

Peace United Church of Christ

The Tidings

March 2024



From the Pastor's Study • March 2024

Do you ever hear an inspiring sentence or two from a story and have it catch your imagination? Maybe one inspiring fragment teases your curiosity, and you wonder what the rest of the story might be. This is the way that our story of faith so often greets us. As we delve again into Mark's Gospel, we encounter this over and over. Mark's Gospel is so sparse with details. It tweaks the imagination if we let it.

We've just begun the season of Lent and the text from the first Sunday always speaks of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness for forty days. Matthew and Luke describe that temptation with depth and soaring details. But with Mark, all we get are fragments of a story: *"The Spirit then compelled Jesus to go into the wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan for forty days. He was out among the wild animals, and angels took care of him."* Our forty-day journey in Lent mirrors this time of preparation for Jesus before he would begin his ministry. It is a length of time that occurs often in scripture: forty days for Noah's ark to weather the flood, forty days for Moses as he received the ten commandments, forty days for Elijah fasting and praying, forty years even for Moses and the Israelites as they journey in the wilderness toward the promised land. That number forty reminds us of all these stories of God seeking to align God's people with God's ways. And so, the early church established a period of forty days of fasting and praying prior to the good news of Easter (they exclude the feast days of Sundays). The time encourages us to consider how we would turn from the ways of the world and turn back to the ways of God.

I don't know about you, but I know that habits are hard to break and that it might just take forty days or more of trying to realign my behavior. Jesus spends those forty days there in the wilderness with the wild animals and angels serving him. Mark's text makes it sound like it could be an extraordinary time of sabbath that would realign Jesus with the very purposes of creation. Jesus was to be in harmony

with the natural world to spend time with the wild animals, and to come to see and understand how all of creation is beloved by God and created to be in harmony. That's not to say that all in the desert is peaceful, for some animals relate to others as prey and nights may be cold and long. But I hear in those simple words the possibility of Jesus returning to a vision of creation that is offered in the stories of Genesis, of a garden of Eden where everything existed in relative harmony. What an amazing fullness of time for Jesus to remember who he is in relation to all creation. He's just heard that he's God's beloved in the verses before this, and now he learns what that means in relation to creation itself. What would it mean to ground ourselves in remembering who we were created to be so that we could say a holy yes to the ministry and the path before us?

We live in a world where it seems that we are encouraged to forget who we are. We are pulled in all kinds of ways by temptations. We are swayed by people assuring us that if we just believe as they do and do what they do that we will be "right." Mark offers those few words that can draw us back to the vision God had at the beginning of creation, so that when Jesus proclaims God's kingdom, it's not just a kingdom that is for us as humans but rather one that includes a different way of being for all that is. As we continue our Lenten journey, may we keep being shaped by remembering who we are, and whose we are. May we learn to live that vision of God's creation as we step out into our ministry in the world. May we nurture a renewed vision of who we are so that we are prepared to proclaim God's good news of Easter for all of creation!

Pastor ERIC

Worship Schedule for March

Sunday, March 3 - 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. - COMMUNION

Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 20:1-17 • Psalm 19 • 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 • John 2:13-22

Sunday, March 10- 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Numbers 21:4-9 • Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 • Ephesians 2:1-10 • John 3:14-21

Sunday, March 17 – 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34 • Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16 • Hebrews 5:5-10 • John 12:20-33

Sunday, March 24 - 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Palm Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 • Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

Sunday, March 31 – 7:00 a.m. and 9:30 am

Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9 • Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 • 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43
• John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

Events and Activities

Lenten Services - Holden Prayer Services will take place on Wednesdays from February 21 – March 20th at 7:00 p.m. at Peace Church.



Easter Flowers - We will not be having an Easter flower sale but will order some spring flower plants to decorate the sanctuary. Please consider donating towards the cost of the plants by sending a check to Peace Church re: Easter Flowers. Thank you!

Community Meal Desserts Needed! – The March Community Meal will be held on Wednesday, March 6th from 4:30 – 6:00 pm. The menu is roasted turkey with mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, and Texas Roadhouse rolls, plus dessert and beverage. We need desserts! If you can make a dessert, please contact the office, and let us know!

Peace Church Book Group - The Wednesday morning book group meets the first Wednesday morning of the month, March 6, at 9:30 a.m. in the music room across from the church office. Everyone is invited. We will be discussing "Three Weeks with My Brother" by Nicholas Sparks. Future books include:

- "Lessons in Chemistry: A Novel" by Bonnie Garmus
- "The Seed Keeper" by Diane Wilson
- "Take My Hand" by Dolen Perkins Vallez

The group chooses books at the April meeting for the upcoming year - September through June.

Adult Faith Formation – will meet the first and third Tuesdays from 7:00-8:30 (March 5, 19, and April 2. We have begun a 5-week study by Pastor Adam Hamilton entitled *Half Truths – “God helps those who help themselves” and other things the Bible doesn’t say*. Session titles are:

1. Everything Happens For A Reason.
2. God Helps Those Who Help Themselves.
3. God Won’t Give You More Than You Can Handle.
4. God Said It, I Believe It, That Settles It.
5. Love The Sinner, Hate The Sin.

Each session will explore the theological and Biblical implications of these familiar phrases that only contain half-truths while often the other half is quite destructive and misguided. These discussions will be led by Pastor Eric and/or Vikar Jakob. You are welcome to join the discussion at any time. Our hope is that together we have a chance to deepen our relationship to God and our faith. There is a book that accompanies this study if you wish to use it, otherwise we will guide you through the DVD based presentation. Let the church office know if you would like us to order a book for you.



Dear Friends of Peace Church,

Thank you so much for all of your prayers, cards, phone calls, flowers and emails after my hip replacement surgery. Your prayers gave me the strength to go into that operating room and have the procedure done. I appreciate all the support from everyone! Recovery is going well and I'm looking forward to seeing you all in church. God's blessings to you all. Karen Kletti

Thank you from Betty Graff: Thank you to my Peace Church family for all the cards and prayers that were sent my way while I was hospitalized and ill. I am feeling better every day!

A big thank you to Texas Roadhouse for their donation of dinner rolls and to Sargento Cheese for their recent donation of a case of cheddar cheese for our Community Meals!

Thank you to the anonymous donor who donated \$500 towards a Kitchen Aid mixer, attachments, and other miscellaneous items for the kitchen!

Thank you to Joyce Meinberg, who recently retired from Peace Church as the costume maker. Over the years Joyce has made many costumes for Pastor Eric and for the Children's Christmas Program. If you would like to take over this role, please let Robin in the church office know.

Peace Church Banned Book Group – will meet on Wednesday, March 20 at 1:30 p.m. in the church music room. The group will discuss "Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret" by Judy Blume. Books are reserved at the Kewaskum Library and can be picked up starting Feb. 15th. Future books are: April 17th – The Call of the Wild by Jack London, May 15th – Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury. If you need assistance with obtaining a book, please contact the church office.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday! (Ages 1-18)

Mar 2 Madilynn Jacobs
Mar 14 Mia Dornacker
Mar 18 Logan O'Brien-Flasch
Mar 22 Kaylee Flood

Anniversaries

Mar 3 John & Shelley Oswald (50)
Mar 12 Sarah & Brian Van Beek (18)
Mar 13 Jared & Melissa Polzin (19)
Mar 26 Robbie & Cheri Manthei
Mar 29 Kathy & Fran Charland (43)

Birthdays (80 years plus)

Mar 2 Gloria Liepert (93)
Judy Nonhof (87)
Mar 11 Mary Billmann (82)
Mar 23 Dolores Terlinden (100)
Mar 25 Emil Radeztsky (81)
Mar 29 Arlene Lemke (82)

Financial Report

Financial Report January 2024

General Fund

Adjusted Beginning Balance as of Dec 31, 2023	(\$45,524)
Receipts	\$38,415
Expenses	(\$28,656)
Ending Balance as of 1/31/2024	<u>(\$35,765)</u>

Benevolence Receipts

Peace Pantry	637.00
Kewaskum Food Pantry	25.00
Christmas	962.00
Thanksgiving	25.00
Giving Tree	425.00
Family Promise	110.00
Total Benevolence Receipts	<u>2,184.00</u>

Church Kitchen Remodeling Project \$(3,548.58)

Council Meeting Minutes

Council Meeting January 14, 2023, Minutes

Members present: Tim Stoffel, Becky Manthei, Kathy Charland, Melinda Sargent, Melissa Polzin, Eric Walker, Bill Stangl, Pastor Eric and Vikar Jakob

Members absent: Lisa Atwater, Mark Bocher, Kathy Mertz, Vance Reif, and Brad Preder

Meeting opened at 6:07pm with a prayer from Pastor.

All motions made and will send out for email votes from those not in attendance.

Motion to approve the agenda with the addition of an update on the \$100,000 gift made by Kathy C, with a second from Tim S.

Motion to approve the December minutes with the correction that Vikar Jakob opened in prayer and Melinda S was not in attendance made by Kathy C, second from Melissa P.

Motion to elect Eric Walker for vice president and Becky Manthei as the secretary made by Kathy Charland with a second from Bill Stangl. Motion approved.

Financial report reviewed. Motion made by Becky M. to place the financial report on file for audit, with a 2nd coming from Kathy C.

Melissa spoke about the 5 pillars and will be emailing the group to see what 2 pillars they may want to serve. The purpose of the council member on the pillar is to check in and to be a support to the committees falling under the pillar. An example would be to alert the council if committees need assistance.

Worship/ministry report: the local member of the discernment committee met to review Vikar Jakob's call to ministry. Letters and recommendations have been sent out to the conference. Vikar Jakob will be meeting with the association in the coming weeks. Vikar is with us until the end of February

serving in his current capacity. The search and call committee is meeting to review what the path looks like for Vikar after that time.

Reviewed the attendance averages for 2023. 8 am service average was 31 and 9:30 was 87. Summer 9am service average was 94. Looking like the summer schedule worked nicely and will revisit summer plans as it gets closer.

Looking at reducing the number of servers for the 8 am service for communion to 2 people. Melissa created a communion schedule for council members to sign up.

Pastor submitted his report for review.

Request for someone to put the a/c covers on in the office. Kathy and Melinda will review.

We will be hosting the Kewaskum Public Library's children's summer program while the new library is being renovated. This will take place on Thursdays at 1 pm.

We will be receiving a generous donation of \$100,000 in the near future. A request was made to use the money in the best way that supports the life of the church. Some specifics include paying off the kitchen, handrails in the bathroom, and supporting the general fund.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm with the Lord's prayer.

Next meeting: February 13, 2023 – 6:00 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Becky Manthei

Council Minutes – Electronic Motions and Results 1/16/2024 and 1/24/2024

The first motion was made via email by Becky Manthei on 1/16/2024: The motion was to approve the payment of \$4,000 to Vikar Jakob Kröener for work completed in January and February of 2024. Payments would be \$2,000 per month. Motion seconded by Melissa Polzin. Motion passed by email vote.

The second motion was made via email by Melissa Polzin on 1/24/2024: Motion to elect Kathy Charland to fill the Council member position vacated early by Chris Rode. The position will expire on 12/31/2025. Motion seconded by Lisa Atwater. Motion passed by email vote.

The third motion was made by Melissa Polzin on 1/24/2024: Motion to elect Karen Kletti to fill a vacant Council member position. The position will expire on 12/31/2026. Motion seconded by Vance Reif. Motion passed by email vote.

Easy Online Giving! Just click on the QR Code and follow the couple of steps to electronically give to a number of Peace Church funds.



— ARE YOU READY FOR AN —

ADVENTURE?



→ **LOTS OF FUN!** ←

Pack your bags and hit the road with Peace Church's Habitat for Humanity as we travel to Red Wing, MN from June 9 - 14, 2024.

Build a home, make new friends, help others. And while you're at it...have some FUN!

(Don't forget your hammer!)

So what are you waiting for? Contact the church office today!

office@peace-ucc.org

Peace Church-March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Worship 8 & 9:30 am All-Congregation Mtg Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation		LECTIONARY 10 AM 7:00-8:30 Adult Faith Formation	XYZ CLUB Book Club Community Meal 4:30-6 Holden Prayer 7:00 pm	Prayer Shawl 1 pm		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Worship 8 & 9:30 am Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30-7:00	Pastoral Relations Mtg 6:30 pm	LECTIONARY 10 AM Church Council 6:00 PM	XYZ CLUB Holden Prayer 7:00 pm	Living the Question 10 am Grief Group 1 pm		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Worship 8 & 9:30 am Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30-7:00		LECTIONARY 10 AM Faith Formation 7-8:30	XYZ CLUB Banned Book 1:30 pm			
F A M I L Y P R O M I S E						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
PALM SUNDAY Worship 8 & 9:30 am Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30-7:00		LECTIONARY 10 AM	XYZ	Living the Question 10 am Grief Group 1 pm Maundy Thursday Service 7 pm	Good Friday Service 1 pm	
31						
EASTER SUNDAY Breakfast at 8:00 am Worship 7:00 & 9:30 am						