



# Tidings of Peace

June 2023

Volume XXVIV Number 6

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church ♦ 1747 W. Milham Avenue, Portage, MI 49024 ♦ 269-343-3453 ♦ [popportage.org](http://popportage.org)

"Touched by  
the Gospel,  
we seek to be  
instruments of  
God's Peace,  
for the sake  
of the world."

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## Pastor's Page

### 60 Years and Counting



*We've come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord;  
Trusting in his holy word, he's never failed us yet.  
Oh, can't turn around, we've come this far by faith.*

*We've come this far by faith.*

*ELW #633, We've Come This Far by Faith*

On Sunday, June 11, we will celebrate our congregation's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary! I'm excited to hear and share stories of our six decades of ministry together. We've gathered pictures and memorabilia to help spark some of those memories and help us tell the story of how generations of our POP community have been empowered by the Spirit here. If you haven't done so already, you can **e-mail pictures** from the last 10 years (2013-2023) to me ([pastorrachel@popportage.org](mailto:pastorrachel@popportage.org)) or Technology Manager Mike Whately ([technology@popportage.org](mailto:technology@popportage.org)) **by June 4**, to be included in a slide show presentation.

And of course, it wouldn't be a church celebration without some special elements in worship! This is one of the prayers we will pray that day: *O God, you have promised through your Son to be with your church forever. We give you thanks for those who founded this community of believers and for the signs of your presence in our congregation. Increase in us the spirit of faith and love, and make our fellowship an example to all believers and to all nations. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

Another decade of ministry is an exciting thing to celebrate, but much like the photos that will spark our memories, this anniversary can only capture a moment in time. What we celebrate is not the whole of who we are – it's a wonderful part of the story of how God has brought us to where we are today, but it isn't the whole story. That story is still being written through the ministry we do together and in the hearts of those whom God will continue to send to our community in the future. We pray and we trust that God will continue to increase our faith and love as we continue our mission and ministry as instruments of God's peace for the sake of the world.

Shalom, Pastor Rachel



## What's Happening at POP!



Tamara will be away on vacation in June. During her absence the office will have reduced hours from June 19 to July 3. The main office will be staffed M-W from 10-12 and T-Th from 10-2.

### Prayer Shawl Ministry

Meets **Friday, June 2 10 AM** in the Social Hall. If you or someone you know would like a shawl, or for more information about becoming a prayer shawl creator, please contact Dianne Hellman, 323-9392.

**When: Tuesday, June 13 at 1 PM**  
**Where: POP Social Hall**

Just a few rolls of the dice and you'll have this fun game mastered!

Bunko is easy to learn and offers wonderful opportunities for conversation and connection with others.

Call Carla Hannemann at 269/216-3498 for more information.



### Ladies Lunch Bunch meets Tuesday, June 20

Meet at 11:45am at University Roadhouse  
1332 W Michigan, Kalamazoo.

Questions? Car pool? Need a ride?  
**Contact Dianne Hellman, 323-9392.**

This is a great time for good food and fellowship.  
Hope to see you there.



### Quilters

**Tuesdays, June 6 & 20 at 9:30 AM**  
**Where: POP Social Hall**



Not sure you can sew well enough to participate? Don't worry! Many of our quilters learned their skills from others in the group because they wanted to contribute to this ministry that provides warmth, security, and shelter to people around the world.

They're happy to teach you, too.

Contact Sheryl for more information: 267-6274.

### Men's Breakfast!



**8:00 AM, Wednesday, June 14**

Michelle's on Romence Rd. in Portage.

Join Pastor Rachel for breakfast, prayer, and conversation. Tell them you're with Prince of Peace. We've got the back room reserved.



## In Search Of. . .

### A Call for Special Music for Summer Worship

Between now and September, there are roughly 20 opportunities for YOU, or YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS, or YOU AND YOUR FAMILY to make special music for our summer worship.

This includes vocalists, instrumentalists, pianists of any age and in any combination or style. I am happy to help you find or prepare music, and/or to accompany you, if that is helpful — also happy to let you be on your own!

Look for the sign-up sheet in the gathering space, or text, email or speak to me, Janet Hill, at 616/340-7151 or hillparadocs@gmail.com.

### Social Concerns Spotlight on . . .

#### SWELL (Sharing With Everyone Lutheran Love)

SWELL has a partnership with Samaritas to support at-risk children in foster care and the young adults who have aged out of the foster care system transition into one of the two Independent Living houses in Kalamazoo.

SWELL is supported by ELCA Lutheran churches in the Kalamazoo and Portage areas including Prince of Peace. Support for these at-risk kids include gift cards to each foster child on their birthday and Christmas and needs not covered by the Department of Health & Human Services, (but important to the child) such as a bicycle for a teen to get to work, graduation gifts, vacuum cleaners for the two houses. In addition SWELL supports the Seita Scholar Program at Western Michigan University.

After Claudia's announcement at the 05-21 Sunday service, all five of the welcome baskets had been spoken for! The welcome baskets are given to each young adult as they move into Independent Living and PoP had been asked to put together 5 baskets. **THANK YOU!** It is truly appreciated. Not only for the baskets but for once more illustrating what a truly giving community Prince of Peace is and how fortunate all of us are to be a part of it.

At the April SWELL meeting Samaritas also asked each of us to reach out to our church membership and let you know that 40 foster families are needed to meet the needs of children. For more information on foster care, call Samaritas at 269-345-5776.

#### Will you help our neighbors?

It takes 4-5 people to help this ministry. Please sign-up and **arrive by 12:30 to help set up. Sign up is on the website.**  
<https://popportage.org/pages/food-distribution-signup>



**The Jubilee Garden has been planted.** Now we wait to see what grows well this year. Starting in June we will have regular hours when volunteers can come and help keep the garden going or just want to talk to someone about the garden activities. No long term commitment is required. Stay for 10 minutes or an hour or more. We are located behind the back parking lot of the church. Regularly schedules work times starting in June will be: Tuesdays 7-8 and Saturdays 10-11.

*Imagine that you're not driving any more but have medical appointments you need to go to and your family and friends can't take you.*

This is where the **Shepherd's Center** can help. We provide transportation to medical appointments for people who are 60 and over, live and have their appointments in Kalamazoo County, and are independently mobile or use a walker or cane.

The Shepherd's Center is a non-profit organization that's been serving people in Kalamazoo County since 1989 and is a member of the national Shepherd's Centers of America. All the drivers are volunteers and drive their own cars. They pick up riders at their home, take them to the appointment, wait if the appointment is a shorter one, or drop the person off and return to pick them up and take them home. Here's what one driver says: "Driving for the Shepherd's Center always feels like a ministry. Like most ministries, I get more than I give. I meet such nice people and have all kinds of adventures finding my way around town. And I even get time to sit and read in the middle of the day. But mostly, I count my blessings. I am so proud to be a part of this wonderful program." The riders say their drivers are "kind", "safe", and one says she sleeps better at night knowing she has a ride scheduled.

The Shepherd's Center drives Monday-Thursday from 8-5 all over Kalamazoo County. They ask for a \$10 donation from the rider for the round-trip ride if that's doable. If not, the rider can offer whatever amount works, or ride for free. The most important thing is getting people to their medical appointments. The Center asks that people register with them and give two weeks' notice to schedule a ride. There are no same-day or next-day appointments.

**The Executive Director will be at Prince of Peace on June 25** with additional information and will do an orientation for those interested in driving after worship. She looks forward to talking with folks about rides or your interest in volunteer driving. If you want to talk with her sooner, please call 269-383-1122 and ask for Mary Beth.





## Fellowship News

*"Our love to God is measured by our everyday fellowship with others and the love it displays."*

– Andrew Murray

**Summer is almost here! Mark your calendars for these upcoming fellowship events at POP!**



On **Friday, June 9th**, come out to support our local Growler's baseball team! As an added bonus, Pastor Rachel will be signing the national anthem that evening! If your schedule changes and you still want tickets after May 21, please con-

tact Gail MacNellis to see if additional tickets may be available or call the Growlers at [\(269\) 492-9966](tel:2694929966) and ask to sit with Prince of Peace.

**Beat the heat with a trivia night in August!**

Wade Lawrence will be our MC for a fun night of group trivia on **Friday, August 18** with check in at 6:30PM and

the game starting at 7:00PM. This will be held in the Gathering Space so we can keep cool in the late summer heat with the A/C. Each team will be seated at a table to work together. There will be food and beverages for purchase. Details are still being worked out, so keep an eye out for further details. All proceeds will go to the Good Samaritan Fund.

Lastly, a **Fellowship "challenge"** for you to try. POP is always full of happy faces at Sunday Service. The next time you attend in person, take a moment and go speak to someone that you never have chatted with before. You can ask how long they have been at POP or what they like about POP. You can even ask what is their favorite flavor of ice cream! It doesn't matter – just reach out and meet someone new!

*Who knows?*

**God just might guide you to a new friend...**

## A Note from Justice and Diversity - June Commemorations



**June is Pride Month**

Pride month honors the LGBTQIA+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual), both for their struggles over the years for equity and for their many contributions to our society.

As an ELCA church member, consider reading the article "Beyond the rainbow flag - Perspective: What does it mean to be truly welcoming?" by Emmy Kegler, published in Living Lutheran (2018). Emmy suggests six ways we can "extend a specific welcome that directly addresses [the] spiritual needs" of a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. <https://www.livinglutheran.org/2018/06/beyond-the-rainbow-flag/>

As a PoP member, consider stopping by our table at the Kalamazoo Pride festival during the vendor showcase on Saturday, June 3, from noon to 6pm. The event is held at Kalamazoo's Arcadia Creek Festival Place. This will be our second year. Details can be found here: <https://www.outfrontkzoo.org/pride2023>

**June 19 is the Juneteenth holiday**

Juneteenth, also called Jubilee Day, Emancipation Day or Freedom Day, is a national holiday that commemorates the end of slavery on June 19, 1865. While President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, it took two and a half years for this news to spread fully, arriving finally in Texas and Louisiana.

Worship and music are two ways we can celebrate Juneteenth. Consider this article "Juneteenth is a jubilant celebration — and a sacred lament," which discusses the role of worship and Gospel music in Juneteenth celebrations. <https://www.npr.org/2022/06/19/1105898257/juneteenth-church-services>

Or try a 15-minute music lesson which includes lyrics, audio, and video recordings for several songs that have been familiar among Juneteenth celebrations over the years, including 'Lift Every Voice And Sing,' 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,' and 'This Little Light Of Mine.'

<https://musicinourhomeschool.com/free-15-minute-music-lesson-for-juneteenth/>

We can also honor Juneteenth by learning about or speaking out about racial justice issues that are still occurring today. For more on what the ELCA is doing, check out their Racial Justice Ministries page. <https://www.elca.org/our-work/publicly-engaged-church/racial-justice-ministries>



## Council and Committees



The Congregational Council met on Wednesday, May 17, via Zoom.

### God Moments:

Nancy Pendziszewski encountered a woman and child during worship sitting in the gathering space alone. She invited them into the sanctuary where they could see and hear better. Nancy returned to the choir and prayed that members would greet them at the end of worship. These visitors were warmly welcomed by many members. Hopefully they will return to worship with us.

Pastor Rachel shared an experience that Claudia told her about. A male ESL student helped her carry in supplied for quilting. Later, during a break, he returned to the social hall to help the quilters tie quilts.

Pastor Rachel's husband, Chris, was recently selected for promotion to the rank of Lt. Colonel. He probably will not actually be promoted until he goes back to teach again in August.

Don Eklov's son and daughter-in-law have been hosting a high school student from Ukraine this past school year. Don and Kathy were invited to attend the baseball awards ceremony and the last baseball game this young man will play in before going back to Ukraine. He's been in the US since before the war but feels they need to be in his home country with his family.

Dick Hewitt has been following the progress with the Stepanski family. Sarah and Stella are still in Malawi. Prince of Peace should host a celebration for them when they are all reunited as one family. Subsequent to the council meeting, Derek shared that it looked promising for Sarah and Stella to return sometime the last week of May.

**Deacon Call Committee:** The call committee has been working diligently on the Mission Site Profile which is required by the Synod before any interviews can begin. They shared the final draft with council asking for our input/corrections. They plan to submit the

document before the end of this month. Council members were extremely impressed with the quality of the document. Kudos to the Deacon Call Committee.

**Mission Statement Reviews:** *Touched by the Gospel, we seek to be instruments of God's Peace for the sake of the World.* For the past two months, council liaisons have been working with their committees to discuss how their committee is supporting our mission statement. We have now received information from most committees. Once we have them all, we will create a document to share with everyone.

**Synod Assembly Report:** This year's assembly was held in Mt. Pleasant, May 7-9. Pastor Rachel, Don Jones and Gail MacNellis were the voting members from Prince of Peace. Em Witteveen attended as a visitor. The combination of having a better understanding of the synod budget and committees, combined with wonderful worship experiences was well worth the time spent participating. Pastor particularly enjoyed the round table discussion within small groups. Our table included the four of us plus members from Trinity in Grand Rapids. Each table was given the same question or topic and then given about 30 minutes to exchange ideas/opinions. It very quickly became a safe place to share with each other. Paula suggested that we make the opportunity to participate clearer to the congregation so more people might consider attending in the future.

### Committee Reports:

Worship: Laura reminded everyone that May 28 is Pentecost and to wear red, if possible. June 11 we will celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Fellowship: Several events are taking place this summer. May 21 is Graduation Sunday and the church picnic; June 9 is the Kalamazoo Growler's Game, and August 18 is Trivia Night, with Wade Lawrence as our MC. All proceed for Trivia Night will go to the Good Samaritan Fund. Begin forming your teams!

Social Concerns: Nancy said they have so many wonderful programs going in Social Concerns, but they would like to see more participation. We discussed possible ways to encourage more people to get involved.

## 2023 Graduates

Ava Erdmann

Ava Erdmann is graduating from Gull Lake High School. This fall, she will attend Purdue University as part of the Purdue Honors College, where she will study pharmacy.



Hannah Williams is graduating from Portage Northern and will attend Purdue University on a swimming scholarship, where she will study engineering. Hannah's favorite memories from Prince of Peace are the many middle school retreats she participated in and how fun they were.

Hannah Williams



**Alison Barnett** will graduate from WMU in June with a degree in Finance.

She will be moving to Columbus, OH where she has accepted a job working for government in the FDIC division.



## Kendall Hannemann

Kendall Hannemann is graduating from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Science in Genomics and Molecular Genetics and a minor in French. She is hoping to attend professional school in a year or two after getting some clinical experience.



Christian Maurer is graduating from Ferris State University.

Christian served as a Petty Officer Second Class with the U.S. Navy until 2020. He then enrolled at Ferris State University, joined the Ferris State Football team as a Defensive Backs coach, and helped them win their first national championship in school history. He has now graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Project Management.

Christian is also in a life-long manhunt to meet and teach the Sasquatch how to play Euchre.



## CHRISTIAN MAURER





# Impact Giving

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OTHERS

- We are so grateful for your recent donation of 158 pounds of food to **Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes**. Imagine the possibilities when our neighbors have the nourishment necessary to reach their potential rather than struggling day after day for the source of their next meal. Thank you so much. Your contributions matter in a very real way, and we truly value your support*  
– Jennifer E. Johnson, Executive Director
- Thank you for your gift to support our SW MI Foster Care Program.* – Dave Morin, Interim CEO, **Samaritas**

## On-Line Giving

### On-line Giving Has Never Been So Easy!



You can click or copy and paste the link

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=2250097>

or use the QR code.

You can also go to the Prince of Peace website & click on the giving button.

For questions contact either Marilyn or Tamara.

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

|         |  |         |   |
|---------|--|---------|---|
| June 1  | Greg Hannemann<br>Scott Walker<br>Sydney Jawahir                                 | June 19 | Gary Krebill<br>Hazel Zaleski   |
| June 2  | Joelene Pedersen   | June 21 | John Thommen<br>Greg Bovenkerk<br>Kristine Pioch                                  |
| June 3  | William Hellman<br>Elias Cartier   | June 22 | Barbara Leaser  |
| June 4  | Mae Pederson<br>Rodney Hokenson<br>Larry Mallak<br>Dylan Lampos<br>Sabrina Floyd | June 23 | Karen Gallagher<br>David Maurer   |
| June 5  | Joseph Beuker<br>Katherine Lago  | June 24 | Michael Preston   |
| June 7  | Laura Meier  | June 25 | Joyce Stout<br>Jason French   |
| June 8  | Elayna Creed   | June 26 | Paul MacNellis  |
| June 9  | Norah Preston<br>Cate Pederson   | June 27 | Carla Hannemann   |
| June 10 | Jennifer Palarz  | June 28 | Laurel Hopper<br>Logan Emrick<br>Richard Hewitt<br>David Cooper<br>Heather Girand |
| June 11 | Tom Askew  | June 29 | Christine Bigelow   |
| June 12 | Samuel Stagra<br>Martha Irons<br>Bill Bye<br>Mary Clyne                          |         |   |
| June 13 | Karen DeVries<br>Sheryl Swodzinski   |         |   |
| June 14 | Oliver Bovenkerk<br>Stephen Haddix<br>Melissa Mickelson                          |         |   |
| June 15 | Laura Bovenkerk  |         |   |
| June 16 | Ella Bischof<br>Thomas Cooper Jr.<br>Robert Hannemann                            |         |   |
| June 17 | Dean Knuth<br>Louis Jean   |         |   |
| June 18 | Julie Winklepleck  |         |   |


### Anniversaries

|                                    |         |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Scott & Emily Walker               | June 1  |
| Dale & Sharon Clem                 | June 4  |
| Carolyn & Laverne Anderson         | June 7  |
| Orville & Linda Smith              | June 8  |
| Dan & Erin Smith                   | June 8  |
| Jim & Sandy Foster                 | June 10 |
| Laurel & Chris Hopper              | June 13 |
| Jim & Linda Timm                   | June 13 |
| Larry Mallak & Jocelyn Steinke     | June 14 |
| John & Laurie Brown                | June 16 |
| Angie Copeland & James Copeland II | June 17 |
| Greg & Laura Bovenkerk             | June 17 |
| Thomas & Nancy Pederson            | June 18 |
| Laila & Chris Poisson              | June 19 |
| David Morin & Gretchen Kauth       | June 20 |
| Laura & Scott Meier                | June 22 |
| Derek Stepanski & Sarah Lindmark   | June 24 |
| William & Dianne Hellman           | June 25 |
| Kathryn & Larry Ott                | June 26 |
| Bill & Denise Bye                  | June 26 |
| Tammy & Peter Olsen                | June 27 |
| William & Gena Baldwin             | June 29 |
| Adam & Sarah Beuker                | June 30 |



## JUNE BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

# Prince of Peace Calendar — June

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday   | Saturday  |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| <b>28</b><br><b>Pentecost</b><br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship Time   | <b>29</b><br><b>Memorial Day</b><br><b>Office Closed in observance of Memorial Day</b><br>5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group   | <b>30</b><br>9:00am ESL<br>9:15am Staff Meeting   | <b>31</b><br>9:00am Literacy Tutoring - Room 7<br>11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom<br>1:30pm Care Team Meeting<br>5:00pm Girl Scout Troop - 80327   | <b>1</b><br>9:00am ESL<br>1:00pm Food Distribution<br>1:00pm Free Store<br>6:30pm South County Fiber Arts | <b>2</b><br><b>Office Closed</b><br>10:00am ESL Open Tutoring<br>10:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry - Social Hall       | <b>3</b><br>9:00am Bread & Breakfast<br>6:00pm Boy Scout Graduation |
| <b>4</b><br><b>Trinity Sunday</b><br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship Time   | <b>5</b><br>10:30am Literacy Tutoring - Library<br>1:30pm WMU Center for Disabilities<br>5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group<br>6:30pm CLO Housing Group<br>7:00pm Personnel/Executive Committee - Zoom   | <b>6</b><br>9:00am ESL<br>9:15am Staff Meeting - Long Range Planning - offsite<br>9:30am Quilters - Social Hall<br>5:30pm Great Lakes Adventure Club - Social Hall/Flex | <b>7</b><br>9:00am Literacy Tutoring - Room 7<br>11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom   | <b>8</b><br>9:00am ESL<br>10:30am ESL End of the Year Party - Social Hall                                 | <b>9</b><br><b>Office Closed</b><br>10:00am ESL Open Tutoring  | <b>10</b>   |
| <b>11</b><br><b>60th Anniversary</b><br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am 60th Anniversary Reception   | <b>12</b><br>10:30am Literacy Tutoring - Library<br>1:30pm WMU Center for Disabilities<br>5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group<br><b>6:00pm Social Concerns Meeting - Zoom</b>   | <b>13</b><br>9:15am Staff Meeting<br>1:00pm Senior Bunko - Social Hall  | <b>14</b><br><b>Flag Day</b><br><b>8:00am Men's Breakfast @ Michelle's</b><br>9:00am Literacy Tutoring - Room 7<br>11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom   | <b>15</b><br>Newsletter Deadline<br>1:00pm Food Distribution  | <b>16</b><br><b>Office Closed</b><br>10:00am ESL Open Tutoring   | <b>17</b>   |
| <b>18</b><br><b>Father's Day</b><br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship Time  | <b>19</b><br><b>Juneteenth</b><br>10:30am Literacy Tutoring - Library<br>1:30pm WMU Center for Disabilities<br>5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group<br>6:00pm Master Gardeners - Sanctuary<br><b>7:00pm Worship Committee Meeting - Zoom</b>     | <b>20</b><br>9:15am Staff Meeting<br>9:30am Quilters - Social Hall<br>11:45am Ladies Lunch Bunch @ University Roadhouse   | <b>21</b><br><b>First Day of Summer</b><br>9:00am Literacy Tutoring - Room 7<br>10:00am Book Club - Gathering Space<br>11:00am Library Committee - Library<br>11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom<br><br><b>7:00pm Church Council meeting - Zoom</b> | <b>22</b><br>         | <b>23</b><br><b>Office Closed</b><br>10:00am ESL Open Tutoring<br>12:00pm Kalamazoo Trumpet Workshop               | <b>24</b><br>9:00am Kalamazoo Trumpet Workshop                      |
| <b>25</b><br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship Time<br><b>11:30am Shepherd Center Driver Orientation</b><br>1:00pm Kalamazoo Trumpet Workshop | <b>26</b><br>9:30am Ruth Circle<br>10:00am Keith Geiman Trumpet Studio - Music room<br>10:30am Literacy Tutoring - Library<br>1:30pm WMU Center for Disabilities<br>5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group<br>6:00pm Justice and Diversity Meeting | <b>27</b><br>Open Doors Men's Shelter Meal<br>9:15am Staff Meeting<br>10:00am Keith Geiman Trumpet Studio - Music room  | <b>28</b><br>9:00am Literacy Tutoring - Room 7<br>10:00am Keith Geiman Trumpet Studio - Music room<br>11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Zoom  | <b>29</b><br>10:00am Keith Geiman Trumpet Studio - Music room<br>1:00pm Food Distribution                 | <b>30</b><br><b>Office Closed</b><br>10:00am ESL Open Tutoring<br>10:00am Keith Geiman Trumpet Studio - Music room | <b>1</b><br>9:00am Bread & Breakfast                                |

## Legend:

AA—Alcoholics Anonymous

ESL—English as a Second Language

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

**269/343-3453**

[www.poppottage.org](http://www.poppottage.org)

Facebook: Prince of Peace, Portage, MI-ELCA