



Peace Lutheran Church

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What's So "New" About A "New Year"?

January 2014

It happens the same way every year. On December 31st, usually after much partying and drinking, people anxiously await the midnight hour. Many turn on their televisions to watch the festivities at Times Square in New York City. Soon, it is less than a minute until the dawn of a new year. People count it down. The ball drops. And people shout loudly, "Happy New Year!"

Have you ever wondered why we do this? Perhaps such a festivity is only an excuse to drink and party. Do we really expect change to happen just because of an arbitrary division of time between 11:59 PM on December 31st and 12:01 AM on January 1st? What exactly will be "new" about a "new year"?

Honesty compels us to admit that much will not be new in the new year. There will be a lot that is still the same as the previous year. Not all of that will be good. People will still suffer in the new year. There will likely be economic crises that leave people in need. There will be natural disasters – floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and the like – which will destroy property and leave people devastated. There will be emotional upheaval that will dissolve marriages, tear apart families, and leave people sad and depressed.

People will still die in the new year. There will be diseases and accidents that take people's lives suddenly. There will likely be more mass shootings, terrorist attacks, and wars that will take people's lives unexpectedly. And, even if people manage to escape all of these terrors, people will still grow old and die. Even if death is expected, it is no less easy to accept.

All of these bad things remain the same because that which caused them – sin – remains the same. Even though Jesus has conquered sin and death by His death on the cross and His resurrection from death to life, the effects of sin on our broken world remain until our Lord returns in glory.

Does that mean we simply have to "suck it up" and endure the same old suffering without hope or relief? Not at all. There is still something "new" about the "new year" which Scripture reveals to us. The book of Lamentations in the Old Testament was written by the prophet Jeremiah to "lament" the unspeakable horror in the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet, in the midst of this suffering and death, Jeremiah wrote, "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning, great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Strictly speaking, God's mercy is not new. His mercy has been present from the beginning when He promised Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior from sin. His mercy brought many people throughout the centuries to faith in that promise. His mercy has allowed us and many others to believe in the fulfillment of that promise in Jesus Christ. By His mercy, we have forgiveness, new life, and the promise of everlasting life with Him.

However, His "mercies", that is, the proofs of His love, are new to us every day. The Lord provides relief and blessing to us every day. If you look carefully, you will see them: a financial need met, an emotional crisis resolved, a disease healed, protection from a disaster experienced, death averted, and so on. Sometimes these "mercies" are spectacular and unexpected. Sometimes these "mercies" are very ordinary and unnoticed. None of these things are by chance. All are a result of the Lord's steadfast love for His people.

No one can promise a "happy" new year, free from trouble and suffering. But, in the midst of suffering and sadness, we can rejoice in the "newness" of the coming year. The Lord's mercies – the proofs of His love - are new to us every morning and are shown to us in every conceivable way. As you begin 2014, pay close attention and let yourself be surprised by God's mercies!

Have a Happy "New" Year,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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TO

All of the adults who stayed and played with the kids during the ski/swim retreat weekend.
Everyone who helped decorate the church for the Christmas season.
Everyone who went caroling.
Everyone who donated items for the Gift of Love Tree.
Members of Christ for the Deaf, LWML, and the TOPS group for sponsoring the soup suppers during Advent.
The children for their Christmas Eve service.
Val Martin and Becky Schlund for organizing and leading the Children’s Service.
The adult choir for enhancing our Christmas Eve 11 PM worship service.
Jill Keil and Val Martin for leading the adult choir.
Val Martin, Gloria Creek and Karen Schaefer for playing the organ and piano during all of our worship services.
All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school and Bible class on Sundays.
Idell Croskrey for changing the banners and paraments.
Everyone on the Prayer Chain for their time and prayers.
Everyone who has donated treats for our fellowship time.
All of the men who volunteer to usher.
Everyone who counts the offering.
Cheri Magnuson for cleaning the Communion linens.

This list is not inclusive. Please accept our apologies if we have missed giving you credit for serving the Lord in any fashion. We know that the Lord knows your service to Him.

Ladies Bible study schedule

The FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS will not meet for Bible study during January.

However, Assisted Living Ministry with hymn singing and a devotion continues as usual with men joining the women in this activity. Always feel welcome to drop in anytime your schedule allows. On Tuesday, January 14th they will meet at 11:00 a.m. at Bee Hive Home #1, 2816 15th Ave So. Friday, January 31st at 11:45 a.m. the group will gather for a no host lunch at the Bar S Restaurant, 5100 North Star Blvd. Afterward many of the group will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So. The residents at the Bee Hive and Highgate are quite housebound in winter and especially appreciate singing hymns and hearing God’s Word. Come along and make the activity even brighter with your smile!

“Life Quotes” from Lutherans for Life

“Yes, children are sinful—just like their parents and grandparents. But baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God sees us as His adopted sons and daughters in Christ. Jesus won for God’s children the privilege of becoming heirs of the heavenly kingdom. This not only bestows value but defines purpose.” *Linda D. Bartlett, www.titus2-4life.org* – A “Life Quote” from Lutherans For Life · www.lutheransforlife.org

“What work has God prepared for you? (Ephesians 2:10) Is it helping a woman who is pregnant and alone? Is it ministering to someone who has had an abortion and can’t believe that God would forgive her? Is it feeding the hungry? ... Whatever God has called you to do, do it with joy.” *Kay L. Meyer, former director of development for Lutherans For Life* – A “Life Quote” from Lutherans For Life · www.lutheransforlife.org

Finances

The sale of the parsonage was final on November 26, 2013! So our income in November, 2013 was \$142,684.04 and our expenses for November were \$11,792.16. We were also able to pay the Lutheran Church Extension Fund loan in full. The balance in the checking account is now \$107,674.65 and no longer in the red! Praise be to God!

LWML

♥ **Thank you to everyone who donated gifts for the Gift of Love Tree.** Thank you, **Elsie Huss**, for organizing the tree. Thank you, elders, for delivering the gifts.



♥ **Thank you to everyone who helped in any way at the soup supper.** The funds raised went to My Neighbor In Need.

♥ **During the month of January**, we will have a Baby Shower for Denise Combs who gives baby layettes to the mothers at Benefis who have babies but have no clothes to put on them. You may bring new or clean, gently used baby items and place them in the box provided. We will also be making fleece blankets that will be given to Denise Combs.

♥ **Our next meeting will be Saturday, January 11 at 10 a.m. with a Bible study. Please note the day and time change!!** We will be making fleece blankets for the layettes that Denise Combs makes for the hospital. If you want to make a fleece blanket, bring 1 and ¼ yards of any print fleece and we will show you how to make the blankets. There will also be Bible study and a business meeting. All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to join us. Don't forget your Mite Boxes!

♥ **Remember to bring your new soap for Soap Sunday on the second Sunday of each month.** Soap collected will go to Lutheran World Relief. Thanks for your continued support.



January Anniversaries

Jan. 14 Garry and Ruth Denning

Baptismal Anniversaries

January	1	Jane Hering
	1	Jessica Eby
	3	Mitch Martin
	4	Dan Martin
	4	Dennis Martin
	5	Ann Schuman
	6	Jeanette Talley
	11	Nathan Rubino
	11	Gary Lux
	15	Bill Neuman
	15	Idell Croskrey
	16	James Onstad
	19	Shirley Smelser
	19	Deloris Brown
	22	Ken Rubino
	22	Rick Bricks
	26	Ken Meske
	26	Matt Steffens
	26	Mikaela Grove
	27	Ryan Anderson
	28	Kaye Franczyk



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

John Birkholz
Sandi Graf
Jane Hering
Hank Politz
Judy VanVleet

Our members who are away serving in the military are **Kurt Mueller and Michael Lewis**.

2014 Offering envelopes

Offering envelopes have been placed in your mailboxes for this year. In an effort to save some money, we have taken leftover envelopes from past years and relabeled them to be used for 2014. Please let Richard Schottey know if you want envelopes and haven't gotten them in the past, or if you receive them but don't want them anymore. Thank you to Carlene Schottey for all of her work in relabeling the envelopes.

Family Night resumes

Family Night will start up again on January 8th. We will have a sandwich bar themed potluck at 6:00 PM. Bible Study for all ages will follow at 6:30 PM. Bread and sandwich meats are provided. Please feel free to bring cheese, chips, salads or desserts. Join us for food, fun, and spiritual growth!



Applying Biblical Teachings

God made it all. God owns it all. This is a simple biblical truth we have often forgotten. Yet, it is one of the most important in understanding the relationship that exists between God and man.

In Genesis chapter one, we are told, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” In Exodus 19:5, the Lord said to Moses, “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” In Psalm 50, we read, “. . . for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.” And in his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul echoes the Psalmist in Chapter 10, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.”

God has never relinquished ownership of His creation. When man fell, God immediately put into place a plan of salvation. “. . . when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons” (Gal. 4:4-5). Christ came into the world to save the world. He kept the law perfectly in the place of everyone. He suffered, died and rose from the dead. Now, God has “. . . seated him [Christ] at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church” (Eph. 1:20-22).

God truly owns and cares for his creation. He is the Proprietor. He gives us blessings for our needs, for our use, for our enjoyment and to do good to others.

By grace, for Christ’s sake, we are God’s people. Through Word and Sacrament, the Spirit nourishes and strengthens us in faith and life. As God’s people, we live lives of good works. This includes the use of our money to glorify God and serve our neighbor. By the power of the Gospel, we are able to do this freely, generously and joyfully.

2014 Events Calendar available in the library

In an effort to help people in various groups involved in the church plan events without conflicting with other events, we have placed a large 2014 calendar in the library with events written on it for the coming year. If your group is planning something and wants to know if there is anything else planned for that day or weekend, please take a look at it and write your groups information on there. This calendar includes daily events for Peace Lutheran as well as events for the LCMS Montana District and LWML Montana District. Thanks so much for your help in the planning of serving the Lord here at Peace Lutheran!