

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

January 2021

Vol. XXVI, Issue 1

Didn't See That Coming!

When 2020 began, none of us would have predicted by mid-March our normal lives would be so incredibly altered – by a pandemic, of all things. Who would have thought that the Christmas song “There’s No Place Like Home for the Holidays” would be taken so literally or apply to every other day, too?!?! Some of you have your own personal stories of the unexpected happening, whether related to COVID or not. Some of you lost loved ones unexpectedly. Some of you had challenges in a relationship. Your finances could have taken a hit. The unexpected wasn’t all bad, of course. Some of you had good news you didn’t anticipate – a new job, a better outlook, a word of acceptance from a college or program, improved finances, a new relationship, etc.

The history of God’s people is worth remembering in times like these because their story is not just about what they encountered that was unforeseen. It was (and is) also a story of what God is up to all the time: loving people and bringing new life out of death. The story of the people of God includes God finding ways to bring people out of captivity (personal or corporate.) Forgiving people whom others had written off. Inspiring people who felt they couldn’t lead.

A plot twist in a book or a movie or a great trick by a magician can be entertaining, but plot twists in our lives have consequences that matter. Having someone who is for us to come alongside us through all those twists is comforting and helpful. The Bible and our own faith journey invite us to anticipate God being active on our behalf even when we do not anticipate it.

By the end of 2021, we will have seen more examples of “didn’t see that coming!” Who knows what those may be? (We can hope for a more normal year!) As we get ready to start 2021 though, let’s keep looking for God to act all along the way with love. May we trust that whatever those out of the blue experiences will be, we also will have inspiring experiences and insights to point to of where God also popped up to be there with us. Anticipate *that* coming for sure!

Pastor Dave Hedlin

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

Prayers Requested

The family of Joe Dienes, Jamie, Eileen, the Boyens family, Bonnie Ruisz, Julie Friedrich, the family of Gary Taeger, Kelly & Dan Norton, Valerie Bogie, Zachary Hancock, Wayne Hansen, Eli Hrnayak, Diane Weber, Joyce Smith, Alwyn Dohrn

Sympathy

The congregation of Peace wishes to extend its sympathy to:

the family of Char Bonomo, mother of Jeff Bonomo;

the family of Mary Brouette, mother of Andrea Rackelin

Congratulations

Nicholas Jank and Kailey Kahl on their marriage on Dec. 12.

Special Prayers for Healing – Sat., Jan. 9

As part of the 5:00 p.m. Saturday night service on Jan. 9, we will have an opportunity within the prayers of intercession to especially note those who need special prayers for healing. They can be for you or for somebody you know.

Baptism Orientation – Sat., Feb. 6

Feb. 6, at 3:30 p.m., marks the next baptism orientation class for those who wish to have children baptized at Peace in the next few months.

Details for How We Worship

FOR EVERYONE COMING TO PEACE

*Whether you drive-in 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. When the back-order is filled, we will also be adding a pre-packaged wafer & grape juice option.

* 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. Masks are required.

DRIVE-IN WORSHIP ON SATURDAYS AT 5:00PM & SUNDAYS AT 9:30AM

* Households are required to socially distance from each other, which can be accomplished by **parking on the yellow lines. Our worship location is centered under the main canopy.**

* Masks would be required if you get out of your car. (We have spare masks.)

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

* The worship will last about 30 to 40 minutes. Worshipping outdoors allows us to sing!

ONLINE OPTION CONTINUES INCLUDING AN 8:30 VERSION

* We will continue to live-stream our worship. We plan each week to record both Saturday and Sunday. Assuming everything works, all will be available through our Facebook site. **We are now going to live-stream an inside the sanctuary version at 8:30am for those for whom that option would be meaningful.**

INDOOR WORSHIP ON HOLD

For now, we are back to outdoor/drive-in on Saturdays at 5:00 and Sundays at 9:30am. Stay tuned!

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:

Kathy Drews, Kelly Muehlnickel, Marylynn Tyler, Sarah, Leslie and Eric Walton, Pamela Putrich Kelly Muehlnickel, Jonathan, Andrew, Jonah, Joshua, Claire DeMik – for special music

Kim Forrester, Bob & Margie Lenz, Keith Tague – for delivering food bags to Joshua Arms

Everyone who donated to the Christmas gift giving

All the musicians for Christmas

All those who provided poinsettias

From:

Cherlyn Jackson – for the wonderful Thanksgiving dinner

ELCA World Hunger – for the donation

Thank You for Christmas Cards for LIRS

Your kindness came through once again. We received 109 cards for the Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services (LIRS) Hope for the Holidays campaign.

Thank You for the Small Toys & Books

Jodie Brugler from our church teaches a special needs class in an economically challenged area. You have brought small toys & "Happy Meal"-type prizes to a bin at church, and then she uses them to encourage her students. Here is what she wrote to say thank you: "If you could only see how the toys from the church motivate my students (hard of hearing and learning disabled) to use strategies to become a writer of 3-5-word sentences! One of them in August sat with arms folded and an attitude of 'there ain't no way I'm writing for you!' She just beams now!! And can't wait to write more! She loves the prizes! So, keep them coming! Those toys change lives! Just wanted the congregation to know!!"

Your Offerings Matter & Are Appreciated!

You can either donate online or mail in your offering (PO Box 205, New Lenox, IL 60451). If you know your envelope #, write that on the check. If you don't, we'll gratefully look it up so that you get credit!

No matter how: thanks for your offerings – they are making a difference at Peace, in our community, in our country and around the world!

Quick Reminders

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS **Jan. 24.**

* **The Will-Grundy Medical Clinic** is now accepting patients for free healthcare for the uninsured and those who qualify. Appointments are available onsite or over the phone, Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. To schedule a free screening appointment, please call 815-726-3377, ext. 228.

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

* **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 the individual the names and telephone numbers of people who could be contacted and if possible, have the person meet these people. 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 counseling, parent support and general grief support, 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.

* **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 in a tree-lined residential area, 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.

* **Cleaning for a Reason** – Provides free housecleaning once a month for 4 months for women currently undergoing chemotherapy. For more information or to sign up please go to: www.cleaningforareason.org/cancer_patients_acct.html.

Check Out Our Social Media Pages

Follow Peace on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram with the handle @PeaceNewLenox. You can help to promote our pages and our church by following our pages and engaging our content by commenting, liking, and sharing our posts.

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

We are starting from scratch and updating our Military Pray for list in the bulletin. If you know of someone who should be on the list, please email the church office.

Need A Mask?

Thanks to our wonderful group of masks makers, we have a supply of masks available. If you are need of a face mask, please take what you need from the Ziploc bag in the grey tote by the front door of church.

Golden Opportunities Books

We are once again offering Golden Opportunity books. This year's edition has arrived and are \$25 each. (A portion of that goes to youth-related ministries.) We hope this helps you get some good bargains!

Looking Ahead

Jan. 9 – Special Prayers for Healing 5:00 pm
Jan. 10 – Peace Page Turners 10:30 am
Jan. 16 – First Communion Class 10:00 am
New Member Orientation 2:00 pm
Jan. 17 – Adult Class 10:30 am
Jan. 23 - 31 – Peanut Butter Emphasis
Jan. 24 – Reception of New Members 9:30 am
Jan. 30 – Blood Drive 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Feb. 6 – Baptism Orientation 3:30 pm
Feb. 6/7 – Souper/Super Bowl
Boy Scout Weekend
Feb. 7 – What’s the Scoop 12:15 pm
Feb. 17 – Ash Wednesday
Feb. 21 – Annual Meeting 10:30 am
Mar. 6/7 – Girl Scout Weekend

Groups

Ruth Circle Quilting – Jan. 11 & 25

Ruth Circle quilting will meet every other Monday at 9:00 a.m. We are social distancing and are not having snacks at this time. Questions? Contact the church office.

Prayer Shawl – On Hold

The crew may be on hold, but here is an update on the work they’ve done: 356 shawls completed & 339 given away! Thanks be to God!

Trailblazers – On Hold

We are still on hold but look forward to the day we can all be together again. Our group is for senior citizens and welcomes you to join us. Email the church office (or call Pastor Dave at home for now) for more information.

Strong Seniors Exercise – On Hold

We usually meet Mondays 12:00 - 1:00 and Wednesdays 11:30 -12:30 in Fellowship Hall. We are cancelling exercise class until further notice.

Ping Pong Club – We have resumed

If you are interested, contact the church office (815-485-5327 or peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org.)

Peace Page Turners – Sun., Jan. 10

The next book for the book discussion group, Peace Page Turners, will be Geraldine Brooks’ *Years of Wonder*. It is a timely novel, written about the plague in the 1660’s in England. Dealing with half the town succumbing to the disease, and all the emotions and stories that go with it, will make this a terrific read. You can pick up a copy of the book at church (sign-out which copy) if you wish. The date will be Jan. 10, and the time will be 10:30 am. Be sure to let us know you are interested so we can give you the Zoom codes.

Alzheimer’s Association Support Group

Do you care for someone diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease or a related dementia? Are you looking for information and support? The Alzheimer’s Association Support Group is hoping to resume at some time, but not yet. For more information on when the group will resume meeting, contact the church office (815-485-5327 or peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org).

Addiction and Family Support Group

The Addiction & Family Support Group meets at Peace on Tuesday nights from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. 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.

GriefShare Ministry

Please watch the newsletter & bulletin for when we will be able to resume meeting. GriefShare is a special weekly seminar and support group designed to help you heal after losing a loved one. The group is led by caring people who have experienced grief and want to help you through the difficult days. For more information, please contact Janet at griefshare.plc.60451@gmail.com.

Peace Circle of Prayer Ministry

If you would like special prayers said for someone, just let the office know of a particular need. Our Circle of Prayer ministry is ready to help. We will send out an email to the praying 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.)

From Deacon Shari Trotter

Dear Members and Friends of Peace,

Happy New Year! I'm sure that we are all taking a collective sigh of relief to see 2020 end. I am so looking forward to a new year with new possibilities and new adventures and I hope that you are too!

What are your new year's resolutions? Do you have any? After a year like 2020 what do you think Jesus new year's resolution would be? Would he even make one?

This year I made the traditional resolutions to lose weight and be more active, but I also have been thinking about some bigger, more life informing resolutions. What kind of resolutions could I make to make the world a better place and to do my part to make 2021 a year to remember for all positive reasons? So, I hereby resolve and invite you to do the same:

I resolve to strive to love more like Jesus.
I resolve to see the good in others even when it's hard.
I resolve to see each person as a child of God regardless of their race, ethnicity, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, or gender.
I resolve to practice putting the welfare of others before my own comfort.

I am sure I will struggle with all these resolutions, but I trust in God to guide me and support me. When I fail, I trust in God to forgive me. When I succeed, I trust in God to use me as a vessel for his Gospel. I keep asking myself how I can make 2021 better, I am only one person, but, if I can attempt to make these resolutions happen than perhaps my footprint in 2021 will be one of justice, faith, and love. May the God of love guide us and protect us in the New Year. May 2021 be a year of healing and may we be a part of the positive impact made on the world.

God's Peace,

Deacon Shari Trotter

College Information Packets

We have available an excellent packet of materials for all who are in the college search stage of life. Let the church office know via email or call, and we'll get it to you electronically.

Faith Development/Education

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. January's passage is Ezekiel 34:20-24 & 31.

Wednesday Bible Study - Now both in person and on-line

Each Wednesday for many weeks now, people have been joining our Bible Study through the wonders of Zoom! We offer both an in-person version for those who hate Zoom. We meet on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. Any version of the Bible you have will work. You do not need to know anything about the Bible to join this class!

Sun. Morning Adult Class – Jan. 17

We invite anyone who wants to participate in an adult class to join us on Sunday, Jan. 17, at 10:30am, via Zoom. Be sure to let us know if you're coming so we can send you the right codes. The topic for this class will be the beginning discussion of Luther's "The Freedom of a Christian." That work is 500 years old, and is as timeless as when it was written. We plan to spend two sessions on this famous God-inspired work.

Daily Devotionals Also Available Online

The coronavirus calls for new ways of helping people of faith. The ELCA's publishing house, Augsburg-Fortress, has made *Christ in Our Home* available free online:

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category/286137/Christ-in-Our-Home>.

Jan. - March Devotional Booklet Available

We put a second bin outside the front door labeled "devotional booklets" and you can come by the church and pick one up at your convenience. If you want it mailed to you, just let us know via peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org.

Faith & Life Experience

We are going to feature stories about people from Peace from time to time.

Enjoy this one from Vivian & Jack Farbak!

“There was a time when we felt totally abandoned; where we didn’t want to be around other people; where they had ‘happy things to talk about’ and we couldn’t stand it.” The challenge of believing that God had totally let us down was not based on a sudden whim. It was based on watching our 30 year-old daughter dying of cancer. She fought hard and we prayed hard and we watched her go from a vibrant mother and active person to a shell of herself, losing 65 pounds in that awful 18-month battle. A faith relationship with God after that seemed phony and inauthentic and was replaced by bitterness. We couldn’t sing and we couldn’t pray...and we didn’t want to if that’s who God was.

We hadn’t always felt that way. Jack grew up at Zion Lutheran at 109th and S. Park in Chicago – Sunday School, confirmation, grammar school, the works. Vivian belonged to Bethany Reformed church, with Sunday School and weekly Bible classes from 3rd through 8th grades. When we got married (in Bethany) we both were a part of Zion, and then other churches in Calumet City and Thornton. We appreciated how people in our churches tried to support us in the battle with cancer, even the church where our granddaughter was going to pre-school. But the bottom line was that our daughter, Donna, died, and we were angry. And we had had it.

It turned out, of course, that God hadn’t abandoned us, nor was God going to stop trying to crack through that bitterness and anger, which it turns out was only making us unhappy. Our son, Jack, and his wonderful family were a part of Peace. They asked us on occasion to come with them, but we said, “no,” just as often. Then one time – maybe it was Mother’s Day – we said okay. And something happened to us. The peace that had eluded us began to seem like a possibility. We started very slowly, not being sure we dared to venture back to a faith relationship. But we did keep coming. And sure enough, that peace that passes all understanding became real for us. The bitterness and anger were replaced by healing and hope. We now know that God brings life out of death. We know that when we pass away, we’ll be in heaven with our daughter – all healed! And along the way now, when Vivian had cancer or Jack had a heart attack, we had a strength, a peace, that we turned to that was outside ourselves.

We are so grateful that our faith journey came full circle. We don’t have to pretend the pain of losing our daughter isn’t real. It still hurts. But we have a perspective now that makes us want more and more of that peace of God. We can sing again and go to Bible Study and Sunday classes, knowing first-hand of God’s love.

Vivian and Jack Farbak

General Announcements

First Communion Class – Sat., Jan. 16

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. 16, at 10:00 a.m.

New Member Orientation & Reception – Sat., Jan. 16 & Sun., Jan. 24

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. Because of the strange times we are going through, it will be a different version of our new member orientation and reception! Part 1: Sat., Jan. 16 at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom. The Reception of New Members will be on Jan. 24, during worship at 9:30 am. If you are interested in joining or finding out more information, email (peacechurch@peacelenox.org) or call the church office at 815-485-5327 or see Pastor Dave. (We will need to omit the sponsors and new member luncheon for now but hope to make it up to the new members later.)

Peanut Butter Emphasis– Jan. 23 - 31

COVID or no COVID, let’s see if we can top last year’s record amount of peanut butter jars we received! The New Lenox Township food bank especially needs this staple this time of year. You can leave the jars outside the front door anytime and we’ll move them in and count them!

Blood Drive – Sat., Jan. 30

Thank you to everyone who donated in December. We had 24 donors appointments, 1 walk in, 2 deferrals and 2 doubles equaling 25 pints of life-giving blood! Our next drive will be Sat., Jan. 30, 9:00 am -1:00 pm. Please visit the Versiti website for any questions or to schedule a time to donate.

Boy Scout Weekend – Feb. 6/7

The annual Boy Scout weekend is coming up on Feb. 6/7. Boy Scouts of all ages, wear your uniforms to church. Then on March 6/7 all Girl Scouts remember to wear your uniforms to church in celebration of Girl Scout weekend.

Souper Bowl of Caring – Feb. 6/7

The Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group: “Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat.” Since that day, more than \$150 million has been raised for local charities across the country.

We will be participating again in the “Souper Bowl” for the hungry. Our usual football display will not be possible, but you can still donate! Send in an offering marked for Souper Bowl and we’ll send them to the ELCA’s World Hunger Appeal.

What’s the Scoop – Sun., Feb. 7

We press on in the name of God! What’s the Scoop will be Sun., Feb. 7 at 10:30am. We anticipate it will be on Zoom.... stay tuned. Let us know if you will join us (815-485-5327 or peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org.)

Notice of Annual Meeting – Sun., Feb. 21

Our annual meeting will take place on Feb. 21, at 10:30am. It is going to be quite a change. Full details will be sent when we get closer, including voting by mail or electronically. Highlights will include the election of council members, celebrating what God was doing through Peace even in a pandemic.

2021 Flower Chart

We do not know when we’ll be back in the sanctuary to worship in person. So, for now we are going to wait before asking people to donate the cost of altar flowers (\$20 per arrangement).

Habitat for Humanity

The Habitat for Humanity (Will County) home on Raynor Ave. in Joliet is having more work done during December and the contractor expects to have the house ready for volunteer work inside around the middle of January again. Would you like to volunteer? We’ll put you in touch with the right person to get the information you’ll need to see if it can work with your own schedule! Let us know (peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org or 815-485-5327.)

Church Office – More Care in Place for the Staff

Because of more rampant (COVID) spread, we are asking you once again to being more restricted about coming into the church office (as it was when we first re-opened the office.) Call ahead M-F from 9:00 to noon and maybe you can arrange what needs to be done by dropping off or picking up something outside the front door. (You can always leave things for our various giving opportunities out there anytime and we will take care of getting it inside. Also, you can email the church and we will get back to you.) We continue to seek ways to serve and be safe at the same time.

Christmas Gift Giving Tree Thanks

Wow! Way to go, people of Peace! Your generosity in wanting to help others is an inspiration once again. We provided the funds for Santa Cruz to give out gift cards for their ministry to the children of their church and to homeless/struggling adults. We gave money to Augustana Center for Open Arms for their ministry to orphaned teens and younger children. And we were able to “buy” chicks and cows and piglets and goats and honeybees and dinners and COVID related supplies and more for the ELCA Good Gifts ministry. The grand total is at \$4,200!!! You can’t beat the joy of giving, and doing it in God’s name makes the giving that much more impactful and meaningful.

2021 Calendars Available

Hickey Memorial Chapel delivered 2021 calendars to us again this year. If you would like a copy, they will be in the black bin outside the front door – help yourself!

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 support

Would You Like Your Own Copy of the Worship Book?

One of our members asked about doing this, and we can make that happen. If you would like your own copy, let us know and we will pass one along at our cost, which should be about \$28 after shipping. Contact the office (peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org or 815-485-5327).

Because of You and Your Gifts

Lilian and her son, Nevil, live in one of the world's largest slums in Nairobi, Kenya. It's common for the buildings in this slum not to have running water or electricity. Paying for water that's safe to drink is the most expensive item for families like Lilian's. Often, the choice is between having clean water to drink or food to eat. Can you imagine making this heartbreaking choice? And through your generous giving, your neighbors like Lilian and Nevil will have easy access to clean drinking water, clean bathrooms and safe places to wash their hands. You also help provide health care to prevent and treat deadly diseases, including COVID-19.

Helping Santa Cruz's Food Pantry

We have an ongoing partnership with Santa Cruz Lutheran Church in Joliet. They have a food and resource pantry for people of their neighborhood who are hungry or in need. You can bring donations anytime and put them in the baskets on the floor heading into Fellowship Hall. The pantry needs the following specific items: **especially cereal (all kinds), canned fruit, peanut butter, soups**, coffee (ground), creamers (powdered), hand soap (bar & liquid), disposable diapers, dish soap, toothpaste, juices.

Caregiver Tip of the Month

It takes a team to make the right decisions, to call on the right doctors, to do the research, to find help for everyday challenges to care for ourselves as caregivers while providing for our loved ones. It takes a team to sit down together and talk about what to do. It takes a team to understand the needs. It takes a team to provide strength and guidance. Find that team. Embrace that team. Stay with that team. It's a win, win.

(Article provided by AARP.)

(For more information about being a caregiver and other related topics - see our display in the narthex.)

Questions Kids Ask About God

While we wait for more opportunities to share our *Questions Kids Ask About God* book with others, we recognize the questions don't stop. Here is one person's that came in via email this month: 1) Was Jesus born on Dec. 25? *We don't know which day Jesus was born; we'd guess in the spring because that is when shepherds would be out all night with their sheep giving birth to new lambs. December 25 was chosen by the early church leaders because the Romans already had a holiday that day....and the Romans had made the day into a wild (not-nice) party-time. The Christians took over the date to make it a good day instead of not-nice day.* And 2) Why didn't God have him born in a nicer place? *The fact that there was no room for Jesus in a nicer place fits how many people even now treat God – no room. It also reminds us that God is very willing to go to the not-nice places and not-nice people in order to love us all. The manger reminds us God comes to us humbly, and invites us to live that way, too.*

Youth Events

Confirmation – Online for now

7th Grade Jan. 6 & 20

8th Grade Jan. 13 & 27

Sunday School

We are hard at work with our Sunday School packets! Remember when your youth(s) do a lesson you can go online to and fill out the form on our website:

<http://www.peacenewlenox.org/ministries/youth-ministry/sunday-school/>

Schedule for January:

Jan. 3 *Happy New Year! NO CLASS*

Jan. 10 Lesson 13 Packet **Zoom meeting P3 - K**

Jan. 17 Lesson 14 Packet **Zoom meeting 1 & 2grade**

Jan. 24 Lesson 15 Packet **Zoom meeting 3 - 6 grade**

Jan. 31 Lesson 16 Packet **Zoom meeting 7 & 8 grade**

Peace 360 Ping Pong Tournament – Sun., Jan. 10

On Sun., Jan. 10 from 4-6 pm, we invite grades 9-12 to join us at church for a ping pong tournament! Please be sure to wear your mask and we will be sure to socially distance while we are together in Fellowship Hall. The next meeting after that will be on Sun., Jan. 24 via Zoom.