



Peace United Church of Christ

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The Tidings

October 2023



From the Pastor's Study

It was good to be gathered together in church as we resumed our fall rhythm. Rally Day had all of this wonderful energy as some people settled back in to their beloved 8:00 a.m. service, and as the kids during the 9:30 a.m. service flooded the front of church with backpacks in hand to receive a blessing and resume Sunday School. It is always good to be gathered together. And after the challenging time of disruption that the pandemic imposed, I find I appreciate these simple moments so much more deeply.

I've learned to watch in the simple moments for where I might catch glimmers of the divine. I've spent my ministry trying to help others to watch for those same glimmers. I guess that I've worn out the phrase "where did you see God today?" and yet the sentiment still seems sound to me. It is the invitation for us to live in the world expecting to encounter God's presence in what we're seeing or doing or learning. It is one of the reasons that churches approach faith formation in so many different ways. I've come to expect that in any given worship setting one person will hear God in a word of scripture, and for another it will be in some moment of music, for another it may be a prayer, and for still another it may be in moment of silence, and for another they may hear God in the process of just keeping the rhythm of showing up, or it may be the fellowship that follows the service. And I know that for me, it's not the same thing every week. But I've come to expect that at some point along the way, I'll come away having been touched by the divine. That experience is a part of what we're invited to experience every day.

Elsa shared how one of her friends greets the birds and the bugs and everything that lives and creeps with the simple greeting "hello friends." I've tried it myself now and again and it's the strangest thing - to greet those bees that are buzzing around the table with the proclamation "hello friends" changes the way that I seem to see and feel about them. And this is what I've been trying to cultivate in myself and all of the rest of us in learning to see with eyes of God for years.

We do this at church with each of our classes and our programs. We try to impact the way that we see and live through gathering together in different combinations of community to live together and build a house or to explore God's creation on a wilderness canoe trip. We learn to see with eyes of God in new ways as we decorate the church and lead children through bible stories through drama and crafts and games and our presence with VBS. And we certainly learn to see differently as people work together in the new kitchen to feed the community, or this summer to feed the families and children who came for breakfast and went home with bag lunches to sustain their bodies even as the conversations and connections fed everyone's souls. This is what it means to be the church.

We share a journey with one another. That journey is one of care and support in times of need. It's also a journey of learning and growing in our understanding of our faith. And my great hope is that every piece of the journey helps to feed our souls in ways that strengthen our relationship with the love of God so that we may see God more clearly at work around us and within us, and so that we can share that extraordinary grace of God with the world.

There's a story of a custodian working at NASA who proudly saw their job as helping to put a man on the moon. Often times we may look at what the church is doing to share God's light. We too are bearers of God-light wherever we go. One little glimmer at a time trying to offer a witness to the power of an unearned, undeserved love of God that is offered for all. We get to humbly open ourselves to see and be differently.

Shalom,

Pastor Eric

Worship Schedule for October 2023

Sunday, October 1 - 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 17:1-7 and Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 • Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 and Psalm 25:1-9 • Philippians 2:1-13 •
Matthew 21:23-32

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

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 and Psalm 19 • Isaiah 5:1-7 and Psalm 80:7-15 • Philippians 3:4b-14 •
Matthew 21:33-46

Sunday, October 15 - 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

New Members Info Meeting @10:30 a.m.

Exodus 32:1-14 and Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23 • Isaiah 25:1-9 and Psalm 23 • Philippians 4:1-9 •
Matthew 22:1-14

Sunday, October 22 - 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Celebration of New Members

Exodus 33:12-23 and Psalm 99 • Isaiah 45:1-7 and Psalm 96:1-9, (10-13) • 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 •
Matthew 22:15-22

Sunday, October 29 - 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Annual Meeting @ 10:30 a.m.

Deuteronomy 34:1-12 and Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17 • Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18 and Psalm 1 • 1 Thessalonians
2:1-8 • Matthew 22:34-46

Events and Activities

Peace UCC Grief Group - Led by Vikar Jakob Kroener, this group meets the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month at 1:00 pm in the Youth Room. For more information, please contact the Peace Church office.

9th Grade Confirmation Classes – have changed to Sundays from 5:30 – 7 pm. in the Youth Room. If you are interested in joining, please contact the church office at office@peace-ucc.org or 262-629-4011.



Annual Congregational Meeting October 29, 2023 – Our annual meeting will take place immediately following the 9:30 service.

Adult Faith Formation:

Every Tuesday Morning 10:00-11:30 a.m.— Each week we gather together in the room across from the church office to explore the Lectionary (the three-year cycle of Bible readings that our worship follows). The discussions offer an opportunity to learn more about how we read scripture, how we wrestle with issues of language and theology and connect scripture to our daily lives. It is a space of wonderful fellowship where questions are welcomed and explored. There is no need to sign up, everyone is welcome.

Starting October 17th , we will resume our Evening Faith Formation on the First, Third, and Fifth Tuesdays of the month from 7-8:30 p.m.. We will begin the fall with delving into the insightful, humorous, and engaging theology of Dr. Amy-Jill Levine.

AJ Levine (born 1956) is Rabbi Stanley M. Kessler Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace. She is committed to eliminating antisemitic, sexist, and homophobic theologies. For many years she taught at Vanderbilt Divinity School where she was a self-described "Yankee Jewish feminist who teaches in a predominantly Protestant divinity school in the buckle of the Bible Belt"

We will begin our studies responding to some YouTube interviews that AJ has done. Then, beginning November 7th we will turn to this Orthodox Jewish New Testament Scholar's four session study on Advent. (More details on materials for the Advent study will be in the November Tidings). Again, all are welcome.

Living the Questions 2.0 - Starting October 12th, we will begin a Thursday Morning study on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month from 10:00-11:30 – When we have done this study in the past it has felt like it offered members in the class an introductory taste of the riches of a seminary education. This is an amazing opportunity to take your faith, your relationship to scripture, God, and the Church to a new level. Vikar Jakob will be the primary leader for this class.

People know that at its core, Christianity has something good to offer the human race. At the same time, many have a sense that they are alone in being a "thinking" Christian or struggling with how to navigate what Christianity means today. What is needed is a safe environment where people have permission to ask the questions they've always wanted to ask but have been afraid to voice for fear of being thought a heretic. As well as having the tools to ask more informed questions of the faith we have inherited.

Living the Questions is a 21 session DVD based small group study exploring beyond the traditions and rote theologies in which so many people and churches seem to be stuck. Living the Questions will help seekers and "church alumni/ae" alike in discovering the significance of Christianity in the 21st Century and what a meaningful faith can look like in today's world.

Mitten Ministry News: We are collecting mittens for those in need on October 22nd. We will have the dedication/blessing on October 29th, and plan to distribute to the schools and pantries the first week of November. If you are in need of yarn, stop by the church to pick some up! If you would like to learn how to knit, I would love to hear from you - the more the merrier! You can reach me (Heidi Rodenkirch) at 920-602-1184.

Book Group - The Wednesday morning book group will be meeting on October 4 to discuss the book "The Forest of Vanishing Stars" by Kristin Harmel. The discussion starts at 9:30 a.m. in the music room across from the Peach Church office. All are welcome to attend the discussion. Please contact Lynn Rusch at lynnrusch@yahoo.com or 262-306-4025 for more information.

Future books include:

November 1: "The Yellow Bird Sings" by J. Rosner

December 6: "Women Talking" by Miriam Toews

Peace Church Banned Book Group – will meet on Wednesday, October 18 at 1:30 p.m. in the church music room. The group will discuss "All Boys Aren't Blue" by George M. Johnson. Books are reserved at the Kewaskum Library and can be picked up starting September 15th. If you need assistance with obtaining a book, please contact the church office.

The Peace Church Banned Book Club meets on the third Wednesday of each month. Below is the schedule for the 2023 calendar:

October 18 - All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson

November 15 - The Kite Runner by Kahlid Hosseini

December 20 - The Hate You Give by Angie Thomas

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday! (Ages 1-18)

Oct 6 Dane Piittmann
Oct 12 Olivia Herbst
Oct 14 Karlee Herman, Caron Strom
Oct 16 Trygve Schemelin, Ella Gitter

Anniversaries

Oct 1 James & Joyce Meinberg (68)
Oct 2 Scott & Terry Buss (24)
Oct 7 Dale & Jennifer Scannell (23)
Oct 10 Doug & Judy Christensen (59)
Oct 11 Jessica & Kevin Klahn (20)
Oct 13 Nicole & David Brei (11)
Oct 17 John & Arlene Lemke (59)
Oct 20 Tim & Nancy Stoffel (39)
Oct 21 Todd & Kris Schmidt (17)
Oct 23 Eric & Laura Kirkegaard (30)
Oct 24 Amanda & Jon Herbst (14), Gary & Kathy Panzer (43)
Oct 26 Jori & Steve Schmeling (38)

Birthdays (80 years plus)

Oct 2 Gary Fisher (84)
Oct 2 Howard Zemlicka (90)
Oct 5 Judy Christensen (80)
Oct 7 William Wiederanders (89)
Oct 8 Kathy Roesel (81)
Oct 21 Terry Koch (81)

Financial Report

Financial Report August 2023

General Fund

Adjusted Beginning Balance as of July 31, 2023	\$ (62,310)
Receipts	24,501
Internal Transfer	0
Incr/Decr from Investments	0
Expenses	(\$24,741)
Ending Balance as of 8/31/2023	(\$62,550)

Benevolence Receipts

Peace Pantry	275.00
UCC Maui Relief	375.00
Kewaskum Food Pantry	10.00
Family Promise	100.00
Total Benevolence Receipts	<u>760.00</u>

Church Kitchen Remodeling Project (\$34,404.79)



Church Council Minutes – August 2023

August 7, 2023, Peace United Church of Christ Consistory Meeting Minutes

Those in attendance: Kathy Charland, Ken Singer, Melinda Sargent, Becky Manthei, Tim Stoffel, Paul Behring, Kathy Mertz, Vance Reif, Melissa Polzin, Chris Rhode, and Pastor Eric.

Those absent: Mark Bocher, Brad Preder, Clark Pearson, Vikar Jakob and Lisa Atwater.

Meeting opened at 6:06 pm with a prayer from Pastor.

Motion made by Melissa P with a second by Tim S to approve the agenda with the addition of cemetery update, council delegates, and membership. Motion carried.

Motion made by Tim S with a second by Kathy M to approve the June Consistory minutes. Motion carried.

The financial reports were reviewed. Ken S shared a newspaper article with the Consistory. Melinda S made a motion to place the financial report on file for audit. 2nd motion from Paul B. Motion carried.

Kathy C reported on the insurance options that Robin has researched. That information will be passed on to the personnel committee to come back to Consistory with a recommendation.

Kathy C reported that Sunday School will start on Sept 10th. Looking to meet with Christian Ed on August 13.

VBS attendance was 40 children. Sharon Stier is working on the rotation model to cover the next few years.

Reviewed the attendance numbers since we have had 1 service. Discussion was had around whether there needs to be further conversations with the congregation on if it makes sense to have 1 service. Plan is to track the numbers thru to the October congregational meeting. We can then share that information with the congregation and have further discussions. Lots of good feedback on the 1 service. Also heard that there are some folks wanting to get back to 2 services so that they can attend again.

September 3rd ushering will be done by Melinda S, Kathy C, Melissa P, and will be doing pew. Plan to discuss world communion at the Sept meeting as this communion will be held in October.

Mid-week services will end at the end of August. Special thank you to Roger and Kathy Mertz and Mary Glenn for opening up their homes.

Cathy Stern will get the budget numbers started and is looking to meet with a group of people on 9-7 at 6pm to have the 1st budget meeting. Clark P, Vance R, Kathy C, and Melissa P have offered to be on the committee.

A stewardship committee composed of Mark Bocher, Sharon Stier, Joan Adler, Heidi Leithold, John Kletti, Rose Gaskell, and Kathy Charland has been created and have met 3 times. They are looking at creating a short-term plan. Lots of great conversation and ideas being reviewed.

Paul B reported on the progress made at the cemetery. He has spent countless hours tracking the plots and determining which monuments need to be leveled. He is also looking at which ones are veterans so that they can be identified in a special way.

We reviewed again what makes someone a member of the church as well as why someone would choose not to be a member. Again, if someone identifies as being a member, then we will consider them a member of the church. Ideally having someone who commits to being a member officially is the best situation. If someone is not a member, then they would not vote.

The Meals on Wheels program has talked to Kathy about their current space not being large enough. They would be looking at needing a space Monday thru Thursday from around 9-11. Kathy will get more information so that we can review in Sept to see if we can make our space available to them.

Need to start thinking about the council delegates needed for 2024. Will review next month.

Kathy C adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted,

Becky Manthei



Celebrating 125 Years of Ministry!

Yes, that's right, 2023 marks the 125th birthday of Peace UCC. You may have noticed the banners outside marking this momentous occasion. Along with the banners we will publish an 8-article series in the Kewaskum Statesman sharing our wonderful ministries with the community.

Much like the vision we had years ago with the picture in which the church was opening itself up to reach outside, we start with introducing ourselves to the wider community. Much like the community meals, placement of the Peace flag and the 125th banner, we continue to proclaim who we are and continue to live out our mission beyond the church walls.

Of course, in true Peace style we will have a celebration on Sunday, November 5th. This date most closely matches when those who came before us gathered first in this space. More information to follow on how we will celebrate. Please see Becky Manthei (262-388-9426) if you are interested in being part of the celebration planning.

Below is the first of a series of articles that will be shared with the Kewaskum Statesman. This article was written by Mugs McFadden:

Peace United Church of Christ to Celebrate 125 Years

“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

2023 marks the 125th anniversary of Peace United Church of Christ (UCC) in Kewaskum. In honor of this special occasion, we thought it fitting to share who we are with the wider community. This is the first of a series of articles that we are hoping will run in the Statesman to offer insight on who we are, how we provide extravagant welcome, and our hopes of peeling back the layers to provide easy access to those in need.

Let’s go ahead and delve right into how Peace UCC made its start in Kewaskum.

With a common goal to establish a German Evangelical Church in Kewaskum, nine men, Albert Backhaus, Henry Bruessel, Carl Doms, Charles Geidel, Ludwig Guth, Nicholas Guth Sr., William Prost, Christian Schaefer, Sr., and George Schleif, Sr., met on June 2, 1898. They asked neighboring pastor, Rev. Robert Gruenwald of Fillmore, to conduct services every two weeks in Good Templar Hall, now known as Labor Union Hall, until a regular pastor could be hired. And thus, the story of Peace Church began.

The following day, Nicklos Guth, Sr. gifted a parcel of land on Wilhelmine Street, now known as 1st Street, to the church. Three days later, a larger group of families met and approved a constitution. The families of Herman Backhaus, Fred Buddenhagen, William Doms, Henry Ebenreiter, Herman Geidel, Michael Geidel, August Kirchner, William Krahn, Phillip Meinhardt, Carl Prost, Charles Schaefer, Christ Schaefer, Jr., John W. Schaefer, Ludwig Schmidt, Christian Schmitt, Jacob Schmitt, John Schmurr, John Schultz and William Wesenberg were accepted in the “Deutsche Evangelische Frieden Gemeinde”, along with Mrs. Nicholas Mertes. The nine founders became the first Board of Trustees, electing Carl Doms, Sr. president, Charles Geidel, vice-president, Ludwig Guth, secretary, and Christien Schaefer, Sr., treasurer. George Schleif, Sr., headed the building committee.

Enthusiastically, the congregation began to build a brick church, 36 by 60 feet in the style of the Fillmore Church, adding a basement for use as a school and furnace room. On August 20, 1898, the cornerstone was laid. Dedicated fundraising and diligent manual labor throughout the summer and fall of 1898 culminated in the dedication of the church on November 4, 1898. The project began with \$1,500 subscribed and was completed at a cost of \$3,900 with much of the work done by members.

The 1900-pound bell, purchased for \$400, was hung in the 90-foot steeple in time for the dedication and was rung three times daily thereafter. Rev. F. Klingsberger, from Milwaukee, presided over the dedication: *“And so they builded a temple, for they all had a mind to work.”*

Rev. Gruenwald, the first minister of the church, also served four other pastorates at Fillmore, Silver Creek, Beechwood, and Waubeka. He continued in his role for a year, then his assistant at Fillmore, Rev. A. Jahnke, was hired as the full-time pastor for the church. Rev. Jahnke served a few months, and Rev. Herman Erber accepted the job in November 1899. He stayed for 10 years, during which Peace Church purchased a parsonage at 1433 Parkview Drive for \$2,000, a lot on the west side of the church was bought for \$150, and the sanctuary was redecorated adding lamps and chandeliers. The first students were confirmed under Rev.

Erber on Easter Sunday, April 16, 1900. With his wife, Rev. Erber organized the Sunday school, and the Christmas program was held on Christmas Eve. A summer picnic was held in River Hill Park, which continues to this day.

Our next pastor was Rev. Fred Mohme. During his tenure, the "Frauen Verein" ladies aid was formed, and Rev. Mohme continued to instruct Sunday School in German. The membership grew under his pastorate, and many of these members were born in the United States. Thus, it was decided to hold Sunday School classes one Sunday a month in English.

When Rev. Mohme resigned, Rev. Henry Barth took over the pulpit. During his time the parsonage was renovated: a telephone was installed, electric lights were added, and a garage was built. The congregation now included 140 families and was becoming a vital part of the community.

In 1923, the 25th anniversary of the church was celebrated. Electric lights were installed, a renovation of the basement was done, and the windows in the church were replaced with twelve new stained-glass ones.

Rev. Barth reorganized the Sunday School so that both German and English were taught and included confirmands too. English services were held one Sunday a month.

In 1925, Rev. Ernst succeeded Rev. Barth. Alternate services in English and German began and minutes of the council meetings were now in English. English hymnals were purchased, and the constitution was written in English. The choir moved from the balcony to the front of the sanctuary. An improvement fund was started for the cemetery as the church took charge of it rather than members taking care of individual graves.

During Rev. John Frohne's pastorate, 1929-1932, extensive remodeling was done. On the south side of the church property, the building was extended to include a sacristy, choir room, and a Gothic type of chancel with room for a pipe organ in the future. The basement space allowed for a fuel oil furnace, modern kitchen, restrooms, storage space and a back entrance. The extension on the north provided a cloakroom and stairs to the basement.

Ill health forced Rev. Frohne to resign in 1931 and Rev. Richard Gadow was called. He stressed benevolent giving and by 1936 the church had met 100% of the benevolent part of the budget. A financial secretary was established in 1933 and the sexton took charge of digging graves at the cemetery. English services were now held on the first, third, and fifth Sundays. Every year brought new and exciting additions to the church, which had become so much a part of the community of Kewaskum.

On August 3, 1941, Rev. R. G. Beck began his pastorate with many new ideas. The "Hymnal" was introduced for congregational singing. The monthly Tidings newsletter was sent out to members. Vacation Bible School was started, and the Sunday School was moved to better rooms. A pulpit and lectern were added with cloth hangings. The cemetery was incorporated, and a perpetual care fund was established.

Rev. William G. Schwemmer came in a momentous year for Peace Church. 1946 was the year that Peace Church officially became affiliated with the Evangelical and Reformed

denomination. As the newest member of the E & R denomination, Peace Church invited the South Wisconsin Synod to hold its Annual Session in Kewaskum the following spring. In 1948, Peace Church celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a service incorporating several past ministers, including Rev. Iroin, who spoke on "Church Makers", which was the goal of the nine founders in 1898.

In 1951, Rev. Frederick Schwemmer was called. He instituted pew communion and pointed out that Peace was the only local church to have open communion. But bigger changes were coming with the advent of the union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the Congregational Christian Church, and the Afro-Christian Convention. With the merger in June of 1957, the United Church of Christ became a reality at a national synod in Cleveland, Ohio.

In 1957, Rev. Clarence Hammon was called, and German services were discontinued. In 1959, the church bought land parcels south and west of the church and construction on the two-story education wing was begun. It was dedicated on January 27, 1961. The next year, a new Allen organ was installed and in 1963, the church became an official member of the United Church of Christ. Rev. Hammon resigned the same year, and Rev. Dan Schowalter came in June of 1964. Two worship services were started in 1965 to accommodate the growing congregation. Work was done on the narthex, and red carpet was added to the sanctuary. In 1969, a new parsonage was built on Hillside Drive in the village and the old parsonage was sold to St. Lucas Church.

Rev. Milton Staskal arrived in 1975. He served less than a year and Rev. Darrell Joiner was called as the fifteenth minister to serve Peace Church. Rev. Joiner left in 1985 and Rev. James Bettin was called in 1986. Rev. Bettin started Peace Church's involvement in Habitat for Humanity. Plus, the planning for an elevator was started and dedicated on Christmas Eve 1996. Rev. Bettin served until his retirement in 1996. Rev. John Wickman served as interim until Rev. J. Eric Kirkegaard arrived in 1998, just in time for Peace Church's 100th anniversary celebration.

Rev. Kirkegaard has been with Peace Church for the past 25 years and as we plan for the 125th celebration, he will be part of it. "May the future years continue to demonstrate our faith to the community and, above all, to the Lord."



October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Worship 8 & 9:30 am Communion Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30 - 7		LECTIONARY 10 AM	XYZ CLUB BOOK CLUB 9:30 am Community Meal 4:30-6 pm	Prayer Shawl Group – 1 pm		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Worship 8 & 9:30 am Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30 - 7		LECTIONARY 10 AM CONSISTORY 6:00 PM	XYZ CLUB	Grief Group 1 pm Living the Question 10-11:30		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Worship 8 & 9:30 am Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30 - 7 New Member Orientation 10:30 am	Tidings Deadline	LECTIONARY 10 AM Faith Formation 7-8pm	XYZ CLUB Banned Book Club 1:30 pm			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Worship 8 & 9:30 am Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade Celebration of New Members 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30 - 7		LECTIONARY 10 AM	XYZ CLUB	Grief Group 1 pm Living the Question 10-11:30		
29	30	31				
Worship 8 & 9:30 am Sunday School Pre-K- 5 th grade 6- 8 th Grade Confirmation 9 th Grade Confirmation 5:30 - 7 Blessing of the Mittens Annual Church Meeting 10:30 am		LECTIONARY 10 AM Faith Formation 7-8pm				