



# Herald of Peace

## January 2018

Peace Lutheran Church,  
1301 Ave. D, Billings, MT 59102

(406) 252-5504  
peacelutheranbillings.com

### **Making Christ Available to All by Rejoicing, Renewing and Reaching Out**

Peace Lutheran Church Mission Statement

#### **Leadership Directory**

Pastor: Rev. Will Sappington  
[prsappington@gmail.com](mailto:prsappington@gmail.com)  
office 252-5504 Home 647-8568  
Office Manager: Dean Jenson  
[peaceoffice@bresnan.net](mailto:peaceoffice@bresnan.net)  
252-5504  
Youth Director: Vanessa Stieger  
[peacelcyouth@gmail.com](mailto:peacelcyouth@gmail.com)  
office 252-5504 cell 698-5576  
Intern Pastor: Brenda Boogren  
[internpeace@gmail.com](mailto:internpeace@gmail.com)  
252-5504

Treasurer Steve Frank  
Organist Robin Goodheart  
Bells of Peace Julie Draeger  
Altar Guild Treasure Molly Johnson  
WELCA Treasurer Connie Hausauer

#### **Church Council**

Anderson, Dewey 656-1709  
Brown, Mike 855-1588  
Christensen, Randy 701-260-5016  
Draeger, Dave 698-1333  
Finn, Susan 534-1860  
McGough, Amy 861-3449  
Miller, Holli 656-6847  
Peterson, Bryan 671-1301  
Sider, Melissa 281-7334  
Strosky, Paul 661-2626

#### **Peace Office Hours**

8am-12pm & 1pm-4pm  
Mon. Tues. Thurs. & Fri.

#### **Worship Schedule**

Saturdays: 5:00 pm  
Sundays: 10:00 am  
Education Hour: 11:00 am  
Sunday Channel 7 at 9:00 am



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



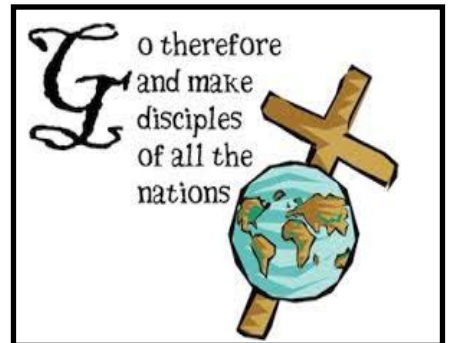
### **"A New Year in the Kingdom"**

*Jesus announced the arrival of the kingdom, yet didn't work to build a government or take a stretch of land. He didn't pen a constitution. He wrote nothing, save truth and love on the hearts of his friends. That's different from any other king, living or historical.*

– Donald Miller

I've been thinking quite a bit about the kingdom of God. It's been on my mind because I need some hope today. I need to hear a word of promise in a world that seems not only divided, but disconnected too. Where can we go to see love in action? Where is grace?

I can tell you it's not found when I demand my own way and insist I've cornered the market on truth. (I am that stubborn, but I'm not that smart. This isn't a brilliant combination.) So I've been thinking about the kingdom of God. If I claim to be a follower of Jesus it makes sense I should listen to what he had to say. Jesus tells us over and over again in the Gospels that the kingdom is at hand. Jesus also tells us that it will change everything. The kingdom is not safe or expected. The kingdom of God is good news for everyone not just the well be-



## ***Prayer Concerns of those we prayed for December 2017***

### **We Believe in Prayer For praise and thanksgiving ...**

Elizabeth A. Eaton - Presiding Bishop, ELCA  
Jessica Christ - Bishop - Montana Synod;

### **For people around the world in need ...**

New Members to come to Peace  
Needs of our neighborhood  
Visitors to Peace Food Pantry  
President Donald Trump (requested by Peace member)  
Christine & Scotty Soileau – Quantico, VA. (member of Peace)

### **For illness or injuries .. of members**

Barb Lee - recovery  
Linda Strosky - surgey  
Katie Wolff - healing  
Leigh Aslakson - comfort at home  
John Modde - healing  
Kathleen Gregg - healing  
Donna Bangert - healing  
Lisa Grimsley - healing  
Art Reinhardt - healing  
Ken, Carol Hoefner and family  
Larry & Shirley Heiser –

### ***With sincere gratitude***

**Dear Members of Peace** When I talked to Lois Gorseth on the phone recently she mentioned that our son-in-law, Micah Hilario is still on your prayer list. You cannot imagine how much that means to all of us. We realize how much prayers have sustained us! So: Thank you!

We remember Peace Lutheran and the important past the church and members played in our lives. In Christ Linda and Gary Branae

**D**ear Friends, Merry Christmas to you and yours! Because of your recent gifts of \$354.00 and clothes, toiletries and gift cards the children and families we serve at Friendship House will truly have a Merry Christmas. Because of your support, each child in our program will receive a complete outfit of school clothing and a winter coat, boots, hat and gloves. Each family we serve will receive a food box with enough meals to sustain them over the winter school break. Each child will get

### **For illness or injuries .. of family and friends.**

Marissa - college student diagnosed with leukemia  
Keenan Weatherford (for healing)  
Laura Fisher (Jodi Peterson's cousin) cancer  
Carolyn Campbell - diagnosed with breast cancer  
Shawn Hanser  
Greg Goodheart  
Bonnie & Kevin - healing and strength  
Pr. Ellen Skatrud-Mickelson - healing  
Emily - prayers for strength  
Bob Miller - Rod Miller's father. stroke, surgery and recovery  
Tyler Berg - kidney illness  
Kari - healing and strength  
Arvid Wedul - friend of Mike Brown - diagnosed with ALS  
Bud Leuthold - friend of Joy Lindberg leukemia  
Micah Hilario, son-in-law of Linda & Gary Branae, (Lois Gorseth friends) diagnosed with ALS

### **For those grieving...**

Rich & Cinda Robbins and family on the death of Cinda's mother, Rethal.

**P**rayer Concerns is a published list of those on the prayer chain, who have given permission to publish their names. If you are interested in praying for these, as well as others, please join the prayer chain. They have leaders who call or email. Please call lone Bloom at 652-2441 or Lisa Grimsley (656-8113).

a gift to open on Christmas. We will continue our weekly programming of youth programming, adult education, teen support groups, preschool classes, counseling and community meetings. And we will do it all because of you and your generous gift. Sincerely, Rev. Matt Lundgren Executive Director

**P**eace Lutheran Congregation Thank yo so much of the wonderful Thanksgiving food box. We appreciate your gift very much, as it allows us to celebrate the holiday! I pray you all have a wonderful holidays! Sincerely Jessie Hanna and granddaughters Chessica & Skye

## Congregational News

### A Day in the Life of the Intern

#### Hello Friends of Peace,

It is hard to believe it is January 2018 and I have been with you since August 19th. I know I am not the only one scratching their head and wondering, where does the time go? It has been an incredible ride thus far. How many of you remember my first sermon on sacrifice? I do hope my last sermons on the beginning of the Gospel of John were at least a little better. Not to forget how I began not knowing any of you to having shared meals together. It has been my joy and pleasure to get to know so many wonderful people here and at St. John's.

You have made me feel like such a welcomed part of this community I cannot thank you enough. I get very excited when I think of the ways that I have and will continue to learn and grow as a Pastor and as a Chaplain and even more so, as a person. You are all so committed to my learning and growing that it sometimes overwhelms me. I appreciate all the care and support.

In these past 5 and a half months, I have preached and taught, visited some of you in your homes or the hospital, gone on my first Internship Cluster Retreat to Oregon and have to also confess that I have not learned everyone's names. I have been going to Toastmasters to work on my preaching and just speaking in front of groups. What have I learned? I have learned that you never stop learning, that it is hard to resist donuts on Sunday mornings (or any morning as far as that goes!) and that I am one fortunate person to have been given this opportunity.

I am looking forward to the New Year and all that will come with it, including my internship project which will come to you in February and March. Keep your eyes and ears open for what that will be and how you can be included. I am very excited for the rest of our time together and to continuing to get to know you and have you get to know me. I also hope the clock slows down just a tad, as there is so much more to learn! Happy New Year to you all!

Friends in Christ,

Brenda

## Peace Lutheran Church Annual Meeting

Sunday January 28th at 12:00 pm

Potluck with meeting immediately following the meal

Meeting of our congregation is Sunday, January 28th. The schedule is: 10:00 am Worship Service 11:15 am Potluck – please bring what you would like to eat to share with others (brunch or lunch type food) 12:00 pm Annual Meeting. Contact Holli Miller, Melissa Sider or Susan Finn if there are questions regarding the meeting.



## Congregational News

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haved. Jesus died for us and rose again to destroy the chains of sin, fear, and death. Still we try to put those chains on others.

How can we be a part of expanding the kingdom this year? I think a good start is to take a look at what our job description is as disciples. Matthew 28 contains The Great Commission where Jesus tells us to go everywhere to everyone and tell them about God's love and invite them into a community where God's love is shared and taught. 1 Corinthians 13 tells us some attributes of this love. We are told it is patient, kind, it doesn't insist on its own way, it isn't rude, and it is not irritable or resentful. Sounds easy, right?

The frustrating thing about being a disciple is we end up being asked to love folks that are hard to love. We are asked to invite those into community that we'd rather take off the guest list. We are asked to be more than nice and polite. We're asked to love our sisters and brothers regardless of whether they agree with us or not. As disciples we're reminded daily that we are not God and we are not the ones who sit in judgment. (We too often find that judgment seat a comfortable place to be.)

This year I aim to be a better listener than talker. This year I aim to be more welcoming than I ever have been before. This year Peace Lutheran will continue to be a community of disciples. I'm hopeful. I am not afraid.

Peace,  
Will +



### ELCA Christmas Message 2017

I was driving to work one day thinking about my schedule – the meetings I needed to attend, reports I needed to finish, preparations for upcoming travel, email, phone calls, and making a grocery list in my head so that I could pick up what I needed for supper on the way home from work. All of a sudden, I found myself pulling into the parking garage at the Lutheran Center. I had driven the 9 miles to work and had no idea how I got there. I didn't remember the traffic lights, the turns, the scenery – nothing. I had been so absorbed in what was coming up that I was completely oblivious to the present.

I think this experience is not unique to me. We set part of our lives on autopilot and set the planning, list-making, what if scheduling part on overdrive. Now, planning is a good and necessary thing. One ought to be aware of what is coming up and what needs to be done, but I found that I was so driven by the contingencies and possibilities that I was everywhere all of the time, and, therefore, not anywhere at all.

I asked my spiritual director about this, and she recommended that I meditate on these four words: "Just this. Just now." It's a simple discipline but not an easy one. It can alleviate all that anticipatory stress but only if we are willing to be still.

## Worship News

### January Worship Themes

John's Gospel will be our guide in the new year. Come hear from "disciple whom Jesus loved" and how the Light of the World comes to bring us out of darkness  
(Sermon focus texts are in **bold**.)

**January 6th & 7th** Baptism of Our Lord

[#wordofwitness](#)

**Readings:** Psalm 29; **John 1:35-51**

*The introduction John the Baptist gives Jesus is an auspicious one. "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" What does it mean to you that Jesus is introduced in this way? Jesus did not come as a conquerer, but as a lamb.*

**January 13th & 14th** Second Weekend after Epiphany

[#wordofabundance](#)

**Readings:** Psalm 139:1-6, **13-18**; **John 2:1-11**

*In John's Gospel we do not hear about "miracles." We hear about "signs." A sign is something that points to something greater. A sign can be a warning or an encouragement. Jesus begins his ministry with a sign that points to a divine love for community. What could this look like today?*

**January 20th & 21st** Third Weekend after Epiphany

[#wordofzealousness](#)

**Readings:** Psalm 62:5-12; **John 2:13-25**

*Jesus comes to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast and finds the temple looking more like a market than a holy place of God. So, he chases the animals out, dumps the money-changers money and over turns the tables. What a scene that must have been!*

**January 27th & 28th** Fourth Weekend after Epiphany

[#wordofwisdom](#)

**Readings:** Psalm 96; **Isaiah 9:2-7**; **John 3:1-21**

*This is one of my favorite sections of the Gospels. Nicodemus comes in the cover of darkness to talk to Jesus. The answers he gets from the Savior of the world don't quite match up with what he expected. Today we hear the words, "For God so loved the world he gave his only son. . ."*

### Mid-Week Worship Service at Peace!!!

Everyone is invited to attend

Compline (night prayer) service

The Second Wednesday of the month Jan. 10 at 7:00 p.m.

Holden Evening Prayer Service

The Fourth Wednesday of the month Jan. 24 at 7:00



Compline Worship  
Service

**Holden  
Evening  
Prayer**

Marty Haugen

## Mission and Service News

### Upcoming Mission & Service Opportunities to Watch For

The Mission and Service committee hopes that you had a wonderful Christmas and wishes you a fruitful start to the New Year! With a new year comes opportunity to serve those in need.

Here are the upcoming Mission and Service opportunities. Please consider praying for where you can personally serve others, and pray for those that will actively participate.

- **All Congregation Day of Service/Family Promise set-up-** Join us after service on January 7th as we set up for hosting Family Promise. We will also be making sandwiches for Salvation Army if "playing chef" is more of your thing.
- **Habitat for Humanity Apostle Build-** There is opportunity for individuals to volunteer their time and talents. Please contact the Mission and Service committee if you have a group that would like to try to coordinate a workday.
- **Souper Bowl of Caring-** Our annual time of giving will take place on Feb. 4th. Come support your football favorite for the big game while supporting a great cause.



ALL CHURCH DAY  
OF SERVICE



Our committee looks forward to serving the Peace congregation again in 2018. Do not be afraid to let a committee member know of new opportunities to serve that you may learn of. As a reminder, our committee meets the second Monday of each odd numbered month at 12:30 p.m. in the Billings Clinic cafeteria. Please feel free to join us if the Spirit so moves you.

#### Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley, formerly Interfaith Hospitality Network, will hold its annual Beach Blizzard -

Party for the Promise Celebration on Saturday, February 3, 2018, at the Radisson Hotel & Convention Center. Family Promise's volunteer committee is planning another wonderful evening including dinner, dancing, silent and live auctions. Individual Tickets \$125.



### Peace Quilters

The Peace Quilters have had a successful year in 2017. We sent 62 quilts to Lutheran World Relief and one to the Christikon Auction and three to the Rocky Boy Day Camp in May. Then there was a very special one to Intern Pastor Liz Frey in August. Now that the New Year is here, we will be back on our regular schedule of the 2nd and

4th Wednesday mornings at 9:00 in the fellowship hall. Anyone interesting in making mission quilts is welcome to join us. Coffee and goodies are ready about 10:30.

# Congregational News

**D**oughnuts and Coffee; What a great time of fellowship we have after Sunday worship with Coffee and Doughnuts. We are looking for sponsors each week to defray the cost of the Doughnuts. The cost is \$28 per week. If you are interested the sign-up sheet is located in the narthex. Thank you!!



**D**o you want to dig deeper into the word? Join us Jan. 3rd & 17th at 7pm as we continue our study of the Gospel of John. Women and men, young and old

are welcome! This Bible study will be meeting on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7pm.

## FOOD DONATION WEEKEND January 6th & 7th

We will be collecting for the

### Peace Food Pantry,

This month there is especially a need for single-serving canned fruit, canned meals with pull top lids, soup, cereal and granola bars.



## Christikon Clips January 2018



Watch this month for Christikon brochures on opportunities for youth. It's not too early to start thinking about this summer. Youth brochures will be mailed

to every young person in grades 4-12 in our congregations this month. Those brochures will detail some very special deals for registering early for camp. We hope to serve even more people from our member congregations in 2018!

Save the date: Christikon Benefit Auction at the Billings Depot is scheduled for April 29.

Too few of our nation's young people (not to mention adults) have significant outdoor experience. Christikon combines spirited outdoor experience with a community experience that helps open people to the life of faith. Think about joining the Christikon life this coming summer. It can do a world of good...

*It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ—exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.*



January 15<sup>th</sup>

*I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. ...*

*"The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But... the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'"*

*"I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their mind and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits."*

*Acceptance Speech at Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony, December 10, 1964*

~ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ~

# Congregational News

## Church E-mail Addresses



### Pastor Will

[prsappington@gmail.com](mailto:prsappington@gmail.com)

### Church Office

[peaceoffice@bresnan.net](mailto:peaceoffice@bresnan.net)

### Intern Pastor

[internpeace@gmail.com](mailto:internpeace@gmail.com)

### Youth Director

[peacelcyouth@gmail.com](mailto:peacelcyouth@gmail.com)



## Bible Studies

The Regular schedule for Women's Circles returns:

**Ruth** Circle meets on the second Tuesday at 11:30 am at Hardees on 24th

**Martha** Circle meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 10:00 am in the fellowship hall

**Deborah/Katie** Circle meets on the second Saturday of the month at 10:30 am in the fellowship hall

## Check out the web site:

[peacelutheranbillings.com](http://peacelutheranbillings.com). Web site is updated with, up to date calendar, newsletter in color, Youth page, and photo page.



## Church Council Minutes

The approved church council minutes are available at the bulletin board outside the church office. Thank you

Find us on facebook:  
Peace Lutheran Church, Billings MT

**Simply Giving Program** - Would you find it helpful to have your offerings taken from your bank account as you do other monthly drafts? Thrivent Financial for Lutherans sponsors a program called Simply Giving which offers this service for people who wish to have offerings transferred electronically to Peace Lutheran Church account. For those who travel, this is particularly helpful in keeping up with their intended offerings, and it will keep you from having to make up the difference later. Contact the church office for more details.



## Congregational Life Committee

The Congregational Life Committee is responsible to touch the lives of the people of Peace Lutheran Church by involving them in the life and ministry of the church. One of the most visible responsibilities is fellowship following worship services. Last year, we moved from asking service committee members to bring cookies, etc., to providing doughnuts from the IGA. So, the duties have been reduced and only one or two people are needed for each Sunday. We will continue to assign monthly service committees as we have done in the past. If we have a potluck or other congregational function during the month, the committee may be asked to help. A committee chairperson will be assigned each month and will ask committee members to help with the fellowship/coffee following Sunday worship.

## January Serving group

Molly Johnson, chair  
Keith Johnson  
Karmen/Lew Hammermeister  
Amy/Jeff McGough  
Fern Schock  
Nola McCafferty  
Doris Berg  
Dick Berg  
Rhonda Sappington



# Congregational News

**2017 Circles & Bible Studies:**  
Everyone is welcome!

**Martha Circle**

Meets Third Wednesday, at 10:00 am  
in the Fellowship hall

**Deborah-Katie Circle**

Meets 2nd Saturday at 10:30 am  
at Peace

**Ruth Circle**

Meets second Tuesday at 11:30 am  
at Hardees on 24th

## Peace Lutheran Church Council

- President - Holli Miller
- Vice President - Melissa Sider
- Secretary - Susan Finn
- Dewey Anderson - Abundant Life
- Mike Brown - Abundant Life, Property
- Randy Christensen - Abundant Life
- Dave Draeger - Worship
- Susan Finn - Mission & Service, Executive
- Amy McGough - Youth/Education
- Holli Miller - Congregational Life, Executive
- Bryan Peterson- Mission & Service
- Melissa Sider - Youth/Education
- Paul Strosky - Mission & Service

### Boards/Committees

#### St John's Ministries

- Leah Bick
- Rich Robbins

#### Christikon

- Erl Barsness
- Jerilyn Dukart
- Vanessa Steiger

#### Lutheran Center

- Debbie Sider
- Kay Rossow

#### Shepherd Cluster

- John Goodheart
- Jody Pierce

#### Endowment Trustee

- Bob Gilbertson
- Gary Broeder
- Molly Johnson
- Jeff Murray
- Ed Popp

#### Nominating Committee

- Julie Draeger



### Men's Breakfast and Bible Study

Meets every  
Wednesday at 6:30 am in the  
Fellowship Hall. New-comers  
and one-timers are  
always welcome



### Questions about Council Activities?

If you have any questions or comments regarding any council action - pending or complete - please contact

- President Holli Miller
- Vice-President Melissa Sider

RELIEVE EDITORIAL STRESS:

**TURN IN  
YOUR ARTICLES  
EARLY!**

RE M I N D E R :

**DEADLINE FOR  
NEWSLETTER  
ARTICLES IS  
January 18th**

Catch  
Worship  
Service  
Broad-  
cast on  
Community  
Channel 7  
Sunday Mornings  
at 9:00 am



### Church Council Minutes

The approved church council minutes are available at the bulletin board outside the church office.

Thank you

# Education and Youth News

Spring Fundraiser Dinner  
Date: March/April (TBA)

We are getting ready for this year's Youth Fundraiser Dinner. Last year, we called it the "Sweetheart Dinner" but we wanted to make it known that all are invited! Each ticket is \$8, which provides a meal and beverages. There will also be silent auction items and an interactive group dessert auction.

We are looking for Silent Auction items and desserts to be donated!



~~Fat Tuesday~~  
~~Date: February 13<sup>th</sup>~~

Fat Tuesday is on February 13<sup>th</sup> this year! Come join us for Pancakes and Jambalaya. There is a little bit for everyone on Fat Tuesday. Will always rounds up a great crew to sing and there are activities for the kids. It's always a fun night!

**The free will offering proceeds go to the Youth program.**



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Don't forget about Lent Soup Suppers starting on Ash  
± 7 . The  
Soup Suppers will run from the  
14<sup>th</sup> of February to March 28<sup>th</sup>.  
Easter is on April 1<sup>st</sup>

Friends,  
It's been an awesome year, folks. Cool things are happening in the Youth Program right now, and I am stoked to share what's happening with you. First, thank you to all the volunteers who have helped with the Youth in the past years, this last year, and the years to come. Without the help of volunteers, donations, and prayers, the Youth Program would not be the same. Thank you so much! Peace is an incredible place.  
As we look forward to 2018, the Education/Youth Team and I would like to thank all the Peace members for their financial support, guidance, and prayer over the course of 2017 and future years. You are a blessing.  
Peace,  
Vanessa

## Community News

Words from the Bishop:

### *Good News of Great Joy*

The angel has it right. Jesus is THE GOOD NEWS. Period. Born homeless. Driven into hiding as a refugee in a strange land. Brought up in humble surroundings. Had a short-lived career. Resisted the devil. Healed the sick. Associated with outcasts. Fed the hungry. Defied the empire. Spent a night on death row, after which he was executed. And through all that, he overcame death, redeemed suffering, and reaffirmed new life for all.

On Christmas we celebrate the beginning, the birth of Jesus. All kinds of other things have been added to that celebration—extravagant giving of gifts, parties and feasts, unrealistic expectations. These are not what the Incarnation is about. Yes, it is lovely to give and receive gifts. Yes, it is delightful to party and feast. Yes, it is wonderful to reconnect with scattered friends and family. But you don't have to be Christian to engage in any of those things.

There are Christians who frown on the celebration of Christmas, precisely because of the incorporation of pagan traditions (such as evergreens and mistletoe, etc.) as well as the bloated over-commercialization that equates "a good Christmas" with one in which sales are high. As Luther-

con't from pg. 4

Here we are in Advent. This season doesn't exist in secular culture where everything is barreling toward Christmas. No time to wait, no time to notice, no time to be present. Not this. Not now. All of a sudden, we will find ourselves on the day after Christmas not knowing how we got there.

Advent is a holy season, a season that bids us to be present, to be still. So much is evoked in this season – hope, longing, and the bittersweet awareness that the world is beautiful and broken. Consider all of these things. Sit with them. Pray with them. Be aware of this time of great promise that comes, at least in the Northern Hemisphere, when night is longest. Come, Lord Jesus.

Wait for the Lord. Disengage the autopilot. Notice. Just this. Just now.

Blessed Advent and merry Christmas, dear church!

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Montana Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

an Christians we do not frown on celebration. And we welcome the incorporation of traditions into the celebration of Christmas—whether northern European or native Hawaiian, American Indian or African.

Jesus is good news for the angels, and good news for the shepherds. Jesus is good news for the people of Palestine, his neighbors and co-religionists, and good news for the gentiles. Jesus is good news for northern Europeans, and native Hawaiians, for American Indians and for people in Africa.

Jesus is good news for the homeless, and for those who are refugees. Jesus is good news for those in humble surroundings, and for those who are unemployed. Jesus is good news for those who are faced with evil, and for those who are sick and hungry. Jesus is good news for those who resist oppression. Jesus is good news for the imprisoned, even those on death row. Jesus is good news for the children, and for the elderly.

Jesus is good news for you, and Jesus is good news for me. Period. Amen.

Jessica Crist, Bishop



## January 2018

**1** *Name of Jesus* Baptized into Christ, we bear the name of Jesus and are prepared for serving our neighbor and spreading the good news of what God has done. Give thanks for the gift of new life we have in Jesus Christ, and pray that we are bold, eager witnesses in the world – never shrinking from the work to which God calls us.

**2** A new year often brings new hopes, resolutions, goals and beginnings. Ask God for strength and perseverance to meet the challenges of new and unfamiliar endeavors, and shout praise for God's forgiveness and love that renews us and frees us to get up, learn and begin again when we stumble or fail.

**3** Give thanks for the bishops of the ELCA, and pray they find mutual support, grow in wisdom and skill for their ministry, and that their faith is strengthened through time together at the Bishops' Academy.

**4** Seasonal workers in our communities often go unnoticed during the busyness of the holidays. Pray that workers now searching for new jobs find steady, fair employment to sustain their families and that our faith communities embrace them with support, concern and welcome.

**5** During Human Trafficking Prevention Month, we lift up prayers for victims and survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation around the world and ask God to stir our resolve and actions to care for survivors, end these crimes and address the causes of trafficking, such as poverty, hunger and sexism.

**6** *Epiphany of Our Lord* God's purpose and redemptive work are revealed in the light of Jesus Christ to all humankind. Pray our hearts and minds are receptive to better understanding – through faith in Christ – the mystery of God's boundless grace, wisdom and power.

**7** *Baptism of our Lord* We remember our baptism and pray for the Spirit to remind us daily that we are children of God, forgiven and called to lives of service and witness in the world.

**8** Ask God to help us recognize, confess, confront and correct sexist attitudes, behaviors and systems in ourselves, our workplaces, the church and society, knowing that the injustice and pain inflicted on women and girls hurts everyone. Pray that our Christian witness in the world is marked by respect for all people and the courage to learn and change as the spirit of God works in us.

**9** We remember in our prayers those who continue to recover and rebuild after the devastation left in the wake of storms and fires, that individuals, families and communities will find new ways forward with the support and encouragement of the church, relief agencies and one another.

**10** Sometimes God's word and voice can be loud and majestic and shake all of creation. Pray we recognize God's voice in daily life and give thanks for how it strengthens us and gives us peace.

**11** We remember in our prayers companion-synod relationships with global-church partners, and ask God to bless and nourish these partnerships for mutual learning and encouragement, sharing our gifts and resources, building up the church and serving our neighbor.

**12** Give thanks and praise to God for the comfort, order and hope God brings to our lives, especially in times of uncertainty, conflict, discouragement and what may seem like chaos.

**13** Pray for those who have responded to God's call to serve as ELCA Missionaries and in the Young Adults in Global Mission program that their faith and service are a bright and lively witness to the good news of Jesus Christ and to God's presence and work in the world.

**14** We pray that when Jesus invites us to "Come and see," we are moved by faith to follow and invite our neighbors – friends and strangers alike – to hear the good news of Jesus Christ, believe and also follow.

**15** **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** We remember in our prayers saints who have gone before us, like Martin Luther King Jr., and courageous people in our midst today who endure criticism and suffering for the sake of standing with, advocating for and serving God's children who suffer injustice, neglect or oppression.



## January 2018

**16** Recalling how God spoke through the boy Samuel, we pray we are attentive to the presence of God's spirit and word in children and youth and that we help young people grow as faithful followers, leaders and servants in the body of Christ.

**17** Give thanks to God for people who mentor us in our faith, daily life and work and have helped us grow and mature through the sharing of their gifts, wisdom, life experiences and faith.

**18** Week of Prayer for Christian Unity We are one in the body of Christ. Pray for our ecumenical partners, global church partners and our brothers and sisters in Christ everywhere, that God will bless and further our work together for the purpose of building up Christ's church in the world.

**19** The spirit of God is always at work in the church. We pray God will renew the church and our faith communities, especially when we grow weary, have questions about serving in changing communities, find ourselves in conflict or need to refresh our sense of mission.

**20** We remember in prayer people of all ages and stages of life who are discovering and preparing for new vocations or studying for new professions and pray they and their families find the faith, strength and encouragement needed to move through times of anticipation, uncertainty and personal change.

**21** The ELCA and The Episcopal Church are committed to prayer, fasting and advocacy addressing cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people living in poverty. Pray for these concerns, our leaders and people in need on the 21st of each month through December 2018.

**22** We ask God to bless the ongoing work of reconciliation and healing among Christians and other faiths and to stay focused in our striving for unity for the sake of the world.

**23** With humility and awe, we praise God for knowing our innermost thoughts and ways and for always seeking us out and embracing us like a loving parent.

**24** We pray that everyone in need of warmth and shelter through the winter months has safe, dependable housing, especially elders and those who are homeless, and that we are unceasing in our work to care for and respect the dignity of people in need.

**25** *Conversion of Paul* Praise God for the miraculous ways our faith and lives are changed as the Spirit works in us and among us.

**26** Just as the disciples put down their fishing nets in response to Jesus' invitation to follow, we pray we are alert and receptive to God's calling us to service and witness in the world and that we are willing to reorder our priorities, tasks and lives to follow Jesus.

**27** We remember in our prayers pastors and seminary students serving in Federal Chaplaincy Ministries in unique settings of the U.S. military, Veterans Affairs hospitals and federal correctional institutions.

**28** Ask God to open our eyes to the ways – intentional and unintentional – in which we isolate our neighbor, cause others to stumble in their faith or stir division and conflict; ask for forgiveness and for the Spirit to redirect and inform our thoughts, words and actions for the well-being of our neighbor and the church.

**29** Give thanks for the impact of the International Women Leaders initiative in partnership between ELCA Global Mission, global companion churches and the colleges and universities of the ELCA, launched as part of Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA.

**30** Pray God continues to influence our lives and guide us through the teaching and example of prophets, teachers, leaders and Scripture and that we have the wisdom to discern what is true and flows from the word of God.

**31** Give thanks for leaders who help us understand stewardship and how to use what God has entrusted to each of us and our communities – gifts from God to be used with generosity, compassion and responsibility in service to our neighbor and for the growth of the church.

# Peace Lutheran Church

Non-Profit Organization  
1301 Avenue D  
Billings, MT 59102-3196

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**God's Work.  
Our hands.**

**January 2018**

## Congregational Meeting



Annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday January 28th There will be a potluck brunch following worship with the meeting commencing after the meal.