# Peace, Blessed Peace I Give You

God offered the Israelites freedom from slavery and peace that they had not experienced for over 400 years. Once they found this freedom, instead of finding peace, they started grumbling and complaining and turning to other gods. Fifteen hundred years later, the people see Jesus and all the wonderful healing He has done and the many other miracles he performed, and yet they yell, "Crucify, Crucify Him!" [Luke23.20].

What gets in our way of accepting Jesus and this blessed Peace? I am reminded of the famous picture of Jesus standing at a closed door. The door has no handle on Jesus' side of the door. The door can only be opened from the inside. In other words, we have to open the door and let Jesus and this Blessed Peace into our hearts, and that involves making some changes in our lives.

Well, how do we make these changes? First, I believe it starts with His **WORD**, The Bible. We need to read His word and study it. This is the way Jesus travels from an idea in our head to living in our heart. We internalize His Word as we seriously study that Word. A lot of people read or hear His Word but don't let the Word into their hearts and live it. It needs to be there as a compass that guides what we do and say, not just some book sitting on the coffee table or a bookshelf.

When we allow the word into our hearts and believe it, we live the word and walk the walk. We begin to have a personal relationship with Jesus our Lord and Savior. As we live His word we begin to **PRAY** more, which is our second step in our journey to receiving God's Peace. Praying is not just rattling off a list to God of things we want. Prayer involves listening, taking the time to hear what God wants to tell us. In our prayers we need to be still and listen for God to speak to us. His message comes in many different ways as the Holy Spirit leads us. What is God saying to you?

The third part of this growing a personal relationship with the Lord that brings peace is WORSHIP. We are drawn to worship, for in worship we hear God speaking to us through His Word in the liturgy, the hymns and music, the scriptures, sermons, and the Holy Eucharist [the Lord's Supper]. We are called to worship by God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And God is there to meet us and welcome us to this holy place. When we worship, we grow our relationship with Jesus, especially in His meal when we truly realize that He has died for us. This is personal, for Jesus takes away our sins and makes us whole. In this holy meal we receive His body and blood. Am I worthy to be saved? NO. What have I done to deserve this? I have done nothing but believe, and through faith we receive His Grace and Peace. Jesus has set us free just as the Israelites were set free.

The fourth part of this journey with Jesus is **DBEDJEMCE**. As we read the Bible, we see clearly that God saves His people and expects obedience in return. God expects that there be no other gods, no misuse of God's name, and no failure to keep the Sabbath holy. And as Jesus said, we must "love one another as I love you." Keeping these four disciplines on our journey is not easy, but when we take them into our hearts, they become easier and we begin to realize the truth in the psalmist: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" [Ps.119.105].

Yes, we celebrate Easter again with the familiar announcement, "Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed!" Many of us hear that announcement as we carry burdens and in the midst of storms, looking and searching for peace just as the disciples were that first Easter night. They were gathered together in Jerusalem and the risen Lord walked through the closed door and said, "Peace be with you" [Lk.24.36].

The southern gospel group, The Gaithers sing a beautiful song called "Because He Lives." The chorus calls us to the source of all peace:



Peace My Friends, Pr. Paul DeMoss

"Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, Because He lives, all fear is gone; Because I know He holds the future, And life is worth the living, Just because He lives!"

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One of the things we learned from Bishop Daniel during the Sunday School hour in his recent visit to First was the availability of a 6-week class on the Sermon on the Mount which he wrote last year in preparation for the Year of Scripture. Since Pr. Bob's class has finished The Story and the God Sightings class has completed the Immersion Bible study on Isaiah. Jeremiah, and Lamentations we decided to do the Sermon on the Mount study. We will meet in Pr. Bob's classroom beginning Sunday, April 28 through June 2 to finish out the "school" year. We realize the kids may be finished earlier, but hopefully we will have enough adults, and certainly grades 8-12 would be welcome. As Jesus said to Nathanael, "Come and See!" Jane and Kurt Ebersole

#### Psalm 119: 105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

If you have missed the first few months of the Year of Scripture, but are still intrigued by the challenge, join us in May for the beginning of First and Second Chronicles, which will catch you up with a quick recap of the first twelve books of the Old Testament. Pick up one of the Daily reading sheets outside Pr. Bob's office. If you remember, the Year of Scripture has a three-fold focus:

- Bible Reading as a daily discipline and habit
- what God does.

Several of us have been discussing the events that have happened thus far, but there is no formal gathering or class. However, there is a community out there, so come and be a part of the dialogue!

# Summer Worship 8:30 & 10:00

This summer's worship will be entitled, "Gimme That Old-Time Religion." All hymns will be those chosen as favorites by the congregation: "Amazing Grace," "How Great Thou Art," "I Love to Tell the Story," "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" and some newer classics: "On Eagle's Wings," "Here I Am, Lord," "Borning Cry," and "Shine, Jesus Shine." The service itself hearkens all the way back to the 1970's (that's almost 50 years ago, people!) and that ancient hymnal, the green LBW. So, we will say things like, "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts" and "In fervent love toward one another." The worship style will be somewhat reminiscent of the old camp revivals that we are all so nostalgic for even though most of us have never been to one. In other words, though the service is traditional, the feel will be casual and intimate. As I'm anticipating two 45minute services (starting at 8:30 and 10:00), these would perfect for inviting those who are uncomfortable with long, formal services. Come and see that the Lord is fervent!.

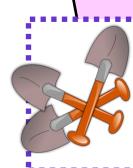
#### **Finish Sunday School Strong**

2019 Year of Scripture!

- Bible Reflection to help us become fluent in the language of sacred scripture and hear God actually speaking to us through His Word
- Bible Study to lead us to discover the depths of who God is and the breadth of

### Who do YOU Miss????

Have you noticed someone missing during one of the Sunday services? Have you not seen someone for a while? Feel free to fill out a card from the "Miss You *Basket"* in the lounge. Just put the name on the envelope and place in the office to be mailed out. If you know the address, or can complete it by looking at the online directory, that would be great too. Let's reach out to our members and let them know we notice when they are not there and we miss them!



## **Good News Gardening Right Around the Corner**

Sharpen up the those spades, trowels, and hoes....gather your seeds and seedlings. We will be preparing to till the garden, if the ground is right, by the end of the month, and plan to plant in early June. Watch for announcements in the bulletin as we begin our 12<sup>th</sup> year! This is a great family activity.

#### PROJECT LINUS

# New Project Linus Coordinator FOUND

I am pleased to announce that after many contacts, phone calls, and prayers, I met with the new Project Linus Coordinator. Jody Conner called me, after reading the article in the Courier, looking for a rewarding volunteer experience. Although she is new to Findlay, she is excited to be a part of Project Linus and hopes to make it a ministry of E Free, where she and her family worship. I hope those of you who have knitted, crocheted, quilted, or fleece-tied quilts over the past 21 years will continue to do so, and if you are in need of yarn, please let me know. I will be "cleaning" out the stash in the PL closet. Yours in stitches, Jane Ebersole



### **Missionary Outreach**

The Missionary Outreach account within Endowment has a very important purpose of providing financial support for Christian projects, education, and services to those beyond the physical confines of our church. We can only appreciate what we have by sharing it. Only when we see how our spiritual blessings bless others can we really come to a deep appreciation of them and thereby draw closer to God. The earnings from the investments made in 2018 provided our largest balance available for distribution in 2019. If you know of a deserving project that meets the above criteria, please present it to a standing committee to have the request presented to the Endowment Committee. Our committee meets the second Wednesday of the month. We hope our benevolence dollars can equip ordinary people with the funds to do extraordinary things in the name of Jesus so that all might see, hear, and experience God's love in tangible ways or partner with local community organizations to help care for the most vulnerable here locally and transform lives for Jesus.





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Good morning, Everyone. We are back home in Findlay, Ohio after a relaxing vacation beside the Atlantic Ocean. I so enjoy the people we meet in the Florida Keys. The men talk about the fish they caught, the ones they almost caught, and the ones they hope to catch. The women swap recipes, talk of grandchildren and books, and we laugh lots. The women, and a few men, also are involved in daily crafts and art projects. One of our camper friends provides the Karaoke machine and then we have nights of laughter <u>and</u> song.

I do read voraciously while on vacation (it only takes five minutes to clean the entire house. The outdoor sitting area another five.) Thought I would share a few titles with you of books I strongly recommend. I recently finished <u>The Magician's Assistant</u> by Ann Patchett, who is better known for <u>Bel Canto</u>. When Sabine's husband dies of an aneurysm, only then does she learn the truth of the magician who recreated himself as well as his history. The book explores what she learns, who she meets and tries to answer the question, "do we need to know the past of a person to appreciate him or her in the present?"

<u>The Weird Sisters</u> by Eleanor Brown tells of three women unlucky in everything in their lives. They each turn to the only place where they feel comfortable – home. They of course find there more than they needed.

<u>Townie</u>, a memoir by Andre Dubus III, author of <u>The House of Sand and Fog</u>, relates Dubus' story from when he and his siblings raised themselves while their mother worked, to his days training in boxing which will lead to his lifetime of writing.

<u>The Secret History of the Mongol Queens</u> by Jack Weatherford narrates how the daughters of Genghis Khan rescued his empire as they ruled the largest empire in the thirteenth century.

<u>The Story Sisters</u> by Alice Hoffman involves three girls stolen from the faerie world and now living with "mother" on Long Island, or so the eldest girl tells her sisters. An interesting take on horrors children face.

<u>The House by the River</u> by Greek writer Lena Manta is an emotional story of five daughters itching to leave their small town in Greece after World War II. They will all learn that the only constant is home.

<u>The Question of Red</u> by Laksmi Pamuntjak tells the story of two lovers, Amba and Bhisma caught up in the Communist purges in Indonesia between 1965 and 1968 during which nearly a million people were killed and 12000 were imprisoned on an island of no escape and facing no written charge.

<u>The Same Kind of Different As Me</u> is a true story told by the two men involved Ron Hall and Denver Moore. Hall and his wife volunteer at a mission in Fort Worth, Texas and save their marriage with the help of one homeless man whom they befriend. I was forced to examine what pitiful amount of help I give the homeless when compared with the work of the Halls.

Last Train to Istanbul by Ayse Kulin tells the story of Selva who marries a Jew prior to World War II and they move to Paris. When the Nazis invade France and begin rounding up the Jews, brave diplomats hatch a plan that will risk many lives in an attempt to free those destined for death.

<u>Rule of One</u> by Ashley and Leslie Saunders is set in near-future Texas where the policy of one child per family is strictly enforced. Ava and Mira are twins taking turns in the upstairs world until a commander's son falls in love with one and begins to notice little differences.

<u>The Light of Fireflies</u> by Paul Ren involves another family living in a basement. Here, a baby boy is born in the basement and as he grows he learns that there was a horrific fire that has damaged all of the family members and then, of course, there are the family secrets.

<u>River in Darkness</u> by Mashaji Ishikawa relates the true story of forty years of one man's life in North Korea and his daring escape to the south.

It is always good to be home now and reacquaint ourselves with family and friends. God bless and keep reading. Kathy Brooks ( kathleenbrooks15@gmail.com)

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	Fri 3 9:30am Bulletin Assembly 10:15am Food Box	9:30am Bulletin Assembly	17 9:30am Bulletin Assembly 9:30am Bulletin Assembly 9:30am Bulletin Assembly Assembly
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	Wed 1-May	8 7pm Endowment 8pm Theology Pub	5 75 <del>1</del> 5
a la	Tue	7 11:30am Pastors Lunch 5:45pm Girl Scouts 7pm Book Club	14 9am Martha Circle 9:30am Rachel Circle 7:30pm Finance 21 1:30pm Staff Meeting 5:45pm Girl Scouts 5:45pm Girl Scouts 5:45pm OWLs
	Mon	6 10:30am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm Worship & Music 7pm Stewardship/ Fvandelism	13 10:30am Ladies Bible Study 7pm Property 7pm Social Ministry 20 10:30am Ladies Bible Study 12pm Newsletter Deadline 7pm Council 7pm Hannah Circle 27 10:30am Ladies Bible Study Bible Study
	Sun	<b>5</b> 8:15am & 10:45 Worship 9:30am Sunday School 11:30am Community Dinner 6pm EPiC Youth	12 8:15am & 10:45 Worship 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Baptism 11:45am Youth Committee 6pm NO EPiC Youth 19 8:15am & 10:45 Worship 6pm EPiC Youth Service Project 26 8:15am & 10:45 Worship 8:15am & 10:45 Worship 8:15am & 10:45 Worship

### WORSHIP and MUSIC COMMITTEE

#### **STEWARDS OF GOD'S GRACE**

#### An interview with Sally Rice,

1. What does your committee do? Our committee performs many tasks throughout the year. A few of them are: Altar Guild, Deacons, Lectors and Greeters, Ushers, Sound System Operators and Altar Flower Delivery. We also give permission to the sub-committees to order wine, wafers, candle oil, make baptismal napkins, fair linens and whatever is needed for Sunday services. Purchase and arrange flowers to be placed around the Christ Candle for Easter and Christmas. Bread bakers. Decorate and tear down for Christmas and see that the cross is up for Ash Wednesday and throughout the Easter season. After the Lenten theme is determined, we design and make the accompanying art posters to be displayed. Create a budget and watch over it to make sure to make sure it is not exceeded. Sponsor Concerts. Evensong and Millstream Ringers, etc. Sponsor Choir Recognition Month. When Organ problems occur, we give Miriam permission to call the appropriate repair people as well as schedule organ and piano tunings. We are continuing the Love and Memory Tree and money collected goes to L.S.S. Purchase booklets for the Lenten services and order the "Greatest Commandment" coins. We sponsor the Taize Prayer services.

2. You have been on this committee for a long time. Why do you feel it is important enough to dedicate so much time to it? I have been the Chair of the Worship and Music committee for over 20 years. I feel that this is a good way to give back to God and my church for all that God has given to me throughout my life. This committee and its sub-committees are responsible for the multitude of things that are needed to make the services run smoothly and to help Pastor Bob whenever needed.

**3. What are some fun things your committee has done recently?** Some of the fun things our committee has done are sponsoring of the Evensong Concert along with ushering that concert. A big thank you goes out to Jane Eakin, Miriam Gibson and Diane Adler who did a wonderful job. Our committee hosted the Soup Supper on March 27<sup>th</sup> and as always, we enjoy decorating the church at Christmastime which is headed by Diane Adler.

4. Congregational worship attendance has been declining over the years. Any thoughts on how this might be turned around? One of the ways to enhance attendance could be made by promoting events to bring the community into our church, such as our concerts and special Lenten, Easter and Christmas services. Whenever we bring in guests or have an event for the community, it is an opportunity to invite them to join our friendly congregation. All members of our congregation need to recognize the importance of inviting family, friends and co-workers to these events and to our regular services.

**5.** Who are the members of the Worship Committee? Our members include: Joan Swisher, Tom Stearn, Nancy Stearn, Linda Mitchell, Cindy Fitzpatrick, Maria Schell, Jane Eakin, Miriam Gibson, Diane Adler, Renee Smith, Arlene Schriner, Tim Franks, Mary Ann Schling, Pastor DeMoss, Pastor Dittmar and Sally Rice Chair.

6. How can members of the congregation assist your committee or offer their time and talents for the enhancement of our worship? Our committee meets the first Monday of every month at 6:30 in the Library. We would welcome any congregation members to come join us on the first Monday of the month, join one of our sub-committees or come and help us decorate the church for Easter and Christmas. If you are interested in joining one of these committees, please contact Sally Rice at 419-424-0685 or at angellady232@aol.com

The Worship Committee "shall assist the Congregational Council in seeing that the services of God's house are conducted regularly and in accordance with the liturgy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and that hymnals and other devotional materials are provided and properly cared for. This committee shall supervise, and strive to advance the welfare and effective service of the choirs of the congregation. It shall arrange for the care of musical instruments and in consultation with the pastor(s), the organists, and the choir directors, it shall furnish music supplies appropriate for use in worship by a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." - By-Law Section V. I of the congregation constitution

#### **Recognition and Appreciation**



Congratulations to

Lexington Rose Sanders

Daughter of Marisa and Robert Sanders. Lexi will be received into our church family through baptism on May 12th. (Lexi is the



Someone you know moving onto the next step in life? *Graduate Recognition Day* is May 19th. If you would like to have your graduate recognized, please contact Pastor Bob or the church office.





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VORSHIP ASSISTANTS			DRIVERS May 5 - Jerry
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May 19-Pastor Chris Dittmar			May 26– Pan
May 26-Tim Cochran/Traci Roth			Apr. 28– Pan



#### Birthdays Maria Schell Susie Polder **Caleb Short** Patricia Stacy Marsha Granath **Nicole Needles** Julie Dittmar Jane Wise 5/7 Avery Johnson 5/8 Joshua Short 5/9 Arthur Wilde 5/9 **Christian Nielsen** 5/9 Shawn Wirt 5/11 Liam Smith 5/11 **Robert Smith** 5/12 Benjamin Kapostasy 5/12 Judith Luth 5/15 **Aaron Needles** 5/15 **Reed Needles** 5/15 Laurie Scott 5/15 **Chloe Nielsen** 5/15 Abigail Zawisza 5/17 Raelyn Sherman 5/17 Paul Brockman 5/18 Joshua Leopold 5/22 Randy Waller 5/22 **Heather Betts** 5/22 Jessica Betts 5/25 Parker Haudenshild 5/27 Karen Breen 5/27 Michael Leonard 5/28 Todd Thompson 5/28 Kahle Thorbahn 5/28 Mark Rose 5/28 Lawson Gerdeman 5/29 Sadye Holbach 5/30 Madison Kutschbach 5/30 5/31

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#### Anniversar Clarke & Angela Huff Bart & Jenny Welte Philip & Rianne Roos

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Rick & Leslie Dudics	5/19/1984
Jeff & Jennifer Kamm	5/21/1988
Paul & Sue DeMoss	5/23/1959
Kenneth & Kathryn Otte	5/26/1956
Joshua & Elizabeth Kutschbach	5/31/2014
Jeffrey & Angela Nunn	5/31/1997



Jace Wartgow	
Daphne Maag	5/2
Erin Meier	5/7
Ken Bahler	5/7
Taylor Polder	5/8
Robert Rodman	5/8
Janet Wobser	5/9
Hayden Bower	5/10
Tenley Bower	5/11
Evelyn Napier	5/11
Kathryn Otte	5/11
Doug Bonnoront	5/13
Kaelee Mains	5/14
Clyde Mason	5/14
Bonnie Bosse	5/14
Edwin Dunn	5/16
Michael August	5/17
Aaron Clark	5/18
Janet Baker	5/19
Nora Cochran	5/20
Karissa Welte	5/21
Elaine Timbrook	5/23
Maria Schell	5/26
Wendy Short	5/27
Joan Swisher	5/28
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