



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

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Signs of Hope

When I was a senior in college, we had a quote board in my apartment full of funny or insightful sayings. One of my roommates put this Emily Dickenson quote on it and I always think of her when I read it:

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers – That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words – And never stops - at all -*

It was several years later that I learned there was more to the poem. It continues:

*And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard – And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird That kept so many warm -*

*I've heard it in the chillest land – And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity, It asked a crumb - of me.*

From: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/42889/hope-is-the-thing-with-feathers-314>

March will be the one year anniversary of when COVID began to impact our lives here in Portage. You don't need me to rehash all the ways phrases like "strangest Sea" or "wilderness" or "unprecedented times" apply. So let's talk about hope instead.

I don't know about you, but I'm starting to hit a wall of exhaustion as we approach this anniversary. I could use a little extra hope right about now. Maybe you could, too.

Here are some places I've found hope: Being able to knit for all 6 babies born to close friends and family in 2020, watching the anti-racism discussion groups take off and grow, never having to worry about the Good Sam fund running out even though there's been an increase in requests for help, the deep discussions we have in Wednesday Bible study group, Zooming with my extended family every week, all the quilts and backpacks that have been sewn, the energy and joy of welcoming new members, the creativity and flexibility of EVERYONE involved in planning worship and other events as guidelines kept changing, e-mails and cards of support from so many of you.

Books that gave me hope and brought me joy this year: *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor, *In the Shelter* by Padraig O'Tuama, the Binti Trilogy by Nnedi Okorafor, the Alana books and Immortals Quartet by Tamora Pierce (revisiting a fantasy world I loved as a teen), the Temeraire Books by Naomi Novick (a new-to-me fantasy series).

I'd love to hear where you've found hope.

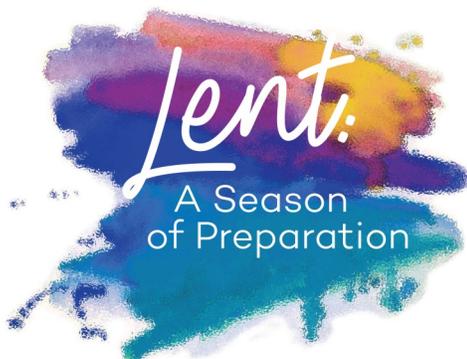
E-mail me at pastorrachel@popportage.org to share your stories.

Shalom,

Pastor Rachel



Lenten Opportunities



Engaging with Scripture at Home in Lent

We're talking about what it means to be Created for Community this Lent. Here are some ways you can engage with our scripture readings each week whether you're able to join us for worship on Zoom at 7 PM on Wednesdays or not.

Week 1 - 2/24

Create four stations around the house, each with a large piece of paper and writing utensils. On each paper write one of these questions:

- What is one way you are dependent on creation in your daily life?
- What is one way you are in danger from creation in your daily life?
- What is one way our lives endanger creation?
- What is one way our lives enrich creation?

Throughout the week, prayerfully visit the stations, consider the questions, and write or draw your prayer or response to the question on the paper. Talk about your responses with others in your household and/or your POP Up Church group.

Week 2 - 3/3

On a piece of paper, draw and/or write about a person whose life and faith have influenced your own. On another, draw and/or write about yourself and the ways you hope to shape and influence the faith of future generations. Share your drawings with one another (you can text or e-mail a picture to your POP Up Church group if you aren't gathering in person) then to place your papers together on a display board as a visible communion of saints. E-mail a picture of your saints to pastorrachel@popportage.org so we can create a visible communion of saints from our whole congregation.

Week 3 - 3/10

Read this week's story, Mark 2:1-12, aloud in a group - your family at home, a group on Zoom, or even outside with your POP Up Church group. Give each person a role in the story (Jesus, paralyzed man, friends of the paralyzed man, scribes). Encourage each person to listen to the scripture from their assigned perspective. Share what you heard and any insights you got by listening from a particular perspective with the whole group. Switch roles and experience the story again from new angles!

Week 4 - 3/17

Browse recent newspapers and magazines to identify people who might be marginalized in our community and around the world. Cut out words and pictures that represent those communities and create collages. Discuss how those people are portrayed or not portrayed in the media you are using.

Week 5 - 3/24

Gather with your POP Up Church group, family, or a group of friends and share a time when you served someone else and a time when you were served by someone else. Encourage everyone to think about what those experiences felt like. After everyone has shared, take a moment of silence to reflect again on the last verse of the gospel reading this week (Mark 10:45).

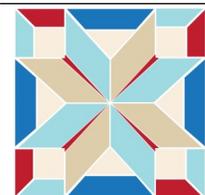
What's Happening at POP!

Think spring. Work in the Jubilee Garden will begin in March this year. Peas will be planted in the raised beds, old asparagus ferns will be trimmed, and the tomato fences will be reconstructed and relocated next to the raised beds. To follow Master Gardener pandemic guidelines you will need to bring your own tools (trimmers, trowels, hammer) and wear a mask when working close to others. Date of work to be determined based on weather. For more information, contact Mark Clyne.



WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP . . .

Meeting March 1 and 15 via Zoom at 7 pm. We are currently reading and discussing Joy-A Study of Philipians by Deb Burma. Would love to "see" you. Contact Diane Snyder at dmsnyder1149@gmail.com for the link.



Add Your Piece to the Puzzle!

"God's Work, Our Hands" is so evident in the work of many making quilts for Lutheran World Relief.

What? You can help by measuring material, cutting squares (11"x11"), sewing squares into tops, sewing pinned quilts together, or tying knots. We also appreciate those of you who donate material for 11-inch squares, 84"x 64" backs, or 80" x 60" fillers.

When? Quilters regularly stop by on the **first and third Tuesdays** starting at 9:30 to pick up & drop off materials. Since working from home has allowed the pieces of the process to continue, you can now stop by during office hours on other days when it's convenient.

We look forward to seeing you on **March 2 & 16, April 6 & 20th.**

Questions: Sheryl 267-6274.



Zoom Mid Week Bible Study

If you are interested in participating Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. Email Pastor Rachel & she will send you an invitation. They are use the Augsburg Adult Study.

The focus for this quarter is: *Prophets Faithful to God's Covenant*. Contact the office to make arrangements to get a study book.

Praises, Poses, and Prayers is on Zoom! Thursdays at noon.

Join us by Zoom as we breathe, practice yoga, relax & meditate. No previous yoga experience necessary. If you would like to join this group send Kelly Blair an email at kblair0702@gmail.com & she will send you an invitation to join.



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY –

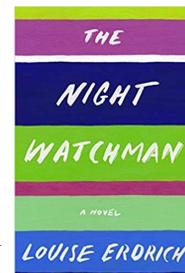
Will be meet in the Social Hall as soon as Council give the word.

We'll keep you posted. Watch the Peace Proclamations!

Prayer Shawls are still 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.

The next book club meeting will be on **Wednesday, March 17 at 10:00 am** via Zoom.

The book for our March 17th meeting is "The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich. This is an historical fiction novel about Native Americans on a reservation in North Dakota during the 1950's. The night watchman, Thomas, is based on the author's grandfather.



The book for April 21st is "Fountains of Silence" by Ruta Sepetys. This story takes place in Spain during the days of the dictatorship of Franco. Many people have secrets and are afraid to speak.

If you like to read and discuss books, please join us. Contact Marilyn Lund for a Zoom invitation.





Lutheran World Relief Quilts are still being made in record numbers at Prince of Peace. Our Quilt Organizer, Sheryl Swodzinski, has made it possible for many hands to work together while we are yet apart due to Covid 19. Anyone can help, with no sewing required for several of the tasks. Listed below are many jobs we need help with. If you can help in any way please contact Sheryl at cookontherun@ameritech.com.

- Donating/purchasing cotton quilting fabric.
- Donating/purchasing batting/fillers.
- Cutting 11" fabric squares with template.
- Measuring fabric.
- Cutting batting/fillers.
- Machine Sewing squares together.

- Fitting/pinning quilts together .
- Machine Sewing pinned quilts together.
- Hand sewing anchor ties on quilts.
- Donating \$2.25 per quilt to handle and ship each quilt to countries all over the world

Let's make the 2021 October Quilt Blessing Sunday even more special for everyone to view and bless in our sanctuary.

FYI in 2020:

264,585 quilts were distributed in 23 countries by Lutheran World Relief. Quilts are gifts of love used for warmth, shelter, clothing, and sometimes burial.

Thank you PoP quilt team for your devotion, compassion and important work.



*I lift up my eyes to the hills –
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth"*

(Psalm 121:1-2)

Dear friends,

The last year has been full of changes and challenges for all of us. Now we are again witnessing a devastating disaster amid the ongoing pandemic. As neighbors in Christ, we have an opportunity to share God's hope, healing and renewal with each other.

Beginning Feb. 14, a polar vortex descended over the United States. Subfreezing temperatures and heavy snow swept across the country, impacting millions of people. The harsh conditions severely impacted Southern states, such as Texas, which lack the infrastructure to handle the freezing temperatures and record-setting snow and ice. This has led to power, food and water shortages throughout the region. At its peak, 4.5 million homes and businesses in Texas were without power. With bursting pipes and broken water systems, around 10 million Texans are facing water disruptions. As temperatures rise, melting ice and snow is expected to cause more water damage.



Lutheran Disaster Response is collaborating with the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, the Southwestern Texas Synod, the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, and Lutheran Social Services Disaster Response. Congregations are already conducting relief efforts such as supplying water, food and generators to those in need and opening their doors to serve as shelters. Long-term recovery may include repairing water-damaged homes, disaster case management and supporting vulnerable populations.

Please give today. Your gifts ensure that our church will be able to provide help and hope for those whose lives have been devastated by the severe storms in Texas. Gifts designated for "U.S. Severe Storms" will be used entirely (100%) for direct response.

Together, we can help provide immediate and long-lasting support for those whose lives have been impacted by severe winter storms and subfreezing temperatures in Texas. Doing this we reflect Christ's light and hope to our neighbors in their time of need. For updates on this and other disasters, follow Lutheran Disaster Response on [Facebook](#).

With gratitude for your partnership,
The Rev. Daniel Rift, Director, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response Funding Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Thank You's



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OTHERS

- The pandemic has been a trying time for our community. Covid-19 has created so much uncertainty and continues to do so even though things are beginning to re-open. Many of our friends and neighbors are wondering how they will pay their bills and feed their families. No one knows when things will go back to normal and what the months ahead will bring. Fortunately for **Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes**, one important thing remains the same – the generosity of people like you. Your generous support, now more than ever, provides both nutritious food and peace of mind to those who are struggling to meet their basic needs. Thank you again for your amazing gift. We absolutely could not do this work without the partnership of selfless people like you. – Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director*

Meals For . . .

Melissa Ottesen have been extended!

Mondays & Wednesdays through March & April..

Here is the link to sign up:

<https://takethenameal.com/OMRQ6720>

Dear Prince of Peace Staff & Congregation,

Thank you for the lovely Chrismon and all the marvelous Covid-19 outreach packets and efforts. You, they and their impact remain a daily mainstay. Additional thanks for all your prayers as we all continue to heal. You are in my prayers during meditation.

With Divine Grace and Peace, Karen Hare

A note forwarded from the YWCA . . .

Thank you so much for the mattress set. It was such a blessing. I love it.

God is so Good!!! Trina



Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, March 14!

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead
when you go to bed on Saturday.

THE WEBSITE IS LIVE!

Here is the link for the new website.

<https://popportage.org/>

We are rolling this out slowly so as not to overwhelm you or the staff. Keep watching for more information. We will be sending detailed instructions with screenshots on how to navigate the member dashboard.

You can also download our new app and follow us on Facebook all through the website.



Miscellany

VIRTUAL CLASSES for OLDER ADULTS

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is partnering with Get Set Up to bring online learning to Seniors.

Every Class. Live & Interactive - Different from other video watching experience, GetSetUp classes involve active participation from all learners. Get Set Up believes in learning by doing. Engaging and Fun - Classes are taught by older adults who bring all their wisdom and experience into the class.

Patt & Dick Hewitt have been taking many classes from Get Set Up and highly recommend giving in a try! And, it's FREE!

<https://www.getsetup.io/partner/michigan>

Dick Hewitt rhewitt@aol.com

The Extended Ministries Endowment Committee is pleased to announce that \$6,574.31 is available in 2021 for disbursement to potential extended ministries beyond the operational budget of POP.

The committee welcomes written requests with the following information:

- 1) Name of requestor
- 2) Name of extended ministry
- 3) Brief description and potential impact of the ministry
- 4) Amount of monies requested.

The Endowment Committee will then review the request and determine if monies will be distributed.

Please contact Mark Clyne via email (markclyne@sbcglobal.net) or any of the other Endowment Committee members (Pat Boulis, Kevin Jawahir, Heather Maurer, Mike Wathen) or fill out a paper form available from the church office with any requests and place them the Endowment Fund mailbox in the workroom. If you use a paper form, please notify an Endowment Committee member as we currently do not monitor the mailbox regularly.



"I made a New Year's resolution to eat broccoli. If I can't stand it, I'll give it up for Lent."



Happy St. David's Day - Monday March 1

Happy St. Patrick's Day - Wednesday, March 17



Facts and Figures

February Attendance:

2/4	172	Live stream - 5 Sunday Epiphany
2/14	174	Live stream - Transfiguration of our Lord
2/17	110	Ash Wednesday
2/21	112	Live stream - 1 Sunday Lent

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

On-line Giving Has Never Been So Easy!

You can click or copy and paste the link

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=2250097>

or use the QR code.

You can also go to the Prince of Peace website & click on the giving button. For questions contact either Sarah or Tamara.



SPECIAL GIFTS FOR PATHWAYS OF GIVING

Loaves and Fishes - Gail Hoover, Randy & Marilyn Lund

Good Samaritan - Jim & Anne Vogt, LeNesha Stiles

in memory of Doris Bernlohr: Nancy Mason, Annette Smith, Diane Snyder, Noel & Cindy Sederstrom, Bonnie Dalton, Norm & Elfie Schuen, Dolores Jennings, Karen Stiansen, Diane Ruzicka, Ann & Mark DiJulio, Kristine Pioch & Karl Westra

In Memory of Tomi Mursch - Wilma Smith, Karen Shaw

Refugee Fund - *in memory of Tomi Mursch* - Claudia Lee

Building Fund - *in memory of Tomi Mursch* - Claudia Lee

ELCA World Hunger - Joyce Stout, Dale & Micki Holder, Rev. Robert & Carla Hannemann, Pete & Tammy Olsen, John & Gloria Beatty, Walt Artson

General Fund

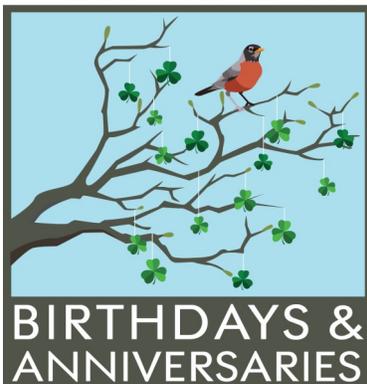
January

Contributions	\$ 40,231
Expenses	\$ 34,602
Surplus/deficit	\$ 5,629

Birthdays and Anniversaries

3-1	Jaxin French Walter Arntson	3-8	Louise Corson Christian Maurer Mina French David Grinder	3-15	Charlotte Steele	3-20	Brian Devries
3-2	Lena Klemm			3-17	Stephen Bigelow Peter Maurer Jim Foster	3-23	Kay Spade Christine Tarpley
3-3	Jerilyn Johnston Cassandra Whately	3-9	Alex Zimmerman	3-18	Ryan Mickelson Dave Walch	3-27	Carol Stezowski Elsa Klemm
3-6	Pat Boulis	3-13	Maria Shaw Jacob Mills	3-19	Fiona Ramsey Rowan Ramsey Carly Davis Mike Myers	3-28	Connor Ramsey
3-7	Jennifer Oskins Annette Smith Carol Christianson	3-14	Karl Westra Jacob Devries			3-29	Dale Gatz
						3-30	Ryan Hannemann
						3-31	Renee Beck

MARCH



Anniversaries

Dale and Micki Holder	3-11
Dave Reinhold and Sue Stapleton	3-14
Bob and Cheryl Thomas	3-24
Eli and Hilde Thomssen	3-24
Rob and Lynda Bauckham	3-26
Michael and Julie Cartier	3-31

Prince of Peace Calendar

MARCH 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 10:30 AM Worship Livestreaming 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour 1:00 PM High School Study & Youth Group	1 7:00 PM Women's Small Group - Zoom	2 9:00 AM Quilters - Social Hall 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom or Gym 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 6:30 PM Anti-Racism Forum - Zoom 7:30 PM Bells	3 9:30 AM Bethany Parent Time- Room 7 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 7:00 PM Lenten Mid-Week Service - Zoom	4 12:00 PM Yoga - Zoom 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Zoom	5	6
7 10:30 AM Worship Livestreaming 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour 1:00 PM Confirmation - Middle School - Zoom	8 5:30 PM Finance Committee mtg. - Zoom 6:00 PM Social Concerns Meeting - Zoom 7:00 PM Executive Committee - Zoom	9 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom or Gym 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 1:00 PM Food Distribution Site - Parking lot 7:30 PM Bells	10 9:30 AM Bethany Parent Time- Room 7 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 7:00 PM Lenten Mid-Week Service - Zoom	11 12:00 PM Yoga - Zoom 6:30 PM Faith Formation Team - Zoom 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Zoom	12	13 9:30 AM Worship Team Rehearsal - Sanctuary
14 Daylight-Saving Time Begins 10:30 AM Worship Livestreaming 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour 1:00 PM High School - Zoom	15 7:00 PM Church Council meeting - Zoom 7:00 PM Women's Small Group - Zoom	16 9:00 AM Quilters - Social Hall 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom or Gym 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 3:00 PM Alpha Delta Kappa - Kitchen & Gym 6:30 PM Anti-Racism Forum - Zoom 7:30 PM Bells	17 St. Patrick's Day 9:30 AM Bethany Parent Time- Room 7 10:00 AM Book Club - Zoom 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 7:00 PM Lenten Mid-Week Service - Zoom	18 Newsletter Deadline 12:00 PM Yoga - Zoom 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Zoom	19	20 First Day of Spring
21 10:30 AM Worship Livestreaming 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour 1:00 PM Confirmation - Middle School - Zoom	22 7:00 PM Worship Committee Meeting - Zoom	23 Open Doors Men's Shelter Meal 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom or Gym 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 1:00 PM Food Distribution Site - Parking lot 7:30 PM Bells	24 9:30 AM Bethany Parent Time- Room 7 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 7:00 PM Lenten Mid-Week Service - Zoom	25 12:00 PM Yoga - Zoom 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Zoom	26	27 9:30 AM Worship Team Rehearsal - Sanctuary
28 Palm Sunday 10:30 AM Worship Livestreaming 11:45 AM Zoom Fellowship Hour 1:00 PM High School Study & Youth Group 7:00 PM Holy Week - Zoom Conversations	29 7:00 PM Holy Week - Zoom Conversations 7:00 PM Women's Small Group - Zoom	30 9:15 AM Staff Meeting - Zoom or Gym 10:00 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 6:30 PM Anti-Racism Forum - Zoom 7:00 PM Holy Week - Zoom Conversations 7:30 PM Bells	31 9:30 AM Bethany Parent Time- Room 7 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 7:00 PM Holy Week - Zoom Conversations	1 Maundy Thursday 12:00 PM Yoga - Zoom 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Zoom 7:00 PM Holy Week - Zoom Conversations	2 Good Friday 7:00 PM Holy Week - Zoom Conversations	3

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