

The MESSENGER

What's INSIDE

A publication of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

- 2 & 3 Worship
- 4 Facilities
- 4 Discipleship
- 5 Calendar
- 6 Volunteer Schedule
- 7 Stewardship
- 7 Prayers
- 8 Witness
- 9 Fellowship



Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

Advent Decorating

⇒ December 2

New Member Reception

⇒ December 3

Poinsettia Orders due

⇒ December 10

Annual Meeting

⇒ December 17

Book Club

⇒ December 20

Christmas Eve Service

⇒ December 24

Food & Fellowship

⇒ December 31

From the Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As I sat in our worship team meeting last week, various hymns were suggested and scriptures reviewed in preparation for Advent and Christmas. **O Come, O Come Emmanuel**, or **It Came Upon the Midnight Clear** were familiar hymns mentioned with excitement. I kept hearing “they” (you, the congregation) want Christmas hymns that are part of ongoing traditions. Everyone continued chattering about what to sing, but I had to sit and think and process. My mind drifted and wandered until my thoughts were interrupted to conclude the meeting. “What do you think, pastor?” brought me back to reality, but as I walked away, I still pondered. The two thoughts at the forefront of my mind were 1) we want more Christmas hymns, and 2) we want our traditions.

Should we ask why Christmas hymns and traditions make us so comfortable rather than why they are so important? Then, can we take our “why” and use that to talk about Jesus? Someone may ask us why we love our traditional hymns so much, and we always want to be ready to talk about Jesus. Are we prepared? Are we equipped? Do we know?

This is not to dampen the holiday spirit but to dig deep into the meaning of this season that is so important to us. “Before Him lowly bend,” says one hymn; Christmas is about reverence to God for the grace of our salvation. It’s about our Messiah! It’s about His birth! It’s about the coming of the Savior of the world! It’s a celebration! It is mass, the central act of worship. It is Christ’s Mass. Let us make a tradition of carrying the blessed message everywhere we go.

So, come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

May God’s Peace be with you, all my brothers and sisters. And His Grace and Love abound over all of you and your families.

Have a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Cassandra

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her. (Luke 1:38)



The Fourth of Advent and Christmas Eve occur on Sunday, December 24 this year. Prince of Peace will be offering three worship services that day: 9:00 am, 11:15 am, and 5:00 pm. Each service will include Bible readings, a message, Holy Communion, and some of our favorite Christmas hymns. If you are able to help as an usher, greeter, reader, acolyte, AV, communion assistant, or counter on December 24, please sign up or contact the church office. Thank you.

Hebrew Worship Words: Part Seven

We have come to the end of my little series on Hebrew Worship Words. The seventh Hebrew worship word is “Barak” (Strong’s #H1288) which embodies the idea of kneeling before God. I think of the Christmas Carol, “O Holy Night,” and the lyric, “**Fall on your knees!** O hear the angel voices! O night divine, O night when Christ was born.” Barak has the idea of falling to your knees in adoration and gratitude. It is a word of humility and reverence. We recognize our position at His feet, kneeling with our eyes on Him in adoration.

Psalm 100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving (towdah) and his courts with praise (tehillah); give thanks (yadah) to him and **praise (barak)** his name.

David uses the word “barak” repeatedly in Psalm 103. All things are commanded to “barak” the Lord – our very souls, every part of us, his angels and mighty ones, the works of the Lord, all his creation.

Psalm 103:1-2 Praise (barak) the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise (barak) the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—

Psalm 103:20-22 Praise (barak) the Lord, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. Praise (barak) the Lord, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will. Praise (barak) the Lord, all his works everywhere in his dominion.

I started this series because I had read, “Holy Roar – 7 Words that Will Change the Way You Worship,” by Chris Tomlin and Darren Whitehead. After reading that, I thought there were only seven worship words. What I have come to realize is that there are more than seven. Like “Taqa” which means to clap, “Kara” which means to dance and “Tephillah” which means to sing a prayer as intercession or petition. And there are probably more.

I hope the meaning of these praise words has inspired you to break free from some of your inhibitions and become more engaged as worshipers. Hands in your pockets or arms crossed is not the body language modeled in Biblical worship. The joy of the Lord is our strength. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

May these actions and attitudes guide Prince of Peace to be expressive in our praise and worship.

Our Almighty, All-loving God deserves it.

Blessings,
Nancy Freedlund, Worship Deacon

P.S. If you still need a little encouragement to be a little more expressive during worship, then watch this music video, “A Brand New Life,” from the musical (showing in theaters now) Journey to Bethlehem, (148) Journey To Bethlehem - Brand New Life (Steven Curtis Chapman, We The Kingdom) - YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHiwpSFNQ3o>

Deck the Halls

All Hands on Deck to *Deck the Halls* on Saturday, December 2, at 9:00 am. Advent begins Sunday, December 3, and we want our Sanctuary to be adorned to welcome Jesus. Please come and help

decorate the Sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall.

You will be rewarded with cookies, coffee, cocoa, laughing and fellowship. Everyone is welcome.

Give or Get the Gift of the Word

Are your children or grandchildren beginning to ask you what you want for Christmas? I recently got myself an early Christmas gift – a SUPER GIANT print Bible. [I got it on eBay (it was new) and I love it]. It makes early morning reading so much easier for me. Either buy yourself a new Bible or put it on your Christmas list. There are many types and versions of the Bible in English. [We are so blessed. Many languages do not even have one

version]. If you need or want help selecting one, ask Pastor for a little help. Amazon and christianbook.com as well as eBay are good places to look. I would be happy to show you my new Bible.

As a congregation, let's start a couple of new habits in the New Year. **Read Your Bible More and Bring Your Bible to Church.**

Nancy Freedlund
Worship Deacon

Praying in the New Year

Save the Date

12th Annual Three Days of Prayer - January 2-4, 2024

As part of the Three Days of Prayer Prince of Peace will be reading the New Testament out loud. There is something powerful that happens when the Word of God is read out loud. What changes might we see in our community?

You will have the opportunity to sign up for a day and time, when you will read the scripture out loud either at the church or at your home. We know the weather in January can be problematic.

It takes less than 20 hours to read the entire New Testament. We will begin reading on Tuesday, January 2 at 8:00 am and continue until 4:00 pm. There will be 8 readers needed for Tuesday and Wednesday and 7 for Thursday.

If you are reading at church, the person before you will simply hand off where they left off. If you are reading at home, you will receive a call at your scheduled time, to let you know where you should start reading. Then at the end of your hour, you will call the next person on the schedule and tell them where to continue reading.

We will end our reading with a Praise and Prayer service at the church on Thursday, January 4 at 3:00 pm.



The sanctuary will be decorated with poinsettias for the Christmas Eve service. This year we are offering red or white poinsettias. If you are interested in purchasing a plant in honor or remembrance of someone, please complete an order form by Sunday, December 10. The cost of each plant is \$13.00. Please include your check with the order form made payable to "Prince of Peace Altar Guild".

Fall Clean Up 2023



Sunday School 2023—Fruit of the Spirit



December 2023



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
<p>The mission of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church is to sow FAITH IN CHRIST, strengthen FAMILIES, serve our COMMUNITIES.</p>						<p>1</p>	<p>2 Men's Group 7:00 am Advent Decorating 9:00 am</p>
<p>3 Worship 9:00 am & 11:15 am Education Hour 10:15 am 4-H Club 3:30pm</p>	<p>4 Prayer Group 9:30 am</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Annunciation Co-op 8:00 am-3:30 pm</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	
<p>10 Worship 9:00 am & 11:15 am Poinsettia orders due</p>	<p>11 Prayer Group 9:30 am Church Council 6:30 pm</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Altar Guild 6:30 pm C.A.L.M. Coffee Club 9:30 am-12:00 pm</p>	<p>14 Annunciation Co-op 8:00 am-3:30 pm</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 Men's Group 7:00 am N. Hall—reserved</p>	
<p>17 Worship 9:00 am & 11:15 am Annual Meeting 10:15 am</p>	<p>18 Prayer Group 9:30 am</p>	<p>19 Naomi Circle 1:00 pm</p>	<p>20 Book Club 12:00 pm</p>	<p>21 Annunciation Co-op 8:00 am-3:30 pm</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 C.A.L.M. Coffee Club at DeeDees 1:00-3:00 pm</p>	
<p>24 Worship 9:00 am, 11:15 am, & 5:00 pm </p>	<p>25 Office closed</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 C.A.L.M. Coffee Club 9:30 am-12:00 pm</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	
<p>31 Worship 10:30 am Food & Fellowship</p>							

Please note: Pastor Cassandra will be out of the office Dec. 13-15. Kara will be out of the office Dec. 27-Jan. 3.

December Serving Schedule

If you are not able to make your allotted time slot, please find a substitute and notify the church office.

December 3 – 9:00 am

AV: Darran Landenberger & Ava Lynch

Acolyte: Damon Lynch

Greeters: Bill & Stacy Diemel

Ushers: Dorothy Bush & Debbie Tracy

Reader: Connor Diemel

Communion Assistants: Sherre Faulkner, Pam Novotnak, & Richard Mackenthun

Counters: Brad Mueller & Kara Wallace

December 10 – 9:00 am

AV: Stacy Diemel

Acolyte: Dan King

Greeters: Cyndy King & Kara Wallace

Ushers: Sherre Faulkner & Kathy Leahy

Reader: Sue Peterson

Communion Assistant: Wendy Goldsworthy, Darran Landenberger, & Sue Peterson

Counters: David Baird & Dan King

December 17 – 9:00 am

AV: Kara Wallace

Acolyte: Ava Lynch

Greeters: Nancy Freedlund & Pam Novotnak

Ushers: Jim Freedlund & Jerry Yarolimek

Reader: Steve Shrider

Communion Assistants: Lora Conrad, Cyndy King, & Amy Lynch

Counters: Sandy Buske & Tom Lenhart

December 24

Need volunteers. Sign-up sheets will be available.

December 31 – 10:30am

AV: Stacy Diemel

Acolyte: Connor Diemel

Greeters: Steve & Denise Shrider

Ushers: Greg & Luann Bartz

Reader: Pam Novotnak

Communion Assistants: Nancy Freedlund, Sue Peterson, & Steve Shrider

Counters: Luann Bartz & Pam Novotnak

December Pews: Sherre Faulkner



Celebrations

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1	Ava Lynch
5	Ellen Goldsworthy
8	Curt McNames Ella Pearson
9	Karen Phelps
10	Sidney Schmidt Wayne Schmidt
11	Sue Peterson
20	Art Goldsworthy
22	Connor Diemel
24	Cheryll Hill Mary Jo Olson

December Anniversaries

3	Ted and Lori Peterson
6	Brad and Christine Mueller
12	Andrew and Pastor Cassandra Langr
16	Robert and Karen Lowery





The Prince of Peace council members meet monthly. If you have questions or ideas, please contact one of the council deacons or attend a meeting.

President, Pam Novotnak
779-423-8093

Vice President, Dan King
815-494-3919

Secretary, Stacy Diemel
608-290-4073

Treasurer, Amy Lynch
815-624-2433

Discipleship, Wendy Goldsworthy
815-389-3796

Facilities, Wayne Schmidt
815-988-6683

Fellowship, Sue Peterson
815-282-2715

Service, Kathy Leahy
815-243-0831

Stewardship, Sherre Faulkner
815-629-2200

Worship, Nancy Freedlund
815-624-6363

Witness, Lora Conrad
815-289-7171

Stewardship Moment

Have you thought about “1% more”? Amy sent you a statement regarding your pledge and your 1%. So now what? Maybe more time with God. Maybe more time doing a volunteer activity. Could you think of becoming an usher, greeter, or offering counter? Could you ask Kara if she has a project that needs another hand? Could

you change the sign by the road? Help water the plants? Are you bringing back the dishes from Sue and Reita? That’s 1% more for the environment. Many little things turn into big things!

Sherre Faulkner,
Stewardship Deacon

Sending Christmas

Now that we packed our Operation Christmas Child boxes, what happens next? The gifts are dropped off at a local church, prepared for shipping, and distributed to children around the world. According to the Samaritan’s Purse website, www.samaritanaspurse.org, “In addition to hearing the Gospel before they receive their shoebox gift, children also receive The Greatest Gift, a storybook that

shares the message of salvation. With the Apostle John as narrator, the booklet shares 11 Scripture stories and invites children to follow Christ. Children take this home to share with family and friends.”

Thank you for all who contributed to this project and to Kathy Leahy and Pam Novotnak for organizing and taking the boxes to a drop-off location. We collected 25 boxes!

In Our Prayers

Healing, strength, and guidance for: Jerry, John, Sue, Angie, Tammy, Jason Kruckenber, Bill, Stephanie, Melissa, Nancy Mohns, Sherry, Arianna, Lois, Jimmy, Marcy, Marilyn, Joan, Ray, Cheryl Peterson, Kim, Scott Gaines, Beth, Sara, Ken Hausvick, Andy Mackenthun, Daphne McNames, Chris, Sharon, Penny Pfile, Karen Phelps, Kathy, Sara, Char, Sarah F., Emily, Jen P., Gary, Ruth, Jim Freedlund, Isla, Joe Locke, Richard, and Abby.

Prayers for our Service Men and Women: Carl Specht, Ella Pearson’s grandsons Rob & Samuel Walker, Sherre Faulkner’s nephew Rod Flom, Penny Pfile’s nephew William Kerr II, Bob & Karen Lowery’s grandson Steve Broomfield, Dorothy Bush’s nephews Christian and Cody Bush.

Please pray for those suffering loss: The family and friends of Dale Brauer, Richard Fago, Nick Rallo, Joyce Sjostrom, and Phyllis Windsor. Karen Lowery upon loss of her sister Judy Bastman. Ron Schoepfer and family upon loss of his mother Delia. Marta Snyder and family upon loss of her husband Ted.

Reaching and Connecting

Highlights from Lora Conrad, Witness Deacon

- 2024 Prince of Peace Church Directory—Photographs are still being taken before and after both services through December 3. Please be sure you are included.
- C.A.L.M. Coffee Club dates for December will be:
 Wednesday, Dec. 13 - 9:30 am-12:00 pm
 Saturday, Dec. 23 - 1:00 pm-3:00 pm
 Wednesday, Dec. 27 - 9:30 am-12:00 pm
- Our first participation in the Rockton Community Trick or Treat on October 29 was a very fun outreach event for POP. Lots of happy trick or treaters received candy bags, frisbees, cellphone stands, pens and cards with information for visiting Prince of Peace. Many thanks to all who helped - Pastor Cassandra, Andrew Langr, Sarah Langr, Jim & Nancy Wuthrich, Adrian Taylor, Pam Novotnak, and Kathy Leahy.
- Many guest bags have been distributed in the past month. Thank you for being welcoming in the sanctuary as well as in Nicholas Hall during coffee time. It's easy to sit with the same friends, but it's also important to engage in conversation with our guests.

“Christ commands us to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth.”



Our Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 17 at 10:15 am. Annual reports will be mailed prior to the meeting. Extra copies will be available in the church office.



Staff Contact Information:

Pastor Cassandra Langr
 pastorcassandra@poprockton.com
 Mon-Thurs 9 am-12 pm

Administrative Asst., Kara Wallace
 info@poprockton.com
 Hours: M-F 8 am-12 pm

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
2336 Freeport Road
Rockton, IL 61072

Phone: 815-624-2115
E-mail: info@poprockton.com
Web page: www.poprockton.com
Worship Service: Sunday 9:00 & 11:15 am
Education Hour: Sunday 10:15 am
LCMC Website: www.lcmc.net

The MESSENGER

December 2023

Coming Up...

December Worship

December 3—First of Advent
9:00 am & 11:15 am

December 10—Second of Advent
9:00 am & 11:15 am

December 17—Third of Advent
9:00 am & 11:15 am

December 24—Fourth of Advent
9:00 am & 11:15 am
Christmas Eve
5:00 pm

December 31—Fifth Sunday
10:30 am

Book Club

Join the Prince of Peace book club as they read *The Twelve Topsy-Turvy, Very Messy Days of Christmas* by James Patterson and Tad Safran. Bring your lunch and we'll have a picnic and discussion on Wednesday, December 20 at 12:00 pm at the church.

