



"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

How Long, O Lord?

I'm usually a pretty go-with-the-flow sort of person. I don't mind not having a detailed plan for the future. I have learned to trust God to sort out the big stuff and not worry too much about the little stuff. Then Coronavirus hit and now it seems like EVERYTHING is up for grabs and nobody has any answers to any of my questions about the future. We don't know when it will be safe to return to in-person gatherings. We don't know what a "safe" return will look like. We don't know when a vaccine will be available. We don't know what impact this pandemic will have on our community long term. We don't know. We don't know. We don't know.

It's really, really frustrating.

One thing helps me through my worst moments to remember that we are not the first people to experience this kind of frustration. We based our first weeks of Manna Moments on the story of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness after being freed from slavery in Egypt. Those stories chronicle 40 years of wandering. We're only in month 4 (or perhaps 5 depending on when you're reading this) of our current wilderness.

I think part of what makes this feel so long is the uncertainty. We don't know how much longer we'll be here. It's much easier to manage our frustration at how slow time can move when there's an end in sight. The time between my engagement and my wedding felt faster than this, but it was actually twice as long as we've been cooped up so far.

I wish I could give you an exact end date for the pandemic. I wish I had more answers for your questions about reopening the building for the staff or small groups or worship. All I have is a whole lot of uncertainty and the promise I made at ordination to speak the truth to the best of my ability and not offer you false hope.

Since I don't have solid answers or an exact timeline, I will give you what I do have: faith and trust. I have faith that God is with us in the midst of every crisis and will get us through this pandemic. I trust that our leaders (staff, council, worship committee, and so on) are doing everything they can to make difficult decisions based on what facts we do have about this virus and the recommendations of health experts with the health and safety of our whole community foremost in their minds. I have faith that you are holding us all in prayer as we discern the next steps for our community and that God will answer your prayers. I trust the medical experts and scientists who are working hard to find a vaccine and give us good advice for keeping one another safe when we do gather in person again.

Continued. . . .

Pastor's Page Continued

I don't know exactly what the future holds, but I do know that God is the one who holds the future. And God's love never fails. That is enough to get me through even the most frustrating days.

Shalom,
Pastor Rachel

What's Happening at POP!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY – We will be meeting outside the church on Friday, July 3 at 10am.

Prayer Shawls are available during this trying time. If you, or someone you know, would like the comfort of one of these shawls, call Dianne Hellman, 323-9392, and she will get one to you.

Women's Small Group on Hiatus in July.
Open to all Women.

If you have any questions or wish to participate contact Diane Snyder (269) 375-0911 .

Zoom Mid Week Bible Study

If you are interested in participating on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. by Zoom. Email Pastor Rachel and she will send you an invitation. They are using the Augsburg Adult Study.

This quarter the focus is *Many Faces of Wisdom*. Contact the office to make arrangements to get a new study book.



Yoga is on Hiatus until August.

Watch the Peace Proclamations and August newsletter for the August start up date.

Volunteer Opportunities

Property Care

Please check the sign up link on the website to see additional opportunities to volunteer for mowing and weeding. Thanks, Karl



Save our Earth Day Trees!

We need YOU to help keep our Earth Day trees growing!

Ride through our field with Paul MacNellis and a 100-gallon tank to water our trees. Please sign-up on our website. It only takes about 1 hour to 1-1/2 hours and is a great family service project. Watering time can be adjusted to fit your schedule. Just give Paul a call.



Fellowship Events



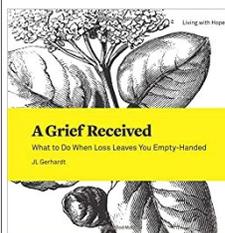
Prince of Peace Campfire

26 people attended the first campfire on Sunday, June 28. It was a lovely evening. We found a spot in the shade and spent time sharing our blessings and visiting with each other. Toward the end of our time together, several people went back to the Jubilee Garden and harvested vegetables.

Our next campfire event is scheduled for Sunday, July 12, at 6 p.m.

Sign-up on the website and join us next time.

POP READS Opportunity!



The Fellowship Committee is inviting the congregation to read the book, *A Grief Received: What to Do When Loss Leaves You Empty-Handed* by J.L. Gerhardt.

Since everyone is experiencing loss this year, we're planning to go a step further than our usual large group discussions and offer small group Zoom discussions of the book as it relates to particular areas of grief, such as the loss of a loved one; grief around issues of race; and those whose lives have been upended by the pandemic (job loss, separation from friends, worship, activities, etc.). Small group leaders will facilitate breakout groups on Zoom so everyone can gather for an opening prayer or chapter overview and then move into the smaller, specific grief-type groups. We anticipate reading the book in July and beginning discussions in August. We can order the books for a group discount. If we order 6-10 books the cost will be \$14.24 each; if we order 11 or more, the cost is only \$9.49 each. Please request your copy on the Sign-up Link on our POP website on the main page. Please sign-up by Thursday, July 9, so we can get the book ASAP and take advantage of the best discount. We will arrange times you can pick up your book at church or we will arrange to have yours delivered. We can collect your money at that time with checks made payable to Prince of Peace.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040B4CADAF23A1FA7-popreads>





BACKPACK DRIVE July 11 & July 18 1-3 pm for Ministry with Community

Don Jones, Program Director at Ministry with Community and Prince of Peace member, has let us know that their "Members" are in need of Adult size back-

packs. Don says, "These are very helpful organizing tools our members use to keep themselves together and mobile. We need them all year. We are completely out (right now), and need lots of them."

With this need in mind, Social Concerns has organized a Backpack Drive. Needed are adult size backpacks, new or very gently used, preferably of sturdy fabric & construction for both men and women. The Drive will take place at Prince of Peace on Saturdays from 1-3pm. If you'd like to volunteer to help collect, contact Claudia Lee at cdlee2002@gmail.com. This is a great service event for a family unit as well.

Recent Bread Drive for Kalamazoo Gospel Mission -

For two consecutive Sundays we answered a request from KGM to help stock their bread shelves as they opened more of their meal service on June 1. On the two Sundays you gave 70 and 81 loaves respectively. We also delivered masks for use by their clients. KGM was most thankful for your help.

LWR gifts update -

Thank you to all who have been donating soap, towels, combs, toothbrushes and nail clippers. We only need 50/300 more towel, 50/600 bars of soap, many clippers and wide toothcombs and many toothbrushes. Please remember to pick up a few items as you shop or go online for the best prices.

Also, a huge thank you to Tamara, Barb, Joeline, Gail, Sandy, Kim Ally and Claudia B. for sewing 180 backpacks for LWR. Also many thanks to Chris and Steve Bigelow for stringing all the backpacks. Steve has made an ingenious hook to speed up the process. Good going Steve.

Thank You's

Thank you to the volunteers who were able to help out with the spring cleanup. Your help is really appreciated. Even though the tasks had to be done individually, we were able to accomplish a lot as a group. — Karl Klemm

Thank you POP staff for all you do. You put hope in our hearts and give us hope for togetherness soon. God bless!

Ray & Sandy Williams

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OTHERS



We are so grateful for your generous gift to Ministry with Community. Despite the changes from COVID-19, we are still open and adapting our services every day to the week. During a time of crisis, it means so much know that we can rely on you to help us continue serving those who need us right now.

— Kelly Henderson, Executive Director

From our Synod Prayer Partners . . .

On Sunday, May 24, we were lifted up in prayer.

We have received notes of blessing from our brothers and sisters in Christ.

- *God's peace and joy be with you! We are grateful for your service and ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.* — your friends at Good Shepherd, Holland
- *Your sisters and brothers in Christ are praying for you and wishing you God's peace.* — the congregation of St. Paul, Greenville
- *We prayed for good health for your church & that you will always feel the presence of the Holy Spirit as you carry out your ministries.* — Bethany Lutheran, Kaleva
- *May God continue to bless you and the work that you do in His name. Peace to you and your people, Rachel.* — Advent Lutheran, Lake Ann
- *It is good to know that. . .we are connected to each other as vital parts together in the body of Christ we call church. We give thanks for you witness to God's grace and presence in all that you do.* — St. John's, Three Rivers

Council Corner

Dear Congregation,

In May, you received a letter from me with updates, at that time, regarding COVID. I want to provide a brief update to the congregation on our current state. It is Council's intention to follow the guidelines within the Michigan Safe Start Plan for returning to "normal" operation. If you are unfamiliar with this plan, you can find it on the Michigan Government website. Our region, Region 3, is currently in Phase 4 of that plan and as such, gathering sizes are limited and remote work is still recommended. Our Worship committee has the challenging task of brainstorming different ways to bring worship to the congregation such that we continue to meet PoP's mission while adhering to COVID constraints and guidelines. That is not an easy task and I would encourage everyone to offer that team both thanks for the efforts so far and prayers for future decisions.

When our region changes phases of the MI Safe Start Plan, or as Executive Orders are issued, we will continue to e-evaluate our current position. Safety has been and will continue to be our top priority. If and when decisions are made, we will communicate those to the congregation in a timely manner.

Lastly, I'd like to offer some thanks. I'm thankful for Pastor Rachel, our staff, and our Worship committee for working so hard to continue to bring worship into our homes each week. I am thankful for the continued generosity of our congregation. The offerings continue to be strong and allow our church to weather this storm. I am thankful that our congregation continues to work towards our mission despite the increased challenges - "Touched by the Gospel, we seek to be instruments of God's Peace, for the sake of the world."

Mike Preston, Council President

Council Corner for July Newsletter

In the month of May, the church had an income of \$36,393 and expenses of \$36,469, which gives us a deficit of \$76 for the month and a yearly overage of \$37,251.

We discussed what we need to have in place to be able to reopen safely.

We discussed updating the church constitution. More information will follow.



More Thank-yous

Thank you to everyone who responded to the worship committee's *Technology and Access* survey. We got over 100 responses and are glad to know that most of you are able to access the Manna Moments, worship videos, and other forms of digital connection in some way from home. We're working to pair those who said they needed help with a particular device or program with those who said they were willing to help teach those devices and programs. We appreciate your feedback and patience as we learn to connect in this digital wilderness!

Shalom, PR

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OTHERS

- *To our friends at Prince of Peace – from all of us at **Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries**, thank you for standing with us through the Covid-19 outbreak and your generous support of this ministry. Your donation will go to work immediately – providing shelter, hot meals, but most importantly hope for their future.*
– In appreciation, the staff at KGM
- *Thank you so much for your generous contributions to the **Portage Community Center**. The PCC is here thanks to the overwhelming support of our community . . . the support . . . that provides an opportunity for everyone to Make Life Better.*
– Chris Buckley, Executive Director

An observance on being connected and dis-connected

At the end of March, I received an e-mail from one of our members, Angie Copeland, who has been homebound for health reasons for several years now. She wrote:

"Your description of what happened with Lazarus and how it relates to what our world is now going thru was enlightening... and even though our situation in the world, in our communities, in our homes is scary and unknown... my world has changed little... for I have been in the "tomb" for quite a while... I have been isolated from friends & family.. I can't go where I want.. when I want... I have been "social distancing" for a long time... But while there are a lot of things that have been tough for everyone - no celebrations (graduations, weddings, memorials, birthdays, etc...), financial difficulties, and serious health issues to manage, there have also been blessings.

Not many people can really understand how difficult it is to be homebound and isolated from family, friends, and the community that is the church... I miss the contact. I have felt disconnected. I have felt alone. However, now I can see who is giving the sermon instead of just listening to it... I can participate in the prayers... and I can sing and/or listen... I hope that when the social distancing ends, PoP will consider continuing the recording or streaming of the service. I often listen to the sermons.. but when I watched the service last week with you and Meg, I felt like I was there.. and it was a feeling that I have truly missed."

I thanked her for her insight and encouragement and asked if she would be willing to offer any advice on staying connected and sane for those of us who are new to being stuck at home. She sent me this:

"As for any things to share with others about my experience and ways to connect or stay sane, I am at a loss. Families have been forced to hang out together (I wish my kids were still young enough to have had that time with them) and both adults and kids have had to use their imaginations in a way that they haven't before... and I believe these to be blessings as well. Now that most people are homebound, there are many services that have become available and many ways to communicate.... and I really don't have any great suggestions on how to stay connected with others or things to do at home to keep oneself sane... because I am not in that place.

For a while it wasn't too bad because KC was still at home. She could drive me to appointments or we could go to a movie or the store or stay home and hang out when she wasn't working. But after she moved out, I was alone all day. I had a couple friends that would do lunch with me every once in a while, but then one moved to the

other side of the state and another had a grandchild and spends much of her time in Cleveland... so, I sometimes get depressed.... and spend my days working within my "screen time" limits... I pay bills, balance accounts, work on digging through my medical records to find what my lawyer needs, doing the taxes for all of the kids, our lead abatement company, and I am now in the middle of finishing up our taxes. All of these things not only use up my screen time, but take me much longer to do than before... I think I have been working for 3 hours and it has been 5... I have no sense of time or what day it is... I have had trouble knowing what day it was and now that Jim and my brother are home, every day just feels like a weekend day. During my off-screen time, I have been going thru all of the boxes of items that belong to my mom...she is living in a nursing home and we had to move everything out of her place... so now there are boxes upstairs, on the main floor, and in the basement and garage... a whole extra home in my house.

All of these things continue to keep me busy... and by the time I throw a nap in there, the day and my brain are pretty much gone. So, I don't have any great tips to help others to feel connected... because I don't feel connected.... I don't have any great ideas of things to fill time, because I don't have extra time to spend doing anything fun... and unfortunately, I use up my screen time doing what has to be done, leaving me without screen time to do the things I like to do (genealogy, reading, puzzles, etc.)

My hope is that when this stuff is done or we get to the "new normal" or "new abnormal" or whatever it ends up being called, that people will remember what it was like having to stay home and will continue to reach out to family and friends that are homebound or are in assisted living or nursing homes. It's lonely being by yourself all the time. It's hard for me to have to ask others for help - with rides to appointments (Telehealth - another blessing, and thank you Joan and Claudia!) or to the store... because I know everyone is busy and I hate that I have to depend on others."

I, too, hope that when we're through this pandemic we'll remember what it is like to feel stuck and lonely and we'll find creative ways to continue connecting with those who live with mobility restrictions regularly. God has blessed us with the Spirit of love and the gifts of community. This crisis has taught us the importance of those things and has given us an opportunity to stretch our creativity in making sure they're still felt even when our usual methods of staying connected aren't safe. What can we do to make sure we're connecting with Angie and others who can't come to our building even after most of us are able to return? I welcome your feedback and ideas! pastorrachel@popportage.org

A 10th Anniversary Drive-by Celebration!

**WOO HOO!
10 YEARS
OF
MINISTRY!**

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. - Philippians 1:3-5

Thank you to the fellowship committee who organized my 10th ordination anniversary celebration and to everyone who drove by, honked, made a sign, sent a card, commented on the pictures on social media, or held me in prayer that day. I am so blessed to be your pastor.

Thank you for making me feel loved and appreciated!

Shalom, Pastor Rachel



They came by muscle car, scooter, truck and car!



THANK YOU
PASTOR
RACHEL



Facts and Figures

June Attendance:

5/31	262	Digital worship
6/7	240	Digital worship
6/14	312	Digital worship
6/21	344	Live stream worship
6/28	234	Live stream worship

Per instructions from the ELCA, we multiply the digital views by 2 to get a virtual attendance.

Shelter in place order in effect until June 8.
No groups larger than 10 inside.

SPECIAL GIFTS FOR PATHWAYS OF GIVING

Good Samaritan - Jim & Anne Vogt, Anonymous, Dennis & Betsy Stalker, Peter Thompson
ELCA World Hunger - Bob & Carla Hannemann, Pat Luma, Dale & Micki Holder, Bev Schmidt
Lutheran Disaster - Diane Snyder, Juan Duran
Refugee Fund - Mary Todas, Juan Duran
In memory of Mark Wagstaff - Ann & Mark DiJulio

A gift has been given to the Good Samaritan Fund in honor of the pastors who provide us with the "Manna Moments" and the women who have made masks for our protection. Their services have not gone unnoticed. Thanks also to our own publisher, Tamara, for her effort in keeping us informed!
Thank you and Shalom to all of you.
- Anonymous

General Fund

May

Contributions	\$ 36,393
Expenses	\$ 36,469
Surplus/deficit	\$ 76

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



Birthdays and Anniversaries

7-02	Lindan Smith	7-12	Ellen Bradley	7-20	Ken Lampos	7-29	Reece Howes
7-03	Adam Schuhknecht		Matt Lago		Alexander Eldridge		Dave Karna
			Don Jones		Kevin Esch	7-31	Kyra Graham
7-04	Pamela Schuhknecht		Angela Dumler	7-23	Christopher Barnett		
7-05	Kris Rieck	7-14	Michael Wathen	7-24	Linda Boeschstein		
7-07	Amber Willy	7-15	Tim Kana'an	7-25	Lukas Pederson		
	Sophia DeRango		Erika Baumann	7-27	Paul Swodzinski		
	Lillian Ross	7-17	Christopher McManus		Megan Zimmerman		
	Matt Erdmann		Jim Vogt	7-28	Marleigh VandenBussche		
7-09	Tammy Cooper	7-18	Jeremy Zimmerman				
7-10	Gail Hoover	7-19	Derek Stepanski				
7-11	Terri Drafta		Rebecka Creed				
	Sandra Williams		Dave Morin				
	Eric Nitz		Max Todas				



Anniversaries

Greg and Melissa Mickelson	7-05	Todd and Ashley Super	7-16
Paul and Sheryl Swodzinski	7-06	Jonathan and Melissa Ottesen	7-17
Ron and Kathy Schuen	7-09	Doug and Joyce Beak	7-21
John and Nancy Ablao	7-09	Matt and Holly Lago	7-22
Jim and Karen Douglass	7-12	David and Amy Cooper	7-23
Michael and Debbie Barnett	7-13	Michael and Sara Cruchelow	7-29

Prince of Peace Calendar

JULY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 10:30 AM Live-Streaming Worship 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour 6:00 PM Campfire fellowship	29	30 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom 2:00 PM Food Distribution Site	1 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom	2	3 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry - outside	4 Independence Day
5 10:30 AM Live-Streaming Worship 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour	6 Office Closed- Independence Day Observed	7 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom 2:00 PM Food Distribution Site	8 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom	9	10	11
12 9:15 AM Zoom Bible Story Discussion 10:30 AM Live-Streaming Worship 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour 6:00 PM Campfire fellowship	13 5:30 PM Finance Committee mtg. 6:00 PM Social Concerns Meeting 7:00 PM Executive Committee	14 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom 2:00 PM Food Distribution Site 6:30 PM Anti-Racism Youth Forum	15 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 7:00 PM Church Council meeting	16 Newsletter Deadline	17	18
19 9:15 AM Zoom Bible Story Discussion 10:30 AM Live-Streaming Worship 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour	20 9:00 AM Quilters	21 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom 2:00 PM Food Distribution Site	22 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom	23	24	25 6:00 PM Drive In Worship
26 9:15 AM Zoom Bible Story Discussion 10:30 AM Live-Streaming Worship 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour	27	28 Open Doors Men's Shelter Meal 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom 2:00 PM Food Distribution Site 6:30 PM Anti-Racism Youth Forum	29 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom	30	31	1



Jessie Ruckstaetter and Sheryl Swodzinski pose with the bread collected for the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission. Thank you to everyone who donated bread!



Legend:

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

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