

# Good News of Peace

July 2014 A.D.

A *Caring Family* † *Reaching Out* † *Sharing Christ's Love* † *Teaching God's Word!*

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

Dear Friends in Christ:

As I sit down to write this, it is one of the few days we've had so far this year that has truly felt like summer. In fact, I put on a short-sleeved shirt today to come into the office for just the second time this month. It is hard to believe, then, that the calendar says that the first of July is already next week and, with it, the traditional summer (June-August) almost a third of the way over!

Every year I think that maybe the pace of life will slow down just a bit over the summer months. As usual, however, so far that hasn't really proven to be the case. In the month of June alone, in addition to the last of the Confirmation and graduation parties and recognitions, we have celebrated three Baptisms here at Peace and (this weekend) a wedding. All of these events have served as a reminder to me that, even though it might be easy to think that our congregation is taking a step backward this summer with the departure of Abi Schmit, our Family Life Minister for the last year, ministry is very much continuing amongst us and around us and through us. Thanks and praise be to God for that!

On Tuesday, June 17, we also held a Planning Meeting here at the church. If you were not able to be a part of it, I wanted to use this space to tell you a little bit about the meeting and what is going to be happening next. A dozen or so members were in attendance, and Rev. Dr. Rick Wolfram, who is our new Congregational Mission and Ministry Facilitator with the Michigan District (although some of you may remember him from years past, as Peace was just getting it start), was here with us to lead our discussion.

This meeting was a follow-up to a series of meetings we held last May and June and a part of a larger discussion to which I have been referring as a Congregational or Strategic Planning Process. That simply means that we are in the process of re-examining and re-evaluating our congregation's mission and ministry, identifying our strengths and potential growth areas, and attempting with the Lord's guidance to "plot a course" for the coming years.

At the June 17 meeting, the group in attendance adopted the four areas referenced in our Mission Statement – Caring, Reaching, Sharing, Teaching – as our four congregational ministry "targets." That means that our goal as a congregation should always be that everything we do (old or new) should fall into one or more of those ministry categories (they will often overlap). Because those are very broad categories, our next step in the planning process is to begin to identify more specific ways in which we might reach those four target areas. By the way, the results of our June 17 discussion remain posted on the walls in the Fellowship Hall – be sure to take a look!

On Monday evening, June 30, we will already be holding our next Planning Meeting. Since a full year passed between our two previous planning meetings, it is of particular importance right now to keep the process moving forward so that we can begin to utilize the results. Rev. Wolfram will be with us again that evening to guide our discussion. We will be discussing what it's going to look like when we are a congregation that is faithfully striving to do and to be those four things – caring, reaching, sharing, and teaching. The hope is that those participating will come with some specific ideas about some ways (old and new) that might happen. Once that part of the process is complete, we will be ready to start taking some specific steps in order to see to it that, with the Lord's blessing, those ideas become reality.

Why are we doing this in the middle of the summer, when the weather is finally agreeable? I heard that question asked last year, and I'm sure some are asking it again this year. In order to do this with the guidance of a trained facilitator from the Michigan District, our meetings have to be scheduled when they are available. Pastor Wolfram is constantly working with multiple congregations at once, and he has other District responsibilities, as well. Our meetings also have to be scheduled when weather permits him to travel this way, and we also want to try to hold them at a time when a maximum number of members are available to participate. I know that it isn't ideal for everyone, but the summer months wind up meeting most of those categories.

Yes, summer evenings in northern Michigan can sure be beautiful, but we are only asking you to consider giving up one more of them. Monday's meeting should last no longer

than two hours – we were finished with our June 17 meeting before 9:00. Whether you are a Church Council member, an elected congregational officer, a Board or Committee head or member, or a member-at-large, you are invited to come and be a part of this process. Your participation and input are very much desired and needed! It is not necessary to have been in attendance at either the June 17 meeting or last year's meetings in order to participate. Even if you haven't been involved with this discussion process before now, it is not too late to join in.

As I have said before, I will say again that I believe that this is a critical time for our congregation. I believe Peace to be a congregation full of gifted, talented, competent, dedicated members and a congregation that has been truly blessed by God. However, it would not be difficult for us to lose our focus as a congregation and to let "the main thing" cease to be "the main thing." What is "the main thing"? Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with our community and beyond, of course. That, in all of its facets, is our Lord's agenda for our congregation.

As many of you know, in recent months, for a variety of reasons, our congregation has sadly experienced a number of internal challenges ranging from simple miscommunication to hurt feelings to resignations from key leadership and volunteer positions. These kinds of setbacks are going to occur in any congregation which includes sinful people. It is my fervent and ongoing prayer, however, that these issues will not succeed in deterring us from the work of ministry.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, there is so much more ministry to be done within and through our congregation! There are people everywhere around us who are hurting and, ultimately, who are dying without knowing Christ as their Savior. That is not even to mention all of the hurts and troubles many of our own members are experiencing in their lives. We must by the grace of God continue to band together and remember who the real enemy is. We may disagree with one another from time to time, maybe even strongly. We may hurt each other from time to time, maybe even badly. For those occasions, thanks be to God for the gifts of confession and forgiveness. But we are not enemies of one another. The enemy is outside the church! He is awfully good, however, at

sneaking his way into the church and distracting us from what is most important.

A verse from Galatians comes to mind:

*For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. – Galatians 5:13-15*

We say it up front in our mission statement: "Our mission as a caring family ..." As sinners, we don't always do a very good job of caring for one another. However, how can we effectively reach, share, and teach, unless we first make sure we get the caring part right?

If you're not going to be here on June 30, and I know that the planning process isn't for everyone, I would ask you to keep those who will be here, along with the planning process and our congregation's ministry as a whole, in your personal prayers. Please pray that the Lord will continue to bless and guide us a congregation to pursue His agenda and not our own personal agendas. Please pray that He will defend and protect us from being distracted and deterred from the work of ministry in His name. Please pray that He will help us to continue to be a caring, forgiving congregation that is eager to reach out to others with the Gospel, and to share the love of Christ, and teach the Word of God. If you don't feel you want to help plan, then please at least help by supporting our planning by praying.

This month, my family and I celebrate two full years of ministry among you and with you here at Peace. In 2014, we also celebrate a congregational anniversary of sorts – 20 years since the dedication of Peace's first church building. It is my prayer that our congregation's ministry, as well as our ministry together, is just getting started!

In His Service,

Pastor Derek Riddle

## The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard locally on Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. on 92.5 FM and at 11:00 a.m. on 1450 AM. You can also listen on-line or via podcast at [www.lutheranhour.org](http://www.lutheranhour.org). Now you can also download the new Lutheran Hour Mobile App to your mobile device. Instructions for doing so can be found at [www.lhm.org/apps/](http://www.lhm.org/apps/).

## July 2014 Schedule:

### July 6

"Real Rest for the Weary"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz  
Real rest is a gift from a gracious God Who draws us to Himself and fills the emptiness in our souls.  
(Matthew 11:25-30)

### July 13

"Truth Has a Voice"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz  
There are many destructive voices that call to us. Jesus has another word, a clear voice of life and salvation.  
(Romans 8:12-17)

### July 20

"Hope Worth Waiting For"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz  
In Christ, we wait in hope and confidence that our struggles have purpose for our life now and in the world to come.  
(Romans 8:18-27)

### July 27

"Nothing"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Ken Klaus  
Nothing in all of creation can separate you from the love of God which is yours in Jesus Christ.  
(Romans 8:38-39)

## Board of Elders

Another beautiful day the Lord has blessed us with. As I am writing this I can see this is another beautiful day the Lord has made, so let us rejoice and be glad in it!

We are living in a fast-paced world, and sometimes it seems we can't keep up with what's going on in our lives. We end up having to make choices. God gives us a choice to follow Him. Through hearing God's Word and receiving His Sacraments we do follow Him. As we hear God's Word He teaches us how we should live and love one another, as he loves us. May we all encourage one another and show our LOVE through our words and through our actions so we may be a blessing to all who God sends our way. The last part of Joshua 24:15 says, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (not just part of the day, but all day long).

## Fundraising News

BBQ Pork Sandwiches and French Fries and Hot Dogs and Brats...it's coming soon—our Nautical Festival Food booth. We need your help! If you can spare a couple hours of the weekend to help at the church or the food booth, it would be greatly appreciated. We serve food for two days at the Courthouse on Friday & Saturday, August 1 & 2. Many helping hands will make for a lighter load. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex. Thanks for all your help!

## Stewardship Corner

"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" asked the rich young ruler. Jesus said, "You know the commandments." And he replied, "All these I have kept from my youth." And Jesus said to him, "One thing you lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (Luke 18:18–22).

As we listen to this, one question is raised in our minds: Is Jesus speaking to us also or only to the rich young ruler? In other words, is Jesus telling us to sell all that we have and give it to the poor?"

As good Lutherans, we answer, No! But why? Why should we not sell all that we have and distribute it to the poor? The simplest explanation is this: If we sold everything we have, our wife and our children would be neglected. In other words, to sell everything we have and give it to the poor would ignore, even abandon, those whom God has placed in our care. Our money, everything we have, is not to be used solely for the church. But that doesn't mean it isn't to be used for the purpose God intends.

Everyone has three stations in life, three spheres in which we live and are to be of service to our neighbors. These stations are the church, the family, and society. We are members of all three of these by birth. We are born into the church by water and the Word of God, and our duties to others in the church arise from either our birth into the church or the birth of others by baptism into it. We are born into a family and our duties to others stem from either our birth into that family or the birth of others into our family. Finally, we are born into society, which is simply a further extension of our birth into our family. The duties we have toward other members of society come from either our birth or the birth of others into the same society.

All that we have are to be pressed into service for the church, the family, and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and our duties toward them would falter. So consider your life and all that you have in light of these three stations. You pay taxes to support and help those in society. You save for college for your children, provide food, clothing, and shelter for the members of your family. But the one that is usually thought of last is the church. Since the needs of the family and society are more immediate, the church is often given what is left over. This is not how it should be. Rather, we are to give of our first fruits, from off the top, the best, even as Abel gave the best of his flock.

This requires forethought and intent. It means that you sit down and make a plan of what you will give from the beginning. It means sticking to it even when it seems that there are other more immediate and pressing things.

Why? Because all that we have and all that we are is given to us by our gracious and giving God. He spared no expense for us and our salvation. He gave up His Son into death so that our sins are forgiven, and we will live. What is more, He provides for all that we need for this body and life. And our lives in this world, among these three spheres of the church, the family, and society, are to mirror the generosity of the one who gave us life in all three by birth.

Don't let the church, your divine family, be ignored or even be an afterthought. It is nurturing you, bringing you up in salvation by Word and Sacrament for eternal life.

Taken from [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org)

## July Birthdays

Kathy Schalk	7/1
Austin Fenstermaker	7/2
David Grulke	7/2
Joshua Taylor	7/3
Kelly Bruning	7/4
Anna Catalano	7/6
Betty Claus	7/6
Jenny Fenstermaker	7/8
Tom Dullack	7/9
Carl Grulke	7/9
Connor Muller	7/10
Marsha Rex	7/10
Tom Rex	7/10
Daryl Rhode	7/12
Matthew Mertz	7/14
Robert Noffze	7/16
Jonah Riddle	7/17
Amie Grulke	7/18
Marilyn Dimick	7/19
Dan Rothe	7/19
Jane Zielaskowski	7/19
Erica Jumper	7/20
Donna Kaski	7/20
Ed Lijewski	7/20
Pastor Riddle	7/21
Hope Coolman	7/27
Sue Fuhrman	7/27
Brooke Roeske	7/27
Peggy Zampich	7/29
Tyler Zempel	7/29
Eric Domke	7/30
Kay Spomer	7/31

## July Anniversaries

	Date	Yrs
John & Jane Zielaskowski	7/3	10
Dennis & Julie Schwiesow	7/5	34
Jake & Tiffany Yarch	7/6	1
Larry & Peggy Schaudt	7/10	15
Trevor & Kelly Bullock	7/14	2
Bob & Sharon Loomer	7/15	14
Terry & Linda Scranton	7/15	47
Roger & Sharon Hein	7/21	25
Henry & Debbie Mayer	7/22	14
Scott & Mary Jo Hein	7/24	21
Ray & Renee Roeske	7/31	21

If you notice your name is missing from the birthday or anniversary sections, please let the church office know so we can update our records... and celebrate these milestones with you!!

### Weird Animals VBS 2014

July 8-10

5:45-8:15 PM

At Weird Animals VBS, kids will learn that God has filled the world with a lot of crazy creatures... including them! When kids feel weird, different, or even lost in a crowd—nothing compares to the extraordinary love of Jesus. This VBS is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear and touch. Games, skits, Bible songs, and snacks are just a few other activities that will be taking place. Children will also participate in an outreach project called Projects-with-a-Purpose that will let the kids share Jesus' love in our community.

Parents, Grandparents, and Friends are invited to join us for a CELEBRATION on Thursday evening starting at 6:30 PM. The children will be sharing a high-energy celebration of Jesus' love you won't want to miss. An ice cream social will follow the program. Everyone is welcome!!

To make VBS a success....we need YOU!!!!

**CREW LEADERS NEEDED FOR VBS!!** Looking for volunteers grades 7-12 that would be interested in helping out. No prior experience required. You just needs lots of energy and a positive attitude!

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!! NO** prior experience required. Looking for anyone interested in helping out with snacks, games, projects, registration, or photography.

### **FOOD/MONETARY DONATIONS**

- Donation sheets are located in the narthex by the display—please look for those!!

### **DECORATIONS NEEDED!!**

Anyone with vines, ferns or other greenery (think "jungle") that we could borrow for VBS would also be appreciated. Please bring to church by Sunday, July 6. Set-up for VBS is at 6 PM on Monday, July 7—please help if you can!

If you are interested in volunteering in any way, please call the church office at (989) 734-7621 or Mary Jo Hein at (989) 370-3549. See you at VBS!!!

