

THE GOOD NEWS OF PEACE

**Our Vision Statement: Sharing Peace Faithfully*

**Our Mission: To bring people into contact with the gospel, and help them grow in their relationship in God in Christ*

1900 E. Lincoln Hwy, P.O. Box 205, New Lenox, IL 60451

815-485-5327

e-mail: peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org - web page: www.peacenewlenox.org

December 2021

Vol. XXVI, Issue 12

It Takes a Little More (or Less)

Christmas is magical? Christmas is exhausting? Christmas is depressing? Christmas is festive? Christmas is too commercial? Christmas is all about family? Christmas is lonely? No matter which of those or others apply to you, one thing is for sure, Christmas will demand something more from you...and not just financially! Year after year we keep saying to ourselves that we should cut back or lower our expectations. And then Christmas happens. We say we are going to start earlier, but so many ordinary things get in the way. It is no wonder that for some, Christmas is only something to be gotten through.

And yet, into the midst of all that, an unmistakable message rings out: Christmas is about more and less. It goes without saying that it could be about less stress and fewer gifts and lowered expectations; if only we could learn how. Those parts are not easy to accomplish because our society and our own traditions “demand” otherwise.

However, Christmas is about more opportunities to see how God invites us to have more meaning. God didn't enter human history by a grand show that would put Hollywood to shame. Quite the opposite! God entered human history in a country without status, to a couple without massive resources, announced to worker-bee shepherds. With God, it turns out that less is more. The incarnation of God in the flesh even comes in the form of a vulnerable baby.

It is quite remarkable that it takes more effort to think “less.” Yet every time you give someone anything from your heart – including a smile or small act of kindness – you are incarnating God in an important way. Expensive gifts impress for the moment; genuine self-giving lasts (it turns out) forever!

May you be blessed in this season of chaos with the peace of God that passes all understanding.

Pastor Dave Hedlin

Please check our website, Facebook and YouTube for the latest information, videos, and more!

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S WORSHIP SCHEDULES

We are counting on being able to have Christmas worship both indoors (3 services) and outdoors (one service.) For the indoor ones, we also will have an option for being in the entrance area and Fellowship Hall if over-flow is required or you would like more space for yourself.

Dec. 24 - 4:00 pm worship includes an invitation for children to bring bells to ring, plus multiple children's sermons (no candlelight at 4:00)

Dec. 24 - 7:00 pm worship & 11:00pm worship - indoors with candlelight and communion (bring your own crackers or use ours) The 7:00pm worship will be live streamed and recorded for our Facebook site.

Dec. 24 - 9:00 worship - outdoors in the parking lot with bring your own communion and bring your own candle/electric candle

Dec. 25 - 10:00am worship (no Saturday night worship)

Sympathy

The congregation of Peace wishes to extend its sympathy to:

the family of David Dyer, father of Beth Lohmar;

the family of Larry Hedlin, brother of Pastor Dave;

the family of Hilda Brockmann, mother of Karen Town;

the family of Esther Coulter, mother of Diana Brewer;

the family of Lori Trosen, wife of Brian Trosen and mother of Kaitlin Gibbs & Joe Halper.

Prayers Requested

Jeanne Dolph, Robert DeLucia, Carlos Owens, the family of Jennifer, Evelyn Marcath, Paula Stripling, Sandra Morris, Lee Potter, Dennis Flynn, Ron Otto, Kristie Paprocki, Dave Dralle, the family of Tom Henaghan, the family of Jim Jesk, Jr., Eileen Krause, Ervin Pander, Mel Stromberg, the family of Nola Gustafson

Congratulations

Kailey & Nick Jank, parents and Dan & Diane Kahl, grandparents, on the birth of Ila Jank on Nov. 12

Welcome to the Lord's Family

Owen Charles Sickman was baptized on Oct. 30

Brody Robert Malone was baptized on Nov. 7

Josephine Jean Schaedel was baptized on Nov. 13

Worship Schedule

We have partially returned to somewhat previous worship plans (pre-pandemic). The plan is for Saturday night's worship at 5:00 to remain outdoors for as long as we can. Sunday's schedule is back to 8:30 and 11:00am - both indoors with masks. Live-streaming of worship will continue on Saturday nights and at the 8:30am service on Sundays.

We will continue to have communion be taken all at once in your seats (bring your own or use our wafers.) We still won't have nursery care or as much liturgy. There won't be printed bulletins or using hymnals (song sheets are available inside and the words to the hymns are available electronically in that bulletin format.) We will have two hymns instead of one. Volunteers will be requested on a week by week basis instead of assigned ahead of time for an usher, lesson reader, greeter. No refreshments after worship.

Details for How We Worship

FOR EVERYONE COMING TO PEACE

***The IDPH guidelines are back to mandating masks indoors.**

*** Children's sermons are resuming!**

*Whether you drive-in, are on the lawn or worship at home, we have a modified communion option. You can take a piece of bread or cracker with you to the service.

We will give the Words of Institution on behalf of all of us and invite us to take our bread/cracker at the same time and partake of this modified version of the Lord's Supper.

* In order to keep people's safety in mind following the advice of the CDC and Illinois Department of Public Health, there will be a drop box if you wish to bring an offering with you. Otherwise, we will depend on people continuing to contribute online or by mail.

* Bathrooms will be available, but people would be encouraged to use them only if necessary, and social distancing would be required. The doors to the bathrooms will be left open to eliminate having to touch them, and for the sake of knowing what kind of distancing/waiting is needed.

DRIVE-IN WORSHIP ON SATURDAY AT 5:00PM

*** Our worship location will be from under the canopy at the front entrance.**

* We will have sound projection/speakers for all to hear, plus our new transmitter for the FM channel (88.3.)

* The worship usually lasts about 35 minutes.

Worshipping outdoors allows us to sing with gusto!

ONLINE OPTIONS CONTINUE

* We will continue to live-stream our 5:00 & 8:30 worship services. Assuming everything works, all will be available through our Facebook site anytime.

INDOOR WORSHIP AT 8:30am AND 11:00am

Here are the notes if you are planning to come:

*** Masks are required indoors, per IDPH guidelines.**

* Congregational singing of a hymn is allowed. We'll have some printed copies available.

* We will have pews marked off so that socially distanced spaces can be maintained.

* We won't be having nursery attendants, acolytes, refreshments, lay liturgists, etc.

* We will be sending an email each week asking for lesson readers. If you would like to volunteer for a specific week, please let us know.

* Bathrooms will be discouraged from being used but are available.

* Communion will have options: continue to be "bring your own bread or cracker," or take one of the wafers (gluten free or regular) or take one of the pre-packaged kind.

* The service length will continue to be between 30 and 40 minutes.

* If you feel sick or have come in contact with someone who has COVID-19, please stay home and watch via the live-stream.

Please pray for our world's healing, and for our congregation's ongoing attempts to stay faithful to God and God's leading!

Thank You Very Much!

The list that follows is for those who have done something for the first time. (If we miss someone, please let us know!) We are thankful for all the people who give of themselves to make ministry happen, even though their names don't keep getting mentioned here.

To:

Jan & Roger Bentley – for delivering Thanksgiving wreaths to Sunny Hill Nursing Home

Jeff Lindeman – for delivering quilts & prayer shawls to NLFD

Jen Arthur – for sorting coats

Girl Scout Troop #75550 – for making lasagna for the Trailblazer luncheon

Everyone involved in making this year's Thanksgiving dinner a blessing to the tune of 186 dinners-out-the-door, not to mention the volunteers who gave of their time and energy, and the whole congregation for wanting this vital ministry to happen this year!

From:

Will County Habitat for Humanity & the Presnall family – for the help with the Faith Build Project

Multiple recipients of the Thanksgiving dinner – for the thoughtful ministry of providing these meals

Quick Reminders

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS Dec. 26.

* **The Will-Grundy Medical Clinic** is accepting patients for free healthcare for the uninsured and those who qualify. Please call 815-726-3377, ext. 228.

* **Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Cards** – Suicide is not about wanting to die, but about a powerful need for pain to end. You can help someone today by reaching out, listening, and letting them know you care. Be sure that the person can reach you and several responsible others if the desire to commit suicide becomes strong or if he/she just feels the need to talk to someone. Give them the suicide prevention hotline.

Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Cards are always located in the entrance area. Help someone today who is reaching out for help by picking up the cards and being attentive to what people are saying about their lives.

Crisis Line – 815-469-6166, text -741741, and online - www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

* **Bereavement Support Groups**

- *GriefShare* – Not currently meeting – please watch the newsletter.

- *Evening Adult Support Group* – Meets the third Thursday of the month, (except for the month of March), December - June 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. at Joliet Area Community Hospice, *donation appreciated*.

- *Afternoon Adult Support Group* – Meets the second Friday of the month, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. at Joliet Area Community Hospice, *donation appreciated*.

For other services offered, including individual, parent support and general grief support counseling, please visit the Joliet Area Community Hospice website: www.joliethospice.org or call 815-740-4104.

***Thrivent members** – For those of you who have Thrivent dollars to donate, don't forget Peace is one of those choices.

***Crutches, walkers & wheelchairs available** – Please feel free to contact the church office if you need to borrow one of these items.

***Guardian Angel Community Services** – Sexual assault & rape crisis services, prevention education & outreach. Programs include medical advocacy, legal advocacy, individual counseling, group counseling, prevention education & professional training. 24-hour sexual assault hotline: 815-730-8984.

* **LSSI's Joshua Arms Website** - Joshua Arms has a website that makes it easy for visitors to see all that the affordable senior housing development in Joliet has to offer. Visit the site at www.LSSI.org/JoshuaArms. Located at 1315 Rowell, Joshua Arms offers 186 independent, apartment-style units and 56 supportive living units, where residents can receive three meals a day, housekeeping, and other daily living services.

* **NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness)** Will Grundy offers, at no charge, education programs and support groups to “support individuals with mental illness and their families through advocacy, education and outreach.”

For more information call 815-409-7917 or go to: info@namiwillgrundy.org or www.namiwillgrundy.org

Addresses for Service Personnel

Midshipman Trevor Horn PO Box # 12989 Annapolis, MD 21412	Sargent Devin Pafford 1208 Battery Creek Dr. Beaufort SC 29902
---	--

MA2 Baker, Connor 5600 Shorewood Lane Norfolk, VA 23502	2 Lieutenant Jakob Swenson 16113 Ryan Place, Apt. C Fort Polk, LA 71459
---	---

Military Pray for List

Please pray for those who have returned from war who struggle to readjust to life and work through their grief. T.J. Burns, Devin Pafford, Connor Baker, Jake Treasure, Allison DeVitto, Shane Bonarek.

Looking Ahead

Dec. 4 – Blood Drive 9:00am. - 1:00pm
Sunday School students sing 5:00pm service indoors
Peace Buddies 6:00pm
Dec. 8 – 8th Grade Confirmation 7:00pm
3-6th Grade Bible Buddies 7:00pm
Dec. 11 – Family Gingerbread House Decorating Event 6:00pm
Dec. 13 – Quilters Christmas Potluck
Dec. 18 – Shortest Day/Longest Night Service 5:00pm outdoors/in cars
Dec. 19 – 7th Gr. & Beyond Christmas Party 6:00pm
Dec. 24 – Church office will be closed
Dec. 24 – 4:00 p.m. – Celebration service in the sanctuary – including our invitation for children to bring bells to ring
Dec. 24 – 7:00 & 11:00 p.m. – Candlelight Communion services in the sanctuary
9:00 service outside (bring a candle or any kind of electric candle)
Dec. 25 – 10:00 a.m. – Festival Communion service (No Saturday evening service)
Dec. 26 – 8:30 & 11:00 worship will be held
Dec. 28 – Church Council 7:30pm
Jan. 1 – Church office will be closed
Jan. 1 & 2 – regular worship schedule
Jan. 8 – Special Prayers for Healing 5:00pm
Jan. 15 – First Communion Class 10:00am
Jan. 16 – New Member Orientation 9:45am
Peace Page Turners 9:55am
Jan. 23 – Reception of New Members 11:00am
Jan. 29 – Blood Drive 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Groups

Peace Buddies – Sat., Dec. 4

Peace Buddies will meet Sat., Dec. 4, from 6:00-7:30pm at church for a Christmas movie, games and crafts. If you would like to sign up, please contact the office.

Ruth Circle Quilting – Mon., Dec. 13 & 27

Quilting will meet on Monday, Dec. 13 & 27, at 9:00 a.m. No experience necessary, you just have to know how to have fun to join. On Dec. 13 we will be celebrating with a Christmas potluck. Questions, contact the church office.

Trailblazers – Tues., Dec. 21

We invite anyone who'd like to get together with some others who are anything but "over the hill" to come together on Dec. 21 at noon at church. Bring \$5; the food will be provided (pizza.) Email or call the church office for more information.

Strong Seniors Exercise – Mon. & Wed.

Join us for a low impact, do what you can exercise program for seniors. We meet twice a week: Mondays 12 noon -1:00pm and Wednesdays 11:15am-12:15pm. **(Note time change for Wednesdays)** Questions, contact the church office.

Prayer Shawls – Wed., Dec. 1, 15 & 29

Do you crochet or knit? The Prayer Shawl Ministry is meeting again! A prayer shawl is a shawl prepared for and prayed over for someone that is hurting so they can wrap themselves in God's love. We could provide you with simple patterns or you could create your own. We meet every other Wednesday at 6:00pm. You may also create shawls at home and drop them at church if you are not able to attend in person. Any questions, please contact the church office.

Peace Page Turners – Sun., Jan. 16

Our next book, a novel written by Paulette Jiles, is *News of the World*. This story tells the adventures and impact of a retired Captain and a young woman and their travels in a portrait that captures a beautiful and hostile land, and a masterful exploration of the boundaries of family, responsibility, honor and trust. A copy of the book is available at church (sign-out which copy) if you wish. The date will be Sun., Jan. 16, and the time will be 9:55am (to match all the other Education Hour times.) You may come in person, or attend via Zoom. (Be sure to let us know if you're attending online so we can give you the Zoom codes you'll need.)

Peace Circle of Prayer Ministry

If you would like special prayers said for someone, just let the office know of a particular need. We will send out an email to the volunteers with that need. (If you would like to be a part of this Peace Circle of Prayer, let us know, including what email address we should use.)

Addiction and Family Support Group

The Addiction & Family Support Group meets at Peace on Tuesday nights from 7:00-8:30pm. This support group meeting is for those struggling, those who love someone struggling, or those who just want to learn about the epidemic of heroin and prescription pain medications in our community. For more information, contact the church office.

Faith Development/Education

Wednesday Bible Study - New Testament

We meet on Wednesday mornings at 10:00am. We started on the New Testament last month. Why not join us online or in person to learn more about this amazing resource? If you have any questions, call the office. Any version of the Bible you have will work. You do not need to know anything about the Bible to join us!

Sunday Adult Education Classes

Adult Education class meets at 9:55 a.m. after the Sunday School opening in the back of the sanctuary.

Dec. 5 - God's "Mindfulness" at Work (for the holidays and beyond)

Dec. 12 - Looking at Problems from Every Angle (the book of Job will be our background story)

Dec. 19 - The Christmas Story Is Not "The Night Before Christmas"

Dec. 26 - no class

Jan. 2 - Already Have Too Many Balls in the Air? (And it's only January 2!)

Everybody Read

Our desire to have people read a common Bible passage is part of our Book of Faith effort. Each month we will pick a passage, invite everyone to read it sometime that month, and then those who are willing, write a sentence or two (or more if you'd like) about what you got out of the passage. December's passage is Matthew 1:18-25.

Stories of Faith in Action

Sometimes we wonder if our offerings make a difference. Each year the ELCA publishes a booklet that highlights a few stories how much good you do as you give to our church! Thank you!!! Please check out this link and see more! [Stories of Faith in Action](#) God is at work through us.

General Announcements

Welcome Audre Kurowski!

We are excited to welcome Audre Kurowski as she began her ministry with us on Nov. 1. Audre comes with many years of experience in a variety of churches. She has all the tools we believe we need to lead us to a meaningful worship experience and successful relationship with the choirs, soloists, instrumentalists and more. We welcome her to our staff! Please greet her and wish her well!

Blood Drive – Sat., Dec. 4

Thank you to everyone who donated in October. Our next Versiti blood drive will be Sat., Dec. 4 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Please visit the Versiti website for any questions or to schedule a time to donate.

Decorating Peace's Outdoor Tree

We will put up a fresh Christmas tree just north of the front entrance on which to hang an ornament. We invite you to bring one you already have or to create one to hang. Because it will be outside, please bring unbreakable ones and put a twist tie or some other means of securing it against the wind! (You won't get the ornaments back so don't bring a "priceless" one.) You can come anytime and put on the ornament, but we are going to invite you to especially reserve Sat., Dec. 11 before or after the 5:00pm worship!

Shortest Day/Longest Night Worship Service – Sat., Dec. 18

As a part of the 5:00 worship service on Dec. 18 we will have a special liturgy and emphasis. It will acknowledge that Christmas is not merry for everyone. This Shortest Day/Longest Night observance allows anyone who has felt any kind of loss (death, divorce, job, etc.) to come and recognize that each is not alone; each is also held in God's compassionate care. We encourage you to invite anyone who has experienced a loss or is struggling.

Special Prayers for Healing – Sat., Jan. 8

As part of the 5:00 p.m. Saturday night service on Jan. 8, we will have an opportunity for people to come forward for special prayers for healing. They can be for you or for somebody you know.

From Deacon Shari Trotter

Dear Members and Friends of Peace,
December is one of those months that feels like we can't quite find our grounding. My to do list is forty miles long and on it are the multitudes of people I feel like I need to please. The Christmas season tends to become the season of not enough, not enough time, not enough money, not enough patience, not enough energy, and not enough focus. What do you do to remind yourself to stop? How do you refocus on the Christmas essence of peace, hope, love, and gratitude for the Christ child? My mom and I had a November and December tradition. We called it Christmas moments and it consisted of challenging each other to do small things out in our community that would make others smile or feel loved. It could be as simple as passing by a close parking space to let someone else have it or grab a grocery cart that was blowing across the parking lot. Some years we would go a little bigger and drop off wrapped toys to a family in need or leave a note in a mailbox of a friend we knew was struggling. When either one of us created or experienced a Christmas moment we would then call the other and share the story of what had happened. What do you do during these busy months to center yourself on the love of Christ? If you don't have a tradition, may I suggest joining my family in sharing Christmas moments. Although this will be the first year, I cannot call my mom to share the stories, I will use the love that she taught me to fuel each and everyone of the opportunities I have.
May you and your family remain centered in the spirit of Christ love this holiday season. May you create memories and traditions that last late into your adulthood, and may you know how deeply you are loved.
Merry Christmas,

Deacon Shari Trotter

First Communion Class – Sat., Jan. 15

Each year we seek to prepare children in the fifth grade (and beyond) for receiving their first communion. We do it in a one-hour concentrated class. A parent/other adult (or two) should attend along with the child. The class will be offered on Saturday, Jan. 15, at 10:00 a.m.

New Member Orientation & Reception - Sun., Jan. 16 & 23

We are privileged once again to invite more people to become formal partners with us in our mission of spreading the Gospel and growing in faith. Orientation will be Sun., Jan. 16 at 9:45 – either on Zoom or in person and the reception will be Sun., Jan. 23, during 11:00am worship. If you are interested in joining or finding out more information, email (peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org) or call the church office at 815-485-5327 or see Pastor Dave, or let us know through the website ([Sign Up](#)).

Advent Devotionals

Advent devotional booklets (adult's & children's) available. You can pick them up anytime from the black bin by the front door. Please also see the article below if you would like a free online option.

Free Online Advent Devotionals

There are free Advent devotionals available online. You can have them delivered right to your inbox, podcast the audio devotional, access them on your mobile device through the FREE app. The link below will take you the site. There is also an option to print out the devotionals if you would rather have a hard copy.
[Advent Devotions: Lutheran Hour Ministries](#)

Thanksgiving & Christmas Offerings

Each year the money we receive in our Thanksgiving & Christmas special envelopes is given away to others, divided between the ELCA's Hunger Appeal, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (the agency of our church that serves so many people in need), mission churches (Santa Cruz in Joliet and Resurrection in Channahon – Pastor Ben's church), and local ministries that help others (Groundwork, Daybreak, Trinity Services, and MorningStar Mission). Under normal circumstances, these gifts total over \$10,000. Again, your generosity will make a huge difference! Please let us know when you've made the donation if online, otherwise just include a note with your offering if by mail or in person.

Christmas Gift “Tree” Giving – Please return by Dec. 12

The donation Christmas tree that we set up in the entrance area might go largely unnoticed and unused this year (**if you did take a tag, please return your gift/donation by Dec. 12**). Yet, we know how generous the people of this congregation are and how you have a heart for others. So, in addition to tags on a tree in the entrance area, as we did last year, we are going to set up a Christmas gift-giving fund to which you can contribute. We know it doesn't feel as good as actually buying a present, but let's concentrate on the people who are in need and plan for a normal 2022 Christmas! Our causes will be the same, so you can designate which one(s) you wish to support and the amount(s). So that we don't blend these gifts with regular offerings, would you please send a check that gives which cause(s) and amount(s)? If you don't have checks anymore, you can drop off an envelope at church with cash, or you can use the online giving and send/email us a note for the special contribution, so we look for it.

We will buy gift cards/send in the donations for the organizations/causes from the moneys we receive.

The causes

Santa Cruz in Joliet (our mission partner) - children and teens (\$10 to \$50)

Santa Cruz in Joliet - homeless adults (\$10 to \$50)

Augustana Open Arms - orphaned teens (\$25 to \$50)

ELCA Good Gifts ministry - assisting people all over the world with animals & more (chicks - \$10; honey bees - \$20; piglet - \$30; school uniform for girls - \$40; goat - \$50; feed 50 people at a soup kitchen - \$100; cow - \$500)

Adult Choir & Ladies Ensemble Information

HEY SINGERS!!! God has blessed us to be able to start Adult Choir and the Ladies Ensemble again. If you have not heard from Pamela due to possible contact info changes and for all those NEW singers who have just been waiting for this news, please contact church office and we will get your information to her. The Adult Choir practices Wednesdays at 7:00pm and the Ladies Ensemble once a month on Saturdays at 3:00pm. We have special singer-masks to help keep everyone safe.

Thinking about Christmas Gifts?

Give your loved one a goat. What!?! Through the ELCA's Good Gifts, you can find all kinds of alternative Christmas giving ideas. In short, someone who needs something, such as livestock, receives the actual animal, and your loved one knows that his or her gift is helping someone in need. Check out these and many other good gifts at <https://community.elca.org/elcagoodgifts>.

Interest Indicators

We know that COVID has thrown a monkey-wrench into our wonderful record of having volunteers galore. We haven't felt comfortable with all kinds of ministry connections because we didn't want to take a chance on getting people sick. But this COVID obstacle is not going to last forever!!! We want to get a head-start on it by asking you to fill out a new Interest Indicator. There are three ways to go: 1) use the version on the website ([Interest Indicator](#)); 2) ask us to email you a fillable PDF version that you can then save and send back to us or print and send to us; 3) fill out a traditional printed version that will be available at church or that we can send you!

American Legion Band Concert – Sun. Dec. 19

Each year we have gotten free tickets for this Christmas tradition at the Rialto. The American Legion Band Concert will be on Sunday, December 19 at 2:00 p.m. and it is free! If you would like to reserve tickets, let us know by **Dec. 5**. [Sign up](#)

Ballet 5:8 Presents Beyond the Nutcracker

A classic holiday tradition with a Ballet 5:8 twist. Join Emma and Uncle Abrahms as they embark on a miraculous journey through time and discover what Christmas is all about.

Dates are Dec. 17 at 7:00pm, Dec. 18 at 2:00pm & 7pm and Dec. 19 at 3:00pm at Lincoln-Way West Fine Arts Center. For tickets or more information go to: School.Ballet58.org or 708-329-8773.

Some New Theater Options - ([Sign Up](#))

We Are Heading Back to Broadway in Chicago!

We are going to put our proverbial toes in the water and offer two different shows through Broadway in Chicago. We think it is safe to give this a try because both shows will require proof of vaccination with an ID, plus masks will need to be worn. Our bargain rate seats will be in the upper sections, as we've had before. We have reserved 10 seats for each of these, but would hope to be able to add more if needed.

The Simon and Garfunkel Story – Sun., Feb. 27 - 2:00pm show - CIBC Theatre

This show features all of the hits of these two legendary performers. They have won all kinds of awards, including a lifetime achievement Grammy award. Tickets are \$38 each, including the handling fees.

Jesus Christ, Superstar - July 19-31 - 2:00pm show - Cadillac Theatre

In celebration of its 50th Anniversary, a new mesmerizing production of this iconic musical phenomenon comes to Chicago! Originally staged by London's Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, this production won the 2017 Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival, garnering absolutely outstanding reviews. (The show is 90 minutes and there is no intermission.) Tickets will be \$23, including all fees. Sign up today!

Because of You

Tropical Storm Isaias poured 7 inches of rain on parts of eastern Pennsylvania on August 4, 2020. Wind damage, tornadoes and widespread, severe flooding affected hundreds of thousands of people, including Joe Small and his wife. Flooding destroyed everything on the Smalls' first floor, including their washer, dryer, heater and furniture. The Smalls replaced all that with their own money, but they couldn't afford to replace the damaged walls, ceiling or flooring. So they turned to Lutheran Congregational Services (LCS), an affiliate of Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), for help. "I can't say how much this means to me and my wife. We lost everything, for the third time," said Joe. Long after storms have passed and the national news media have moved on, LCS and LDR assist disaster survivors in Pennsylvania and around the world.

Faith & Life Experience

We are going to feature stories about people from Peace from time to time. Enjoy this one from Michele Lenz!

I was raised in a different religious tradition. I went to the appropriate classes for my age, and I attended church regularly. I learned the words to the services and did my best to "follow the rules" that were presented to me. I was comfortable in my faith, but something was missing. I began to have questions, some of them rather deep for someone my age. Questions that I couldn't seem to obtain clear answers. I somehow thought that maybe this was something I would learn later on.

As I got older, I began to wonder if perhaps this wasn't the right religious tradition for me and perhaps, I should change. Change I did and I joined the Lutheran church and raised my children in that church. I found that the teachings, the sermons, and the services were leading me to want to know more; to have a deeper understanding and a closer relationship with God. Unfortunately, that church had deep financial problems and came very close to closing. We had moved and I thought maybe I should look for another church more in my area. After a period of time, we found Peace.

Peace Lutheran Church was a different experience. From the first time we came everyone was so friendly. We met many wonderful people and made two very close friends. It was comfortable, you might say. It only took a short while before we decided to join. I really enjoyed Pastor Dave's sermons as they connected the Gospel with everyday life. For the first time, the Gospel readings really began to relate to my life. I decided to join Bible study as I had never really read the Bible. I had just listened to someone else read small parts of it.

After some time, I volunteered to read on Sundays and be a lay liturgist. My family and I enjoyed some of the many activities Peace has to offer but it was that connection to the Bible readings that has changed me. Whether it be at Bible Study, a reader or a lay liturgist on Sundays, it was that connection, that new understanding that has become so strong for me. These three things at Peace have given me a connection to God that I never felt I had before. When I was younger, I had questions for which I couldn't find the answers. I now may not have all the answers, but I see them unfolding in the words of the Bible. Every time I read I feel that connection and my faith deepening. I thank Peace Church for giving that to me.

Michele Lenz

Questions Kids Ask About God

If God forgives everyone, why is there a hell?

God's forgiveness stands on its own. It is a complete work of God and a gift from God to us. Going to hell is not because forgiveness isn't offered or that some action was so bad that God wouldn't forgive it. But some people completely reject God. God is not going to save us against our will or make us take God's gifts, like forgiveness. When people completely reject God, they have rejected both forgiveness and God. So in the end, because hell is the absence of God, it exists because some people refuse to be with God.

When Jesus was born, did his lifestyle and actions influence the actions of others?

100% yes!!! We know practically nothing about his growing up childhood. (Certainly, his birth influenced many people who came in contact with him.) But we know for sure how he influenced countless people in his life as an adult. Some were changed in small ways (like the religious leaders who were taught lessons by Jesus). Many were changed forever (like his disciples, people who were healed, people who were rejected by others in society but loved by Jesus, and many, many more!)

Parents/grandparents, please keep sending in your kids questions! Go ahead and ask them specifically what questions they have about God!

Coat Drive to Help Others

One Warm Coat is a ministry of our church to assist in the collection of clean, reusable coats and jackets for donation to local individuals free of charge. We are grateful for our ability in all circumstances to continue in our mission to meet basic human needs. Items can be dropped off at church including left outside the front door in a bag or box. Scarfs, hats, gloves/mittens and boots are also accepted. Thank you for your continued support.

Helping Santa Cruz's Food Pantry

Santa Cruz has a food and resource pantry for people of their neighborhood who are hungry or in need. The pantry needs the following specific items: **especially cereals, canned fruit, peanut butter, jelly, toilet paper, paper towels, household cleaning products, personal care items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, easy-open snack-type items (protein bars, cookies, chips, nuts),** coffee (ground), creamers (powdered), hand soap (bar & liquid), disposable diapers, dish soap, toothpaste, juices.

Youth Events

Peace 360 – 7th Grade and Beyond!

We are expanding our youth group! From now on our 7/8th graders and our high school graduates are invited to join our high school youth group! Peace 360 will be open to youth going into 8th grade through our graduated youth, as well!

Sun. Dec. 19 – We will have our Christmas party and have a fancy dinner!! We will have a gift exchange so bring a gift to give, \$5 max! 6-8pm

Confirmation Schedule:

7th gr. Confirmation 7:00pm Jan. 5 & 19

8th gr. Confirmation 7:00pm Dec. 8 ; Jan. 12 & 26

3rd-6th Grade Bible Buddies – Wed., Dec. 8

Come join us for Bible Buddies! On two Wednesdays of the month, from 7-8:00pm, we invite our 3rd-6th graders to come and hang out with Miss Jess. We will a lesson and some fun! Please let us know if you're planning to come. [Bible Buddies sign up](#)

Sunday School Singing – Sat., Dec. 4

We will not have a traditional Christmas Program this year, but on Sat., Dec. 4, at the 5pm service. We are asking our Sunday School youth to sing during service. Please let us know if your youth will be singing with us during service. [Sunday School sings sign up](#)

Family Event – Pizza & Gingerbread House Decorating – Sat., Dec. 11

On Sat., Dec. 11, at 6pm we invite families to have some pizza and decorate a gingerbread house! Each family will receive one gingerbread house kit. (The houses will be pre-glued so that they are ready to be decorated when you get here). **Please sign up before Dec. 5**, so we have enough pizza and supplies to go around. [Family Event sign up](#). Cost is a good will donation.

9th Grade and Beyond Operation Clean Sweep – Wed., Dec. 22

Here is a chance to get some service hours in! 11-2pm we will tidy up the church before our Christmas Services! Jimmy John's will be served for lunch! Sign up and let us know what sandwich you would like for lunch.