

# The Peace Post



*The peace of the Lord be with you always. Amen!*



**FROM THE  
DESK OF  
PASTOR  
MESSER**

**“Defining Lutheranism”**

On June 23, I was privileged to attend the Conference on the Augsburg Confession at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Marion, Ohio. As I sat in the pew of that beautiful old church for the opening Divine Service, I held in my hands a *Lutheran Worship* hymnal which once graced a pew rack here at Peace (Gethsemane is the congregation to which we donated our old TLH and LW hymnals). It was really neat to see “Peace Lutheran Church” engraved on the covers of many of those hymnals. What a blessing it is to know that we were able to provide our brothers and sisters in Christ at Gethsemane with hymnals to use during Divine Service. We are truly blessed to be a blessing!

The Conference was outstanding. The keynote speaker was Dr. Lawrence R. Rast, Jr., who is currently serving as the Academic Dean and as Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne. Dr. Rast was one of my favorite profs at the seminary. I was fortunate to have four classes with him and learned much from him. Listening to him speak on Article IV of the Augsburg Confession, which presents the chief article of the Christian faith—justification by grace through faith in Christ—was like being home.

In addition to Dr. Rast’s fine presentation, we were privileged to attend three breakout

sessions focusing on other articles of the Augsburg Confession, all of which were outstanding.

During the course of the breakout session on Article V of the Augsburg Confession (On the Office of the Holy Ministry), Rev. Lance O’Donnell shared with us what I believe to be the best definition of Lutheranism I have ever heard. He defined Lutheranism as **“An absolute, unrelenting focus on forgiveness and the means through which Christ promises it.”**

Pastor O’Donnell informed us that he arrived at this definition after being asked by others repeatedly over the years what Lutheranism is all about. He serves in an area that is heavily populated by Methodists, and the congregation he serves is the only Lutheran congregation for miles. Thus, people often ask him what it means to be a Lutheran. He humbly admitted that he had “blown it” many times over the years when trying to respond to his inquirers. He either said too much or too little. But now, when he is asked, he responds with the definition above.

What an awesome definition of Lutheranism! It truly is “An absolute, unrelenting focus on forgiveness and the means through which Christ promises it.” Our focus on forgiveness and the means through which Christ promises it stands at the center of all we say and do as Lutherans. It always has!

This was the very reason for the Reformation of the Holy Christian Church in the 16th century. Luther was led by the Holy Spirit to discover the truth in Scripture. The Church in his day had become corrupt and had lost sight of the truth. It taught that forgiveness was merited (earned) by

human beings in a variety of ways—the purchase of indulgences, confession of all sins followed by making satisfaction through holy works, going on pilgrimages to holy sites, etc. But, Luther discovered the truth, that forgiveness is not something we merit or earn, but has been merited and earned for all of us by the perfect life and death of Jesus Christ.

What amazing, beautiful Good News this is for us sinners! It means that Christ won forgiveness for *all* our sins—yes, even those really bad sins that still burden you. It means that we need not worry about whether or not we have been good enough,

*Continued on next page*

*It is finished!*



**Inside this issue:**

Peace Lutheran Library	2
“Defining Lutheranism” cont’d	2
Quarterly Voters’ Assembly	2
Church Picnic	2
Summary of Council Minutes	3
PYG News	3
Ladies & Altar Guild Info	4
Second Time Around Sale	4
Website Info	4
S.A.L.T. News & Notes	5
Christian Education at Peace	6
July Birthdays & Anniversaries	6
Euchre, Table Talk, Par. Report	6
July Calendar	7
Serving in July	7



# PEACE LUTHERAN LIBRARY



**Donations are always welcome!**

If you are thinking about donating one or more books to our library and are not sure what to be looking for, we have a “wish” list of suggestions in the church office. Prices and books can also be found in the CPH catalog, also in the church office.



*We would like to encourage people to use our Church Library more often. If you have read a book from our library that you enjoyed, or that inspired you, and you would like to share it, please contact Beth Brostrom or Coaline Luplow.*

## “Defining Lutheranism” cont’d

for Christ has been good enough for us all. It means that there are no “ifs” attached to our forgiveness. Christ has taken away all the “ifs” by His Holy and Precious Blood shed on the cross. We are forgiven! It is a guarantee!

We Lutherans need to maintain an absolute, unrelenting focus on the forgiveness Christ won for all people on the cross. We also need to maintain an absolute, unrelenting focus on the means through which Christ promises that forgiveness to us. These two go hand in hand and make Rev. O’Donnell’s definition of Lutheranism complete. You see, while Christ has won forgiveness for all people of all time, it is only through the means of grace He has established—His Holy Word and Sacraments—that the forgiveness He won is delivered to sinners. Thus, an absolute, unrelenting focus on forgiveness would be meaningless without focusing on the means by which that forgiveness is applied to us. Therefore, the means of grace Christ has established must remain at the heart and center of all that we Lutherans say and do.

This is just as true in our day and age as it was for our Lutheran forefathers in the 16th century. In fact, the challenges we face today are even more severe than what they faced back then. Today, it is not only the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches which teach that human beings must earn the forgiveness Christ won for all people. This false teaching is taught by nearly all Protestant Churches as well. In one way or another, nearly all of Christendom has adopted the false belief that sinners must do something to “get right with God” and merit forgiveness.

But, we Lutherans know differently. We know the truth. We know that we have no ability within ourselves to “get right with God,” but Christ has done all things necessary to make us “right with God.” We know that because the Holy Spirit has worked through the Holy Word and Sacraments to bring us to faith. And, through faith in Christ—not through good works, not through holy living, not through indulgences, not through pilgrimages, not through a “personal decision,” not through Church membership, not through a special anointing, and so on—we ARE forgiven and we ARE declared righteous in God’s sight! Period! No ifs, ands, or buts!

“An absolute, unrelenting focus on forgiveness and the means through which Christ promises it.” That’s what Lutheranism is all about, because that’s what Christianity is all about. May it be what we are all about here at Peace always!  
Your servant in Christ,

*Pastor Messer*



## QUARTERLY VOTERS ASSEMBLY

**SUNDAY**

**JULY 22, 2007**

**11:00 AM**

## CHURCH PICNIC

**Mark your calendars!**

**Peace Lutheran Church  
Picnic to be held on  
Sunday, September 9  
at Pastor Messer’s home**

**Informational letter  
coming shortly!**



# Synopsis of June 5, 2007 Church Council Minutes

## Call To Order & Opening Prayer:

- President Jakolat called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Pastor Messer conducted the opening prayer. The following members were present: Vern Jakolat, Megan Brown, Carol Zeile, Dave Zeile, Bill Brostrom, Sharyn Greening. Members absent: Miguel Ortiz, Coaline Luplow, Larry Elliott, Dick Kohler. Non-voting members present: Pastor Messer

## Approval of Agenda:

- The following items were added to the agenda: Under New Business, the Council is to discuss Officer Vacancies

## Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

- Motion made by Councilmember Greening, supported by Treasurer Zeile to approve the minutes from the meeting of May 1, 2007 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

## Reports:

- The following reports were presented and received into record: Pastor, Treasurer, Board of Elders, Board of Trustees, Board of Christian Education, Board of Evangelism, Board of Stewardship, Peace Lutheran Ladies Guild, Constitution & Bylaws, Budget & Finance.

## Old Business:

- Procedures and Control Regarding Offering Money - Motion made by Councilmember Greening, supported by Treasurer Zeile, in the absence of the Financial Secretary, the Elder on duty after each Service shall ask two (2) members of the Board of Elders or the Council (with the exception of the Treasurer and the Pastor) to count, deposit, and perform any corresponding record keeping of offering money. Motion carried unanimously.

## New Business:

- Function of Budget & Finance Committee - The Council was reminded that this is an advisory committee and the Council has the final authority to make decisions.
- Officer Vacancies: Vice President and Chair of Board of Evangelism - The position of Vice President will be open due to Miguel Ortiz moving out of state. President Jakolat, Pastor Messer and the Chair of the Board of Elders will meet to discuss candidate for this vacancy. The Council also discussed the status of the Chair position of the Board of Evangelism. Larry and Andrea Elliott have stepped down from their duties as co-chairs. The possibility remains that Larry and Andrea can remain co-chairs and designate a member of the Board to serve on their behalf.

## General Comments:

- Mailing Newsletters - The Council discussed the cost involved with mailing newsletters that are not picked up by members. The practice will be reviewed in order to save money.
- Greening Sisters Donation - The four sisters of Jon Greening have generously donated \$2,000 for a special purchase for the congregation.
- Wallpaper Behind Altar - Pastor Messer inquired about the wallpaper behind the altar and would like to talk with founding members to determine if it can be removed or updated.
- Use of Fellowship Hall for Elections - Secretary Brown informed the Council that a notice was received from the City of Alma that the Fellowship Hall would not be needed for the Primary Election scheduled for August 7.

## Adjournment & Closing Prayer:

- Motion made by Councilmember Brostrom, supported by Councilmember Greening to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:02pm. Pastor Messer conducted the closing prayer.

Proposed minutes respectfully submitted,  
Megan Brown, Secretary

## PYG NEWS

### July Events

Fellowship - Sundays - All Year Long!  
July 23-27 - Higher Things, Minneapolis, Minnesota

### Greetings in Christ,

First, I would like to thank Bill B. and the trustees for getting and mounting a new cork board for the Youth Group in the Fellowship Hall. Please check it regularly to see new news and plans.

This month will be busy with a group of the youth going to the Higher Things "For You" convention in St. Paul, Minnesota on July 23—27. Please pray for our safe journey and spiritual growth at this event.

Christ be with you,  
Jonathan Penzien

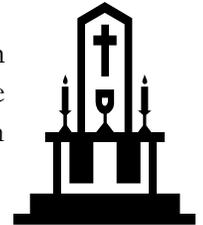


Thanks to everyone who helped make VBS a success. We had a great week exploring Holy Land sites in a Quest for Truth about Jesus. Our children learned the following truths:

Jesus is our promised Savior  
Jesus is God's Son  
Jesus shows mercy  
Jesus died and rose to save sinners  
Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit

# LADIES & ALTAR GUILD INFO

- **LADIES GUILD MEETING:** Guild meets the first Monday of each month from October to May (except for September, which will be the Second Monday). All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend our guild meetings; if you are a confirmed female member of Peace, you can be a member of the guild. We would sincerely encourage you to participate and be an active member of the guild.
- **LADIES GUILD PRAYER CHAIN:** The Ladies Guild has a prayer chain in place. If you wish to be included in the prayer chain as a caller, see Marlene Wiltshire. If you wish to add yourself or someone else to the prayers, call Marlene Wiltshire (463-4101).
- **ALTAR GUILD DUTY:** July - Beth Brostrom; August - Carol Zeile; September - Beth Brostrom
- **ALTAR FLOWERS:** There is a flower calendar for 2007 posted on the fellowship bulletin board. If you wish to place flowers on the altar some time during the year, fill in your name and/or contact Beth Brostrom or Cheryl Henry. A bouquet usually lasts about one (1) month and the cost is about \$25.



## UPCOMING COFFEE HOSTESSES:



<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>
1 - Dorothy Trgina	5 - Jenny Baughman	2 - Lois Miller/Jeanette Bigelow
8 - Marilyn Oswald	12 - Lois Ramsey	9 - Janice Sager
15 - Beth Brostrom	19 - Carol Zeile	16 - Youth Group
22 - Sara Cummins	26 - Coaline Luplow	23 - Cheryl Henry
	29 - Sharyn Greening/ Megan Brown	30 - Lisa Messer

## SECOND TIME AROUND SALE

We are looking for all your unwanted household items. Clothing, shoes, yard/garden items, books, craft items, etc.

This sale will take place around the 16th and 17th of August, 2007. You may start bringing your items on Sunday, August 12th.

Proceeds from this sale will go to the S.A.L.T Committee.

Any questions, please contact Lisa Messer or Dorothy Trgina.



## HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT OUR WEBSITE LATELY?

[www.peacealma.org](http://www.peacealma.org)

- Read or listen to Pastor Messer's sermons online!
- Read info about our 2007 Easter Egg Hunt and view pics (more pics to come!)
- View our Constitution and Bylaws
- View our Service Bulletins and Inserts
- Access our Lutheran Confessions
- Access a fully color-coded Church Year Calendar
- Read *The Peace Post*, Pastor Messer's Bible Study Notes and *Morning Sun* articles

**Much more is on the way!  
Check back often!**

# S.A.L.T. NEWS & NOTES

*S.A.L.T. is our Evangelism Committee here at Peace. Its mission is to **Share with All the Love and Truth** of Jesus Christ!*

1. **Looking for more S.A.L.T. members:** We are in the process of revitalizing our committee and becoming more organized and focused on fulfilling our mission. We have many things we would like to accomplish, but need more help to do so. Please consider joining our group. There are no membership dues or contracts to sign! All that is needed is a heart to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ within our congregation and without our community. You need not sign up nor tell anyone of your intention to join our committee. All you need to do is show up at our next meeting on **Tuesday, July 17 at 7:00 p.m.** Please come join us and help us make this very important committee more effective!

2. **Relay for Life:** Last year, Peace Lutheran Church entered their first team in the American Cancer Society Relay for Life at St. Louis High School. But, 2007 promises to be an even more successful event! This year, the 24 hours of entertainment, celebration, and reflection will be held at Ithaca High School, beginning at **3:00 p.m. on Friday, August 10.** Bring your friends and family members, join our team, and have fun camping out, visiting the PLC campsite for as long as you like, or walk around the track once or twice with other Peace members or friends. See Don Reithel after Service in the weeks to come to become a part of our Peace Lutheran team. Our efforts in this campaign are dedicated to the glory of God and to those who have lost their battle with cancer or continue to fight this dreaded disease.



4. **Support Our Troops:** Please continue to help us support our troops as we will continue to accept donations for this ministry. If you have any family members serving overseas in our military and would like for us to send them a shipment, please see Andrea or Larry Elliott. Thank you!



5. **Advent Tea:** We are already planning our next Advent Tea, which will take place on **Wednesday, November 28 at 7:00 p.m.** There will 12 tables available for hostesses this year. A sign up sheet **IS** posted on the S.A.L.T. bulletin board (we announced that there was a sign up sheet posted last month, but there wasn't—there is now!). These tables will be first come, first serve, so if you want to host a table, please make sure to sign up as soon as possible! The requirement for hosting a table this year is that it must include the **color red** in it somewhere. The rest is left to your own individual creativity. Of course, it is also the responsibility of each table hostess to invite seven guests to sit at their table. There is an additional sign up sheet on the bulletin board for any of you who desire to attend the Advent Tea, but do not want to host a table. We will share this list with our hostesses to make sure that all who desire to attend are invited. If you have any questions about Advent Tea, please see Lisa Messer.



6. **Food Bank:** Food Bank collection Sunday is the first Sunday of every month. Please help the S.A.L.T. committee give aid to families and seniors of Gratiot County by bringing non-perishable, canned, or packaged foods on **Sunday, July 1.** Suggestions for donations are posted on the S.A.L.T. bulletin board. Place your donations in the **RED COLLECTION TUB** in the Fellowship Hall. Thanks for your help!



8. **SPECIAL S.A.L.T. MEETING:** As noted above, our monthly S.A.L.T. meeting will take place on Tuesday, July 17 at 7:00 p.m. Preceding that meeting, we will hold a special meeting at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the development of an *Intentional Evangelism Program* here at Peace. Our congregation's mission statement begins by declaring, "*The mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to welcome all people into the fellowship of God's love by proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.*" That's wonderful! It's Biblical! It's right! But, it is nothing more than a statement if we are not at the business of fulfilling it. It's one thing to *have* a mission statement, it's another thing to *do* a mission statement. And, if we are all honest with ourselves here at Peace, we will have to admit that we have not been *doing* our mission statement very well. Thus, this meeting will focus on how we can get our congregation more actively involved in *doing* our mission statement by sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others. We hope to accomplish this by developing a *congregational* evangelism program that is both distinctively Lutheran and effective, and one in which all members of Peace can participate. We would love to have you join us as we discuss plans to develop and implement this program. Hope to see you there!

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT PEACE

## Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

- Sunday School will reconvene in the fall.
- Adult Bible Class is offered **every Sunday at 11:00 a.m.** for all confirmed members of Peace and adult guests. We are currently engaged in a detailed study of **Revelation**.

## Youth Confirmation Class

- Youth Confirmation Class will reconvene in the fall.

## Together in the Word

- Our *Together in the Word* Bible Study takes place **Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m.** All men and women of Peace who are available at that time are encouraged to join us. Guests are always welcome, too. We are currently engaged in a detailed study of **Genesis**. Please plan on joining us soon.

## “It’s All Greek to Me”

- *It’s All Greek to Me* is a class for those interested in learning elementary Biblical Greek. The day and time when this class meets has changed. It will now meet on **Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.** until further notice.

## JULY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

### Happy Birthday to:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 - Christopher Figueroa | 21 - Steffanie Rosalez |
| 4 - Bill Brostrom        | 22 - Gretchen Harrison |
| 6 - Ryan Cummins         | 24 - Sharyn Greening   |
| 8 - Tanya Strong         | 25 - Pastor Messer     |
| 9 - Brandon Brown        | 25 - Chris Brown       |
| 15 - Lois Miller         | 27 - John Brostrom     |
| 15 - Tim Mikek           |                        |

### Happy Anniversary to:

- 15 - Joyce & Dick Kohler
- 20 - Debra & Jon Penzien
- 22 - Amanda & John Row
- 24 - Cheryl & Jeff Kuehnlein
- 26 - Donna & Bruce Bebow



*If we ever miss your birthday or anniversary, please let us know so that we can update our records.*



### EUCHRE NIGHT!

Euchre has been discontinued for the summer. Thank you to all who came and played this past winter. We will resume again in the fall. Watch for postings when we re-convene.



### TABLE TALK

Our Table Talks are informal and informative discussions with Pastor Messer on various topics decided by the group in attendance. We will not meet again in July as previously announced. In August, we will meet at Pastor Messer’s home (date will be announced in bulletins and in next month’s *Peace Post*).

### PAROCHIAL REPORT

(As of June 28)

Membership at Peace

Baptized - 184; Confirmed - 148

Official Acts: 1

Baptism: Benjamin Larry Elliott (6/17/07)

Membership gains: 1

Membership losses: 0

Financial Report

YTD Receipts: \$44,652.22

Budgeted YTD: \$49,875.00

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# July 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <i>4th Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <i>NO Together in the Word</i>	<b>4</b> 	<b>5</b> 5:00 pm—WW	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <i>5th Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9:30—Together in the Word  7:00—Council Meeting	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 10:30 - Greek Class  5:00 pm—WW	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <i>6th Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9:30—Together in the Word  6:00—Intentional Evang. Mtg. 7:00—S.A.L.T. Meeting	<b>18</b> 7:00—Stewardship Committee Meeting	<b>19</b> 10:30—Greek Class  5:00 pm—WW	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <i>Sr. Mary Magdalene</i> 8:00—Elders Meeting 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—Quarterly Voters' Assembly	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <i>NO Together in the Word</i>  8:00—Trustees Meeting	<b>25</b> <b>DEADLINE FOR AUGUST PEACE POST</b>	<b>26</b> NO Greek Class 5:00 pm—WW	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <i>8th Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 9:30—Together in the Word	<b>August 1</b>	<b>August 2</b>	<b>August 3</b>	<b>August 4</b>
<b>PEACE YOUTH GROUP AT HIGHER THINGS CONFERENCE IN MINNEAPOLIS, MN</b>						

# SERVING IN JULY

	<u>ACOLYTES</u>	<u>ORGANIST</u>	<u>ELDER</u>	<u>USHERS</u>	<u>GREETERS</u>
JULY					
1 - 9:30 am	Jordan Henry Sarah Messer	Mary Jakolat	Dave Zeile	Vern Jakolat Burt Henry	Carol Durst/ Marlene Wiltshire
8 - 9:30 am	CJ Oswald Melanie Penzien	Beth Brostrom	Don Reithel	Bill Brostrom Curt Oswald	Burt & Cheryl Henry
15 - 9:30 am	Kelsey Gensler Samantha Messer	Beth Brostrom	Larry Elliott	Jon Penzien Bill Hendrick	Terry & Coaline Luplow
22 - 9:30 am	Tyrel Harwager Phillip Schafer	Mary Jakolat	Terry Luplow	James Sager Vern Jakolat	Lisa Messer & Family
29 - 9:30 am	Alex Henry Jessica Oswald	Mary Jakolat	Dave Zeile	Chris Brown Bill Brostrom	Helen Meyers/ Lois Ramsey
AUGUST					
5 - 9:30 am	Lauren Penzien Jordan Henry	Beth Brostrom	Don Reithel	Burt Henry Curt Oswald	Jon Penzien & Family

*“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men” (Eph. 6:7)*

Peace Lutheran Church  
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Pastor's Home: 989-796-4453  
Pastor's Cell: 989-289-3908  
E-mail: [pastor@peacealma.org](mailto:pastor@peacealma.org)



*The mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to welcome all people into the fellowship of God's love by proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and to nurture our members with God's Holy Word and Sacraments.*