

Peace Lutheran Church

Volume 36 No. 8

August 2023



Re: VITALITY “PARTNERSHIP IN THE GOSPEL”

Read Philippians 1:3-11

The Letter to the Philippians is one of my most favorite letters, Spirit-inspired by St. Paul. It is written while Paul is under house arrest in Rome, awaiting the decision of the Emperor concerning his fate.

As the verses above indicate, it is a letter of thanksgiving for the gift that was sent to him by the congregation in Philippi in support of his ministry in Rome. As one commentator observes, and I'm paraphrasing, the letter reveals his deep love and compassion for those in Philippi.'

Note his thankfulness is for their partnership in the Gospel. As demonstrated in the verses above, their partnership demonstrates unity in faith and purpose. Their partnership is not self-serving nor focused on Paul. Rather it is about getting the Gospel message out.

Such partnership is Christ-centered and unselfish. They had grown in faith to set aside personal for the sake of others. This is evidence of the fruits of faith.

Nearly every night, as I prepare to go to sleep, I pray for the following:

1. That God would grant to Pastor Fitch and me not only knowledge and wisdom but discernment as we together are charged to shepherd His flock at Peace.
2. That the congregation would benefit from God's directing through His under-shepherds, their pastors.
3. That together, pastors and sheep will be empowered by the Means of Grace – God's Word and Sacraments – to Reach Out, Serve Jesus, and Celebrate His Love.

Ministry today is as difficult as it has always been to conduct. As St. Paul was thankful for his partners in ministry, so am I.

As we move forward with the Re: Vitality process, it is my hope that the Task Force and pastors will be able to put forth a reasonable and attainable - by God's blessing – strategic plan for 2024-2026. It is my fervent prayer that pastors and congregation will walk in full partnership for the sake of the Gospel.

Re:VITALITY TASK FORCE: AN UPDATE

In their June meeting, the Task Force finished the Bible study, especially written for the Task Force's work. It established the biblical support for strategic planning in the congregation. There were 9 sections to the Bible study.

The Task Force received some “education” concerning emotional systems and how they affect the working of the congregation. They also had the opportunity to see the 10-year demographics of the congregation. The adopted (2012) Values Statement was distributed as well. This is to allow for support material to develop a Strategic Plan for 2024-2026. Finally, there was the preparation for the interview process in July.

In August (this month), the Task Force will be assembling on two Saturdays for a workshop to be guided in the process of a strategic plan. This process is facilitated by Pastor Schroeder using 9 sessions that are provided electronically by the Synod.

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Re:VITALITY: INTERVIEWS

The Interviews are now past us. A total of 24 family units (approximately 1/10th of the family units of our congregation) participated. A summary of the interviews will be presented to the Task Force in their July meeting. The same report will be shared with the Elders and Church Council in August and finally with the congregation in the September newsletter.

Please continue to pray for the Task Force that their work be Spirit-led and give glory to God as we seek to "Reach Out, Serve Jesus and Celebrate His Love."

To God be the glory!

Pastor Schroeder



~On Marriage~

"It is not good for man to be alone" God spoke these words (Gen. 2:18) in a world that was not yet under the curse of sin after Adam & Eve's fall, and it sounds like a contradiction. After declaring all things ***"very good"*** (Gen. 1:31), God spoke the words ***"not good"*** about man being alone & isolated. Mankind was created for relationships with his Creator

and with the rest of creation. Man was also created for woman, and woman for man. God created their bodies different, yet complimentary, in order that they would become one. Marriage is not an afterthought. It is the pinnacle of God's creation because this great mystery was intended from the start to be an image of the one true marriage: the marriage of Christ and His Church (Eph. 5:32). Man was created for communion with God, and marriage was instituted in the image of that union.

In Scripture, the last words spoken of the world before the Fall were, ***"The man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed"*** (Gen. 2:25). The very next word in the Hebrew is serpent, indicating that the marriage of man & wife is the target of Satan's fury, and his attack on Holy Marriage continues still. Satan is evil, not ignorant. He understands that marriage is the place where the Image of God is powerfully made known in creation. In the most intimate communion between two people, in the union of mind, body, spirit, will & possessions, there the union of Christ and His Church is mysteriously reflected.

A military general may not realize the importance of a strategic position until a superior general on the enemy side makes that position the focus of his attack. This is us. Sin-darkened reason cannot see or understand the glory God gives to holy marriage and also holy singleness. Only God's Word can enlighten us. Satan's non-stop and increasing attacks on both of these demands that the Church defend and protect chastity.

Like a tactician of sound mind, we do well not to squander enemy intelligence. False teachers continue to insist that attacks on marriage are mere debates or disagreements on morality. In the face of Satan's attacks, and contrary to the clear teaching of Holy Scripture, they would have us believe that our time, efforts & resources are better deployed elsewhere. Guided by the Gospel, we confess marriage as the earthly expression of Christ's relationship to His Holy Bride, the Church. Understanding the core connection of marriage to the Gospel, we also see much more clearly the threats to its foundations.

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"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). According to this divine institution, marriage is exclusive ("leave"), permanent ("cleave"), *and* a complementary ("one flesh") union. The committed love of marriage always reveals God's intention that individuals are called into community since marriage takes us beyond our individual identities so that we give ourselves to another who is distinctively different from us. St. Paul notes in Eph. 5 that husbands are called to sacrificial love toward their wives and wives to a willing respect for their husbands.

In responding to the bitter reality of divorce, the Word made flesh, our Lord Jesus, reaffirms the gift of marriage and then reminds us of an obvious implication: ***"Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate"*** (see Matt 19:3b-6). His warning is necessary because the beautiful gift of marriage, like all of God's created goodness, is marred by sin, which Jesus describes as ***"hardness of heart"*** (Matt 19:8). But sin does not have ultimate power.

Christians recognize that marriage is lived under the cross. Husbands & wives are not exempt from the suffering that comes with faithfulness in marriage, and our spouse is the one we will sin against most in this world. Yet this provides a wonderful training ground for us as God's people if we are willing to let Him shape us & our marriage relationship.

Trusting in the promises of Christ and clinging to each other in love, marriage is the arena for husband & wife to live together in repentance, forgiveness, and faith.

God's intention for marriage is skewed when it is treated as unimportant for human well-being, belittled as the godly gift it is, or twisted into forms that no longer resemble the gift God has intended. God gives marriage to humanity, to us, for our well-being. He commends biblical marriage for couples to make a deep commitment to one another before God, for a lifetime of giving to one another and forgiving each other.

The daily challenge in marriage is to reject your natural selfishness and live out your forgiven life in Jesus. It will be a lifetime of modeling forgiveness, forgiving each other as Jesus forgives you, a lifetime of love & respect, a lifetime of striving to love like Jesus because He first loved you.

Let us pray: Faithful Lord, pour Your grace upon husbands & wives, help them fulfill the vows they have made, reflecting Your steadfast love in lifelong faithfulness to each other. As members with them of the body of Christ, use us to support their life together in Christ our Lord. Amen.



WE ARE ALREADY BEGINNING OUR PLANNING FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL!

Have you EVER thought that you might enjoy teaching our children about their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Please consider doing so this fall! The sign-up sheet will be posted with all the positions available for the 2023-24 Sunday School year on the bulletin board in the middle hallway. Pick your favorite position, and be sure to sign up. You won't regret that you did! Do you have questions about what may be required of you? Please contact our Sunday School Superintendent Caitlyn Vanden Bloomer, or Pastor Fitch. God bless you as you consider this most important job of assisting our Peace Families by teaching our children about Jesus! We are also looking for people to help plan activities during the Sunday School year. Also watch for information about SS Teacher training to take place sometime in August.

VITAL STATISTICS

Number of Baptized Souls: 405

Number of Confirmed Souls: 349

Number of Families: 247

Transferred out of Peace:

Johnny, Guin, Adalynn & Isley Miels

Transfer to New Hope Lutheran Neenah



CHOIR SEASON WILL BEGIN SOON! Our Choir is open for ALL confirmed members of the congregation to come together and praise the Lord with singing. **We will be starting up September 6th at 6 p.m.** Remember you are always welcome to join us and age does not matter! If you have any questions, please contact the Director, Brian Hallman @ 920-475-0748



The total amount raised for Bo's Heavenly Club House was \$1,452.91. We have received a thank you from the organization, which will be posted on the bulletin board in the back hall by double doors. Again, thank you to all that contributed/participated in the Treasure in the Trunk event—donations made in memory of Alayna Bootine.

The collection for August will be school supplies: Notebooks, paper, pencils, crayons, markers, etc. There will be a collection wagon in the narthex.



No gift goes unnoticed by God, the Giver of All. No gift is so small that it is overlooked by Him. God's instructions in the Bible are applicable today.

Stewardship Giving Options @ Peace Lutheran Church, Neenah

Pray for the Church, missionaries, pastors, Sunday School teachers, the ill or hospitalized, government leaders, and the leaders of Peace.

Use your God-given talents to benefit the body of Christ at Peace. i.e., assist with Sunday School, participate in events like the Live Nativity, Treasures in the Trunk, the annual Timeless Treasures Bazaar, contribute food or serve at a funeral, usher at a service, prepare the Lord's Supper as a member of the Altar Guild, count the weekly offering, service as an acolyte, serve coffee on Sunday, welcome members and visitors on Saturday or Sunday with a friendly greeting, sing praises with the choir, assist with Vacation Bible School.

Contribute to the General Fund using offering envelopes or online e-Giving, which covers all bills, salaries, insurance, and upkeep.

Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.

1 Thessalonians 4: 9 - 12 ESV



Come to the Neenah Farmer's Market on Saturday, August 12. Peace Mission Guild is partnering with the Board of Evangelism with a booth to interact with the community. Games for children and adults with prizes and literature about Peace will be offered. The Farmer's Market is held at Shattuck Park on Wisconsin Avenue from 8 am-Noon.

Looking ahead to September, all women are invited to gather in the Fellowship Hall on Monday, September 11, at 6:30 pm, for the first get-together of the season of Peace Mission Guild. There will be a devotion, ice breaker, Bible Study, and brief business meeting. Come and get together with women you may not have seen for a while!

South Wisconsin District Fall Retreat will be Friday-Saturday, September 29-30, at the Clarion Hotel & Suites in Wisconsin Dells. The theme is "Comforted to Comfort Others." The registration cost for the retreat is \$60. Lodging is \$99 (plus fees & taxes) for 2-4 people in a room. The registration deadline is September 10. More information can be found at this link: <https://www.lwml-swd.org/upld/resource/2a34a42f-6be3-4c78-bd38-6c63e02812b7.pdf>

One of the missions your offerings to the quarterly Mites collection goes to is Orphan Grain Train Servant Center — Orphan Grain Train, U.S. \$100,000 Orphan Grain Train (OGT) has carried out the mission of the Lord for thirty years by providing humanitarian service. They have assisted orphans, carried out domestic disaster relief, and gathered, sorted, packed, and distributed food, clothing, medical supplies, equipment, and educational materials for those experiencing poverty in the U.S. and internationally. This grant will be used to expand their food production facilities, thereby allowing them to produce 10,000,000 mercy meals annually.

Barb Bergner	8-4	Barb Kaun	8-21
Becca Thomas	8-4	Joyce Wolf	8-23
Lois Dailey	8-11	Shari Brennan	8-27
Anne Wilson	8-17		



Confirmation Orientation – Confirmation Orientation will take place on Wednesday, September 6th, @ 5 pm for 7th & 8th Grade Catechumen. Classes will begin a week following the orientation on Wednesday, September 13th.

Rally Day & Church Picnic – This will take place together on Sunday, September 10th this year, kicking off our Sunday School/Bible Study year together. More details to follow in August...



4th of July Pancake Breakfast – The Board of Education & Pastor Fitch would like to thank you for your support of our youth here at Peace. This was now our 3rd time holding the Pancake Breakfast here under our own steeple, and your gifts of time, talents & treasures were multiplied by our Lord to raise over \$4,000 that will be split between our Youth Fund and LES Scholarships. Counting Adults, Youth & Children, we served 500+ people(!) from our church, community, and more. Thank you, Lorrie & Erin, for your assistance & mentoring! And most of all, THANK YOU, Brothers & Sisters of Peace!! Lord willing, we will enjoy an even bigger turnout next year!!!

Puzzle!

Fill in the blanks with the correct words. Then transfer the letters to the numbered boxes below to complete Psalm 107:1, NIV.

Shape that symbolizes love 31 15 7 18 5

Part of a stove used for baking 12 3 24 39

Color made by red and yellow 28 42 7 8 27 37

A present 1 32 20 11

Clothing a girl wears 19 22 43 44 33

Something you open to go into a room 40 29 17 47

Opposite of soft (sound) 34 17 41 30

To take a long walk 14 2 9 38

A high body temperature 45 50 49 48 42

Items used to build or fix things 13 35 21 16 26

Edge of the sea 10 23 46 51 4

Home for a bee 6 25 36 4

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8
9	10		11	12		13	14	15
	16	17	18	19		20	21	22
	23	24		25	26		27	28
29	30		31	32	33		34	35
36	37		38	39	40	41	42	43
44		45	46	47	48	49	50	51

Answer: heart, oven, gift, dress, door, loud, hike, fever, tools, shore, hive; Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Psalm 107:1, NIV



Use simple ingredients and your imagination to bake these fluffy, cloud-like treats.

What you need:

- 3 egg whites
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- Mixer
- 2 Tbsp. powdered sugar
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- Parchment paper

What you do:

1. Preheat oven to 300°. In a mixing bowl, combine egg whites and vanilla. Whisk eggs with mixer at medium speed until frothy.
2. While whisking, gradually add sugar and cornstarch. Keep whisking at high speed until stiff peaks form.
3. Spoon mixture onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Create fun shapes.
4. Bake 20 minutes. Cool and enjoy!



Creator of the stars

The stars and sky testify to God's amazing power and creativity.

Directions: Use the clues and Bible passages to fill in the blanks. Then transfer the circled letters (in order) to the spaces below to complete a verse of praise.

God determines this and calls each star by name. (Psalm 147:4)

○ _ _ _ _ _

The heavens are the work of God's what? (Psalm 8:3)

_ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _

What does God bring out one by one? (Isaiah 40:26)

_ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _

God made two great lights to do this. (Genesis 1:16)

○ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _

God promised Abraham this would be like the stars. (Genesis 15:5)

_ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _

The sun, moon and stars have this. (1 Corinthians 15:41)

_ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _

The lights in the sky serve as what? (Genesis 1:14)

_ _ _ _ _ ○ _ _ _ _ _

The heave__s declare the __lory __f __od;
the ski__s __roc__aim the wo__k of his ha__ds.

PSALM 19:1, NIV

Answer: number, fingers, host, govern, offspring, splendor, signs; The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Psalm 19:1, NIV

Prepared by Loren Wahl, Congregation Chairman, June 30 2023.

\$40,222 June Budget (anticipated expenses)

\$34,081 Actual June Income

\$36,331 Actual May Expenses

\$- 2,250

\$241,332 YTD Budget (anticipated expenses)

\$236,626.63 Actual YTD Income

\$219,448.18 Actual YTD Expenses

\$ 17,178.45

Peace Lutheran Church

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Rev. Ricky P. Schroeder

Pastor

Rev. Josiah Fitch

Associate Pastor



**Peace
Lutheran Church**
NEENAH, WISCONSIN – LCMS

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Reaching Out . . . Serving Jesus . . . Celebrating His Love



e-mails

pastor@peaceneenah.com
assocpastor@peaceneenah.com

Web site:

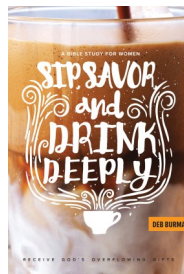
www.peaceneenah.com

Worship Services

Sat. 5:00 p.m.

Sun. 9:00 a.m.

Bible Study/Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Sundays



Women's Bible Study: Sip, Savor & Drink Deeply

The idea of a coffee break is enticing, isn't it? Even if coffee isn't your beverage of choice, you look forward to downtime, especially if it is spent with a friend who wants your company.

Jesus is such a friend. The Lord wants our company.

He invites us to meet with Him in His Word. Just imagine what He has in store for us as we meet Him with our "cup" - our self - a vessel created and chosen

by God, redeemed in Christ, and ready to be filled for His purpose.

Time spent in Bible study will fill you to the brim and beyond with God's Good News. Sip, savor and drink deeply from His Word.

Receive the outpouring of His grace, His joy and His peace.

Grab your cup of coffee (or hot chocolate, water, tea) and join us to Sip, Savor and Drink Deeply with your sisters in Christ! We will be meeting at Peace, the first and third Wednesday of the month, at 9:30 am. Keep your eyes and ears out for further information!

Please contact Paulette Stecker (pfstecker@gmail.com) or Ashley Fitch (aehend7j@yahoo.com – 574-780-2749) if interested or for any questions. We look forward to seeing you!

