

May 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.*



A Letter From Your Pastor

Pastor Amy Michelson

Some of these days sure are starting to feel like summer! I hope you have a lot to look forward to in the summer months - vacations, projects, gatherings with friends and family, and quality time in the great outdoors.

There is a lot to look forward to here at Peace too! To name a few...

- Our Service Camp is June 8th-12th. We have confirmed our service project on Tuesday at HHH Ranch and Wednesday at Sunny Hill. There's more information in the youth section of this newsletter.
- We will start outdoor worship on May 30th and, weather permitting, will worship outside the last Saturday of the month through September. We will also have Contemporary Worship on the second Saturday of the month in June, July, and August.
- VBS is July 21st-24th for kids 4 years old-incoming 5th graders. Our theme is Caught in God's Love. Invite friends and family to join us. We have lots of opportunities for older youth and adults to help too.
- Finally, our office staff is working on making some updates to our website and phone system, so you'll notice some changes there too.

We're looking forward to spending the summer with you doing some really great ministry.

May your summer be blessed,
Pastor Amy

PS: An important note - these exciting upcoming ministries and ALL the ministries you read about in this newsletter are possible because of your generosity. Sharing your time, money, resources, and gifts with Peace is what makes Peace what it is. Thank you! If you haven't yet, please turn in a giving intention card as part of our stewardship appeal so we can faithfully plan for the future ministries of Peace. Thank you!

PRAYERS REQUESTED:

- Sharon
- Martell Halloran
- Cliff Lindham
- Frank Rossi
- Richard Dohrn
- Michele Lenz
- Bill Sandt

OUR SYMPATHY GOES TO THE FAMILY OF:

George Rumbaugh
Ted Musak

EVERYBODY READ

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

May's passage is:
Hebrews 10:24-25



Financial Update as of March 31, 2026

Mar. Income	YTD Income	Annual Budget
\$53,477	\$527,126	\$602,158

Mar. Expense	YTD Expense	Annual Budget
\$52,008	\$522,010	\$602,158

Welcome To The Lords Family

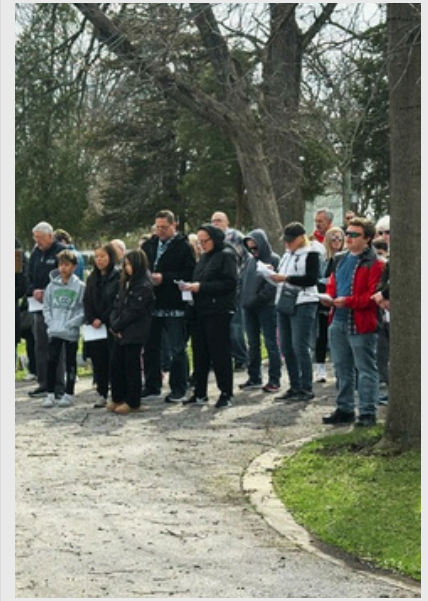
- Elizabeth Virginia Perry was baptized on April 18
- Petra Maxine Perry was baptized on April 18

Welcome To Our New Members

Lauren Verner

The Brucker Family

The Fornaris Family



Thank You

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

- Our super dedicated and awesome Sunday School superintendents, teachers, helpers, and subs
- Our Ensemble Directors and musicians for celebratory Easter services
- Our AV team for their weekly dedication to streaming worship, but especially for all the extra work they put in for Holy Week
- Our Stewardship team and the quilters for an inspiring Appeal
- Ken George for fixing our AV system in the Fellowship Hall

2026 Annual Stewardship Appeal

OUR APPEAL KICKED OFF ON APRIL 11! THIS YEAR'S THEME IS "WRAPPED IN GOD'S LOVE." KNOW THAT EACH OF YOU IS A CHILD OF GOD, PRECIOUS IN GOD'S EYES AND LOVED BEYOND COMPARE. GOD'S LOVE WRAPS AROUND US ALL AND GIVES US STRENGTH, PEACE, HOPE, AND PROTECTION. PLEASE SUPPORT PEACE CHURCH IN BRINGING GOD'S LOVE INTO OUR HEARTS AND OUT TO ONE ANOTHER.



A Letter From Ellen DeMik

When our family moved here almost 12 years ago, it was clear as soon as we walked through the doors that we wanted to be a part of Peace Lutheran Church. Once we started attending Peace, it was very evident that it was not just members of Peace that walked through our doors. Peace is not just a building located in our community; it is an active part of our community. Our doors are open, providing a safe space not just for worship and fellowship, but also for gathering. Gatherings of Girl Scout Troops and Boy Scout Troops, Quilters, Grief Share meetings and exercise groups, Homeowners Organizations, Weight Watchers, Community Theaters, music recitals, and Non-Profit Organizations.

I have always admired this open-door approach, but I really came to appreciate how much Peace means to our community during the Ministry Site Profile process, when I had a chance to speak with the leaders of some of the organizations that meet at Peace. They talked about how they so appreciated the beauty and cleanliness of our building, how kind and professionally they were treated by our office staff, and how they didn't have the ability to pay for a meeting space. Several said they weren't sure they could exist without Peace opening our doors.

I also remember the first time I realized what it takes to maintain a church building – electricity, heat, carpet cleaning and replacement, parking lot sealing and paving, roof work, HVAC units, etc. These expenses are much more significant than what we all pay individually to provide shelter and a home for ourselves and our families, but they are essential to provide a gathering place. I am so proud to be a member of a church that not only provides this for our members, but also for our community. Our daughter and countless scouts have earned numerous Girl Scout badges in this building; our boys and countless scouts have done the same. Eagle Scouts have completed their projects, many of which benefited Peace, because Peace provided them the space to meet. Members of Weight Watchers rely on Peace as a space to meet and share their journeys and lives. So many from our community are part of groups that meet at Peace, providing them support and a sense of belonging, allowing them to conduct necessary business, giving back to our community and simply enjoying time together.

I am sharing this because when you give to Peace, you not only provide for the staff and members of Peace Lutheran Church, but you also help provide a safe, in-person gathering space for so many members of our community. **As you think about giving this season, remember the reach of your gifts goes far beyond our walls in ways we may never fully understand and all who benefit are truly grateful.**

-Ellen DeMik

Online Giving:

We are transitioning our online giving from Vanco to our new church management system, Tithely. This change will help streamline our processes and strengthen our overall financial tracking and reporting.

If you have not yet made the switch, please contact the church office at your earliest convenience. so we can assist you in updating your giving platform.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support.





A Letter From Your Deacon



Dear Members and Friends of Peace,

Have I told you yet how awesome our youth are? If you have not heard me say that our youth are the best youth ever at least a hundred times than I have not been saying it enough. Our youth are the best youth ever!!!!!! In March we had our annual youth retreat Antioch. We hold Antioch every year in either the first or second weekend of March. It is named Antioch because in the Book of Acts, Antioch is described as the place where some of the first Christians met to have worship together. Our retreat is called Antioch but has a separate theme every year. The theme is always an acronym and each letter means something. The youth have a contest to see who can guess the words. This years theme was I.D.E.N.T.I.T.Y.

The youth arrived on Friday night at 7pm. We began by playing partition volleyball and registering with Deacon Shari. One of the first things we do at Antioch is create a group covenant, or “contract” of how we plan to live in community together throughout the weekend. We all sign the covenant including the adults and it remains in our common space for the entire event. The youth raced one another to put together puzzles that would explain the theme and then we discussed the first part of the theme, who is God? and who are we as God’s creations? The last part of the evening was free time and we end every night of Antioch with Devotions. At all of our lock-ins and retreats we sleep so lights out is at Midnight. Each year the guys and girls sleeping area switch. This year the girls got the fellowship hall and the guys got the youth rooms with the coveted couches .

Saturday is all about service and worship. We began our day at Feed My Starving Children. This year we packed meals for families in Haiti. We came back to church and had an amazing lunch provided by Lora and Doug Dittman. This year we had a special guest speaker, Mr. Ed Gramza, who shared his faith story and a piece of artwork that he uses to share the Gospel. Each of the youth got their own personal copy of his art, “praying hands”. We finished up the evening with an energetic, completely youth led worship service. A group of amazing ladies makes a fancy dinner for the youth every year and it is always so good! We discussed the second part of the theme, “You are enough, and so what now, how do we serve as God’s creation. “

Sunday we wake up very tired! We finish the event by sharing our “God” moments and by connecting ourselves in a web of string that becomes bracelets. There is yet another contest to see who can wear their bracelet the longest. Parents are invited to a potluck lunch of the youths favorite foods and then everyone goes home.

This year we had 41 youth in attendance and I had Three amazing adults that stayed with me the whole time! A HUGE thanks to Brandon Fuhr, Ricky Wesel, and Morgan Barlow. Till next year may you all know that you are fearfully and wonderfully made and that your most important identity is baptized child of God.

God’s Peace,
Deacon Shari

Worship

Contemporary Worship

Join us the 2nd Saturday of the month (June 13th, July 11th, & August 8th) at 5pm for a more contemporary worship style. Looking forward to worshipping with you!

Outdoor Worship

Weather permitting, join us outside the last Saturday of the month at 5pm, May-September. Bring your own chair and dress for the weather!

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.

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.

Mortgage Paydown

Thank you to all who gave above and beyond to paydown our mortgage. Our rate has reset to 5.75%. Our monthly payment is over \$1000 lower because of your generosity. Thank you!!

Tax-wise giving through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

For those age 70½ or older, a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from an IRA remains one of the most tax-efficient ways to support Peace. A QCD allows you to give directly from your IRA, satisfies your required minimum distribution, and does not increase your taxable income. Many members find this provides a greater benefit than claiming a traditional charitable deduction.

Beginning in 2026, taxpayers who do not itemize will also be able to claim a \$2,000 charitable deduction, creating an additional opportunity to give in a tax-advantaged way.

We are deeply grateful for your faithful generosity. Every gift whether through QCDs or other means strengthens the ministries we share.



Looking Ahead

Congregational Budget Meeting- May 31

VBS- July 21-24

Faith Development & Education

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.

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! Our last class until the fall is May 17th.

Thrivent Representatives will be at Peace - Sun, May. 3

Peace Lutheran Church has a long history of working with Thrivent to make a positive impact on our community and using the membership benefits to help the church with needed ministry and care funds.

On Sun., May 3rd, Thrivent representatives will be available between services to help further educate about special Thrivent's benefits and also help existing Thrivent members utilize their membership benefits to help Peace Lutheran Church directly through funds which Thrivent provides. Current members, please bring your username and password if you have an online account. Look for them in the narthex area.



Fellowship

VBS Planning Meeting- Wed., May 13 at 6:00pm

On May 13 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 - Wed., April 29

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.

Adult Fellowship Bunco - Sat., May 16th at 6:15pm

Join the Adult Fellowship Group on Sat., May 16th from 6:15pm-8pm for a fun night of Bunco! Bring a heavy appetizer to share and a white elephant gift to exchange. Please use the sign up in the bulletin if you will be joining us.

Peace Garden Club

DID YOU KNOW...that gardening will make you happier and healthier? Playing in the soil actually boosts your mood and immune system and reduces stress and anxiety! If you don't believe that, then come join the Peace Garden Club! Our initial goal is to raise vegetables for local food pantries, soak up some sun and Vitamin K, and find some fun along the way. We need lots of volunteers on an ongoing basis to mulch, plant, weed and water ... and eventually harvest. We hope to get started this spring. Can you dig it? If so, please Register Online to indicate your interest. You know you will feel better if you do! This project is opened to any students who would like to earn community service hours.

Going to the Carwash!-Sun, May 3 at 12pm

On May 3rd from 12pm-2pm our youth will be washing cars in the church parking lot. Vehicles of all shapes and sizes are welcome. The car wash is free, but donations are appreciated. All donations will be used to take the youth to the National Youth Gathering in the summer of 2027.



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- Thurs., May 14 at 7pm

Please join us for our final meeting until September and bring snacks to share, a game to play, a craft project to work on, or just yourself, ready to enjoy some quality time together! We're looking forward to gathering and enjoying fun activities, delicious food, and good company. See you there!

Peace Page Turners-Sun., May 17 at 9:45am

The next meeting of the Peace Page Turners will be May 17, 2026. we will discuss "Plain Truth" by Jodi Picoult

Tuesdays at Peace-Tues., May 12th at 10:00am

We will be discussing "How to Test Negative for Stupid" by John Kennedy. We are meeting at Gost Coffee Roasters at 1333 S Schoolhouse Rd in New Lenox, instead of at the church.

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.

Men's Breakfast – Sat., May 23 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., May 4 & 18 at 9am

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

Trailblazers – Tues., May 19 at 12pm

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

Out To Eat Group – Sun., June 7 at 12:15pm

Join us at Waffles 20594 S. Lagrange Rd in Frankfort. They offer large portions! Reserve by June 4 (It's a "call ahead", so patience is valuable!)

Golf Group – Thursdays at 8:00am

The golf group will start playing when the temperature hits 50 degrees in the morning. We play for fellowship, fresh air and maybe hit a good shot occasionally. Each week Mike Bohl will send out an email to interested golfers with when and where to meet. You do not have to play every week. Questions, contact the church office.



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.

Car Wash and Peace Youth Water Games- Sun, May 3 at 12pm

On May 3rd we will be offering a car wash in our parking lot from 12pm till 1:30pm and then have water games for our last monthly youth group of the summer. We will start meeting again in September. Water games will last till 2:30pm and pizza lunch will be provided. If you have any questions, please contact Deacon Shari.

Jr. Youth Wild and Crazy Water Fun- Sun, May 31 at 12:15pm

On Sunday May 31st, we will meet at 12:15pm and have pizza together and then go outside and have fun with water balloons, squirt toys, and slip and slides. This will be our last monthly gathering until September because of summer vacations. If you have any questions, please contact Deacon Shari.

Summer Service Camp

We are trying something new this year! The week of June 8th through June 12th, we will be doing a different service project each day. We will meet at Peace at 9am each day and carpool to the location where we will serve. We will return to church and have lunch together and talk about our experience. This camp is designed for youth, but all are invited to sign up and come. As of right now, we have confirmed Tuesday's service project with HHH Ranch and Wednesday's with Sunny Hill Nursing Home. Stay tuned for more info!



Upcoming Youth Events

- Sun, May 3 - Car Wash and Peace 360 Water Games- 12:30pm
- Sun, May 31- Jr. Youth Wild and Crazy Water Fun- 12:15pm
- June 8th thru 12th- Summer Service Camp



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.



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

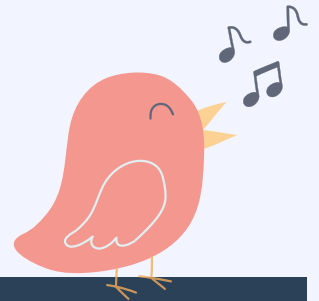
Crutches, walkers & wheelchairs available
please contact the church office

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

Recycling and Green Initiatives-
willcountygreen.com



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.

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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Phone: (815) 485-5327

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