

March 2026

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 to God in Christ.*



PRAYERS REQUESTED:

- Brittany Burns
- Karen Salutric
- Roxanne VanderVelde
- Tammie Last
- Lexie
- Kelly
- Steve
- Ellen Burnett
- Scott Campbell
- Howard Campbell
- Lynn Peterson
- Julie Friedrich
- Jeff Cohn
- Stacey Ghizoni
- Brittany Burns

OUR SYMPATHY GOES TO:

The Family of
Dolores MacLoed

EVERYBODY READ

Our desire to have people
read a common Bible
passage is part of our
Book of Faith effort.

March passage is:
Galatians 6:2

A Letter From Your Pastor

Pastor Amy Michelson

Lent has officially kicked off. As I wrote about last month, the theme for our midweek services this year is Conversations with Jesus. Conversations about our faith are important. Conversations about our life together are important. As pastor here at Peace I want to hear from you. I especially appreciate when you let me know that...

...you are in the hospital. If you're up for a visit, I would be honored to come visit, pray with you, and bring communion.

...you are moving out of the area. We have a Blessing and Godspeed prayer that we can do in worship if you are interested. It's an opportunity for us to send you on your way with our love and for the congregation to get to say goodbye.

...you are having a hard time. I am here for you - to talk on the phone, to get together at church or out for coffee, to pray with you.

...you are upset about something. Things will change, decisions will be made, mistakes will happen and you may feel upset as a result. I want to have a respectful conversation about that with you. I do not deal with anonymous feedback that comes through the grapevine. I do appreciate and take it seriously when someone is willing to come talk to me about it. The decision might not change, but your feelings and your thoughts matter to me.

...you have a new diagnosis, a death in the family, a doubt, fear, or question about faith. You of course don't have to talk to me about any of these things, but as a pastor, it is a great honor to walk with people through the highs and lows of life and sometimes, just saying the thing out loud helps.

It is a gift to be in conversation with you and with God in this place.

-Pastor Amy



Financial Update as of January 31, 2026

Jan. Income	YTD Income	Annual Budget
\$56,645	\$416,451	\$602,158

Jan. Expense	YTD Expense	Annual Budget
\$76,134	\$416,133	\$602,158

**Expenses for January include \$17,455 for mortgage paydown and \$12,800 for latest HVAC unit.*



Welcome To The Lords Family

- Mason Alan Brucker was baptized on Feb 15



Thank You

We are thankful for all the people who give of themselves to make ministry happen!

- Our contemporary worship musicians for another wonderful night of worship
- Matt Piet for an awesome piano concert
- All who attended our annual meeting and the committees for all their great work in 2025
- Generous donors who have given toward paying down our mortgage before our rate resets and who have donated or bought tickets for our scholarship fundraiser
- Our super-duper tapers and painters who helped refresh our Sunday school hallway
- Our Outreach Committee for organizing Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY

SUNDAY APRIL 29
8:30 & 11:00 AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 2
MEAL IN THE UPPER ROOM-6:30PM
SERVICE-8:30PM

GOOD FRIDAY

FRIDAY, APRIL 3
7:30 PM

HOLY SATURDAY

SATURDAY, APRIL 4
DARK TO LIGHT SERVICE- 5:00 PM

EASTER SUNDAY

SUNDAY, APRIL 5
WORSHIP AT 8:30 & 11:00 AM
BREAKFAST AT 9:45 AM*

*PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATION TODAY!



Dear Members and Friends of Peace,

“Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, ‘Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest’” Mark 6:31

As a rostered leader in the ELCA we are encouraged to take a sabbatical every 7 years. What is a sabbatical? It comes from its root word “sabbath” and it is paid leave for a clergy leader for rest and renewal. In our congregation’s constitution both Pastor Amy and I are encouraged to take up to three months of time for rest and renewal every 7 years that we have served at Peace. On April 15th of this year I will have served alongside all of you at Peace for 10 years. In September I will have been in ministry for 15 years and I am beginning to realize and feel that I have not taken sabbath as I ought to. I love my ministry and yet have not allowed God to speak to me and worshiped in the ways that I encourage all of you to.

When taking a sabbatical, it is so important to make sure that the time is right for both the congregation and the clergy. When I hit 7 years of serving at Peace, the time was not right. We had just come out of Covid, and we were in a transition period with Pastor Dave retiring and calling Pastor Amy. Now as I reflect on the last three years, we are in a beautiful and sturdy place as a people of God doing ministry together in New Lenox. Pastor Amy and I have sat down and discerned a period that will allow me to enjoy some time of rest, reconnection with my family, reconnection with my own faith and a time that will not disrupt the ministry here at Peace. I will be taking my first ever sabbatical July 19th-October 19th of 2027.

What does this mean for the congregation? It means that you will get the opportunity to hear from some guest preachers, as well as Pastor Amy. It means that I will not be reachable during those three months, but I will look forward to hearing what amazing ministry you have been doing. Per our constitution I, in consultation with the council, have put together a sabbatical committee that will help the congregation and Pastor Amy while I am away as well as allow us a way to share all the wonderful things we have all experienced during this time of renewal. A deep thank you to Irv Roberts, Jenna Welzen, and Vicky Burns for serving on this committee and for encouraging me to rest and renew. If you have any questions please feel free to ask any of these three as well as myself.

I am not leaving Peace! This sabbatical does not mean I am not coming back. In fact, per our constitution to receive this sabbatical I must come back and I will do so joyfully. It is because of the wonderful people here that I feel like I can take some time for my own faith and to spend time with my family in Georgia, my grown children who are quickly gaining lives of their own, and my husband who gives so much so that I can serve the Church. I will be sharing with all of you what my sabbatical plans are once they are fully decided but for now, I will tell you that I am hoping to be in awe of God again and to visit as many National Parks as I can. I am going to right size myself in ministry and allow God to speak to me instead of always being the one who is talking. I look forward to sharing more with each of you!

God’s Peace,
Deacon Shari

2026 CHURCH COUNCIL

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED CANDIDATES!



Ricky Wesel



Jan Stoller



Karen Town



Andrew Smothers



Karl Becker



Quinn Rumbaugh
(Youth Representative)

Our Annual Meeting on Feb. 1 was another opportunity to celebrate the ministries of people doing God's work. We are very grateful for all those who were nominated to serve on the Council - Ricky Wesel, Jan Stoller, Mike Dragisic, Andrew Smothers, Abbie Pedigo, Karl Beker, Karen Town, Quinn Rumbaugh (Youth Representative)

Thank you also to our Election Tellers - Tom Salutric, Kathy Sons, Syndy Lindbloom.

Our Nominating Committee for 2026 will consist of Marylynn Tyler, Don Lafferty, Mark Muehlnickel, Eric Wesel, Emily Dotzenrod, Chance Smothers.

Worship

Do You Love to Sing?

Come join in the fun of making a joyful noise! Peace Choir and the Ladies Ensemble are looking for new singers. No experience or auditions are required. Have questions? Contact the office, and they will have us reach out to you.

Handbells

Join us Tuesday's at 7:30pm.

Offerings & Opportunities

2026 Flower Sign-Up

The flower chart for 2026 is filling up. If you would like to sign up for flowers, take a look. We have a new way to track flower information, so please grab a slip and envelope off of the bulletin board if you sign up or if you have not yet paid for your flowers or given the office the dedication information.

Lenten Devotionals

We will have a few Lenten devotionals available on the counter in the narthex. We also have our Christ in our Home devotionals available and the following link is for an online resource with many Lenten devotionals for your use.

<https://katebowler.com/lent/>

Mortgage Paydown

Thank you to all who have given to paydown our mortgage before the rate resets! There is still time if you would like to contribute to our efforts to keep our future payment at or below our current monthly payment. You can give online or place a check or cash in the offering plate, just be sure to label it for mortgage paydown. Thank you for your generosity!

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.peacenewlenox.org, click on the donate tab.

Easter Lily Order Deadline – Sun., Mar. 15

Each year at Easter we invite people to remember and honor people or events that are important to them by donating an Easter Lily or Hydrangea to decorate our sanctuary. Order forms are available in the narthex. The deadline to order is Sun., Mar. 15. The cost of each lily is \$22 and hydrangea is \$29.

Easter Breakfast Volunteers Needed

If you would like to volunteer to help set up for the Easter Breakfast at 9am on Sat., Apr.4, help during the breakfast or clean up afterwards, please use the sign up at our new volunteer sign up station in the narthex.

Announcements

Shoutout to Deacon Shari

In case you missed it, we celebrated Deacon Shari on February 22nd! Did you know she's been at Peace for 10 years and a deacon for 15?! Please take a moment to share a memory, your gratitude, or simply say congratulations. Thank you Deacon Shari for all you do!



Looking Ahead

March 13-March 15- Youth Antioch

TBD-Jr Youth Ultimate Pizza & Slime Lab

April 26-New Member Orientation & Luncheon

Faith Development & Education

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesday mornings at 10am. We are currently studying the book of Revelation. You do not need to know anything about the Bible to join us!

Sunday Adult Education Class

We meet every Sunday at 9:45am. All are welcome!

Free books!

Yes, you read that right! We are now giving away our "Questions Kids Ask About God" books. They are available in English and Spanish, hardcover, softcover and coloring books. If you know of anyone who would enjoy learning about God in a fun, creative way, help yourself to these books. They will be available on the counter in the narthex. They make great gifts.

Midweek Lenten Worship February 25 – March 25

This year's theme is Conversations with Jesus. Each week we will dive deeper into the gospel reading from the previous weekend, all of which feature conversations that Jesus has with his friends, followers, and adversaries. We will pray together, sing together, hear reflections from congregation members, and consider how these ancient conversations continue to inform our own lives of discipleship.

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.

New Member Orientation & Luncheon – Sun., Apr. 26

The New Member Orientation & Luncheon will be Sun., Apr. 26, at 12:30pm and we plan to welcome the new members on Sun., May 3 during the 11am service. Please contact the church office to let us know if you would like to join Peace at this time.



Fellowship

VBS Planning Meeting- Wed., Apr. 8 at 6:00pm

On April 8th from 6pm-7pm we will be meeting to continue planning VBS for the summer of 2026. Our theme this year is "Caught in God's Love." If you are interested in helping to plan, please come and share your ideas!

All Committee Night - Tues., March 24

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

Midweek Lenten Soup Provider

After our midweek Lenten worship service, we will be having soup & fellowship at 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall. We are looking for 4 people each week to provide soup for the group. If you would like to volunteer, please use the sign up and the office will contact you with more information.

Meal in the Upper Room - Thurs., Apr. 2

You are invited to the Maundy Thursday celebration of the Meal in the Upper Room on Thurs., Apr. 2 at 6pm. This meaningful service reminds us of Jesus' last supper with his disciples and draws us into fellowship with Christ and one another. We will be inspired by God's word and special music. Please use the sign up insert in the order of worship if you would like to attend. Deadline to sign up is Mar. 22.

Watch Matt Piet's Concert

In case you missed it, you can enjoy Matt's concert [here](#). Thanks Matt!

Easter Breakfast & Baskets- Sun., Apr. 5 - Reservations needed by Mar. 22

Our Easter breakfast will be at 9:45am in fellowship hall. The breakfast will be catered so we are asking for everyone coming to please sign up by Mar. 22, so we have an accurate count. The menu will be scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, French toast, Ashford potatoes, danish, fruit, bacon, coffee & orange juice. There is no cost for breakfast, if you would like to make a donation you are welcome to do so. There also will be Easter baskets for the kids 12 & under who have signed up. Please use the sign up insert in the order of worship.



Groups

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.

Women's Fellowship and Discussion Group

Women of all ages - join us on the second Thursday of the month (Sept-May) at 7pm for fellowship and conversation. Each time we'll discuss a different topic based on a book, podcast, video, Bible study, etc. Sign up with the insert in the bulletin, email or by calling the church office. Next meeting is March 12th.

Peace Page Turners-Sun., March 29 at 9:45am

The next meeting of the Peace Page Turners will be March 29, 2026. we will discuss "The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell" by Robert Dugoni

Tuesdays at Peace Book Club-Tues., March 10 at 10:00am

We will be meeting next on Mar. 10 to discuss "The Land in Winter" by Andrew Miller

Men's Breakfast - Sat., March 21 at 9am

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

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!

Ruth Circle Quilting - Mon., March 9 & 23 at 9am

Please join us, all are welcome! Meets every other Monday.

Trailblazers - Tues., March 10 at 12pm

Group 65+ meets the third Tuesday of the month. Cost \$5, lunch will be provided.

Out To Eat Group - Sat., Mar 21 at 6:15pm

Join us on March 21st at Beggar's Pizza in New Lenox.

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.



Youth

Peace Youth Group

Do you want to hang out with other awesome Peace youth? Do you like to eat good food, play games, and talk about Jesus? Awesome!!!! Peace Youth Group is for you!

Our 7th - 12th grade youth group meets most Sundays from 12pm-2pm to enjoy fellowship, faith and fun. Please check out the bulletin for upcoming events and get connected to our Youth Group Google calendar.

The Ultimate Pizza & Slime Lab

Jr Youth Group (3rd-5th grade)

In March we will be learning how to make homemade pizza from Lucas's mom Christina Spreadbury. After lunch we will make some fun homemade slime. Come and have some creative and delicious fun! Date TBD

Antioch 2026 I.D.E.N.T.I.T.Y. March 13th -15th

March 13th -15th we will have our annual youth retreat, Antioch! This year's theme will be I.D.E.N.T.I.T.Y. We will explore who God made us to be and how wonderful that is. This event is open to youth in 7th grade- 12th grade. We will spend the night at the church Friday and Saturday night, lead worship Saturday evening and serve at Feed My Starving Children on Saturday morning. The weekend will end with a family luncheon on Sunday where the youth can share all they have learned and the fun things they have done together. We hope you can attend.



Upcoming Youth Events

- The Ultimate Pizza & Slime Lab - TBD
- Antioch - Sat. March 13 thru March 15



Helping Others

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.

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.

Service/ Outreach Committee "Paper Drive"

The Service/Outreach Committee is holding a "paper drive" during the month of March. We are seeking donations of toilet paper, paper towels, and facial tissue to be shared with local food pantries. Please deposit these paper products in the large bin in the narthex. The "paper drive" has replaced our annual collection of business clothing. Clothing items can be dropped off at Morning Star Mission on US 30 New Lenox, or Washington Street in Joliet.

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking for individual volunteer opportunities, to earn community service hours, find ways to give back or lend a hand? The Service/Outreach Committee is creating a list of ideas for individual service projects. Watch the bulletin board in the narthex and the newsletter for details. For starters, here are a few suggestions. If you know of other opportunities, please share.

**ShareFest, 21715 Moni Drive, New Lenox, needs volunteers to help out in its food pantry and warehouse during the day, Tuesday-Saturday. Sign up at <https://www.sharefestwillcounty.org/>

**Sunny Hill Nursing Home, 421 Doris Avenue, Joliet, you can scoop ice cream in the Sweet Shop, help with Bingo, and more. All volunteers must complete a form for a background check. Contact Kristen at 815-727-8710.



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
info@namiwillgrundy.org or
www.namiwillgrundy.org



General Information

Inclement Weather Policy

Your safety is important to us, so Peace will cancel our events during the week if Summit Hill School District cancels school or their evening events. We will do our best to post on social media, send emails, and/or remind app notifications when we cancel. If the weather on a weekend is extremely bad making travel particularly dangerous, we may cancel weekend activities or even worship. We will try to make this decision early and post/send notifications as outlined above. If you do not have access to our digital platforms and would like to be notified of a cancellation, please let the office know and we will do our best to reach out to you via a phone call. We hope you stay safe and warm during these wintry months!

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.

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.

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e-mail: peacechurch@peacenewlenox.org

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