Tidings of Peace

come grow with us

The Power of the Spirit, Then and Now

August 2026

https://www.livinglutheran.org/theology-beliefs/the-power-of-the-spirit-then-and-now/

JAN SCHNELL

The power of the Spirit bears the word to the world amid upheaval by making Christ known. We see this in Scripture and we see it today—in your life, in my life and in the life of the world. This article connects the experience of Judith and Mary with our experience today and invites you to see and experience the places in your life where the power of the Spirit is at work.

In Albrecht Dürer's woodcut *The Annunciation*, a dove above Mary's head signifies the Spirit, power radiating in all directions. Announcing transformation, the Spirit makes Christ known as the living Word takes flesh in Mary. Jesus becomes incarnate in human history, revealed in time as God with us, Emmanuel.

Dürer showed the Spirit's power in many ways. Here I focus not only on Mary but also on the unexpected presence of Judith, who is depicted holding the head of the invading Assyrian general Holofernes. At first, her image seems to be a non sequitur. Why is Judith even in this picture? What does her presence signify? Dürer highlighted Judith: she is placed in a rondel in the highest tympanum.

Judith plays a decisive role in the redemption of the people of Bethulia, defeating the invading Assyrian army by infiltrating it, gaining access to Holofernes' inner circle and slaying him. According to the Cleveland Museum of Art, in Dürer's day, the detail of Judith would have "held significance for European Christians. … The Old Testament heroine Judith … symbolizes Mary's victory over the devil." By including Judith, Dürer invites attention to the parallels between her story and the annunciation, which show God's powerful action in tumultuous times.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN JUDITH AND MARY

Often that power is manifested through God's faithful ones. We see them blessed by God and honored by others. We see God attending to those brought low, lives being endangered by God-inspired actions and heavy-handed rulers being challenged.

First, others tell both Judith and Mary that God has blessed them. When Judith returns to Bethulia, Uzziah says, "O daughter, you are blessed by the Most High God above all other women on earth" (Judith 13:18). In Mary's story, Elizabeth, "filled with the Holy Spirit … exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women'" (Luke 1:41-42).

Second, this blessedness is combined with ongoing honor. Uzziah tells Judith, "May God grant this to be a perpetual honor to you" (Judith 13:20). Mary sings, "Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed" (Luke 1:48). In both cases, this honor flows from their God-given roles.

Third, Scripture confirms that God sees and attends to those brought low. Judith recognizes "when our people [were] brought low" as the time of God's blessing (Judith 13:20). Mary says God "lifted up the lowly" and "filled the hungry" (Luke 1:52-53). Both stories declare God's care for the vulnerable.

Fourth, both Mary and Judith were endangered by actions aligned with God's work of lifting the downtrodden and unsettling the lofty. Uzziah tells Judith, "You risked your own life when our people were brought low" (Judith 13:20), and Mary's life is threatened when her pregnancy throws her engagement with Joseph into uncertainty, risking much in a patriarchal purity culture.

Fifth, the reigns of unjust rulers totter when God's Spirit moves through the people. Judith recounts, "My oppressed people shouted … and the enemy trembled" (Judith 16:11). Mary sings that God "brought down the powerful from their thrones" (Luke 1:52). God's action in the Spirit can disquiet and even depose those using their positions to harm the vulnerable. In "An Advent Sermon," Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes:

The song of Mary is the oldest … the most revolutionary Advent hymn that has ever been sung. … [A] hard, strong, relentless hymn about the toppling of the thrones and the humiliation of the lords of this world. … This is the sound of the prophetic women of the Old Testament—Deborah, Judith, Miriam—coming to life in the mouth of Mary. … [She] speaks, by the power of this Spirit, about God's coming into the world, about the Advent of Jesus Christ.

Bonhoeffer names layers of power at the annunciation: the power of Mary in this "hard, strong, relentless hymn," the power of evil in the "thrones" and "lords of this world" and, above all, the power of the Spirit, for Mary is "seized by the power of the Holy Spirit," who speaks through her of the realities Jesus brings—lifting the lowly, unseating the enthroned.

By including Judith, Dürer emphasizes the Spirit's power (through us and beyond us) to witness in turbulent times. Wherever our Bethulia may be, we live in a time of upheaval, as did Judith—our homes and loved ones threatened by invading dominions.

In such tenuous situations, God historically bodied forth the Word through the power of the Spirit in the lives of Mary and Judith and more. God will do so again. So, we notice signals that God has repeated in every generation: Where is God attending to those brought low? And what dominions opposed to God's action are threatened even now by the transformative power of the Holy Spirit?

Jan Rippentrop Schnell is the assistant professor of liturgics at Wartburg Theological Seminary. Their 2025 book *Agapic Anger: Influencing Change While Navigating Gender*, an exploration in ethnography and virtue ethics, describes how Christians can use their anger to bring about needed change for their communities.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Packing the Back Packs: August 6th

Articles Due for August Tidings: August 14th

Youth Pool Party at the Moore's: August 15th (Page 5)

Noisy Bucket Offering: August 30th

Peace Garage Sale: September 10th - 12th (Page 7)

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

At our most recent meeting, the Call Committee worked together to create interview questions for both the initial Zoom interviews and the in-person interviews with candidates. At this time, we are waiting for the Synod to recommend candidates for us to prayerfully consider. We know this part of the process can involve a significant amount of waiting, as it depends on the timing of available candidates. We appreciate your continued patience, prayers, and support as we trust God's guidance throughout this process.

Men's Night Out

We will meet for dinner and fellowship on **Tuesday, August 25th at 6:00 pm**

Ladies Luncheon

Wednesday, August 19th
11:30 am at Evelyn Bay

The Pregnancy Center

The center has a specific need for size 4 and 5 diapers. Please place your donation in the basket in the Gathering Area.

Poolside Fun in August!

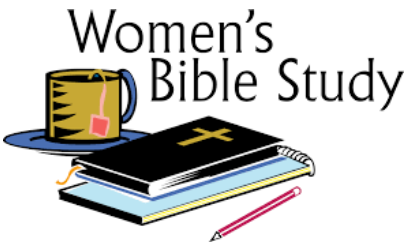
All kids, parents and Sunday School teachers are invited to the Moore's home for swimming and hot dogs on **Saturday, August 15th** from **3:00 pm to 6:00 pm**. Come at the time that works for you. We'll serve food around 4:30; bring a friend for twice the fun! Drinks, hot dogs and paper products will be provided; just bring your swim suit, towel and a dish to pass — which could be as easy as potato chips:).

Just let Susie or Harry Moore know you are coming, so we'll have an idea of how many hot dogs to grill. Hope to see you on August 15th!

Helping Hands Ministry

For the month of April, we are collecting **Canned Vegetables**. A basket has been placed in the gathering area in front of the Helping Hands Ministry bulletin board to place donations. Thank you for your support!

Women's Bible Study



All women are invited to attend our Bible study starting in September.

We meet monthly on the second Saturday at 10:30. Our first session will be on September 12.

We are currently studying the Women of the Old Testament. The subject of the September meeting will be Esther.

Our meetings are informal with casual discussions. We usually meet for one hour. Please sign up on the posting on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space.

Contact Sandy Hassen with any questions.

WANTED: ITEMS FOR PEACE GARAGE SALE

When:

Thursday	**September 10th**
Friday	**September 11th**
Saturday	**September 12th**

Please NO clothing.

Donated items can be priced in advance if desired, but not necessary.
10% of the proceeds will be tithed.

See Karen Jorgensen or Lorene Crigier for questions.

We welcome anyone who is able to volunteer their time to help set up or help the days of the sale.

Thank you in advance for donations of items and/or time!!

Nature Around Peace Lutheran

We all enjoy the view outside our sanctuary window and the occasional wildlife sighting as we worship on Sunday mornings. There is now a trail camera out in the yard behind the church courtesy of Mike Hueter! Check out some of the images that have been captured!

CHURCH CLEANING SERVICE - UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that a new cleaning service has been hired and started the week of April 27th. **Her name is Jen** and she will be doing the basic cleaning of the church on a weekly basis. As we have done in the past, **we are looking for volunteers to pay for her services on a bi-weekly basis.** There is a sign-up sheet in the Gathering area for you to use.

If you have any questions, please contact Joe Crigier of the Property Team.

Follow Peace Lutheran Now on Instagram!

Find and follow using this QR code or search @peacecharlottemi.

When buying ink from Staples for you or your family please consider using Peace's phone number when checking out. Your purchase of ink can apply to Peace's Rewards program. The office uses the rewards dollars for supplies for our church.

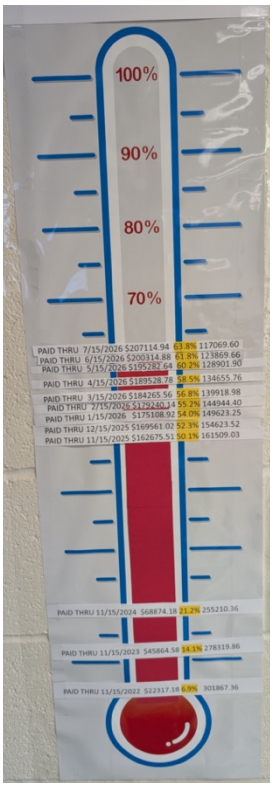
Did you know that we recycle pull tabs here at Peace?

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.

Serve God and Others in Worship

Each week it takes many of God's people working together to make worship happen-and there is a place for you! Join the ministry of worship by serving as an usher, reader, worship assistant or serve on the altar guild. You may want to be a Gathering Host. **Sign up sheets are located in the Gathering Area.** You are welcome to join any of the teams at Peace. The teams are the Caring Team, Community in Action Team, Finance Team, Growing in Faith Team, Personnel/IT Team, Property Team and the Worship Team. Please contact the office if you are interested in this ministry.

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS??



This thermometer is a visual look at the church mortgage. The original mortgage was in January of 2002 for the construction of the new sanctuary, pastor's office, narthex and bathrooms as an addition to the existing building. The mortgage was for $700,000. It took almost 20 years to pay the first half of the mortgage. In November of 2021 the remaining balance of $324,000 was refinanced for 15 years with a 5 year balloon payment due in November of 2026.

The balance as of July 2026 is $117,000. This huge reduction in the balance was accomplished by several large one-time payments on the principal along with some members of the congregation also making monthly or annual donations toward the principal. With the current vacancy of a pastor, it was decided to use some of the funds which would be used to pay a pastor to help reduce the balance even further. The mortgage will be reviewed with the bank in the second half of 2026 for any changes needed for the remaining 10 years on the mortgage. The more we can reduce the balance before this review the better position we will be in.

New Member Recognition!

On Sunday, July 26th we recognized our newest members of Peace Lutheran!

- Dave and Shelly Gillahan
- Holly Hueter
- Marlene Leitch
- Macy Lumbert

Dave and Shelly Gillahan

Holly Hueter

Property Team Update

During the summer, the Property Team will be working on several projects and will be looking to you for help. Some of the projects will be filling the cracks in the parking lot, trimming bushes and painting the wood exterior of the church.

In addition, we are looking for volunteers to mow the lawn this spring and summer. A sign-up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board in the gathering area. The mowing takes about 1 ½ to 2 hours. If you are interested but want more information contact Steve Clark, Terry Jorgensen, Harry Moore or Joe Crigier.

I know this sounds like a lot, but as the old saying goes "Many hands makes light work." This is your church and how it looks reflects on us. So, please help us make the best impression.

Thank you in advance for YOUR help in Sprucing-up our church!

VISITATION MINISTRY

The Caring Team is asking for help with a Visitation Ministry in reaching out to our members. We need volunteers to visit people in the congregation that have difficulty in getting to church on a regular basis. Visitors would go out in teams of two and would be making one visit per month. Each month you would be visiting a different member, and your visiting partner might change. You will receive a schedule of who and what week to visit and who is your visiting partner. Your responsibility is to get with your visiting partner and contacting the member to set up a visitation time. Then to go and enjoy learning more about one of our members.

After making a visit you will realize that you are the one that have been blessed. This is a ministry where you receive more than you give.

Please contact Char Ehlers if you are interested in this ministry.

Worship Ministry
August 2026

Date	Sunday 8/2	Sunday 8/9	Sunday 8/16	Sunday 8/23	Sunday 8/30
Altar Guild	Louise Bradley	Louise Bradley	Louise Bradley	Louise Bradley	Louise Bradley
Audio/ Visual	Scott and Connie Lumbert	Scott and Connie Lumbert	Scott and Connie Lumbert	Scott and Connie Lumbert	Scott and Connie Lumbert
Choir Director/ Musician	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio
Fellowship	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Flowers	The Hueter's	Dian Leckrone	Dar Gareisss	**Volunteer Needed**	The Augenstein's
Lector	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier
Pastor	Pastor John Burow	Pastor Dave Augenstein	Pastor John Burow	Pastor Dave Augenstein	Pastor John Burow
Ushers	Steve and Kathy Cook	Steve and Kathy Cook	Steve and Kathy Cook	Steve and Kathy Cook	Steve and Kathy Cook
Worship Assistant	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi

Church Calendar – August 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 9:30 am Worship 10:30 Gathering Back to School Supplies due today Pastor John Burow	3	4 7:00 pm CAT Team Meeting	5 11:30 am Caring Team Meeting 6:00 pm AA Meeting	6 10:00 am Pack the Back Packs	7	8
9 Blessing of the Back Packs 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering Pastor Dave Augenstein	10	11	12 1:00 pm IT/Personnel Team Meeting 6:00 pm AA Meeting	13 10:00 am Worship and Music Team Meeting	14 Articles Due for the Tidings	15 3:00-6:00 pm Youth Swim Party at the Moore's
16 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering Pastor John Burow	17	18 7:00 pm GFS Team Meeting	19 11:30 am Ladies' Luncheon 6:00 pm AA Meeting	20	21	22
23 9:30 am Worship 10:30 Gathering Pastor Dave Augenstein	24	25 6:00 pm Men's Night Out	26 6:00 pm AA Meeting	27 7:00 pm Property Team Meeting	28	29
30 Noisy Offering 9:30 am Worship 10:30 Gathering Pastor John Burow	31					

Please feel free to submit articles or pictures for the Tidings to the editor, Kristin Shannon gore.kristin88@gmail.com

Peace Lutheran Church (ELCA)

830 N. Cochran Ave.
Charlotte, MI 48813

517-543-1503

peacelutheran.charlotte@gmail.com

www.PeaceLutheranCharlotteMi.org

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.

Scan this QR code for online giving to Peace Lutheran Church