

"Where the Word of God is preached and people come to know the Lord"

THE TIDINGS OF PEACE
Peace Lutheran Church
Ashland, Ohio

JANUARY
2021

VOLUME 21 ISSUE 1

From Pastor Karen

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Siblings in Christ,

I want to take a moment and thank everyone who helped with preparation, execution, and clean-up of our in-person Christmas Eve services, especially our out-door worship. Having a drive-in service in the middle of what felt like an actual blizzard was certainly an experience I will never forget. But we were able to worship together, and it would not have been possible without a lot of help. Thanks to our Peace Lutheran Bell Choir, to the Bishop's, Cindy Armstrong, the Rinehart's, the Byron's, the Shaefer's, the Hovey's, the Blackley's, Sheryl Budd, and special thanks to Tom Reed for his help with the sound system, which is way above my pay-grade, and to Freda Cook who, amongst many other things, put all our luminaries together. If I have accidentally left anyone out, thank you to you as well! As difficult as this year has been, it has been an absolute honor to serve alongside everyone at Peace Lutheran. A very Happy New Year to you all! I pray that the light of Christ carries us all into the New Year with hope for what is to come.

With Hope in Christ,
Pastor Karen

happy new year
2021

2021 Council Members

Linda Swanson

Amy Long

Jim Anderson

Wendy Wasnich

Lisa Blackley

Dan Bishop

Ron Twining

Michael Schaefer

WE ARE NEVER ALONE

BY: BISHOP EATON

The room was spare and dimly lit. We sat on folding chairs in a circle—young Honduran women and some of us from the ELCA. We had come to Honduras to observe the work of [AMMPARO](#) (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). This is the ELCA's strategy to help youth who have been forced to flee their home countries because of violence, abuse, extortion by gangs and extreme poverty. *Amparo* is the Spanish word for shelter or refuge.

In this case, [AMMPARO](#) partnered with the [Lutheran World Federation](#) and the Mennonites to resettle returned migrants—those who had tried to seek asylum in the United States but had failed or had been denied and deported back to Honduras.

One by one they told us their stories of fear and desperation. Not a one undertook the long and dangerous trek north on a whim. They told us about the abuse they had suffered, about family members who had been killed by gangs, about the inability to make a living because of the extortion by organized crime. They talked about the bitter sadness of leaving home and family, and the uncertainty of the future.

I remember one young woman in particular. She was pregnant when she tried to migrate to the United States. She had the baby somewhere along the way. She was far from home, mostly alone and desperately wanted her mother to be with her. None of this is what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new and strange existence. She and her baby were now back in Honduras—but not at home. Home was too dangerous.

I told the young Honduran woman about another young woman who was forced to leave home because of a government decree. She, too, was pregnant and made a long and difficult journey.

Remember last Christmas? Remember all of the preparations, the travel to be with family? Remember the holy beauty of the Christmas Eve liturgy and receiving Christ's grace and forgiveness at his table? The shopping and Christmas caroling? The in-person gatherings? All that has changed.

The pandemic hasn't forced us from our homes but into our homes, sheltering in place, isolated. Not together, but physically distanced. Not gathered with family and friends, but forced apart because of the threat of infection. Forced by circumstances beyond our control into this strange existence. Oh, there will be Christmas carols piped into grocery stores and other essential services, but they will be painful reminders of how life used to be.

We are reminded of the experience of the exiles in Babylon: "By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captives asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalm 137)?

I told the young Honduran woman about another young woman who was forced to leave home because of a government decree. She, too, was pregnant and made a long and difficult journey. She, too, was far from home and without her mother when the baby came.

She had to find shelter wherever she could. This wasn't what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new existence.

That young woman was Mary and the child was Jesus. Precisely in our distress, in our dislocation, the Lord shows up. Emmanuel—God with us—makes his home in the very places we find foreign or isolating. The young Honduran woman, and all of us, can find hope because of the birth of Mary's child. There is no God-forsaken place and we are never alone—not in hospital rooms, or sheltering in place, or Zoom calls or on dangerous roads.

Many of us will not be physically home for Christmas, but we are truly home in Christ.

JAN/FEB LECTOR

01/03—Dan Bishop
01/10—Donna Breault
01/17—John Byron
01/24—Erin Schafer
01/31—Cindi Twining

02/07—Craig Hovey
02/14—Dan Bishop
02/21—Donna Breault
02/28—John Byron

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

01/10—John and Carolyn Cook

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

01/02—Katherine Blackley
01/04—Sawyer Wade
01/10—Al Poorman
01/12—Freda Cook
01/14—Pastor Karen
01/16—Christine Egyedi
01/17—Jean Howman
01/18—Ron Dreher



01/26—Brenda Crist
01/28—Paige Swanson

Birthday Highlights:
Pastor Karen Liddy
5604 Bilney Court
Medina, Ohio 44256


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IN OUR PRAYERS

Andrew, Louise Winger, Diana Kowalka, John Wolfe, Mike Austen, Herb Broda, Keith Demers, Betty Harper, Charles Winger, Gary Liddy, Jenny Musille.

***In Our Continued Prayers:** Bonnie Wuthrich, Joanne Offhaus, Sandy Moherman, Lyn Sorensen, Jonathan Baltes, David Winger, Barb Colbow, Taryn Wolfe, Natalie Anderson, Pat Hamler, George Miller, Curt Hall.*

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 	2
3 9am-S.S. Middle & High School in Gym 9am—Adult SS in Fellowship Hall 10-Worship/Comm.	4	5	6 <i>Epiphany</i>	7	8	9
10 9am-S.S. Middle & High School in Gym 9am—Adult SS in Fellowship Hall 10-Worship	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 9am-S.S. Middle & High School in Gym 9am—Adult SS in Fellowship Hall 10-Worship/Comm. <i>Confirmation follow- ing service</i>	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 9am-S.S. Middle & High School in Gym 9am—Adult SS in Fellowship Hall 10-Worship	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 9am-S.S. Middle & High School in Gym 9am—Adult SS in Fellowship Hall 10-Worship/Comm.						