

The MESSENGER

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A publication of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

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Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

Church Council

⇒ December 5

Annual Congregational Mtg.

⇒ December 11

Poinsettia Orders due

⇒ December 11

Book Club

⇒ December 21

Christmas Eve Worship

⇒ December 24

Christmas Day Worship

⇒ December 25

From Pastor Bob

From the lion's den...

Dear Friends in Christ and Fellow Ministers:

As I was reflecting on what to share with you this month, I thought it important to focus on our upcoming annual meeting together. Therefore, I have asked Kara to republish my annual report from last month, so that you will have it before you as we head into and out of our annual meeting together. Once again, you will find my annual report to the congregation below. I am looking forward to being with you following worship on December 11th for this important meeting in the life of Prince of Peace.

Many years ago I made it my practice to use my newsletter column the month before the annual meeting to present my annual report, so that it would be shared both in the newsletter and in the annual report of the congregation. First, thank you for your appreciation during this Pastor Appreciation Month. It is not lost on me that this will be my second and last annual report to Prince of Peace Lutheran. As you know, I will be leaving you on April 30th next spring. I will at that time have completed a 2-year term as your interim pastor. (You are my first interim contract call.)

In my last annual report, I want to review where we have come together and anticipate what is coming. When I began as interim, I knew that I was the second interim pastor during this vacancy. Much of the work to be done during a time of vacancy had already been accomplished by your Transition Team. This included two separate surveys. When I reviewed the survey results I saw two things of note that I took to be important. One question was whether there was the possibility of having more than one style of worship each month. The second was whether there was a way to make your worship more engaging to younger worshippers. These are related. I had been trying rotational worship in every congregation I have served as solo pastor in my career; and Council agreed that it addressed both questions. So we instituted our current rotational worship service schedule as an experiment. I am grateful that Council saw merit in it from the input they received from you, and have continued the experiment throughout my term. As our time together is winding down, I wanted to remind you that it is an experiment. Rotational worship is something to consider with your new pastor, but it is not written in stone. It is much too new to be "This is how we do things." One of the things that you will be doing together is evaluating your worship experience and discussing how you want to present worship moving forward. (continued on page two)

Pastor Bob continued...

Because of my work with young people over the years, I am pretty dogged and relentless when it comes to presenting a praise band in worship. Years ago in my third call I asked my confirmation students if there was one thing we could do in worship that would be most likely to keep them engaged. Unanimously they said: Praise Band. His Subjects had a good run during the last program year, from August 2021 through August 2022. Now that Brandon and Darvis have moved back into serving at Life each Sunday, we are currently looking for a new guitar player and a new drummer. If you have contacts, please reach out to that person. I am looking forward to having a full band together before I leave, as we have received positive input from you, including Council, of Fourth Sunday Worship music.

During my time among you, we have tried changes. But it is time to stress that I was not so much instituting change, as I was tilling ground for an atmosphere ready and willing to explore change through experimentation. That will continue with your new pastor. As you move forward together, this will be a profitable time to have leadership gather together to form a new Vision Statement for a new situation moving forward. That Vision Statement will help shape direction and focus for the years to come.

I want to say a word about the gift inventories that you took last fall. During a transitional interim time, new ministries are rarely generated. That is for the congregation to do with the new pastor. You have not been contacted regarding your participation based upon your gift inventory results. But, you will be. As you move forward together there will be continuing opportunities to serve together using the Gifts of the Holy Spirit that you have received from God. For many of you, we now know to a large extent what those are. Please prayerfully consider serving according to the gifts that you have been given by saying Yes, when “The Ask” is made. The Ask will be based upon the gifts that we have identified through your inventory results.

So, in closing, I want to share some observations about your new pastor, Pastor Cassandra. You know from her resume how intelligent she is. I have found her to be open and teachable in the areas in which I have something to teach her. As I approach my 25th anniversary of ordination I am wise enough and experienced enough not to teach her in the areas in which she already surpasses me. All pastors have different gift clusters. She is not me and I am not training her to be a copy of me. She is herself and who God is making her to be. Pastor Cassandra is a charismatic Lutheran, as I am. In general what that means is not just seeking God the Holy Spirit for guidance but being in tune with The Holy Spirit in receiving that guidance. Dr. Leonard Sweet from whom I have gratefully received over the years, coined the word “pneumanaut.” As an astronaut navigates space, a pneumanaut navigates The Spirit of God. This is an important and powerful thing for a pastor to be; and Pastor Cassandra is that.

When I began as your interim pastor, I shared with you what I call The Five to Thrive: five traits that marked every thriving congregation in The United Methodist Church. The last of the 5 is a long-term trust relationship with the pastor (a minimum of 7 years). My last responsibility as your interim is to help position Pastor Cassandra to be that pastor, and to help position you to be that congregation. Pastor Cassandra will be blessed, as I was upon ordination, with multiple mentors in ministry. I will gladly continue to be friend and mentor. In addition, her internship will be completed by Pastor Martha Nelson, who was your Call Coach. Also, Pastor Cassie has already met Martha’s husband, Pastor John Nelson, Senior Pastor of Hosanna Lutheran in St. Charles and leader of the Illinois Fellowship of the LCMC. Last, but not least, Pastor Cassandra will have the opportunity to meet with one of my many mentors, Pastor Brian Metke of Trinity Lutheran in Pell Lake, who has supplied for me at Prince of Peace twice in my two years here. Pastor Cassandra will have the support that all new pastors need entering her/his first call. Once again, here are The Five to Thrive:

Active small groups and programs

Activities geared toward youth

Active lay leadership

A mix of traditional and contemporary worship services

An inspirational pastor who has served a longer tenure there.

Yours and His, but not in that order,

Pastor Bob

From Pastor Cassandra

Dear Beloved Congregation,

Greetings in the name of our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

I have been pondering whether we, as a congregation, have a song of thanks to sing. Do we have shouts of praise for things we are grateful for? I know many people who make daily gratitude lists first thing in the morning and others before bed at night. Do we do this? Do we thank God for all that He has done? If so, what are we thankful for, and what do we thank Him for? These questions come to mind as Thanksgiving is right around the corner. Can I start? I am thankful for His love, His grace, my family, which includes Prince of Peace (are we not brothers and sisters), His beautiful creation, and friends. The Psalmist wrote:

A Psalm for Thanksgiving.

Psalm 100 (NIV)

¹Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth.
²Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before Him with joyful singing.
³Know that the Lord Himself is God;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
⁴Enter His gates with thanksgiving
And His courts with praise.
Give thanks to Him, bless His name.
⁵For the Lord is good;
His lovingkindness is everlasting
And His faithfulness to all generations.

What a beautiful Psalm. As we enter this new Church year, can we make a joyful noise and come before our Lord with singing and praise, counting it all joy as stated in the first chapter of James? Let us enter this Advent season thanking Him for what He has done and will do as we prepare to celebrate His birth and second coming. As the psalmist said, He is good, His love is without end, and He is faithful to all generations (Psalm 100:5 paraphrased).

May He awaken our hearts and open our eyes, for He is truly the reason for the season!

Blessings, dear congregation, blessings always on you and your families.

In Christ's Service,
Pastor Cassandra

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."
Isaiah 43:19, NIV



The Prince of Peace council members meet monthly. If you have questions or ideas, please contact one of the council deacons or attend a monthly 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, Sue Ducett
779-475-1907

Facilities, Wayne Schmidt
815-988-6683

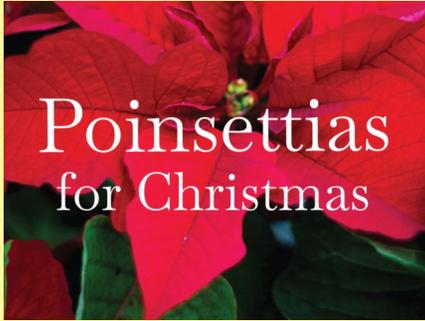
Fellowship, Sue Peterson
815-282-2715

Service, Kathy Leahy
815-243-0831

Worship, Nancy Freedlund
815-624-6363

Vision Statement

Praise His Name & Love Him
Obey His Word & Serve Him
Pray His Promises & Believe Him



Poinsettias for Christmas

The sanctuary will be decorated with poinsettias for the Christmas Eve service. If you are interested in purchasing a plant in honor or remembrance of someone, please complete an order form by Sunday, **December 11**. The cost of each poinsettia is \$13.00. Please include your check with the order form made payable to "Prince of Peace Altar Guild".

Praying in the New Year

SAVE THE DATE January 3-5, 2023

Prayer was a holy habit practiced by Jesus Himself (see Mark 1:35; Luke 11:1). The disciples who walked alongside Him witnessed a connection between His public life and ministry, and this habit of prayer. It was a connection so significant, that they asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1).

LCMC's Three Days of Prayer on January 3-5, 2023 is an opportunity for us to follow the Lord's example and to come together as one across the association with a shared purpose: to pray. Please watch for details on how we will participate in this endeavor.

A Savior is Born

A **Christmas Eve** Worship service will be offered at 4:00pm on December 24. It will include Bible readings, a message, and our favorite "Silent Night" hymn by candlelight. On **Christmas Day**, we will have a worship service at our regular Sunday morning time of 9:00am. If you are able to help as an usher, reader, acolyte, AV, communion assistant, or counter on December 24 or 25th, please contact the church office. Thank you.



In Our Prayers

Healing, strength, and guidance for: Bob Mohns, Judy Hines, Dorothy, Nate, Linda Chartrau, Jimmy, Brian S., Dona B., Jerry, Carter Peterson, Linda Conrad, David A., MaryAnn, Marcy, Kris Wagner, Christian D., Ada, Phil, Jeanne, Kelly, Sara, Ann Stewart, John, Angie, Kasie, Claire, Katie, Paul, Eric M., Cheryl Peterson, Penny, Lois, and Michelle.

Prayers for our Service Men and Women: Carl Specht, Ella Pearson's grandsons Rob & Samuel Walker, Sherre Faulkner's nephew Rod Flom, Tom & Jean Lenhart's grandson Cody Merrett, Penny Pfile's nephew William Kerr II, Bob & Karen Lowery's grandson Steve Broomfield, Dorothy Bush's nephews Christian and Cody Bush, David & Reita Baird's son-in-law Quentin VanDewoestyne, and Duke & Sue Ducett's nephew Danny Wagner.

Please pray for those suffering loss: The family and friends of Jean Bennet, Harriett Geiseman, and Deb Partau. Debbie Tracy and family upon loss of husband Brian. Steve Shrider and family upon loss of mother Julia Ann. Stacy Diemel and family upon loss of cousin Jim Igo.

First Communion



*Ava & Damon
Violet & Andrew*



Creation Story
Fall Study 2022





Jesus Name Above all Names

Advent Tea :November 19, 2022



December 2022



| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----|---|
| <p>The mission of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church is to sow <u>FAITH IN CHRIST</u>, strengthen <u>FAMILIES</u>, serve our <u>COMMUNITIES</u>.</p> | | | | 1 Annunciation Co-op 8am-3:30pm | 2 | 3 Men's Group 7am |
| 4 9:00am Worship 3:45pm 4-H Club | 5 Prayer Group 9:30am Church Council 6:30pm | 6 | 7 | 8 Annunciation Co-op 8am-3:30pm | 9 | 10 Naomi Circle 9am Sophia's |
| 11 9:00am Worship 10:30 Annual Congregational Meeting Poinsettia orders due | 12 Prayer Group 9:30am | 13 Worship Team 9:30am | 14 Altar Guild 6:30pm | 15 Annunciation Co-op 8am-3:30pm | 16 | 17 Men's Group 7am N. Hall—reserved Mohns |
| 18 9:00am Worship N.Hall—reserved Faulkner | 19 Prayer Group 9:30am | 20 | 21 Book Club 6:30pm | 22 | 23 | 24 4:00pm Service  |
| 25 9:00am Worship  CHRISTMAS DAY | 26 Prayer Group 9:30am Office closed | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

December Serving Schedule

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

December 4

AV: Kara Wallace

Acolyte: Ava Lynch

Ushers: Greg Bartz & Dan King

Reader: Tom Lenhart

Communion Assistants: Cyndy King & Richard Mackenthun

Counters: Dan King & Brad Mueller

December 11

AV: Stacy Diemel

Acolyte: Greg Bartz

Ushers: Pam Novotnak & Debbie Tracy

Reader: Lora Conrad

Communion Assistants: Pam Novotnak & Steve Shrider

Counters: Sandy Buske & Steve Shrider

December 18

AV: Kara Wallace

Acolyte: Damon Lynch

Ushers: Lora Conrad & Jerry Yarolimek

Reader: Jim Freedlund

Communion Assistants: Sherre Faulker & Darran Landenberger

Counters: David Baird & Kara Wallace

December 24 - 4pm

Need Volunteers

December 25 - 9am

Need Volunteers

Stock Pew Racks for December: 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 |

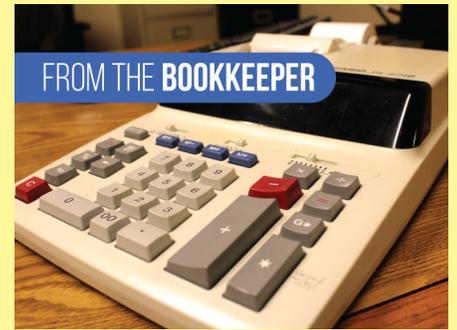


Council Update

November was a busy month for us.

- 1) On All Saints Sunday, we remembered the family and friends of Prince of Peace who died in the past year.
- 2) We concluded our Fall Education courses on November 6th. Thank you to Pastor Bob for leading the Faith5 adult study. Thank you to Discipleship deacon Sue Ducett and her team of helpers for leading a study for the youth on the Creation Story (Genesis 1).
- 3) Prince of Peace honored our U.S. Veterans on Sunday, November 13 with the Armed Forces medley and patriotic boutonnières donated by Nyrie's Flowers in South Beloit.
- 4) Our Operation Christmas Child project was a great success. Service deacon Kathy Leahy was able to deliver 32 shoebox gifts to the drop-off location in Belvidere. Well done!
- 5) Prince of Peace members and friends enjoyed the multi-generational Advent Tea (Coffee/Hot Chocolate) on Saturday, November 19. Gift bags were created for residents at Highview in the Woodlands in Rockton.
- 6) Commitment Cards for the 2023 Stewardship drive are now available. Please complete a card and return it by November 27. Thank you for your continued prayers, participation, and financial support of Prince of Peace.
- 7) Remember God's Got This!

Yours in Christ,
Pam Novotnak, President



We are still accepting donations toward the repair of our garage. The estimates project a cost of about \$8,000-\$9,000 for roofing and siding which will resolve the current issues. Thankfully we do not need to replace the entire garage. We are also accepting donations for the furnace fund. We replaced one furnace in September but have another larger furnace that will need to be replaced next year. Estimates for the replacement are \$9,000. The furnace we just replaced cost \$5,498 and we received \$2,650 toward that replacement.



Thank You Veterans!

Staff Contact Information:

Interim Pastor Bob Castro
pastorbob@poprockton.com
Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 9am-12pm

Intern & Contract Apprentice Pastor
Cassandra Langr
pastorcassandra@poprockton.com
Tues.-Fri. 9:00 am-12:00pm

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

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 9:00am
LCMC Website: www.lcmc.net

The MESSENGER

December 2022

Coming Up...

Planning for the Future

Our Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 11 at 10:30am. Annual reports will be available for pick up on Sunday, November 27. The office will be mailing any reports that are not picked up.



Book Club

Join the Prince of Peace book club as they read Mr. Dickens and His Carol by Samantha Silva. The group will meet for discussion and fellowship on Wednesday, December 21 at 6:30pm at the church.

