

Giving Thanks

**Peace Lutheran Church
Newsletter**

**Love God, Love People,
and Serve the World!
November 2023**



Ecumenical Thanksgiving Worship

**Hosted by
Faith United Church of Christ,
St. John's Episcopal Church,
Peace Lutheran Church, and
New Braunfels Presbyterian Church**

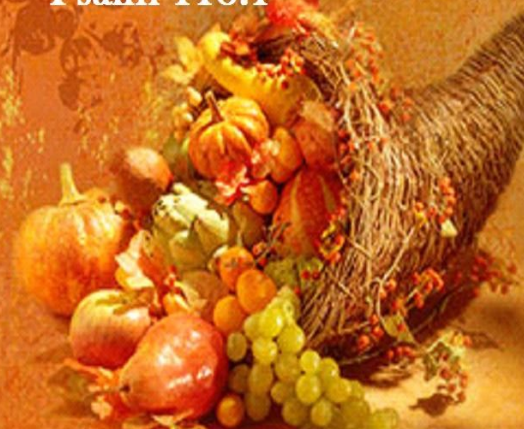
**Where: Faith UCC 970 Loop 337
New Braunfels, TX**

**When: Thursday, November 16th,
@ 6pm**

**Why: To celebrate God's abundant
grace and provision.**

**Join us as we worship with our partner
congregations.**

**Give thanks to the Lord,
for He is good; His love endures forever.
- Psalm 118:1**



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A Message from the Pastor



Stewardship

When you hear the word *stewardship*, what is the first thing you think of? Most people will say, “Money.”

There’s a lingering misconception that stewardship is just a fancy word for “fund-raising.” Perhaps the church is partly to blame for this, even as I write this in the midst of our annual fall stewardship campaign. But stewardship is not fund-raising; it is a way of life.

Here’s a couple quotes to give us a better grasp of what stewardship is.

Stewardship is what we do after we say we believe. Clarence C. Stoughton.

Stewardship is partnership with Christ, through the Holy Spirit, in fulfilling the purposes of God in the world. A. C. Conrad

Stewardship is God’s grace working God’s purpose out in the world, in, with and through us, who, in grateful response to God and through faith in Jesus Christ, enter into a covenant relationship with the empowering Spirit of God that blesses all creation. Rhodes Thompson

As the concept of biblical stewardship gets clearer, we can now talk about money which represents so much of what we value; after all, a dollar bill is just a piece of paper. But it represents something of value. Martin Luther is credited with saying that humans need to experience three conversions: of heart and mind and purse. We might take the attitude, it’s nobody’s business what I do with my money. But isn’t it God’s business? What you have been entrusted as a steward matters to God. And what you invest in is a testament of your deepest beliefs.

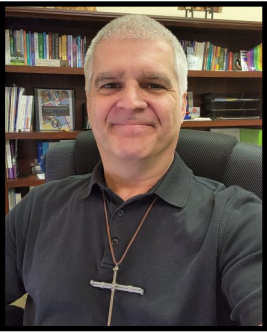
Stewardship, therefore, is not an ugly word to be avoided in polite conversation. Rather it is a “good news” words saying that the gospel of Jesus is something to be shared freely bringing joy to the world. I can’t help but think of November as the season of Thanksgiving, the season of gratitude. Some of the most joyous experiences are when we share our gifts with others. When we dedicate our first fruits to God in celebration of the ultimate gift-giver.

This month you’ll receive a series of letters encouraging you to take a step in the faith practice of stewardship. I hope you’ll be moved to join God with glad and generous hearts to share your gifts as we live out our mission to Love like Jesus so that each person experiences God’s way which moves us toward the vision of a world made whole through love.

Peace,
Pastor Jake



Life of Faith with Deacon Andrew



Language Matters Part 1: **“Church”**

Words are wonderful tools in our communication with other people. We use words to convey information, and to express our ideas, thoughts, feelings, questions, opinions, beliefs, and relationships. Words carry within them meaning and reflect our understanding and perspective on the world and our place in it. Language is indeed essential to our society.

However, words have limits and are not perfect. The words we chose to use can create unintended problems of meaning and interpretation. Sometimes the our choice of words can actually influence our worldview and sense of identity over time, without us even realizing it.

This is especially true when those words become deeply ingrained in our culture and language.

The challenge we are called to wrestle with is this: “how does our common current language about faith shape our understanding sense of Christian identity and mission?”

Let’s take a look at the word **“Church”**. When you hear the word church, what images come to your mind? Here are some examples of ways we likely use the word church in our conversations with other people:

“I’m a member of Peace Lutheran church”

“I go to Peace Lutheran church”

“I belong to Peace Lutheran church”

“My church”

If you are like me, you’ve probably used variations of all of these phrases fairly often. These phrases and uses of the word “church” have largely become the default way that most of us, as Christians today, describe our connection to and participation in a particular faith community at a specific location.

Now, let’s try changing the language in the above phrases. See what differences you notice.

“I’m part of the community at Peace Lutheran”

“We are the church”

“I belong to God”

“God’s church, our congregation”

In the second set of phrases, the emphasis shifts from a **particular place** to statements about our understanding of **who** and **whose** we are through **our baptismal identity**. In these shifts, the word “church” reflects that we are a community of people who belong to God, not a building. Church isn’t somewhere we go or something we do. Church is **who we are**.

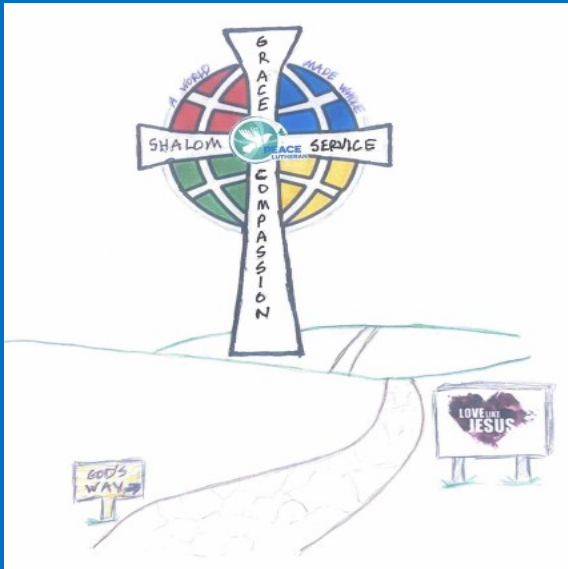
When Jesus was speaking with the disciples at Caesarea Philippi, he said to them, **“upon this rock...I will build my church”** (Matthew 16:18). Jesus was certainly not talking about building a literal church on the spot where they were sitting. He was referring to people. The word “church” occurs 113 times in the New Testament. In all of those instances, the word “church” refers to the Christian community, not a place.

Because of this, I’ve found it helpful in my conversations with other people to replace the word “church” when referring to a specific place with the word **“congregation”**. I try to focus my use of the word “church” as a way to describe the identity and activity of the broader global Christian community, the same way it is used in the New Testament.

Shifting our language can be challenging. It certainly feels awkward at first, like any new skill. The words we use and how we use them matter. The care we take with our language around topics of faith can bring us to a new level of appreciation and insight into our identity as Christians. I encourage you to try out these language shifts and then notice what difference they make in your own thinking and understanding.

Mission/Vision/Values Worship Series

Do you know what your purpose is? (Mission)
 Do you know where you are headed in life? (Vision)
 Do you know what keeps you anchored in all life's shifting circumstances? (Values)



10/22

Mission

Love like Jesus so that each person experiences God's Way

10/29

Vision

A world made whole through love

11/05

Value 1

Grace

11/12

Value 2

Compassion

11/19

Value 3

Serve

11/26

Value 4

Shalom

Join us each for a worship series
 clarifying who we are as God's people.

Polka Worship Service



Polka Worship Service

Just because Wurstfest ends on November 12th,
 doesn't mean the party is over.

Join us on
 November 19th @ the 10am worship
 for a Polka Worship with the
 New Braunfels Gemischter Chor Harmonie,
 followed by a German meal.
<http://nbharmonie.org/>

Abundant Blessings

November Birthdays

01	Clint Phillips, Sr.
02	Tommy Perkins
02	Dennis Hank
02	Andre Guerin
02	Beverly Anderson
03	Olivia Hetherington
04	Carol Ann Miller
06	Bonnie Claycomb
06	David Thomas
08	Linda Hook
08	Juliana Garcia
10	Donna Braune
12	Helen Probst
13	Arlene Wold
13	Nate Raschke
14	Steven Willis
15	Ray Martinez
19	John Claycomb
19	JoBeth Oestreich
20	Helen Bravenec
21	Dorothy Ebert
23	Margaret Weese
23	Charlie Phillips
25	Nick Masters
26	Hattie Tippens
27	Nanci Witten
28	Kerri Clausen
30	Brenda Martin
30	Brandy Huston
30	Melissa Fain

November Anniversaries

John and Bonnie Claycomb
November 26, 1967
Ted and Margo Woollven
November 29, 1975

Peace Prayer Ministry

Peace Lutheran Church has an active Prayer Ministry. We have an Email Prayer Chain, we have a Zoom "Sweet Hour of Prayer" Group that meets every Monday morning at 9:00 a.m., and we have a Prayer loom that is included in our Sunday morning prayers. All are welcome to join our email Prayer Chain and our Monday morning Prayer Group.

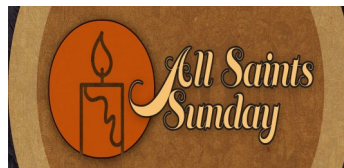


We have experienced some amazing, answered prayers this year and we have given comfort to many of our members in their times of distress. Please consider being a part of our Prayer Ministry in this new year. You can email me at beckyvoges@yahoo.com for info.

Prayers

Lavern Kistner
Becky Perkins
Martin Franz
Nora Miller
Carol Franz
Steven Robbins
Barbara Doleshal
Maureen Garcia
Bob Johnson
Jim Miller
Jack Ralph
Riley Martinez
Michelle Rappmund
Rick Smith
Betty Wilcox
Margaret Weese
Judy Phife
Earl Blaschke
John Claycomb
Margo Woollven
Arlene Wold
Helen Probst
Cody Smith

All Saints Sunday



Join us on All Saints Sunday, November 5th @ 10:00 am, as we remember those who have been joined in Christ's heavenly kingdom.

We light a candle in remembrance of God's promise in baptism that our lives belong to God, and that promise is fulfilled even in death as we are given new life.

We lift our loved ones before the Lord, honor their memories and witness of faith, and invite God's resurrection promise to shine through.

We also, lift up Kay Skaggs, who died last November. The family had requested confidentiality and privacy. And so we celebrate her life along with all the saints.

Note: Daylight Savings Time ends on Nov. 5th, so we fall back an hour.

November Mission Spotlight

Peace Little Pantry

Mission Moment

***“For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty, and you gave me drink.
I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” Matthew 25:35***

The concept of a Little Food Pantry is not a new one. There are Food Pantries in communities all over the world. The thought behind the Little Pantries was that they would serve a need, 24 hours a day, for anyone who is hungry, no questions asked. We planted our Little Pantry in August 2022.

Since that time, we have fed and welcomed countless individuals. We have given them a respite from the harshness of our world. The prayer requests that come to us from the prayer box move us deeply.



Our Pantry has stayed stocked because of the love of our congregation and our neighbors. Dedicated Pantry Angels have monitored and filled the Pantry without fail. Steady donations for the Pantry have helped us keep the pantry stocked. It is our desire to fully fund the Pantry without being in the church budget. Monetary donations will ensure that we have our Little Pantry filled and ready for those in need. God bless each of you for your generosity. We have shown our neighbors that Peace Lutheran Church is a church that fulfills God’s call to “love our neighbors”.

If you would like to support this cause financially, please make checks out to Peace Lutheran Church. Giving online is available as well by clicking the link or scanning the code below. Regardless of your method of support, please be sure to include "Mission Spotlight" in the memo.

Becky Voges

<https://bit.ly/3MP8sPF>

SCAN ME



Family Promise



Family Promise's mission is to help families with children facing homelessness achieve and sustain independence. Families move to a new congregation each week in which they are hosted as guests. Congregations provide shelter, meals, and community for the families in the evenings.

<https://www.fpgnb.org/>

We will be hosting our last time of the year from November 26th - December 3rd. We will need the following volunteer areas filled to welcome our guests:

- Serve as overnight hosts (2 individuals each night)
- Help with the afternoon/evening set up, clean up, and engagement with families (2 individuals each day)
- Support meal preparation, cooking, and serving (1 to 2 individuals each day)

Be on the lookout for our Sign-Up Genius that will be sent out through the weekly EBlast, on Facebook and a physical sign up sheet in the narthex. **To get in contact with our team, please email peacelutheranfp@gmail.com with any questions on ways to get involved!**

Thanks, Peace Lutheran Family Promise Team

Angel Tree



Peace Lutheran's Angel Tree will be supporting *CASA of Central Texas* this year.

CASA of Central Texas Mission: CASA of Central Texas, Inc. provides high quality, best interest advocacy for children & youth in the child welfare system. We train & empower dedicated CASA volunteers to ensure children's needs are met & their voices lifted. We commit to strengthen the connections & well-being of children in foster care, one family at a time.

<https://www.casacentex.org/>

Each year **CASA of Central Texas** hosts an annual **Holiday Gift Drive**. Community members are able to sponsor kids' wish lists. Peace will have a Christmas Tree out in the narthex at the beginning of November with *Angels* on display with different wishes. Angels will be on display from **November 5th - November 26th**. Please make your selections and follow the instructions on the back of your Angel. We ask that you return your gift/s unwrapped (ensure the original Angel is attached to the unwrapped gift) under the tree by **November 29th**.

Further instructions and information will be out on display near the Angel Tree and out in our weekly EBlast. Should you have any questions, please reach out to Brandi Raschke- raschke.brandi@gmail.com
Thank you, Brandi Raschke

Christmas Tea

Saturday, December 2nd



The Christmas Tea will be held on **Saturday, December 2nd** from **10:00 am to 12:00 pm**. This year's theme is "The Nutcracker". You can sign up on sign up genius (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0844acac29a2fd0-anutcracker>) or we will have forms at the church. Tickets are \$9.00.

Again, this year we will be collecting canned goods and monetary donations for the SOS Food Bank.

Deadline to purchase tickets is November 22nd.

Contact Donna Braune at 830-643-9353 for more information.

2023 Live Nativity

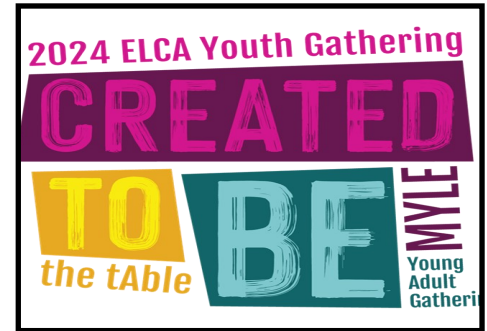
December 16th, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm



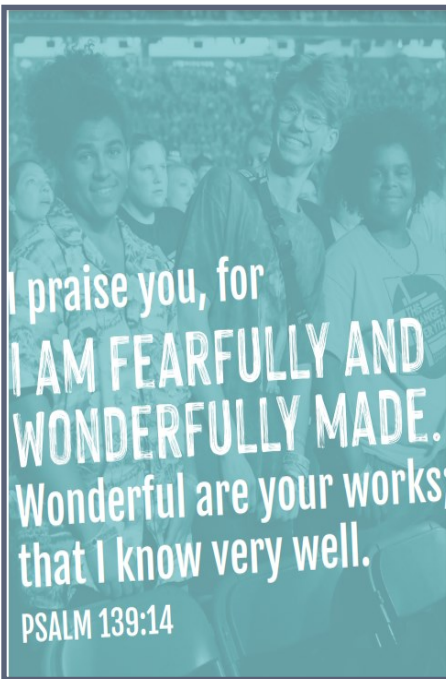
It is really hard to believe that we are already making plans for our Live Nativity. Pretty soon we will be sharing a Sign-up sheet for all the Shops that our visitors will visit when they stop in to see Bethlehem and the blessed event. We will need Carolers, Shepherds, Angels, and greeters. We will need Shopkeepers for the Pottery Barn, Joseph's Carpenter Shop, Kathi's Kitchen and Oils of the Orient. We will need people to man the Hot Cocoa Station, a camera crew and a set up crew. It takes an amazing group of very willing and talented people to share this amazing story, and those of us who have been a part of it are always blessed beyond belief after the evening is over. Last year we had a group from St. Andrew work in our Ornament Shop. They loved it, and they are coming back to help again this year. If you want to hear more, call Becky Voges at 830-587-4003 or email beckyvoges@yahoo.com for more information.

2024 ELCA Youth Gathering!

July 16th-20th, 2024
New Orleans, Louisiana



We now have eight youth and two adults from Peace and St. Andrew successfully registered for the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer. As we prepare, we will lead all of our youth, not just those attending the Gathering, through an intentional learning journey to dive deeply into the theological themes of the Gathering. The ELCA has provided a detailed curriculum designed to guide youth groups through this learning journey. The curriculum is based around the theme of the Gathering “*Created To Be*”, based on Psalm 139:14



The Getting Ready curriculum is divided into 5 sections:

Created to be **BRAVE**: to show up with an open mind and heart, willing to be challenged

Created to be **AUTHENTIC**: to bring our whole selves and know that we are loved by our Creator

Created to be **FREE**: to be transformed by the gospel

Created to be **DISRUPTIVE**: to work for justice for all our siblings

Created to be **DISCIPLES**: to be sent into the world to love our neighbor, just as we are loved by God

As we work our way through this curriculum, we will share what we are learning with the congregation through articles, videos, and personal experiences. We look forward to your learning alongside us, and we ask and greatly appreciate your prayers and your support in the months leading up to next summer’s Gathering.



(not pictured, the Garcia family)

Big Serve Weekend youth project, building beds for future guests at First Footing shelter.



Thank You

Thank you, Jim and Judy Johnson, for donating the money to purchase these sheep for our Live Nativity. These make a nice addition to Dominic, our donkey and the two sheep we already have. This is going to set a very nice scene for our “Shepherds abiding in the fields”.



Becky Voges
Fellowship Chairperson

New Braunfels Housing Partners First Footing Homeless Shelter

Dear Peace Lutheran Church Family,

Thank you so much for your ongoing support of New Braunfels Housing Partners. We have exciting plans underway, including crisis housing/shelter and services at one site, as well as temporary and long-term housing at a second site. Your passion and partnership are helping dreams become reality for individuals who seek our help each year.

Gratefully,

Kellie Stallings
Executive Director



Church Council and Ministry Team Leaders 2023

Carol Franz - President
Megan Wenzel - Vice President
Matthew Simmont - Secretary
Don Hodde - Treasurer
Kathi Anderson - Member At-Large
Vicki Hillmer - Member At-Large
David Thomas - Member At-Large
Forrest Willis - Member At-Large

Fellowship Team - Becky Voges
Finance Team - James Huston
Outreach Team - Open
Property - John Kassel
Service Team - Brandi Raschke
Worship Team Judi Miller

Giving at Peace

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



Finances September 2023

FUND	BEGINNING BALANCE	INCOME	EXPENSE	TRANSFERS	ENDING BALANCE
General Fund	\$ 14,268.68	\$ 24,987.93	\$ 35,972.92		\$ 3,283.69
Building Fund	\$ 15,589.07	\$ 356.27	\$ 0.00		\$ 15,945.34
Endowment Fund	\$ 8,321.14	\$ 132.71	\$ 0.00		\$ 8,453.85
Endowment Investment Fund	\$ 129,521.95	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00		\$ 129,521.95
Deferred Maintenance Fund	\$ 10,712.29	\$ 13.45	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,000.00*	\$ 11,725.74
Designated Funds	\$ 34,253.86	\$ 1,120.00	\$ 1,918.13		\$ 33,455.73
Total Funds	\$ 212,666.99	\$ 26,610.36	\$ 37,891.05	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 202,386.30

*Transfer Property Plant Equipment Reserve from the General Fund to the Deferred Maintenance Fund



Peace Lutheran Church
1147 S. Walnut Ave.
New Braunfels, TX 78130
Web address: www.peacenb.org
830-620-0618

830-312-8797 - Pastor Jake Fain
830-609-8359 - Valerie Wood

Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
8:00 am - 3:00 pm
Friday
8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Worship Service
Sunday
10:00 am - Indoor Worship and
Livestream @ Peace
peacenb.org/live



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