

The Witness of Peace

January 2024

The Work of Christmas

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.*

Since I began our Christmas season last month with Howard Thurman, I thought I would bring him back for these last days of Christmas. His poem above reminds us that not only is Christmas more than a day, more than a liturgical season, it is meant to guide us all year round in the way of discipleship life.

The whole point of Christmas is that the dream of God took flesh and dwelt among us, planting a seed of grace that was to be tended and nourished and shared, so that it might grow and flourish among all peoples. The wondrous gift was that the heart of God was found among the humble and ordinary, drawing together the marginalized shepherds and the foreign pagans, the seekers and the servants, the earthly and the heavenly beings, all gathered together to celebrate new life- a Kingdom life, shaped by a different set of values than what we often encounter among the powerful in this world.



Let us seek to take up this work of Christmas by following Jesus in the way of healing and welcome, nurturing and building up, being makers of both peace and music. I believe if we listen closely, we can still perceive the voices of the angels calling us discover the good news of great joy that God so wants to share with us.

Blessings for the year ahead!

Pastor Annette

There must be always remaining in every one's life some place for the singing of angels – some place for that which in itself is breathlessly beautiful... H.T.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January means...

Time for the Annual Report! Please have your submissions to the office no later than January 21st to allow plenty of time to create and distribute before our meeting in February.

Save the Date! Saturday, February 10th @ 5:30 pm Heart of Guatemala Dinner

Once again, the Mission team will be hosting a Valentine dinner by donation. Reserve your spot to come and share a night of wonder as we prepare a delicious meal, with appetizers, dessert, music, photos, and good cheer!



Funds raised at this event will support the purchase of Stoves for Guatemala and Water Filtration Systems 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!!!

Stilly Cluster News

As some of you heard at the congregational meeting, our Stilly Cluster has been invited to participate in the coaching program with Northwest Washington Synod. We have now received the names of our two coaches: Jade Yi and Hector Garfias-Toledo. We are excited about this opportunity, and we invite you to join us if you are interested. Contact Jolene Rod or Karen Dicken for more information. Our initial meeting will be in person sometime in January, but some of these meetings will also be via Zoom. Part of this coaching will be to explore what we want to explore!

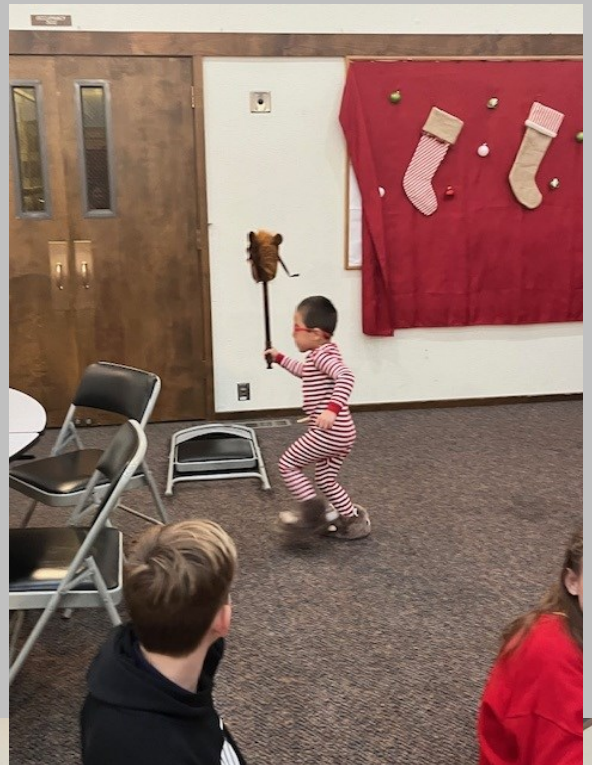
We are exploring the possibility of studying the book mentioned also at the congregational meeting: "Love Without Limits" by Jacqueline Bussie. We may do this as a cluster as well as a group at Peace – we will have to see how that pans out, but if you are interested in discussing this book, we highly recommend it!

*We will be planning another cluster worship for late summer/early fall.
Watch for more information!!*

ON DECEMBER 2ND, 15 KIDS (AND A FEW OF THEIR GROWN-UPS) MET IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR A FUN-FILLED CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION. MANY, MANY PIGS IN A BLANKET WERE EATEN ALONG WITH STACKS OF TATER TOTS AND BAGS OF POPCORN IN FRONT OF A MOVIE. THE CHILDREN JUMPED HURDLES ON HOBBY HORSES AND ROARED WITH LAUGHTER AS THEY RACED AROUND THE ROOM. THEY EVEN HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A WINTER WONDERLAND IN A JAR. BIG THANKS TO MARY & JORDY FOR FEEDING AND ENTERTAINING THIS FANTASTIC GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE!



TO CREATE A WINTER WONDERLAND IN A JAR. BIG THANKS TO MARY & JORDY FOR FEEDING AND ENTERTAINING THIS FANTASTIC GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE!



Church Life and Community News Mary Fuentes, Youth and Family

Unbelievable – UNBELIEVABLE, I'm still in a state of shock that 2023 has come to a close and we are now into 2024! Where did the days go? How in the world did I let the year slip by. Well, I guess it didn't exactly slip by, I did take an active part in many events here at Peace and around the area. Now I'm looking forward to 2024 and what is going to happen next and how amazed I will be at God's work playing out through our hands.

To kick off 2024 we are going to have a **FEAST** on *Epiphany* at **5:30**. Everyone is invited to come and join the fun and bring your favorite dish to share in the potluck. We will have a Kings Cake, (and just who will get baby Jesus?) pinata, and to end the evening a gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped gift of no greater value than \$7.00 to share. The gift should be for youth or adult- male or female.

BUNCO is back by popular demand! *Saturday the 20th at 5:30pm* we will have a night of fun and laughter while we are yelling BUNCO!! Please bring an appetizer to share and a gift to go on the table, so that everyone will go home with a prize. For the littles I will have a craft table set up with coloring pages and other fun things. There is no need for experience as we have lots of folks who will teach you along the way. Come for the fun and stay for the laughter and fellowship.

OTLB will be traveling to Stanwood to enjoy lunch at the old fire station, now known as **SAAL**. The online reviews looked promising, but I have learned my lesson and I try not to put too much stock in those. As this is such a close location, we will meet at the restaurant at *1pm on the Thursday the 25th*.

OTD will be heading into Marysville to visit an old favorite, **Maxi's Chinese Restaurant**. We will gather at the restaurant on *Wednesday the 17th at 6pm*. Please RSVP, so I can give the owners an approximate number of folks to expect.

Go green tip: Gather up a group of friends and walk the streets, ok not just walk the streets, but walk them with some garbage bags and pick up the trash!

Food bank item of the month is canned fruit.

We are serving at the Gathering Place this month and would love to have more folks join in on this important ministry. It also happens to be our January Mission of the month.

This year we will be serving on the **third Thursday** of January, March, April, June, August, September, October, November, and December. We have been blessed for the past many years that Our Savior's in Stanwood has hosted this weekly dinner. The meal time has changed due to the bus schedule changing over the years, but the constant has been the dedication of all the churches and volunteers who come each week to prepare a home cooked meal. It's a joy to cook with a variety of folks from Peace and always, or at least in my opinion, put out a tasty and nutritious meal.

We've cooked many meals, from roasted vegetables, brats, soups, mac n cheese, potato bar, and baked chicken to name a few. We are always willing to try something new if we can prepare it in an hour and a half and have it hot and ready to serve. Come and share your favorite recipes with the community!

I am very thankful for Brett, Richie, and Marie who were the founders of the Gathering Place. We are inching toward our Pre-Covid numbers of those served. We have come a long way from 0-2 people per week to the 45-75 that we see now.

Please save the date of February the 10th for the Heart of Guatemala Valentines dinner.

New Year Blessings,

Mary J

Mission of the Month: The Gathering Place

Our January Mission of the Month is The Gathering Place at Our Savior's Lutheran in Stanwood. Each week, one of 10 area churches, provides a free community dinner for anyone who walks through the door. This ministry was founded in 2006 by the local church youth council and is still going strong 17 years later.

Peace has been an integral part of the gathering place since it was just an idea. The first year we served only about 2 people a week. Many thought that we should quit, but we stuck in there doing the hard work and the meal has grown to 50-75 participants gradually over the years. We are almost back to our pre-pandemic numbers!

The Gathering Place is ***so much more than a meal***. It is community and connection. If you haven't had a chance to participate, whether it be by serving in the kitchen or partaking in the meal and making a new friend, we would love to have you! Peace is serving on **January 18th**. We begin preparing the meal at about 3:30 and serve at 5:00 pm. We would love to have you there!



Peace Lutheran Church Quilters are holding a **Sew-a-Rama on Saturday, January 27th from 10 to 2.**

The sale will include sewing and craft equipment and supplies as well as fabric. If you have been meaning to clear unused items from your sewing or craft area, donations of sewing and craft related items will be accepted on January 25th and 26th in the community room.

The quilters are part of Lutheran World Relief at Peace.



From the Bishop:

I was listening to the news a few days ago when I heard that Israel had bombed Gaza using artificial intelligence called “The Gospel.” I thought at first that I had misheard. Surely an AI program designed to bomb people is not named “gospel.” But, horrifically, I had heard correctly. As Steve Inskeep from NPR’s Morning Edition reports on December 14, “The system is called The Gospel. And basically, it takes an enormous quantity of surveillance data, crunches it all together and makes recommendations about where the military should strike.”

Pause right here and read the above paragraph again. I mean it. Read it again.

A weapon of war is named The Gospel. Dear Beloveds of Christ, I cannot emphasize enough how bone-chilling and nauseous it makes me feel that a word designed to bring hope and love and peace and joy to this world – Gospel – is being used to kill.

I don’t know who first named this system “gospel.” I don’t know what marketing expert or even what acronym “gospel” might mean in the AI world. I could not find the origin. But what I do know is that this system is now being used for something horrendous. This is so contrary to the first words from the gospel of Mark, “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

As you might be aware, the word gospel is translated into English as “good news.” When Martin Luther was struggling about the laws of God and feeling that he was a sinner beyond redemption, he recounts in many of his writings how his understanding of God changed as he read Paul’s letter to the Romans. He suddenly realized that it was not up to him, but up to God. God was the one who redeemed. God was the one who forgave. Luther suddenly experienced what God through Jesus does for all of us: Through Jesus Christ, God provides comfort for the terrified, forgiveness for the sinner, and faith for the doubting. Martin Luther was overwhelmed with God’s grace and was immersed in the Gospel.

Following this earth-shattering understanding of the Good News of Jesus, Luther taught, preached and wrote about this insight every chance he got. In 1521, Philip Melancthon condensed Luther’s insight to this provocative sentence: “The gospel is a promise.” To this day, Lutherans continue to bear witness to the whole church and world that the gospel is a promise, truly good news of God’s mercy and love in Christ, received by faith alone.

In these days when words are manipulated by those in power, when evil seems to be gaining ground, when neighbor turns against neighbor, may we remember and experience God’s grace. May we be enveloped in God’s love. And, in response, may we, in our words and actions, move against the forces that are contrary to all that Jesus stands for.

For we are called, my dear Beloveds, through God’s grace towards God’s promise of wholeness and true peace. This is the Gospel.

As the prophet Isaiah proclaims of God in chapter 42, “I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

May it be so. May it be so.

We look towards 2024 in faith, holding God’s promise of Gospel.

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee bishop@lutheransnw.org

IN LOVING Memory

Each year the women of Peace remember our members who have passed away during the past year by honoring them with a Memorial. This year we are recognizing Irene Simonseth and Anne Grimm by sending a Memorial in their names to the ELCA Good Gifts program which provides farm animals to families in emerging nations.

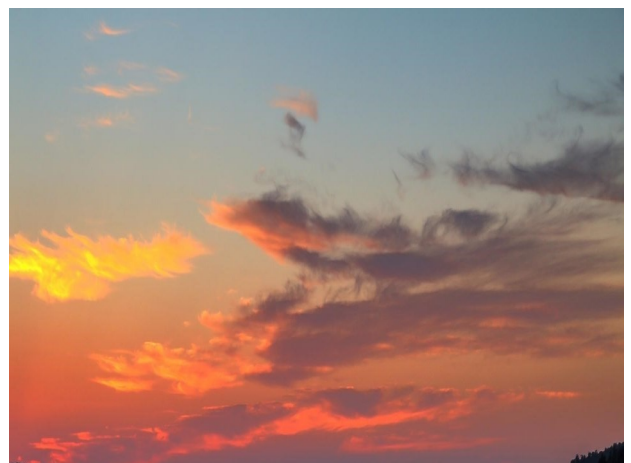
New Year Blessings to you!

As many of you know, our little Kaden has been on quite a journey with his eyesight since birth. Until very recently we had almost no hope of him gaining any functional vision in his left eye. Each morning we place an eyepatch over his “good” eye in an attempt to strengthen his blind eye.

The last few weeks during these long days of darkness, as Kaden and I are driving toward Tulalip Bay on our way to school, we have been gifted the most beautiful sunrises over the water. Every single time we come around the bend and the view of the water and sky opens up to us, without fail he gasps and exclaims, “Wow! Thank you God! You painted that for me! Thank you for my eyes too!” Every day while he is admiring the gift of God’s handiwork from his “blind eye” I am reminded to slow down and breathe in God around me.

That’s my prayer for all of us as we enter this new year. May we SEE God in everything and take it in with the enthusiasm and wonderment of this 4 year old child. Praying that each and every one of us can walk into this year with an exclamation of AMEN like Kaden and that we experience Christ as if we’re seeing Him for the first time.

*Peace to you,
Mindy*



♪♪ Happy Birthday To You ♪♪

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

**youth are italicized*

January Worship Assistants
Thank you for serving!

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Ushers</u> | <u>Communion</u> | <u>Lectors</u> | <u>Counters</u> |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| January 7 | Youth | Youth | Youth | Jolene Rod & Larry Bean |
| January 14 | Char Tyler | Jordy Tyler | Kris Rinnert | Al & Judy Camp |
| January 21 | Mary Fuentes | Jordy Tyler | Ashley Kombol | Ralph & Gwen Dalseg |
| January 28 | Larry Bean | Stephanie Bean | Larry Bean | Karen & Dennis Dicken |

Out To Lunch Bunch
SIGN UP WITH Mary Fuentes!

Thursday, January 25th
we will meet at SAAL in
Stanwood at 1 pm

Out To Dinner Group
SIGN UP WITH Mary Fuentes!

Wednesday, January 17th
we will meet at Maxi's in
Marysville at 6 pm

Peace Lutheran Church Women

Lydia Circle: Tuesday, January 2nd @ 5:30PM

PLCW: Wednesday January 3rd at 11:30 am

Naomi Circle: Wednesday, January 10th @ 9:30AM





Book Club

Next Book Club will meet at *5pm Tuesday, January 30*, at Robin Sather's home. January's book selection is: *State of Terror* by Louise Penny and Hilary Clinton. Hope to see you there for a great discussion!
Questions? Contact Mary Fuentes for more details.

JOSEPHINE GIVING PROJECT UPDATE:

The Livingston Elves delivered 17 colorfully packaged gift bundles to Josephine Caring Community on December 17th. Thank you for contributing to this important ministry year after year.



Foodbank Item of the Month



Canned Fruit!



The sign-up sheet to provide **sanctuary flowers** for January-April is now posted on the wall outside the nursery.

JANUARY 2024

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

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| *OTLB=Out to Lunch Bunch **OTDG=Out to Dinner Group | 1 AA 10 am | 2 AA Noon Lydia Circle 5:30 | 3 ALANON 10 am PLCW 11:30 am | 4 | 5 AA Noon | 6 Epiphany Fest 5:30 pm |
| 7 Epiphany (Children’s Service) Sunday School 9:00 Worship 10:00 | 8 AA 10 am | 9 AA Noon | 10 Naomi Circle 9:30 am ALANON 10 am | 11 | 12 AA Noon | 13 Men’s Breakfast 8 am |
| 14 Sunday School 9:00 Worship 10:00 | 15 AA 10 am | 16 AA Noon District AA 6:00 Council 6:30 | 17 ALANON 10 am OTDG Maxi’s Marysville 6 pm | 18 Gathering Place 3:30 pm | 19 AA Noon | 20 Bunco 5:30 |
| 21 Sunday School 9:00 Worship 10:00 Annual Report submission deadline | 22 AA 10 am | 23 AA Noon | 24 ALANON 10 am Quilting 10-2 Witness Deadline | 25 OTLB at SAAL Stanwood 1:00 pm Sewing donation drop off | 26 AA Noon Sewing donations drop off | 27 Men’s Breakfast 8 am Sewing Sale 10-2 |
| 28 Sunday School 9:00 Worship 10:00 | 29 | 30 Book Club 5 pm | 31 | | | |

Christmas Eve 2023

An evening of beautiful music, light, and family.



**Peace Lutheran
Church
P.O. Box 100
Silvana, WA 98287**

Contact us:
360-652-8739
office@plsilvana.org
pastor@plsilvana.org

Look Inside for information about church and community events and post the calendar on your wall so you don't miss a thing!