

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

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January 2023

Vol. 28 Issue 1

From Pastor Gary Erickson

Matthew 3: 16-17

And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Echoes of the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah are heard in the Scripture quoted above. Isaiah 43:2 reads in part, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers; they shall not overwhelm you..." Our lives can be filled with challenges from health and financial issues to loss and grief. Being overwhelmed by life's challenges is not unusual. One of the challenges faced by many is the sense of loneliness and isolation. During cold winter when we huddle indoors that sense of loneliness and isolation might be magnified. Perhaps you are longing for hope: hope for connections, warmer weather, and meaningful conversations.

Hear, then, these words of hope: "just as Jesus came up from the water... a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'" And, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you..." In worship we are privileged to hear words, hymns, and prayers of hope.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1931-2021) once said, "Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." I pray that Peace Church will be your destination for hope. That we together might meet those needs for connections, warmth, and meaningful conversations.

With gratitude,

Pastor Gary Erickson

Interim Update:

The Reverend Jennifer Beamsley will join us on Sun., Jan. 29 for lunch & discussion about the transition/call process. Please plan to join us following the 11:00am worship service.

Prayers Requested

The family of Ruthelda Haugen, Sharon Obuchina, the Salutric family, Emily Camp, Josh Brann, Dylan Brann, Marijo, Judy, Jean, Vera, Peggy, Foster, Sheila, Crystal, Joyce, Cass Ott

Sympathy

The congregation of Peace wishes to extend its sympathy to:

the family of Thomas Klock, father of Todd Klock

the family of Phil Landry, husband of Joan Landry

the family of Judith Albright, mother of Patti Merk

Special Prayers for Healing – Sat., Jan. 14

As part of the 5:00 p.m. Saturday night service on Jan. 14, 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.

First Communion Class – Sat., Jan. 21

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 should attend along with the child. The class will be offered on Saturday, Jan. 21, at 3:30pm.

Notice of Annual Meeting – Sun., Feb. 19

Our annual meeting will take place on Feb. 19, at 9:55am in the sanctuary. Highlights will include the election of council members & reflections on our ministries on God's behalf. Please plan to attend.

Thank You Very Much!

We are thankful for all the people who give of themselves to make ministry happen!

To:

To all the worship volunteers, musicians, choirs and special music providers who helped make Christmas special

All those who provided poinsettias
Everyone who donated to the Christmas gift giving
Mark Anderson – offering counting for Christmas
Cindy Hostert – candle assembly for Christmas

From:

Peace Church Office – for all the good wishes and Christmas goodies!

Lucille Taite – for the Thanksgiving dinner

Family Addiction Support Group – for use of the church for meetings

Worship Details

Saturday worship 5:00pm, Sunday at 8:30 & 11:00am.
8:30am service is live streamed.

* Masks are now optional but are once again encouraged for all who are at all concerned.

* We are now passing the offering plate if you wish to bring an offering with you. Otherwise, we will depend on people continuing to contribute online or by mail.

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

To sign up for anything, to ask a question, or to share a thought, we suggest using the church's email:

peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org.

Your Offerings Matter & Are Appreciated!

You can either donate online or mail in your offering
PO Box 205, New Lenox, IL 60451

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

Electronic Giving

If you would like to sign up for automatic withdrawals, please contact the office. You can also give on-line at any time through our website www.peacenewlenox.org, click on the donate tab and then use the donate through PayPal tab. You can use most major credit cards.

Because of You

Gender inequality is a major cause and effect of hunger and poverty. According to the World Food Program, an estimated 60 percent of chronically hungry people are women and girls. Guatemala has a particularly difficult issue with stunting because of malnutrition, with nearly 47 percent of children under 5 affected. LWR has partnered with local organization FundaSistemas on the "Improving Health and Nutrition in Guatemala's Western Highlands" project. Residents are provided with agricultural training, seeds and tools for farming to make sure their food is varied, healthy and nutritious. Before the project, single mother Guisela did not know how to farm. Now she is growing nutritionally packed seasonal vegetables such as carrots, radishes and broccoli, producing delicious oyster mushrooms and is raising hens, which provide nutritious eggs for her young daughters Maily and Darriana. With such options, Guisela can be reassured her daughters have a variety of healthy foods to eat and will grow up strong and healthy.

2023 Flower Chart

2023 dates are available to donate flowers for the altar. Any week we have people who wish to donate them we will order them. You may call or email the church office. The cost per arrangement is \$20.

Community Resources

* The Will-Grundy Medical Clinic

free healthcare for the uninsured and those who qualify
815-726-3377, ext. 228.

* 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

call/text 988 or online chat at www.988lifeline.org

* Joliet Area Hospice Support Groups

www.joliethospice.org or 815-740-4104

*Crutches, walkers & wheelchairs available

please contact the church office

*Guardian Angel Community Services

Sexual assault & rape crisis services
24-hour sexual assault hotline: 815-730-8984

* LSSI's Joshua Arms

independent & supportive living units for seniors
www.LSSI.org/JoshuaArms or 815-727-6401

* NAMI - National Alliance for Mental Illness

815-409-7917

info@namiwillgrundy.org or www.namiwillgrundy.org

*Cleaning for a Reason

free housecleaning for women undergoing chemotherapy
www.cleaningforareason.org/cancer_patients_acct.html

Looking Ahead

Jan. 7 – Ladies Ensemble Rehearsal 3:00pm
Jan. 8 – Peace Page Turners 9:45am
Jan. 14 – Special Prayers for Healing 5:00pm
Jan. 15 – New Member Orientation 9:45am
Jan. 21 – First Communion Class 3:30pm
Jan. 28/29 – Peanut Butter Weekend
Jan. 15 – New Member Orientation 9:45am
Jan. 22 – Reception of New Members 11:00am
Jan. 28 – Blood Drive 9:00am - 1:00pm
Jan. 28/29 – 7-12th gr. Winter Lock In
**Jan. 29 – Lunch & Discussion with
Rev. Jennifer Beamsley 12:00pm**
Jan. 31 – Church Council Meeting 7:00pm
Feb. 4/5 – Boy Scout Weekend
Feb. 6 – Committee Chair Meeting 7:30pm
Feb. 11 – Baptism Orientation 3:30 pm
Feb. 11/12 – Souper/Super Bowl
Feb. 15 – VBS Planning Meeting 6:00pm
Feb. 19 – Annual Meeting 9:55 am
Feb. 22 – Ash Wednesday
Mar. 11/12 – Girl Scout Weekend
Apr. 2 – Palm Sunday
Apr. 9 – Easter Sunday

Groups

Quilting – Mon., Jan. 2, 16 & 30

Ruth Circle Quilting meets every other Monday from 9:00am - 12:00pm. Come whenever you would like.

Trailblazers – Tues., Jan. 17

We invite anyone who'd like to get together with some others who are anything but "over the hill" to come together on Tues., Jan. 17, at 12noon at church. Bring \$5; the food will be provided. 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.

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.

Prayer Shawls – Wed., Jan. 11 & 25

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 week on Wednesday at 6:00pm. You may also create shawls at home and drop them at church.

Peace Page Turners - Sun., Jan. 8

Our next meeting will be Jan. 8 at 9:45am and we will discuss Horse by Geraldine Brooks.

Copies of the book are available to sign out at church.

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 them, or those who just want to learn about the epidemic of heroin and prescription pain medications in our community. Questions, contact the church office.

Faith Development & Education

Wednesday Bible Study

We meet on Wednesday mornings at 10:00am.

Why not join us online or in person to learn more about this amazing resource? You do not need to know anything about the Bible to join us!

Adult Education Classes

Please join us for Sunday adult classes

Jan. 1 – New Year's Day – no adult class

Jan. 8 – Peace Page Turners Book Discussion

Jan. 15 – Epiphany - "Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem..." Who were the Magi?

Jan. 22 – Epiphany: The beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Jan. 29 – Rev. Jennifer Beamsley will discuss the work of the Northern Illinois Synod.

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 Revelation 21:5-6.

General Announcements

Ladies Ensemble Rehearsal – Sat., Jan. 7

Rehearsals are only one Saturday a month. The next rehearsal will be on Sat., Jan. 7 at 3:00pm. Please contact the church office for more information.

Albums & Appetizers Event -Sat., Jan. 21

Come take a walk down memory lane and join us to help organize Peace's many photos into new dated albums. The new albums will then be displayed in the library for everyone to enjoy.

We will meet in Fellowship Hall on Sat., Jan. 21 from 10:00am - 2:00pm. Bring an appetizer to share and your organizing talents to help make this idea a reality. If you would like to help, please use the sign up in the bulletin.

Blood Drive – Sat., Jan. 28

Our next blood drive is Sat., Jan. 28, from 9:00am - 1:00pm. Please use the Versiti website https://donate.illinois.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/5597808 to make an appointment.

New Member Orientation & Reception - Sun., Jan. 15 & 22

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. 15 at 9:45 and the reception will be Sun., Jan. 22, during 11:00am worship. If you are interested in joining or finding out more information, please call the church office.

Lunch & Discussion About the Call Process with Rev. Jennifer Beamsley - Sun., Jan. 29

Please join us for lunch and discussion with Rev. Jennifer Beamsley, assistant to the bishop, on Sun., Jan. 29 at noon. She will be discussing the transition & call process our congregation will be going through and answering any questions. Lunch will be provided, please bring a dessert to share. Please use the sign up in the bulletin if you would like to join us.

From Deacon Shari Simon

Dear Members and Friends of Peace,

I will be out of town January 9th through January 17th. I wanted to let you all know this because my family could use some prayers for my nephew Parker. Parker is my brother's oldest child and he turned 16 on December 22, 2022. Parker has been diagnosed with a rare seizure disorder that started off with one seizure every couple of months and now he is having 10 or more seizures every single day.

On January 10th his doctor will be performing a procedure to monitor exactly where his seizures are coming from. This procedure requires the surgeon to drill a hole into Parker's skull and place a lead wire on his brain. They will then keep him in the hospital and remove all his seizure medicine in hopes of tracking the seizure activity. The last time they removed all the medicine he had over 27 seizures in less than 24 hours.

My whole family is very anxious about this procedure, but we are very hopeful that this will help to pinpoint a location where the seizure activity is coming from. If all goes well, they will find a specific location where most of the seizure activity is coming from, and they will plan for a major brain surgery where they will go in and kill the portion of his brain that is causing the problem.

I am traveling to Georgia to not only support Parker, my brother Ronnie, and my sister-in-law Alyssa but they also have an 11-year-old daughter Cadence, and I will be her caregiver for the week so that Ronnie and Alyssa can focus on Parker. I am blessed to be able to go and care for my family during this stressful time. While Cadence is at school, I will be taking a turn hanging out with Parker so that his mom and dad can take a breath, brush their teeth, say a prayer, and whatever else they need for self-care.

I am incredibly grateful to have a church family who support me in putting my family first in all that I do. I know from the depths of my heart that we will have many prayer warriors on Parker's side. My family asks that while you are praying if you could add some prayers for Parker, his doctors, good answers, and for the rest of us as we worry and try our best to care for Cadence who will no doubt be very worried about her big brother, I know that you will all be in great hands with Pastor Gary and the rest of the staff at Peace and I will be anxious to be back with you all.

May God bless you all while I am away and may God travel with me and bless my family too!

God's Peace,

Deacon Shari Simon

VBS Planning Meeting - Wed., Feb. 15

Yes, it's time to think summer! Our VBS is amazing and involves lots of people each helping in some way. We invite you to be a part of the planning crew to join in the behind-the-scenes fun of putting this great event together. The first meeting will be Wed., Feb. 15 at 6:00pm. Please let us know if you would like to help with this ministry in any way.

Youth Fellowship & Faith Story

I love God because he is always there and you can always pray to him. My favorite story about God is Noah's Ark. I like that God saved the animals so that they can make more animals. If I could ask God one question I would ask him, If you created everything, who created you? I like to come to church because we have fun, learn about God, and sing songs.

~ Lilianna Rumbaugh

College Information Packets

We have available an excellent packet of materials for all who are in the college search stage of life. Look for them on the counter in the narthex.

2023 Calendars Available

Hickey Memorial Chapel delivered 2023 calendars to us again this year. If you would like a copy, please look for them on the counter in the narthex.

Helping Others

Peanut Butter Weekend – Jan. 28 & 29

Let's see if we can top last year's record amount of peanut butter we received! The New Lenox Township food bank especially needs this staple this time of year. If you would like to donate, please bring your peanut butter to church and look for the bin in the narthex.

Coat Collection Through January

One Warm Coat is a ministry of our church to assist in the collection of clean coats, jackets, scarves, hats, gloves, mittens and boots for donation to local individuals free of charge. Items can be dropped in the bin located in the narthex.

Help With Sorting Donations

We are so blessed as a congregation to collect so many things to give to people in need. We are looking for individuals or groups to take turns organizing, boxing and delivering these items to MorningStar, Santa Cruz and the New Lenox food pantry. If you would like to help, please call or email the church office.

Amazon Smile

Thank you to everyone who designated Peace as the recipient of the Amazon Smile program. Because of you we just received a donation of \$89.89. Thank you!!!

Help Others Fund

Alongside our regular giving that helps all kinds of people in need, we also have a special "help others" fund within our general fund. It is targeted to help people who need food or gas. We continue to be diligent in making sure the money actually goes to people in need.

Helping Santa Cruz's Food Pantry

Santa Cruz has a food & resource pantry for people of their neighborhood who are hungry or in need. We have a list now of specific items they can use in their pantry. You can bring these anytime and put them in the baskets on the floor heading into Fellowship Hall.

cereal (all kinds)	canned fruit
coffee (ground) all kinds	creamers (powdered)
ice cream cones (summer only)	juices
hand soap (bar & liquid)	toothpaste
dish soap	disposable diapers

Peace Church Scholarship

Peace Church will make available the annual scholarship for high school seniors who are planning to attend 4- or 2-year college programs or technical/trade schools. Up to 5 scholarships will be awarded. Recipients will be chosen based on several factors, which are detailed in the application form. These forms are available on the counter in the narthex and must be submitted no later than Feb. 22, 2023. Interviews will be conducted on Sun., March 19 starting at 12:30. [Printable Scholarship Application](#)

Confirmation Schedule -

7th Gr. – Wed., Jan. 18 & Feb. 1 at 7:00 p.m.

8th Gr. – Wed., Jan. 25 & Feb. 8 at 7:00 p.m.

You can submit Sermon Notes [online here!](#)

Youth Events

7-12 Gr. Service Project Opportunity - Sun., Jan. 22

We will meet at church, at 3:00pm, and go to MorningStar Mission. Here we will pass out all the things we have been collecting for the Blessing Bags and we will be serving dinner. Please let us know if your youth can attend, so we know how many drivers we will need. Adults, please let us know if you would like to drive. This event will count as service hours towards Confirmation and for high school. [Sign up here](#)

7th-12th Gr. January Youth Lock-in Jan. 28 - 29

It might be snowing outside but it's warm at Peace! What a perfect time of year to have a lock-in. We will meet at church at 4:45pm on Sat., Dec. 28th and worship together and then have some winter fun. Please bring a sleeping bag and pillow. We will provide Dinner and breakfast the next morning. The lock-in will end on Sun., Dec. 29 at 12pm. This lock-in is for anyone in 7th grade through 12th grade. Parents are welcome to come and spend the night! [Sign up here](#)

3-6th Gr. Paint Night & Pizza - Sat., Jan. 21

Come and join us in Fellowship Hall while we dine on pizza and create a New Year's masterpiece! Please sign up online or in the bulletin. Cost is \$5 for supplies. [Sign up here](#)