

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH: GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.

The Witness of Peace

January 2023



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



As we begin a new year, we often pause and take some time to reflect on who we are, how our lives are going and to what newness the Spirit might be calling us. I thought that this might be a helpful time for us as a congregation to step back and consider a wider perspective on who we are within the larger Body of Christ.

Given our independent legal status and focus on congregational history, we can sometimes lose sight of our deep connection to the larger church bodies that we are part of. We are a congregation within the Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As our presiding bishop, Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, loves to remind us: *We are Church Together*. We are committed to a sharing of time, talent and treasure to support the work of the Church at the local, regional, national and international level. We claim God's diverse gifts of "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." We value the resources of church reflection, discernment and teaching to guide our own walk of discipleship. We know that in this time of change and uncertainty about the future shape of the Church, we have much shared wisdom, creativity, trust and hope as we seek the guidance of the Spirit of God.

As a member congregation of the ELCA, we share these inherent values:

"Our values are grounded in faith, in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources and our love of God and neighbor. They speak to the way this church lives and practices our faith, and they will guide how we journey forward in Christ as church together.

Forgiveness and reconciliation – We are reconciled to God by God's forgiving mercy. Forgiveness and reconciliation flow from what God has made us to be in Jesus Christ and what God is doing with us in the world. As a people of God, we embody forgiveness in speech, action and relationships, and our ministry in reconciliation is foundational.

Dignity, compassion and justice – Each person is created in God's image. We respect this God-given right to dignity and, inspired by the life of Jesus, show love and compassion for all people. Through proclamation of the gospel, through worship and as servants of God working for healing and justice in the world, we uphold and seek to protect the dignity and human rights of all people.

Inclusion and diversity – As Christ's church, we value the richness of God's creation and offer a radical welcome to all people, appreciating our common humanity and our differences. We are a church that does not view diversity as a barrier to unity. We recognize and will challenge dynamics of power and privilege that create barriers to participation and equity in this church and society – for women, people of color, minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities,

people who are marginalized or living in poverty, and the LGBTQ community.

Courage and openness to change – Because we trust in God's promise and understand faith to be a living, daring confidence in God's grace, we are emboldened to embrace learning and change in our spiritual and institutional journey as church. This means we are open to new ways and willing to take risks to discover God's plan for this church.

Faithful stewardship of God's creation and gifts – As church together, faithful stewardship is about holding to God's purpose and ensuring the responsibilities and resources that God has entrusted to us are used with great care and with accountability to God, to each other and those served by this church.” ([Mission & Vision - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America \(elca.org\)](http://elca.org)) I pray that in this new year, we choose to clearly embrace these values as guidance for how we will journey forward together and how we will discern the newness to which God might be calling us.

New Year Blessings, *Pastor Annette*



FROM THE BISHOP: January 2023

More than twenty years ago now, when I was serving in a congregation, I sat with a woman who was dying. I loved this woman. Her name was Bobbie. She was fierce and funny. She was smart. She could be a little intimidating. She was a tall, big woman who pounded her cane into the ground as she walked. Throughout her life, like most people, she knew grief and joy. Disappointment and surprise. I was honored to hold her hand and sit with her as she took her last breaths.

As pastor, I have had the opportunity to sit with many people as they are dying. It is one of the most holy things a person can do. There is truly a thinness between what is and what is to come. While there are many things I love and miss as a congregational pastor, one of the top absences is being invited into people's lives as they leave this world and enter into God's presence in the company of all the saints.

Recently I attended a three-day retreat with several bishops and leaders from the western part of the United States. Most of what we talked about and discerned was what it means to be church today. Included in the conversation was how to journey and accompany congregations that are dying. This retreat wasn't a "how-to manual" of what to do. Instead, the intentional prayer, singing, worship, and community led us to sit in the same "thinness" feeling that I mentioned above: what is and what is to come.

As we sat in both the grief of some of our congregations closing and in the anticipation of what God is calling us towards, one person made the comment, "There is Spirit-led death and then there is just death." I've been pondering about this statement since it was said. What does it mean to have a Spirit-led death? What does it mean to just die? Perhaps we can use Bobbie's death as a guide.

I think back to Bobbie who I met with many times before she died. She made it clear to me what her wishes were for her funeral. She talked many times about how thrilled she would be to see her husband again. (Her husband died when he was twenty-eight leaving her with two small sons.) She was looking forward to resting. She wanted to make sure that I knew how glad she was to not be a burden any more to her sons. She had hopes for the assets she was leaving behind and how they would be used to further her passions. Most of all, she was excited about what was next for her – she talked quite frequently about the questions she was ready to ask Jesus.

In the weeks before Bobbie died, her sons called me to ask if I would be available to sit with Bobbie when she died. They lived far away and knew that they might not make it to her bedside in time. I, of course, said yes. When the nurse called me, I went.

In Bobbie's last hours on earth, I was with her. I felt God's holy presence as I held her hand, sang hymns, prayed the Lord's prayer, shed tears, sat in silence, loved her, and was present with her and Jesus in the thin place between life and death and resurrection.

Going back to the retreat that I was at and the questions that arose, I wonder how we can have language to talk about some congregations having Spirit-led deaths. While I hope and pray that all congregations thrive and grow, I also know that there is a life cycle for all things. And I want to be able to live in the thinness between life and death and resurrection with all of us in the Northwest Washington Synod. I want to have the hard, deep conversations that need to happen. I want us to talk about looking beyond survival and instead talk about death and resurrection. How can we do this in meaningful ways? How can we do this before there is a sudden death? How can we do this acknowledging the pain and heartache and also living in faith and hope?

We in the synod office want to journey with you in these conversations. It is not easy and it is not wanted. But it is a time that can be holy and where God's presence is made known. As this new year begins, may we walk together in the Spirit – placing our hope in God through Jesus. May we journey as resurrection people.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee
bishop@lutheransnw.org

Visit from Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

As part of our connection to our local synod, we will welcome our bishop as preacher at worship on Sunday, January 15.

Primarily due to the pandemic, Bishop Shelley has not yet been able to visit us since her election as bishop in 2019.

We are looking forward to welcoming her to Peace!

Church Life and Community News: Happy New Year!!! **Mary Fuentes, Youth and Family Worker**

It seems wild to be saying it's 2023 and another year is beginning. With this New Year brings new life, new beginnings, new friends, new experiences, more laughter, more joy, more hope, more peace, and more love. I pray that this new year helps us open our eyes and hearts to what God is calling us to do. **May we all be filled with His spirit and be His hands to do His works.**

The best way to kick off the new year is with an **Epiphany Party**. Friday night **January 6th** we will be having a night of festivities. We will start the night at **5:30 pm** in the fellowship hall with a potluck dinner where we are asking everyone to bring their favorite family dish. I have a fun craft, new games, and ask everyone to bring a **white elephant gift valued under \$5 for the gift exchange**. If your feeling super festive **the theme of the night is plaid**, you decide how you want to let that play out.

This month we will be collecting **pasta and pasta sauce** for the **Arlington Food Bank**. You can drop off your gifts in the grocery cart in the Narthex.

Out to Lunch Bunch is heading to Arlington to **Nutty's Junk Yard Grill** on **Thursday, January 12th**. We plan to arrive at 1:30 pm for some famous burgers and onion rings. We always have good conversation and share much laughter. If you can join us, please contact me.

Out to Dinner Group will be going to **Paraiso Mexican Restaurant** in Smokey Point on **Wednesday, January 18th**. We plan to arrive at 5:30 pm for an evening of good food and conversation.

Mission of the month needs your input! This is a vital way that we support the surrounding communities. **Each month we focus on a specific ministry, and it's needs.** If you have a ministry that you think we should focus on, please reach out to me ASAP as I'm working on finalizing the 2023 monthly ministries.

Mission of the Month for January is The Gathering Place at Our Savior Lutheran Church. Peace Lutheran Church has been part of The Gathering Place since it's inception and we've watched the growth. From the first year when we served an average of two people each Thursday. A few folks said we should quit. Well, here we are many years later, survived a pandemic with take out meals, a kitchen remodel, and the addition of new churches when others had to drop out. Pre-pandemic we were serving an average of 75 people each Thursday. Today we are serving an average of 42 people. Some churches prepare the same meal every time while others mix it up. We like to mix it up and test our cooking skills, once in awhile we are pulling the dinner out of the oven at the very last second, but it always tastes great. In the past we've given out blankets, toothbrushes, toothpaste, books, coats, gift cards, and random gifts. **The Gathering Place is more than just a place to get a warm meal**, it's a place to greet old friends, make new friends, and spend time together in a safe and caring environment. Come and visit any Thursday for dinner between 5 and 6pm! **Come join us on Thursday, January 19th when Peace is providing the meal!** We need folks to help cook, visit with diners, and help with clean up. We get started at 3pm and serve by 5pm. **Be part of this community experience.**

CHURCH COUNCIL 2023

PRESIDENT	Larry Sather
VICE PRESIDENT	Steve Rinnert
SECRETARY	Jennifer Corser
TREASURER	Patti Jones
PLCW REP	Debra Compton
MEMBERS AT LARGE	Al Camp, Dave Tripp, Linda Legler

Note Open seats: one Member at Large and one Youth Rep. Would you like to serve?



Book Study

Begins January 4th
7pm on Zoom

Living Lutheran: Renewing
Your Congregation

by Dave Daubert

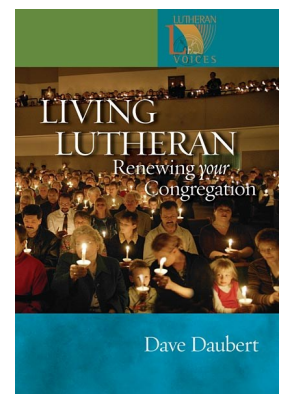
Please join The Cluster Lay Group on **Wednesday, January 4th from 7-8 pm, as we meet via Zoom to discuss “Living Lutheran, by David Daubert.**

No pressure or expectations. We just want your participation, whether as an observer or participant. Please read one short chapter before each meeting.

Journey with us as we explore and discover our core values, which will provide the foundation for developing a Purpose

Statement, as well as implement that statement to guide our decisions and move us into the future.

Come join us! Please send your email address to: Karen Dicken at office@plsilvana.org to receive the Zoom link that allows you to join in. **You will receive the email prior to the Zoom meeting on January 4th.**



Go Green Tip January:

Maybe this is the time to make a couple green resolutions?? Use a reusable water bottle, eat locally, compost, collect the rain. The list is endless, you choose one or two or more. Have a green tip? Share it with me! Mary F.

**Peace Lutheran Church Women (PLCW)
Wednesday, January 4th at 11:30 AM
Potluck and Speaker Meeting**

The speaker for our **January 4, 2023** PLCW luncheon/meeting is **Beth Kovarik** from **Life House Ministries**.

Life House Ministries is a 501(c)(3) non-profit meeting the needs of single moms who have experienced domestic violence, teen pregnancy, loss of a spouse, substance abuse, trauma, or homelessness. Join us as we build a better future for single moms and their children! For more information: www.lifehousewa.org.

We hope you will join us to hear about this local and vital ministry!



In Memorium

Each year the women of Peace remember those in our congregation who have passed by purchasing a book for our church library. Debra Compton who gets the books puts much thought into which book to choose for each person. *“I try to get a glimpse of the person’s life by the story reflected in the book,”* she said.

Books purchased for 2022 are:

In memory of Dolly Paschur – Confessions of a Crappy Christian by Blake Guichet

In memory of Becky Sather – Come Sit By Me edited by Becky Keife

In memory of Jim Jones – The Stranger in the Lifeboat by Mitch Albom

In memory of Joyce Klabunde – Faith Still Moves Mountains edited by Harris Falkner

In memory of Jeff Olseene – The God Who Stays by Mathew West

All of these books are available to check out and can be found in the church library located in the Fireside Room. Please enjoy them and remember the folks who have gone on before us.

We ask that you return the books to the library when you’ve read them so others can enjoy them also.

Save the Date! Tuesday, February 14th @ 5:30 pm

Heart of Guatemala Valentines dinner

Once again, the Mission team will be hosting a Valentines dinner by donation. Reserve your spot to come and share a night of wonder as we prepare a delicious meal, with appetizers, non-alcoholic drinks, dessert, music, photo's, and good cheer!

Funds raised at this event will support the purchase of Stoves for Guatemala through our partnership with Hands for Peace Making: Making a World of Difference ONE LIFE AT TIME!

www.handsforpeacemaking.org

STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS FROM MARY FUENTES!!!



Dear Peace Family,

We want to thank you all for your prayers, caring thoughts, and support during this very difficult time.

With love to you all,

The Family of Jeff Olseene



Thank you to our guest musicians who helped make Christmas Worship Special: **Paul and Madelyn Walker and Emily Tripp.**

Thank you to everyone who participated in making all of our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship services possible, when it seemed the weather might not cooperate.

Thank you to my Peace Family for the prayers, texts and cards during my recent medical crisis. It's been almost exactly 2 months since the stroke and I'm continuing to regain function in my leg and hand. I was very fortunate to not have suffered more serious long term problems. The upside is that I now use a cane that also comes in handy when Wynn gets out of line.

😊 Blessings 🍷 Pam Holdal

January Birthdays

- 9 Jean Oien
- 11 Cheri Gonzales
Dave Tripp
- 15 Karen Fuentes
- 19 Jordy Tyler
Shawn Moyer
- 20 Tammy Chase
- 23 *Madelynn Wood*
Yulissa Martinez
- 27 Darlene McClay
Allyson Martinez
Carson Wood
- 28 Jennifer Corser

Italics = Youth

January Food Bank Item

Pasta and Pasta Sauce!

Thank You!

Food Bank collection in December

Thank you to PLC for supplying cold cereal and bread crumbs to the food banks! The food banks appreciate your generosity!

January

Mission of the Month:

The Gathering Place

at Our Savior Lutheran Church
in Stanwood

Book Club 1/31/2023 @ 3PM

Robin Sather's Home

To Kill a Mockingbird,

by Harper Lee

Out To Lunch Bunch

Thursday, January 12th
1:30 pm

Nutty's Junk Yard Grill in Arlington

SIGN UP WITH MARY!

Men's Breakfast

Second and Fourth Saturday at 8am
January 14th and January 28th

**Lutheran World Relief
(LWR) Quilters**

January 25th 10am to 2pm

Out to Dinner Group!

Wednesday, January 18th

5:30 pm

Paraiso Mexican Restaurant in
Smokey Point

SIGN UP WITH MARY!

Lydia Circle: Tuesday, January 3rd at 5:30 PM

Naomi Circle: Wednesday, January 11th at 9:30 AM

Happy New Year!

January 2023

Peace Lutheran Church Mission Statement
*“Called by Christ to offer help, hope,
 and healing.”*

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Worship 10am	2 Women’s AA 10am	3 AA Noon Lydia 5:30 pm	4 Alanon 10am Tea Mtg. 10:30am PLCW 11:30am Cluster Zoom 7pm	5	6 AA Noon Ephiphany Family Night 5:30PM	7
8 Sunday School 9am/Worship 10am	9 Women’s AA 10am 4H MF 6:30pm	10 AA Noon	11 Alanon 10am Naomi 9:30am	12 Conf. Class Resumes Lunch Bunch 1:30pm	13 AA Noon	14 Men’s Breakfast 8am Set up for Tea Reception 10am
15 Bishop Visit Sunday School 9am/ Worship 10am/Tea Reception following Worship	16 Women’s AA 10am	17 AA Noon Dist 2 AA 6pm PLC Council 6:30pm	18 Alanon 10am Dinner Group 5:30pm	19 Gath. Place 3pm/5pm 4H KF 3pm	20 AA Noon	21
22 Sunday School 9am/Worship 10am	23 Women’s AA 10am	24 AA Noon Witness Deadline!	25 Alanon 10am	26	27 AA Noon	28 Men’s Breakfast 8am Dist 2 AA Workshop 11am to 2pm
29 Sunday School 9am/Worship 10am	30 Women’s AA 10am	31 AA Noon Book Club 3PM @ Robin Sather				

Peace Lutheran Church
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Contact us:
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pastor@plsilvana.org

Look Inside for messages from **The Pastor, The Bishop, and The Youth and Family Worker!**

Don't miss the ***guest speaker*** at PLCW on January 4th at 11:30pm!

Join us for a fun-filled **Epiphany Family Night** on January 6th at 5:30pm!

Help us welcome **Bishop Shelly Bryan Wee on January 15th** during our 10am Worship and Tea Reception!