



# Tidings of Peace

August 2021

Volume XXV11. Number 8

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church ♦ 1747 W. Milham Avenue, Portage, MI 49024 ♦ 269-343-3453 ♦ popportage.org

*"Touched by  
the Gospel,  
we seek to be  
instruments of  
God's Peace,  
for the sake  
of the world."*

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## Pastor's Page

### Approaching the Promised Land, Part II

*Above all, trust in the slow work of God.*

*We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.*

*We should like to skip the intermediate stages.*

*We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.*

*And yet it is the law of all progress  
that it is made by passing through some stages of instability –  
and that it may take a very long time.*

*And so I think it is with you;  
your ideas mature gradually – let them grow,  
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.*

*Don't try to force them on,  
as though you could be today what time  
(that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will)  
will make of you tomorrow.*

*Only God could say what this new spirit  
gradually forming within you will be.*

*Give Our Lord the benefit of believing  
that his hand is leading you,  
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself  
in suspense and incomplete.*

*Patient Trust by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ*

Last month I wrote to you about liminal space, this time between where we were where we are going, who we were and who we are becoming. I hope you've had a chance to talk with others about the questions I posed. I'd love to learn more about what you discovered. I believe we are still in that liminal space, so let's keep the questions and conversation flowing.

This month, I'd like you to consider a time when you made an important contribution to our congregation – through your personality, your perspectives, your skills, your activities, your character. Don't be humble. This is important to our life together as people of faith.



## Pastor's Page Cont.

What was happening when you made this contribution? Who else was involved? How did you make a difference?

Next, I want you to think about an important spiritual experience you've had – a growth in belief or a step of faith that has occurred in your life in this congregation. Describe what, when, how, and where this happened.

Ask these questions at committee meetings and small group gatherings and around the dinner table or with people you meet before and after worship. Share them with me, too! I can't wait to hear your stories! Call the office, text my personal number (it's in the directory), or e-mail me at [pastorrachel@popportage.org](mailto:pastorrachel@popportage.org).

Shalom,

Pastor Rachel

## What's Happening at POP!



### Prince of Peace/Community Picnic Sunday, August 15, 12:30 pm

There will be one *outdoor* worship service on August 15 at 11 a.m. so everyone can stay and welcome our Portage neighbors for a picnic at 12:30. We will be offering beef and vegan hotdogs and prepackaged sides. Please join us! We're looking for one or two corn-hole toss games. If you have one, please let Tamara in the office know.

### Kayak the Kalamazoo River Saturday, September 4, 10 a.m.

Watch for details about a family-friendly day at Jim and Sandy Fosters' home kayaking the Kalamazoo River and staying for an outdoor picnic

### Five-Senses Garden – Details TBD

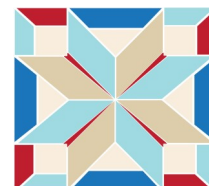


Have you ever visited the Five Senses Garden in Kalamazoo?

The heart of the garden is a series of three circular "rooms" connected by a winding path that leads the visitor through the five senses from smell to touch, on to hearing, taste and finally sight when you leave the constraint of the walled rooms. Sculptures add interest and benches allow for rest and contemplation.

### Quilters! We will be meeting on Tuesday, August 3 and Tuesday, August 17 at 9:30am.

As always, pick-up/drop-off times continue to be available during office hours. We look forward to seeing everyone in August  
Questions: Sheryl Swodzinski  
267-6274.



### Bunko Tuesday, August 10 @ 12:30 PM

No lunch, just Bunko! Meet in the Social Hall and Flex Room. Contact Carla Hannemann at 269/216-3498 with questions.

Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet

**Tuesday, August 17, 11:45,**

at Buddy's, 5314 S. Westnedge.

Join us for good food and fellowship!

### Zoom Mid Week Bible Study

If you are interested in participating  
Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.

Email Pastor Rachel & she will send you an invitation. They use the Augsburg Adult Study. The focus for this quarter is: *Confident Hope* Contact the office to make arrangements to get a study book.



### WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP . . .

WSG-Will resume in September. Contact Diane Snyder, [snyder1149@gmail.com](mailto:snyder1149@gmail.com) for details.

### Book Club

We will not meet in August.



### Social Concerns update -

The next two months are pretty busy for the servants of PoP. You can help out in any way. Just contact any Social Concerns team member and check out the Sign-Up Genius. Remember, it takes our "Prince of Peace Village" to make an important impact on our community and in the world.

**August 25 - Project Connect,**  
Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds, Noon-4pm.

**What is it?** - A large free event to benefit the marginalized population of the Kalamazoo area. 50 or more booths and activities, including fresh food distribution, clothing selection, housing information, medical advice, vaccinations, hair cuts and much more. PoP will be providing a free store of essential personal and household supplies.

**What can you do?** - Prepare supplies, set up free store, work at the store on Project Connect Day.

**August 29 -4pm. Discover Open Doors Event -**  
"Change Gonna Come, the Music of Sam Cooke"

**What is it?** - Free Concert in Bronson Park. The Kalamazoo Bach Festival and Open Doors have teamed up to present a powerful experience of artistic expression and an opportunity to support and better understand

our local housing crisis. Change Gonna Come is a musical theatre production portraying the life and songs of soul singer Sam Cooke. Baritone Jerome Collins will perform along with Kalamazoo's favorite jazz instrumentalists and back up singers led by Bach Festival's Music Director Chris Ludwa.

**What can you do?** - Attend the Concert and donate to Open Doors. See Claudia Lee for donation information or email Stacy Vest, Development Director: [svest@odkzoo.com](mailto:svest@odkzoo.com) or text ODK to 56512

**September 12 - Noon to 2pm.**  
God's Work. Our Hands. Day, at PoP.

**What is it?** This is our opportunity to serve Lutheran World Relief as a community. We will assemble and pack Health Kits and School Backpacks, work on LWR quilts, Plyarn mats for homeless/needy people in Africa, work in the Jubilee Garden, work in the Refugee closet, help our refugee family, and prepare Community meals for PoP members and friends. We'll also enjoy our annual Sloppy Joe lunch provided by the Fellowship team before we start our work.

**What can you do?** - Donate supplies to make the LWR health and Backpack Kits. The Sign up genius will be up very soon. Sign up to work at God's Work, Our Hands Day. Help make and serve the lunch.

## Refugee Update

### New Friends Welcomed to Prince of Peace

On July 8, POP volunteers welcomed a young family from the Congo to our church. The family consists of a single Mom, Asende, and seven children (2 girls, 5 boys): Bilali (16), Anastazia (14), Seleman (12), Ofise (12), Kisubi (8), Safi (6), Ibrahim (4). Led by the caseworker from Samaritas, the volunteers have been very busy helping the family move, register for school, get their Michigan I.D.'s, and much more.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has been the scene for over 25 years of the world's worst violence and human rights abuses. The Congolese refugees are part of a population of more than 3 million Congolese refugees and internally displaced persons forced by war and unrest to flee their homes. Want to learn more, visit [www.culturalorientation.net](http://www.culturalorientation.net)

The family speaks Swahili but with the use of language apps and translators provided by Samaritas, the volunteers will be able to communicate with the family. Language tutoring has already started. Their new home is located in the Edison Neighborhood so they will be able to take advantage of the many services offered by the Kalamazoo Public Schools.

Ways the congregation can support the family will be outlined in upcoming newsletters and the Peace Procs. If you would like to help with any of the projects such as a clothing drive, call Joyce Stout at 269-668-6381. We welcome this family and appreciate the challenges they will be facing in the upcoming months. Next month meet the volunteers who are working directly with the family.

## Retreat Opportunity

### A Bottle Full of Tears

A 4-week online retreat on moving through grief

**Wednesdays in September (8, 15, 22, 29)**

Led by Debbie Eisenbise, Spiritual Director and End-of-Life Doula

For more information and to register, go to: <https://dominicancenter.com/programs-and-retreats/bottle-full-of-tears/>

Who among us is not feeling loss right now? So much has been taken from so many - our parents, our incomes, our freedom of movement, our long-planned-for celebrations, our friends, our family members, our work, our health, our hopes.

This year has called us to be attentive to loss and to the truth of impermanence. The human experience of loss is inevitable. Through practice, insight, and stopping to look deeply we may be worked by loss, learn from it, and love through it. Grief is a natural reaction, an individual reaction. There is no timetable for grief. Grief is love that has nowhere to go.

## Thank You's

Dear Friends at Prince of Peace,

Thank you for thinking of me on my 1st birthday! I had a fun day celebrating with family and got some neat toys to play with outside. See you soon!

Love, Chase Roberts

**The Red Cross Blood Drive** was a success. Thank you for everyone that supported the drive, either by volunteering to help out or by giving blood. We met our goal!



Dear Prince of Peace,

Benje Daneman and I are extremely grateful for your generosity and willingness to open your doors to the Kalamazoo Trumpet Workshop this year. We had an excellent week with the students.

Thanks so much.

Peace, Light and Love – Keith Geiman

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OTHERS

- *Thank you so much for your generous contribution to the **Portage Community Center** for help with our emergency assistance programs. Your donation will help us provide holiday food baskets to Portage families, help prevent water from being shut off to 75 Portage families, help more than 50 Portage students receive a quality after-school and/or summer experience. On behalf of the many children and adults able to find assistance at PCC, the board of Directors and staff extend their heartfelt appreciation for your kindness, compassion and generosity*  
– Chris Buckley, Executive Director.
- *Each and every day, nearly 37,000 individuals in Kalamazoo County face food insecurity – an obstacle that has serious physical and emotional consequences for the entire family. Your contribution of 42 pounds of food to **Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes** will help us work toward realizing the power of a community where all people have adequate access to the most basic of human needs – food and nutrition.* – Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director for Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes
- *We are writing to express our appreciation for your recent gift to **Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries**. Your donation provides a warm place to sleep, three meals a day, the much-needed support for our homeless neighbors and a helping hand to those in need.*  
– Pastor Michael Brown, CEO/President
- *We can look back at the uncertainties created by the global events of 2020 and be grateful for the expectations of the return to some sort of normalcy in 2021. Your gift of support to the **YWCA** is essential to our ability to continue services which are not often found in Kalamazoo County.*  
– Dr. Grace Lubwama, Chief Executive Officer



## News from Council and Committees



**Council Members met on  
July 21 via Zoom.**

“Two Great Things”: Each month council members are invited to share “two great things” with each other.

We have sold nearly 80 tickets for the Growlers/MacDaddies game on August 8 where Pastor Rachel will be singing the national anthem. The refugee committee is bringing our newly adopted family to this fellowship event (a mother and her seven children).

Evangelism and Fellowship are teaming up to host a church/community picnic on Sunday, August 15, following the 11 a.m. worship service. There will only be one outdoor service that Sunday.

We have hired two of our three staff positions: Marilyn Storch, Church Accountant; and Mike Whately, Technology Manager. We are truly blessed to have Sue Jones and Rob Boulis as part of the Personnel Committee to guide us through the hiring process.

Derek and Sarah Stepanski have secured 30 acres to begin building a Children’s Care Center in Malawi.

The Stewardship Committee emailed out surveys to all members of the congregation. Many have already been returned.

June Financial Report: Our current level of giving is not sufficient to meet our \$475K projected budget. We will meet our expenses in 2021 as new staff were hired half-way through the year and one position remains open. However, Finance may be reviewing the budget for 2022 and committee budgets may be reduced if giving does not increase. It was suggested that a video be created showing how easy it is to set up giving through Tithe.ly.

Faithful Metrics: Council members will be reading this book together and discussing what goals and outcomes work best for Prince of Peace.

Sanctuary Cameras: Now that Mike Whately has been hired as our Technology Manager, he will be purchasing cameras for the sanctuary for our live-stream worship. Live-stream worship will continue even after we are all able to worship together without masks. This option has made it possible for many of our shut-ins and community members to worship with us.

Our next meeting is scheduled for August 18 at 7 PM via Zoom.

**The Extended Ministries Endowment Committee** has distributed all available funds for 2021. Check back with us in early 2022 to see if funds will be available for that year.

## On-Line Giving

### On-line Giving

If you are looking for an easier way to give contributions/offerings to the church, try the on-line giving feature on the church’s website. Simply click on the GIVE tab at the top of the landing page and follow the directions. If the directions are hard to follow, or you need additional help, don’t give up. Please contact Mike Whately at church (technology@popportage.org or (269) 343--3453 ext. 15), and he would be happy to help. Please consider this easy and convenient payment method.

### On-line Giving Has Never Been So Easy!



You can click or copy and paste the link

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=2250097>

or use the QR code.

You can also go to the

Prince of Peace website & click on the giving button.

For questions contact either Marilyn or Tamara.

## 2021 Mid Year Financial Report

**The Finance Committee is pleased to provide this mid--year update.**



**FINANCE  
COMMITTEE**

First, we would like to thank the congregation for the terrific support during the pandemic. Many churches and businesses struggled and some closed during this difficult time. Prince of Peace was able to maintain, and in some cases increase our commitment to our Christian mission thanks to the prayerful generosity of our members.

As a reminder, our congregational--approved operating budget for 2021 is \$475,000. By approving this amount, it means that we both authorized spending by our administration and various committees totaling this amount, and we projected that our offerings would be this amount for the year. Through June 30, our year-to-date offerings have been \$227,890. Last year through June 30, the offerings had been \$249,463, indicating a nearly \$21,500 decrease this year. While our offerings are less than half of our total budgeted amount, contributions are typically stronger in the second half of the year due to increased giving in December.

On the expense side, our year to date pending has been \$192,271 compared to \$202,250 at the same time last year. This results in a current 2021 surplus through June 30 of \$35,620. However, it should be noted that we paid approximately half of our annual approved mission commitments in the amount of \$7,325 in the middle of July, immediately reducing this surplus to \$28,295. Much of the remaining surplus has been generated from our budgeted annual compensation for two new positions (Technology Manager and Communications Manager) that have not yet been filled and the lower costs thus far this year (approximately \$10,000). As we continue to come out of the pandemic, and fill these positions (Technology Manager has recently been filled), we will likely see a significant increase in our spending for the second half of the year. Thus, the current surplus is an important budgetary cushion that will hopefully cover any increased costs we incur. It should be noted,

however, that the current level of giving for this year likely will not support continuing an annual budget of \$475,000 for next year.

In addition to our operating budget, we have two important dedicated funds that serve as form of savings account for our church. One is the General Fund Excess fund, with a current balance of \$74,973. The Finance Committee has recommended that this fund be maintained at a minimum of \$75,000 to cover at least 3 months of salaries and benefits in case of an emergency. Therefore, this fund is exactly at the recommended level. The second dedicated fund is our Property fund, with a current balance of \$120,149. The Finance Committee has recommended that this fund be maintained at a minimum of \$50,000. Due to the age of some of our facilities, this excess is arguably justified.

Thank you for your continued support of our church through your generous contributions.

Dave Reinhold, Treasurer



### **PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY**

**We are on hiatus until September.**

Prayer Shawls are still available during the summer.

If you, or someone you know, would like the comfort of one of these shawls, call Dianne Hellman, 323-9392, and she will get one to you.

## Facts and Figures

### July Attendance:

7/4	106	Live stream	In person	94
7/11	86	Live stream	In person	106
7/18	74	Live stream	In person	70
7/25	68	Live stream	In person	61

Per instructions from the ELCA, we multiply the digital views by 2 to get a virtual attendance.

General Fund	June
Contributions	\$ 33,019
Expenses	\$ 30,333
Surplus/deficit	\$ 2,686

### SPECIAL GIFTS FOR PATHWAYS OF GIVING

**Loaves and Fishes** Gail Hoover

**Good Samaritan** - Jim & Anne Vogt,

*in memory of Jan Christianson* – Chuck Christianson

**Lutheran World Relief** Diane Snyder

**ELCA World Hunger** - Bob & Carla Hannemann,  
Brian & Karen DeVries, Pete & Tammy Olsen

**Refugee Family** Annette Smith, Rod Hokenson  
**Memorials**

*in memory of Jan Christianson* - Kay Kincaid, Gail Hoover,

*in memory of Tomi Mursch* - Mike & Kathy Devine,  
Anonymous

**Parish Nurse Fund** - *in Memory of Jan Christianson* –  
Terry & Norma Gilbertson

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

8-1	Jacob Howes	8-6	Roy Weber	8-15	Marlowe Crocker	8-22	Duane Bushfield
	Mitchell Kalleward		Maeve Jensen	8-17	Katie McManus	8-23	Amanda Bischof
	Sharin Noall		Sarah Lindmark		Daniel Lassila		Dave Snyder
	Jean Darling	8-7	Joyce Hare		Zoey Roberts	8-26	Tara Swodzinski
8-2	Danielle Rieck		Eleanor Ross	8-18	Shelley Lehman	8-28	Noah Gatz
			Emily Miller		Steve Creed	8-30	Marti Haug
8-4	Pam Timm	8-8	Don Bennett	8-19	Kenneth Louder		
	Troy Swodzinski	8-12	Rob Bauckham	8-20	Alice Lago		
	Jessica Ruckstaetter	8-14	Dwain Leaser	8-21	Matthew Williams		
8-5	Ashlyn Miller		David Flagler		Michael Williams		

### Anniversaries

Ken and Kim Tabor	8-1		
Bill and Sharon Umberger	8-1		
Jason and Mina French	8-2		
Mike and Beth Whately	8-4	Dale and Yvonne Gatz	8-15
Charles and Joan Ford	8-6	James and Jerilyn Johnston	8-16
Lee and Darcy Banitt	8-6	Marlowe and Diane Crocker	8-17
Mark and Mary Clyne	8-9	Ray and Linda Isakson	8-17
Mike and Heather Girand	8-9	John and Christine Thommen	8-18
Jim and Emily Miller	8-9	Dick and Patt Hewitt	8-19
Jim and Anne Vogt	8-11	Jerry and Kay Spade	8-19
Jeremy and Kristie Zimmerman	8-12	Don and Kathy Eklov	8-19
Larry and Julie Wentzel	8-12	Eric and Michelle Nitz	8-29
		David and Valerie Flagler	8-29

# AUGUST



# Prince of Peace Calendar

## AUGUST 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 9:00 AM Outdoor Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship Time 11:00 AM Worship In Person & Livestreaming	<b>2</b> 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 5:30 PM AA "Promises" Support Group	<b>3</b> 6:00 AM Election - Gym 9:00 AM Quilters - Social Hall 9:15 AM Staff Meeting 5:30 PM Great Lakes Adventure Club - Social Hall/Flex	<b>4</b> 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom	<b>5</b> 6:00 PM High School Youth Group at the Davis Home	<b>6</b> Office Closed	<b>7</b> 9:30 AM Math Tutoring - library
<b>8</b> VBS Close 9:00 AM Outdoor Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship Time 11:00 AM Worship In Person & Livestreaming 1:15 PM Growler's Game @ Homer Stryker Field	<b>9</b> 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 5:30 PM AA "Promises" Support Group 5:30 PM Finance Committee mtg. - Zoom 6:00 PM Social Concerns Meeting - Zoom 7:00 PM Personnel/Executive Committee - Zoom	<b>10</b> 9:15 AM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Food Distribution Site - Parking lot 1:00 PM Senior Bunko - Social Hall & Flex Room 3:00 PM Fellowship Committee - Zoom 6:00 PM Bible Study Picnic - Lakeview Park or Gym	<b>11</b> 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 5:30 PM Middle School & Youth Group	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Office Closed	<b>14</b> 9:30 AM Math Tutoring - library
<b>15</b> 11:00 AM Worship In Person & Livestreaming 12:30 PM POP Community Picnic	<b>16</b> 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 5:30 PM AA "Promises" Support Group	<b>17</b> 9:30 AM Quilters - Social Hall 11:45 AM Ladies Lunch Bunch @ Buddy's	<b>18</b> 10:00 AM Book Club - Gathering Space 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 7:00 PM Church Council meeting - Zoom	<b>19</b> Newsletter Deadline	<b>20</b> Office Closed	<b>21</b> 9:30 AM Math Tutoring - library
<b>22</b> 9:00 AM Outdoor Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship Time 11:00 AM Outdoor Worship & Livestreaming 12:00 PM New Member Exploration	<b>23</b> 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 5:30 PM AA "Promises" Support Group 7:00 PM Worship Committee Meeting - Zoom	<b>24</b> Open Doors Men's Shelter Meal 9:15 AM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Food Distribution Site - Parking lot	<b>25</b> 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom 12:00 PM Project Connect 4:00 PM Dinner Prep 5:30 PM Middle School & Youth Group 6:00 PM Musicians Appreciation Dinner	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Office Closed	<b>28</b> 9:30 AM Math Tutoring - library
<b>29</b> New Member Reception -TBD 9:00 AM Outdoor Worship 10:00 AM Fellowship Time 11:00 AM Worship In Person & Livestreaming	<b>30</b> 10:30 AM Literacy Tutoring - Library 5:30 PM AA "Promises" Support Group	<b>31</b> 9:15 AM Staff Meeting	<b>1</b> 11:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom	<b>2</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal - Live	<b>3</b> Office Closed 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry - Social Hall	<b>4</b> POP Kayaking Party @ the Fosters 9:30 AM Math Tutoring - library

### Legend:

AA—Alcoholics Anonymous

ESL—English as a Second Language

FA—Food Addicts in Recovery

WMU—Western Michigan University

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

**269/343-3453**

[www.popportage.org](http://www.popportage.org)

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