



January 2020

Volume XXVI. Number 1

Tidings of Peace

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church ♦ 1747 W. Milham Avenue, Portage, MI 49024 ♦ 269-343-3453 ♦ popportage.org

"Touched by the Gospel, we seek to be instruments of God's Peace, for the sake of the world."

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Pastor's Page

2020 Vision

I first learned I needed glasses when I was in the third grade. After learning this, I decided to wear my swim goggles around the house all day for "practice." *Spoiler alert: wearing swim goggles does not feel anything like wearing regular glasses.*

These days I have astigmatism in both eyes and am incredibly nearsighted, which means that without my glasses everything is really blurry and I have very poor depth perception. I'm likely to trip if I try to walk down stairs and I can't see people's faces or read without a lot of squinting. Basically, without my glasses, I'm lost. I'm sure I'm not alone in this. Many of you can't read this without assistance from glasses or contacts. Very few of us have perfect 20/20 vision. Thanks be to God for the lenses that help us see!

Glasses and contacts aren't the only lenses that are useful for helping us see. We also use metaphorical lenses – ways of thinking – that shape the way we perceive and understand the world around us. The lens of fear might make us see danger where none exists. The lens of scarcity may make us forgetful of the gifts we've been given. The lens of judgment may make us hear disdain and criticism in the words of a friend.

CAN'T SEE THE HATERS WHEN I GOT MY LOVE GLASSES ON



This popular internet meme is one of my favorite illustrations of Christ's invitation to view the world through God's eyes. When we look on the world through our "love glasses," what do we see? Are strangers people who hate us and want the worst for us or neighbors who may need our help? Have we been granted scarce resources we need to hoard, or opportunities to give generously as God has given to us? Have we received harsh judgment for our imperfections or the grace of the God who went to the cross and the grave for our sake so that we might have new life?

It can take a while to feel comfortable wearing new glasses and it does take practice to get used to them (though I don't recommend using swim goggles as practice). We may have to change our routines and habits until we can remember to wear them regularly. We may have to take breaks to clean them so we can see more clearly.

So, too, it takes practice to view the world through Christ's "love glasses." Thanks be to God there are routines and habits that can help us! We can worship regularly with our faith community. God's welcome at the font and at the table reminds us that we are loved and are therefore able to love others. Not to mention being around our community of faith gives us lots of opportunities to practice seeing other people through those love lenses! Bible study, especially when we study together, is a great way to learn more about God's love and clear our minds and hearts of any fear or confusion that might be fogging our view.

Will you join me in practicing wearing your "love glasses" this year?

Shalom, Pastor Rachel

What's Happening at POP!

Mid Week Bible Study



Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.
They are using the
Augsburg Adult Study.

Next quarter the focus is
Honoring God.

Attention Senior Citizens!

Senior Potluck and Bunko

Tuesday, January 14 at 12:30

See the sign up sheet in the Gathering Space

If you have any questions, please contact:
Carla Hannemann 269-216-3498.

Praises, Poses, and Prayers

comes back starting Monday, January 27 at noon.

Join us in the *Gathering Space* as we breathe, practice yoga, relax and meditate, all to contemporary praise and worship music. No previous yoga experience necessary.

Please bring a yoga mat if you have one
(there will be some on hand if you don't, no worries). Wear comfortable clothing that allows you to move freely, and don't forget your water bottle.

Hope to see you there.



Kelly Blair, RYT 200 (certified yoga instructor)

NEWS from the

PRINCE OF PEACE

Women of the ELCA



We will be meeting on Monday, January 27 at 9:30am.

Ruth Circle is a group of women, who gather the **fourth Monday of the month** for fellowship & a light snack followed by Bible study as printed in the *Gather* magazine, a publication of the Women of the ELCA.

In the next four sessions, we will explore vocation in many contexts. As we learn more about how our ancestors in faith heard and responded to God's call, we will reflect on our own lives and callings .

All women are invited to attend. Ruth Circle meets monthly except for December & the summer months.

Questions: call Claudia Blahnik @ 269-375-6907
or 269-352-7430.

Men's Breakfast

Tuesday, January 14 8:00 AM

Meet at Michelle's on Romance Road
in Portage.

Join Pastor Rachel for
breakfast and conversation!



The annual **Ted and Bea Olsen Chili Cook-Off** will precede our annual meeting on **Sunday, January, 26.**

So bring your best recipe and your most discerning taste buds. Sue Stapleton is the defending champion and the one to beat. A prize will be awarded to the maker of the best chili! After we eat, we'll spend some time reflecting on the ministry of the congregation over the past year and discuss the budget and leaders we will need for the year to come. We need cornbread to go with the chili! The sign up is out now!



Happy New Year! Spread Warmth and Good Cheer!

Are you looking to volunteer in 2020, but you don't have a lot of extra time? Once or twice a month might be perfect. The **Quilters** meet at 9:00 am on the first Tuesday and third Monday of each month. Or work from the comfort of your own home. Just ask!

Are you cleaning out old sheets to make room for new ones? (Queen and king-sized flat sheets work best, but we also use other sizes to cut into 11" squares.) Do you have cotton material that will never make it past your sewing room shelf? **We need pieces of fabric measuring 64" x 84" to be used as the backs of our quilts. We also need filler measuring 60" x 80" to provide warmth.** Mattress pads and quilt batting are two possible ideas. Others can be found at the Lutheran World Relief website.

Please join us beginning **Tuesday, January 7th** and/or **January 20th!** Questions can be directed to Sheryl at 385-3045 or www.cookontherun@ameritech.net.

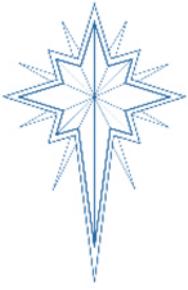
Come and join our Women's Small Group

Come join us beginning this **January 6** as we finish our last study of Mary and begin a new study January 20.

We meet from 7-8:15 pm in the high school room.
We'd love to have you!!

Contact: Diane Snyder, 375-0911

Fellowship Events



Epiphany Crosslights January 5!

Epiphany Crosslights is a family-centered pageant celebrating the close of the Twelve Days of Christmas with seasonal songs, poems, stories, food and, of course, a visit from the Three Kings! If you have not already signed up, please do so by Sunday, December 29!

On **Sunday, January 5, 2020 at 4 p.m.** a light supper in four courses will be served, including wassail, veggies, rolls, roasted chicken, scalloped potatoes, peas and bread pudding. We are trying to accommodate those following a gluten-free diet. Please make a note on the sign-up if this applies to you.

To help defray the cost of food and printing, a nominal charge is requested – \$5 for adults or \$3 for children/young people ages 3-15. There is a \$16 cap on the cost to immediate families (so if you have 5 or more in your immediate family it will cost no more than \$16). Any money collected over and above what is necessary will be donated to the youth travel fund.

Due to the popularity of this event in the past, reservations are necessary. *Epiphany Crosslights* envelopes will be available near the sign-up. Please note “Crosslights” on your check. If you pay by cash, put your name, amount enclosed and “crosslights” on your envelope. You can place your envelope in the offering plate or turn it in to the church office.

We hope you join us and enjoy the festivities!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Social Concerns

Prince of Peace Christmas Gifts 2019



The Gathering Space Christmas Tree was surrounded with love as new gifts piled up for this year's adopted families. Portage Community Center asked us to help 4 large families, which included many children and handicapped people. Gifts of pots and pans, many coats and snowsuits, legos, socks, shoes, boots and underwear were beautifully wrapped and delivered on time. We learned from PCC that 99 Portage families were served through them this year, with 30 being "single person" families. Once again we also provided each family with a generous food basket, including Christmas dinner. Thank you for the gracious generosity you've shown again this year. We also are most grateful to Pat Boulis who organized and completed the entire project for us.

Prince of Peace Christmas gift-giving continued this year as we gifted each of our Refugee families with a \$100 gift card. The families are doing very well and the refugee team continues to support them as any family celebrates each person's success.

Our Middle and High School youth also adopted a large family from the Kalamazoo YWCA. Thank you to everyone who supported the Annual Youth Bake Sale which provided \$650 for the families' gifts. The youth divided into teams with needs/wants lists and shopped for the family. Thanks to Megan Floyd and our youth for their great work.

We also supported Ministry with Communities Underwear Party this year. The large box in the Gathering space was filled with underwear, hats, scarves, mittens/gloves, and other pieces. The HS Class also sponsored a Sock Tree, collecting 90 pairs of socks to donate to Ministry with Community, as well.

Thank you for serving and gifting in God's name, helping to make someone's Christmas very special and knowing that your gift had impact on their lives.

Advent & Christmas Thank You!

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton likes to say that we are church together for the sake of the world. We, the staff of Prince of Peace, would like to thank you for being church with us through your many gifts of time, talent, and treasure throughout the year. We would also like to thank you for your generous Christmas gifts. We couldn't do what we do without your support. Thank you! Serving God with you is a gift and a blessing.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Rachel, Megan, Janet, Tamara, Mike, Sarah, Steve, Scottie, Amanda, and Mariana

Thank you to Congregation

I am feeling greatly blessed by your generous Christmas gift. But there is more! I continue to be blessed by being able to work with Pastor Rachel, the staff, the musical ensembles, and you the congregation in making music for our worship. Thank you. Janet Hill

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OTHERS

- *HRI gratefully acknowledges your generous donation. Every dollar counts in our fight to end homelessness. Thank you for your continued support!*
— Michelle A. Davis, Executive Director
- *We are writing to express our appreciation for your recent gift to **Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries**. Your donation provides a warm place to sleep, three meals a day and a helping hand to those in need. Thank you and God Bless.*
— Pastor Michael L Brown, CEO/President
- *Your support means so much to those facing hunger. With every dollar to **Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes**, we will be able to provide food for over 3 meals.*
— Jennifer E. Johnson, Executive Director
- *Thank you so much for your generous contribution to the Portage Community Center for help with our emergency assistance programs.*
— Chris Buckley, Executive Director
- *Dear friends thank you so much for your generous gift to **Ministry with Community**. We are Kalamazoo's only daytime shelter and resource center open to everyone who comes through our door.*
— Kelly Henderson, Executive Director
- *Thank you very much for your gift and partnership with **Open Doors**, as we continue to serve our community members with the goal of always being encouragers, listeners, and builders of hope.*
— Stephanie Hoffman, Executive Director

Synod Prayer Partners

If you would like to sign the letter you will find it in the Gathering Space next to the table sign:

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SYNOD PRAYER LETTER.



A special thank you to Pastor Rachel for her pastoral leadership throughout the year and especially during Advent and Christmas.

Thank you to Megan Floyd and the children for the wonderful children's program.

Thank you to Tamara Preston and Mike Whately for their extraordinary efforts to schedule volunteers, prepare and print bulletins and keep myriad plates spinning all at the same time.

Thanks also to Janet Hill for all the work she contributes, rehearsing musicians, rewriting music, and leading our outstanding musicians. . . the choir, the bell choir, the soloists, the ensembles and the brass.

Thanks to Scott Walker for leading our worship team.

Thanks to our custodian, Steve Haddix, for staying on top of all the many events and services in our building all year long, but with the especially hectic schedule throughout the holidays.

Thank you to Bill & Dianne Hellman and their crew for coordinating our Advent Simple Suppers.

Thank you to Jeanette Field and Laurel Hopper for their leadership in Liturgical Art. The sanctuary and gathering space were beautiful throughout Advent and Christmas.

Thank you to Social Concerns for helping us remember the meaning of sharing with others throughout this special season and all throughout the year.

Thank you to all the volunteers who put up the tree, folded bulletins, ushered, served communion, baked bread, served on altar guild, and served as readers, worship assistants and sound technicians.

Thanks to those who baked cookies and served as acolytes and those who participated in special worship programs.

Thanks to the Fellowship Committee for offering us opportunities to gather in fellowship and build relationships.

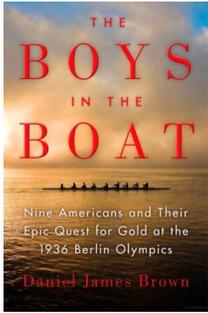
There is no way to recognize everyone or even come close to remembering all who serve this ministry and the family of Prince of Peace, we are grateful for all of you!

Blessings to all in the new year.

More of What's Happening

Book Club

Next meeting on **January 15 at 10:00 am and we will be discussing** *The Day the World Came to Town* by Jim Defede



For February
The Boys in the Boat
by Daniel J. Brown

A irresistible story of how nine working class boys from the University of Washington's eight-oar rowing team, in the depths of the Great Depression, overcame many challenges to defeat the elite East Coast Teams and go on to win the 1936 Olympics in Berlin by challenging the German boat rowing for Adolf Hitler. A true story of determination and grit.

Upcoming books

- Jan. *The Day the World Came to Town* by Jim Defede
- Feb. *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel J. Brown
- Mar. *The Island of Sea Women* by Lisa See
- Apr. *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim M. Richardson



Flower Sign-up:

Anyone who wishes to recognize a special occasion or in remembrance of someone may contribute toward the monthly flowers and all will be recognized in the Peace Proclamations and newsletter. We need a minimum of five people to sign-up, contributing \$10 to cover the cost of the flowers.

Sign up for February!

6th Annual Sewing/Craft Day

Saturday, February 1, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Join us for the 6th annual sewing/craft day in the social hall at PoP. This has been a very successful event the past several years. Bring your sewing machine, your yarn and knitting needles, your scrapbooking, and join us for a day of fellowship. Please allow at least an hour to work on the service project identified for the day.



Everyone should bring a dish to pass for lunch.

New Member Exploration

**Sunday, January 12 and
Tuesday, January 14**

New Member Exploration



We will be taking in new members on **January 19.**

If you are interested in membership, we would love to

have you join us for lunch on Sunday, January 12 after worship or Tuesday, January 14 at 6:30 in the Social Hall.

Please, contact the office or Pastor Laughlin, if you plan to attend, so that we may plan for food.



**The office will be closed
Monday, January 20
in observance of
Martin Luther King Day.**

Peace Kids!

January, 12th after worship and Morning PoP Stars, we'll have lunch and then learn how to make our own winter and Valentine's Day themed cards. This workshop will be led by Carla Hannemann... Carla makes really beautiful cards! Sign-up in the Gathering Space, and join us for this fun event!

Power of Breath is on hiatus until February 5.
Class meets on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 8:30 pm.
Questions? Call Carolyn Selby 269/327-9949

Join the Ladies Lunch Bunch.

This group meets the third Tuesday, 11:45 a.m., at various restaurants for food and fellowship. All women are welcome.

January 21 Summer Thyme 3928 Portage Rd, Kalamazoo

Council Corner



Council Corner

- In the month of November, we had an income of \$39,979 and expenses of \$40,221 giving us a monthly deficit of \$243. Our year to date income vs. expenses gives us an overage of \$30,934.
- We approved the draft budget to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- We received an update from the Property Visioning Committee.

If you have any questions, please see any of the council members or see the minutes posted.

Dates to Remember:

Budget Hearings

Sunday, January 12 at 9:15

Sunday, January 19 at 11:45

Annual Meeting Sunday, January 26

This meeting will include acceptance of the 2020 church budget, elections of council members and an update from Facility Visioning.



**A LOOK
at the
BUDGET**

Kids, Kids, Kids and more Kids!



Great performance kids!!

The Children's Christmas Program was so fun to watch, and I truly enjoyed helping you all put it together. I appreciate all of your hard work, and I appreciate the dedication of the parents who helped with costumes and of course, getting everyone there for rehearsals! My heart was so happy and full- thank you!

Peace,
Minister Megan

Sign up in the Gathering Space if you want to ring the bells before service.

Call to Worship Bell Ringers

L - R: Nicholas and Kathy Eklov, James, Carolyn and Jessaca Hart.



Facts and Figures

December Attendance:

12/1	170	1st Sunday of Advent
12/8	214	2nd Sunday of Advent
12/15	248	3rd Sunday of Advent
12/22	190	4th Sunday of Advent
12/29	154	1st Sunday of Christmas

SPECIAL GIFTS FOR PATHWAYS OF GIVING

Good Samaritan - Jim & Anne Vogt

Loaves and Fishes - Gail Hoover

ELCA World Hunger – Greg & Christine Guthrie, Pat Luma John & Gloria Beatty, Brian & Karen DeVries, Larry Wentzel, Bob & Carla Hannemann, Dale & Micki Holder, Bev Schmidt, Diane Snyder, Rod Hokenson

Lutheran Disaster- Rod Hokenson, Tamara Preston, James Morgan

Handbells - Wade & Kim Lawrence

Good Samaritan Fund - Joyce Stout in memory of Greg Visel

General Fund November

Contributions	\$ 39,979
Expenses	\$ 40,221
Surplus/deficit	\$ 243



Monday, January 6



Use this QR code to make your contribution to Prince of Peace.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

1/1	Renee Lassila Tom Noall Mary Holtapp	1/9	Nicole Wyatt	1/17	Gabriel Maurer Tammy Olsen	1/24	Caelyn French
1/2	Eli Thomssen	1/10	Karen Helmeke Marilyn Lund	1/18	Leslie Kepplinger	1/24	Linda Isakson Michelle McManus
1/5	Lorraine Knuth Marilyn Storch Jenn Jawahir	1/11	Ann Lindahl Jordan Kana'an	1/19	Christina Brown	1/25	Holly Lago
1/6	Kyan French	1/13	Joan Ford	1/20	Stephanie Somers Ava Erdmann Gretchen Kauth Avery VandenBussche	1/26	Linda Timm
1/7	Kai Jensen Calleigh Bolde	1/15	Meredith Ablao Melissa Ottesen	1/21	Dylan Sweeney	1/27	Donna Pennington Diane Reames
		1/16	Claudia Blahnik Charles Ford	1/22	Barbara Ziegler Michelle Nitz	1/29	Dennis Stalker Fran Bushfield
				1/23	Jan Christianson	1/30	Sara Krebill
						1/31	Sara Lassila

Anniversaries

Randy and Marilyn Lund	1/22
Mike and Joanne Preston	1/28



Prince of Peace Calendar

JANUARY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 10:30 AM Worship	30 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring 5:00 PM AA "Promises Support group" mtg.	31 Office Closed at 1:00pm 1:00 PM Literacy Tutoring	1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 7:30 AM FA 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	3 6:00 PM Tai Chi	4 10:00 AM Epiphany Crosslights Meal Prep 3:30 PM Epiphany Crosslights Rehearsal
5 9:15 AM Learning Hour 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM Morning "PoP" Stars Children's Music 4:00 PM Epiphany Crosslights	6 Epiphany 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring 4:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 5:00 PM AA "Promises Support group" mtg. 7:00 PM Facilities Visioning 7:00 PM Women's Small Group	7 9:00 AM ESL 9:00 AM Quilters 9:15 AM Staff Meeting 9:30 AM Ladies Exercise 1:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring 5:30 PM Great Lakes Adventure Club 6:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry	8 9:00 AM ESL Jobs Training 10:00 AM Burlington English Training 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 12:15 PM ESL Citizenship Class 2:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 7:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal	9 7:30 AM FA 9:00 AM ESL 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	10 10:00 AM Literacy Open Group Tutoring 12:00 PM TOEFL Prep Class 6:00 PM Tai Chi	11 9:30 AM Worship Team Rehearsal
12 9:15 AM Budget Hearing 9:15 AM Learning Hour 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM Morning "PoP" Stars Children's Music 12:00 PM Peace Kids	13 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring 4:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 5:00 PM AA "Promises Support group" mtg. 5:30 PM Finance Committee mtg. 6:00 PM Social Concerns Meeting 7:00 PM Executive Committee	14 9:00 AM ESL 9:15 AM Staff Meeting 9:30 AM Ladies Exercise 12:30 PM Senior Potluck- Bunko 1:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring	15 9:00 AM ESL Jobs Training 10:00 AM Book Club 10:00 AM Burlington English Training 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 12:15 PM ESL Citizenship Class 2:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 7:00 PM Church Council meeting 7:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal	16 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 AM FA 9:00 AM ESL 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring 4:00 PM GOTR Shoe Fitting Open House 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	17 10:00 AM Literacy Open Group Tutoring 12:00 PM TOEFL Prep Class 6:00 PM Tai Chi	18
19 9:15 AM Learning Hour 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM Morning "PoP" Stars Children's Music 12:00 PM Budget Hearing	20 Martin L. King, Jr. Day Office Closed 9:00 AM Quilters 5:00 PM AA "Promises Support group" mtg. 6:30 PM Master Gardeners Meeting 7:00 PM Women's Small Group	21 9:00 AM ESL 9:15 AM Staff Meeting 9:30 AM Ladies Exercise 11:45 AM Ladies Lunch Bunch @ Summer Thyme 12:00 PM Kalamazoo Conference 1:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring	22 9:00 AM ESL Jobs Training 10:00 AM Burlington English Training 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 12:15 PM ESL Citizenship Class 2:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 7:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal	23 7:30 AM FA 9:00 AM ESL 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	24 10:00 AM Literacy Open Group Tutoring 12:00 PM TOEFL Prep Class 6:00 PM Tai Chi	25 9:30 AM Worship Team Rehearsal
26 9:15 AM Learning Hour 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM Morning "PoP" Stars Children's Music 12:00 PM Annual Meeting and Chili Cook-off	27 9:30 AM Ruth Circle 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring 12:00 PM Praises, Poses & Prayers 4:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 5:00 PM AA "Promises Support group" mtg.	28 Open Doors Men's Shelter Meal 9:00 AM ESL 9:15 AM Staff Meeting 9:30 AM Ladies Exercise 1:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring 7:00 PM Kalamazoo Recorder Players	29 9:00 AM ESL Jobs Training 10:00 AM Burlington English Training 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 12:15 PM ESL Citizenship Class 2:00 PM Literacy Tutoring 7:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal	30 7:30 AM FA 9:00 AM ESL 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring 3:30 PM Reading Tutoring 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	31 10:00 AM Literacy Open Group Tutoring 12:00 PM TOEFL Prep Class 6:00 PM Tai Chi	1 9:00 AM Bread & Breakfast

Legend:

AA—Alcoholics Anonymous ESL—English as a Second Language
FA—Food Addicts in Recovery WMU—Western Michigan University

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

269/343-3453

www.poppottage.org

Facebook: Prince of Peace, Portage, MI-ELCA