

FAMILY CHRISTMAS BANQUET and HEARTLAND QUARTET

Combined Event on Sunday December 3rd

The Heartland Quartet of Omaha returns to sing the Songs of Christmas during worship and in a special time of song after worship on Sun Dec 3rd. All are invited to a Christmas Banquet for all of the family as part of this event.

There will be a freewill offering during worship to help defray expenses for the quartet. Cost for the meal is \$5 per person, children ages 5 and under free, payable at door. Catered menu: : roast beef, pork loin, mashed potatoes & gravy, corn, coleslaw, fruit fluff and rolls. If you can, bring a dessert to share. Text RSVP to Steve R 712-463-2073.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL EXPLORES REVELATION MESSAGE

Second Stop Smyrna, present-day Izmir, Turkey

The second of the seven churches to whom John addressed his letter in Revelation was Smyrna. As he continued to write from his place of exile on the island of Patmos (off the western shore of Turkey), he chose the Christians of this church, to encourage them to endure through persecution (Revelation 2:8-11). It was during this same time that in the ruling city of Rome, Emperor Nero burned much of that city, with the intent to rebuild Rome into a city of greater magnificence. But it was the Christians of Rome whom he blamed for the burning, and they were persecuted mercilessly, burned on pitch crosses en-masse. So it was that the Christians of Smyrna were also mercilessly persecuted.

Smyrna was a city with a large concentration of Jews, who were believed to be receptive to Christianity. Unlike the Jews who converted to Christianity, however, the Jews were granted special dispensation by Rome to not have to worship the emperor as a deity, but rather just pay homage to him. Christians were not granted this dispensation, and their refusal to pay worship as directed by Rome saw ruination of livelihoods and the death of many martyrs, perhaps most notable Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna who avowed, "For 86 years the Lord has been true to me and I cannot now forsake Him."

Smyrna translates to "myrrh, as in an expensive incense." A very wealthy city, it rose to prominence with its good port conditions, ease of defense, and good inland soil. Its streets were broad and well laid out in right angles. Smyrna diminished in status by the 3rd century, when Constantinople became the capitol of the area and trade business changed to that region. Archeological remains are still visible today. Next stop: Pergamum, present-day Bergama, Turkey. Join us Sunday mornings!

LOVE INC DELIVERS BENEVOLENCE MESSAGE AT PLC

CEO Deb Van't Hul here on November 19 2023

Love inc Sioux County has their office in Rock Valley. They prioritize relationships and services for churches but also take calls from individuals. Their call center receives 30 to 50 calls per month. In 2022, Love INC Rock Valley served 350 families, 500 adults and 325 children. Their volunteers logged 975 hours in 2022. They coordinate resources and provide food, home essentials, hygiene and personal goods. Their team of volunteers provides rides to medical appointments for those without transportation. Heart & Soles distributed shoes for children at 5 locations this year. Their Heart & Christmas event includes a central store, holiday meal kit, and take-home devotionals. Love Inc provides classes to assist families in need with finances, grieving and parenting. Love Inc is a regular benevolence offering at PLC.

DECEMBER 2023



PLC NEWS

Monthly Newsletter of Peace Lutheran Church



Pastor's Pen:
Pastor's Favorite Bible Verse
Isaiah 48:10-11

BY PASTOR WILLIAM NELSON-LOEFKE

Not As Silver

*See, I have refined you, though not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.*

*For My own sake, I do this. How can I let
myself be defamed? I will not yield
My Glory to another. Isaiah 48: 10-11*

Circumstances can look bleak when you are in exile far from your homeland. It seems unrealistic for the Israelites to have confidence in God in view of His apparent inability to protect them from the Babylonians, who boasted of their superior gods.

Likewise, circumstances can look bleak when we, far from our heavenly homeland, endure suffering or sickness or betrayal. Is the Lord, after all, able to be victorious for us? He may be allowing these sufferings so that the genuineness of our faith may be shown (1 Peter 1: 6-7), but must He turn up the heat until there is no faith left?

Never! "I have refined you, though not as silver." The apparent reason is that God has turned up the heat on Israel to the point required to release the silver; He otherwise would have found very little worth saving. But He seeks to reveal His promise, not our unworthiness. To destroy Israel or us would make Him unfaithful to His promises of redemption. But He is faithful and so will reveal our faithfulness. He redeems and desires a full host of the redeemed to be brought home to their heavenly reward. Not by our might, but by His promises will we be sustained.

*O God, who suffers with us, increase our love and hope so that
we may hold to Your promises of deliverance even in the middle of affliction.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen*

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

October Treasurer Report

General Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 40,044.87
Income	
General Fund	\$ 10,177.00
Expense	
General Expense	(\$ 12,289.05)
Ending Balance	\$ 37,932.49

Benevolence Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 1.00
Income	
Benevolence Offering	\$ 2,915.00
Expense	
Operation Chr Child	(\$ 2,915.00)
Ending Balance	\$ 1.00

OCTOBER 2023 Congregation Report
[Communion - 55](#) [Average attendance - 87](#)

DECEMBER 2023 Sunday Benevolence

Whispers of Love, Hope & Joy, Sioux Center IA
...is dedicated to housing and assisting women and children affected by domestic violence. Staff provide counselling and restoration for survivors. Further info *Newsletter* Oct '23.



Member Ministry

WORSHIP service Sundays at 10:15am, Sacrament of Holy Communion first Sunday of month (second Sunday if holiday weekend). Next Communion: Dec 3.

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 12/20-12/27; next meet 01/03.)

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL meets Sundays 9:15am. (Holiday Recess 12/24-12/31; 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 Jan 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

Dec 03 Sun- Muriel K / Cal DR	Dec 17 Sun - Kevin R / Mary S
Dec 06 Wed - Nicole L, Vicki R / Cal DR	Dec 24 Sunam - Amanda B / Darrell V
Dec 10 Sun - Mike DR / Terry W	Dec 24 Sunpm - Loefke family / Terry W
Dec 13 Wed - NA / Darrell V	Dec 31 Sun - Vicki R / Terry W

Scripture Readings

Dec 03 - Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; I Corinthians 1: 3-9
Dec 10 - Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; II Peter 3:8-15a
Dec 17 - Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; I Thessalonians 5:16-24
Dec 24am - II Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27
Dec 31 - Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7

Advent / Praise Team / AV Techs / Organist(s)

Dec 03 Sun - TRehder fam / -- / Daniel Tasha / Matt
Dec 06 Wed - NA / -- / Tim Neil / Gin
Dec 10 Sun - Goetz fam / Praise Team / Steve Ryan / Matt
Dec 13 Wed - NA / -- / Jeff Tasha / Becky
Dec 17 Sun - Roshko fam / -- / Jeff Tasha / Marlene
Dec 24 Sun am - DeZeeuw fam / -- / Steve Ryan / Gin
Dec 24 Sun pm - Loefke fam / -- / Jeff Neil / Becky
Dec 31 Sun - NA / -- / Daniel Ryan / Becky

December Birthdays and Anniversaries

08 Pastor Bill Loefke	25 Elisey Homziakov
11 Curt Moore	26 Brandon Scherff
16 Rowan Borchers	27 Wayne & Cindy McDaniel
17 Evert DeBondt	David & Tasha Winterfeld
19 Garrison Borchers	28 Dylan Reid
Maryna Homziakova	30 Don & Claudia Winterfeld