

Peace Lutheran Church Newsletter

Love God, Love People,
and Serve the World!

May 2021

Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly 2021
June 4 - June 6



Peace Lutheran is a part of the Southwestern Texas Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Our congregational identity extends beyond the local church into these two other layers. Together they make up the national, synodical, and local church.

The Synod is a collection of 130 ELCA congregations throughout South Texas. Each year a synod assembly takes place much like a congregational annual meeting that comes together to learn, to share stories of God’s work in the world, to elect leaders, and establish a missional budget to advance God’s work together.

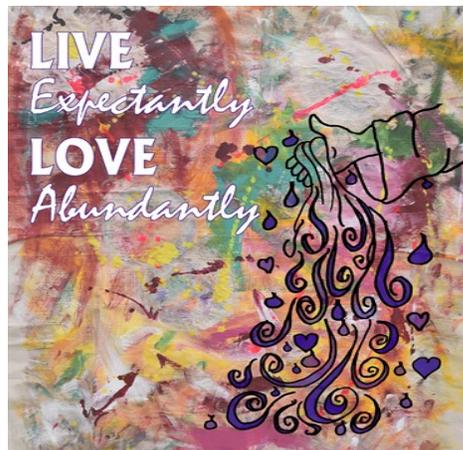
This year’s Synod Assembly runs from June 4-6 and the theme is “Live Expectantly, Love Abundantly”, centering around John 4, the story of the Samaritan women at the well.

You may join online at www.facebook.com/swtsynod and tune into the work of the church.

Other resources can be found at:

www.swtsynod.org

www.elca.org



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor’s Message	2
Abundant Blessings	3
From the Castle	4
Important Information	5
Deacon’s Message	6
Noisy Offering	8
Stephen Ministry	9
Worship	10
Finances	11



A Message from the Pastor

Liminal Space

Living in the “in-between” time is tough for us. There’s a fancy word for this called liminality or liminal space. It’s when something hasn’t fully transitioned and so it requires a different response. It comes from the Latin word “limens” which means threshold.

It’s like when a player in sports takes a shot, and the ball is in the air waiting to come down. It’s not the beginning before the ball was launched, and there’s no closure in terms of how it will land. Eyes get fixated in anticipation how it might all turn out.

This is a nervous time for many as we tend to like resolution. It’s applying for a job. You’ve already had the training and you’ve filled out the résumé and you’re waiting to hear back from the company you’ve applied to. How will it all pan out? There’s waiting for closure.

We find ourselves in this liminal space in our current context.

- Our worship life is beginning to regather for outside worship.
- Our building is under renovations.
- Our church community life is slowly reconstituting.
- Our everyday lives are starting to have some sense of normalcy.

But we’re not fully there. And it will likely take longer than we’d like.

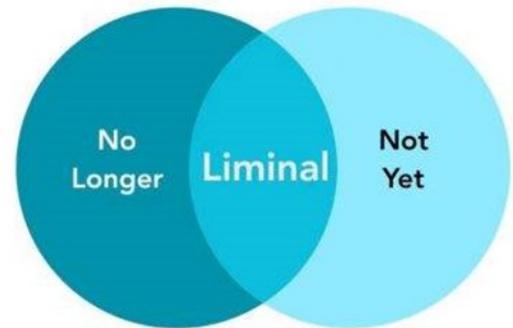
For Christians, we are no strangers to liminality. While this particular moment in history is challenging to be sure, Christians have always lived in liminal space – the time of the resurrected Jesus who ascends into the heavens, and the time we expect he will return to establish the fullness of his kingdom. We continue to live in this in-between time of the fullness of God’s kingdom inaugurated when Jesus rose from the dead. This fundamentally shifted the course of our reality of who’s really in charge. Is it the powers and principalities of this world? Sin? Death? Pandemics? Winter Freezes? By no means! It is Christ Jesus, the Lord.

The church continues to live faithfully advancing the kingdom of God each day through the work of reconciliation, forgiveness, love, and hope.

Instead of asking “How long will this go on?” Might a better question be, “How might we join God in the reconciling work of justice and mercy in our world today?” or “Where is God establishing His reign of peace?”

I don’t pretend to have all the answers; beware of anyone who does. There are no easy answers in liminality because we don’t know where the ball will land exactly. But if all we do is project where it will land, we miss out on the love of the game itself.

Peace always,
Pastor Jake



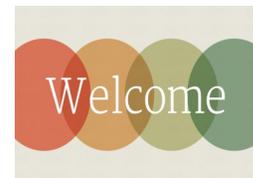
Abundant Blessings

May Birthdays

01 Wade Ohnheiser
 02 Patti Kassel
 05 Carol Franz
 06 Kathi Chapman
 07 Brent Paullus
 08 Sydney Paullus
 08 Carson Tiemann
 11 Whitney Linder
 11 Josh Stallings
 12 Karen Laughlin
 13 Aubrie Gonzalez
 14 Kellie Stallings
 14 Bryan Butrico
 14 Gabriel Butrico
 16 Elias Anderson
 17 Doug Haman
 18 James Thibodeaux
 18 Claire Friedrich
 19 Judy Phife
 21 Becky Voges
 21 Dan Hill
 23 Glenn Clausen
 23 Ivory Butrico
 24 Alan Ramirez
 24 Jennifer Butrico
 30 Ellie Koester
 31 Boots Sexton
 31 J.T. Miller

New Member

Welcome new member, Judy Phife. Judy joined Peace on February 26th via transfer from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Pflugerville. Judy was born in Dallas and was married in 1975. She and her husband moved to Pflugerville, where they raised their three children, Daniel, Becky and David. They moved to Oregon in 2003 and her husband passed away there in 2016. She moved back to Texas to be close to her family. She loves animals, especially dogs, cats and horses.



First Footing Homeless Shelter

How are we joining Jesus in serving some of the most vulnerable people in our city?



By praying for, loving, and serving our homeless brothers and sisters in Christ.

We are blessed to partner with the First Footing Homeless Shelter. This past month we were able to provide breakfast for them for April 26 – May 2 for 40 people a day. That's 280 meals provided by Peace! Thank you for

being the church of Jesus and caring for others in need.

Find more opportunities to serve at www.servepot.org

May Anniversaries

Steven and Kathi Anderson
 May 1, 1976
 David and Cindy Thomas
 May 3, 1980
 Greg and Kathy Mosher
 May 3, 1987
 Natanael Lizarazo and
 Barbara Wangsness
 May 7, 1988
 Jeremy and Melissa Thibodeaux
 May 12 2013
 Mike and Kellie Stallings
 May 14, 1988
 Wil and Becky Voges
 May 16, 1970
 Roger and Clara Gawlitta
 May 22, 1965
 Tim and Erika Kaufman
 May 30, 1998

Prayers

Trice Kastein
 David Martin
 Beverly Giacoletti
 Arlene Wold
 Dora White
 Wil Voges
 Lindsay Friedrich
 Martin Franz
 Michelle Rappmund
 Ron Podojil
 Rhonda Schmidt
 Cody Smith
 Helen Probst
 Bob Schlabach

In Sympathy

Our thoughts and prayers go out to O'Neal Weigelt and his family on the death of his wife, Edna.



Edna passed away on April 9th. A memorial service was held at Zoeller Funeral Home on April 18th.

From the Castle

Spiritual Practice

Just what is ‘spiritual practice’, you might ask? Well, believe it or not, there is no one way to do it! The word spiritual would lead you to believe that it is a way to connect yourself to God. The word practice implies that you do not ever achieve perfection. Both are true.



Many people use prayer as a spiritual practice. Prayer can be intercessory in nature... that is praying for someone else or for yourself. Prayer can also be done privately or in community. You might also have heard about contemplative prayer. This practice uses silence to still the worldly noise and focus on listening for God’s voice.

Another popular spiritual practice is journaling, that is writing down your innermost thoughts or feelings in a particular place. It is similar to a blog or a dialogue with yourself. It allows you to identify what in your life is challenging and what is life-giving.

Some people sing. Some people go for walks. Some people paint or read scripture.

As you can see, there is not just one right way. God meets us wherever we are. The one word that is constant in this however, is the word ‘practice’. Whatever method(s) you practice is a discipline. Your chosen practice is repeated for a period of time.

Personally, I use several methods of spiritual practice. I practice both communal and contemplative prayer...regularly. I paint. I sing music. I write in my journal. I find refreshment and nourishment from God in a wide variety of ways.

Where do you find God?

Marianne Gould
Deacon Intern

Men’s Breakfast

Men’s Breakfast is moving to the park. Beginning, May 5th and continuing for the next four months, men will meet at Landa Park Pavilion #5 at 9:00 am.

It will be BYOBS (bring your own breakfast sandwich).
For more information, contact Ron Podojil at reposito@gmail.com.



Mother’s Day Celebration



Sunday, May 9th
9:00 am - 10:00 am

We will be serving breakfast tacos, juice and sweet rolls between the 8:00 am Parking Lot Service and the 10:00 am Outdoor Worship Service. Make your plans now to enjoy some fellowship and a taco.

We will be following all Covid precautions. Any questions, contact Becky Voges.

Important Information

Building Update - Progress Report on Water Damage

We have received our initial insurance reimbursement and work should start within the next week. All the lighting fixtures have been ordered and we are just waiting delivery for the electrician to start. We had estimated their arrival by 4/19 but they have been delayed due to the quantity being ordered. I expect them to arrive any day.

Sheetrock repair is scheduled to begin on 4/26 with painting to follow. We have not yet received the engineering report on the suspected source of the mold on the sanctuary walls before we can start its removal and replacement.

We met with the plumber last week and are waiting for his estimate for the work to add showers and a space for the washer/dryer. This effort will not be covered by insurance as these items are being requested by us to enhance our facilities.

The Contractor will be ordering the cabinets, sinks, and solid surface counter tops later this week for the kitchen, fellowship hall, and the sacristy. Classroom cabinetry will also be replaced however those counter tops will not be solid surface.

A separate effort is underway by several folks to rebuild the sound booth to better accommodate our new equipment. Installation will be coordinated with the contractor to coincide with the installation of the sanctuary flooring.

At this time, the repair estimates are expected to take 60-75 days. It is our hope that we could have all work completed on this initial phase of work by July 1st.

To the right is the sample of the solid surface countertop that coordinates well with the cabinetry and paint.



John Kassel, Property Ministry Chairperson

Flowers 2021

Signing up for flowers will look a little different this year. There will not be a chart in the Narthex; we will utilize a Sign Up Genius online.

Visit the Peace website at www.peacemb.org. Scroll to the bottom and click on the Flower Button. This will take you directly to the Flower Sign Up Genius.



Please review the available slots, click on the date to sign up, then scroll to the bottom and click the Submit and Sign Up Button. Enter your dedication, name(s), and email. Click the Sign Up Button Now.

Cost of flowers is \$40.00. Make check payable to Peace and mark "flowers" in the memo. Contact the church office if you need any assistance.

Thank you!
Worship Ministry Team

Deacon Andrew's Bible Study Toolbox



How Lutherans Interpret the Bible Series

The Importance of Context

Lutherans interpret scripture contextually. We ask about the **literary context** of the writing in which individual passages are found. We also ask about the **historical context** of the situation the writing was intended to address. Taking into account BOTH the literary and historical context of the writings of the Bible helps us to better understand the intended purpose and overall message of each writing. Failing to take

literary and historical context can lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

Part 1: Literary Context

The Bible is a collection of 66 unique individual writings with many authors written across the span of centuries. We often call these writings “books of the Bible”, but that term is somewhat misleading. Most were written as scrolls of varying length. Some are collections of multiple writings on a single scroll. Some were written as letters as short as a single page (Philemon). Some writings contain the hand of more than one author (Genesis, Psalms). Some writings share the same author (Luke/Acts, the letters of Paul). Some are full of creative and symbolic imagery that can make it difficult for modern readers to interpret (Daniel, Revelation).



The first thing we need to understand about the writings in the Bible is that they represent a wide diversity of literary styles and forms, which function in unique ways. Here are some of the main literary styles and forms we find in the writings in the Bible:

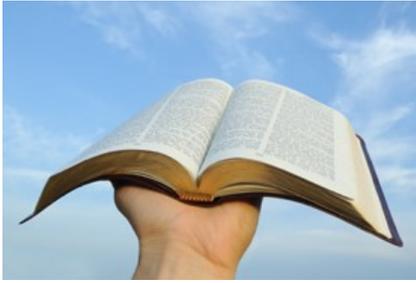
- ◆ Discourse (people talking directly to others)
- ◆ Narrative (story)
- ◆ Songs
- ◆ Wisdom sayings
- ◆ Poems
- ◆ Parables
- ◆ Proclamations
- ◆ Miracle stories
- ◆ Sermons
- ◆ Genealogical lists
- ◆ Historical accounts
- ◆ Law codes
- ◆ Prophetic oracles
- ◆ Apocalyptic writing



As you can see, there is a wide variety of literature in the Bible, and many writings of the Bible contain several of these styles and forms within a single writing. When we read and study a passage in the Bible, a very important task is to ask the question, **“what type of literature am I reading here?”** Asking this question can make studying the Bible more fruitful and rewarding, but also presents a challenge to us requiring us to go beyond the surface of the words on the page.

In Peace,
Deacon Andrew

From the Desk of Deacon Andrew



Ephesians

The New Testament writing of Ephesians features powerful and poetic language celebrating the life of the early Church, and the union of all believers, both Gentile and Jew, within the body of Christ, with Christ himself as the head. Believers have been reconciled to God through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and distinctions of race and ethnicity are muted in favor of the new common identity of Christian discipleship.

Some interesting aspects of Ephesians:

- **Length:** Six chapters
- **Author:** Although the salutation of this writing indicates it is from the apostle Paul (1:1a), many biblical scholars think that this writing was actually made by the hand of a second generation Christian from a church community established by Paul, rather than by the apostle himself. As such, Ephesians is sometimes put into a category of writings in the NT referred to as “deutero-Pauline”. This distinction does not lessen in any way the validity, canonicity, authority or value of these writings for Christians and for the Christian church. It simply reflects the development of the early church and its interpretation and expression of the faith.
- **Recipients:** Earliest manuscripts lack any reference to Ephesus (1:1b), and the letter also does not seem to address a need or problem of a specific congregation. Hence Ephesians is widely regarded as a general letter originally intended to be circulated to several churches in Asia Minor. The naming of “the saints who are in Ephesus” as the recipients was quite possibly a later addition to a copy of the letter that was sent to that specific community, in order to make its words more personal to them.
- **Date:** This letter is most often dated sometime at the end of the 1st century, between 75 CE and 90 CE.
- In Ephesians we find both a blessing (1:3-14) and a thanksgiving section (1:15-23) at the beginning of the letter. The occurrence of both in one letter is unique in the Pauline corpus of writings.
- Chapter 2 contains a series of affirmations emphasizing God’s reconciliation of humanity through Jesus, the conversion of the Christian from death to new life, and of the new unity in Christ of both Gentile and Jewish believers;
 - **“in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall between us”** (2:14)
- Chapter 3 continues with Paul’s description of his own apostleship as a servant of God’s grace, and his fervent prayers for the faith of the Christians who would hear this letter (**“I pray...”** 3:13; 3:16; 3:18)
- In chapters 4—6, the author then appeals to hearers to manifest in their own lives the new life they have been given through Christ .
 - **“I therefore...beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called”** (4:1)
 - **“be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love as Christ loved us”** (5:1-2a)
- In Ephesians 5:21-6:9 we find what are sometimes referred to as the “household codes”, describing the principles for relationships between husband and wife, parent and child, master and slave, centering on the principle of mutual subjection; **“be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ”** (5:21)



Noisy Offering

The Noisy Offering is back! Peace will be collecting donations for the following Noisy Offering Sundays:

Sunday, May 23rd - Trulight 127

Trulight 127 wants to provide children with an environment that is full of love, nurture, support and structure. Thus, preventing them from becoming a statistic of hopelessness.

They seek to do this by:

- being their voice in a world that ignores them,
- supporting them with tangible services to meet their real needs,
- empowering them with the knowledge and self-esteem they need to pursue their dreams,
- and supporting the families that care for them.

Their program of supportive services adds a community component to their mission of foster placement. They will empower and equip individuals, communities, and churches to move in God's call in James 1:27 to care for the orphans. By doing so, they can change the course of their lives to be a productive citizen of society full of hopes, dreams, and ambition to do more.

The Noisy Offering will be collected a little differently though. **We will not actually collect coins, rather, we will collect cash and/or check donations.*****



In Person Worship Service attendees can drop off their donation at that time. Livestream Worship Service attendees can drop off donations in the church mailbox or mail their donation directly to the church. Please make your check out to Peace Lutheran Church and put Noisy Offering in the memo.

*****Giving online is always a great option as well. Go to the church website, peacemb.org, and click on the Ways To Give Tab. Choose Online Giving and follow the instructions. Please remember to designate Noisy Offering in the memo.**

Thank you for your continued support.

Stephen Ministry

LOST

Have you ever been lost, either physically or emotionally? It can be very scary, and draining. With everything that we have gone through over the past year. I would be surprised if no one answered yes.



How do we react when we are lost physically. Today most of us would check our GPS and get back on track. Years ago it was not that simple. When you planned a trip, you would collect the maps you need to get from A to B. You may also have someone to read the maps while traveling, as well as directing any route changes that may come up. Then if you still became lost you could stop and ask for directions.

When we are becoming emotionally lost, it is not always that easy to find the path that we need to take. It can be confusing as well as frustrating. If we can identify the moment or the event that triggers the loss, we may then be able figure out what to do next.

Many times with an emotional loss it can be difficult to find that trigger and the elusive path that we need. Sometimes we need to ask for help to find that path, but we may not know who to turn to.

Those who are experiencing difficulties with feeling lost, contact the church or a Stephen Minister. If you would like some help, contact Pastor Jake or our Referral Coordinator, Bill Purcell at 210-846-3315. For more about Stephen Ministry at Peace Lutheran Church, see the web pages at www.peacemb.org/Stephen-Ministry

Ron Podojil
Stephen Minister

Church Council 2021

Don Hodde - President
Lisa Harrison - Vice President
Matthew Simmont - Secretary
Megan Wenzel - Treasurer

Carol Franz - Member At-Large
Hayden Kaufman - Member At-Large
David Thomas - Member At-Large
Amy Tiemann - Member At-Large
Forrest Willis - Member At-Large

Worship

As reconstruction continues on the church building for the next couple of months, remember we are the church (community), and the building is being renovated.

Worship Opportunities:

8am Parking Lot Worship in vehicles. Worship in the comfort of your vehicles in the community (much like a Drive-In Theater) using your radio to participate and in worship and hear the worship leaders.

10am Worship Outdoors and Livestream

Currently we are worshipping in the parking lot with chairs gathered in the parking lot. As the weather gets warmer we may move to a cooler area. Our new cameras and robust media team help provide worship online (www.peacenb.org/live) at this time for a live broadcast of outdoor worship. You can download your bulletin each week on the peace website or from your weekly Saturday e-blast.



Generosity Abounds

How much time do we spend worrying if there is going to be enough?

God's generosity is surprising.

On the Monday after Easter, having heard the good news of Jesus' surprising resurrection, I went into the church office and checked the mailbox. Enclosed was a letter from St. Thomas Lutheran Church in Omaha, Nebraska.

"Omaha," I said. "Who do we know from Omaha?"

Within the letter was an appeal by St. Thomas who heard of our winter freeze and flooding plight. Moved by compassion a Bible Study Group studying 2 Corinthians listened to Paul's admonition in the 9th chapter:

⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written:

*"They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever."*

¹⁰ Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴ And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Having read these words, the church reached out to Peace Lutheran knowing that we are connected as brothers and sisters in Christ. They believed God was calling them to support congregations who had been hurt and to raise up the broken.

Included in the letter were their heartfelt prayers and a check for \$5,247 to help our rebuilding process.

Friends, do you see how we are not alone in this time? The church has more partners in ministry that we even knew.

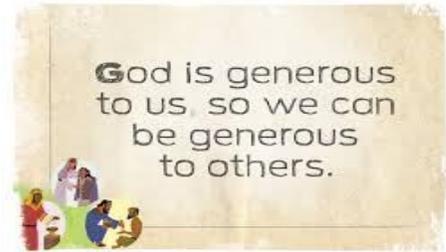
Others within our congregation and a few gifts from outside sources have donated to our rebuilding fund growing to over \$10,000. Thank you to all who have responded in generosity as we have faced adversity. We are builders of the kingdom of God, and with God there is always enough!

When it feels like there's not enough, God's resurrection promise of hope abounds. There is always an abundance of care when God is at work.

Peace,
Pastor Jake

Giving at Peace

There are several giving options at Peace: Offering Envelopes; Online Giving (Website); AmazonSmile Program; Bank Drafts. If you would like more information on any of the options listed above, please give our Financial Administrator, Valerie Wood, a call at 830-620-0618.



Finances

FUND	BEGINNING BALANCE	INCOME	EXPENSE	TRANSFERS	ENDING BALANCE
General Fund	\$ 93,846.99	\$ 22,872.96	\$ 29,630.48		\$ 87,089.47
Building Fund	\$ 34,270.85	\$ 4,748.85*	\$ 0.00		\$ 39,019.70
Endowment Fund	\$ 8,589.10	\$ 111.98	\$ 5,000.00**		\$ 3,701.08
Endowment Investment Fund	\$ 148,133.26	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		\$ 148,133.26
Deferred Maintenance Fund	\$ 5,776.32	\$ 0.49	\$ 0.00		\$ 5,776.81
Designated Funds	\$ 32,183.84	\$ 696.35	\$ 175.00		\$ 32,705.19
Total Funds	\$ 322,800.36	\$ 28,430.63	\$ 34,805.48		\$ 316,425.51

***\$4,748.85: Offerings - \$125.00; Interest - \$18.85; Flood Damage Offerings - \$4,605.00**

****\$5,000.00: Grant presented to New Braunfels Housing Partners for First Footing Homeless Shelter, by Peace Lutheran Church Endowment Committee**



Peace Lutheran Church
1147 S. Walnut Ave.
New Braunfels, TX 78130
Web address: www.peacenb.org
830-609-8359 - Valerie Wood
830-312-8797 - Pastor Jake Fain

Office Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 am - 12:00 pm 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Worship Services

Sunday

8am Parking Lot Worship @ Peace
10am Outdoor Worship and
Livestream @ Peace

peacenb.org/live



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