

Mission:
To love like Jesus so
that each person
experiences God's way.

**Peace Lutheran Church
Newsletter
December 2024**

**Love God, Love People,
and Serve the World!**



Midweek Advent Suppers

Advent Suppers Begin Dec. 4!

We will be serving a light supper before our Advent worship services (6:30 p.m.) from 5:15 -6:15 p.m. If you would like to help with serving or bringing something for the meal, contact Becky Voges at beckyvoges@yahoo.com.

Dec. 4 – Assorted Soups

Dec. 11- Baked Potato & Salad

Dec. 18 – Hamburgers



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Message	2
Narrative Lectionary	4
Advent & Christmas Schedule	5
Hello From Deacon Andrew	6
Groups & Events	7
Mission Spotlight	9
Blessings - Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Prayers	10
Giving & Finances	11

A Message from the Pastor

Advent Practices: Preparing Our Hearts for Christ's Presence



Advent, the season of anticipation and preparation, invites us to pause amid the busyness of life to make space for Christ's coming. Here are some meaningful practices to help center your heart and home on the gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love during this sacred time.

1. Light the Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a beloved symbol of the season. Each week, light a candle and reflect on the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. Pair this with a short Scripture reading or prayer to set your heart on Christ's light shining in the world. Name something that needs light in the darkness.

2. Practice Daily Reflection

Carve out a few minutes each day for silence and prayer. Consider using an Advent devotional guide or reading Scriptures that point to the coming of Christ. Write down your reflections or prayers to deepen your connection to God. Purchase an Advent calendar and trace the story each day. This year tracks nicely with Advent beginning on December 1st.

3. Create Space for Gratitude

Amid the season's busyness, practice noticing the blessings around you. Each day, name one thing you are grateful for. Gratitude helps us recognize the presence of God's grace in our lives. Join us for one of our special Advent worship opportunities.

4. Engage in Acts of Kindness

Advent is a time to extend God's love to others. Write a note of encouragement, donate to a charity, or volunteer your time. Simple acts of kindness are ways to embody Christ's love in the world. Consider for each gift you share with a loved one, extending that gift to someone you have yet to love.

5. Prepare Through Conversation

Take time to talk with friends, family, or neighbors about what Advent means to you. Share stories of faith, explore the themes of the season together, and listen for how God might be speaking through others. If Jesus is really coming, perhaps Jesus is already here in the relationship you have.

A Message from the Pastor Continued

6. Simplify and Rest

Let go of unnecessary obligations to focus on what truly matters. Spend intentional time with loved ones, rest in God's peace, and resist the pressure to do it all. Simplicity creates room for Christ's presence in your life.

7. Pray for the World

Lift up prayers for those who are struggling this season—whether due to grief, poverty, illness, or other challenges. Pray for leaders, communities, and the earth itself, trusting in God's promise to bring renewal.

Advent calls us to live in the tension of the "already" and the "not yet." As we await the celebration of Christ's birth, let these practices guide you toward a deeper awareness of God's gifts and prepare your heart for the joy of His presence.

What Advent practices will you embrace this year?

Peace,
Pastor Jake



Narrative Lectionary

Narrative Lectionary for December

The story of God continues this month. Each week we progress in the narrative lectionary opening God's word in worship and witnessing God's redemptive story of grace. Furthermore, there are faith formation opportunities to study with a group and grow together with others Sunday mornings.

Remember there are guides in your bulletin each week to help you with a daily Bible reading plan to take a deeper and more comprehensive journey throughout the Holy Scriptures.



Special Seasonal Worship opportunities are included in the table below.

December 1 10am	Daniel's Hope in God	Daniel 6:6-27
December 4 6:30pm	Wednesday Advent Worship Reflection on Hope	Isaiah 40:1-11
December 8 10am	Joel: God's Promised Spirit	Joel 2:12-13, 28-29
December 11 6:30pm	Wednesday Advent Worship Reflections on Peace	Luke 1:26-38
December 15 10am	Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me	Isaiah 61:1-11
December 18 6:30pm	Wednesday Advent Worship Reflections on Joy	Luke 1:39-45
December 22 10am	The Christmas Story Christmas Program	Luke 2
December 22 6:30pm	The Longest Night	Healing Service
December 24 5pm 7pm	Candlelight Christmas Eve	
December 29 10am	Simeon and Anna	Luke 2:21-38

Advent & Christmas Worship Schedule

Advent & Christmas Worship Schedule

Advent Series: Reflections on Jesus' Coming

Advent is a sacred time to prepare for the coming of Christ into our world. It is a time of reflection and stilling our hearts and minds to allow space for God to fully enter into the chaos.

I invite you into this special worshipful season, that God might speak to you anew.

Each week we reflect together as a community about what our hopes and dreams are when Jesus comes among us.

Come and join us for a meal on Wednesday night from 5:15pm-6:15pm, followed by worship from 6:30-7:15pm.

Wednesdays in Advent: 12/4, 12/11, and 12/18.



12/22 6:30pm The Longest Night



Longest Night is a worship service on commemorating December 21st the longest night of the year. Because of the Live Nativity scheduled on this night, we will remember the Longest night on December 22nd. The winter solstice reminds us that the day is short and for many in this happy season, it can be painful. It acknowledges that, for many people, Christmas is a time of loneliness, sorrow, alienation, sadness. This service offers a way for people to claim those feelings and still feel surrounded by the compassionate love of God.

12/22 10am Christmas Program

Join us on Sunday morning worship for the telling of the Christmas story by our young people for our Christmas pageant. 12/15 after worship is the Christmas program rehearsal.

12/24 Christmas Eve 5pm & 7pm

Traditional Candlelight Worship

Join us on Christmas Eve for a traditional candlelight worship as we welcome Jesus into our world and into our hearts. This holy night celebrates the way God joins us in our humanity and the light of the world blesses us in Jesus. Our 7pm service will be livestreamed; no livestream for 5pm.



Hello from Deacon Andrew

Hi friends! Its been a very busy first few weeks since I arrived in North Carolina. The trip itself was very long and tiring, a total of 1200 miles across 7 states. I'm so grateful I had my son, Zack to help with the drive and moving in. I've gotten settled into my new apartment and have already hosted family several nights. It really is very nice to be so close now. I'll be able to be with my family for Thanksgiving and Christmas, which is wonderful. I'm enjoying my new apartment. It is right on the Catawba River which runs past Morganton. It is quiet and peaceful, with a wonderful view of the river and nothing but trees on the other side and mountains in the distance.

My work is quite a big learning curve because of my dual role working in a local congregation and also working for the NC Synod office. The people at Calvary have been very warm and welcoming. I've had an opportunity to preach, to lead children's sermons, and enjoyed several get-togethers with the youth group. My role at the synod office will be helping to oversee the synod's children, youth, and family ministries. I do have an office at the Synod, but I'm only there a couple of times a month. I do most of my work for them remotely from my office in Calvary.

I want to again express my appreciation for the kind and heartfelt send-off from both churches. I've bragged on Peace and St. Andrew and all of you to the folks here in North Carolina and told them what wonderful things you are doing. My time in Texas was so rewarding, both personally and professionally. I am so blessed to have spent 5 years with you. BTW, Grace also wanted to say thank you and that she misses all of you. She does still worship via livestream with you and waves during the sharing of the peace.

North Carolina is a beautiful state and I'm thoroughly enjoying the cooler weather and the changing leaves. There is still quite a bit of damage to the far western part of NC from the hurricane. Things where I am in Morganton are essentially back to normal. Calvary has been hosting four refugee families who had just arrived in the US two weeks before Hurricane Helene hit. They were living in Asheville. All four families have successfully been placed in homes, the kids are in school, and parents are working. This is a very servant hearted congregation, like Peace and St. Andrew.

My blessings to all of you as you continue as communities of faithful disciples of Jesus! If you're even in North Carolina, stop by Morganton!

All the best, Deacon Andrew

Sisters in Christ



Sisters in Christ

Weds., Dec. 18, 11:00 a.m.

All sisters are invited to join us for lunch and an ornament exchange. Please RSVP by Dec. 15 and bring a wrapped \$5.00 ornament to exchange. For more information and reservations contact Becky Voges at beckyvoges@yahoo.com

Christmas Caroling



CAROLING

Christmas Caroling

December 22, 4:30 p.m.

It has been our tradition to spread some Christmas cheer to our shut-ins. We will meet at 1225 Loma Verde at 4:30 p.m. to carpool to local facilities and the First Footing Shelter. If you have someone who would like us to come and sing for them, let me know. We will gather afterward for cookies and fellowship.

Live Nativity



**Peace Lutheran
Church
Live Nativity
Dec. 21.
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

Yes, before you know it, we will be hearing Christmas Carols and preparing our homes for Christmas. It has been our tradition (7 years) to recreate Bethlehem on the front church lawn. We will need shepherds, angels, wise men, carolers, shop vendors, greeters and towns people to share the greatest story ever told for our neighbors and community. We will have Joseph's Carpenter Shop, Kathy's Kitchen, The Ornament Shop, The Candle Shop, The Hot Chocolate Stop, Christmas Caroling, and more! SignUpGenius is up and ready for signups.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094BAFAF2FA7FC1-52145743-live>

Questions? Email Becky Voges at beckyvoges@yahoo.com.

Christmas Tea



Annual Christmas Tea

*Special Guest Speaker:
Deacon Terry Westerman*

Saturday, December 7th
10am – 12pm

Cost per Person - \$10

Sign Up in the Narthex or
online with SignUp Genius

December Mission Spotlight



When you hear the words Salvation Army, you automatically think of Bell Ringing at Christmas, but they are so much more. About six months ago, a group of Peace Members visited our local Salvation Army to assist preparing meals for First Footing Homeless Shelter. They make lunch and dinner meals for the shelter 365 days of the week. These are made in their kitchen and delivered to the shelter. That day we saw how much they do for our community.

We were greeted in the kitchen by Major Leal with his apron on and his sleeves rolled up and right in the middle of preparing meals for the shelter. He does this while also, the pastor of the church, assessing the needs of everyone who comes in for help, delivering programs that provide food, shelter, clothing and financial assistance, and directing ministries. They have a small staff but most of their work is done with the help of volunteers.

The first thing I noticed is when a person comes in looking for help, the first thing they say is "are you hungry?" and immediately prepare a meal for them. Then they take them into an office and assist them with their problems. On Sundays they serve a full breakfast while preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, they deliver sandwiches and pass out emergency kits to homeless people on the streets, and they have an emergency disaster vehicle and staff ready to go anywhere. On Thanksgiving and Christmas, they not only prepare the meals for First Footing, but spend a week preparing 300 meals for shut-ins that are alone. Last year they provided 43,000 meals to food insecure people.

How can you help? Monetary gifts are always best as they can be used to purchase food, paper products, cooking supplies and maintenance upkeep. Another way is prepare meals, such as, soups, casseroles and/or salads that can feed 40 people. You can also host a food drive for pop top can foods, (such as fruit, vienna sausage, poptarts, etc.), hygiene care products, wash cloths, socks.

November Birthdays

Michelle Johnson 12/01
 Barbara Wangsness 12/01
 Virginia Raley 12/03
 Kristopher Martinez 12/05
 Clyde Peebles 12/06
 Megan Ohnheiser 12/06
 Michael Simpson 12/09
 Brendan Healey 12/10
 Earl Koester 12/10
 Robbi Will 12/11
 Megan Wenzel 12/12
 Ceretta Daum 12/13
 Holly Guerin 12/13
 Stacy Pfeil 12/15
 Clarence Friesenhahn 12/16
 Max Ebert 12/17
 Jacob Henderson 12/17
 Gayle Morris 12/17
 Don Hodde 12/18
 Kaylee Stone 12/26
 Bernice Lenz 12/28
 Curtis Rabenaldt 12/28
 Paul Fisher 12/29
 Greg Gunderson 12/30

Peace Prayer Ministry

Peace Lutheran Church has an active Prayer Ministry. We have an Email Prayer Chain, we have a Zoom “Sweet Hour of Prayer” Group that meets every Monday morning at 9:00 a.m., and we have a Prayer loom that is included in our Sunday morning prayers. All are welcome to join our email Prayer Chain and our Monday morning Prayer Group. We have experienced some amazing, answered prayers this year and we have given comfort to many of our members in their times of distress. You can email Becky at beckyvoges@yahoo.com for info.



December Anniversaries

Peggy & (Mark) Cooper
 12/15/2007 - 17 years
 Wade & Lavonne Ohnheiser
 12/18/2004 - 20 years
 Matthew & Leslie Tippens
 12/20/2003 - 21 years
 Dan & Anita Hill
 12/23/2018 - 6 years
 Alan & Sandra Freeman
 12/27/1966 - 58 years
 Joseph & Arlene Wold
 12/27/1956 - 68 years
 Robbie & Olivia Hetherington
 12/28/2013 - 11 years
 Earl & Eleanor Koester
 12/28/1951 - 73 years
 Jacob & Shea Henderson
 12/30/2017 - 7 years

Prayers

Lavern Kistner
 Martin Franz
 Carol Franz
 Bob Johnson
 Jim Miller
 Riley Martinez
 Rick Smith
 John Claycomb
 Arlene Wold
 Helen Probst
 Stella Leissner
 Earl Koester
 Lupe Travis

Giving at Peace

There are several giving options at Peace: Bank Drafts; Online Giving (Website); Offering Envelopes. If you would like more information on any of the options listed above, please give our Finance Administrator, Theresa, a call at 830-620-0618.



Finances October 2024

FUND	BEGINNING BALANCE	INCOME	EXPENSE	TRANSFERS	ENDING BALANCE
General Fund	\$ 7,423.21	\$36,944.22	\$ 22,556.83		\$ 21,810.60
Building Fund	\$ 17,322.04	\$ 395.46	\$ 0.00		\$ 17,717.50
Endowment Fund	\$ 7,420.21	\$ 55.42	\$ 0.00		\$ 7,475.63
Endowment Investment Fund	\$152,837.62	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		<u>\$ 152,837.62</u>
Deferred Maintenance Fund	\$ 1,521.89	\$ 41.86	\$ 0.00		\$ 1,563.75
Designated Funds	\$ 36,194.16	\$ 967.00	\$ 900.00		\$ 36,261.16
Total Funds	\$222,719.13	\$ 38,403.96	\$ 23,456.83		\$ 237,666.26



Peace Lutheran Church

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830-620-0618

Pastor Jake Fain
830-312-8797

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Friday

Office Closed, Phones Open
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Sunday

10:00 am - Worship
Livestream @ peacenb.org/live