

The Peace Post

Peace Lutheran Church ~ Alma, MI

November, 2009



From the Desk of Pastor Messer



“Thankful for Our Partnership in the Gospel”

Dearly beloved in the Lord,

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:3-6).

This is how St. Paul begins his letter to the Christians in Philippi. I echo his words with regard to the Christians here at Peace in Alma.

These last few months have been the most difficult months I have yet endured as a pastor. A lot of my time and energy has been spent on matters that both sadden and frustrate me. Were it not for the grace of our Lord, and the help He provided me through the comfort and counsel of our board of elders, several brother pastors, and some very dear friends, I could not have possibly endured this time of trial and testing.

People I love are leaving our fellowship. That saddens me greatly. I wonder what I could have done differently. I am sure I have failed in more ways than one. I know that I am a sinner and have much to learn as a pastor. Please pray for me, that I may serve our Lord faithfully, in spite of my many flaws.

At the same time, I am frustrated by this. It is frustrating to not have my love, and my efforts, returned. It is frustrating to be ignored. It is frustrating to hear it said of me that I am unapproachable, even while I am in the midst of begging and pleading with those who make that claim. I am a sinner. I am full of flaws. But, I am not unapproachable.

What I am is helpless to help those who do not want to be helped. It is impossible to serve those who do not want to be served. I have learned that the hard way. It is not an easy lesson to learn.

And yet, through all of this, I am thankful. I echo St. Paul’s words to the Philippians because what he says of them I am blessed and privileged to see in you. The most difficult thing I have had to endure these last few months is to hear it said that our congregation is not loving. The only way people could utter such an absurdity is if they refused to get to know the children of God in this place, or if they were so consumed with their own personal

grievances that they were blinded to reality. For the one thing I know for sure is that the little flock I am blessed to serve is loving. They are not perfect. They are sinners, just like me. But, they are loving. And faithful. And generous.

And I am zealous to serve and to defend this little flock. I am more committed to that now than I ever have been. I have learned through experience what our Lord means when He says, “*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose*” (Rom. 8:28). The Lord knows what He’s doing, even if we don’t. He is working for our good, and not only for our good, but for the good of those who have decided to leave us.

I am thankful for you, dear friends in Christ; thankful for your partnership in the Gospel of our Lord. I am optimistic about our future, precisely because of that partnership, for that partnership is built upon the Holy Spirit-wrought faith we share in the One who lived and died in our place.

Let us pray for our brothers and sisters who are leaving, that whatever it was that caused them to depart would no longer be an obstacle in their way of receiving the Lord’s Gifts through Word and Sacrament. And, let us move forward together as partners in the Gospel. The Lord has much to accomplish through us, and He will. I am committed to this partnership. I know you are, too. For that, I am eternally thankful. And, because of that, we are truly blessed.

The Lord’s will be done among us. His will is always good. It never fails. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.

Your thankful servant in Christ,
Pastor Messer

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Christ Is Present in the Holy Eucharist

A blog post by Pastor Messer



I was watching *The Journey Home* last week on EWTN (Roman Catholic channel). This is a show where the host, Marcus Grodi, interviews guests who have recently converted ("returned home") to the Roman Catholic Church. I have watched this show many times over the years, because I find it interesting to hear the reasons the guests give for making their journey to the Roman Catholic Church.

The guest that night was a former United Methodist Church pastor. As I listened to him tell his story, it was easy to discern the main reason for his conversion to Rome, namely that he was drawn by the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. There were other reasons, to be sure, but this was the clincher for him. He had come to learn, through his study of Church History, that the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church has always believed, taught, and confessed that Jesus was really present in His true Body and Blood when the faithful gathered in His Name. This changed everything for him. His practice as a Methodist pastor seemed empty now. The worship he led was directed toward an absent Jesus, who was "up there" in heaven, and his preaching was focused on leading people to live godly lives that they might be good enough to meet Jesus when they die. Having been given this new revelation that Jesus is present in the Holy Eucharist, he could no longer, in good conscience, serve as a Methodist pastor, so he resigned his call, began catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church, and eventually joined that fellowship.

One of the frustrating things about this interview, and all the interviews I have watched on this show over the years, is that the impression was given that Roman Catholics are the only ones who believe Jesus is present in the Mass (Divine Service). Eastern Orthodox are sometimes acknowledged as believing this, too, but they are said not to have the "fullness" of the Eucharist, since they're not fully part of "Holy Mother Church." What about Lutherans? We are lumped together with all other Protestants on this show. To be fair, every once in a while, Grodi and his guests will acknowledge that we Lutherans have "some sense" of Christ's Real Presence, but we are never given full credit for what we believe, teach, and confess.

The way we Lutherans are falsely caricatured on the show used to anger me, but no more, since I think I understand why we are not taken seriously about our beliefs, especially in relation to our belief concerning Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist. This came to me a little over a year ago when I watched the show and

two former Lutheran pastors were Grodi's guests. Both former Lutheran pastors expressed our Lutheran belief in Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist very well. They made it vividly clear that Lutherans believe Jesus is present with His true Body and Blood in the Holy Meal. They even corrected Grodi a couple of times during the interview, since he was trying to interject the idea that Lutherans don't really believe in the same Real Presence as Rome. The reason both former Lutheran pastors left Lutheranism and went "home" to Rome was not because Rome had the Real Presence and Lutherans didn't, but rather because, in their estimation and experience, Rome took the Real Presence seriously and Lutherans didn't. They had become dissatisfied with the flippancy they witnessed among many Lutherans surrounding the Holy Meal. They pointed to the use of plastic, disposal, individual cups during the Distribution and how those cups were thrown in the trash after the Service, and to the growing trend within their Lutheran denominations toward contemporary worship formats which, in their estimation, contradicted what Lutherans claim to believe, teach, and confess.

I have to admit that I listened to these two former Lutherans with a sympathetic ear, as I share the frustrations they communicated during the interview. The truth is that one could walk into a great many Lutheran congregations today and have no idea that they believe Jesus is Really Present. Why should Lutherans be taken seriously about their belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist when their practice doesn't match that belief? Why do many Lutherans, including many of the leaders in our own Missouri Synod, believe that we can worship like those who do not believe in Christ's Real Presence, but still somehow maintain the substance of our confession? I can totally understand the frustration these two former Lutheran pastors felt. Not only is it frustrating to witness Lutherans practicing contrary to what they believe, but, as they also shared, it is frustrating to be mocked and ridiculed by these new-age Lutherans when we stand fast upon our beliefs and put into practice what we believe. False accusations of being "closet Roman Catholics" or "ultra-confessionals" or "purists" are hurled our direction because we are adamant about our belief that Lutherans should celebrate the Mass (Divine Service) as though we actually believed Jesus was Present, rather than like those who don't.

With that said, my sympathy for these two former Lutherans ends at the point of their leaving Lutheranism for Rome. That is no solution to the frustrations they experienced. I have never understood how Lutherans could abandon their confession of the faith in order to join Roman Catholicism or Eastern Orthodoxy. I understand their frustrations, but I will never be able to understand their willingness to give up some of the essential

doctrines of the Christian faith, the chief of which being the doctrine of justification, in order to ease those frustrations. Of course, those who have left would argue that they haven't abandoned their confession, but have rather learned the fullness of their confession in these historic fellowships. Sorry, I don't buy it. Not even for a moment. The doctrinal differences between Lutherans and Rome (and the East) are essential and vast. But, that's not what I want to focus upon here.

What I want to highlight is the fact that we Lutherans do believe, teach, and confess, with the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church of all time, that Christ IS PRESENT in the Holy Eucharist, and how that belief must inform and shape our practice in worship. At the end of the day, this is really the crux of the silly, ongoing debate among Lutherans regarding worship practices. If we believe that Christ is Present among us, we will practice accordingly.

This is what our Lutheran forefathers were getting at when they confessed:

“Our churches are falsely accused of abolishing the Mass. The Mass is held among us and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved, except that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns. These have been added to teach the people. For ceremonies are needed for this reason alone, that the uneducated be taught what they need to know about Christ” (Augsburg Confession XXIV:1-3).

Our Lutheran forefathers were being accused by Rome of abolishing the Mass and doing a new thing. Their response was clear. They had not abolished the Mass, but continued to celebrate it with the highest reverence. They retained the usual ceremonies. The only thing they added were German hymns for the purpose of further teaching the people what they believed, taught, and confessed about Christ, even as their retention of the usual ceremonies taught the same. They go on to point out some of the abuses within the Mass that they had corrected, for the sake of the Gospel. But, they are adamant in their defense that they have not changed the theology of worship, which is centered on the Real Presence of Christ among them during the Mass.

After Rome responded to the Augsburg Confession with their Confutation, our Lutheran forefathers again made their confession clear:

“At the outset, we must again make this preliminary statement: we do not abolish the Mass, but religiously keep and defend it. Masses are celebrated among us every Lord's Day and on the other festivals. The Sacrament is offered to those who wish to use it, after they have been examined and absolved. And the usual public ceremonies are observed, the series of lessons, of prayers, vestments, and other such things” (Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXIV:1).

Again, they are clear. Rome's accusations against them are false. They go on to explain very clearly that the only changes they've made to the Mass are for the sake of more clearly teaching people about Christ and His Presence among them in the Mass, including the use of the vernacular. They admit that they have discontinued some things, like "private Masses," and that they have corrected some abuses, like consecrating bread and wine for the sole purpose of adoration, rather than for the purpose of distribution, per our Lord's clear institution. There is much more discussed in this article, but the main point that comes through loud and clear is that Lutherans continued to confess the Real Presence of Christ in the Mass and that their celebration of the Mass, including the ceremonies they employed, most definitely matched this belief.

Can the same be said today by those Lutherans who take their cue from Protestants who do not believe in the Real Presence of Christ and turn the Divine Service into an entertaining "worship experience"? Is the Mass (Divine Service) being celebrated "with the highest reverence" when the altar is eliminated or moved to the side to make room for the "praise band"? Are Lutherans "religiously defending and keeping the Mass" when they employ "contemporary praise songs" which focus on an absent Jesus, at best, or a generic god, at worst?

It is no wonder that we Lutherans are not taken very seriously when it comes to our confession that Christ is Present in the Holy Eucharist. How can we be taken seriously when many among us do not act like they believe this?

I really believe, as I said above, that this is the crux of the debate among Lutherans. It is not about "style" or "taste"; it is not about holding on to the past merely for tradition's sake. It is about what we believe and, specifically, what we believe about Christ in relation to the Divine Service. Is He Present or not? If He is, then our practice should confess as much. It is not enough to confess on paper that we believe He is Present; our practice better confess the same. For our Lutheran forefathers are most certainly correct: Our ceremonies teach; our practice informs. People learn every bit as much about our doctrines from our practices as they do from our words. In fact, I think it is safe to say that if our practice does not jive with our words, practice will win out. We can say "Real Presence, Real Presence, Real Presence" till the cows come home, but if we practice like we don't believe Jesus is Really Present, people won't believe it.

We do not need to return "home" to Rome or flee to the East. We need only to practice what we believe, teach, and confess. If we did that, then those dissatisfied Protestants who are brought to the realization that Christ Is Present in the Holy Eucharist might actually consider taking the journey home to confessional Lutheranism, where the faith of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church is truly confessed.

The New Reformation

A blog post by Pastor Larry Peters (www.pastoralmeanderings.blogspot.com)



While many others and I, myself, have spoken of the great need to return to the Lutheran Confessions, to a renewed catechetical emphasis within the parish, and to the Divine Service as the basis for the liturgical life of the parish, I want to make it clear that it is not Luther's Reformation that we need to fight again. The world has

changed, people have changed, and the battle before us is far different than that battle of Luther's day.

Everyone believed there was a God in Luther's day -- but most believed this God was an angry ogre who would rather punish than forgive, who forced people to jump through hoops to satisfy Him, and whose Word was more Law than anything else. The Gospel had been shrouded in Law to the point where its voice was hidden and almost silent within the average parish. Fear had replaced trust. Luther's own personal struggle was a reflection of the fears and concerns of the people of his day.

Today we live in a different world. The God of today is no consuming fire or even a present force. The God of today is distant from day to day life, who holds to no abiding truths except love and acceptance, and who treats sin and rebellion with the casual shrug of an indifferent deity. The God of today is an individual creation with ingredients from many holy books, philosophers, theologians, and spiritual guides -- a conglomeration of pieces stitched together and re-stitched in the minds of people -- to fit the prevailing mood.

Where once people were captive to the voice of the priest and the words of the Mass, now they are captive to the voices of their own hearts. Though with information in abundance, they have become Biblically illiterate and therefore susceptible to the mood of trend and change in the ebb and flow of human ideas and ideals. They have the Gospel but are not so sure they have sin. They have the resurrection but choose to overlook the death.

We do not need to battle the Reformation of Luther's day all over again. We have a new battle and it requires a New Reformation. This Reformation is not a representation of old ideas but an embrace of that which is yesterday, today, and forever the same -- the abiding truth that alone allows us to

abide in Him and He in us. This Reformation is a ship adrift on a sea of uncertainty seeking to hold anchor in the truth that does not change. This Reformation may require more Law before the Gospel can be heard again, the conviction of sin and death and our desperate need before we can rejoice in the holy hope that the cross and empty tomb affords.

This Reformation needs no friend in culture but needs to confront the old friend in culture which has betrayed her and mark the boundaries. This Reformation needs no Luther to tip the scales but millions of faithful who will walk in the steps of Luther, and those before and after him, who dare to speak the whole truth of God, to live before Him through the Word and Sacraments, and to proclaim to the world the need of a Savior and the one and only Savior who is Jesus Christ. This Reformation needs to learn how to use technology as well as it is being used to promote the empty and self-serving truths of today that last only as long as we want them and are only as big as we want them to be. This Reformation needs to be concerned not only with the Church but with the parachurch, with those things that live around the Church and in many cases pass as the Church (so much so that people follow them and ignore what takes place on Sunday morning where two or three are gathered around the Word and Table of the Lord).

Yesterday's confessions need to be heard again, but new confessions may need to be written that speak to a world where education has worked to separate us from what we believe, where science has become the smug enemy of faith, where sophistication laughs at church going, where humor can belittle no one except Christians, and where morality is the feel good moment justified.

Lutherans approaching Reformation Day cannot afford to speak of what was once and how it was changed . . . unless we are also willing to speak of what is and what must be done to confront the deathward drift of a faith unleashed from Scripture and Truth and unfocused upon the Cross and Empty Tomb.

This is how the Church will reclaim its power and place in the world . . . and without it I believe the Church will become the hospice center that is herself dying. This is no doomsday prediction but a call to take up the mantle of the prophets and apostles and engage the world around us with the one and only Word that brings life and the one and only Savior who can rescue and redeem us from all our enemies . . . but mostly from ourselves.

Synopsis of October 6, 2009 Church Council Minutes

Call To Order & Opening Prayer

Vice President Hill called the meeting to order at 7:04pm. Pastor Messer led the opening prayer. The following members were present: Carol Zeile, Larry Elliott, Vern Jakolat, Ken Hill, Gary Miller, Sharyn Greening, Megan Brown and Chris Brown (8:05pm). Carolyn Johnson was appointed to serve as the Chairperson of the Board of Evangelism by President Brown and was also present.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was amended to add "Concerns about Members" under Business. Motion made by Councilmember Elliott, supported by Treasurer Zeile to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Treasurer Zeile, supported by Financial Secretary Miller to approve the minutes from September 1 as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Report(s)

- **Pastor** - Pastor Messer presented the attached report.
- **Treasurer's Report** – Treasurer Zeile presented the attached report and informed the Council of other matters regarding the Christian Care Fund and a comparison of finances between fiscal years 2008 and 2009. Treasurer Zeile also presented a request from Mary Jakolat to attend the Good Shepherd Institute in Ft. Wayne. The Institute would require \$258 dollars for registration, room and board and travel expenses. Motion made by Financial Secretary Miller, supported by Treasurer Zeile to approve the request and fund Mary's attendance and travel to the Institute. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Financial Secretary** – Financial Secretary Miller informed the Council that the quarterly statements should be available before the October Voters Assembly meeting.

Boards

- **Board of Elders** – Councilmember Elliott informed the Council that he has been elected to be a lay delegate for the 2010 synodical convention. Additionally, new members have been placed into districts.
- **Board of Trustees** – Councilmember Jakolat informed the Council of various projects including: winter furnace check at a cost of \$312, new water heater has been installed, fire extinguishers have been installed at a cost of \$248, snow plow estimate was received from Green Side Up for \$72 a push, phone in kitchen to be repaired on October 7 and Pastor will work with his father to repair the light in the parking lot.
- **Board of Christian Education** – Councilmember Greening informed the Council that both the Sunday School children and Adult Bible Study are studying the liturgy.
- **Board of Evangelism** – Councilmember Johnson informed the Council that the first meeting was held on September 30 with the group discussing the food bank and Adopt-A-Family holiday activities.
- **Board of Stewardship** – No report.

Organization and Committee Reports

- **Peace Lutheran Ladies Guild** – No report.
- **Peace Youth Group** – No report.

Business

- **2010 Budget Process** – Treasurer Zeile reported that the stakeholders have been contacted regarding the 2010 budget. Carol will prepare a proposed budget for discussion at the November Council meeting.
- **Concerns About Members** – Pastor Messer informed the Council of concerns he has about various members.

General Comment

Due to elections on November 3, the next Council meeting will be held on November 10.

Adjournment & Closing Prayer

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56pm. Pastor led the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Brown, Secretary

(Note: Complete minutes with all attachments are available in the church office for review.)

PEACE NEWS & NOTES

PYG NEWS

November Events

MONTHLY MEETING

Sunday, November 22— 5pm-7pm

Fellowship Hall

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Sundays during Fellowship

Youth Room

Greetings in Christ,

November will be a busy month as we prepare for the Ladies' Guild Annual Bazaar and Cookie Walk. We will be doing the fudge again this year. It went very well last year. We will meet in the Youth Room during fellowship reviewing other ideas and crafts

Our monthly meeting is slowly growing as youth are able to set time in their busy schedules. 5-6 is recreation and fellowship. 6-7 is Bible study and discussion. We are currently studying the Gospel of John.

All youth of Peace, sixth grade and up, are members of the Peace Youth Group. All are welcome to attend any and all meetings and events. Bring a friend, they are welcome too.

As always, thank you to everyone who supports the Youth through our fundraisers (pop can drive, Spartan label drive, and cell phone drive). Also your support of time and attention given is greatly appreciated by all of the Youth.

May the Spirit of the Lord be
with you,
Jonathan Penzien



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

A very sincere and heartfelt thank you to the Ladies' Guild for hosting the Pastor Appreciation Dinner on October 11, and to all of you who presented us with cards and gifts. Your love, appreciation, and generosity are appreciated by us more than words can say. We love you all very much and are so blessed to be a part of this wonderful family! Thanks again!

Much Love,

Pastor & Lisa Messer



ADVENT TEA

The Advent Tea will take place on **Saturday, December 12 from 4-6 pm**. We are looking for one more hostess. A sign-up sheet is posted on the S.A.L.T. bulletin board. There is an additional sign-up sheet for anyone who would like to attend but does not want to host a table. If you would like to help organize the tea, please see Lisa Messer. Our color this year is gold. Alternate date, if we have bad weather, will be Tuesday, December 15 from 7-9 pm.

This is a wonderful opportunity for women to get together and focus their hearts on Christ as the Advent season prepares us for the celebration of Christmas!

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN TO SERVE WOMEN!

The Advent Tea Committee needs men to help during the Tea. Join us on **November 8** or **November 15** immediately after the church service for a brief discussion.

CHURCH DECORATING

SATURDAY

NOVEMBER 28

10:30 AM

Lunch of **PIZZA, SALAD, DESSERTS** and **BEVERAGES** will be provided by the Ladies' Guild for all who come to help.



PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd

PASTOR MESSER IS BLOGGING!

www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com

*Check in from time to time
to see what's on his mind.*



Abide In My Word!

Ladies Lunch Bunch

We will be visiting the Middleton Diner on Monday, November 16, at 1:30 pm.

All ladies of Peace are welcome and also may invite a guest—someone without a church or someone living alone. Please enter your name on the signup list posted in Fellowship Hall and join us!

TABLE TALK

Our Table Talks are informal and informative discussions with Pastor Messer on various topics decided by the group in attendance. Plus, THEY'RE FUN! Our next Table Talk will take place on **Thursday, November 12 at 7 pm** at the Church. We hope you'll be able to join us!



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P.O. Box 912
Collinsville, IL 62234

You can also donate online via PayPal by going to www.issuesetc.org and clicking on "Donate." There are also forms available in the church office for any interested in donating monthly via automatic withdrawal.

S.A.L.T. News

Sharing with All the Love and Truth of Jesus Christ!

The next S.A.L.T. meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 10 at 6 pm**. We would love to have you join us as we seek to put some of our plans into action.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

and MORE

COMING SOON

ADVENT WEDNESDAY EVENING

POTLUCK DINNERS

6 pm

December 2, 9, 16

PEACE MOVIE NIGHT

We gathered together in the Smith Room at the Alma College library on Tuesday, October 27, and watched the movie, "Luther." We were blessed to have 13 members of Peace and over 20 students from the college in attendance. What a special treat this was! Huge thanks to Carol Zeile for taking care of all the arrangements. It was a truly wonderful event.

Our next Movie Night has yet to be scheduled. We have been blessed to have a generous donor volunteer to purchase a projector for our church (the projector we used to have was borrowed and no longer in our possession). We are hoping to get this purchased and installed in time to host a Movie Night at the church sometime in November. Keep your eyes opened for details to be posted in the bulletin and around the church soon!

Ladies' Guild

Ladies' Guild Meeting

Our next meeting will be **Monday, November 2 at 7pm**. Hostess will be Coaline Luplow. All Ladies of the congregation are invited to attend our Guild meetings. If you are a confirmed female member of Peace, you are a member of Guild. We would sincerely encourage you to participate and be an active member of the Guild.

Altar Flowers

There is a Flower Calendar for 2009 posted on the fellowship hall bulletin board. If you wish to place flowers on the altar sometime during the year, please fill your name in on the calendar and contact the church office with any information that you wish to have included in the bulletin. A bouquet costs \$25 and usually lasts about one (1) month. **We would like to encourage 2 persons (families) to purchase flowers each month, one for each plant stand.** If paying the church for the flowers, checks should be made payable to Peace Lutheran, Church with a separate sizeable note marked "Flower Fund," attached and placed in the Financial Secretary's envelope in the church office. Thank you for helping to beautify our chancel.

PLC Women's Prayer Chain



The updated list is posted on the Ladies' Guild Bulletin Board. All participants should have received a copy. If you wish to be added to the prayer chain as a caller, or if you wish to have yourself or someone else "sent through the chain," please see or call Marlene Miller at 463-3710.



ANNUAL COOKIE WALK AND CRAFT SHOW SATURDAY DECEMBER 5, 2009 9 AM—4 PM

The Ladies' Guild is asking all the ladies of Peace (who are willing and able) to bake 25-30 dozen small, fancy cookies for our cookie walk. Please have them at the church by Friday evening, December 4, if at all possible.

Setup will be on Wednesday evening, December 2 after the Advent Service.

Also, if you are willing to help during the bazaar, please contact Coaline Luplow (763-1016). We appreciate all the help we can get!!

Ladies' Guild will be making personal calls to everyone this year to determine the number of participating people and cookies.

Thanks so much for your help!



Altar Care

November

Sally Pease

December

Carol Zeile

January

Marlene Miller, Charlotte Dargie

Coffee Hostesses

November

1 Shawna Greening
8 Dorothy Trgina
15 Ladies' Guild
22 Mary Jakolat
29 Gretchen Harrison

December

6 Coaline Luplow
13 Jo Wendt
20 Cassie Tennant
27 Coaline Luplow

January

3 Carol Zeile
10 Tina Schafer
17 Peace Youth Group
24 M. Miller/C. Dargie
31 Janice Sager



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT PEACE

Youth Confirmation Classes

- First Year Confirmands meet for instruction on at 10 am, followed by Second Year Confirmands at 11 am.

Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

- Sunday School and Adult Bible Class is offered every Sunday at 11 am for all children, adult members of Peace, and guests. We are currently using **“A New Song Unto the Lord”**.

Together in the Word

- Our *Together in the Word* Bible Study meets on **Thursday mornings at 10 am**. All men and women of Peace who are available at that time are encouraged to join us. Guests are always welcome as well. We are currently studying the book of **Romans**.

“Christian History 101”

- Weekly classes are held on **Wednesdays at 6 pm**. The class is studying the history of the Christian Church from the time of the apostles to today. Few Christians today really know and understand the history of the Christian Church, so this is a study that will benefit all who attend.



NOVEMBER

Happy Birthday to:

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 4 Brian Stroven | 21 Aaron Reithel |
| 13 Lillian Manns | 22 Jayden Row |
| 13 Jessica Penzien | 23 Joyce Kohler |

Happy Anniversary to:

- 9 Pastor and Lisa Messer
- 22 Ryan and Sarah Cummins
- 25 Donald and Susan Reithel

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

PAROCHIAL REPORT

(as of 10/30/09)

Membership at Peace

Baptized - 141; Confirmed - 121

Membership gains: 1

Virginia Gorsline—Transferred from Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Newport, MI

Membership losses: 19

Mike & Anna Gilbert; Bill & Beth Brostrom; Dick & Darlene Palmer; Lois Miller; Burt, Cheryl, Alex, Jordan, and BJ Henry; Carol Durst; Jeff, Cheryl, Jenna, Megan, Jared, and Jayce Kuehnlein; Leland & Marilyn Oswald—All Transferred to Zion Lutheran Church in Mt. Pleasant.

(At the Voters' Assembly on October 25, Pastor Messer gave a detailed report concerning the situation leading to the transfer of these members. He shared how numerous attempts had been made to reach out to these brothers and sisters in the attempt to set up meetings with them and work toward reconciliation. Early in September, Pastor Messer was contacted by Pastor Sam Reith from Zion in Mt. Pleasant and made aware of the fact that most of the members above had been attending there on a regular basis. Since that time, Pastor Messer, in consultation with our board of elders, has worked with both Pastor Reith and Pastor Jon Bakker (who also serves in Mt. Pleasant) toward a resolution regarding these members. Pastor Messer read the letters that had been sent in this regard to the Assembly, and reported that, with the exception of Cheryl Henry, none of the members above wished to meet and discuss their concerns. Ultimately, it was the will of all of these members to transfer their membership to Zion and, after much prayer and reflection, Pastor Messer and both pastors from Zion agreed to honor their request. If you have any questions about any of this, do not hesitate to speak with Pastor Messer. We wish these brothers and sisters God's richest blessings and commend them to the spiritual care of the faithful pastors at our sister congregation in Mt. Pleasant.)

Financial Report

YTD Budgeted.....	\$ 96,105.00
YTD Receipts.....	\$ 85,842.48
Difference.....	\$-10,262.52

Update from the Treasurer

For those of you who were unable to attend, following is a summary of the report presented at the Voters' Assembly on October 25, 2009. You will notice that this is a comparison of our income and expenses on September 30, 2008 and September 20, 2009. In this way we are able to compare nine months of data.

PLC Income and Expenses

	As of 9/30/09		As of 9/30/08	
	Total Actual	Total Budgeted	Total Actual	Total Budgeted
<u>Income</u>				
Offering	\$76,164.98	\$114,655.00	\$73,296.51	\$114,655.00
Rental Income : City	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$0.00
Rental Income : Weight Watchers	\$1,020.00	\$1,560.00	\$1,140	\$1,560.00
Total Income	\$77,184.98	\$116,215.00	\$74,736.51	\$116,215.00
<u>Expense</u>				
Church and Worship : Altar and Worship	\$1,089.66	\$1,500.00	\$887.52	\$1,800.00
Church and Worship : Christian Education	\$598.52	\$800.00	\$583.41	\$1,000.00
Church and Worship : Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150.00
Church and Worship : Music	\$1,336.34	\$2,000.00	\$904.95	\$2,500.00
Church and Worship : Stewardship	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
Church and Worship : Evangelism	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
Church and Worship : Youth Group	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,500.00
Miscellaneous	\$849.51		\$51.30	\$0.00
Missions : Issues, Etc.	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Missions : Local	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$180.00	\$250.00
Operating Expense: Administrative Assistant	\$3,900.00	\$5,200.00	\$2,516.00	\$2,408.00
Operating Expense : Advertising	\$131.31	\$200.00	\$648.00	\$900.00
Operating Expense : Building Maintenance	\$1,412.92	\$1,000.00	\$1,482.07	\$2,000.00
Operating Expense : Insurance	\$1,799.00	\$2,800.00	\$2,132.00	\$3,000.00
Operating Expense : Janitorial	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1716.00	\$3,500.00
Operating Expense : Snow Removal	\$1,080.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,088.00	\$1,750.00
Operating Expense : Maintenance Supplies	\$475.95	\$250.00	\$592.48	\$250.00
Operating Expense : Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
Operating Expense : Office Expense	\$3,089.12	\$2,400.00	\$2,704.77	\$2,500.00
Operating Expense : Telephone/Internet	\$1,546.45	\$2,000.00	\$1,508.93	\$1,750.00
Operating Expense : Utilities	\$4,480.42	\$5,500.00	\$3,452.86	\$5,500.00
Pastoral Expense : Benefit Package	\$16,603.17	\$22,000.00	\$15,001.08	\$19,000.00
Pastoral Expense : Conferences and Training	\$945.78	\$1,000.00	\$105.00	\$1,000.00
Pastoral Expense : Down Payment Loan	\$1,665.00	\$2,220.00	\$1,665.00	\$2,220.00
Pastoral Expense : Guest Pastors	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$150.00	\$400.00
Pastoral Expense : Mileage	\$1,341.32	\$2,000.00	\$1,432.09	\$2,000.00
Pastoral Expense : Book Allowance	\$398.01	\$500.00	\$453.21	\$500.00
Pastoral Expense : Salary	\$46,251.56	\$62,045.00	\$45,043.83	\$59,645.00
<u>Total Expenses</u>	\$89,994.04	\$116,215.00	\$86,298.50	\$116,215.00
Total:	-\$12,809.06	\$0.00	-\$11,561.99	\$0.00

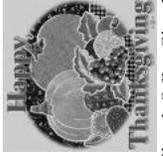
Please let me know if you have questions.

In Christ,
Carol Zeile

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November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 All Saints' Day 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	2 7 pm—Ladies Guild 	3 7 am—8 pm Election Day <i>Church Office Closed</i> <i>Pastor Messer @ Winkel</i>	4 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Vespers	5 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers	6	7 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf.
8 3rd-Last Sun. of Church Year 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	9	10 6 pm - S.A.L.T. Meeting 7 pm—Church Council	11 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Vespers	12 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers 7 pm—Table Talk	13	14 <i>No Confirmation Classes</i>
15 2nd-Last Sun. of Church Year 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	16 1:30 pm—Lunch Bunch	17	18 <i>No Class or Service this evening</i>	19 <i>No Together in the Word</i> 5 pm—Weight Watchers	20	21 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf.
22 Last Sunday of Church Year 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 5-7 pm—PYG 	23 <i>Newsletter articles due</i>	24	25 6 pm—"Christian History" 7 pm—Divine Service <i>Thanksgiving Eve</i> 	26  <i>Church Office Closed</i>	27	28 10:30 am Church Decorating Free lunch to workers <i>No Confirmation Classes</i> 
29 1st Sunday in Advent 8:30—Choir 9:30—Divine Service 10:45—Fellowship 11:00—BC, SS 	30 Noon - Divine Service <i>St. Andrew</i> 	December 1 5 pm—Advent Bible Study 6 pm—Potluck Dinner 7 pm—Advent Service 	2	3 10 am—Together in Word 5 pm—Weight Watchers	4	5 9 am—4 pm Ladies Guild Cookie Walk & Crafts 10 am—1st Yr. Conf. 11 am—2nd Yr. Conf. 

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Pastor's Home: 989-463-3093
Pastor's Cell: 989-388-2037



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.

Serving in November

November	ELDER	ACOLYTES	USHERS	GREETERS
1 - 9:30 am <i>(All Saints' Day)</i>	Larry Elliott	Natalie Penzien Samantha Messer	Gary Miller Jim Sager	Yvonne Elenbaas, Mary Girard
8 - 9:30 am <i>(3rd Last Sunday)</i>	Terry Luplow	Melanie Penzien Aaron Messer	Chris Brown Bill Hendrick	Dorothy Trgina
15 - 9:30 am <i>(2nd Last Sunday)</i>	Miguel Ortiz	Tyrel Harwager Phillip Schafer	Daren Johnson Vern Jakolat	Terry and Coaline Luplow
22 - 9:30 am <i>(Last Sunday of Ch Yr.)</i>	Larry Elliott	Sarah Messer Natalie Penzien	Jim Sager Jon Penzien	Lisa Messer and Family
25 - 7:00 pm <i>(Thanksgiving Eve)</i>	Larry Elliott		Vern Jakolat	
29 - 9:30 am <i>(Advent 1)</i>	Terry Luplow	Samantha Messer Sierra Luplow	Gary Miller Chris Brown	Bob and Jo Wendt
December				
2 - 9:30 am <i>(Advent 1 Midweek)</i>	Terry Luplow		Vern Jakolat	Charlotte Dargie, Marlene Miller
6 - 9:30 am <i>(Advent 2)</i>	Miguel Ortiz	Aaron Messer Tyrel Harwager	Bill Hendrick Daren Johnson	

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