



PEACE
LUTHERAN

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Annual Meeting
JANUARY 25, 2026
FOLLOWING WORSHIP

Sharing God's Love by
Serving Our Community
and our World



952-955-3434 | plc@come2peace.com | come2peace.com

2025 Annual Meeting Agenda January 25, 2026

- Welcome/Introductions
- Call to Order
- Opening Prayer
- Open Forum
- Adopt Annual Meeting Agenda
- Approve Meeting Minutes
- Ballot Presentation
- Reports
- Building Expansion Update
- Call Committee Update
- Recognition of Ministry Teams
- 2025 and 2026 Finance Review
- New Business
- Nominating Committee - Election Results
- Thank You
- Adjournment
- Closing Prayer

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2025 In Review



A MESSAGE FROM CATHY RIECKENBERG *President of the Congregation*

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:7

This verse reminds us that in life's changing tides, God is ever present and in control. I thank you, Peace family, for the privilege of serving as President this past year. At this time last year, I had no idea where God was leading Peace. As I reflect, it has been a year of transition, challenge, and faithful unity for the glory of God.

This year brought significant transitions. We said a bittersweet farewell to Pastor David, who faithfully served as our shepherd for the past 10 years. After prayerful searching, God called Pastor John Hopper to serve as our Interim Pastor, bringing us the Word of God through sermons and Bible studies. We are grateful for his leadership.

I would like to shine a light on our outstanding Ministry Board: Jon Peterson, Karen Dressel, Tory Schmidt, Bill Helfritz, Dan Nelson, and Ted Pew. They went above and beyond this year, filling in wherever needed, serving on numerous teams, addressing challenges, and spending many long hours in meetings, all in faithful service to Peace and to God.

The Nominating Committee also exceeded expectations, meeting to assemble a strong Call Committee. Thank you to Bob Rieckenberg, Diane Malmin, Nicole Johnsrud, Colette Thorson, and Greg Tesch.

Our Call Committee plays a vital role as we seek the pastor God is calling to lead our congregation. Pastor John has faithfully walked alongside them. We thank Jake Boehler, Dan Cowger, Karleen Boettner, Deb Butler, and Kevin

Schroeder for their dedication and prayerful service.

Volunteerism is the heart of Peace—without it, our church could not function. I am grateful for all volunteers who serve faithfully on ministry teams, during worship, and so much more. Everything we do is for God and His house.

This past summer, the Ministry Board undertook a Strategic Planning process to better understand the needs and desires of our congregation. This effort was led by Ann Goebel. The insights gained helped shape the Pastor Profile for the call and will continue to guide us as we look toward 2026.

Our building addition has remained a central focus throughout the year. While the process has taken longer than expected, we trust God's timing. The Design and Development Team has worked diligently to update plans and we are thankful for their efforts. We have now entered the bidding phase, overseen by the Implementation Team (I Team): Cory Meyer, Arvin Senne, Jim Grossheusch, Alex Hickel, and Jami Doolittle. When bids are received, a congregational vote will be planned for this spring. Finance continues to work closely with the Ministry Board as we explore future options, and the congregation will ultimately decide, as we are a congregation-led church.

It has been a busy and faithful year at Peace. Thank you for your patience, input, and prayers. God is good. He is here. Let us continue to move forward together as one congregation—for Him and for His house, Peace.

God's Blessings,

Cathy Rieckenberg



Dear People of God,

First, Sally and I are grateful for these first few months we have been with you. You have welcomed us with love and support as we share in this ministry of hope called Peace Lutheran Church.

A year ago, Pastor David said “2025 will be an incredible year with many challenges, for sure, but also many moments of joy and celebration.” Little did we know that a major change would be his retirement from pastoral ministry. We grieve our loss. At the same time, we continue to move forward into the future God has planned for us.

Indeed, much is before us at Peace. The building expansion, the financial support needed both for our ongoing ministry and the building, the possibility of more than one worship opportunity, and the desire to develop a small group ministry are still very much a part of our future. And, of course, another very important challenge is calling a new pastoral partner to lead Peace Lutheran.

All of this is grounded in the promises of our gracious God. We believe God is at work among us. And God will provide all that we need to continue to share the good news of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

It is also true that, as the Body of Christ called Peace Lutheran, we are invited to invest ourselves in this ministry. Though we are many, with many and various gifts, we need all of us, working together, sharing our gifts whether of time, talent, or treasure, so that this ministry remains vibrant.

Paul reminds us of that in Romans 12:3-8:

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”



Peace Lutheran is an alive and welcoming place. And, despite the challenges we face, as members of this body of Christ, you have stepped forward into the future with grace and hope. You have challenged yourselves. And as you have met those challenges in the past, I am confident you will meet all the challenges ahead, seeing them as opportunities to reach out to each other and many others with the Gospel.

All the glory belongs to our gracious God!

Pastor John Hopper



A MESSAGE FROM MARK NISSEN

Director of Youth & Family Ministry

I am so grateful for another year of service here at Peace. It has been a year full of great conversations, amazing kids, and witnessing God at work in our community. Youth ministry always brings new challenges, but it also serves as a wonderful reminder of God's grace—especially when events or lessons don't go according to plan, yet God is still present and working through them.

Confirmation continues to be a joy to lead. Last year, 14 young men and women confirmed their faith and their baptisms. Our program strikes a wonderful balance between teaching and experiences, allowing students to dive into their faith, spend time with mentors, and serve others. I'm particularly proud of our confirmation retreat, where nearly 200 middle schoolers from 10 churches gather to worship, learn, and engage deeply with one topic. This year, we'll focus on the hard questions of faith—promising another memorable weekend.

This year brought a new blessing for me: officiating weddings. I had the joy of officiating three incredible couples, including my first former youth, Mikayla Block (formerly Thorson). There is no greater joy than seeing former youth grow into faithful adults whose foundation is Christ.

Our ministry has also grown in family events, giving families the chance to spend meaningful time together. Sharing life as the body of Christ is central to our faith, and seeing families enjoy events like our Llama Farm outing was a real delight. We hope to continue building on these experiences in 2026.

Another exciting development has been our high school youth group, which is drawing many students from outside our congregation. Paired with the thriving local FCA group, it's clear that students today are hungry for Christ

and guidance. Our lessons continue to balance scripture study with practical guidance for living as a Christian in today's world.

There are countless other highlights from the past year—the mission trip, Valentine's dinner, middle school youth group, elementary events, weekly story time, the MEA retreat, and more. I also want to

offer a personal thank you from my family. Life with little ones at home is joyful and busy, and we are so grateful for the love and support of this church. Your encouragement allows me to serve while prioritizing family, and it is a true gift to see our children grow up in such a caring community.

I am excited to see what God continues to do with our youth ministry in the coming year!



Mark H. Nissen



Mark with Mikayla & Kash Block



Youth volunteering at the food shelf



2025 Confirmation Retreat

2026 Peace Ministry Board Candidates

3-Year Term - Vote for up to three (3)



Ron Boettner

Ron, along with Karleen, began attending Peace over two years ago. We enjoyed the blended worship and the passion people have for the well-being of their church and community. We live in Independence and are getting more and more familiar with Watertown.

We have three children and four grandchildren. I had been a biology teacher and baseball and basketball coach for a couple of years, and then served as a Lutheran pastor for over 37 years. I am so thankful for God making Himself known in my life, and I work to help people connect with God in their lives. I retired from full-time ministry three years ago. I enjoy our family time, especially our four grandchildren, building and restoring Model A Fords, gardening, sailing on Lake Superior, the boundary waters and catching walleyes. I love the Minnesota Twins and the Chicago Bears (I grew up in Chicago.) I think Peace is at a very important time to grow deeper in its relationship with God and each other, to build a foundation for living in Christ for generations to come. It would be an honor to serve the members of Peace Lutheran.



Teri Dressel

My name is Teri Dressel, and I have been a member of Peace for the past eight years. This church community has been a meaningful part of my life, and, if elected, I look forward to becoming more involved and giving back through service on the Ministry Board. My husband, Tim, and I live

near New Germany, and we are blessed with three adult children, a daughter-in-law, and three grandchildren. Our home is also shared with two dogs and a cat, who keep life lively. Professionally, I serve as an Area Manager for a company that partners with veterinary clinics, where I help support the clinic leaders at nine locations. I also bring prior board experience, having served multiple terms on the Board of Directors at Christ Community Lutheran School while my children were students there. I would be honored to serve Peace Lutheran Church in this role, and support the continued growth and well-being of our congregation.



Graduate Recognition Sunday



Julie Maas-Kusske

I have attended Peace for the past couple of years and officially joined in October 2024. I have lived in the 55359 (Independence/Maple Plain) area since I was five years old, except for my time attending Crown College. I am passionate about community, love people of all ages,

and have a heart for service. I am involved with several organizations, including the Orono Rotary Club, West Hennepin Chamber of Commerce, Hwy 12 Safety Coalition, American Legion Auxiliary, Orono Coalition, and the Hennepin County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee. Seniors hold a special place in my heart, and I have served on the Delano Senior Center Advisory Board and currently serve on the Haven Homes Mission Advancement Board. I am a substitute special education teacher in Orono Schools and the Mayor of Maple Plain. My most important roles are wife and mom. I have been married to Bart Kusske for 28 years, and we have two grown sons, Adam (23) and Andrew (21). In my free time, I enjoy being with family and friends, scrapbooking, singing praise music, campfires, and spending time on the lake enjoying God's creation.



2025 Ministry Board

Jon Peterson, Bill Helfritz, Karen Dressel, Tory Schmidt, Cathy Rieckenberg, Ted Pew, Dan Nelson, Pastor David Hanson

Thank You!

We have so much to be grateful for this year!

We give thanks to God for the faithful leaders who have guided our congregation with insight, dedication, discernment, and a deep love for Christ and His church.

To those completing their time on the Ministry Board—Cathy Rieckenberg, Karen Dressel, Bill Helfritz, and Tory Schmidt—thank you. Your service has strengthened our ministry and blessed our church family in countless ways. We pray that God continues to lead you and use your gifts in whatever area of ministry comes next. **Thank you for serving with such faithfulness!**

We also extend a heartfelt thank you to Pastor David, who faithfully led our congregation for 10 years. His steady leadership, deep faith, and genuine care for this church have shaped our ministry and strengthened our community in countless ways. We are grateful for his years of service and the lasting impact he has made among us.

2026 Peace Ministry Board Candidate

1-Year Term - Vote for up to one (1)



James Walz

James and his wife, Lindsey, have called Watertown home for nearly a decade and have been active members of Peace for the past three and a half years. Together, they are raising three children: Alexander (9), Elizabeth (6), and Benjamin (2½). James has 15 years of experience in the large-

format print industry, including the last ten years at The Bernard Group, a printer and retail fixturing company located in Chanhassen. He has a lifelong interest in art and design and enjoys seeing how creativity and craftsmanship come together. Raised in nearby Buffalo, just 25 minutes north of Watertown, James appreciates the strong sense of community in the area. When he's not working, he spends his time woodworking, taking on home improvement projects, coaching youth sports, and honing his skills at smoking meat.

2026 Peace Nominating Committee Candidates

2-Year Term - Vote for up to three (3)



Tiffany Molitor

Tiffany and her family have been members at Peace Lutheran Church since 2022. Tiffany works for Ridgeview Medical Center. She has been in the Emergency Department for the last 13 years helping in different roles. Tiffany and her husband, Terry, have three children together. Lena is 7, Owen is 5, and Jace is 3 years old.

Raising her children in church has always been a priority in life and teaching them the love of Jesus. Tiffany's confirmation verse was Proverbs 3:6 and still often reminds herself to keep putting God first and trusting Him down the path in life. Whenever there is free time, her favorite hobby is figure skating!



Alyssa Paschke

Hi, my name is Alyssa Paschke, and my family and I have been members at Peace since 2022. I am married to Mike Paschke, and we have three children, Kailey, Addi, and Jack. Over the years, I have enjoyed helping with FCA breakfast mornings, the hospitality committee, and various youth activities which have allowed me to build

strong relationships within our church community. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Nominating Committee because I believe in supporting thoughtful leadership and helping others find meaningful ways to serve. I value collaboration, listening, and encouraging participation from all members. Outside of church, if we're not cheering our kids on from the sidelines, I enjoy spending time at the lake, traveling, and making memories with my family. I look forward to working alongside others on the committee and contributing to the continued growth and strength of Peace Lutheran.



Nancy Sandin

My name is Nancy Sandin. I, along with my husband, Troy, and our son, Colton, have been members of Peace Lutheran for approximately six years. During this time, we have been blessed by the fellowship, worship, and

meaningful opportunities to serve alongside our church family. At Peace, I have been involved in several ministries, including serving on the Special Giving Committee, supporting youth activities, and most recently joining Altar Care. Through these roles, I have gained a deeper appreciation for the importance of generosity, teamwork, and nurturing the spiritual growth of all generations within our church. I am grateful for the opportunity to be considered for service on the Nominating Committee. If elected, I would approach this role with care, integrity, and a prayerful spirit. It would be an honor to serve and to help strengthen our church through thoughtful and faithful leadership.



Doreen Seal

Hello! My name is Doreen Seal and my husband, Clayton, and I have been members at Peace Lutheran since April 2013. When we joined PLC we soon found out what a wonderful place this was, not only for the worship time but for the friendships we have built

over the years. You all have become family to us. During our time at PLC, I have been involved with many committees and activities; from Outreach, Christian Ed (yes, I was a SS teacher), Altar Care, to delivering pineapples and the Corn Feed. The church has been a blessing to our family and we enjoy worshiping here with the fantastic Praise band, to a new addition in the works for our youth. What a great foundation we have in Christ. Thank you in advance for considering me for this team. All Glory to God.



Deb Wasser

My name is Deb Wasser and I have officially been a member for a little over two years but had attended Peace for awhile before that. I live in Watertown with my husband, Jon. We have four grown children. I currently work

part-time at CCLS and I also have a storage business. I am currently on the Altar Care Team and am part of the quilting group. I have helped with VBS for the past three summers. In my free time, I love to read, swim, walk and do puzzles.

Altar Care

Submitted by Sharon Weinzierl, co-chair

WHO WE ARE

Karen Dressel, Wendy Forland, Charlotte Helfritz, Kristina Hickel, Susie Kohls, Dianne Mack, Lori Nelson, Faye Rothenberger, Nancy Sandin, Doreen Seal, Deb Wasser, and Sharon Weinzierl

A special thank you to Brian & Wendy Ely, Karen & Robert Lotito, and Cathy Rieckenberg for their past service. And a special thanks to our helper, Lexi DiBenedetto.

We welcome are new 2025 members Susie Kohls, Dianne Mack, Lori Nelson, Faye Rothenberger, and Nancy Sandin.

Any member of Peace is welcome and encouraged to join the Altar Care Ministry Team. We are devoted and feel

very privileged to serve our Lord and hope you may also be ready to experience this joy!

WHAT WE DO

We are the caretakers of the altar, lectern, and baptismal font along with their presentation based on the church calendar and events. Our duties consist of setting up and maintaining supplies for Holy Communion, Baptism, and the various festivals and seasons of the church year as well as to care for the acolyte robes. Our responsibility is also to assist with seasonal decorations in our worship sanctuary.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025

Special events: Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, Confirmation Sunday, Pregnancy & Infant Loss



Awareness Month, All Saints Day, Veterans Day, Advent, Christmas, etc.

We had 60 flowers/plants for our Easter Garden. We supported 16 baptisms and confirmation for 15 students.

This year we purchased five new acolyte robes. With the rise in baptisms, we are very grateful for the women of church who continue to make the beautiful blankets to be shared with families on this special occasion.

The opportunity to share altar flowers is available to everyone. The sign-up calendar is on the bulletin board by the Connect Counter. Thank you to everyone who has so graciously provided us with beautiful flower arrangements over is past year!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Doreen Seal - 612-730-8248
Sharon Weinzierl - 952-955-2400

Prayer & Care

Submitted by Mary Fritz-Barfnecht, chair

Who We Are

Thank you to our team members for their ideas and dedication: Sue Beulke, Marla Erickson, Susie Kohls, Karen Lotito, Rhonda Swanhorst, Mary Fritz-Barfnecht, and special-need helpers.

A special thank you to Cathy Rieckenberg for being our Ministry Board liaison.

What We Do

We believe that we can change the world through prayer and acts of kindness to others by demonstrating Christ's love. We provide a window to the life-altering power of a relationship with Jesus. At Peace we strive to show compassion to our church family by supporting each other as we experience life together.

Highlights of 2025

Visited homebound members Glenn Johnson, Bob and Jan Carlson, and Mary Ann Hoes.

Mailed cards for various holidays, celebrations, sympathy, get well, thinking-of-you cards. birthday and anniversary to our on-line members.

Delivered May Day baskets. We sponsor the Our Daily Bread booklets that are available at the Connect Counter.

Provided send-off prayer card and gift to youth going to Bible camp and the mission trip.

Provided flowers for Pregnancy and Infant Loss month.

Recognized veterans during worship and provided dessert for Watertown Legion Veterans Day dinner and sent cards of thank you in recognition to two active service members.

Just before Thanksgiving we hosted *Surviving the Holidays*.

Several prayer shawls were given away this year. Prayer Shawl kits are available by the mission display, once finished, they can be returned to the church for distribution to people who are ill, suffering a loss, or are in the midst of a life crisis. If you know someone who could use a prayer shawl, please feel free to take a shawl and fill out the card



in the box so we know who received and who we can pray for.

A four-part devotional series called *Journeying Through Grief* is sent

quarterly for one year to members who experienced a death of a loved one. In 2025 we sent to four new families. We hope they have found these helpful on their grief journey.

Several meal trains were coordinated for members. Thank you to everyone who has helped with this ministry.

Facebook Prayer group continues to be a great way to communicate and lift up prayer requests. This is a private group that Peace members are welcome to participate in, look for Peace Prayer in the Facebook groups and ask to join, or let us know and we will invite you. Currently there are 40 members on Peace Prayer. If you have a prayer request, we ask that you keep us updated so we know how to continue to pray.

As we reflect on 2025, we are thankful to be able to make a difference in lives of those in need. We pray our Lord continues to help us identify ways to love our congregants and our community.

Christian Education

Submitted by: Nicole Johnsrud, Chair

Who We Are

Christian Education at Peace is supported by a dedicated team committed to nurturing faith across all ages. The committee includes Nicole Johnsrud, Colette Thorson, Mark Nissen, Pastor John, Ron Boettner, Elizabeth Schulze, Shelby Dressel, Lindsey Walz, along with the many faithful volunteers who give their time and talents to Sunday School, Adult Education, Confirmation, Vacation Bible School, and the Children's Christmas Program. We are deeply grateful for the energy, care, and faith these individuals bring to this ministry.



What We Do

Christian Education provides meaningful opportunities for our congregation and community to grow in faith, knowledge, and service. Through teaching, fellowship, and hands-on experiences, we strive to equip all ages to live out their faith in daily life.

Highlights of 2025

Sunday School

During 2025, Sunday School adapted to a year with more limited volunteer availability while continuing to prioritize meaningful faith formation. We moved to a large-group model for all PreK–4th grade students, gathering in the sanctuary immediately following worship. This approach allowed us to keep children connected and engaged while making the most of available leadership.

Each Sunday typically begins with music, followed by snack time and a large-group lesson focused on some of the most well-known Bible stories. After the main lesson, students would break into two smaller groups—an older group and a younger group—to recap the day's story through age-appropriate discussion and activities. Sunday School usually concludes around 11:00 a.m. Each week, following Sunday's lesson, a recap email went out to families giving

them the lesson recap if they missed that Sunday and an update of dates ahead. Families are busier than ever, we are trying to help keep Jesus at the forefront of their busy lives.

This model has allowed us to provide consistent, engaging, and age-appropriate instruction while maintaining a welcoming and joyful environment for our children.

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

The 2025 VBS theme was *Magnified*, a Lifeway program that helped children explore how God's greatness is seen in even the smallest details of creation and in their own lives. We were blessed with 72 registered children, along with a wonderful group of adult and youth volunteers who made the week a success.

Looking ahead, VBS 2026 will be *Illumination Station*, and it will take place June 15–19, 2026. We are excited to continue offering a vibrant, faith-filled week for our children and community.

Noisy Offering

Noisy Offering continues to be a meaningful way for our children to learn generosity and compassion. During 2025, Noisy Offering funds supported Operation Christmas Child, the local Food Shelf, flooding victims in Texas and North Carolina, and K-9 Comfort Dogs.

In total, \$3,625 was raised through Noisy Offering in 2025, making a tangible impact both locally and beyond our congregation. We remain thankful for the generosity of our children and families, and welcome ongoing suggestions for future recipients.

Confirmation

The Confirmation program remains a strong and vibrant part of Christian Education at Peace. This fall, students started the study of Luther's Small Catechism, grounding their faith in core Lutheran teachings while

connecting those teachings to their daily lives.

We currently have 39 students enrolled in the Confirmation program, which meets on Wednesday evenings.

Confirmation is led by Pastor John Hopper and Mark Nissen, supported by a dedicated team of small group leaders who walk alongside the same group of students throughout the year. These leaders include Deb Butler, Julie Potter, Andrea Plahn, Colette Thorson, Jon Peterson, Nicole Johnsrud, and Lindsay Schmidt.

Highlights of each year include mentor evening potlucks, faith-sharing nights where members of the congregation share their personal faith journeys, and service nights that allow students to serve others in meaningful ways. The annual Confirmation Retreat will take place at Camp iPoint from February 27–March 1, offering confirmation students a time for reflection, community, and faith growth.

Adult Education

Adult Education continued to provide opportunities for learning and faith development throughout the year. Over the summer, a women's study on 1 Peter by Jen Wilkin, offered rich discussion and encouragement to around 12 women both in our church and the community. In the fall, Pastor John led a study of Romans, and we are now entering a new study of Matthew, also led by Pastor John.

These studies continue to foster thoughtful conversation, biblical understanding, and strong connections among participants.

The Christian Education Committee is grateful for the continued support of the congregation and is always open to new ideas and volunteers. If you feel called to serve or have interest in growing this ministry, we warmly encourage you to reach out to a committee member.



2025 First Communion bread baking

Finance

Submitted by: Dan Cowger, chair

Who We Are

The members of the Finance Ministry Team for 2025 were Julie Potter, Dan & Sue Beulke, Andy Johnsrud, Nathan Wendland, Bill Helfritz, Dan Cowger, RaKel Schroeder, Judy Jacobson, Linda Senne, and Karen Dressel (MB Liaison).

What We Do

The Finance team oversees the financial matters of the church, proposes budgets, and keeps the congregation informed of its finances. Their goal is to be good stewards of the congregation's gifts to God and to encourage stewardship in all areas of ministry and mission.

Highlights for 2025

The Finance Ministry Team would like to thank the members of Peace Lutheran Church for their generous gifts this year. The 2025 budget projected a \$22,000 deficit due primarily to allowing for a possible new staff position (Director of Worship & Music). A new staff person was not added, which allowed expenses to come in below the budgeted amount. Our General Fund Giving is up approximately 2% from last year. As a result, we are very pleased to report that the year-end numbers indicate that we

will have a budget surplus for the 2025 calendar year of approximately \$37,000. Praise the Lord for this wonderful blessing.

A financial review was conducted by an outside accounting firm and showed that everything was in good order, following generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

I would like to extend a very special thank you to Julie Potter who has taken on the role of Financial Administrator. Julie has put in countless hours and has done a tremendous job. She has truly been a blessing to the finance team and to Peace Lutheran Church. I would like to extend a sincere Thank You to the entire Finance Ministry Team for their hard work and dedication this past year. Tracking, recording, analyzing, and reporting Peace Lutheran Church's financial condition would not be possible without the efforts of the entire Finance Ministry Team.

2025 marked the second year of our Capital Campaign. The goal of the campaign was to raise \$1.5 million over a three-year period. At the end of this year, congregational members have pledged \$725,000 toward the expansion project with \$504,000 already received. The Nesvold family has pledged a matching gift of up to \$600,000. Capital

Campaign gifts and all Funds received have been invested in CDs with PLC earning over \$37,000 in interest in 2025. We are very blessed to have such a generous and supportive congregation here at PLC. We look forward to a building expansion, and we thank God for such a wonderful blessing.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are projecting a \$31,000 budget deficit. We are projecting a decrease in giving in 2026 based on the Faith Promises we received this year. Our prayer is that, even though Faith Promises are down, that ultimately, with God's help, giving can still increase in 2026. Our plan is to retain \$31,000 from this year's 2025 budget surplus to offset any possible deficit in 2026.

We have very generous members who actively support the ministries here at Peace with both their time and their financial gifts. At the same time, we have volunteers and ministry teams who have done a fabulous job of expanding their ministries and staying within their budgets. The combination of generous giving, thoughtful use of those gifts and God's blessings has allowed Peace to end the year 2025 in a very solid financial position. We look forward to an exciting year of ministry and building God's kingdom in 2026.

Hospitality Committee

Submitted by Jill Blair, Chair

Who We Are

The Hospitality Committee is made up of dedicated volunteers who help create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere at Peace. Committee members include Laurie Langner, Dani Hahn, Karen and Robert Lotito, Billie Tharaldson, Lindsay Schmidt, Deb Wasser, Beth Seefeldt, Charlotte Helfritz, John Weinzierl, Jill Blair, and Heather Heun.

What We Do

Hospitality is at the heart of our ministry. Each worship service begins with a warm welcome from our greeters at the front door, while ushers help ensure that services run smoothly. Every Sunday, Peace Café offers hot coffee

and tasty treats, providing an opportunity for fellowship and strengthening the sense of connection within our Peace family.

As we look ahead, we are exploring a few new ideas and adventures for the coming year—stay tuned!

Highlights for 2025

We were grateful to continue many beloved traditions, including:

- Chili Cook-Off Contest
- Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed (record attendance!)
- Cribbage Tournaments
- Pie Auction for Rally Sunday
- Easter Breakfast
- Fish Fry
- Craft Weekend
- Tater Tot Hotdish Competition
- Movie Night

Christmas Bazaar and Cookie Walk (285 dozen cookies sold!)

Additional highlights included Pastor David's creative way of tying sermon themes to food and baseball fare, as well as his memorable luau-themed retirement party.

New Purchases and Donations

We are thankful for the generosity and support that helped enhance our hospitality efforts:

- A chest freezer donated by Kris Hanson Family
- Heavy clear plastic table covers to protect the tablecloths on the high-top tables

Looking Ahead

We look forward to 2026 and all that it holds for Peace Church. The Hospitality Committee remains committed to fostering fellowship, connection, and a welcoming environment for all.

Property

Submitted by: John Weinzierl, chair

Who We Are

The Property Ministry Team is made up of dedicated volunteers who offer their time and talents to ensure that our facilities are well maintained, safe, and welcoming. Team members include: Bill Hoernemann, John Lobitz, Tom Mittelstaedt, Paul Nesvold, Jim Grosshuesch, Kris Hanson, Andy Johnsrud, Tim Dressel, Leif Pederson, Cory Meyer, Troy Sandin, Les Forland, John Weinzierl, and Ted Pew (Ministry Board liaison).

What We Do

The Property Ministry Team is responsible for maintaining the church's heating, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, and security systems. Additional responsibilities include maintenance of supplies, carpet cleaning, light bulb replacement, HVAC monitoring, and oversight of custodial services. Custodial work includes regular weekly cleaning as well as cleaning on an as-needed basis.

Exterior maintenance includes gardening, weeding, mowing, fertilizing, irrigation system maintenance, and snow removal. This team works diligently throughout the year to keep Peace looking well cared for and functioning smoothly.

Highlights of 2025

- Brevik Tharaldson secured a grant from Xcel Energy to convert nearly all fluorescent lighting to LED. As a result, the church is now 99.9% LED, improving both energy efficiency and lighting quality.

A special thank you goes out to all who stepped in as needs arose. We are especially grateful to the Monday morning cleaning group: Bill Hoernemann, Paul Nesvold, Jim Lindgren, Bill Helfritz, Ted Pew, Dewey Swenson, Bob Rieckenberg, Harlan Sundblad, Les Forland, Dan Beulke, and Jake Jacobson.

Thank you to Jerry Berg for providing lawn care services; Kris Hanson and Tom Mittelstaedt for snowplowing; and John Lobitz and Paul Nesvold for sidewalk snow removal.

There is always a need for additional volunteers. If you are interested in serving on the Property Ministry Team, please contact John Weinzierl.

Missions

submitted by Amy Peterson

Who We Are

Karleen Boettner, Jaime & Troy Carlson, Ruth Clark, Jim Grosshuesch, Edie Hanson, Karen Hoernemann, Julie Maas-Kusske, Karen & Robert Lotito, Dale Mack, Nikki McClurg, Amy & Jon Peterson, Cathy Rieckenberg, Faye & Carl Rothenberg, Sharon Weinzierl, and Dan Nelson (MB Liaison).

What We Do

Recommends recipients of Peace's annual benevolence dollars and uses its operating and designated funds to financially support those in need. In addition to monetary gifting decisions, the Missions team organizes various opportunities for Peace members to volunteer and serve. Local and global mission partners are explained in detail in the Missions pamphlet. Also, some Peace Thrivent policyholders use Thrivent Action Plans for additional funding (i.e., blessing bags and quilting supplies).

Highlights of 2025

January and November – Brittany's Place: Peace members assembled and delivered 74 blessing bags to Brittany's Place (50 in January and 24 in November), including self-care items, teddy bears, New Testament Bibles, and notes from confirmation students, along with fleece blankets and clothing. *Coordinated by Jaime and Troy Carlson.*

May – Feed the Poor: Guest speaker and retired pastor Dan Cloeter spoke to the congregation about Feed the Poor. Freewill donations were received.



August – Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed/“Stuff the Truck” Food Drive: This event collected 456 pounds of non-perishable food and \$265 in monetary donations, which were delivered to Gather & Grow. Coordinator: *Jim Grosshuesch.*

September – Missions Sunday: Guest speaker Stacy Zimmerman shared about Feed My Starving Children (FMSC). Peace's 2025 mission partners and volunteer opportunities were highlighted, with the Missions Team serving in worship and hosting an information fair with FMSC, Love INC, Gather & Grow, and the Gideons. A total of \$650 from the Missions budget was gifted for a speaking honorarium and partner donations.

October – Confirmation Servant Night: Missions partnered with Confirmation students for a Servant Night at Peace. Jamie Carlson shared about Brittany's Place, and students wrote encouraging notes for blessing bags. Youth also prepared bandages for Global Health Ministries and assembled Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.

October – Erickson/ Grosshuesch Wedding: Unique to this year, when Peace members Marla Erickson and Jim Grosshuesch were married, they requested donations to Gather & Grow in lieu of gifts, resulting in gifts totaling over \$11,000. A special thank you to Marla and Jim for their generosity!

October/November – Operation Christmas Child: Peace members filled 119 shoeboxes, with 299 more collected from area churches and individuals. These were delivered to the western Twin Cities drop-off site, contributing to a total of 11,235 shoeboxes. Coordinators: *Amy and Jon Peterson.*

continued →

November/December – Mittens of Hope: Peace members filled 27 mittens/purchased Christmas gifts for students pre-identified by the W-M school social worker. *Coordinator: Sharon Weinzierl.*

December – Advent Giving Calendar for the Food Shelf: A 24-day Advent calendar listed needed food items was included in the Sunday bulletin.

Quarterly – FMSC: Peace members volunteered at Feed My Starving Children in Chanhassen in January, April, July, and October, hand-packing Manna meals for children in need. *Coordinator: Ruth Clark.*



Missions We Support All Year

Gather & Grow Watertown Food Shelf: On the 4th Sunday of each month, Peace collected cash and non-perishable food items. Including “Stuff the Truck” and Advent donations, Peace contributed ~1,086 lbs. of food and \$2,990.19 beyond its budgeted benevolence. Youth and leaders also participated in Trick or Treat for the Food Shelf, collecting over 3,600 lbs. of food and \$800—Yay God! *Coordinator: Jim Grosshuesch*

Global Health Ministries (GHM): Donated white cotton sheets were ripped, rolled, and rubber-banded into compact bandages. Volunteers rolled 360 bandages in 2025, which were delivered to Global Health Ministries for worldwide distribution. *Coordinators: Jim Grosshuesch and Cathy Rieckenberg.*

Good Samaritan Ministry: The Good Samaritan Ministry provides financial

and practical assistance to individuals and families in need within the Peace community and surrounding area. Through this ministry, volunteers offer support with essentials such as food, gas cards, and other urgent needs, reflecting Christ’s love in tangible ways. *Coordinators: Pastor John Hopper and Edie Hanson.*

Love In The Name of Christ (Love INC – Heartland): Peace continued partnering with Trinity Lutheran to provide personal care items quarterly for families in the “Fresh Start” GAP ministry. PCI and monetary donations were collected on the 2nd Sunday of each month. *Coordinator: Nikki McClurg.*

Peace members also volunteered at Love INC thrift stores, assisting at the register and sorting donated clothing, household items, and furniture. Visit the stores in Delano and Howard Lake to shop and support Love INC. *Coordinator: Karleen Boettner.*

Nutritional Assistance Program for Seniors (NAPS): Peace participates in NAPS on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. NAPS provides low-income seniors (age 60+) with a free box of nutritious food from Second Harvest. Currently, two seniors receive boxes. Seniors who may benefit can contact Nikki. *Coordinator: Nikki McClurg.*

Orphan Grain Train: Peace members continued making diapers from used t-shirts, dresses from pillowcases, and baby quilts. In 2025, donations included 129 diapers, 27 pillowcase dresses, 64 sunflower dresses, 17 baby quilts, and 2 lap quilts. *Coordinator: TBD.*

Ronald McDonald House: Peace

continued to collect tabs from pop, soup, and pet food cans for monetary support. In addition, Peace members cut and tied 4 small and 4 medium fleece blankets for children receiving medical care and staying at the Ronald McDonald House. *Coordinators: Karen & Robert Lotito.*

Royals Room: Peace members continued to donate healthy snacks, school supplies, new or gently used clothing, hats, mittens, shoes and boots to the Royals Room at the WM Elementary School for students who come to school hungry or inadequately dressed. *Coordinator: Sharon Weinzierl.*

NEW in 2026

- **New Benevolence**
 - ◊ **Corn Feed:** to help fund the Corn Feed and alleviate congregation donations.
 - ◊ **Dwelling Place:** faith-based domestic violence safe home for women in the Twin Cities area, including Carver County.
 - ◊ **KTIS Radio.**
 - ◊ **Marion Medical Mission:** replaces the Tanzania Well Project, Peace will financially pay for two new wells in 2026.
- **Good Samaritan Fund:** gas cards will no longer be made available to the public due to safety concerns.
- **New Hope Mission Society:** benevolence discontinued. Research will be done for a possible alternative to support in 2027.
- **Royals Room:** members of the Missions team will purchase healthy snacks during the 9-month school year in lieu of asking the congregation for healthy snack donations.



Feed My Starving Children Packing Event



Operation Christmas Child



Gather & Grow Food Shelf

Outreach

Submitted by: Karen Dressel, chair

Who We Are

Our committee members include Brenna Demeules, Mary Fritz-Barfnecht, Robert & Karen Lotito, Tom & Audrey Nickleby, Cathy Rieckenberg, Karen Dressel (chair).

What We Do

We work to share the love of Christ to the community of Watertown and surrounding areas, supporting and hosting community events.

Highlights of 2025

Pineapple Express: Over 200 pineapples were delivered to new neighbors by church members this past year. Thank you to all volunteers and to Cathy Rieckenberg for leading the project.

Spring Flower & Plant Sale (February): Order flowers, flats,

vegetables, and herbs from the comfort of home. Proceeds support the Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed (WNCF).

Chili Feed (March): We hosted a chili feed for the Watertown Fire Department and EMTs. Fun for all, and our first responders love the “hotter the better” chili!

Easter Eggstravaganza (Saturday before Easter): Families enjoyed fun activities, and we handed out bracelets imprinted with “He Is Risen.”

Rails to Trails Parade (July): Our float featured a cornfield to advertise the WNCF, and volunteers handed out fans, candy, and freezie pops along the route.

Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed (August): The 1st Saturday in August brought a record community turnout! Members volunteered with setup, roasting corn, cooking, concessions, booths, and cleanup. Each year, the event grows bigger and better.



Ladies Night Out (October): Outreach hosted a table, handing out Chamber of Commerce bags and 300 cookies with information about grief support, Bible studies, and the Christmas Bazaar.

Coffee, Cake & Conversation & New Member Sundays: Held quarterly, these events welcome new members with a “WELCOME” swag bag. Many new members have joined Peace through WNCF, pineapple deliveries, postcard mailings, social media, or personal invitations.

A special thanks to our dedicated Outreach team—especially Sandy Fleischman for her artistic talents—and all Peace members who help make our ministry thrive.

Join Us: The Outreach Ministry Team meets the first Monday of every month at 6:00 p.m. at Peace. We welcome new ideas, inspiration, and energy—consider joining us!

Building Addition & Remodel Update

2025 was an exciting year for Peace as we advanced plans for a building addition and remodel to meet the needs of our growing family. Early in the year, the Design Development Team (DD-Team)—Elizabeth Schulze, Cory Meyer, James Walz, and Lindsay Schmidt—met with each ministry team to assess needs and gather input for the architectural development of our church building. A primary focus was creating spaces for youth and families, while also strongly supporting other congregational needs and staff areas.

To gain perspective, the team visited several area churches to learn what is working well for their congregations. Peace Lutheran Church partnered with Nor-Son Construction as the Design Builder for the project, with architect Eric Larson joining the DD-Team. By mid-2025, a design was created and refined through several informational meetings. On June 1, the congregation voted to move forward with the design and begin preparing construction documents and bids.

As 2025 concluded, the DD-Team and the Implementation Team (I-Team)—Cory Meyer, Arvin Senne, Jami Doolittle, Jim Grosshuesch, and Alex Hickel—continue working diligently to finalize plans. Bids are expected in the first quarter of 2026. After they are received, refined, and summarized, the congregation will review options presented by the team and a vote will be held on how to proceed. Based on current progress, Peace is positioned to move well into construction during 2026.

God's blessings to His people,
Tory Schmidt - on behalf of PLC Ministry Board

Design Development Team



Elizabeth Schulze, Chair



Cory Meyer



Lindsay Schmidt



James Walz



Tory Schmidt, MB Rep

Implementation Team



Jami Doolittle



Jim Grosshuesch



Alex Hickel



Cory Meyer



Arvin Senne

Safety

Submitted by Bob Rieckenberg, chair

What We Do

The Safety Ministry Team is responsible for implementing safety policies, procedures and monitoring activities at church.

Highlights of 2025

We continue to review and update our safety procedures here at Peace. We will continue to make recommendations to the I-Team for the new addition to the church. This year we installed a mirror outside the secretary's office so Sandy can see when people enter and exit the parking lot as well as when someone comes in the front door. We will be installing a locking and monitoring system for the front door and entry that can be controlled from within the office. We will be looking at options other than a key entry system such as a badge or card type procedure. This year we want to do some safety training sessions for the congregation as well as additional training for the ushers and greeters. Please let the committee know if you would be interested in becoming a part of our team.

Stewardship

Submitted by: Sue Beulke, chair

Who We Are

Our team includes Sue Beulke, Amy Peterson, Jon Peterson, Bob Rieckenberg, Bill Helfritz (MB liaison), and YOU! It is your time, your talents, and your gifts that allow Peace to spread God's word and do God's work all year long.

What We Do

Stewardship 360 is a year-long effort focusing on time, talents and gifts.

Highlights of 2025

Our stewardship series *From Small Beginnings ... Great Things Come* highlights was based on Jesus' seed parables and what the Bible has to say about growing and reaping as it relates to our spiritual growth. We are reminded that our true spiritual growth and strength come from being connected to God. It is in that connection that God blesses and multiplies our gifts. In October we had tables with sign-up opportunities arising

in the next six months for each ministry team. We will repeat this in spring 2026 and we encourage everyone to find at least two opportunities to serve. ***Many hands make light the work.***

182 stewardship packets were mailed. We are very thankful for the responses and are excited to see how God works this year through each of our gifts! Peace needs YOU! Please pray about how you can become more involved at Peace.

We're looking forward to our Stewardship journey in 2026!

Technology

Submitted by Kevin Schroeder, chair

What We Do

The Technology Team is responsible for the electronic equipment throughout the church including the office equipment, telephones, PCs, and audio/video equipment, as well as coordinating upgrades and changes to software.

Highlights of 2025

We have seen many improvements to technology in 2025. Here are the highlights:

We installed a new unified receiver antenna. This antenna combines all the individual microphone antennas into one much more powerful antenna, giving all of our wireless microphones much better reception throughout the sanctuary.

We rebuilt the technology booth at the back of the church, creating more space for the sound board (the person who manages all the microphones at every service), the slide presenter (the person who manages the slides on the screens for every service) and the recorder (the person who manages all the cameras for the livestream for every service).

We added two more cameras to our worship area, giving us a total of four cameras. This gives our recorders more options and better angles to capture everything that happens during a service. The new camera angles really help to capture the kids during JAM, baptisms, instrumentalists, and the worship band.

We also added a whole new camera board. The new board and the additional cameras make the livestream viewing much more professional, enjoyable and easier to watch by allowing us to switch cameras more frequently and get better angles to everything that is taking place at any given service.

Our upgraded Wi-Fi along with the additional cameras have greatly improved the sound quality of our livestream as well. We are putting out very high-quality, well-done videos of our services.

We have experienced some glitches with our current sound board where the touch screen doesn't respond. So far it has worked to turn the system off and then back on and it eventually responds. Other than that, we appear to be in a good place currently with our microphones, cameras, sound system and camera system and hope that what we have now will last for many years to come.

Worship & Music

Submitted by: Edie Hanson, chair

Who We Are

We are deeply thankful for the many people who contribute to the Worship & Music Ministry at Peace. We give thanks for Pastor David for his faithful leadership and quick wit, and for Pastor John, who has graciously served as our interim pastor during this season of call.

We are grateful to JoAnn Deveny for her devoted leadership of our music ministry, to Marla Erickson for coordinating special music and directing the choir, and to Marla and Ruth Clark for providing accompaniment when needed. We also celebrate our Children's Choir, led by Nicole Johnsrud, and the volunteers who make our Christmas Program so meaningful.

Our thanks extend to the Worship & Music Ministry Team, volunteer musicians and vocalists, and all who serve as ushers, greeters, sound, recording, and slide operators. We are especially grateful for Mark Nissen and Kevin Schroeder for their faithful



preparation each week.

We thank Jesus Christ for His work among us and for all who serve behind the scenes to bless our worship. We welcome continued feedback on music, worship flow, and atmosphere at Peace.

What We Do

Worship & Music volunteers are a group of people who graciously share their gifts and talents by serving as musicians, greeters, ushers, readers, slide presenters, video recorders, sound system operators, and Sunday JAM message volunteers.

Members of the core team meet monthly to plan worship services, most often at 9:00 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month.

Highlights of 2025

The goal of Worship & Music in 2025 has been to create meaningful worship for everyone at Peace. We continue to offer blended worship,



combining traditional hymns and contemporary praise music to speak to a wide range of hearts and help all feel blessed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Our live-streaming ministry continues to grow, with people joining us online each Sunday and through YouTube and Facebook. We are grateful for the dedicated volunteers—especially our youth—who make this ministry possible. This year, we upgraded our video system and added cameras, enhancing overall quality. We also said farewell to Pastor David Hanson and welcomed Pastor John Hopper as our interim pastor.

The Worship & Music Team meets monthly to plan Sunday and midweek services and is encouraged by increased worship attendance. We continue to work with the Technology Team and Ministry Board to improve sound quality.

Volunteers of all ages are welcome to serve as greeters, ushers, readers, slide presenters, and tech helpers. Youth have been especially gifted in technology roles, and families are encouraged to serve together. We are deeply grateful for all who serve.

Adult Choir

Submitted by: Marla Erickson,
(763) 331-2525
Adult Choir Director & Special Music
Coordinator

Who We Are

A group of adults who love to praise the Lord in more traditional song.

What We Do

Peace Lutheran's Adult Choir and Special Music musicians enjoy sharing music at our weekly Sunday morning worship services and at special Advent, Lenten, or community-wide ecumenical gatherings. We welcome and encourage new members to join choir or volunteer to do a special music number anytime through the calendar year. (We are especially in need of altos and tenors.) Choir keeps a September-through-April

schedule, and Peace relies more heavily on special music offerings in the May-through-August period.

Highlights of 2025

Choir began rehearsing approximately 2 to 3 Wednesdays per month at 5:00 p.m. this year, which lends more opportunity to become better familiarized with music. In addition, on the Sunday mornings on which it sings, we have a pre-rehearsal at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall and a sanctuary rehearsal at 8:15 a.m. for the 9:00 a.m. worship service.

Special Music Highlights:

Peace has many talented musicians; i.e., vocalists, pianists, flutists, trumpet players, drummers, guitar and bass players and others who greatly enhance our worship by adding their God-given talents to not only Sunday a.m. worship, but to Lent, Easter, Reformation Sunday, All Saints Sunday, etc. This fall, Peace was blessed with the piano/

vocal special music performance of an original song by Pastor John Hopper's granddaughter, Lauren Hopper, entitled "Be Still..." A special recognition and thanks to trumpeter Alex Kelly at the Christmas Eve 5:00 p.m. worship and Bill and Karen Hoernemann's grandchildren and Ruth Clark who participated in the 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve worship this year.

Adult Choir participated in a beautiful Watertown community Thanksgiving Week service in November, hosted by Immaculate Conception Church, which nicely prepared all who attended to set their hearts and minds in a spirit of thanks to the God of all creation.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth; make a loud noise and rejoice and sing praise."

Soli deo Gloria! (To God alone be the glory.)

Youth Activities

Submitted by: Meghan Weaver

Who We Are

Committee Members: Mark & Gladys Nissen, Meghan Weaver, Nicole Johnsrud, Andrea Plahn, Nancy & Troy Sandin, and Jon Peterson – MB rep

What We Do

Our Youth Activities Team is dedicated to helping young people grow into a mature, active relationship with Jesus Christ, equipping them to become disciples and leaders within our church and throughout the community. We are committed to showing genuine care and support for every student we serve. This ministry welcomes youth from the completion of their first communion through 12th grade.

Highlights of 2025

The Youth Activities Ministry experienced a full and vibrant year in 2025. Every year I find myself saying the same thing—it's hard to believe how quickly time passes. Yet when you look around Peace on a Sunday morning or during Wednesday night youth group, the evidence of God's work is unmistakable. There are so many kids, and they are such an incredible blessing.

Attendance continues to grow in Sunday worship, Wednesday confirmation, and youth group. But this growth isn't just measured in numbers—our youth are actively serving. On any given Sunday, you'll find them reading Scripture, sharing special music, participating in J.A.M., ushering, and even running slides and livestreams for online worship. Their presence and leadership enrich our congregation in meaningful and visible ways.

Mark continues to faithfully lead youth group each week—Wednesday nights for high school students and Sunday afternoons for middle schoolers. Youth group remains open not only to Peace members, but also to friends and students from the wider community, and we are grateful to see more and more non-members joining in. On a



typical night or event, we welcome anywhere from 15 to over 20 students, creating a lively and meaningful environment for connection and growth.

Throughout the year, our youth and adult volunteers participated in a wide range of service opportunities. Highlights included Feed My Starving Children, Trick-or-Treat for the Food Shelf, summer volunteering at the food shelf, a youth-led Easter celebration, See You at the Pole, spring college care packages, and a youth-led Valentine's Dinner. Our youth also supported other Peace ministries by serving at VBS, Rally Sunday, and the Corn Feed.

Of course, 2025 wasn't all work—there was plenty of fun as well. The committee planned a variety of activities, including movie nights, a trip to Valleyfair, Egg Olympics, a water war, spikeball tournaments, and several Bible studies hosted by Mark at his home, complete with dinner. These moments of fellowship strengthened friendships and deepened faith in joyful and memorable ways.

Yay God—Peace completed its fifth mission trip this year! Twenty-six youth and five adult leaders traveled to Elliott County, Kentucky, where they shared the good news of our Savior while serving the local community. Their work included supporting a retreat ministry for abused women through yard projects and building repairs, helping construct a Christian retreat center, assisting community members with home and yard needs, and stepping in wherever an extra set of hands was needed. Each day also included time for worship, prayer, relationship-building, and a little fun along the way.

Looking ahead, Peace is already preparing for its sixth mission trip this coming July. Our youth will be traveling to Lake Charles, Louisiana, ready once again to serve and to share the good news of our amazing Lord.

Our committee is genuinely energized about what lies ahead, and it's easy to see why. The word that

continues to rise to the surface is growth. Each year I say it again: God is so good. We have many families eager for their children to be part of Peace's youth ministry, and we are seeing increasing interest from families outside of Peace as well.



As a committee, we are grateful and excited to watch the faith of our youth deepen. We remain committed to walking alongside them, supporting their spiritual journeys, and strengthening the relationships we've built. With the continued encouragement and support of our congregation, this ministry is poised to gain even more momentum and reach even more young people in meaningful ways.

We know 2026 will be a full and vibrant year. We look forward to carrying on beloved traditions while continuing to grow and strengthen our youth group. With God, nothing is impossible.

"Lord, we give You all the glory for the gift of our youth—for every event we share and for the work You are accomplishing both within our church and far beyond its walls. It is our deep desire to grow Your Kingdom and to help more and more young people come to know You, love You, and worship You with their whole hearts. May every step we take and every effort we make be pleasing in Your sight. Amen."

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank-you to our congregation for the unwavering support you show to Mark and to our youth. While we may be a lively group at times, this church is truly home for these kids, and they find real comfort within these walls and within each of you.

A special thank-you goes to Mark for being an incredible asset to our church, our youth, their families, and our wider community. Your passion and dedication shine through in everything you do, and we are deeply grateful. And finally, to my fellow committee members: thank you for offering your time, energy, and talents so generously. None of this ministry would be possible without you.

Praise God!

UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING - January 26, 2025

Welcome given by President Mike Rupp. Following Robert Rules of Order. We have a quorum.

I. Call to Order: Call to order at 10:36 a.m. by President Mike Rupp.

II. Opening Prayer: Opening prayer lead by Pastor David Hanson

III. Open Forum: None

IV. Adopt Agenda:

Motion to adopt Annual Meeting Agenda as written. Ruth Clark / Deb Butler / Carried

V. Approve Congregational Meeting Minutes:

- a. 2023 Annual Meeting – January 28, 2024
- b. Special Congregational Meeting – February 11, 2024
- c. Special Congregational Meeting – November 17, 2024.

Motion to approve the minutes for congregational meetings held on January 28, 2024, February 11, 2024, and November 17, 2024 as written. Bob Rieckenberg / Mary Fritz-Barfnecht / Carried

VI. Nominating Committee Ballot Presentation Given by Bob Rieckenberg:

- a. Ministry Board Positions (3-Year Term) Vote for Two: Dan Nelson and Ted Pew

- b. Nominating Committee (2-Year Term) Vote for Three: Stephany Allen, Nicole Johnsrud, Mary Lobitz, Nancy Sandin, RaKel Schroeder, Colette Thorson, and Meghan Weaver.

VII. Reports

- a. Pastor's Report given by Pastor David Hanson.
- b. Director of Youth & Family Report given by Mark Nissen.
- c. Ministry Board Report given by Mike Rupp.

VIII. Building Expansion Update: given by Mike Rupp.

IX. Recognition of Ministry Teams

X. Remembering Our Departed Members: Maggie Grosshuesch and Renata Dahl were remembered. A moment of silence offered prayer and remembering that grieving is a journey.

XI. 2024 and 2025 Finance Review Presented by Dan Cowger, Finance Chair.

- Audit Report of 2024 Financial Records – Done by an independent agency, Jeanne Matter CPA, and found our books to be in order. Verified accurate.
- Review of 2024 Finance Report – Dan Cowger reviewed income and expenses.

Motion to accept the review of last year's budget. Roger Larson / Larry Cramb / Carried

- Proposed 2025 Budget – Dan Cowger discussed the 2025 budget, forecasting a budget deficit for 2025.

Motion to approve 2025 Budget: Doreen Seal / Marla Erickson / Carried

X. New Business: None

XI. Nominating Committee Election Results Presented by Bob Rieckenberg

- Elected Nominating Committee Members for the 2025 year serving a 2-year term are: Nicole Johnsrud, RaKel Schroeder and Colette Thorson
- Elected Ministry Board Members for the 2025 year serving a 3-year term are: Dan Nelson and Ted Pew

Motion for Cathy Rieckenberg to be President of the Congregation was made by Tory Schmidt / Jon Peterson / Carried

Motion to destroy ballots: Julie Maas-Kusske / Beth Seefeldt / Carried

XII. Thank You Past Ministry Board Members, Past Nominating Committee Members and Candidates

XIII. Adjournment: Closing statement from the president of the congregation, Mike Rupp.

Motion to adjourn Jake Jacobson / Dan Junczewski / Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

XIV. Closing Prayer: Closing Prayer — Lord's Prayer all together.



Fat Sunday Kazoos



Pastor's David Retirement Sunday



Bill's 90th Birthday



Pie Auction

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE
FEBRUARY JUNE 1, 2025 SPECIAL
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

I. Welcome

Welcome given by President Cathy Rieckenberg. Following Robert Rules of Order. We have a quorum.

II. Call to Order: Cathy called the meeting to order at 10:34 am.

III. Opening Prayer: Led by Pastor David

IV. Adopt Agenda:

Motion to adopt the Special Congregational Meeting Agenda as written. Larry Cramb / Greg Tesch / Carried

V. Design Team Update: Given by Tory Schmidt, opening by reading Matthew 28:16-20 'The Great Commission'.

Tory reviewed the process and plans to date, 2022-2025. Discussed the value of the design, both Education/Youth and the Administration. Clarified what was and wasn't being voted on today.

VI. Finance Update: Given by Dan Cowger. Status as of April 30, 2025.

VII. Committee Ballot Presentation

Motion to authorize the Ministry Board to -

- 1) *Engage Nor-son to complete construction documents and secure contractor bids. This expenditure is not to exceed \$58,000.*
- 2) *Appoint an Implementation Team (I Team) to work with Nor-Son on construction documents and contractor bids.*
- 3) *Appoint a Construction Finance Team (CF Team) to define financing options on the proposed design concept and to monitor the costs for the construction documents.*

After all documents are completed and shared, the congregation will vote again to decide whether to proceed with the additions and financing options.

Bill Helfritz / Doreen Seal / Carried

DISCUSSION

Questions asked:

- Nicole and Andy Johnsrud: Urged review of the \$56k cost for detailed plans and bid work. They believe the cost should be far less.
- Jake Bohler: Based on the plans presented, once the bids come in, if we need to lower the cost, will we need to pay for new plans?
- Norm Bauer: Does the current, \$2.1-\$2.3M estimated, represent only construction cost or is this the total project cost? Elizabeth Schulze answered: The estimated \$2.1-\$2.3M represents the total project cost, including furniture.
- Norm Bauer: What is the cost per square foot? Elizabeth Schulze answered: \$329, which includes everything. \$2.3M/ total square feet.
- Jerry Berg: Is this the final concept for the Education wing? Tory Schmidt answered: Yes

VIII. Congregation Vote

IX. Collection of Ballots by Nominating Committee

X. Congregation Vote Results: Presented by Bob Rieckenberg. Yes – 78; No – 17; Blank – 0.

XI. Motion to Destroy the Ballot

Motion to destroy the Ballots. Ted Pew / Cory Meyer / Carried

XII. Adjournment: at 11:20 a.m. by Cathy Rieckenberg

Motion to adjourn. Russ Blair / Dan Cowger / Carried

VIII. Closing Prayer

UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE JULY 27, 2025 SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

I. Welcome

Welcome given by President Cathy Rieckenberg. Following Robert's Rules of Order. We have a quorum.

II. Call to Order: Cathy called the meeting to order at 10:13 am.

III. Opening Prayer: Led by Cathy

IV. Adopt Agenda:

Motion to adopt the Special Congregational Meeting Agenda as written. Duane Swenson / Sue Buelke / Carried

Cathy – "This is the most important committee we have elected in the past 10 years. Please pray for them and direction for their search."

V. Ballot Presentation: Bob Rieckenberg, as chair of the Nominating Committee

There is a ballot revision. Clay Thaemert has asked to be removed from the nominations for the Call Committee. Jake Bohler has agreed to be a nominee.

No new nominee from the floor.

Nominations were closed.

VI. Congregational Vote

VII. Collection of Ballots

VIII. Peace Happenings Update

Cathy announced our interim pastor: Rev. Dr. John Hopper

While waiting for vote results, Cathy introduced Ann Goebel. Ann gave us a brief history of who she is and how she was involved with the original pastoral search 11 years ago.

IX. Congregational Vote Results – 99.9% approval of the 5-member Call Committee.

Members: Jake Bohler, Karleen Boettner, Deb Butler, Dan Cowger, Kevin Schroeder

X. Motion to Destroy Ballots. Tory Schmidt / Bill Hoernemann / Carried

XI. Adjournment 10:25

INCOME SUMMARY	2025	2024	2023
Faith Promises - General Fund	\$ 380,679	\$ 375,696	\$ 358,854
Cash Offerings	5,739	4,726	7,385
Holiday Offerings	14,827	14,992	8,981
Interest Income	9,873	4,688	1,847
Miscellaneous Income	-	2,800	1,555
Education & Youth Events	<u>7,167</u>	<u>7,776</u>	<u>7,434</u>
OPERATING INCOME	<u>\$ 418,285</u>	<u>\$ 410,678</u>	<u>\$ 386,056</u>
Capital Campaign	\$ 363,203	\$ 383,087	\$ -
Prepaid Faith Promise	12,736	13,260	-
Undesignated Donation Fund	-	-	100,000
Youth Mission Trip	24,314	27,260	23,984
Various Funds	21,456	59,232	41,944
Memorials—Undesignated	-	410	50.00
Refunded Transactions	<u>20,387</u>	<u>5,543</u>	<u>7,347</u>
NON-OPERATING INCOME	<u>\$ 442,096</u>	<u>\$ 488,792</u>	<u>\$ 173,325</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 860,381</u>	<u>\$ 899,470</u>	<u>\$ 559,381</u>
EXPENSE SUMMARY	2025	2024	2023
Altar Care	\$ 1,659	\$ 1,966	\$ 1,575
Benevolence	37,940	35,640	32,000
Prayer & Care	763	1,097	1,165
Christian Education	11,417	10,459	8,942
Technology	1,403	3,847	3,808
Hospitality	3,163	3,535	2,975
Missions	693	1,470	1,987
Office and Church Supplies	32,178	22,998	26,942
Outreach	12,132	7,348	6,999
Property	35,582	31,717	33,253
Salaries & Benefits	232,282	249,390	244,693
Stewardship	556	1,078	2,864
Worship & Music	2,900	3,311	2,183
Youth Activity	<u>8,048</u>	<u>6,675</u>	<u>8,903</u>
OPERATING EXPENSE	<u>\$ 380,716</u>	<u>\$ 380,531</u>	<u>\$ 378,289</u>
Build the Future Fund	\$ -	\$ 29,986	\$ 18,721
Properties Fund	204	-	13,220
Noisy Offering	4,654	3,604	1,200
Youth Mission Trip Fund	21,697	26,376	21,220
Outreach Fund	1,131	7,982	12,465
Technology Fund	3,806	1,628	-
Various Funds	9,789	7,327	13,280
Memorials Fund	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,348</u>
NON OPERATING EXPENSE	<u>\$ 41,281</u>	<u>\$ 76,903</u>	<u>\$ 81,454</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 421,997</u>	<u>\$ 457,434</u>	<u>\$ 459,743</u>

**totals rounded to the nearest dollar*

Cash & Fund Balances

as of 12/31/2025

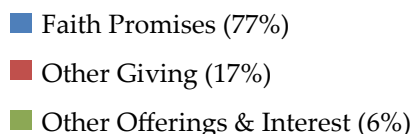
General	\$ 149,398
Capital Campaign Fund	841,635
Brick & Mortar	25,129
Prepaid 2026 Faith Promise	12,736
Memorials - Undesignated	480
Rainy Day	16,362
Altar Care	1,011
Christian Education	594
Noisy Offering	237
Prayer & Care Ministry	773
Hospitality	22,345
Mission Ministry	3,539
Good Samaritan	3,164
Thrivent Mission	2,828
Outreach	5,747
Property	351
Repairs & Maintenance	15,000
Worship / Technology	1,528
Music Ministry	5,465
Youth Ministry	
High School Scholarship	4,200
Youth Mission Trip	10,848
Refunded Transactions	<u>9,367</u>
TOTAL FUND BALANCES	<u>\$1,132,737</u>
Credit Card Payable	\$ 2,150
CASH IN BANK	<u>\$1,134,887</u>

2025 Benevolence & Missions

LOCAL	
Missions & Good Samaritan	\$ 693
Carver County Veterans Council	2,000
Gather & Grow Food Shelf	3,000
Hope House	2,000
LCMC	3,000
LCMC - Augustana District	5,000
Love INC	3,000
Lutheran Bible Translators	600
MN Asst Council for Veterans	2,000
Noisy Offering	4,654
Philomena House	640
Ronald McDonald House	500
GLOBAL	
Feed My Starving Children	4,000
Global Health Ministries	600
Tanzania Well Project	600
New Hope Mission Society	2,500
Orphan Grain Train	6,500
Samaritan's Purse	<u>2,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 43,287</u>

2026 Estimated Income

Faith Promises (75)	\$ 289,980
Other Giving	\$ 62,000
Other Offerings	\$ 15,000
Interest Earned	\$ <u>9,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>375,980</u>



2026 Budget - Ministry Team Summary

	2026 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET
Finance	\$ 325,588	\$ 353,606
Property	\$ 27,875	\$ 23,960
Education	\$ 15,550	\$ 14,760
Youth Activity	\$ 9,200	\$ 9,100
Missions	\$ 1,032	\$ 1,550
Stewardship	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,000
Prayer & Care	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,800
Outreach	\$ 10,660	\$ 11,710
Hospitality	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,900
Music	\$ 3,062	\$ 4,385
Altar Care	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Technology	\$ <u>5,150</u>	\$ <u>3,435</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>407,217</u>	\$ <u>434,206</u>

2026 Budget & Income Comparison

Budgeted Expenses	\$ (407,217)
Estimated Income	\$ 289,980
Other Giving	\$ 62,000
Other Offerings	\$ 15,000
Interest Earned	\$ <u>9,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>(31,237)</u>

2026 budget to be approved at January 19, 2026 Ministry Board meeting and January 25, 2026 annual meeting.

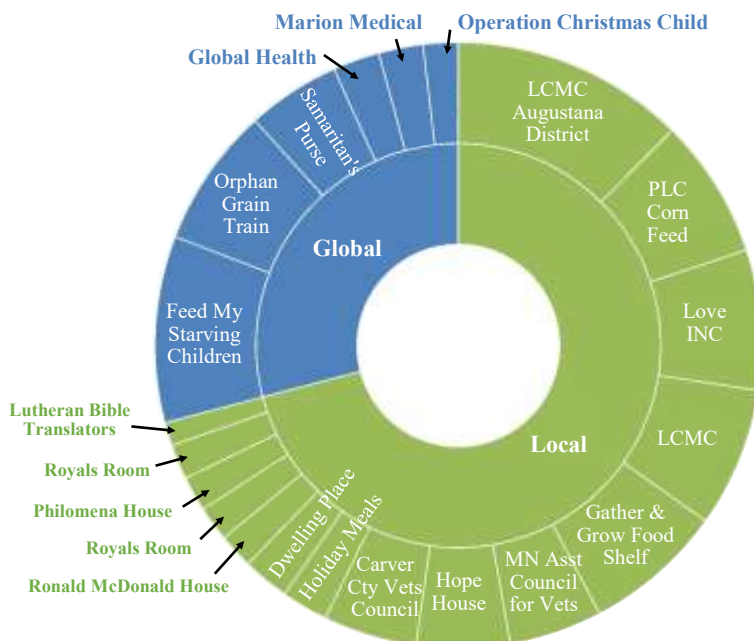
2026 Benevolence Budget

LOCAL

Missions	\$ 3,221
Carver Cty Veteran's Council	\$ 2,000
Dwelling Place	\$ 1,000
Gather & Grow Food Shelf	\$ 3,000
Holiday Meal Baskets	\$ 1,000
Hope House	\$ 2,000
KTIS	\$ 750
LCMC	\$ 3,000
LCMC—Augustana District	\$ 5,000
Love INC	\$ 3,000
Lutheran Bible Translators	\$ 500
MN Asst Council for Veterans	\$ 2,000
Peace Lutheran Corn Feed	\$ 3,000
Philomena House	\$ 750
Ronald McDonald House	\$ 750
Royals Room	\$ 750

GLOBAL

Feed My Starving Children	\$ 4,000
Global Health Ministries	\$ 1,000
Operation Christmas Child	\$ 750
Orphan Grain Train	\$ 3,000
Marion Medical Mission	\$ 950
Samaritan's Purse	\$ <u>2,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>43,421</u>



Membership & Worship Stats

	2024	2025
◆ Baptized Membership	527	529
◆ Confirmed Membership	373	384
◆ Number of Member Households	185	185
◆ Members Removed	24	34
◆ Average Sunday Worship (<i>not including Easter or Christmas Eve</i>)	189	188
◆ Average Midweek Worship		
• Ash Wednesday	157	193
• Lent	104	95
• Maundy Thursday	130	165
• Good Friday	122	135
• Summer Series	26	N/A
◆ Easter Worship		
• 7:00 am	112	112
• 9:00 am	247	290
• 11:00 am	140	144
◆ Thanksgiving Community Worship	231	N/A
◆ Christmas Eve Worship		
• 3:00 pm	238	230
• 5:00 pm	147	157
• 9:00 pm	102	71



Bible Presentation Sunday September 14, 2025

3rd Grade

✠ Iza Demeules
✠ Duke Duske
✠ Summer Guetzkow
✠ Adley Hanson
✠ Emery Hawkins
✠ Braxton Johnson
✠ Luke Meuleners
✠ Magnolia Mullaney
✠ Jackson Paschke
✠ Leo Pawelk
✠ Annabelle Petree
✠ Natalie Plahn
✠ Raife St. Aubin
✠ Alice Thompson
✠ Emma Voca

7th Grade

✠ Rylee Danielson
✠ Sloan Demeules
✠ Alex Doolittle
✠ Abel Griebel
✠ Autumn Guetzkow
✠ Addison Johnsrud
✠ Harper Kleve
✠ Grady May
✠ Nolan McGowan
✠ Dash Miller
✠ Cooper Racette
✠ Peder Rumrill
✠ Roslyn Schubert
✠ Owen St. Aubin
✠ Austin Seefeldt
✠ Charley Stuntebeck
✠ Juliana Wendland



Weddings

- Jessica Holker and Isaac Good
July 26, 2025
- Ella May and Riley Sames
October 4, 2025
- Mikayla Thorson and Kash Block
October 4, 2025
- Marla Erickson and James Grosshuesch
October 25, 2025

2025 Pastoral Acts

Baptized

- 2024 — 13 2025 — 16
- Weston Alden Sandquist
January 19, 2025
 - Millie Raelyn Pawelk
January 26, 2025
 - Maverick James Miller
February 9, 2025
 - Micah Dean Nissen
February 23, 2025
 - Larissa Lynn Kohls
March 30, 2025
 - Layla Lou Kohls
March 30, 2025
 - Poppy Renee Prater
April 13, 2025
 - Brynlee Jean Anderson
April 20, 2025
 - Everlee Rae Anderson
April 20, 2025
 - Angela Joyce Lee
June 1, 2025
 - Hayden Alan Young
June 8, 2025
 - Mac Nicolas Duske
June 29, 2025
 - Aanahlisa Kate Thompson
August 10, 2025
 - Alice Claire Thompson
August 10, 2025
 - James Alexander Thompson
August 10, 2025
 - Jarren Lewis Braegelmann
December 28, 2025

First Communion

- Thursday, April 17, 2025
- Lexi DiBendetto
 - Simon Eichelberg
 - Henry Hokenson
 - Aubrey Laughlin
 - Alex Doolittle
 - Paityn Miller
 - Maci McClurg
 - Truett Meis
 - Sloan Miller
 - Liam Raser
 - Heidi Seefeldt
 - August Tharaldson



Congratulations! 2025 Graduates

Graduate Recognition
Sunday, May 4, 2025

High School — Jaeger Baird*, Brody Butler*, Wyatt Gabrelcik, Nora Gosha*, Audrey McClurg, Kaitlyn McNeilly, Maddi Meis*, Marcus Rupp*, Aidan Williams

College — Mckenzie Erickson, Parker Mittelstaedt, Mikayla Thorson, Brayden Weaver, Meghan Weaver

*High school students who received
Peace Graduate Scholarships



	2024	2025
Baptized Members	39	26
Households	13	11

Sunday, February 23, 2025

- 11 people / 4 households
- Rachel & Cody Kasprick; *Madelyn*
 - Dianne & Dale Mack
 - Rhonda & Jeffrey Swanhorst
 - Lindsay Zumbrunnen; *Autumn, Summer, Winter*

Sunday, June 8, 2025

- 13 people / 6 households
- Steve Dvorak
 - Daniel Eichelberg; *Simon*
 - Susan & Loren Kohls
 - Crystal & Joshua Lee; *Angela*
 - Taylor & Chase Rizo
 - Megan & Phillip Young; *Skylar*

Sunday, August 24, 2025

- 2 people / 1 households
- Sue Neisen & Robert Koenig



Confirmed

- Sunday, May 18, 2025
- Kylar Gerald Cox
 - Landon Meyer Johnsrud
 - Alyson April Kamps
 - Gracie Autumn Kleve
 - Chloe Madelyn Knutson
 - Colton Hunter Lange
 - Riley Daniel McGowan
 - Vienna Kenzie Miller
 - Olivia Jane Pederson
 - Samson Bradley Plahn
 - Barrett Mitchell Rupp
 - Victoria Kae Sprenger
 - Casey Jacob Stunebeck
 - Emmett William Voca
 - Addison Grace Weaver