



Peace Lutheran Church

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January, 2012

On New Year's Resolutions

January 2012

A new year is upon us. Some people take this time to reflect on their behavior in the past year and make "new year's resolutions" about behavioral changes for the new year. Usually, after the Christmas feasting, the resolutions have to do with eating less or exercising more.

How do those "resolutions" work out for you? Usually, they work for a week or two. We engage in the new behavior for awhile and then we fall back into the old behavior. Why is that? It seems that willpower alone is not sufficient in transforming our lives and behavior.

Now is a good time for us, as a congregation, to reflect on our behavior in the past year as we prepare for the challenges of the new year. We face challenges in reaching out with the Gospel to our community. We face challenges in reaching in with the Gospel to inactive members of our congregation. We face serious financial challenges in funding this ministry.

What should we do? Can we find a program or come up with some gimmick which will turn things around quickly? Should we make resolutions to pray more or give more? Such spiritual resolutions will work no better than secular resolutions. [This is a test to see who reads the newsletter. Tell Pastor Schlund you saw this, but don't tell anyone else about it.] And it has nothing to do with being lazy or insincere. As sinful human beings, it is not within our nature to improve spiritually or even to seek to improve spiritually. Our sinful nature induces us to continue in past sinful behavior.

Can our congregation improve or are we doomed to struggle even more in 2012? Jesus gives us the answer. He said, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:4-5)

When we are "in Christ", we can bear much fruit. How, then, can we be "in Christ"? It is when we are where Christ has promised to be – His Word and His Sacraments. When we are in His Word and faithfully participating in His Sacraments we will bear much fruit. We can grow spiritually, numerically, and financially. Apart from Christ, we can do none of those things, regardless of any programs or gimmicks we might have.

The New Year is a good time to decide to be in worship more. It is a good time to join a Bible Class. It is a good time to decide to read the Word of God outside of the church building, personally and with your family. It is a good time to receive the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion more often. His Word and Sacrament will change our thinking and our behavior. When we are in Christ like this, there is no telling what fruit we can and will bear in our lives and in the life of our congregation in 2012!

In Christ, our Epiphany Savior,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

THANKS

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 for organizing and leading the Children's Service.

The adult choir for enhancing our Christmas Eve 11 PM worship service.

Jill Keil 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, Bible class, and midweek classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.

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.

Cindy Greenwood for decorating the bulletin boards.

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.



Thank you to everyone who so graciously helped me with the Children's Christmas Eve service. Thank you to Kristen, Angie, and Ann for their assistance with the children. Thank you to Becky for helping the children with the song "Away in the Manger". Thank you to Karen for accompanying.

And thank you to Loretta, Char, Linda, and Brook for getting the bags ready for the children. It was a pleasure to work with each and every one of you. But the biggest thank you I offer is to all of the children who proclaimed the message of the birth of Jesus our Saviour and you did it beautifully in word and song.

Val Martin

Ladies Bible study schedule

Happy 2012!! Have your activities slowed down after the holidays? Please consider joining the FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS as they continue their study of the BOOKS of JEREMIAH and LAMENTATIONS.

Bible study will be held January 6th, 13th, and 20th from 1:15 - 3:15 p.m. at the home of Marge Johnsten, 3000 8th Av So.

Assisted Living Ministry with hymn singing and an Epiphany devotion will be held at the following locations. On Tuesday, January 10th ladies will meet at 11 am at Bee Hive Home #1, 2824 15th Ave So. Friday, January 27th they will meet at 11:45 a.m. for a no host lunch at Goode's restaurant, 2500 10th Ave So. Following lunch they will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So. Warm up your January by joining the singing with these assisted living residents!

Finances

The year to date budgeted amount through November 30, 2011 is **\$145,047.84**. What was given through November 30, 2011 is **\$125,793.24**. **We are short \$19,254.60**. Our Mission Commitment to the District is short by \$5,063.98. The amount in **Lutheran Church Extension Fund** as of November 30, 2011 is **\$22,433.04**. **LCEF loan balance as of November 30, 2011 is \$87,197.52**.

Christmas "Un decorating"

Be watching for more details about UN-decorating the church! Sometime after Epiphany...January 6th...we will be removing the Christmas decorations.

Snow removal needed

The Board of Directors at Peace is looking for someone to remove snow from the sidewalks at Peace when it snows. They are willing to pay \$10 per hour to the person or people who are willing to be sure the snow is removed in a timely manner each time it snows. In order to be in compliance with city ordinances, and because we have functions at the church each day of the week, this needs to be done any time during the week that it might snow, not just Sunday mornings. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Amy Dorr at 899-4050.

LWML

- ♥ **Thank you to everyone who donated gifts for the Gift of Love Tree.** Thank you, **Elsie Huss**, for organizing the tree. Thank you, **Pastor Schlund and family**, for delivering the gifts.
- ♥ **Thank you to everyone who helped in any way at the Soup Supper.** The funds raised went to Peace's mission commitment to the district.
- ♥ **During the month of January, we will have a Baby Shower for Life Way Pregnancy Services here in Great Falls.** You may bring new or clean, gently used baby items and place them in the box provided.
- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 10 at 6:30 p.m. with a Bible study.** All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and join us! We will also be making fleece blankets that will be given to Denise Combs, who hands out baby items to women who have babies at the hospital and have nothing to dress their babies in to take them home. Bring 1 and ¼ yards of fleece and good scissors to make a blanket. All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and 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	Patsy Zvara
	1	Jane Hering
	1	Tom Stevens
	1	Jessica Eby
	3	Mitch Martin
	4	Dan Martin
	4	Dennis Martin
	5	Ann Schuman
	6	Jeanette Talley
	11	Nathan Rubino
	11	Gary Lux
	11	Tammy Drummond
	12	Caleb Giles
	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



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:
The following people are experiencing health problems:

John Birkholz
Esther Largent
Patsy Zvara

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

Family Night resumes

Family Night will start up again on January 4th. We will have a "general potluck" at 6:00 PM. Bible Study for all ages will follow at 6:30 PM. Join us for food, fun, and spiritual growth!

2012 Offering envelopes

The offering envelopes for 2012 have been placed in your mailboxes at church. If you did not get them and would like to have some, talk with Richard Schottery. If you got them and don't want them, please drop them off to the church office. Please make sure that you use only the new ones now and not the ones from last year as the numbers change each year.

“Life Quotes” from Lutherans for Life

“Unless we recognize that each individual is irrepeatable and valuable by virtue of simply being conceived human, we cannot begin to talk about human rights. This includes the right to be born ... True justice should be for each human being, visible and invisible, young and old, disabled and able, to enjoy fully their right to life ... color, sex, intelligence, economic circumstances, physical or mental disability should not be used as an excuse to deprive a person of life.” *Dr. Margaret Ogola, award winning author, medical doctor, human rights advocate, Kenyan pro-life humanitarian* – A “Life Quote” from Lutherans For Life · www.lutheransforlife.org

Pictorial Directory pictures taken in January

Peace Lutheran Church’s pictorial directory would not be complete without you! Pictures for the directory will be taken **January 12 – 14, 2012 at the church**. You receive a \$25 portrait gift certificate and a free pictorial directory just for having your picture taken. There is no purchase necessary. Even if you are not interested in purchasing photos, please come and be a part of the directory so that it is complete. If you have not signed up for pictures yet, you may call Charlene Schottey at home, 761-7187, to schedule your appointment. Thank you for your cooperation!

Lutheranism 101 begins on January 4th

Lutheranism 101 is the name of our new Adult Bible Study on Wednesday evenings. It will examine Lutheran beliefs and heritage in a fresh way. If you are a lifelong Lutheran searching for more information or new to Lutheranism looking to understand what we believe, this book will be your guide. It is written in an easy-to-read conversational style with short articles, side-bar features, and some humor. We will begin this study on Wednesday, January 4th.

New Sunday Morning Bible Study

There is a lot of talk these days about what worship is and what worship is not, what should be in worship and what should not be in worship, and how worship should change and how worship should stay the same. The Sunday morning Adult Bible Class will study the topic of worship in a 12 part video series by Dr. Arthur Just of Concordia Theological Seminary, called *Liturgy: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*. Join us on January 8th as we begin this new study.

