

January 2021 Newsletter

Western Edge Parish (Peace Lutheran, Dickinson & St. John's Lutheran, Richardton)

Serving the community in partnership.

From the Pastor

January 2021



Happy New Year everyone! We will trust that 2021 will be more positive and hopeful than 2020! Writing this article so close to Christmas, I'm still quite focused on the hope and promises of the Christ Child in the manger. Love, light, hope and peace have come down to us from God above. With God among us in such a loving and powerful way, we can still thrive no matter what the New Year will bring.

While preparing for Christmas this year, I was introduced to a hymn that was not familiar to me. It's called *I Bind unto Myself Today*. Its words are attributed to St. Patrick who lived from 372-466. So it's old! The tune is an Irish melody (go figure!). There's good reason I hadn't sung it before. It's a clunker to sing! Even the title is a bit odd. But the words, the words, are so good. I'll share some of them with you. The fourth verse says:

Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

This verse reminds me of the Christmas promise that God in Christ is with us. He is Emmanuel after all, God with us. As the hymn verse above reminds us, in all places and in all circumstances, in friend or stranger, God is present. Bishop Craig Schweitzer in his first Sunday after Christmas sermon said, "We look for God in all the wrong places." Perhaps we make seeing God among us more difficult than it needs to be. Within, behind, above, beside, beneath, in quiet and in danger, Christ is nearer than we think. Usually he is where we would least expect him to be, doing the holy work of God.

In the New Year, I pray that you can see God at work in your life surrounding you in every situation you find yourself. The Christmas promise doesn't end when the tree comes down and the decorations are put away. 2021, like every year, will have challenges of its own. We can't flip a switch and make life go back to normal pre corona virus. There is still a long road ahead of us. But you can be guaranteed that God is walking with you on this and every road of your life. Look for God in those places of your life where you would least expect God to show up. I can guarantee God is there. With God surrounding you, everything in the New Year will be okay. Love, light, hope and peace will never leave you. May you have the eyes to see that God is with you!

With Peace,

Pastor Mike Pretzer

Caring Hands for January

January, May, & September

Bette Madler

Phyllis Nordeng

Tim & Bev Hodahl

Carolyn Blake

Sylvia Kalliokoski

Gregg & Jessica Bertelsen

Becky O'Neal

Sheila Schilling

Deanna Davenport

Don & Erika Schumacher

Don Fersger

Dean & Lola Hushka

Shantel Petroff

During your month, sign up (or email or call the church) to help with the following worship/fellowship needs. You can sign up in pairs to help each other out with worship and fellowship duties, if desired. Sign up sheets are located at the church along with a signup sheet for mowing.

-Worship hosts

-Greet people and hand them a bulletin

-Make sure the candles are lit

-Collect offering

-Fellowship hosts

-Make a pot of coffee/heat the water kettle for tea

-Provide some kind of snacks (bars, fruit, toast, meat/cheese, cookies, etc)



Thank you!

Dear church members of St. John's and Peace Lutheran, thank you so much for the generous outpouring of gifts and well wishes over the Christmas holiday! Your kindness and thoughtfulness toward me and my family is very much appreciated! We have enjoyed the goodies and the gifts, the cards and pictures, and mostly, the love that comes with them. Thanks again! Blessings and good health to you all in 2021!

Pastor Mike Pretzer



Annual Meeting Notice

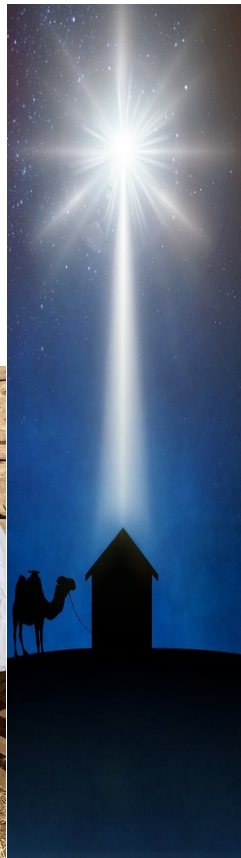


Peace Lutheran Church will have its **annual meeting** on Sunday, **January 17th, 2021** following the 10:00 am worship service. There will **not** be a potluck meal following the meeting. In order to ensure a quorum, a zoom connection will be provided for church members to attend. A link to the meeting will be sent through the weekly constant contact bulletin through email.

St. John's Lutheran Church will have its annual meeting on Sunday, **January 24th, 2021** following the worship service which will begin at **11:00 am**. Please note the change of time for the worship service that day! Also note that there will **not** be a potluck meal as part of the annual meeting this year.

Live Nativity was Held

On a night under the stars members from Peace Lutheran's Wednesday Night Worship and Faith Formation Group gathered in mask and costume at Pastor Mike and Alecia's farm north of Taylor to reenact the Nativity Story. Characters of the nativity were joined by two cows and a few goats to retell the amazing story of God becoming one of us in the form of a helpless baby, Jesus. As the story was told, a few Christmas Carols were sung. I was a nice reminder that God comes to the surprising and crude places of our lives to offer grace and love. God makes our humble setting holy! Below are a few pictures from the night.



PRAYERS FOR HEALING,

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Deidra Shannon (Terry H. cousin)
Megan Grabow (Shelby & Derek Sister-in-Law)
Navah DenHerder
Ervin & Florence Heidecker
Eric Sellers (Cancer)
Tammy McReynolds (Terry Halversons Sister)
Matt Ellerkamp (Brain Tumor Treatment)
Lea Madler (Lung Cancer)
Bonnie Heidecker (Throat Cancer)
Beth Fugle (Candy H. Sister- Cancer)
Holly (Cancer)
Sharon Meissel (cancer)
Lakin Dvorak
Jackson Portra & his Parents Jared & Mandy Portra
Stanley Lang
Family of Raymond Hushka
Monica Hushka

COMMUNITY PRAYERS:

All those serving in the military & their families. Our partner congregation, St. John's Lutheran in Richardton, Lutheran Social Services, Badlands Ministries, the Ministries in the Central African Republic.

ST. JOHN'S IN RICHARDTON

Harrison Job Magstadt & his parents Haley & Nathan Magstadt
Kristin Johnson
James Hauter (Lynn Johnson's Father)
Welde Heinle- Recurrence of cancer
Arlyne Magstad
Shirley Kitzan
Dee Homelvig -Chemotherapy
Emmalou Lavine (Armin's Sister)
Holly (Cancer)
Pam (Cancer)
Family of Gaite Gebhardt
Steve and Kayla Olson and unborn son Luke

WNW Schedule

Jan. 6 @ 6:30 – Epiphany Party
Jan. 13 @ 6:30
Jan. 20 @ 6:30
Jan. 27 @ 6:30

Other Events In January

Jan. 12– Council Meeting @ 7pm
Jan. 17– Peace Lutheran Annual Meeting
Jan. 24– St. John's Worship @ 11AM Annual Meeting to follow



Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

*¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “**Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews?** For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”*
Matthew 2: 1-12



Don't pack away the Christmas decorations just yet for while the 2020 calendar may have come down and a new one taken its place the season celebrating Christ's birth isn't quite over. The Christmas season extends through January 6, when we celebrate the Epiphany of Our Lord.

On this day the Christian church remembers the arrival of the magi – wise ones who journeyed from faraway lands following the light of a star bearing gifts worthy of honoring the arrival of a king. But they do not find the king where one might expect. He is not found in the halls of the palace in mighty Jerusalem. Instead, the star leads them to a modest village, Bethlehem, to a home where they find the child and his mother. Here in this ordinary place, these outsiders pause to pay homage, recognizing the deep presence of the Holy masked in the seemingly ordinary.

Epiphany is an easy day to skip over. It doesn't garner the fanfare of Christmas. This year it lands on a Wednesday, smack dab in the middle of the week. It would be easy to rush on by so we can just get on with the business of looking forward. The days are getting longer now. The calendar is fresh. We can close the book on 2020, a year many of us can't put behind us fast enough. We want desperately to rush headlong into the new year hoping for better things to come. But Epiphany offers us an important reminder to not get ahead of ourselves. There is value in pausing to recognize the holy in the humble.

Human nature leads us to often spend our days either dwelling on the past or planning for the future. But if we take anything away from 2020, may it be a greater appreciation for the present moment, for what is. The significance of time spent with others. The very gift of breath and life and relationship.

Epiphany means sudden illumination, new insight, a revelation. Perhaps the Epiphany for us now is to understand more deeply not only that Christ came to us in a stable long, long ago, or that Christ will indeed come again at some undesignated time and place in the future, but also that Christ is Emmanuel, God With Us, right now.

Perhaps our Epiphany is recognizing again the significance of pausing to honor the very holy in our midst. Might we pause to recognize Christ in the eyes of the ones with whom we sit? Might we practice gratitude for the small and beautiful gifts God offers us each day-the richness of a meal, the comfort of a conversation, the beauty of creation? Might we grow in our sense of the Holy Spirit weaving itself throughout our days? Might we not rush the journey, but rather pause to pay homage to our King by opening our own treasure chests brimming with gifts such as justice, compassion, and love ready to be poured out on our neighbors in honor of our King.

Deacon Beth Anderson
Assistant to the Bishop for Faith Formation, Candidacy & Communications

Council Meeting Minutes – December 15, 7:00 PM

Present: Jeff Anderson, Bev Holdahl, Lola Huschka, Travis Kupper, Pastor Mike Pretzer, Tammy Sadowsky, and Kim Jones. Absent: Jessica Bertelson, Heather Fagerberg, Marilyn Huschka, and Derek Jilek.

1) Bev called the meeting to order. 2) Pastor Mike shared devotion and prayer.

3) Minutes MSC Travis/Pastor Mike 4) Agenda – MSC Travis/Pastor Mike

5) Leadership Reports –

Pastor's Report – Pastor has officiated at a funeral 11/25, and one 12/17/20 for New England parish.

Pastor is working on a live nativity at Pastor's farm for the Wednesday service 12/16/20. Longest Night service will be on Facebook 12/21 at 7 pm, area pastors participated. Christmas Eve service will be at 6 PM.

Treasurer position – we are still looking for a volunteer.

Annual Meeting will be January 17, 2021. Per synod guidelines, electronic format needs to be offered (Zoom Meeting). Announcement of meeting needs to be in newsletter and church bulletins. Quorum would be 15% of confirmed membership.

6) Stewardship

Small Business Administration PPP- Heather filed paperwork – loan forgiveness

Financial report-reviewed. Questions regarding Central African Republic funds – these need to be sent to Western ND Synod, Bismarck. Operation Christmas Child fund is from offerings to ship boxes, this money stays with the church. MSC Jeff/Lola - approve the financial report as printed. MSC Jeff/Travis to present financial report to congregation at Annual Meeting.

Lefse fundraiser raised \$3037, which was matched by an anonymous donor.

Discussion held on donating to local charities. MSC Jeff/Kim - Church to give \$500 to Amen Food Pantry and \$500 to Badland Ministries out of the lefse fundraiser money.

7) Worship

Devotion from the Badlands – Pastor continues to contribute devotional on Facebook each week.

Longest Night Service – December 21 at 7pm on Facebook

Sunday service after Christmas will be a hymn sing

8) Faith Formation

A. Kool Gang /Confirmation– Outdoor Christmas Story 12/16 at 6:30 pm at Pastor's farm
January 6 will be startup date after the holidays.

9) Community Partnerships

Badland Ministries – Christmas Event will be available to watch on Facebook after 12/19/20 1 pm. Tim Holdahl and Pastor Joe Natwick from St John presented music for this.

Preschools – their Christmas parties are scheduled

AA meetings – Saturday group is meeting

10) Building and Property

Parking Lot – looking for fundraiser ideas

Snow removal – Dave Vernon from DL Lawn service has agreed to remove snow. Guidelines will be set on when he should come to move snow.

Church sign – damage from recent winds. Pastor will check with insurance to see if damage is covered.

Church did receive a donation of \$250.00 from American Bank.

Building insurance contacted Pastor that the church needs a Sexual Misconduct Policy in place. Council to work on this after new year, need to check for template or guidelines from Synod

Suggestion from Pastor - Council should update our Church Constitution in January.

11) Communication

A. Newsletter – plan to mail early January

12) Next Meeting Date – January 12, 7 pm. Closed with the Lord's Prayer and meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Kim Jones

SJR—St. John's in Richardton KA—Kid Academy Preschool (Monday-Thursday)

R2B—Room to Bloom Preschool (Tuesday/Thursday) AA-Alcoholics Anonymous

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 AA 8-12
3 Peace Worship-10AM SJR— 8 AM	4	5	6 WNNW 6:30PM	7	8	9 AA 8-12
10 Peace Worship-10AM SJR— 8 AM	11	12 Council Meeting 7pm	13 WNNW 6:30 PM	14	15	16 AA 8-12
17 Peace Worship-10AM Annual Meeting SJR— 8AM	18	19	20 WNNW 6:30 PM	21	22	23 AA 8-12
Peace— 10AM SJR— 11AM SJR-8AM Peace— 10AM 31	24 25	26	27 WNNW 6:30 PM	28	29	30

Peace Lutheran Church
1550 21st Street W
Dickinson, ND 58601
Phone: (701)483-1550
Website: peacelutherandickinson.com

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