Tidings of Peace

come grow with us

The Gift of Community

May 2026

https://www.livinglutheran.org/voices-of-faith/the-gift-of-community/

Though I've often lived alone, I'm drawn to community and connection. I've been blessed to take part in many Christian communities, some for an intense, two-week period of formation and discernment, some for a season of shared prayer and song, and others for a studious semester. Still others endure and sustain, as we gather weekly for liturgical worship amid the ups and downs, joys and conflicts of ministry and life.

Sometimes Jesus whispers among us. Often, he listens and cries beside us. Always, our Savior meets us with forgiveness during corporate confession, speaks boldly through the word and nourishes us at the table. At times, Jesus kneels at our feet in servant love, and in times of great celebration, dances with us! On one holy occasion, I felt a sword of the Spirit hovering over our prayer group as we met for the last time. God was actively shielding and protecting us, strengthening us for what lay ahead.

These days, the Lord has called and gifted me to shape and nurture community for college students. As our Shepherd guides, I select Scriptures, facilitate conversations, plan activities and empower leaders. I make room for diversity and honest questions, and always, point these gifted young adults toward Jesus, interweaving with earnest prayer the benevolent, learning-rich chaos we create together. My role is to listen and mentor, accompany and encourage, yet also to let community emerge and blossom, with each semester unique to those preceding.

Community is a precious gift, yet also hard work with its pitfalls and pain. Our human shortcomings can cause miscommunication, misunderstanding and misalignment of gifts. Those of differing strengths can fail to perceive the grace of how God's Spirit is powerfully at work in and through those who are shaped in opposite ways. In times of shrinking resources, we can take on a spirit of scarcity, anxiety and fear instead of a spirit of creativity, hope, teamwork and opportunity, trusting in our Creator's abundance and steadfast care.

Our loving Lord laughs often and joyously—and invites us to do so as well.

The current climate entices us to seek answers in polarity, in anger, in an us-versus-them mentality that places blame definitively outside oneself. By contrast, the communities that have most deeply blessed my journey have been Christ-centered ones that embrace difference, nuance, truths held in tension and an openness about our brokenness as human beings. In sharing personal histories and wounded places honestly from the heart, we unearth the mutual, mortal truth of aching for love, yearning to be held, and longing to be named, seen and forgiven—and we are met by the truest, fullest answer to all that soul-need in the everlasting arms of the triune God.

Amid the ashy grace of human vulnerability, holiness can rise like phoenix wings. At times, I've felt we touched heaven for just a moment, whether through corporate prayer, shared song, silence or the mutual humility of foot washing. Amid life stories shared in trust-filled spaces or during moments when a community's grief unites it in aching trust of a greater truth, God's tender, loving hands lift and carry us beyond this brief earthly sojourn and shelter us in peace.

And there's one other sweet surprise. Perhaps the brightest glimpses of God's presence shine out when laughter erupts unsought, during the childlike silliness of games and creativity, or in delight-filled song and dance. For all my love of intentionality and planfulness, I continue to be amazed by the draw and grace of banter over communal meals and the synergy of soul that can happen amid spontaneous, shared play. Christ's Spirit loves to engage in hide-and-seek amid the giggles, the unexpected connections and wordplay, and the relaxed spaces of games and community bonding. Our loving Lord laughs often and joyously—and invites us to do so as well.

May your communities be filled to overflowing with open hearts, Spirit-led worship, dancing joy and eager play. And may you find the courage to enter in with childlike abandon and be fully yourself, to the glory of God!

MINDY HOLLAND

Mindy Holland is the "Grounded in grace" columnist. A minister of Word and Service, she is the chaplain of the Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Delaware in Newark and author of *Wind-Borne Sister.*

DATES TO REMEMBER

Craft and Vendor Show at Peace: May 1st and 2nd (Page 5)

Articles Due for June Tidings: May 25th

Noisy Bucket Offering: May 31st

Men's Breakfast

We will meet at the Eaton Place for breakfast and fellowship on… **Thursday, May 14th at 8:30am.**
Hope to see you there!

Men's Night Out

We will meet for dinner and fellowship on **Tuesday, May 26th at 6:00 pm**

Ladies Luncheon

Wednesday, May 20th
11:30 am at Evelyn Bay

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.

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Call Committee recently participated in initial training with Pastor Scott Torkko. We also met to discuss questions on the Ministry Site Profile. This document will help candidates gain a clear picture of life and ministry here at Peace. We are finalizing our responses on the online profile, which will be ready for review at the May council meeting. Thank you to all who completed the recent congregational survey. Your responses helped guide our discussion and keep the thoughts of the congregation in mind as we worked!

Livestock instead of Lilies

Thank you so much members of Peace Lutheran Church. Your generous donations to *"Livestock instead of Lilies"* were greatly appreciated. With your gifts we were able to provide the following animals, birds and bees to those in other countries who need help to become more self-relight. We purchased 2 flock of chicks, 2 roosters, 3 goats, 4 shares of a cow, 2 honeybee hives, and 2 piglets through ELCA good gifts program. Your gifts will certainly help others.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The next Women's Bible Study meeting is **May 9th at 10:30 am.**

For more details contact Sandy Hassen.

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.

CRAFT AND VENDOR SHOW

Peace Lutheran Church is holding its first Craft and Vendor Show on **Friday, May 1 and Saturday, May 2.** The majority of the funds raised at this show will come from the Vendors' rental of the booth spaces. This fundraiser is to support the PLC mortgage reduction drive. The vendors will be located in the gathering area, youth room, nursery, class room and the narthex. PLC will hold a bake sale and succulent plant sale during this event.

Advertising for this event has been on the Michigan Craft Shows and Events web page as well as on PLC web site and on Facebook. A grant has been received from Thrivent to cover advertising in the County Journal and we plan to put a free article in the County Journal as we get closer to show time! A sign to place out by the road is in the process of being made and we have our new pencil SALE flag that will be by the road as well. But as we all know, WORD OF MOUTH advertising is a very important tool to get the word out! So please everyone, tell your family, friends and neighbors about this very important fund raiser. It is important that we get good traffic at this show so the vendors will be excited to participate in future shows.

If you have any questions, please contact one of the committee members: Bev Cahill, Bev DeFord, Sharron Pridgeon, Susie Moore

Helping Hands Ministry

For the month of April, we are collecting **Spaghetti Noodles**. 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!

Follow Peace Lutheran Now on Instagram!

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

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!

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.

Staples

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.

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.

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

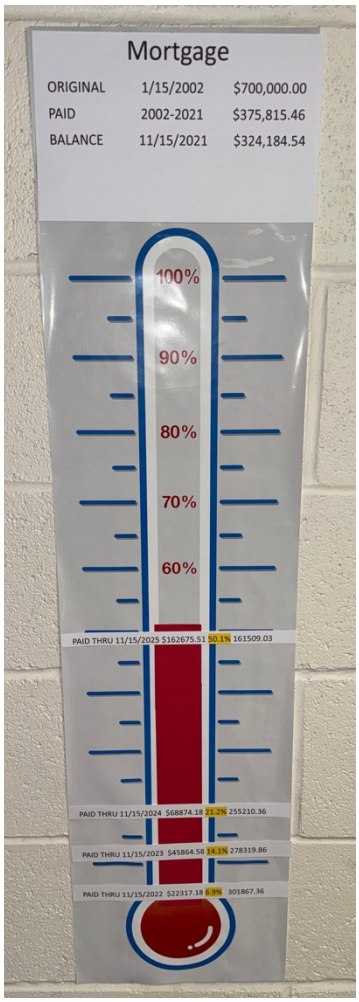
Pull for Ronald McDonald House!

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.

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 December 2025 is $155,000. 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.

Worship Ministry
May 2026

Date	Sunday 5/3	Sunday 5/10	Sunday 5/17	Sunday 5/24	Sunday 5/31
Altar Guild	Sharron Pridgeon	Sharron Pridgeon	Sharron Pridgeon	Sharron Pridgeon	Sharron Pridgeon
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**	Rosalie Bazzett Linda Meyer	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Flowers	Beverly Leffler	Rosalie Bazzett	Dian Leckrone	The Hueter Family	Bruce and Sandy Hassen
Lector	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi	Cathey Levi
Pastor	Pastor Jim Couser	Pastor Dave Augestein	Pastor Frank Rothfuss	Service of the Word Sandy Hassen	Pastor Dave Augenstein
Ushers	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**	**Volunteer Needed**
Worship Assistant	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln

Church Calendar – May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 CRAFT SHOW 9:00 am-3:00 pm	2 CRAFT SHOW 9:00 am-1:00 pm
3 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering	4	5	6 11:30 am Caring Team Meeting 6:00 pm AA Meeting	7 11:30 am National Day of Prayer @ City Hall Flagpole 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	8	9 10:30 am Women's Bible Study
10 Mother's Day 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering 10:45 am Sunday School	11	12 10:00 Worship and Music Team Meeting 7:00 pm Council Meeting	13 6:00 pm AA Meeting	14 8:30 am Men's Breakfast 10:00 am Golf Outing @ Maple Grove 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	15 BUILDING RENTAL-all day WEDDING	16 BUILDING RENTAL-all day WEDDING
17 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering	18	19	20 11:30 am Ladies Luncheon at Evelyn Bay 6:00 pm AA Meeting	21 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	22	23
24 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Gathering	25 Articles Due for the May Tidings	26 6:00 pm Men's Night Out	27 7:00 pm Property Tam Meeting 6:00 pm AA Meeting	28 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	29	30
31 NOISY BUCKET OFFERING 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Gathering						

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

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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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