

The Good News of Peace

Our Vision Statement: Sharing Peace Faithfully

Our Mission: To bring people into contact with the gospel, and help them grow in their relationship in God in Christ
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April 2025

Vol.30 Issue 4

From Pastor Amy Michelson

Darkness is not itself evil, but, especially in biblical times, a lot of evil happened in the dark. Without streetlights or flashlights in their pockets (thank you, smart phone developers), the darkness provided cover for evil, for things that people would never have done if it were to be seen in the light. And so, light and dark became some of the go-to symbols for good and evil. That's why we hear it so much in our scripture. There are a lot of good examples of light and hope and goodness, but one of my favorites is when God promises to Abram that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars.

Picture it – Abram's talking to God, standing outside, shrouded in darkness (not evil, just darkness) and he looks up into that beautiful, clear, dark sky to see millions of specks of light. Have you ever been in a dark place, like really dark, and you look up and realize you can see SO MANY more stars than our usual places with streetlights and city lights getting in the way? It's breathtaking, isn't it? That dazzling night sky was what God chose to communicate to Abram that there was hope for him and for Sarah. All those tiny specks of light in that deep, dark sky were a promise that God had not forgotten or forsaken them.

That is part of what it means to be God's light in the world – to be people of hope, dazzling, breathtaking hope. One of the ways we show that we have hope is by investing in something, whether it's investing our time, our money, or our gifts. In this stewardship season we are asking you to consider your investment in Peace. Your involvement shows that you have hope – hope in God, hope for the present and future of the church, and hope for your community. In this season we ask, how are you able to give out of hope? Pray about it, talk about it, and please return an intention card by April 6th. You are lights, you are hope, and we are so grateful that we get to be and do all this together with you for the sake of Christ.

Hoping with you,

Pastor Amy Michelson

Holy Week and Easter Worship

Thursday, April 17

6pm - Meal in the Upper Room – Sign up deadline is Apr. 6

7:30pm - Maundy Thursday Worship

Friday, April 18

10am - Cross Walk in New Lenox – Starts at St. Jude's Church

7pm - Good Friday Worship

Saturday, April 19

5pm - Transition from dark to light Easter Worship

Sunday, April 20

8:30 & 11am - Communion Festival Easter Worship

9:45am - Easter Breakfast – Reservations are needed by Apr. 6

Congratulations

Bob Reimel on his 100th birthday

Prayers Requested

Joanna Ziolkowski, John Westhus, Pete Viehweg, Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Beloit, Ron Bergmark, Patti Merk, Larry Brewer, Jeff Howell, Kevin Conway, Joseph Conway, Cathy Tague, Teresa Barr, Matthew & DeeDee Decker, the family of Judith Johnson, Karen, Laurie V.

Thank You Very Much!

To: Everyone who helped with Antioch

From: Pastor Kelly Nieman Anderson – LSSI Sunday

Dave Merk – for prayers for his wife Patti

MorningStar Mission – for the donation

HVAC Thank You

Special thanks to everyone who has contributed to the HVAC fund. To date we have received \$28,580. If you would still like to contribute, please designate your gift to the HVAC fund.

Financial Update as of February 28, 2025

<u>February Income</u>	<u>YTD Income</u>	<u>Annual Budget – Income</u>
\$38,430	\$453,555	\$617,090
<u>February Expense</u>	<u>YTD Expense</u>	<u>Annual Budget – Expense</u>
\$59,775	\$452,169	\$617,090

Looking Ahead

Mar. 30 – No Sunday School or Adult class

Apr. 5 – Stewardship Commitment Weekend
Ladies Ensemble Rehearsal 3pm

Apr. 6 – Stewardship Commitment Weekend
MIUR Meeting 9:30am
First Communion 11am
Peace 360 Games & Pizza Making 3-7pm
Easter Lily Order Deadline

Apr. 8 – Tuesdays at Peace Book Club 10am

Apr. 12 – Out to Eat Group 6:30pm

Apr. 13 – Palm Sunday
Peace Page Turners 9:45

Apr. 14 – MIUR Harosés Prep 5pm

Apr. 16 – MIUR Set Up 5pm

Apr. 17 – MIUR Final Prep & Set Up 9am

Apr. 20 – Easter Sunday

Apr. 24 – VBS Planning Meeting 6pm

Apr. 26 – Men's Breakfast 10am
Ladies Ensemble Rehearsal 3pm

Earth Day Worship & Prayers for Healing
Apr. 27 – Earth Day Worship & Prayers for Healing
New Member Orientation 12:30pm

Apr. 29 – Church Council 7pm

Apr. 30 – All Committees Meet 6pm

May 18 – Confirmation Sunday 11:00 (1st option)

May 25 – Confirmation Sunday 11:00 (2nd option)

July 22-25 – VBS Set Up

Groups

Quilting – Mon., Apr. 7 & 21

Ruth Circle Quilting meets every other Monday from 9:00am - 12:00pm. Come whenever you would like.

Peace Page Turners – Sun., Apr. 13 at 9:45am

We will be discussing *Our Souls at Night* by Kent Haruf. Books are available to be checked out at church. Everyone is welcome!

Tuesdays at Peace Book Club – Tues., April 8 at 10am.

We will be discussing *"The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek"* by Kim Michele Richardson. Everyone is welcome!

Out to Eat Group – Sat., Apr. 12

Please join the Out to Eat Group on Sat., Apr. 12 at 6:30pm. at Rosati's in New Lenox (108 W Illinois Hwy). Please use the sign up in the bulletin by April 9 if you will be joining us.

Trailblazers – Tues., Apr. 15

We invite anyone 65 & up to join us for lunch on Tues., Apr. 15 at 12pm. Bring \$5 - food will be provided.

Strong Seniors Exercise – Mon. & Wed.

Join us for a low impact program for seniors. Mondays 12 noon -1:00pm and Wednesdays 11:15am-12:15pm.

Mahjong Masters – Thursdays at 1pm

Don't worry, being a master is ABSOLUTELY not required! A group of Mahjong Minded Members have started gathering at Peace on Thursdays at 1:00pm. We would love to have you join us. We welcome those who know how to play and those who would like to learn! Come and laugh with us as we play the game and enjoy each other's company at the same time! If you have any questions, you can reach out to Helen Sarsfield, Charlotte Roberts, or Deacon Shari and we can get you more information!

Men's Breakfast – Sat., Apr. 26

Men ages 16 and older are invited to this fellowship opportunity that meets at Peace on the fourth Saturday of the month at 10am. Cost will be a free will offering – breakfast cost is approximately \$15 each.

Coffee & Conversation – Mondays

Every Monday morning from 10-11am, Deacon Shari will be holding office hours at Gost Coffee on Schoolhouse Road in New Lenox. Please come grab a cup of joe and share in conversation.

Faith Development & Education

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesday mornings at 10am. You do not need to know anything about the Bible to join us!

Sunday Adult Education

Sunday Adult Education Class meets each Sunday from 9:45-10:45am. **We will not meet on Apr. 20.**

Everybody Read

Our desire to have people read a common Bible passage is part of our Book of Faith effort. April's passage is John 1:3-4.

Northern Illinois Synod - Growing Disciples

Each month the NIS will have a theme related to following Jesus, an area of discipleship we can grow and nurture in our lives. We will explore the seven different marks of discipleship opening of our hearts and lives, just as the original disciples did. Please visit:

www.nisynod.org/prayer.

From Deacon Shari Simon

Dear Members and Friends of Peace,

The last two months we have had large events that were made possible by Thrivent Action Team Grants. You might be asking yourself, what is a Thrivent Action Team Grant, and so I wanted to take a moment to explain this opportunity so that you can evaluate whether this is something you can be a part of. Thrivent Action Team Grants are available to anyone who has membership or associate membership with Thrivent Financial. Full Members may apply for 2 action team grants each year and associate members may apply for 1 each year.

An action team grant is \$250 of seed money for fundraisers, service projects, and education opportunities. Some events that we have used Thrivent Grants for are the Trunk-or-Treat, Scholarship Spaghetti Dinner, and Antioch. They are very easy to apply for and Pastor Amy and I are more than willing to help you fill out an application online for one. We realize that this is something that many of you may not know is even an option as a Thrivent Financial Member. What a wonderful resource to help make ministry possible. Due to our Thrivent Action Grant, we did not use any proceeds from the scholarship fundraiser to buy food. All the money raised from selling tickets went towards scholarships for college freshmen and seminarians. Thrivent helped us to buy non-candy toys for children who cannot have candy for Trunk or Treat. The youth at Antioch were able to get a special treat because of the action grant.

We hope that this opportunity gets your ministry ideas flowing! If you have an idea that you think would be a great way to use an action grant, please let us know. This can be a way to help support existing events and create new ones. Thank you for all you do to spread the good news! If you are a Thrivent member or associate member and want to be a part of this new opportunity, or have questions, please let Pastor Amy or me know. God's Peace,

Deacon Shari Simon

Announcements

VBS Planning Meeting – Wed., Apr. 24

Our VBS is amazing and involves lots of people helping in many different ways. We had a great first meeting and we invite you to be a part of the planning crew to join in the fun of putting this great event together. Please let us know if you would like to help with this ministry in any way.

All Committee Night – Wed., Apr. 30

Want to be involved in the ministries happening at Peace? You are invited to come on the last Wednesday of the month at 6pm and participate in the committee of your choice. Committees to choose from are Fellowship, Support, Property, Faith Development, Worship, and Service/Outreach.

Suggestions for Fellowship Events

Please let us know what type of Fellowship activities you would like to see planned. Ideas can be emailed to the church office.

Midweek Lenten Worship Through April 9 - Lenten Worship Through the Senses

God has created and blessed us. In Jesus, God has joined us in the experience of embodied life as an expression of God's own love and joy. Through exploration of our own physical senses, we are invited to know God in new ways. Please join us on the Wednesdays between Ash Wednesday and Holy Week at 6pm for worship and at 6:30pm for soup, sandwich & conversation. Bring your own sandwich, soup will be provided.

April 2: Luke 8:42b-48

April 9: Luke 22:14-20

Teacher Appreciation – May 3 & 4

We like to say thanks to teachers – both in our Sunday School and in the world of education. Sat., May 3 & Sun., May 4 will be this year's official time to express our appreciation!

Updated Information for the Peace Directory

We are getting ready to print our new directory in May and want to make sure we have everyone's correct contact details. The new directory will now include cell phone numbers and email addresses.

If you would like to update your information or do not want your cell phone number or email address included, **please contact the church office by May. 4.**

Save the Date - VBS July 22-25

Save the date for our God's Gigantic Kingdom Vacation Bible School from Tues., July 22 through Fri., July 25 from 9:30am-12pm. Please watch the bulletin and newsletter for more information.

Rehearsals

Bell Choir Rehearsal – Mondays

Bell Choir rehearsals are on Mondays at 7pm. Please join us! For more information contact the church office.

Children's Choir Rehearsal – Sundays

Meets each Sunday at 9am in Fellowship Hall for anyone 2nd - 8th grade who loves to sing!

Peace Church Choir Rehearsal – Wednesdays

Peace Choir would LOVE to welcome you! Men and women, including high school on up. No auditions, no experience needed! We rehearse each Wednesday at 7pm, but you don't have to be there every week. Come when you can!

Ladies Ensemble Rehearsal – Sat., Apr. 5 & 26

The Ladies Ensemble is a fun group of Peace women who love to sing and fellowship. We practice once a month at 3pm. If you love to sing, please consider joining this joyous group!

Youth

Confirmation

Apr. 30 – 7th & 8th grade

May 7 – 7th grade

May 14 – Mandatory 8th grade Confirmation Rehearsal

Peace 360 Game Day & Pizza Making – Sun. Apr. 6

Join Deacon Shari in Fellowship Hall from 3-7pm for a fun afternoon of games & pizza making contest! Please use the sign up in the bulletin if you will be coming.

Helping Others

Santa Cruz's Food Pantry Special Appeal

In lieu of the usual items on the needs list for Santa Cruz food pantry, they are making a special appeal for cereal and any kind of canned goods. If you would like to donate some of these items, please look for the baskets by Fellowship Hall.

Business Clothing Collection

Peace has generously provided to people who are unemployed find jobs by dressing for success. We're looking for business attire and business casual clothing, including gently used shoes, suits, sports coats, ties, shirts, blouses, dresses, skirts, pants, sweaters, whatever you think would help someone get a job! Please bring your items to church by Apr. 30 and look for the bin in the narthex.

Prayer Shawls Available

A prayer shawl is a knitted or crocheted shawl that is made with prayerful meditation for yourself or someone in need. Please put your requests in the Prayer Shawl box in the narthex or email the office.

ShareFest Volunteer Opportunities

We have two volunteer opportunities to work with an old friend, ShareFest:

Recyclepalooza, Sat., Mar. 29 at Joliet Junior College 12:30 to 2:30pm to unload vehicles that drive through to drop off donated items. Open to HS and older.

ShareFest facility, 21715 Moni Drive, Sat. Apr. 26, time to be determined to unpack and sort donated items or do other jobs as needed. This is for all ages – with parental supervision. To volunteer or for more information about ShareFest go to www.sharefestwillcounty.org or Recyclepalooza www.willcountygrecn.com.

Prayer Shawl Group Not Meeting – Prayer Shawls are still needed!

The Prayer Shawl Group will not be meeting anymore, but prayer shawls are still needed. Do you crochet or knit? A prayer shawl is a shawl prepared for and prayed over for someone that is hurting so they can wrap themselves in God's love. You may create shawls at home and drop them at church and we will get them to the people who need them.

Santa Cruz's Food Pantry Needs List

We are always collecting bottled water, juice, paper products, hand soap, shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, shaving cream, canned soup, applesauce, cereal, Jell-O, pudding, beans, rice, coffee, powdered cream, sugar, pretzels, chips, popcorn, etc. for Santa Cruz's Food Pantry. Look for the baskets by Fellowship Hall.

Small Toy Collection for Under Privileged Students

If you have any small toys like McDonald's Happy Meal toys to donate, please look for the bin by Fellowship Hall.

Help Others Fund

Alongside our regular giving that helps all kinds of people in need, we also have a special "help others" fund within our general fund. It is targeted to help people who need food or gas. We continue to be diligent in making sure the money actually goes to people in need.

General Information

Worship Details

Saturday worship 5pm, Sunday at 8:30 & 11am. 8:30am service is live streamed.

Email Contacts

Pastor Amy – amichelson@peacenewlenox.org

Deacon Shari – strotter@peacenewlenox.org

Church office: peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org.



Stewardship Appeal 2025

We Are God's Light!

"You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5: 14-16

As you consider your response to this year's Stewardship Appeal, we ask that you please reflect on the times when God's light has lifted you up and shown you the way when you felt lost and your spirit seemed to be in shadowed darkness. Reflect on how Peace Lutheran has brought God's light into your life and how you have seen it bring God's light and love into the lives of many others.

Your financial commitment to Peace Lutheran is one of many ways that can you shine God's light. Your support enables our church community to continue shining the warmth and beauty of God's love to all our church members and visitors and to continue being God's light to the world.

WE ARE GOD'S LIGHT

Jesus taught us that we are the light of the world. And Jesus instructed us to let our light shine. We each shine in many different ways by our words and deeds. One way that you can let your own light shine is by supporting Peace Lutheran's work in shining God's light as a unified church community. We, together as a church, provide hope, spiritual guidance, and a place of tranquility for all who come to join us in worship. We offer nourishment for the body through community dinners and donations to food pantries and nourishment for the soul through song, scripture, and prayer. We offer a place where support groups meet to brighten the lives of those who have suffered much darkness due to loss or addictions. Together, we are God's light to the world. We, as a church, can only shine brightly with your support and financial commitment. Please help us bring God's light to our community with your response to this year's Stewardship Appeal.

SHARING GOD'S LIGHT

In considering how to respond to this year's Stewardship Appeal, we ask that you acknowledge the impact that God's light has had in your own life. Consider the times when people have come into your life and brought you love and compassion when you needed it. Consider the times that you felt God's light simply through quiet prayer in church. Be mindful of the times Peace Lutheran has shined God's light for you and for others in our congregation through uplifting words and supportive actions in times of grief and illness. Then consider how your response to the Appeal can share that light with others. Perhaps think of our Christmas Eve tradition of lighting the whole sanctuary with the candles of all from the light of a single candle, noting the role that each person had in passing the light on. Please share your light.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VITAL AND APPRECIATED

Your participation in our Appeal through the return of your giving intentions commitment is important for us to be able to budget and plan for the coming fiscal year. We use the information regarding our anticipated resources to guide decisions on how best to use those resources and to prioritize expenses. Please know how much we appreciate any gift you choose to offer.

YOUR GIFT SHOULD BE BASED ON YOUR INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

While we hope that everyone is inspired by their experiences to make a commitment to Peace Lutheran, we can't tell you how much you should give. Nor should we. You all have a unique set of circumstances, resources, and responsibilities. What is a right level of financial giving for one may well be entirely wrong for another. We do request that you consider giving based on a percentage of your income level, and we offer the Guide to Growth Giving for your review. Ultimately, your gift should come from your heart based on your evaluation of your situation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSE BY APR. 6

Commitment Weekend is April 5-6. To help us with planning, please return your commitment by April 6. You can fill out the form below and submit online or turn in your card via offering plate or mail. All responses are very much appreciated! We are grateful that you take the time and effort to help us appraise our financial position. We are grateful for your financial support, but we are just as grateful that you shine God's light in many other ways.

THANK YOU!!!

Electronic Giving

If you would like to sign up for automatic withdrawals, please contact the office. You can also give online at any time through our website www.peacenewelenox.org, click on the donate tab or use the QR code below.



Hearing Assistance Available

We are happy to offer wireless receivers to assist anyone with a hearing impairment. Please ask an usher if you would like to use one.

Community Resources

Will-Grundy Medical Clinic

free healthcare for the uninsured and those who qualify
815-726-3377, ext. 228.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

call/text 988 or online chat at www.988lifeline.org

Joliet Area Hospice Support Groups

www.joliethospice.org or 815-740-4104

Crutches, walkers & wheelchairs available

please contact the church office

Guardian Angel Community Services

Sexual assault & rape crisis services

24-hour sexual assault hotline: 815-730-8984

LSSI's Joshua Arms

independent & supportive living units for seniors

www.LSSI.org/JoshuaArms or 815-727-6401

NAMI - National Alliance for Mental Illness

815-409-7917

info@namiwillgrundy.org or www.namiwillgrundy.org