



## Peace Lutheran Church

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January, 2016

### Happy New Year?

January 2016

Happy New Year! You have probably been saying that familiar phrase or having it said to you a lot in the past week or so. Do you actually believe it when it is said *by* you? Do you actually believe it when it is said *to* you? What reason do we possibly have for thinking that 2016 will be a happy year? What possible basis do we have for wishing a happy new year to anyone? Or is this just something we all say with a wink and a nudge but know it's not true.

There are plenty of reasons to expect that 2016 will be filled with unhappiness. You don't even have to be a pessimist to acknowledge that. Just read the newspaper to see all the unhappiness that will be present in the world in the coming year: terrorist attacks throughout the world; dangerous, life-taking weather; poor economic times; and so on. The list could go on and on.

There will also be a lot of personal unhappiness that each of us will experience in different ways: money problems, illnesses, death of loved ones and family members. This list could go on and on, too.

We may feel that there will be no end to unhappiness, pain, and suffering. We may think it insensitive or even cruel to wish people a "happy new year" with all the bad stuff that could be coming in 2016. So why do we do it? Why do we wish "happy new year" to each other? Why *can* we wish "happy new year" to each other? Because, despite all of the unhappiness that exists in the world, there is still happiness coming in 2016.

The Christmas season reminds us of this. The message of the angel to the shepherds was, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." The angel promised more than happy feelings, but a sense of joy. It would be not a little occasional joy but *great* joy. And it wouldn't be limited to only the privileged people, but was for all people.

What was the "great joy" that was coming? The angel says, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." The answer may seem like a children's sermon where the answer is always, "Jesus". Here, the answer to source of happiness and joy is not money, possessions, friendships, romantic love, medicine, health or any other thing. The answer truly *is* Jesus.

The reason that we lack happiness and joy is not due to a lack of "stuff". That's what the devil wants you to think so that he can get you busy chasing after stuff and keep you from being truly happy. The reason why we lack happiness and joy is due to a lack of relationship with the God who created us. Sin has destroyed that relationship and therefore the ultimate cause of all the unhappiness in the world.

Christmas brings us happiness now and joy for the new year, not because of the presents, the parties, or the presence of family and friends, but because Christmas brings us "a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Jesus came to restore our relationship with God by living the perfect life which was required of us and that we failed to do; by paying the price on the cross for our sins which we owed but could not do. Trusting in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, we have His forgiveness for all our sins, His own holiness in our account before God, and a new relationship with God through Christ.

We have joy now and will have a happy new year in 2016. This doesn't mean that there will be no suffering, pain, lack of material goods, or loss. We still live in a world infected by sin. It does mean that, despite all of these bad things, we rejoice in being right with God. We have God's forgiveness for all of our sins in 2016. We will have God's Word of promise and encouragement as well as His gifts in the Sacraments through all of 2016. We have God's presence and protection in every situation in 2016.

So, Happy New Year in 2016! (And I'm not afraid to say it!)

In Christ,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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TO**

**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 Children's Service on December 20.

**Val Martin and Jennifer Lewis** for organizing and leading the Children's Service.

**The adult choirs** of Peace and Trinity and Trinity's bell choir for a lovely concert.

**Val Martin and Judy Boyce** for leading the adult choirs.

**Val Martin, and Gloria Creek** 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 Lord has blessed us with another new year, 2016! May the Epiphany season be a time of enlightenment and enrichment, as we bring in the New Year participating in God's sacraments and His Word. The FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS invite all women to join them as they continue their study of 1 CORINTHIANS. Join them for Bible study January 8th, 15th, and 29th from 1-3 p.m. at the home of Ann Nimmick, 2327 15th Ave So.

Assisted Living Ministry with a devotion and hymn singing will meet at the following locations. Tuesday, January 12th at 11 a.m. ladies and gentlemen will meet at Bee Hive Home #2, 2816 15th Ave So. On Friday, January 22nd at 11:45 a.m. the group will gather for a no host lunch at Jaker's, 1500 10th Ave So. Afterward many will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So. On a cold January day come and spread some of God's love and warmth with these residents!

## 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 will go toward the purchase of new red/white reversible paraments.

♥ **During the month of January**, we will have a Baby Shower for Denice 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 no sew fleece blankets that will be given to Denice Combs.

♥ **Our next meeting will be Saturday, January 9 at 10 a.m. with a Bible study. Please note the day and time change!!** We will be making no sew fleece blankets for the layettes that Denice 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. Remember 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  
 3 Mitch Martin  
 4 Dan Martin  
 4 Dennis Martin  
 11 Gary Lux  
 15 Bill Neuman  
 15 Idell Croskrey  
 16 James Onstad  
 19 Shirley Smelser  
 19 Deloris Brown  
 26 Ken Meske  
 26 Mikaela Grove  
 28 Kaye Franczyk



**Deacon for January is Mitch Martin**

### Ushers for January

3 Pat Lewis  
 Darrell Greenwood  
 10 Lee Henselin  
 Arnie Gidlow  
 17 Arnie Gidlow  
 Tyler Denning  
 24 Bruce Clark  
 Eric Fletcher  
 31 Matt Schlund  
 Bruce Clark

## Family Night resumes

Family Night will start up again on January 6<sup>th</sup>. We will have a sandwich bar themed potluck at 6:00 PM. Bible Study for all ages will follow at 6:30 PM. Join us for food, fun, and spiritual growth!



### INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

**John Birkholz**

**Tami Birkholz**, John's sister-in-law who is battling a rare skin tissue disorder

**June Foard**, June Meier's daughter

**Jane Hering**

**Bill and Dorothy Neuman**

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

## 2016 Offering envelopes

Offering envelopes have been placed in your mailboxes for this year. Please let Barbara Clark know if you want envelopes and haven't gotten them in the past, or if you receive them but don't want them anymore.

| JANUARY 1 - NOVEMBER 30, 2015 |                     |                      |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| CHURCH INCOME                 | YTD ACTUAL          | YTD BUDGET           |
| Regular Offerings             | \$118,252.85        | \$ 122,210.00        |
| Other Income                  | \$ 5,166.98         | \$ 990.00            |
| <b>Total Income</b>           | <b>\$123,419.83</b> | <b>\$ 123,200.00</b> |
| Church Expenses               |                     |                      |
| Personnel/Benefits            | \$ 73,910.24        | \$ 73,736.63         |
| Administrative                | \$ 6,913.25         | \$ 7,892.50          |
| Buildings & Grounds           | \$ 21,211.27        | \$ 22,137.61         |
| Missions                      | \$ 10,394.90        | \$ 10,541.63         |
| Christian Education           | \$ 3,555.61         | \$ 4,812.61          |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>         | <b>\$115,985.27</b> | <b>\$ 119,120.98</b> |
| <b>Net Church Income</b>      | <b>\$ 7,434.56</b>  | <b>\$ 4,079.02</b>   |

## Applying Biblical Teachings

Jesus had commanded His disciples to go and preach among the Jews. As proof of their divine message, He gave them great authority and the power to heal, to raise the dead and to drive out the demons of darkness. However, they were not to use this power for personal gain, and Jesus followed His instruction with this word of warning: “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8).

With these words, Jesus sets the tone for all of Christendom. His followers are not to use the Gospel message they proclaim for personal gain. Rather, they are to have the nature of a servant, with Christ as their model, giving to those around them. In fact, great shame has fallen on those who have sought to use God’s power for personal gain and position or to promote a church for status and profitability.

By His grace, and through the authority and power of the Word, God grants His power to those called by the Gospel. This power is great, for the Gospel moves and changes sinful hearts. Just as we have received God’s power freely, we also freely share the Gospel message with those around us and expect nothing in return.

With the words of Jesus ringing in our ears, “Freely you have received, freely give,” we are moved by the Holy Spirit to freely and gladly share the Gospel message. In Christian liberty, we have chosen various ways to do this. Those of like mind have gathered to form a fellowship or a congregation, and these congregations have been joined together to form a church body. Church buildings, schools and seminaries have been built as a testimony to the Gospel message. We have called pastors, employed teachers and commissioned missionaries to proclaim Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Radio and television programs have been produced, along with countless advertisements, to proclaim the good news of salvation. Organizations within the church body have been formed with one goal in mind — that of telling everyone of Jesus’ love for them.

We rejoice in the proclamation of the Gospel and support Christian service for the benefit of all. Because God has freely given to us, and because of His work in our hearts, we freely give. In loving service and without any expectation of gain, we give money, use our abilities and volunteer our time to freely give the Gospel message as it has been given to us.

## **2016 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 2016 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!