

June, 2010

# The Peace Post

Peace Lutheran Church ~ Alma, MI

## From the Desk of Pastor Messer

### “Five Years at Peace: Part 2—In the Beginning”

*Reminiscing about my call to, and first five years of service at, Peace.*



So, I had a call to Peace in hand and was working with Jon Greening on finding a home for my family. That went far more smoothly than I anticipated it would. Lisa and I actually only had to make two trips to Alma to look at houses with our realtor before settling on the one we wanted to pursue. We looked at dozens of houses during those two trips, many of them located in the subdivisions within the city limits, and many others located in the country areas outside the city limits. What we found amazing was the fact that the prices didn't vary that much between the two locations. We could purchase a much larger home outside the city limits for a fraction more than it would cost for a smaller home within the city limits. That being the case, and given the size of our family, we quickly narrowed our search to the larger homes outside the city limits. By our second trip, we were able to narrow things down even further to two possibilities. One of these was a fairly new cape cod, located on Adams Rd., off of Lumberjack Rd. This was my choice. Lisa liked it, too, but she was concerned that it was a little too far out from the city. That didn't bother me at all, since the best feature of this home was that it came with a little over 7 acres of hardwoods, and all I could think about was the hunting I could do there. The other home was the one we ended up purchasing. This was Lisa's choice. Once she saw this home, the Adams home was no longer an option in her mind. I didn't bother trying to convince her otherwise, since I knew that it would not only be a pointless venture to do so, but also that she was right. This was a much better option for our family. So, we called the realtor and asked him to make an offer, and just a few short weeks later, we were in Alma at the bank with Jon signing papers.

That was early June, 2005. I was actually slated in to continue serving my vicarage in Frankentrost until mid-July, but, thankfully, the good people there were gracious enough to release me from my duties a month early. This gave us a little over a month to move into our new home and get settled before I would begin serving at Peace, which was an absolute blessing. It also afforded me time to do some much needed planning and preparing before commencing my pastoral duties (planning Services, choosing hymns, writing sermons, etc.). It was my goal to have a developed plan for the first six months of Services by the time my ordination/installation day arrived and, by God's grace and with a lot of hard work, I was able to accomplish that goal.

In the meantime, this time of transition also had me working in concert with Jon, Pastor Bob Koeppen (Interim Pastor at Peace), and Pastor David Reed (the Circuit Counselor for our Midland Circuit at the time) on my Ordination/Installation Service, which was scheduled for July 24, 2005. Actually, the three of them did most of the work. I simply supplied them with the names of the Pastors I wanted to participate in the Service and a few other details, and they did everything else.

It was also during this time that Pastor Koeppen treated me to lunch and filled me in on the congregation I would soon be serving. We spent nearly three hours together talking. He shared Peace's history with me and filled me in on the current state of the congregation, as he saw things. He was honest and forthright with me, alerting me to some concerns he had and some of the obstacles he thought I would have to find a way to overcome. He recommended that I take

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

“Five Years at Peace . . .” ..... 1-4	A Blessed Exchange..... 11	Birthdays & Anniversaries ..... 14
“Piety Matters” ..... 5-7	From the Lighter Side ..... 11	Parochial Report ..... 14
Church Council Minutes..... 8	Stewardship Article ..... 12	June Calendar ..... 15
Peace News & Notes ..... 9-10	Ladies Guild ..... 13	Serving in June ..... 16

things slow, since he was sure that, based on the congregation's history, it would take time to build trust. The two biggest concerns he had, and wanted to clearly convey to me, were the fears he sensed from some in the congregation that a) Peace simply could not afford to support a full-time pastor (indeed, there were some in the congregation who were not fully on board with the decision to call a full-time pastor), and that b) I would not stick around for the long haul, since Peace had a history of pastors coming and leaving in short fashion. So, there were some in the congregation who didn't think calling a full-time pastor was the best idea and others who were totally on board with calling a full-time pastor, but were also worried that the full-time pastor they called wouldn't stick around for very long. In other words, there were fears and worries spread throughout the congregation over my call, which is to be expected in a congregation which had been without a full-time pastor for nearly fifteen years. I was definitely going to have my hands full, that's for sure.

At the same time, Pastor Koeppen was excited about the step Peace was taking in calling me—a step he had invested a lot of time and energy moving the congregation toward during his two-plus years of faithful service as Interim Pastor—and he was optimistic about the congregation's future. He shared many positives about the congregation with me and it was clear to me that he had grown to love the people of Peace during his time here. He was extremely helpful in preparing me for service at Peace. Between the information I received from him and that which I received from my many meetings and conversations with Jon, I had a good idea of what I was walking into.

Then came the day. July 24, 2005—the day I was ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry and Installed to serve as pastor at Peace. It was the hottest day ever recorded in human history. Okay, so maybe not, but it was HOT! Those of you who were there that day can surely remember how hot it was. All the windows and doors were opened and several fans were put to use, but none of that was able to keep the heat out. The place was packed to the gills, which was a tremendous blessing, but definitely added to the hotness. Lots of sweating going on that day, for sure!

And yet, aside from the heat, it was a most wonderful Service. There were over fifteen pastors in attendance, a few of whom traveled great distances to be there. Lots of family and friends came to share the day with us, and a large contingent from Immanuel, Frankentrost filled the pews and the additional folding chairs set up as well, not to mention the many members of Peace who were there, many of whom graciously made room for all the guests, standing in the back and sitting in the overflow areas. Here are a couple of pictures to bring to remembrance how packed it was in the Lord's House here at Peace that day:



Last month, I shared how surreal it felt for me to hear Dr. Fickenschner announce my call to Peace during the Call Service at seminary. As surreal as that felt, it didn't compare to what I felt the day I was ordained. To be perfectly honest, the Service itself is a blur in my memory. I recall bits and pieces of it, but when I think of that day, what really comes to mind are all the emotions I remember experiencing as the Service began and unfolded. I was, quite literally, a nervous wreck. You wouldn't have known it by looking at me, but I was shaking something fierce on the inside. This was it! There would be no turning back now. I was being ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry. Me! It just didn't seem real. And, in many ways, it still doesn't seem real, even five years later. I still often wonder what the Lord was thinking in all this. That He would call me, with my long list of faults and inadequacies, to serve as a pastor definitely proves the old saying that He works in mysterious ways!

Besides the nervousness and the intense feeling of not being worthy for the task before me, I also felt a strong sense of relief at the same time. It was a long and difficult journey to get to that day, one which involved countless sacrifices made not only by me, but by Lisa, our children, and many others who took that journey with us in one way or another. There were many times along the way when it seemed certain that the journey was at an end and we wouldn't make it to the final destination. The biggest, and most recurring, obstacle we faced was financial. I can't tell you how many times Lisa and I had no clue how we were going to make it through the month. Were it not for the food and clothing banks at the seminary, and the monetary gifts from people and congregations we didn't even know, which always mysteriously arrived somehow just at the right time, we certainly wouldn't have made it. And, even with those blessings, we were forced to do a lot of less than salutary financial shuffling to stay afloat—like paying bills with credit cards, and even getting new credit cards to help pay bills because our other credit cards were maxed out, both of which are big “No-No's,” financially speaking. But, that's what it took to survive. It was either that or throw in the towel. (This would be an opportune time to launch into a lengthy diatribe about how sad it is in our day and age that becoming a pastor in our synod almost always involves going into massive debt—e.g. Lisa and I entered seminary nearly debt-free [the only debt we had at the time were my undergraduate student loans, which totaled around \$12,000], but we left the seminary around \$80,000 in debt, which is, again, sadly, par for the course these days—but I'll spare you that diatribe for now and get back to the topic at hand). Suffice it to say that it was indeed a relief to finally arrive at the day of my ordination/installation. The Lord had graciously brought us to the completion of the long and difficult journey to get there, and I knew that we were about to embark on another journey as I began my pastoral ministry. And, while I was definitely nervous about beginning this new journey, I was excited at the same time. Here are a few more pictures of my ordination/installation:



*Rev. Mark Loest ordaining me with the words: “Thomas C. Messer, I ordain and consecrate you to the Office of the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*



*Rev. David Reed installing me with the words: “Reverend Thomas C. Messer, I install you as pastor of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Alma, Michigan, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*





Now that I was officially the pastor at Peace, it was time for the work to begin. But, before I get to that, I'd like to share a few thoughts on another important day—July 31, 2005. This was the Sunday upon which I conducted the Divine Service for the first time as a pastor here at Peace. I remember having great difficulty sleeping the night before. I kept going over the Service in my head, trying to convince myself that I was fully prepared and had no reason to be as anxious about it as I was. But, try as I might, I couldn't rid myself of that anxiety. What if I forgot to do something important? What if I couldn't remember parts of the liturgy? I had thankfully accumulated lots of experience participating in Services, but had never flown solo before this and I'd by lying if I didn't admit that the thought worried me a bit.

But, the Lord is good and He gave me the strength and confidence to get through that first Service. Things actually went quite smoothly with this rookie pastor at the helm for the first time. I did make one significant goof during the Service. I forgot to prepare for Holy Communion as the Offering was being gathered. So, when it came time to consecrate the elements, I had to hurry up and uncover the vessels before reciting the Words of Institution. I'm sure this went unnoticed by nearly everyone in attendance, but I felt like such a dummy. I've never forgotten to prepare for Holy Communion since that day though, so maybe it was a blessing in disguise. Other than that goof, everything else went very well.

After the Service, as I was making my way to the fellowship hall, a strange thing happened. A member approached me and asked if he could speak with me for a moment. "Sure," I said. So, he and I headed into the old pastor's office, which is now the new church office, and he said, "I just wanted to let you know how happy many of us are to have a new pastor here at Peace. This congregation needs a pastor to stick it out here. Please don't let some of these people run you off, because they'll certainly try to do so."

Now, this is not exactly the sort of thing a pastor who has just gotten through his very first Service wants to hear. I had no clue how to respond to this. I think I just said something brilliant like, "Okay." I do think this particular member meant well at the time, but it was just a tad bit on the strange side to be hearing this from someone on my first day of service in the congregation, and it made me wonder further what I was getting into here. Was this just the fear Pastor Koeppen sensed and shared with me bearing itself out? Or, did this man know of people who were already planning how they might run me off? I was perplexed and confused by this, to say the least, but I kept it in mind. The irony of this is that the man who shared these sentiments with me is no longer a member here. I wish he would have "stuck it out" and not allowed people to "run him off," as he admonished me to do on that day long ago.

Anyway, after this strange incident, I made it to the fellowship hall, grabbed some coffee and sat down as Jon Greening was getting set to begin the Voters' Assembly scheduled for that day. It had been decided to postpone the Voters' Assembly, which normally takes place on the fourth Sunday of the month (which would have been July 24), so that I could be in attendance. And, I'm ever so glad that decision was made, because I got to hear Jon address the congregation with a brilliant little treatise on what having a new, full-time pastor meant for them. I can still remember the sentiment of the speech he gave that day like it was yesterday. After welcoming my family and me, he told the members assembled there that having a new, full-time pastor did not mean that they now had themselves their "hired Christian." He said something like, "We are blessed to have Pastor Messer with us now, but he has not been sent here to do all the work and make our lives easier. He is not our hired Christian. He is here to serve us, not work for us. And, he needs our help. Now that we have a full-time pastor, our efforts are needed far more now than they were before. It is time for us to get to work. We need to make ourselves available to serve with Pastor Messer if our congregation is going to grow and thrive."

Jon's actual speech was surely more profound than my little summary of it here, but hopefully I've captured the gist of it. I remember telling Lisa how impressed I was with what Jon had said when we got home that day. She had been just as impressed. Jon knew the congregation as well as anyone and he said what needed to be said. He knew that one of the biggest obstacles this congregation would have to overcome was the "part-time mentality" which had set in from being part-time for so long. He knew full well that there were people in the congregation who wrongly viewed my arrival as some sort of magic ingredient for automatic growth and success. Thus, he faithfully admonished the congregation not to view me as a hired Christian in their midst, but as a servant alongside of whom they should be ready to serve. It was a wonderful admonishment, indeed, full of wisdom and truth, as was always the case with Jon. The question, of course, was: Would the congregation heed his admonishment? The answer is . . . well, you'll have to wait until next month when I conclude my little trip down memory lane in: "Five Years at Peace: Part 3—Where We've Been, Where We Are, and Where We're Heading."

Your servant in Christ,

*Pastor Messer*



## Piety Matters

(By Rev. Heath Curtis, Pastor at Trinity Lutheran in Worden, IL,  
and Zion Lutheran in Edwardsville, IL)

*This excellent article was posted by Pastor Curtis on [www.gottesdienstonline.blogspot.com](http://www.gottesdienstonline.blogspot.com) earlier this week. In it, Pastor Curtis debunks the idea held by many today that it is possible to be Lutheran in doctrine, but not in practice. It is one of the best pieces on this oft-contested topic among Lutherans I have read to date. Please give it a read!*

Can a religion be only cerebral? Is religion only a way of thinking and not a way of doing?

I don't believe so. I think that religion is a matter of soul, mind, and body. It is a way of thinking, doing, and living. In other words, it is a matter of piety. The old saw about "Lutheran substance and [American] Evangelical style" is all wrong—in fact, the catch phrase intentionally plays down the importance of a lived religion: it's merely "style." And we all know that style is unimportant. Once men wore fluffy collars, now they wear ties. Just a matter of style.

But it's the wrong word. What the advocates of such a plan mean to say is: Lutheran substance, American Evangelical piety. The piety of a Christian is how he lives the faith he professes. Piety is what a Christian does and the words that rattle around in his head without him consciously thinking about them: the words and actions of his Sunday morning worship, how he prays in his daily life, the pattern of sound words that pop into his head throughout the week, the songs he sings, the proof texts he knows by heart and repeats to himself, how he explains the faith to his children, the way he dresses for worship, the popular activities he avoids because of his faith, and the like.

So is there a distinctively Lutheran piety? Or is being Lutheran simply a cerebral matter: Here is a list of doctrines—if you assent to these, then you are a Lutheran and your piety is up to you, as an individual or community, to devise on your own from whatever source you like. Is that how it is?

I certainly don't think so. And I think the history of the Reformation and even a cursory reading of the Lutheran Symbols (i.e. Confessions) give the lie to such a notion. Indeed: the Reformation was about piety, about actions, about a faith lived in a particular way.

So what is the distinctively Lutheran piety? It is not hard to define. It is spelled out in the Symbols and the history of our fellowship, it is written on millions of hearts – it is so well known that it is easily caricatured on the radio by Garrison Keillor.

Lutheran piety begins at the Divine Service. The Mass (i.e. Divine Service) is celebrated among us as the thing of most importance (AC XXIV). Lutheran piety is reverent (think of Luther sucking up the Precious Blood off the altar rail in 1543). Lutheran piety dresses up for church. Lutheran piety dwells within the traditional prayers, lessons, vestments, and ceremonies of the Western tradition (Ap. XXIV.1). This is a rich tradition. Therefore, Lutheran piety recognizes that there is room for one parish to have more ceremonies than another, so long as the ceremonies in use comport with the pious tradition within which we live, for we are not frivolous, jocular, or offensive in the house of God (FC SD X). Lutheran piety bows or kneels at the altar. Lutheran

piety adores Christ present in the Sacrament. Lutheran piety stands for the Gospel Lesson. Lutheran piety chants and sings. Lutheran piety considers one day more holy than another, unto the Lord, and thus offers the Sacrament on every Lord's Day and the other high feasts. Lutheran piety has pastors, celebrants, and ministers. Lutheran piety is one of Word and Sacrament, tilted slightly toward Sacrament: thus the Sacrament has pride of place over the sermon.



After the benediction, Lutheran piety goes into the home. Lutheran piety, while standing or kneeling, makes the sign of the cross, morning and evening, and recites the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Lutheran piety goes to confession and says, "Dear pastor please hear my confession and pronounce forgiveness in order to fulfill God's will." Lutheran piety reads Luther's sermons, Portals of Prayer, and the Church Fathers. Lutheran piety thanks God for clothing and shoes, house and home, eyes, ears, and all my members. Lutheran piety teaches his children to say, "We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things." Lutheran piety expects crosses. Lutheran piety expects that it will daily sin much and need forgiveness.

Lutheran piety is, as you can see, molded and formed by two things—the liturgy as described in Ap. XXIV.1 and the Small Catechism. These tell us the how of the Faith. Through these the Lutheran Faith is lived. The Catechism is not a doctrinal treatise, a merely cerebral book: it is an instruction manual for personal piety. It gives words and actions. Just as Anglican piety is formed by the 39 Articles and the Book of Common Prayer and Roman piety by the canon of the Mass and the rosary, Lutheran piety is shaped by the liturgy and the Catechism.

The words of the liturgy and the Catechism constantly rattle around a head shaped by Lutheran piety. They are the lens through which daily life is filtered. The mind and heart shaped by Lutheran piety can complete all of these ellipses:

Lord, keep us steadfast . . .  
 I believe that I cannot by my own . . .  
 What is the world to me . . .  
 . . . that we are by by nature . . .  
 Lord now lettest . . .  
 A mighty fortress . . .  
 The Lord be with you . . .  
 Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless us . . .  
 O Lord, open Thou my lips . . .  
 This is most certainly . . .  
 Yes, yes it shall . . .  
 We should fear and . . .  
 Glory be to God on high . . .  
 . . . therefore with angels . . .  
 Lord, let at last thine angels . . .

There are other pieties that have different catch phrases, different actions, different ways of worship. The American Evangelical piety uses the 19th century camp meeting liturgy: warm up songs, call to worship, prayer of confession/humility, songs, scripture reading, sermon, songs. American Evangelical piety does not wear vestments or regard one day as more holy than another (except for Sunday, Christmas, and Easter). American Evangelical piety does not make the sign of

the cross or go to confession. American Evangelical piety, when it celebrates the Sacrament, does so in a simple manner without ceremonies that would indicate worship or adoration toward the Sacrament. American Evangelical piety is upbeat, casual, and jocular. American Evangelical piety expects daily improvement and victorious living. American Evangelical piety reads Guideposts, My Utmost for His Highest, and the Purpose Driven Life. American Evangelical piety knows what AWANA stands for. American Evangelical piety has worship leaders, song leaders, praise bands, and preachers. American Evangelical piety is one of Word and Sacrament, tilted strongly toward Word: thus the sermon (or “message”) has pride of place over the Sacrament.



The mind and heart shaped by American Evangelical piety cannot complete many ellipses besides the lyrics of currently popular church songs. The words that rattle around the head formed by this piety are generally phrases of their favorite preacher, song, Bible verse, or currently popular book.

Now – what would happen to a Baptist church who wanted Baptist doctrine but took up Lutheran piety via the Common Service on Sunday morning and replaced Guideposts and free form prayer with Portals of Prayer and the Creed throughout the week? What would happen to an E-Free church that swapped out their current list of songs for those in LSB and had their pastor wear an alb and stole? If they did this for a generation at the late service, what would the next generation of Baptist and E-Free preachers be like?

The generation that brought American Evangelical piety into the Lutheran Church is now in late middle age. Their confirmation classes are now graduating from seminary and Synodical schools. For the first time in history, we have Lutheran pastors who cannot complete all the ellipses listed above because they always went to the late service that was formed not by Lutheran piety but by American Evangelical piety. For the first time in our English-speaking history, we are ordaining pastors who do not know the Common Service (or any setting of the Western liturgy) by heart. For the first time in history, we have school teachers who cannot say Matins from memory – but know all the lyrics to the top five selling worship songs as listed each month by CCLI.

Will a church body really be the same church body if a number of its parishes are formed by Lutheran piety and a number of others by American Evangelical piety?

We are not just minds – we are minds, souls, and bodies. Piety matters. That's why the Confessions say so much about it. A sea change has occurred in the piety of the Missouri Synod – a change away from Lutheran piety and toward American Evangelical piety. We are only beginning to feel the repercussions.

+HRC



## **Synopsis of May 4, 2010 Church Council Minutes**

### **Call To Order & Opening Prayer**

- Vice President Hill called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. Pastor Messer conducted the opening prayer. The following members were present: Carol Zeile, Sharyn Greening, Carolyn Johnson, Gary Miller, Megan Brown, Bill Harmon, Vern Jakolat, Ken Hill, Larry Elliott and Chris Brown (arrived at 8:10pm). Pastor Messer was also present.

### **Approval of Agenda**

- Motion by Councilmember Johnson, supported by Councilmember Harmon to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

- Motion made by Treasurer Zeile, supported by Financial Secretary Miller to approve the April 6 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Report(s)**

- **Pastor** – Pastor Messer presented the attached report. The Council received the report into record.
- **Treasurer's Report** – Treasurer Zeile presented the attached report. The Council received the report into record and held an in-depth discussion of the current financial situation.
- **Financial Secretary** – Financial Secretary Miller informed the Council the first quarter financial statements would be available by the following Sunday.
- **Boards**
  - **Board of Elders** – Councilmember Elliott informed the Council that the Board of Elders has been working to contact inactive members and make visits to shut-ins.
  - **Board of Trustees** – Councilmember Jakolat informed the Council of the prioritization of projects based on time and cost involved.
  - **Board of Christian Education** – Councilmember Greening informed the Council that Sunday School ends on May 23 and VBS will be held the week of June 14.
  - **Board of Evangelism** – Councilmember Johnson informed the Council that meetings will not be held through the summer months. Bowling Night will be May 15 and the Lansing Lugnuts game will be July 25.
  - **Board of Stewardship** – Councilmember Harmon informed the Council that the next meeting will be May 11 at 7:00pm.

### **Organization and Committee Reports**

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

### **Business**

- **Conference Assessment** – Treasurer Zeile reported that a letter from the Michigan District had been received regarding the assessment for the District Conference. The assessment is three hundred dollars per congregation plus two dollars for each confirmed member. The total cost for Peace would be \$570.00 and is due by May 15. After discussion, a motion was made by Financial Secretary Miller, supported by Councilmember Harmon to send \$100 with a letter of explanation. The letter will be written by President Brown and Pastor Messer and the funds will come out of the Christian Education line item. Motion carried by a vote of 8-2.

### **General Comment**

- Pastor Messer informed the Council that the terms for the Secretary and Treasurer are coming to an end this year and that Secretary Brown and Treasurer Zeile are term-limited and cannot run again. The Council should consider a plan for succession.
- Councilmember Elliott informed the Council that the Master Gardner met with members on May 3. The cost of the materials will be \$350-\$400. Donations will be accepted.

### **Adjournment & Closing Prayer**

- Motion by Financial Secretary Miller, supported by Councilmember Elliott to adjourn at 8:45pm. Motion carried unanimously. Pastor Messer closed with the Lord's Prayer and the Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,  
Megan Brown, Secretary

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



# PEACE NEWS & NOTES

---

## SALT NEWS

### **BOWLING**

Saturday, May 15, was a huge success  
with 21 people attending.

Another bowling night will be in our future plans.

### **PEACE MOVIE NIGHT**

will not be held during the summer months.

### **CAMPING**

**July 10-12 - Wilson State Park, Harrison MI**

### **LUGNUTS BASEBALL GAME**

Sunday, July 25, 2:05 pm

Kids Day (see Posting)

Deadline for Ticket Order Forms  
and Payment is June 6

Make checks payable to Carolyn Johnson  
and give form and payment  
to Carolyn or to Mary Jakolat

(Join us in celebrating Pastor's birthday on Sunday, July 25)

### **SUPPORT OUR TROOPS**

This is an ongoing outreach for the SALT Committee. If  
you know of a person in the armed forces who is serving  
abroad, please contact Carolyn Johnson (email  
[ckj1969@yahoo.com](mailto:ckj1969@yahoo.com) or telephone 463-3052).

Regular SALT meetings will not be held during June,  
July and August. Should you have issues or concerns,  
please contact Carolyn Johnson or Pastor Messer.

### **CAMPING WEEKEND**

**JULY 9-10-11**

**WILSON STATE PARK  
HARRISON MI**

**ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME FOR THE  
DAY ON SATURDAY JULY 10**

**Bring lawn chairs and your own drinks**

**Day parking available - Day Pass \$5**

**Potluck at 6pm**

**Church Service at Campsite**

**Bring a dish to pass**

**dinnerware will be provided**

**Hot dogs and hamburgers will be furnished,**

**Donations to defray the cost**

**would be welcomed**

Any Questions? Please see Andrea Elliott

### ***Ladies Lunch Bunch***

*We will be going to Bob Evans in Mt. Pleasant at  
for lunch on Monday, June 21. scheduled for 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 sign up list posted in  
Fellowship Hall and join us!*

## PYG NEWS

**June Event - Planning Meeting, June 6, 10:45-11 am - Fellowship Hall**

Greetings in Christ,

We will be having a short summer planning meeting during Fellowship on June 6. If you have any ideas on activities or fundraisers, please bring them in. Also, bring a calendar of when you will not be available for activities. We hope to give everyone an opportunity to participate.

Speaking of participating, all Youth who are in the 6th grade or higher are members of the Peace Youth Group. If you are entering the 6th grade next fall, please join us at the planning meeting as you are invited to get involved this summer.

Thanks to everyone for your continued support of the Youth Group. Our Bake Sale last month was a huge success and I am pleased to report that we were able to pay off our loan from the Building Fund that enabled us to attend the Higher Things Youth Gathering.

We are hoping to attend the Higher Things Youth Gathering in 2011. We will be kicking off the sign up and fundraising later this summer.

Thank you for your continued support of the pop can, Spartan labels, and cell phone collection drives.

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



# PEACE NEWS & NOTES Cont'd

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JUNE 14-18 - 9:00-12:00 AGE 4 THROUGH GRADE 7



Thanks to all who  
have volunteered.

VBS STAFF, please attend a meeting on June 8  
at 7 pm to make final plans.

If you would like to make a donation, we will need the  
following:

- Money toward buying supplies to print the materials needed
- Food for the daily snack time, such as cookies, or fruit - see Marlene Miller.
- Food for closing day picnic (such as hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, chips, veggies, desserts)
- Help with advertising, flyers, postcards, newspaper articles.

Please see Sharyn Greening if you  
can help with any of the above.

## PEACE LANDSCAPING GARDENING

**Check out the new landscaping in  
the front of our church. Thank you  
to everyone who showed up to help!  
The project went very well.**

**The whole project only cost about  
\$500, and we are still looking for  
special donations to cover about  
\$200 of that cost. If you would like  
to contribute a special offering for  
the plants, please give them to Gary  
or Carol and let them know that it is  
for this project. (write checks to  
Peace Lutheran Church**

**Thank You!  
Larry & Andrea Elliott**

## SPRING CLEANING THANK YOU

### TO ALL WHO HELPED ON MAY 22

We were not able to complete all of the  
tasks that need to be done, so we have  
scheduled another Cleaning Day for  
Saturday, June 12 at 10:00 am. Come  
clean with us. We will be working inside  
and outside. Bring cleaning supplies and  
rags and lots of energy. Questions call  
Coaline at 989-763-1016.

Sponsored by Ladies' Guild

**DID YOU KNOW** that the hospital does not always notify us when  
one of our members has been hospitalized? Please call the church  
office at 463-5754 or Pastor Messer at 989-388-2037 (cell) when a  
member of Peace has been admitted to the hospital.

### SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING:

Remember to pick up and fill the "mission cans" we  
have available in the fellowship hall as we continue our  
year-round collection for:

**The Siberian Lutheran Mission Society**  
We'll collect the cans in November or December.

## CHURCH WEBSITE

You may view current newsletters and service bulletins prior  
to the service dates on our Peace website at  
[www.peacealma.org](http://www.peacealma.org). Keep up to date at your convenience.

## 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! *Note: Our next Table  
Talk will be held in September  
around the campfire at Pastor  
Messer's house. Date is yet to be  
determined.*



# The Lord's Supper: A Blessed Exchange



*There in the Supper it is not a mere man who deals with you individually, but Christ, your Savior himself, through his minister. And he says: "Take and eat. This is my body, which is given for you. Take and drink. This is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of your sin, etc." In our flesh nothing good dwells. The sin which works in us many evil desires, hinders the good and often causes us to fall. Christ however in his Supper makes with us the blessed exchange. For he through his holy flesh and blood unites himself with us so that he thus through his power ever more and more may crucify and kill the old Adam. And thus we all become one body in Christ where one member is to love, honor and advance the others. And in summary, he who finds that he is weak in faith has in the Lord's Supper a blessed, powerful antidote that strengthens faith, etc. If this basis is diligently stressed, pious Christians will find themselves partaking of the Lord's Supper often and with great devotion. And also on these grounds they can instruct themselves regarding the use, fruit and consolation which poor, troubled consciences find in the right use of the Lord's Supper. However, if a person will not allow himself to be moved by these reasons one can know what kind of Christian he is.*

—Martin Chemnitz, *Braunschweig-Wolfenbuettel Church Order*, 1569.

## ***From the Lighter Side . . .***

*A LITTLE STORY WE RECEIVED FROM OUR DAUGHTER, CHERYL (Vern and Mary Jakolat):*

### SHIRLEY & MARCY

A mom was concerned about her kindergarten son walking to school. He didn't want his mother to walk with him. So she had an idea of how to handle it.

She asked a neighbor if she would please follow him to school in the mornings, staying at a distance, so he probably wouldn't notice her. She said that since she was up early with her toddler anyway, it would be a good way for them to get some exercise as well, so she agreed.

The next school day, the neighbor and her little girl set out following behind Timmy as he walked to school with another neighbor girl he knew. She did this for the whole week.

As the two walked and chatted, kicking stones and twigs, Timmy's little friend noticed the same lady was following them as she seemed to do every day all week.

Finally she said to Timmy, "Have you noticed that lady following us to school all week? Do you know her?" Timmy nonchalantly replied, "Yeah, I know who she is." The little girl said, "Well, who is she?" "That's just Shirley Goodnest," Timmy replied, "and her daughter Marcy." "Shirley Goodnest? Who the heck is she and why is she following us?"

"Well," Timmy explained, "every night my Mom makes me say the 23rd Psalm with my prayers, 'cuz she worries about me so much. And in the Psalm, it says, 'Shirley Goodnest and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life,' so I guess I'll just have to get used to it!"

*The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift His countenance upon you, and give you peace.*

*Oh, and may Shirley Goodnest and Marcy follow you all the days of your life! 😊*

I know you smiled! I sure did.

# What Is Stewardship?

From the Peace Lutheran Church Stewardship Committee

By Carol Zeile

<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. <sup>17</sup> By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. <sup>21</sup> And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother (1 John 4:13-21).

There are so many different meanings of stewardship in our lives today. We are continually bombarded in the media by the concept of stewardship as related to the environment. We should recycle, use environmentally friendly cleaning products and paint, etc. There are many protected species that need to be preserved. Don't get me wrong, treating our environment with respect is certainly a worthy goal. But, what does stewardship mean in the context of the church? What does it mean to be a good steward?

We strive to be good stewards in order to have the resources to spread the pure Gospel. That's the bottom line, isn't it? The Church Council prepares a budget and strives to follow it so that the congregation can flourish in order to spread the Good News. Those who work in the congregation do so to make certain that the church building is maintained, Services are held and children are taught in order to keep the Pure Gospel alive in our community. So, what does this mean in practical terms?

It is often said that we should share our time, talents and treasures as we have been blessed. Many of us are indeed busy and often feel that we have no time to give to our Lord. How can this be? Everything we have comes from the Lord, including our time. We do have time to serve Him and our brothers and sisters, if we just look at our lives. Don't get me wrong, I am busy too. There are many days when I awake and have no idea how I will accomplish everything necessary for that day. The Lord wants us to provide for our families, care for our children and maintain our homes. Shouldn't we strive to make the work of the church a high priority even in those busiest of days?

Nothing is required of us to receive the gifts that our Lord gives us in the Divine Service each week. We attend simply to receive. After receiving such a great gift, should we not want to pass it on? The above verses written by St. John speak about the love we share with our brothers which proceeds directly from our love for God. Perhaps if we replace the word "stewardship" with the word "love" that will help us to have a different perspective. In everything that follows, we must also remember that no works are required of us for salvation. We work and give and love because He first loved us.

Consider the following examples:

- Perhaps you are a busy mom with young children and husband to care for, a house to clean and a fulltime job that requires your time. Maybe, on a day when you are watching your children at home, you could call another mom in the congregation and offer to entertain her children too for a couple of hours to give her a break. Or, maybe as "entertainment" for your children, you could take them to church and help out by cleaning the kitchen or the bathrooms. When you're baking cookies for your family, perhaps you could make a few extra and take them to someone in our congregation who doesn't have the ability or means to bake their own. Or, what about talking with coworkers, neighbors, family members about how important our congregation is to you and how the Gospel is spread among us?
- Perhaps it is your habit to go to a movie or to breakfast, lunch or dinner once a week or once a month. Consider skipping that every now and then and putting the money you save in your offering envelope. Every little bit helps to bring us closer to making our budget.
- Perhaps you are unemployed or underemployed and don't have the funds to contribute as you would like. Check the Stewardship Corner bulletin board and offer to lend a hand wherever you can.
- Perhaps you are homebound a good part of the time. Get out your church directory and call someone else who is in your same situation and chat for a few minutes.
- Perhaps you are a busy teenager with no money and no time. Maybe you could forego a date with your boyfriend or girlfriend once in awhile and bring him/her along to a church sponsored event instead.

These are just a few examples. Everyone needs to search his/her own heart to determine what he/she can do. If you have suggestions for the Stewardship Committee, please attend a Committee meeting, bring it up at a Voters' Assembly, or consider writing a response to this.



# Ladies Guild

## Ladies Guild Meeting

Our Ladies' Guild is on hiatus for the months of June, July and August. Our next meeting will be **Monday, September 13, 2010 at 7pm**. Hostess will be Lois Ramsey. 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.

## 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.

## Altar Flowers

There is a flower calendar for 2010 posted on the fellowship hall bulletin board. We are now working toward ordering altar flower arrangements that coordinate with and enhance the liturgical colors of each Season of the Church year. Depending on the dates, flowers may not always be displayed for a calendar month. Some Seasons of the Church year cross calendar months. If you wish to place flowers on the altar sometime during the year, please put your name on the calendar and contact the church office with any information that you wish to have included in the bulletin. If there is a specific date in the month that commemorates an occasion, please also enter that date. A bouquet costs \$25. We encourage two persons (families) to purchase flowers each month, one for each plant stand. Please make checks payable to Peace Lutheran Church, attach a note marked "Altar Flowers" and place in the Financial Secretary's envelope in the church office. Any questions may be directed to Carol Zeile. Thank you for helping to beautify our chancel.

## PEACE LUTHERAN LADIES GUILD



For the next portion of the Lutheran World Relief project, the Ladies Guild is asking for your help in supplying the following personal care items:

hand towels, wash cloths, toothbrushes,  
combs (wide tooth), metal nail files,  
nail clippers (w/file attached),  
band aids (1/2 to 2/4 "), soap (bath size bar)

Collection period: Ends June 30

## LADIES GUILD SELLS CUTLERY

Rada cutlery is on display the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month in the fellowship hall during the coffee hour. We have seven different items in stock: Paring Knife, Large Slicer Knife, Tomato Slicer, Serrated Steak Knife, Spatula, Pie Server, and Veggie Peeler. A product catalogue is available for viewing and orders may also be placed through the catalog.

## COOKBOOK

Ladies, gentlemen and kids who love to cook, Peace Lutheran Ladies Guild are collecting your favorite recipes to put into a cookbook. It can be the simplest of drinks to complicated desserts and casseroles.

Please write them, type them or make a copy of them and give them to Coaline Luplow or Mary Jakolat in the office.

You can also e-mail them to the office or Coaline at  
luplow2@hotmail.com

## Altar Care



### June

Coaline Luplow/Jennie Harmon

### July

Lois Ramsey

### August

Andrea Elliott

## Coffee Hostesses

### June

6 Tina Schafer  
13 Peace Youth Group  
20 Lois Ramsey  
27 S.Greening/M.Brown

### July

4 Carol Zeile  
11 Andrea Elliott  
18 Dorothy Trgina  
25 Coaline Luplow

### August

1 Jenny Baughman  
8 Gretchen Harrison  
15 Cassie Tenant  
22 M.Miller/C.Dargie  
29 Y.Elenbaas/M.Girard



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT PEACE

## Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

- Sunday School will reconvene on Sunday, September 13, 2009. Join us for a Rally Day potluck!
- Adult Bible Class is offered **every Sunday at 11am.** for all adult members of Peace and guests.

## Together in the Word

- Our *Together in the Word* Bible Study will meet one last time on **June 10** to complete our study of **Romans**, after which we will be on hiatus until **Thursday, September 9.**

## Christian History 101

- Weekly Wednesday classes meet at 6 pm. We are currently studying "Christian History 101."



## JUNE

### Happy Birthday

5 Marlene Miller	17 Georgia Spindler
8 Larry Elliott	17 Jo Wendt
8 Karla Greening	20 Helen Meyers
8 Justin Acosta-Arellano	20 Vivian Strom
9 Bill Harmon	21 Lois Ramsey
9 Miguel Ortiz	24 Andrea Elliott
12 Gary Miller	29 Susan Ortiz
13 Janet Isom	30 Bruce Bebow
14 Art Tennant	30 Terry Luplow
	30 Janice Sager

### Happy Anniversary

2 Kenneth and Phyllis Hill
7 Michael and Gretchen Harrison
18 Gordon and Lucille Slick
20 Terry and Coaline Luplow

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

## PASTOR MESSER IS BLOGGING!

[www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com](http://www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com)

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



Listen to what you want,  
when you want, at:  
[www.issuesetc.org](http://www.issuesetc.org)

## PAROCHIAL REPORT

(as of 5/23/2010)

Membership at Peace

Baptized - 140; Confirmed - 119

Membership gains: 1

Mabel Diane Elliott—Baptized on 5/2/10

Membership losses: 0








Financial Report

YTD Budgeted.....	\$ 45,864.00
YTD Receipts.....	\$ 41,967.46
Difference.....	\$ -3,896.54

Rev. Thomas C. Messer  
 (989) 463-3093—Home  
 (989) 388-2037—Cell  
 pastor@peacealma.org  
 pastormesser@gmail.com  
 www.abideinmyword.blogspot.com

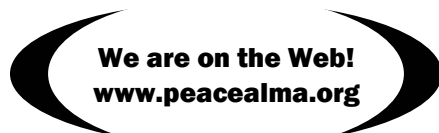
# June 2010

Peace Lutheran Church  
 325 E. Warwick Drive  
 Alma, MI 48801  
 (989) 463-5754  
 contact@peacealma.org  
 www.peacealma.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	31  <b>Remember Our Veterans</b> <i>Church Office Closed</i>	1 <i>Pastor at Winkler</i> 7 pm - Church Council	2 <i>No Class or Service tonight</i> <div>Church Office Closed</div>	3 <i>No Together in the Word</i> 5 pm - Weight Watchers	4	5
6 <i>First Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30 - Divine Service 10:45 - Fellowship 10:45 - PYG Planning 11:00 - Bible Study 	7 7:00 pm - Ladies Guild	8 7 pm - VBS Planning	9 11 am - Elders Mtg. 6 pm - "Christian History" 7 pm - Div. Serv. <i>St. Barnabas, Apostle</i> 	10 10 am - Together in Word 5 pm - Weight Watchers	11	12 10:00 Cleaning Day
13 <i>Second Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30 - Divine Service 10:45 - Fellowship 11:00 - Bible Study 	14	15	16	17	18	19
		<i>Vacation Bible School - 9-12 am, Monday-Friday</i>				
			6 pm - "Christian History" 7 pm - Evening Prayer	5 pm - Weight Watchers		
20 <i>Third Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30 - Divine Service 10:45 - Fellowship 11:00 - Bible Study <i>Happy Father's Day!</i> 	21 1:30 pm - Lunch Bunch <div>Newsletter articles due</div>	22	23 6 pm - "Christian History" 7 pm - Divine Service <i>Nativity St. John the Baptist</i> 	24 5 pm - Weight Watchers	25	26
27 <i>Fourth Sunday after Trinity</i> 9:30 - Divine Service 10:45 - Fellowship 11:00 - Bible Study 	28	29	30 6 pm - "Christian History" 7 pm - Divine Service <i>St. Peter and St. Paul</i> 	<b>July 1</b> 5 pm - Weight Watchers	2	3

Peace Lutheran Church  
325 E. Warwick Dr.  
Alma, MI 48801

Church: 989-463-5754  
E-mail: [contact@peacealma.org](mailto:contact@peacealma.org)  
Mary's Home: 989-463-3067  
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 June*

	ELDER	ACOLYTES	USHERS	GREETERS
<b>June</b>				
6 - 9:30 am (Trinity 1)	Miguel Ortiz	Sarah Messer Aaron Messer	Jonathan Penzien	Lois Ramsey Gary Miller
13 - 9:30 am (Trinity 2)	David Zeile	Melanie Penzien Sierra Luplow	James Sager Chris Brown	Helen Meyers
20 - 9:30 am (Trinity 3)	Larry Elliott	Samantha Messer Myka Luplow	Vern Jakolat Kevin Sellke	Jim and Janice Sager
27 - 7:00 pm (Trinity 4)	Terry Luplow	Morgan Johnson Aaron Messer	Gary Miller Daren Johnson	LeRoy and Maxine Isaksson
<b>July</b>				
4 - 9:30 am (Trinity 5)	Miguel Ortiz	Natalie Penzien Sarah Messer	Vern Jakolat Phillip Schafer	Jon Penzien and Family

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