



**PEACE**  
NORTH AMERICAN  
LUTHERAN CHURCH



**February, 2020**

## *PASTOR'S MESSAGE*

On any given day a person or a congregation has three choices: die, survive, or thrive. There is always the temptation to just give up, throw in the towel and wait like Jonah for God to call you home. In difficult times the goal of surviving might be all one can manage. God's goal for us is to thrive, to fully live life and serve Him.

At the January Semi-Annual congregational meeting some sobering information was provided to the membership. At our current rate of income vs. spending, cash reserves will be depleted in approximately three to four years. If nothing changes, Peace will enter a phase of life similar to a hospice ministry for an individual. We can celebrate the accomplishments of the past and begin the process of shutting down the ministry. This is the default choice, but it isn't the only option.

The membership of the congregation can opt for survival mode: further eliminate expenses while attempting to increase income. The Church Council

has trimmed the budget to "bare bones" – salaries, utilities, office supplies and mortgage. It will take creative input from all members to find additional ways to reduce costs.

The final option is to engage in congregational renewal. To focus on why we are here and what God is calling us to do. Each one of us needs to reflect on the question, "Do I love Jesus enough to change what I'm doing?" Loving Jesus enough to change means being willing to join Jesus on His mission. It means becoming involved in Bible studies, book studies, and small group ministries. It means more than attending Sunday morning worship. Being willing to make a change also means opening



**SENIOR PASTOR  
STEVE HARTTEN**

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### **Peace Lutheran Church**

3590 Lincoln Avenue  
St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: 269-556-7000

Church Office Email:  
PeaceLutheranStJoe@sbcglobal.net

Church Website:  
PeaceLutheranStJoe.org

### **Church Office Hours:**

Monday through Thursday  
9 a.m.—12 p.m.

### **Pastoral Contact Info:**

Rev. Steve Hartten  
Senior Pastor  
Phone: (H) 281-0307  
(C) 303-638-7598

Rev. Ronald Schmidt  
Staff Pastor  
Phone: (H) 983-2590

### **Audio/Video Requests:**

For Audio CD call:  
Josh Lochner 429-4415  
For Video DVD call:  
Jim Damaske 769-3792

### **Weekly Worship & Praise Opportunities:**

*Sunday*  
**10:15 a.m. Worship**

*Tuesday*  
**11:30 a.m. Prayer Meeting**

*Thursday*  
**7 p.m. Choir**



## **Congregational Forum- February 2**

A Congregational Forum follow-up to the Semi-Annual Congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 2 immediately following worship.

Members will have an opportunity to meet in small groups with individual Church Council members to provide

feedback/suggestions/comments regarding the three paths that lay before the congregation.

Coffee and donuts will be provided. Plan on spending one to one and one-half hours at this important meeting.

# COUNCIL MINUTES

## Peace Lutheran Church Council Minutes Monday, January 20, 2020 6:30 p.m.

**Members present:** Kevin Kunst, Barb Berry, Virgil Bennett, Herb Kroening, Rich Steinbauer, Mark Carpenter, Ed Zajak by telephone

**Also present:** Pastor Hartten, Bob Phillips, Brian Sorensen, Jon Kooiman, Shawn Cahill

**Absent:** Bev So

**Call to Order:** Kevin Kunst called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### Opening Devotion/Prayer

Pastor Hartten chose Ephesians 3:14-21 for the devotion. God is able to do more than we ask or imagine. Trust and be obedient to Christ. This is a time of opportunity to turn to God. Pastor Hartten said a prayer following the devotion.

### Approval of January agenda

Barb made a motion to approve the January agenda and Mark seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Approval of December 2019 minutes** made via email.

### Treasurer's report Jon Kooiman (Acct. Mgr.)

	Current Month	Current Month Budget	Over (Under) Budget
Offerings	\$26,183	\$16,042	\$10,142
Interest	\$ 17	\$ 12	\$ 5
Total	\$26,200	\$16,054	\$10,147
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Over (Under) Budget
Offerings	\$191,647	\$192,500	(\$853)
Interest	\$ 179	\$ 144	\$ 35
Total	\$191,826	\$192,644	(\$818)

### Standing Committee Reports

**Worship Committee** - report sent via email from Ken

Berry.

The Christmas tree in the sanctuary needs replacing. A new tree will be put on the wish list.

The keyboard needs a new circuit board, but the cost of replacing a new circuit board is prohibitive. The cost for a new keyboard would come out of the audio visual fund. A motion was made by Barb to approve looking for a new keyboard not exceeding \$1,600 and Ed seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Fellowship Committee** - report sent via email from Christine Bennett

There will be a potluck for the congregational meeting. Fellowship is looking into a Leap Year Dinner on Saturday, Feb. 29. Lent soup and supper will begin on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26, through April 1. Sign up sheets for soup will be on the bulletin board.

### Building/Property Kevin/Virgil Bennett

A TV was donated for the youth room and the DVD player will be installed soon. The exit lights in the church will be replaced. Virgil is looking into security lights if the power goes out.

### Pastor's Report Pastor Hartten

Pastor Hartten requested vacation from May 7 through May 13. Rich made a motion to approve the vacation time. Herb seconded the motion and the motion passed. Pastor Schmidt will be taking two or three weeks of vacation in February and the whole month of June.

The summary of pastor's activities are as follows: Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen, Church Council, Come Holy Spirit Class, Home Visits, Hospital Visits, Lutheran Clergy Text Study, Men's Thursday Bible Study, Nursing Home Visits, Office Visits, Parents' Meeting for Youth Bible Study, Tuesday Prayer Meeting, Tutoring at Upton Middle School, Un-Greening the Church, Worship Committee, Sunday Worship services, Midweek Advent Service, Christmas Eve Services, Youth Sunday School.

### New Business

### Budget information Shawn Cahill

Shawn discussed the tentative budget. Herb made

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## Pastor's Message

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the building to outside groups as a way to engage the community.

Each of you will be given the opportunity to discuss your thoughts with a Church Council member at next Sunday's Congregational Forum on Feb. 2 immediately following worship. I can assure you that my goal is to have the congregation decide the course of its future. I can support all three options. My desire is that we as the community of Peace willingly choose one of these paths. The worst case scenario is to deny the present reality and end up by default sliding into Hospice mode. Choosing to die with dignity is an honest choice; opting for survival mode would be the result of an informed decision. Repenting (changing our thoughts and behavior) out of love for Jesus will be the hardest path, yet it is one that still remains open to us. Please prayerfully consider these options and take the opportunity to attend the Congregational Forum on Feb. 2.



## Food drive for Soup Kitchen underway

February marks the annual drive for the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. A white tree will be placed in the narthex with needed items written on tags. Please help us stock our pantry by purchasing one or more of the items.

Meijer or Gordons gift cards purchased through the Scrip program and cash donations will be very welcome also.

Our next Soup Kitchen date is Friday, Feb. 14. If you are interested in helping, please contact Bev So or Barb Berry.



**Our 2020 Church Council Members will be installed on Feb. 2 at the 10:15 a.m. worship service.**



**Ash Wednesday is Feb. 26**

Return your palms from 2019 by Feb. 16 so they can be used for this year's ashes.

## Council Minutes

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a motion to approve the tentative budget. Virgil seconded the motion and the motion passed. Shawn will give a presentation at the congregational meeting.

### Council greeters for February

Council chose Sundays in February to greet. Bev will send out reminders to the greeters.

### Congregational meeting

Council discussed some of the topics to be discussed at the meeting including council-led listening posts on Feb. 2.

### Every Member Book Study

Virgil suggested the book "Joining Jesus On His Mission". It is a short read and geared to average every day opportunities. Virgil made a motion for this book to be used for the book study. Herb seconded the motion and the motion passed. The book study will start in March or April.

### Election of officers for 2020.

The new officers will be as follows:

Bev So - President

Rich Steinbauer - Vice President

Barb Berry - Secretary

### Motion to Adjourn

Mark made a motion to adjourn.

**Closing prayer by Pastor Hartten**

# NINE GOOD REASONS TO ATTEND CHURCH WEEKLY (Part 1)

By Thom S. Rainer

I think I've heard most of the excuses:  
"You don't need to attend church to be a good Christian."  
"We give our family priority when we miss church to do sports on Sunday."  
"My church really doesn't meet my needs."  
"I'm not getting fed at my church."  
"Sunday is really the only day we have off."  
"My church has a bunch of hypocrites."

I will deal with these and other lame excuses later. For now, I want to focus on the positive. Why is it important for us to attend church services regularly, usually weekly? Allow me to share nine reasons.

1. **The local church was God's plan in the New Testament.** From the founding of the first local church in Jerusalem to the growth of new congregations throughout the Roman Empire, the New Testament is clear. God wanted His people gathering regularly and faithfully. And lest we forget, all of these congregations had problems. All of these churches had problem people. Hypocrisy was real and pervasive, but it was not a valid excuse to give up the local church.
2. **The Bible speaks clearly about the priority of local congregations.** If you read the New Testament from Acts to Revelation, you will see that a gathered church was not just one important factor for the Christian, it was one of the highest priorities. After the ascension of Jesus, the local church was truly "the body of Christ."
3. **We are commanded and designed to enjoy worshipping the one true God as a gathered community.** What if church members really did one thing in worship services? What if they asked God to let them see Him and know Him fully as the church gathered together? What if that was the priority over evaluating the style of music? What if that was more important than the preacher preaching five minutes more than you deemed appropriate?
4. **A unified church can stand strong in a culture turning away from God.** We can't be a unified church with sporadic attendance. We can't stand together if we aren't persistently gathered together. Do you remember how the early church in Jerusalem reached a culture opposed to God? The outside world saw the unity and joy of the church and wanted to know more about this Jesus they worshipped. Remember, they were "praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those were being saved" (Acts 2:47). A faithfully attended church is a unified church. A



unified church is an evangelistic church.

5. **The world looks at our priorities and evaluates what we deem as important.** Expanding on the previous point, we can't expect the community we serve to get excited about our church if the members of the community see it to be a low priority among the members. The twice-a-month attendees make the church an afterthought. The once-a-month attendee hardly thinks about the church at all.

6. **Accountability takes place in the local church.** When we gather together worshipping with others, we are holding each other up and accountable. When we belong to a small group in the church, our absence is conspicuous. We need people holding us accountable in love. We need others looking after us. Accountability is indeed a good thing.

7. **Families that attend church faithfully and regularly are happier and healthier families.** The research from the secular world is overwhelming. Study after study shows that families who are in church almost every week are among those with the best-adjusted children. Marriages are healthier. Small children grow to become mature and joyous adults. Though these studies are affirming, we can see throughout the New Testament how God has a clear and compelling plan for His children and their families to gather together regularly and faithfully.

8. **Discipleship takes place in the local church.** There seems to be this big mystery about discipleship. How do we do discipleship? Exactly what is discipleship? How does that work in the local church? Remember, discipleship is simply becoming more like Christ. We become more like Christ as we gather and worship together. We become more like Christ when we belong to a small group and do

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## Leap Year Dinner - Feb. 29

More details available closer to the event.



### Sisters in the Spirit Group to meet

Our new Sisters in the Spirit group is going to meet at 10 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month. A different group member will host each month. In February, we'll meet on Feb. 15 at Becky Carpenter's house. Becky's address is 5485 Pioneer, St. Joseph.

Each session includes:

- Short Bible Study
- Pray together
- Support one another
- Refreshments and fellowship with our sisters.

If you plan to attend, please sign up at the church so Becky will know how many people to expect. For more information, call Loretta at 720-231-9200.

### Nine good reasons

*Continued from Page 4*

community together. We become more like Christ as we listen to the preached Word every week. We become more like Christ as we do ministry and evangelism through our local church. For sure, discipleship can take place outside the local church. But the New Testament clearly demonstrates the local congregation is God's "Plan A" for growing as a disciple.

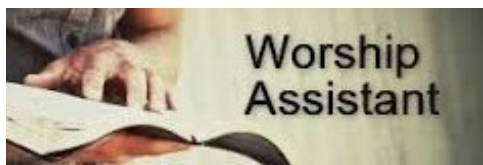
**9. God gives us great joy when we serve others through the local church.** For sure, there are some grumpy and miserable church members. They seem to have a common trait. There are things in the church that aren't going their way. They are not getting their worship style. They are not getting themselves fed. They don't like the way the pastor does things because it's not their way. They focus on three people: me, myself, and I. But we can experience incredible joy as we serve others, as we put others before ourselves, as we don't focus on our own preferences and desires. We experience incredible joy as we serve other church members and those who reside in our community.

All of these nine reasons, of course, presume we are faithful attenders. We are neither obedient nor are we able to experience the full joy of our church if we attend once or twice a month or even less. Faithful weekly church attendance is important. It brings us joy. It helps us to grow spiritually. It is one of the primary characteristics of a healthy family. Above all, it is an act of obedience to God. And that's what really matters.



### Co-Chair needed for Easter Egg Hunt

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, April 4. Unfortunately, our Chairperson for the last few years, Amy Cahill, will be out of town that day. So, we are looking for a volunteer to help chair the event. Amy is willing to help with the organization and publicity again this year, but we need someone to be on hand to lead the event on April 4. If you are willing to help with this key outreach for Peace, please contact Amy in the church office at 556-7000.



## SUPPORTING OUR WORSHIP

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Serving this Month

**Worship Leaders:** Pastor Steve Hartten, Pastor Ron Schmidt

**Organist:** Maria Tallman

**Choir Director:** Debbie Kroening

**Audio:** Josh Lochner, Mark Carpenter

**Video:** Jim Damaske

**Usher:** Dominic So

**Communion:** Autumn McCune and Marty Tallman

February 2

**Greeters:** The Sorensen Family

**Lector:** Shari Schmidt

**Altar Guild:** Nan Hacker

**Altar Flowers:** Open

February 9

**Greeters:** The Cahill Family

**Lector:** Shawn Cahill

**Altar Guild:** Amy Cahill

**Altar Flowers:** Open

February 16

**Greeters:** Greg and Louise Solak

**Lector:** Louise Solak

**Altar Guild:** Ginger Kunst

**Altar Flowers:** Open

February 23

**Greeters:** Larry and Nan Hacker

**Lector:** Nan Hacker

**Altar Guild:** Loretta Hartten

**Altar Flowers:** Open

February 26

**Lector:** Amy Cahill

## THIS MONTH'S READINGS

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**Sun., Feb. 2 - Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31, Matthew 5:1-12

**Sun., Feb. 9 - Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**

Isaiah 58:3-9a, Psalm 112:1-9

1 Corinthians 2:1-16, Matthew 5:13-20

**Sun., Feb. 16 - Sixth Sunday after Epiphany**

Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 119:1-8

1 Corinthians 3:1-9, Matthew 5:21-37



**Sun., Feb. 23 - Transfiguration of Our Lord**

Exodus 24:8-18, Psalm 2:6-12

2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9

**Wed., Feb. 26 - Ash Wednesday**

Joel 2:12-19, Psalm 51

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10,

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:15 Cong. Forum	3 9-12 Office Hours 6p Fellowship Committee Mtg	4 9-12 Office Hours 11:30 Prayer Mtg	5 9-12 Office Hours 7:30p Mark Study	6 9-12 Office Hours 8 Men's Ministry 7p Choir	7 Office closed	8
9 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 1 p.m. Tubing	10 9-12 Office Hours 7p Worship Committee Mtg	11 9-12 Office Hours 11:30 Prayer Mtg	12 9-12 Office Hours 7:30p Mark Study	13 News Due 9-12 Office Hours 8 Men's Ministry 7p Choir	14 Office closed 9 Soup Kitchen	15 10 Sisters in Spirit
16 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:45 Youth Group	17 9-12 Office Hours 6:30p Council	18 9-12 Office Hours 11:30 Prayer Mtg Pastor S. Vacation	19 9-12 Office Hours Pastor S. vacation	20 9-12 Office Hours 8 Men's Ministry 7p Choir Pastor S. gone	21 Office closed Pastor S. vacation	22 Pastor S. vacation
23 9 S. School 10:15 Worship 11:45 Youth Group Pastor S. gone	24 9-12 Office Hours Pastor S. vacation	25 9-12 Office Hours 11:30 Prayer Mtg Pastor S. vacation	26 9-12 Office Hours 5:45p S. Supper 7p Ash Wednesday	27 9-12 Office Hours 8 Men's Ministry 7p Choir Pastor S. gone	28 Office closed Pastor S. vacation	29 6p Leap Year Party Pastor S. vacation

## Birthdays

1 Ray Lietz  
6 Jim Chapman Jr.  
7 Maria Tallman  
11 Jacob Tallman  
12 Alison Adkins  
13 Ken Berry Jr.  
13 Becky Carpenter  
20 Marian Hogue  
21 Debbie Kroening  
21 Autumn McCune  
25 Bob Phillips  
28 Joe Naines  
28 Rev. Ronald  
Schmidt

## Military

**Lt/jg Chad  
Knipschild**  
301 Maple  
Edgewater, MD  
21037

## Shut-In's

*To keep our shut-ins  
safe, please call the  
church office for  
mailing addresses.*

Marian Hogue  
Joe Naines  
Ruth Retzke  
Betty Robbins  
Roger and Elaine  
Sirk  
Barbara Southland  
Mildred Wantz



If you have a loved  
one serving in the  
military, we'd like to  
know about it!

We recognize  
service members on a  
special bulletin board  
in the Narthex and  
include them on our  
prayer list. Please  
contact the church  
office or Ted  
Hollacher.

# Tubing at Five Pines Try Two 1 p.m. Feb. 9

**Meet at Five Pines**  
6597 Smith Road, Berrien Center



Afterward, we'll share a meal at the Subway in Berrien Springs.  
*Don't want to tube? Enjoy the fire at the Five Pines lodge or just meet us for dinner.*  
**Please sign-up on the bulletin board if you plan to attend.**

## Ash Wednesday is February 26

The Season of Lent is fast approaching - it begins the last Wednesday in February. This year's theme for the mid-week Lenten services is "The Son of God Goes Forth to War." Scripture is replete with imagery and descriptions of our Savior Jesus as the warrior who fights and defeats sin, death, and Satan. Each service focuses on an aspect of our Savior-warrior as he is promised to us, fights our enemies for us, and triumphs over them for us. Mid-week worship is at 7 p.m. Feb. 26 – April 1. Join us for Soup Suppers before worship at 5:45 p.m.



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