



PLC NEWS

Monthly Newsletter of Peace Lutheran Church



Pastor's Pen:
Pastor's Favorite Bible Verse
James 1:17

BY PASTOR WILLIAM NELSON-LOEFKE

The Gift of God Is Given

Every good action and every perfect gift is given from God. These good gifts come down from the Creator of the sun, moon, and stars, who does not change like their shifting shadows.

James 1: 17

The conclusion is unavoidable: self-salvation simply does not work. Humanity has no way to save itself from sin. We are helpless.

But Paul announces that God has a way ...a carefully laid plan. He loves us THIS much! Where man fails, God excels. Salvation comes from heaven downward, not from earth upward. "Every good action and every perfect gift is from God" (James 1: 17).

Please note: Salvation is God-given, God-driven, God-empowered, and God-originated. It is a powerful gift delivered to us each day! The gift is not from humankind to God. It is about coming low to earth, in the form of Jesus the Christ. The gift of salvation is freely ours! Praise Him forever!

*Prayer: O great God, You come to us and abide with us.
Help us that we may always look to You...our salvation.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen.*

Council president Jeff Rehder will preside at the PLC Annual Meeting January 24 7:00pm. Agenda topics will include Mission Ukraine update, pastor's salary review, pastor's report, and deacon and property committee reports. The congregation will elect two members to serve 3-year terms on the Council; those persons' names are pending as the slate is incomplete as of date of this publication.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL EXPLORES REVELATION MESSAGE

Third Stop Pergamum, present-day Bergama, Turkey

The third of the seven churches to whom John addressed his letter in Revelation was Pergamum. This city of immense wealth was steeped in worship of pagan gods and emperor Caesar. Revelation 2:13 refers to the city as "where Satan's throne is." That giant throne was excavated in the mid 1800's and moved to a Berlin museum which opened in 1930. This alter of idol worship and sacrifice, now in the hands of the Germans, served as inspiration to Hitler and Albert Speer, as part of their premise and creation of the 1936 German Nuremberg rally.

The city of Babylon had earlier been the throne of Satan's kingdom, but after Babylon receded in power and influence, Satan is said to have chosen Pergamum. The city was also a center of medical expertise and treatment, with a combination of medicine, magic and psychiatry. The physician Antipas, who had converted to Christianity was sacrificed as a martyr here, undoubtedly because he refused to worship Caesar as required by Roman law.

Jesus' concern was that the church of Christianity in Pergamum indulged favor with the worshippers of pagan idols and Caesar. Thus, the double-edged sword referenced in Rev 1:16 -- one edge to rid Christians of their enemies, the other edge to return in judgment of the indulged Christians of this city. The church of Pergamum represents many churches of today, whose who have sold out to the world and no longer cling to the pureness of life in Christ.

Pergamum in now known as Bergama Turkey. It sits on an isolated hill 15 miles inland from the Aegean Sea; the name translates to "citadel" or "united, such as by marriage." Its influence remains in symbolisms in medicine and icons of the Catholic church. Join us Sunday mornings!

THE ARRIVAL OF THE THREE WISE MEN TO WORSHIP THE LORD

Marking Time in the 12 Days after Christmas, Western World and Ukraine

Western churches, including the Lutherans, mark the 12 days of Christmas as those that passed until the arrival of the wise men to worship the Lord, and also an observance of the Savior's baptism and revelation to the Gentiles. This observance is known as Epiphany.

Until this year, Christmas in Ukraine was observed on January 7th, the western world's day of Epiphany. However, this past summer President Zelensky, in a move to distance Ukraine from Russia (where Christmas is also observed on January 7), officially moved the country's Christmas Day observance to December 25, in line with Europe, the US and western world.

Our Ukrainian families observed the holidays somewhat differently. The Roshko family, in western Ukraine, celebrated on December 25 and attended church where they sang traditional Christmas carols. The Homziakov family, who lived further east and nearer to Russia, celebrated the holiday on January 7. On this day they attended morning worship at their church, and in the evening they went to homes in the villages where they sang songs and proclaimed the great joy that Christ was born.

2023 Church Council

President - Jeff Rehder '24
Vice President - Russ Gradert '24
Secretary - Vicki Ranschau '25
Treasurer- Ryan Ranschau '25
Benevolence - Matt Lammers '26
Head Usher - Dave Winterfeld '26
Education Liaison - Ryan Ranschau '25

2023 Deacons

Cal De Ruyter Mary Schmidt
Darrell Vermeer Terry Winterfeld

Building Committee

Dave Heuer Warren Gradert
Scott Campbell Steve Rehder

November Treasurer Report

General Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 37,9324.49
Income	
General Fund	\$ 15,053.76
Thanksgiving offering	\$ 2,931.00
Mission Fest offering	\$ 4,229.00
Total Income	\$ 22,213.76
Expense	
General Expense	(\$ 14,473.14)
Ending Balance	\$ 26,973.11

Benevolence Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 1.00
Income	
Benevolence Offering	\$ 2,590.00
Expense	
Love INC	(\$ 2,590.00)
<u>Ending Balance</u>	<u>\$ 1.00</u>

NOVEMBER 2023 Congregation Report

Communion - 39 Average attendance - 63

JANUARY 2024 Sunday Benevolence

The Banquet, Sioux Falls SD

...serves 16 meals weekly for the homeless and needy at two locations in Sioux Falls. Volunteers from the SF area finance, prepare and serve the meals, with over 200,000 people served annually (25,000 children under 12). PLC will prepare and serve here on 01/06/24.



Member Ministry

WORSHIP service Sundays at 10:15am, Sacrament of Holy Communion first Sunday of month (second Sunday if holiday weekend). Next Communion: Jan 7.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL ages 3 through high school meets Sundays 9:00am. (Holiday Recess 12/24-12/31; next meet 01/07.)

CONFIRMATION students meet Wednesdays 7:00pm. (Holiday Recess 12/20-01/03; next meet 01/10.)

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL meets Sundays 9:15am. (Holiday Recess 12/17-12/31; next meet 01/07.)

ADULT BIBLE STUDY meets third Thursday of month (note day change), supper 6:30pm, Bible Study 7:00pm. (Holiday Recess 12/21, next meet 01/18)

LYO (Lutheran Youth Organization) students in Confirmation and High School. See *Bulletin* for info.

PLAY (Peace Lutheran Active Youth) young adults do special projects and activities for the church. See *Bulletin* for announcements.

Schedules

Lectors / Prayers

Jan 07 - Donna R / Darrell V
Jan 14 - Ali R / Cal DR

Jan 21 - Steve R / Terry W
Jan 28 - Amanda B / Darrell V

Scripture Readings

Jan 07 - Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7
Jan 14 - I Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; I Corinthians 6:12-20
Jan 21 - Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; I Corinthians 7:29-31
Jan 28 - Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; I Corinthians 8:1-13

Praise Team / AV Techs / Organist(s)

Jan 07 - -- / Steve Tasha / Matt
Jan 14 - Praise Team / Tim Neil / Matt
Jan 21 - Praise Team / Daniel Ryan / Becky
Jan 28 - Praise Team / Jeff Tasha / Marlene

PLC Ministry and Talent Opportunities

We welcome musical talent, vocal and instrumental; contact Marissa R 605..203.1234.
To train on the soundboard, or with AV, contact Neil R 712.470.2710.
To join the Children's Ministry team, contact Lindsey DZ 712.470.1639

January Birthdays and *Anniversaries*

04 Muriel Koedam
Kenna Ranschau

06 Delenn Huffman

12 Elsie Ranschau
Steve Rehder

13 Dustin Reid

14 Shirley Moore

15 Alina Homziakova

16 Lance & Katie DeJong
Roger & Muriel Koedam
Wayne McDaniel

19 Lindsey DeZeeuw
David Heuer

Judy Yates

21 Santino Oteri

23 Mackenzie DeZeeuw

25 Shari Koopmans

27 Lisa Miller

30 Kara Jensen

31 Ameliya Homzikova
Nataliia Homziakova
Arlene Miller