASE CARDS, PLEASE SEE SHARI OR BEVERLY AFTER WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS OR AMY, IN THE CHURCH OFFICE, MONDAY—THURSDAY BETWEEN 9 A.M. AND NOON.

What Does This Mean to Me?

This regular newsletter feature—playing on Luther’s famous line in the Small Catechism—is designed to help us all better understand why things happen as they do at Peace. The worship committee actively seeks feedback or questions from congregation members confused or concerned about worship practices.

“Why don’t we sing Christmas Carols beginning the first Sunday in December?”

Advent has been described as “the Season that gets in the way of Christmas.” It is that difficult time of year when a congregation is asked to put the brakes on Christmas celebrations; it seems artificial and contrived. The season serves as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas as well as the return of Jesus at the second coming. The lessons the first Sunday of Advent have a dark, ominous tone as they point to the tribulation before Jesus’ return. Advent means “coming;” it is a season anticipating Jesus’ Second Coming as well as His birth in Bethlehem. The second Sunday in Advent presents John the

Baptist and his message of repentance. Though not an uplifting, joyous message, it is an important message for us to hear.

We do not sing Christmas Carols the first two weeks of Advent mainly because of the lesson’s focus. Our Sr. Pastor and Organist strive to match congregational song to the themes present in the biblical texts. We also don’t sing Christmas Carols the first two weeks of Advent in an attempt to differentiate the seasons: Advent and Christmas are two distinct and separate seasons in the Church’s calendar. Each has its own focus. On the third Sunday of Advent one Christmas Carol is introduced as the focus of the lessons switches to Jesus’ earthly ministry. On the fourth Sunday of Advent, two Christmas Carols are sung to ease the transition into the upcoming Festival Season of the Nativity.

In an attempt to let Advent be Advent, we sing Advent Songs and delay the introduction of Christmas Carols till later in the season.



Mid-Week Advent Worship begins Dec. 5

Come and sing the Joyous Light Vespers service at 7 p.m. December 5, 12, and 19. This year we will look at the birth of Christ through the lens of Hope, Hero, and Joyful Presence.

Returning January 2019

Watch for details



“Adopt a Family” drive is underway

Christmas is coming. A time for snow, trees, wreaths and spreading joy. Peace will again be adopting families through the Salvation Army. This year we have four mothers and 10 children, ranging in age from 2 months to 8 years. The Wish Tree can be found in the Narthex with information about each of these needy participants. Paper ornaments with the age and sex of the recipient should be removed and should be returned with a gift (or item of clothing, if a size is indicated). The tags allow us to get the right gift to the right person.

Initially, we will have a collection of unwrapped gifts that will be on display. Volunteers will then wrap them for delivery to the Salvation Army for distribution to the families in an effort to make Christmas a little brighter for both those who give and those who receive. The deadline to return your items is Dec. 16.

Let us never forget that we are responsible for helping those who are in need.

HATS - GLOVES - SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST

We have almost reached our goal of 350 hats for our Hat and Glove ministry, but we are still in desperate need of gloves. Please consider helping us out by purchasing gloves when you are out shopping for Christmas gifts. We will take all kinds of gloves...Dollar Store gloves to ski gloves.... We are grateful for all.

This ministry began in 2011... a 16-year-old girl felt that God was asking her to help 610 elementary children at the school next to her church. The church provided food for needy families at the school ... she began to feel God working in her life ...He was urging her to make a difference in the lives of these children. She thought, "If they do not have food...they probably do not have warm winter hats either". So she began to crochet hats... soon her teenage friends...then their moms...then the members of her church began to help.

When the ladies at Peace heard about this, they began to do the same. Peace began with a contribution of 40 hats to that program in 2011, but has continued to produce hats and gloves every year since then for needy children in Berrien County. All told ... women from Peace have produced nearly 2,500 hats in this program. Most of them have been handmade. Over the years we added gloves to the program.

We have contributed to several schools and organizations over the years, but have entered into a regular partnership with Lybrook Elementary School



in Eau Claire.

We will deliver our hats in mid-December. As the body of Christ we are asked to use our God-given gifts and talents to help those in need and make the world a better place to live.

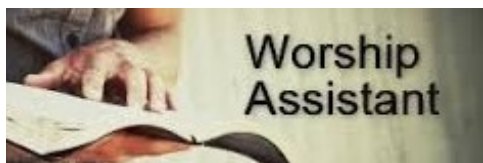
Greening the Church—Dec. 9 following worship

Plan to remain after worship on Sunday, Dec. 9, for the "Greening of the Church." We will decorate the Christmas Tree, hang wreaths and garland, and put up the window displays. As a bonus, there will be pizza provided by the congregation. Those planning on staying are asked to bring a tray of Christmas cookies for a cookie exchange in the Fellowship Hall.



*Lessons
& Carols*

On Sunday, Dec. 30, Peace will offer a service of Lessons and Carols at 10:15 a.m. This traditional service has been offered on the Sunday after Christmas for years. It is a great opportunity to sing Christmas Carols and hear the Biblical story of salvation.



SUPPORTING OUR WORSHIP

Serving this Month:

Worship Leaders: Pastor Steve Hartten,
Pastor Ron Schmidt

Organist: Maria Tallman

Choir Director: Debbie Kroening

Audio: Josh Lochner, Mark
Carpenter

Video: Jim Damaske

Usher: Jim Priebe

Communion: Lee and Lynn Hornack

Altar Guild: Karen Richardville

December 2

Greeters/Ushers: Herb and Debbie
Kroening

Lector: Teresa Hogan

Fellowship: Sandy Warren and Jim
Steinbauer

December 9

Greeters/Ushers: Chris and Virgil
Bennett

Lector: Nan Hacker

Acolyte: Emily Sorensen

Fellowship: Fellowship Committee

December 16

Greeters/Ushers: Jim and Judy Priebe

Lector: Jim Priebe

Acolyte: Ainsley Cahill

Altar Flowers: Bev and Dominic So

Fellowship: Bev So and Ginger Kuntz

December 23

Greeters/Ushers: Rich and Norma
Carpenter

Lector: Bill Konar

Christmas Eve 4:30 p.m.

Greeters/Ushers: Ken Berry and Shari
Schmidt

Lector: Shari Schmidt

Christmas Eve 7 p.m.

Greeters/Ushers: Bryan and Heidi
Sorensen

Lector: Amy Cahill

December 30

Greeters/Ushers: Karen and Gary
Richardville

Lector: Barb Morgan

THIS MONTH'S READINGS

Sun., Dec. 2 - First Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16, Psalm 25:1-10

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36

Sun., Dec. 9 - Second Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-7b, Psalm 66:1-12

Philippians 1:2-11, Luke 3:1-20

Sun., Dec. 16 - Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20, Psalm 85

Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 7:18-35



Sun., Dec. 23 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a, Psalm 80:1-7

Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-56

Mon., Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20

Sun., Dec. 30 - First Sunday of Christmas

Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15, Psalm 111

Colossians 3:12-17, Luke 2:22-40

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	3 9-12 Office Hours 1p Prayer Class 6p Fellowship Committee Mtg	4 9-12 Office Hours 11:30 Prayer Mtg 7p Prayer Class	5 9-12 Office Hours 2:30 Upton 7p Advent Vespers	6 9-12 Office Hours 8 Men's Ministry 7p Choir	7 Office closed	8
9 9 S. School 10:15 Worship with communion 11:30 Greening of church	10 9-12 Office Hours 1p Prayer Class 7p Worship Committee Mtg	11 9-12 Office Hours 11:30 Prayer Mtg 7p Prayer Class	12 9-12 Office Hours 2:30 Upton 7p Advent Vespers	13 News Due 9-12 Office Hours 8 Men's Ministry 7p Choir	14 Office closed 9 Soup Kitchen	15
16 9 S. School 10:15 Worship with baptism 3p Caroling	17 9-12 Office Hours 6p Council Mtg	18 9-12 Office Hours 11:30 Prayer Mtg	19 9-12 Office Hours 2:30 Upton 7p Advent Vespers	20 9-12 Office Hours 8 Men's Ministry 7p Choir	21 Office closed	22
23 10:15 Worship with communion	24 Office closed 4:30p Worship 7p Worship	25 Office closed No Christmas Day worship service	26 Office closed	27 Office closed	28 Office closed	29
30 10:15 Worship with communion	31 Office closed					

Birthdays

2 Marilyn Riley
4 Brian Nimitz
7 Josh Lochner
9 Jesse Spiker
10 Larry Coffey
12 Sharon Schmidt
16 Gary Richardville
19 Sally Reschke
22 Olivia Carpenter
24 Marilyn Hettig
31 Jerry Schlutt

Anniversaries

1 Jim & Elaine
Chartrand
11 Larry & Karen
Coffey
18 Jim & Pam Bauer
27 Keith & Betty Hettig

Military

Brandon M Enders
1061 USS Tennessee
Ave
Kings Bay, GA 31547

Lt/jg Chad Knipschild

301 Maple
Edgewater, MD 21037

Betty Robbins

Barbara Southland
Mildred Wantz

Shut-In's

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

Albert Beebe
Marian Hogue
Joe Naines

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

3 p.m. December 16

Meet at the church to join us as we brighten the holiday season for our shut-ins. Songbooks are provided and there's no judgement on your singing ability. After singing, we'll have dinner at the St. Joseph Pizza Hut. This will be our Family Fellowship for December.



**Join us for worship on
Christmas Eve**

4:30 p.m. or 7 p.m.

**This year we will not have a
service on Christmas Day.**

Peace
LUTHERAN CHURCH

3590 Lincoln Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085





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