



October 2026

Tidings of Peace

*"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

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. – 1 Corinthians 3:6

Harvest season always amazes me. This time of year, many of those tiny seeds or tender young shoots farmers planted in their fields in the spring have grown strong and are providing food for us all. Human hands faithfully tended these ordinary miracles, but God gives the growth that will nourish us in the seasons to come.

A very similar thing is happening at Prince of Peace these days. We have faithfully tended the seeds of God's Word that the Spirit has generously planted among us and God is giving us growth, both spiritually and numerically.

This growth is exciting, yes! But growth always brings change with it and that can be a little scary. We're trying new things - like the Prayground that invites us to consider worship from the perspective of those who are just learning what it means to gather with the wider community to praise God so we can help them know God's love in new ways. We're meeting new people - like our new staff members and the new households that grace us with their presence and fresh energy almost every week. We're learning new ways of communicating and organizing our work together as more people get involved as leaders and new technologies to support our work, like MS Teams, are explored.

The Fall 2026 Stewardship campaign began on Sept. 27, and hopefully by now you've received my introductory letter about it. Each year during this campaign we share stories about God moving in and through our community to bring God's grace, peace, and joy to the world. We also ask members of our community to let us know how they intend to support the work we do together with their financial offerings in the coming year.

Using the information we gather from this campaign and the priorities set by our congregational council, our finance committee builds a proposed budget that outlines how we will financially support our mission and ministry in the coming year. At our annual congregational meeting in January, all voting members of the congregation are invited to vote on that budget so that it truly reflects the discernment of our whole community about who God is calling us to be and what God is calling us to do in the coming year. Whether it's spent on the flour for the communion bread or the toilet paper for the bathrooms or the stamps for the birthday cards or the boxes of food at the food distribution or salaries for the staff - every dollar we receive enables us to continue our work of sharing the gospel and being instruments of God's peace for the sake of the world.

Thank you for your faithfulness and generous support of the work we do together, beloveds. You are a vital part of the new life God is growing here!

Shalom,

Pastor Rachel

What's Happening at POP!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Next meeting **Friday, October 2 at 10 AM**
in the Peace Lounge.

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.

Quilters

Tuesdays, October 6 & 20 at 9:30 AM

Where: POP Social Hall



Not sure you can sew well enough to participate? Don't worry! They're happy to teach you! Contact Sheryl for more information: 267-6274.

Sunday, October 4 2 PM

Back Church Parking Lot

Bring your pet, a picture or a stuffed animal for the annual Pet Blessing.



WOMEN'S STUDY GROUP:

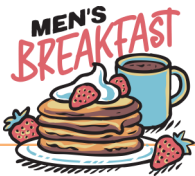
Please join us in the Flex Room for a New Study:
STONE YARD DEVOTIONAL by Charlotte Wood
Read thru Part 1— Mon, Oct. 5 at 7pm
THEN thereafter Tue Oct 20 - 4 pm - Flex Room
Would love to have you come. It's a great group of ladies and we have lively discussions!

Contact Diane Snyder, dmsnyder1149@gmail.com

Men's Breakfast

8:00 AM, Wednesday, October 14

Mark's Diner on Romence Rd in Portage.
Come for fellowship, prayer,
and conversation.
Tell them you're with Prince of Peace.
We've got the back room reserved.



When: Tuesday, October 13 at 1 PM

Where: POP Gathering Space

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, October 20.

Meet at 11:45am at Carabbas, Westnedge St,
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.

Women of the **ELCA** 

**Ruth Circle is
Monday October 26**

Come at 9:30 for refreshments and fellowship followed by the study. We are usually done by 11:15. Still unsure? Call Dianne Hellman (269-323-9392)

Prince of Peace Book Club
is reading the following books:

October 21

"The Frozen River"

by Ariel Lawhon

November 18

"Lula's Little Library of Banned Books"

by Kristin Miller

The Book Club meets at 10am
in the Peace Lounge every
third Wednesday of the month.
See you then!



First...Save the Date for this year's

Project Connect

October 14 from 12:00 to 3:00pm
at the Housing Resources, Inc. Facility

PoP will be participating, once again, as a Free Store serving approximately 400-500 homeless and marginalized people of the Kalamazoo/Portage area. We will offer laundry detergent, cleaning supplies, health supplies, paper products, individual health bags (containing cloths made by our prayer shawl group) and blankets. If you are interested in helping set up, prep, or distribution please let us know.

God's Work, Our Hands Day, on September 13 brought 85-90 of us together to complete several large projects. After a delicious sloppy joe lunch, the Jubilee Garden was worked in, refugee furniture was cleaned, and boxes (secured at no cost from our C-Store friends across Milham) were assembled to send the LWR kits and quilts which were assembled that day. All Lutheran World Relief (LWR) kits and quilts were assembled using donations/gifts from our congregation and friends.

We assembled :

- 410 Health kits (1 bath towel, 3 bars soap, 1 comb, 1 nail clipper, 1 toothbrush in each) - 50 boxes
- 224 School Backpacks, sewn by PoP members. (4 spiral notebooks, 5 pencils, 5 pens, 1 ruler, 1 eraser, 1 scissor, 1 pack crayons, 1 pencil sharpener in each) - 32 boxes
- 50 Fabric Sewing kits (2-2.5 yd. Pieces fabric 2 spools thread in each) - 4 boxes

We also tied 6 quilts, which will be packed along with approximately 110 already sewn.

The LWR quilts and kits will be displayed and blessed in October before they are transported to a truck which will take them to LWR warehouses in Minneapolis. Thank you to EVERYONE for your support with GWOH's day 2026!



October is Pastor Appreciation Month...

and Sunday, October 11 is
Pastor Appreciation Day!
Make a point to let her know we
appreciate her this month
and all year round.

Blessed to be a Blessing -



Please consider donating non-perishable food items for the blessing box.

Some suggested items are peanut butter, jelly, soup with pop-top lids, fruit cups, crackers, cookies, and toiletries.

You can put your items in the Blessing Box bin in the Gathering Space by Social Concern basket.

Food Scarcity is in Our Community!

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>



Fellowship News

"Fellowship is a place of grace, where mistakes aren't rubbed in but rubbed out. Fellowship happens when mercy wins over justice."

- Rick Warren

The Fellowship Committee strives to provide opportunities for us to share time together and get to know each other in community. Please join us for these events and share your suggestions with any member of the committee to consider in the future.



Euchre – Friday, October 9

So many people have enjoyed our Euchre evenings, we're offering an other opportunity to play on Friday, October 9, at 7 PM. Please note on the sign-up if you need to participate in the learning table.

Trunk or Treat – October 25

Moving Trunk or Treat to Sunday afternoon in the front parking lot has made this event a great outreach to the community. We will need lots of trunks this year to meet the demand. Sign-up in the Gathering Space. LOTS of candy donations will be appreciated!



Gingerbread Houses – November 15

The annual Gingerbread decorating will happen Sunday, November 15 after worship. This is a one-Sunday event, so plan to make a whimsical holiday decoration. The houses are always so varied and creative – and the construction materials are really sweet! It's a joyful way to spend an afternoon to get in the holiday mood. Lunch will be provided. Watch for more details and a sign-up in the Gathering Space. As always, thanks to Kim and Wade Lawrence for leading this event.



Fall Flu and Covid Clinics

October 25 & November 1

from 8:30-10am.

Sign up in the Gathering Space.

Please indicate which vaccines you want.

Your choices are: Flu, or the most recent Covid-19.

If you are under 65, you must sign a high risk consent form to receive a Covid shot.

Both Pfizer and Moderna are available. Most shots are still covered by insurance, without insurance, Covid - \$150, Flu regular-\$30, Flu 65+ -\$85

Please bring a completed registration form with you to speed up the processing time. Vaccines will be given first come, first served.



Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, November 1



Pray Without Ceasing

Pray Without Ceasing is a nationwide prayer movement started in the ELCA to uplift and unite communities in prayer during a time of significant change.

Join us every **Wednesday at 10 am** here at church to pray together. For more information, contact Laurie Brown or Em Witteveen. For more information on the Pray Without Ceasing movement, visit pray-without-ceasing.org.

AND MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

Holiday hors d'oeuvre Party – December 4

Christmas Caroling – December 13

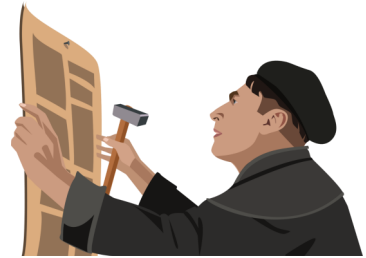
For Your Information

Dear Church Family at Prince of Peace,

Words cannot fully express my gratitude for the exceptionally generous gifts you presented to me as I concluded my time serving as your intern. The stole is beautiful and when I wear it, I will remember my time there! Thank you also for the generous gift cards that were sent to me once I arrived in Dubuque.

Thank you also for the profound warmth, grace, and educational environment you provided over the past year. From our shared moments around the table at Holy Communion to the abundant fellowship afterward, you completely welcomed me into your lives and your faith journeys. You gave me the space to preach, teach, and grow as a leader, and I am a better minister because of your mentorship.

You have shaped my heart for ministry in ways I will carry with me always. Please know of my continued prayers for your community as you continue to do God's work in the world.



Fall 2026 CHURCH HOURS	
MONDAY	9AM - 4PM
TUESDAY	9AM - 4PM
WEDNESDAY	9AM - 4PM
THURSDAY	9AM - 4PM
FRIDAY	9AM - 12PM
SATURDAY	CLOSED
SUNDAY	FAITH FORMATION CLASSES 9:15AM WORSHIP SERVICE 10:30AM



With deep gratitude and blessings,

Kathleen Robinson
Pastoral Intern

SHARE THE NEWS!

When we have something exciting to share, we want the world (or at least our faith community) to know about it!

Announcements are an important part of our life together, but when they run long at the end of worship, it can be hard for us remember them all. In the back of the bulletin each week, you'll now find a small guide for making a memorable announcement. Fill in the basic information and take your bulletin up to the pulpit with you so you can quickly and confidently share the important information and pique peoples' interest in learning more.

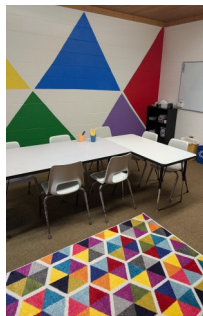
Information about dates, times, and locations, and instructions for signups, registration, or payment for events are most helpful to have in print for folks to reference later when they need it. Submitting your announcement to Ashley (secretary@popportage.org) in advance can get it included in the Peace Proclamations, newsletter, announcement slides, or other forms of church communication. Newsletter information is due by the third Thursday of each month. Peace Proclamations and announcement slide information is due by Wednesday each week.

Children and Youth News



Rally Day on September 13th kicked off our program year of Faith Formation classes for all ages! Our kids and youth have a great year of learning to look forward to.

Not sure which class or room your child will be in? Reach out to Em via email or head toward the Ed Wing at 9:15 on a Sunday morning —there will be lots of smiling faces to point you in the right direction!



Nursery care is available for kids under 3 during learning hour.

Age 3-Kindergarten: Frolic invites young learners to experience Bible stories through play and exploration.

1+2: How is the bible arranged? Why do we do what we do in worship? We're exploring the building blocks of the bible and Lutheran worship.

3-5: It's time to dive deep into some of the familiar stories of the bible to understand how everything fits together.

Quest (6-12): How do we apply faith, the bible, and church to our daily living? In Quest, older youth have the opportunity to explore and experiment with ways to live their faith.

You may have noticed that one class appears to be missing from our list—Confirmation!

But don't worry, it isn't *actually* gone...the content of the class is still present in our curricula: students will continue to learn about the bible, the history of Christianity and of Lutherans, and about applying faith to their daily life. Students in the class will still be invited to experience and experiment with all the ways they can be involved in our faith community. The focus will still be on building community amongst our youth and connecting them with the wider congregation.

The class, which will involve both middle and high schoolers, is called *Quest* as a reference to the invitation into deeper learning, exploration, and understanding that the class will put forth.

The word "Confirmation" will now be used only to describe the day on which we celebrate the rite of affirmation of baptism, aka confirmation, traditionally Reformation Sunday in October (October 25th, 2026). Affirmation of baptism will be open to youth (and adults) of any age who wish to affirm their faith. Youth will continue to be a part of the Quest class after they participate in the rite of confirmation if they choose.

Youth who feel ready to be confirmed will be invited to sit down with Pastor Rachel and Em for a short conversation. This conversation is *not* a test and does not require any kind of memorization, practice, or checklist of "good deeds". It is a chance for us to hear about your faith journey thus far and find out how our congregation can best nurture, pray for, and support you as you continue forward with this big step.

The Christian Education and Youth committees have spent time this summer discerning, discussing, and imaging what a better model for supporting youth and families. Families need flexibility and more time to nurture their child's budding faith. Youth deserve to follow their own divine call and shouldn't feel pressured to affirm their faith the same year some of their peers are. With this new framework for youth Faith Formation, we hope to meet the changing needs of our community. If you have questions or would like to participate in the rite of Affirmation of Baptism (confirmation) on October 25th, please reach out to Em or Pastor Rachel to set up a time to talk.

People & Planet

UNITED WAY 21-DAY DISABILITY EQUITY CHALLENGE

The United Way of South Central Michigan offers several Equity Challenges per year to raise awareness of segments of our communities that regularly face oppression as well as treatment and systems that lead to exclusion. As October is Disability Awareness Month, they are offering a 21-Day Disability Equity Challenge to increase our awareness and understanding of the social and systemic challenges facing those with disabilities. It also provides content that includes guided discussion which can assist you with language for sharing what you learn with others. Here is how it works:

- Participants sign up for free and receive an email each weekday morning during October to read, watch or listen to at their own convenience. We recommend spending 10-15 minutes each day exploring the content.
- Each email includes a brief introduction on a topic related to disability, followed by resources such as podcasts, articles, videos and infographics.
- Two virtual community conversations facilitated by DNSWM will be offered during the Challenge as an opportunity to connect with other participants and gain deeper knowledge from experts in the space.

If this intrigues you, here is the link to sign up: [2026 21-Day Disability Equity Challenge](#)



Hope for Creation

Climate change has resulted in more frequent and stronger storms in Michigan. The NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information report of 2025 (US Billion Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters) has shown that in the 1990s, Michigan had less than one billion-dollar weather disaster per year. Now, severe storms and floods causing billion-dollar damages happen every year with 8 such events in 2024. As a result, environmental resilience centers are becoming more and more common. Have you ever wondered what defines an environmental resilience center? According to a Google search, environmental resilience centers are facilities, academic institutes, or community hubs designed to help populations and ecosystems prepare for, withstand, and recover from climate change and natural disasters.

Many houses of worship are stepping up to help people during and after extreme weather events. You may not realize it, but Prince of Peace Lutheran Church has already participated in this movement. After both the 2024 Portage tornado event, and again after the severe storms of May, 2025, we opened our doors to neighbors who needed food, a place to charge their electronic devices and someplace where they could simply get away from the stress of the moment. The data shows that these weather events are likely to continue to increase in the near future. Hope for Creation is in the beginning stages of trying to organize the Kalamazoo County faith community response to future climate challenges. Stay tuned for updates as they become available.

Living Our Faith

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO OTHERS

- *Dear PoP, I want to thank you for the wonderful gift of quilting lessons and a book to learn from. It will bring me a lifetime of learning and creating. I will think of all of my church family when I am quilting. I will curse you under my breathe when I am frustrated and wonder who's idea this was! But mostly I will remember all of you on my las Sunday and the love that you showed me . You are and have been my ministry.*
Love, Tamara Preston
- *Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes thanks you for your recent donations. Your kindness makes our work possible. For those in need, your donation provides more than just food – it offers dignity, compassion, and hope for a brighter tomorrow. —Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director*

- *We are grateful for your partnership and proud to count Prince of Peace Lutheran Church among the organizations that share our commitment to student success.*
– Laurel Plamer, Director of Annual Giving, WMU

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.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

Birthdays		10/11	Verity Poisson	10/20	Tim Gatz	10/25	Nathan Copeland
		10/12	Sarah Erdmann		Daisy Stepanski	10/26	Avery Davis
10/1	Dale Holder	10/13	Dolores Jennings	10/21	Gregg Nelson	10/27	Madison GarciaRieck
	Sarah Bierema	10/15	Gail MacNellis	10/22	Michael Bierema	10/28	Mark Brown
10/2	Anne Vogt	10/16	Finnegan Ross		Linda Tortorice		Jan Ellwitz
	Mark DiJulio		Adam Todas	10/23	James Copeland II	10/31	Cameron Hopper
	Michael Cartier	10/19	Gena Baldwin		Jerry Spade		Gregory Koester
10/4	Catherine Cartier			10/24	Allyson Maurer		
	Laurie Brown						
10/6	Bridget Whately						
	Dorothy Tisland						
	Jeanette Field						
10/9	Kathy Eklov						
	Raegan Pedersen						
10/10	MacKenzie Hart						



OCTOBER



OCTOBER

birthdays & anniversaries

Anniversaries

Karl & Tonya Klemm	10/3	Diane Wilke-Karna & Dave Karna	10/10	Renee Beck & Tim Snow	10/16
Wade & Kim Lawrence	10/4	Jeff & Pamela Schuhknecht	10/13	Gail & Paul MacNellis	10/21
Peter & Michelle Eldridge	10/7	Michael & Sarah Bierema	10/16	Jolaine & David Snyder	10/24
Jennifer & Jason Ross	10/10	Gregg & Carole Nelson	10/16	Erin & Ron Leversee	10/27

Prince of Peace Calendar — October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 9:15am Faith Formation for All Ages 10:30am Worship 11:45am Fellowship Time 12:00pm Fellowship Committee Meeting	28 9:30am Ruth Circle 2:00pm Care Team Meeting 5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group 6:00pm Justice and Diversity Meeting - Zoom 6:00pm SA Troop 287 6:30pm Nami Support Group	29 9:00am ESL 9:15am Staff Meeting 9:30am Quilters 7:00pm Bells Rehearsal 7:00pm Jubilee Garden Work Day 7:00pm Youth Committee - Teams	30 10:00am Literacy Tutoring 10:00am WMU Center for Disabilities 11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Teams 12:00pm Pray Without Ceasing	1 9:00am ESL 1:00pm Food Distribution 1:00pm Free Store 6:30pm South County Fiber Arts 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	2 10:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry - Peace Lounge 1:00pm Liturgical Arts	3
4 9:15am Faith Formation for All Ages 10:30am Worship 11:45am Fellowship Time 12:00pm New Member Exploration 2:00pm Pet Blessing	5 5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group 6:00pm Audit Committee 6:00pm SA Troop 287 7:00pm Women's Study Group	6 9:00am ESL 9:15am Staff Meeting 9:30am Quilters - Social Hall 7:00pm Bells Rehearsal	7 10:00am Literacy Tutoring 10:00am WMU Center for Disabilities 11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Teams 12:00pm Pray Without Ceasing 6:00pm Great Lakes Adventure Club - Social Hall/Flex	8 9:00am ESL 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	9	10
11 9:15am Faith Formation for All Ages 10:30am Worship 11:45am Fellowship Time 4:20:00pm Chili Cook-off 12:00pm New Member Reception	12 Indigenous Peoples Day 3:00pm Social Concerns Meeting 5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group 5:30pm Finance Committee mtg. - Teams 6:00pm SA Troop 287 7:00pm Personnel/Executive Committee - Teams	13 9:00am ESL 9:15am Staff Meeting 1:00pm Bunko - Gathering Space 7:00pm Bells Rehearsal	14 8:00am Men's Breakfast @ Mark's Diner 9:00am Project Connect 10:00am Literacy Tutoring 10:00am WMU Center for Disabilities 11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Teams 12:00pm Pray Without Ceasing 3:00pm Community Conversations 7:00pm Community Conversations	15 Newsletter Deadline 9:00am ESL 1:00pm Food Distribution 1:00pm Free Store 6:00pm Nurse Honor Guard of Kalamazoo 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Christian Ed Committee - Teams	16	17
18 9:15am Faith Formation for All Ages 10:30am Worship 11:45am Fellowship Time 12:00pm Fellowship Committee Meeting	19 5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group 6:00pm Evangelism Committee 6:00pm Master Gardeners - Sanctuary 6:00pm SA Troop 287 7:00pm Worship Committee Meeting - Teams	20 9:00am ESL 9:15am Staff Meeting 9:30am Quilters - Social Hall 11:45am Ladies Lunch Bunch @ Carabbas 2:00pm Stewardship Committee Meeting 4:00pm Women's Study Group 5:30pm Property Committee - Teams 7:00pm Bells Rehearsal	21 10:00am Book Club 10:00am Literacy Tutoring 10:00am WMU Center for Disabilities 11:00am Library Committee - Library 11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Teams 12:00pm Pray Without Ceasing 7:00pm Church Council meeting - Teams	22 9:00am ESL 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	23	24
25 Reformation Sunday Trunk or Treat 8:30am Flu Clinic 9:15am Faith Formation for All Ages 10:30am Worship 11:45am Fellowship Time	26 9:30am Ruth Circle 2:00pm Care Team Meeting 5:30pm AA "Promises" Support Group 6:00pm Justice and Diversity Meeting - Zoom 6:00pm SA Troop 287 6:30pm Nami Support Group	27 Open Doors Men's Shelter Meal 9:00am ESL 9:15am Staff Meeting 9:30am Quilters 7:00pm Bells Rehearsal	28 10:00am Literacy Tutoring 10:00am WMU Center for Disabilities 11:00am Pastor's Bible Study - Teams 12:00pm Pray Without Ceasing	29 9:00am ESL 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	30	31

Legend:

AA—Alcoholics Anonymous

ESL—English as a Second Language

NAMI — National Alliance on Mental Illness