

The MESSENGER

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A publication of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

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Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

Children's Winter Gear Drive

⇒ January 1-31

Removal of the Greens

⇒ January 2

LCMC 3 Days of Prayer

⇒ January 4-6

The Alpha Course begins

⇒ January 16

Book Club

⇒ January 19

From the Pastor

From the lion's den...

Dear Friends in Christ and Fellow Ministers,

As of the typing of my annual report, I have walked with you, among you, for seven (7) months. I have appreciated the opportunity to do so. When your leadership was considering whether to bring me in as interim pastor, I shared with them my presentation on the challenges of being both faithful and relevant in the 21st Century, postmodern, post-Christian, post-Truth culture. This is a difficult time to be The Church, even pre-Covid. I shared with them the title of the conference that takes place each October in Milwaukee among several Lutheran synods: Change or Die. This is a big part of that challenge. Having heard that presentation your leaders brought me in to work along with you as you move forward through the call process, preparing the way for your next called and installed pastor.

Much of the change will take place under the leadership of your next pastor, but, to "till the ground" we have tried some change initiatives. In your surveys taken during this process, two questions were raised that I felt were worth addressing sooner rather than later. The first was wondering about the possibility of more variety in worship style, and the second, to look for ways to engage younger members. These concerns are actually related. The average retention rate for young people continuing in worship across the country and across denominations is about twenty percent (20%). That means that on average, only one in five students stays in the life of the church following confirmation. Among Lutherans, this number is actually substantially lower. This is a huge issue for a congregation moving forward.

To address both of these concerns we began a rotational worship format. On the first Sunday of each month, we have gone back to the traditional more formal First Setting of the Lutheran Book of Worship (green). On second Sundays we have retained the Blended Worship style that Prince of Peace has shared over the past years. On third and fifth Sundays we are using the informal, Service of the Word format, with liturgy that is spoken rather than sung. And on fourth Sundays we are using a more neo-evangelical, megachurch worship style with music that is more contemporary/today.

(continued on page two)



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

Stewardship, Tom Lenhart
815-389-4203

Worship, Nancy Freedlund
815-624-6363

Staff Contact Information:

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

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

Pastor continued...

Not everyone is equally blessed by all of these different worship styles, but that is part of the point. As long as there is only one worship service on Sunday, it makes sense to share it with those among our church family who are more engaged by a different style.

Another thing that I have done to help "till the soil" for the new pastor is to explore with both your Transition Team and your Council the suggestion to put together a Mutual Ministry Team to work in partnership with your new pastor when he/she arrives. I believe this will benefit your life together over a longer term.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Church Growth in our current culture is spiritual growth. For that reason, I shared with you the 7 Living Faith Practices: Pray, Worship, Study God's Word, Invite Others, Encourage Younger Generations, Serve, and Give. This is what true discipleship, loving God, following well, looks like. In January we will be moving through The Alpha Course, which is also an important program enhancing discipleship. Jesus' marching orders to us were pretty clear: share the Gospel; make disciples.

Thank you for your courage and commitment to walk through these changes with me as we prepare together for Prince of Peace to move forward and not just survive, but thrive in the years to come with your new pastor.

I want to close by sharing a quick word about my opening greeting and my closing greeting. Mutual Ministry understands what you have written on the inside of your worship space doors. All of the family gathered as Prince of Peace are ministers, co-workers in the mission of this congregation within The Church. You are Friends in Christ AND Fellow Ministers. As I shared when we discussed Service, each of you has a gift or gifts from God the Holy Spirit for ministry that we need to move forward: all oars in the water and all pulling in the same direction. The Gift Inventories that you took on Reformation Sunday will be a huge help in identifying your gifts and bringing them to bear in ministry. If you have not taken the Gift Inventory, it is available on the table in the narthex outside worship, and through the church office. In my closing I share an important but complicated truth. The pastor, all pastors, are accountable. There is accountability to the synod, the congregational members, the council and the mutual ministry team. But above them all is the pastor's accountability to The God who gifted him/her and the King who called and installed him/her. The pastor is not an employee of the congregation. Neither is the pastor a boss brought in to be in charge. The pastor is a co-worker called to work alongside the church family in a specific role as all serve together.

Yours and His, but not in that order,
Pastor Bob

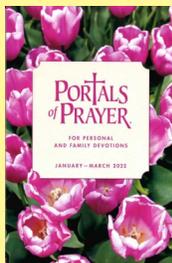


Women's Advent Breakfast



December 4, 2021





New Devotional

This year we are trying a new devotional, "Portals of Prayer," by Concordia Publishing. They are available now in the narthex. A couple of things that are different. On pages 4-6 there is an "Order of Family Worship" followed by Martin Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers and Mealtime Prayers. This is followed by the daily Bible readings, devotion, and short prayer. Beginning on page 99 is a morning and evening prayer for each day of the week. Prayers for special days and circumstances begins on page 105. Also, for those of you who prefer things in a digital format there is a Portals of Prayer App. Just go to your app store and search "Portals of Prayer." You can listen to the devotional or read it. If you click the link for the scripture passages, it takes you to the passage in BibleGateway where you can choose the version of the Bible you want to read. Let us know what you think.

Annual Three Days of Prayer

For three days in January, join thousands of others around the world from our network of churches (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ) for intentional prayer for ourselves, our churches, and our world.

Prince of Peace will have two resources available at the church to guide your prayer time.

Hourly Guide – This brochure gives prayer suggestions on an hourly basis, from 8am to 8pm. Each day has a different focus (Ourselves, Our Church, Our World).

Daily Guide – This pamphlet provides a prayer and reflection for each day. The topics are "Day One: Pray for Our Congregations and Leaders", "Day Two: Pray for Those Who Don't Yet Know Jesus as Savior and Lord, and for the Prodigals", and "Day Three: Pray for Our International Partners".

Feel free to pick up a guide/s and join us for the LCMC Three Days of Prayer, January 4-6, 2022.



In Our Prayers

Healing, strength, and guidance for: Marcy, Chad, Jimmy, Jerry, Lois, Judy Hines, Adrian, Bob, Kristan, Andy, Nancy, Julie, Brian Tracy, Brett, Tom L., Lora Conrad, Brent Timmer, Karen Y., Kim, Jim Igo, Danielle, Diana S., Jesse Ann, Kay Alpers, Matt, Corbin, Mike, Phil, Quentin, Nancy Wuthrich, Tom Taylor, Cyndi, Melissa T., Lee, Paul Bielski, and Anita Castro.

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 nephew 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 Shirley Pearson Lins and Diane Redieske. Brian Tracy and family upon loss of his brother Bruce. Marge GeRue and family upon the loss of sister Donna Mack-Fakler. Helen Weaver upon the loss of her husband and son. Phil Martin and family upon loss of his mother.



January 2022



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Men's Group 7am <i>Happy New Year!</i>
2 Removal of the Greens 10:15am	3 Prayer Group 9:00am	4 Three Days of Prayer: Day 1	5 Three Days of Prayer: Day 2	6 Three Days of Prayer: Day 3 Annunciation Co-op 8am-3:30pm	7	8
9 Baptism of Our Lord	10 Prayer Group 9:00am Church Council 6:30pm	11 Annunciation Co- Op 8am-12pm	12	13 Annunciation Co-op 8am-3:30pm Altar Guild 6:30pm	14	15 Men's Group 7am
16 Alpha Course begins 11:30am	17 Prayer Group 9:00am	18 Annunciation Co- Op 8am-12pm Naomi Cir. 1pm 4-H Club 5:30- 8:30pm	19 Book Club 6:30pm	20 Annunciation Co-op 8am-3:30pm	21	22
23 Alpha Course	24 Prayer Group 9:00am	25 Annunciation Co- Op 8am-12pm Mary Rachel 1pm Rockton Quilt 6-9pm	26	27 Annunciation Co-op 8am-3:30pm	28	29
30 Alpha Course	31 Prayer Group 9:00am			<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>		

January Serving Schedule

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

January 2

AV: Kara Wallace
Acolyte: Volunteer
Ushers: Jim Freedlund & Pam Novotnak
Reader: Sue Peterson
Counters: David Baird & Kara Wallace

January 9

AV: Stacy Diemel
Acolyte: Elliott Diemel
Ushers: Greg & Luann Bartz
Reader: Pam Novotnak
Counters: Greg Bartz & Dan King

January 16

AV: Char Mohns
Acolyte: Volunteer
Ushers: Sherre Faulkner & Jerry Yarolimek
Reader: Stacy Diemel
Counters: Tom Lenhart & Brad Mueller

January 23

AV: Stacy Diemel
Acolyte: Connor Diemel
Ushers: Dan King & Debbie Tracy
Reader: Cyndy King
Counters: Sandy Buske & Pam Novotnak

January 30

AV: Kara Wallace
Acolyte: Greg Bartz
Ushers: Dorothy Bush & Kathy Leahy
Reader: Darran Landenberger
Counters: Luann Bartz & Dorothy Bush

Stock Pew Racks for January: Sherre Faulkner

Celebrations

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 1 Robert Lowery
- 2 Cyndy King
- 5 Denise Shrider
- 7 Rick Olson
- 14 Melissa Peterson
- 16 Ann Stewart
- 18 Dorothy Arndt
- 20 Duke Ducett
- 23 Arlen Lehrke
- 24 Tom Lenhart
- 26 Norm Larson
- 27 Josiah Hedman
Seth Hedman
- 29 Ron Stewart



The Meaning of Life?

The Alpha Course

John Calvin, the Father of the Presbyterian Church wrote that the meaning of life is to glorify God, and to enjoy God's presence forever. Years ago, at Holy Trinity Brompton Anglican Church in London, England, The Alpha Course was launched the flesh out Calvin's definition. The Alpha Course is an eleven-week course on the basics of The Christian Faith: What we believe; why we believe it; and why it matters today. It is centered in both evangelism and discipleship. Some time ago Prince of Peace held The Alpha Course. I have taught it for many years, and will be once again at Prince of Peace, beginning Sunday mornings at 11:30 on January 16th. The ses-

sions include lunch together, followed by a short twenty-to-thirty-minute video, and concluding with a small group discussion time. You can register by calling or emailing the Office, or by signing in the Narthex or Nicholas Hall. Consider joining us for this meaningful time together.

The Alpha Course: beginning Sunday, January 16th at 11:30 a.m. in Nicholas Hall. Sign-up sheets are now available.



New Flower Calendar

Providing flowers for the altar on a Sunday is a special way to honor, celebrate, or remember someone. There are many openings on the new flower chart posted outside of Nicholas Hall. Altar Guild has changed flower suppliers and so the new cost for altar flowers will be \$36. Checks should be payable to Altar Guild. If you have a newborn in your family, please contact Altar Guild or church office so that we can celebrate with a flower and an announcement in the bulletin.

Offering Options

Prince of Peace has ordered 2022 giving envelopes but there is currently a back-log at the printing company. Want to skip writing checks? We have the option available to us where you can have your offering automatically withdrawn from your bank account. You may set it up however you choose.

There are several options: weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, semi-monthly, to name a few. If you would like to explore this option, forms are available in the church office. Please see Amy Lynch with any questions at 815-624-2433 or email Lynch05@gmail.com.



Removing the Greens

The Prince of Peace Altar Guild continues to adorn the sanctuary with banners, paraments, etc. that follow the church calendar. The Epiphany season begins with the Baptism of Our Lord on January 9. We need a few helpers to remove and pack up our Christmas decorations after the worship service on January 2. Please lend a hand if you are able. Thanks.

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Rockton, IL 61072

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Web page: www.poprockton.com
Worship Service: Sunday 9:00am
LCMC Website: www.lcmc.net



Coming Up...

Book Club

Join the Prince of Peace book club as they read Anne of Green Gables by L. M. Montgomery. The group will meet for discussion and fellowship on Wed. January 19 at 6:30pm at the church.



Naomi Circle will be collecting children's gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves January 1-31. The items will be donated to local schools.