



Tidings of Peace

From the Pastor's Desk...

May 2023

Today is the first day back from my “stay-cation.” Generally, we go somewhere when we take time off but this week we decided to stay home, work around the yard, and even managed to take a couple of day trips. The most revealing part of this time, for me, was my ability to leave church at church, and spend time with Sandy, and relax!

But what is relaxation? How many of us allow ourselves even just a moment... when life suddenly shuts down and we are afforded opportunities to experience what God has given us. To find this, to do this requires a level of trust, doesn't it? Trust in God, trust in ourselves – and trust in our ability to do just this – relax. From Psalm 62...

For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.

At the beginning, I had a long list of things needing to be done; naturally very few were completed. One of those items was removing the rocks the adorn the front of my house. Sandy helped for a while; but then it was just me – alone in my thoughts, quiet in my soul. We talked for a moment – God and me. And as we did, I felt the weight of my world dissipate from my shoulders. Slowly I began to trust in God, to just be a presence in and with him. Time passed, and it was time to be done for the day. I haven't returned to that place, that time since – but I



know it's there, waiting for me. I know God is there, waiting for me. All I have to do is trust in it, trust in him... it's a work in progress. And I long to go back there – to trust in myself, to trust in God.

So I make myself this promise, to actively take the time to awaken the silence within me, to rest and relax in my thoughts, in my prayers, in myself, and in God. As spring returns and summer beckons, I invite you to join me in the silence of rest and relaxation (email or text me now), even for a brief moment; and to allow life to shut down around us so we can experience God in his glory and mercy. This is our refuge; He is our refuge. Thanks be to God.

God's Blessings and Peace

Pastor Neil

Pastor's Office Hours

Tuesday/Wednesday 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Spring Clean-Up at Church

The Property team has selected the following dates to gather and begin the spring task of maintaining our property. We would love to have many hands join us so we can complete the list of items to be completed. Please join us – rain or shine. Any time you can help is greatly appreciated.

Saturday, May 20 th	8:00am – 12:00 noon
Saturday, June 17 th	8:00am – 12:00 noon



If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Property Team.

Men's Breakfast



We will meet at the Eaton Place for breakfast and fellowship on **Thursday, May 11th at 8:30am**. Hope to see you there!

Men's Night Out

This is something most of us enjoy – so let's get together again on **Tuesday, May 23rd at 6:00pm** for a sandwich and beverage. It's a great time to catch up with one another and share some stories and laughs. Hope to see you there!



Bible Study – the book of Revelation



Our adult bible study on Revelation began on April 30th and everyone is still welcomed to join us. This study is a 20-week study and will continue through the fall. The schedule is now available along with the Session 1/2 booklet. There will be breaks in the schedule due to holidays and existing scheduling conflicts. Please let Pastor Neil know.

Ladies Luncheon

Join us on **Thursday, May 25th at 11:30 am** at The Eaton Pub



Special Appeal – Loads of Love

Our **LOADS of LOVE** ministry is thriving – the last few events have far exceeded our expectations, which is a great thing. We are ministering to our community in a positive way. With this increase in the number of people taking advantage of our ministry, our designated fund account has dwindled down to nothing. We conduct the Loads of Love event once every three (3) months. Through the Thrivent Grant program, our team is able to request and receive a grant of \$250.00 for each event. This does not cover the cost of our Loads of Love ministry. The total cost is averaging approximately \$400 each time. We need your help!



Council has authorized the Community in Action team to hold a ***SPECIAL OFFERING*** to fund our ministry for the foreseeable future. **Special offering envelopes will be provided on May 14, 2023 and included with the bulletin.** For those unable to attend worship, please utilize our QR code on the website or simply send your donation to the church office. The CAT team thanks you in advance for your support.

Our **NEXT** Loads of Love event is at Quality Dairy in Charlotte on **Saturday, May 20th from 8 am to noon.** Please consider signing up to work a 2 hour shift for the event. Your help in this community event is greatly appreciated!



Happy Birthday!

Bev DeFord celebrated her 90th Birthday on
April 6th!

Highlights from the Council and Team Meetings

Council – March 2023

- Team reports were presented and approved
- February 2023 council meeting minutes presented and approved
- Several building requests forms were presented and approved
- Pastor's report was presented and approved
- HVAC updates were presented and discussed
 - Motion to contract with GoldStar HVAC was made and approved
 - Motion to issue down payment for HVAC units (\$20,000) was made and approved
 - Motion to borrow from ourselves rather than using the LOC was made and approved
 - Authorized Phil Lemke to send out special appeal letter

Teams – April 2023 (Please prayerfully consider joining one of our teams)

Here's what's happening in our ministries together.
(Lunch with the Pastor if you let him know you saw this.)

Caring Team

- Lay communion visits are being made monthly
- Birthday/anniversary card ministry going well
- Baptismal quilt donated by Bev DeFord
- Team discussed two articles passed out by Roger
- Prayer concerns were updated
- Team prayed for all listed on our prayer concerns



Teams Continued...

Communications Team

- Waiting on new logo design from graphic artist; once received and approved by team, it will be proposed to council for their approval
- Team is brainstorming on ways to get our “name recognition” in the community
- Discussion was also held regarding better communications between our church and its members

Community in Action Team

- Loads of Love ministry continues to thrive and be successful
 - Thrivent grants continued to be used to help fund; however, we are limited to \$250 per grant
 - Motion made to hold special offering to help fund this vital ministry; motion forwarded to council for their approval
- Helping Hands update received from Jim & Louise Bradley
- “Earth Day” dessert fellowship planned for Friday, April 14th at 7:00pm. Movie will be shown during fellowship time
- Looking into the specifics regarding church night at the Lugnuts baseball game scheduled for July 21st – details to follow
- Project Success – food items were purchased and bagged for students to assist with meals over spring break
 - They will meet again to prepare take-home bags to help over the summer

Giving/Finance/Stewardship Team

- Nothing to report

Growing in Faith Team

- Reviewed Sunday school/Confirmation
 - Discussed the need to ask for volunteers to join team
 - There will be no VBS
 - Established Sunday school for 2023-2024 as 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month
 - Pastor Neil will discuss Confirmation with parents
 - Pastor Neil would like to have a Youth Sunday in the fall; will discuss with parents
 - It’s time to create an active youth group; Pastor Neil will discuss with parents
 - Would like to see the “Chimes Choir” become more active in worship next year
-

Teams Continued...

Personnel/IT Technology Team

- Nothing to report

Property Team

- New HVAC units installed and working great
- Water heater replacement – tabled until later
- Working with Fire Department on installation of “Knox” lock box and direct alarm system
- Discussed and reviewed snow removal from this past winter; job well done by Alex Lumbert
- Church inventory has been completed and submitted to insurance company
- Condition of parking lot and drive was discussed; we need to look into fix the cracks and crumbling drive; Joe will seek some bids
- Church work days were selected
 - April 29th, May 20th and June 17th, 8:00am – noon
- Lawn mower – maintenance was done by Steve in preparation for the mowing season

Worship and Music Team

- Reviewed and discussed our Easter season worship services
 - Thanks to all who helped with the various worship services, especially our Vigil readers and our musicians
 - A lot of discussion on the Easter Vigil and lack of attendance
 - Discussed various ways to help prepare congregation for Easter week
 - Added summer outdoor worship dates
 - June 25th, July 16th, August 20th, September 10th
 - Community in Action team tentatively planning to host Fellowship for June 25th
 - Growing in Faith team will host September 10th as “Kick Off Sunday” for the new church year
 - Discussed possibility of transitioning to You Tube for future broadcasts
 - When we do, we will broadcast our services via YouTube and Facebook simultaneously for a period of time
 - Licensing, etc. still being investigated
-

Continued Support: Helping Hands Food Pantry

The support helping hands receives from Peace and other churches in the community helps supply food for those in need. With the rising cost of foods and reduced food allowance people are receiving, there are more and more coming to the pantry for help. **Helping Hands serves 100-130 families a week.** Every little bit helps. Thank you for your continued support.

Community Action Team



FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP



Would you like to provide flowers for worship? People often provide flowers in honor of a birthday or anniversary, in memory of a loved one who has passed away, or just for the glory of God! If you'd like to bring flowers for a weekend, please sign the sheet in the Gathering Area.

Providing flowers is easier than ever! We have arranged with a local florist to provide the arrangements. All you need to do is bring a check made out to Peace Lutheran Church or cash for \$30 to the office. We will take care of the rest.

Following worship on Sunday, you may take the flowers home if you choose. If you choose to take them home, please bring a vase to transfer flowers to, or return the vase to the church for the next weekend

When you sign up, please indicate if there is an occasion you are celebrating and would like to have listed in the bulletin.

Contact Kathy Cook in the office at 517-543-1503 if you have any questions.



Did you know that we recycle pull tabs here at Peace?

Pull tabs are taken to the Ronald McDonald House in Lansing

They turn these tabs in to cash to help support the House. The House provides care, comfort, and a free place to stay for families to heal together while their child receives medical treatment.

This is a simple way to help support the House, just pull those tabs off the cans and **place them in the container at church** and Dar will see that they get over to Ronald McDonald House.

Rewilding spirituality

Let your attention be a prayer

By Heidi Barr April 20, 2023

Editor's note: This modified excerpt from Heidi Barr's *Collisions of Earth and Sky: Connecting With Nature for Nourishment, Reflection, and Transformation* (Broadleaf Books, 2023) is reprinted with permission.



There is something sacred to be found in how the winter sun casts shadows on snow-covered ground, or in how a walk through an old forest reminds you of what you are truly devoted to. There is something sacred in continuing to put your life energy where it is returned, in kind. Somehow the wild silence ties all things together, as one being, even when that silence also holds a continuing evolution of understanding.

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I grew up in the ELCA. My family went to church most Sundays, and I can still hear my paternal grandmother saying grace before we dug into meals on the farm table, her voice rising to emphasize the first three words, “Come, Lord Jesus,” and then dropping in tone to finish with “be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed.”

My maternal grandparents met working at a Lutheran Bible camp in Illinois; my parents met working at a Lutheran Bible camp in Colorado; my spouse and I met working at a Lutheran Bible camp in Wisconsin. Lutheran Christianity will always be a central part of my spiritual story for the simple fact that it’s the first lens through which I consciously thought about God.

I wanted to spend more time outside in contemplation. I wanted to spend less time deciphering scriptural texts and more time with the sacred that is nature itself.

I worked at four different wilderness-based ELCA youth camps during college and the years just after, and the fellowship, community and proximity to nature they provided made me feel closer to a higher power. Ironically, it was my time completing a master’s degree at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., when I found myself becoming more welcoming of other belief systems and less certain of my own, more inclined to ask questions and less inclined to say, “I know the answer.”

I found myself caring less about what happens inside a human-made sanctuary and more about what happens outside the church’s doors, amid the cycles of the earth. I wanted to spend more time outside in contemplation. I wanted to spend less time dissecting scriptural texts and more time with the sacred that is nature itself.

Strategies for centering the wild

Spirituality is an ongoing, personal journey—I can’t claim to know the formula required to “rewild” it. However, I do have a few strategies that have proven essential on my own path.

- **Go outside more than you think you should.** Get intimate with what resides outside your front door, in the weedy patch between the two abandoned houses down the block, at the neighborhood park. Learn to love what’s out there, and let it love you back. Bring little bits of it inside. Keep going back out.

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- **While you're paying attention and being curious, celebrate contrast.** Diversity is essential for a thriving life, and the wild is one of the best teachers of this truth. See the beauty in the garden as different types of vegetables and fruits and weeds all intermingle in a tangled mass. See a similar beauty in how different your fellow humans are—those down the block and those on the other side of the world. Marvel at how good a warm fire feels after you've been hiking in a snowstorm. Celebrate the fact that bright light makes shadows, and the need for both to live into our creative human potential.
- **As you celebrate contrast and diversity, think specifically about your food.** Jesus and his disciples broke bread together; it's a sacred act. Food is important when it comes to spiritual things for myriad belief systems. And when you eat a diet that's rich in color, texture and varying tastes, you set your body up for optimal health. We need more than monocropped corn and soybeans to thrive. When we grow a wide variety of food ourselves, or get it from others who do so sustainably, we play one small role in fostering better health for the earth.
- **Finally, while eating, let the food you ingest remind you that you have a body,** that that body works together with a mind and spirit, and that those things are always trying to reclaim their wildness—both as individual entities and as members of a collective. The need for nourishment brings us together, over borders and across generations.

Even a snowy day deep in the winter of the American Midwest has the power to remind me of the vast web that connects all things on the earth and my place in it. It reminds me of my own wildness and how essential it is to continue to claim it.

Devotion to something starts with paying attention to it. It reminds me to pay attention to the bedrock beneath my feet, the sky above my head, and the community (human and otherwise) in which I make my home. We are devoted to that which we give attention to. Let's give our attention to the wild, outside ourselves and within.



Heidi Barr is a wellness coach and the managing editor of The Wayfarer magazine. A graduate of Luther Seminary, she is the author of several books, including *Collisions of Earth and Sky* (Broadleaf Books, 2023). She lives with her family in Minnesota.

Schedule of Worship Volunteers May 2023

Date	Sunday 5/7	Sunday 5/14	Sunday 5/21	Sunday 5/28
Acolyte	Jobson	Jobson	Corbin	
Altar Guild	Brenda Morris	Brenda Morris	Brenda Morris	Brenda Morris
Audio/ Visual	Scott Lumbert Phil Lemke	Scott Lumbert Phil Lemke	Scott Lumbert Phil Lemke	Scott Lumbert Phil Lemke
Choir Director	Scott Myckowiak	Scott Myckowiak	Scott Myckowiak	Scott Myckowiak
Fellowship	Steve and Kathy Cook	Harry and Susie Moore	The DeFord's	
Lector	Lorene Crigier	The Levi Family	The Levi Family	The Levi Family
Pastor	Pastor Neil Brady	Pastor Neil Brady	Pastor Neil Brady	Pastor Neil Brady
Musician	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio
Ushers	Jim and Louise Bradley	Jim and Louise Bradley	Jim and Louise Bradley	Jim and Louise Bradley
Worship Assistant	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln

Church Calendar May 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 7:00 pm CAT Team Meeting	3 11:30 am Caring Team Meeting	4 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	5	6
7 9:30 am Worship 10:30 Gathering 10:45-Noon Sunday School 11:00 Bible Study SYNOD ASSEMBLY	8 SYNOD ASSEMBLY	9 SYNOD ASSEMBLY	10 7:00 pm Communication Team Meeting	11 8:30 am Men's Breakfast 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	12	13
14 9:30 am Worship w/ Loads of Love Special Offering 10:30 Gathering 11:00 Bible Study	15	16 10:00 Worship and Music Team Meeting 7:00 Council Meeting	17	18 6:30 pm Property Team Meeting 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	19	20 8:00-Noon Loads of Love at Quality Dairy 8:00-Noon Spring Clean Up@Peace
21 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering 11:00 Bible Study	22	23 6:00 pm Men's Night Out	24	25 11:30 am Ladies Luncheon @Eaton Pub	26	27
28 Noisy Bucket Sunday 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering 11:00 Bible Study	29	30	31	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Pastor Neil's Office Hours Tuesday-Wednesday 10:00 am-3:00 pm </div>		

Please feel free to submit articles or pictures for the Tidings to the editor, Kristin Shannon
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*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul,
and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your
neighbor as yourself.*



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