

Peace United Church of Christ
1503 2nd Ave NE
Rochester, MN 55906

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Peace United
Church of Christ
1503 2nd Ave NE,
Rochester, MN
55906
507-282-6117

www.peacechurchucc.org
http://www.facebook.com/
peaceuccrochester

An Open and
Affirming (ONA)
Congregation

**Vision: A safe and
inclusive church
living God's radical
message**

Communion the first
Sunday of the month

8:30am Traditional Worship*
9:45am Faith Formation
11am Contemporary Worship*
*Only ONE Service at 10am on
12/17, 24, & 31

Nursery care available from
8:30 to 12pm on Sundays

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR
UPDATES:

Inside this issue:

December Happenings 2/3

December Sundays 4/5

Poinsettia Dedications / Peace Groups 6/7

CONNECT Groups 8/9

Check the on-line version
of the Olive Branch to see
pictures of our November
events

Olive Branch

December 2017

Ponderings of Pastor Paul ...

"Amazing Grace, how sweet sound..." That beautiful hymn, in numerous ways, has been echoing in our sanctuary, and in our hearts, over the past 6 weeks. Amazing Grace was the center focus of our stewardship/giving theme. Over these past six weeks each of us was called to consider our gifts for the ministry of Peace United Church of Christ in response to God's Amazing Grace! Your response was very positive, and we are thankful for each and every one of you and all of the gifts of Time-Talent-Treasure that you share. Final results will be shared at our January 21, 2018 Annual Meeting. Don't worry, if you have not submitted your pledge/gift for 2018, you can still do so. Just call the office for more information.

We concluded our stewardship/giving Sunday with our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner! With the new addition, we were able to comfortably seat everyone. We had 300 people enjoy the thanksgiving dinner, and everyone was through the serving line in 30 minutes! Thanks to everyone who helped with the preparation, set-up, serving, and clean-up! An amazing day!! Thank you!

Now that our thanksgiving celebration is complete, we turn our hearts and eyes TOWARDS Christmas.... No, we are not there yet... but it is coming! We are entering the church season called Advent. The Advent season (four Sundays) focuses on expectation and serves as an anticipation of Christ's birth in the season leading up to Christmas. The Christmas Season (also known as the 12 days of Christmas) begins on Christmas Day and continues through Epiphany on January 6. It is during these 12 days (from Christmas to Epiphany) that we should fully embody the joyful message of Jesus' birth and the in-breaking of God's radical message of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy!

Too often, we want to rush Christmas instead of leaning towards Christmas. There is great meaning and power in our faith as we await the coming of Jesus breaking into the world. This year, as we move towards Christmas and our expectations build, we will slowly move through our Advent Season towards our Christmas Season. During Advent (December 3-24) we will focus on the theme, "What Child Is This?" Each week we will center our themes on the needs and struggles of children in our community, the nation, and world and how we are called to help others experience God's love in amazing ways. Finally, we will rejoice and celebrate Jesus' birth and God's light in the world!

Here is our Advent and Christmas Eve schedule:

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3	8:30 & 11:00am	What Child Is This? (Local)
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10	8:30 & 11:00am	What Child Is This? (National)
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17	10:00am (One Service)	Christmas Cantata What Child Is This? (International)
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24	10:00am (One Service)	Children's Christmas Program What Child Is This? (Jesus is Born!)
	4:00pm	(Lessons and Carols) Candlelight/Communion
	6:00pm	(Contemporary) Candlelight/Communion
	7:30pm	(Contemplative Guitar) Candlelight/Communion
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31	10:00am (One Service)	

Peace,

Paul Bauch, Senior Pastor
pastor@peacechurchucc.org
http://www.facebook.com/paul.bauch

Beth Rogers, Associate Pastor
ypastor@peacechurchucc.org
http://www.facebook.com/rev.rog

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES: www.peacechurchucc.org

Just so you know...

You can check our website for updates: www.peacechurchucc.org

Please submit all articles for the next issue of the Olive Branch by the **15th of the month** to the Church Office or email to office@peacechurchucc.org.

The deadline for the bulletin is Wed at **9am** every week.

The deadline for PowerPoint announcements is **Thursdays at Noon**.

REMINDER....

ONE SERVICE at 10am

**December 17th
December 24th
December 31st**

**Christmas Eve Services at
4pm, 6pm & 7:30pm**

Pastor Paul

JOY
TO THE
WORLD! THE
LORD IS COME;
LET EARTH RECEIVE
HER KING. LET EVERY HEART
PREPARE HIM ROOM, AND HEAVEN
AND NATURE SING, AND HEAVEN AND
NATURE SING, AND HEAVEN, AND HEAVEN
AND NATURE SING
m

Pastor Beth

Brian

John

Mona

Sara

Debby

Laurie

DECEMBER HAPPENINGS



Join us this Advent Season as we delve into our theme of "What Child is This?.... and explore the needs and struggles of children in our community, the nation and the world and how we are called to help others experience God's love in amazing ways.

Parent and Adult Leader Training

Saturday, December 2nd ~ 9am - 12pm

Parent and Adult leader training with Sara Neher to understand generational changes in youth ministry.

Confirmation

Sundays, December 3rd & 10th* ~ 12:45pm

(*Note day change)

CPR/AED Red Cross Training

Saturday, December 16th ~ 12 to 4 pm

Cost \$65 per person. Sign up on line if you would like to participate. (<https://goo.gl/DKTnDj>)

Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 17th

10am ONE SERVICE

The Choir of Peace, along with many musicians, invite you to experience a journey of international carols and folk songs that incorporate narration and scripture. The anticipation, incarnation and proclamation of Christ's birth is presented through the Christmas Cantata "The Song Heard 'Round the World" written by Joseph M Martin. You won't want to miss it!!

All Church Caroling at Samaritan Bethany

Sunday, December 17th ~ 12:30pm

Join us to spread the joy and light of Christmas to the residents at Samaritan Bethany. We'll gather at church at 12:30pm, have some pizza, and then head over. Sign up on line if you plan to go so that we can order enough pizza! (<https://goo.gl/zMNL38>)

Peace Wiggle Room (aka Nursery) Help Needed!!

Sundays in December

We are seeking volunteers to help staff our Wiggle Room during our services. This space is designated for those 3 and under. Please sign up here if you can help!! <https://goo.gl/P4Hs8h>



DECEMBER HAPPENINGS Cont'd



The Sharing Tree Through December 17th

Celebrate the spirit of giving this Christmas and purchase items which support Rochester-area agencies:

- Project Legacy which provides life and educational support to youth of color; and
- Family Promise-Rochester. Which provides transitional housing for homeless families

Take an ornament (or several) off the tree, purchase item as needed and return the Unwrapped gift with the gift tag attached) and place in the boxes next to the tree. Please indicate the amount of purchase for the gift cards and leave those (with the tag) at the Welcome Desk.

Gifts need to be returned by Sunday, December 17

Christmas Eve Services

Sunday December 24th (see times below)

Come celebrate the joy of Christmas Eve through one of our services below. Bring your family and friends and enjoy the Christmas spirit.

- 10:00am Children's Program - Christmas for Everyone!!
- 4:00pm Traditional Lessons and Carols with Candlelight Communion
- 6:00pm Contemporary Service with Candlelight Communion
- 7:30pm Contemplative Guitar Service with Candlelight Communion



New Year's Eve Service

**Sunday December 31st
10am ONE SERVICE**

Peace Prayer Space Opens

This space is located in the front row of the Sanctuary to ensure that kids can engage in what is happening up front while we pray, sing, and even hear the sermon during our worship services. It is new and wonderful and we know you like it, so please help us in making sure that all can fully be welcome in worship.

Family members are responsible for their kids to maintain the boundaries and ensure that kids are engaged in worship, or using the quiet play area in a way that allows for those around them to fully participate as well. Thank you to all those who have made room in those front seats for the families of young children so they can be close to and engaged with the space. And thanks to everyone who is helping to make sure that young children can grow up in our community, knowing their church family cares for them!



Birthdays

- 1 Jessica Wright, Martin Geiger, Macy Loechler
- 2 Alan Bakken
- 3 Irene Solomon, Emelia Tande
- 5 Norma Vale
- 7 Lisa Jerabek, Duane Jr Rich
- 8 Jim Ohly, Augusto Edwards
- 9 Cindy Andrist, Carter DeYoung,
David Rebstock, Stacy Beyer-Groth,
Aaron Tande, Linda Floden
- 10 Kenneth Bourquin, Dawn Stevens
- 11 Heidi Kloempken, Steve Franks
- 12 Kent Johnson
- 13 Eijja Abbakar-Springer, Zora McLaurin
- 14 Cal Hawley
- 15 Alex Bauch, Jonah Stewert
- 16 Mary Leppala
- 18 Clinton Wilson
- 19 Sharon Wilder
- 20 Gayle Rock, Alyvia Doffing
- 21 Holly Christie
- 23 Lori Paul, Carole Winters
- 24 Cathleen Meinhardt, Sheila Welke,
Nancy Tointon
- 25 Nancy Bishop
- 26 Martin Wieland
- 28 Laurie DeYoung
- 29 Nicole Hollar, Elizabeth Endicott,
Nancy Wieben, Brianna Ohly,
Cameron MacDonald

SUNDAY	SERVICE	COUNCIL IN CHARGE	SPECIAL MUSIC	FELLOWSHIP LUNCH TEAM
3 Communion	8:30am	Bob Werner	Jenny Orzcan	Team Fantastic
1st Sunday of Advent	11:00am	Laurie Klein	Peace ONEVOICE	
10	8:30am	Bob Werner	Bells of Peace	Scott-Diekvoss Team
2nd Sunday of Advent	11:00am	Laurie Klein	Joy ONEVOICE	
17	10:00am	Laurie Klein	Christmas Cantata	No Fellowship Lunch
3rd Sunday of Advent				
24	10:00am	All	Children's Program	
4th Sunday of Advent	4:00pm Communion	Available	Choir of Peace	NA
Christmas Eve	6:00pm Communion	Council	ONEVOICE	
	7:30pm Communion	Members	Congregation	
31 New Year's Eve	10:00am	Bob Werner		No Fellowship Lunch

Christmas Fund Offering Sunday, December 24



Your gift to the Christmas Fund will not only assist pastors, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and provide Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to low-income retirees. Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. On Sunday, December 24, this is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.



Financial Update

October was a better month. We did great getting pledges in and/or caught up. Thank you! However, overall, year to date we still have a deficit although it is decreasing. Thank you for giving what you are able.

	October	YTD
Pledges Budgeted	\$35,417	\$354,167
Actual Pledges	\$36,185	\$327,523
Difference	\$768	-\$26,644

Mark Your Calendars.....
Sunday, January 7



over to Sunday interactions. But Sunday is also filled with a hundred or more people who are also recharging and engaging. You need to be heard by those close to you, in both your joy and your pain, and CONNECT Groups can be in that bridge with you. CONNECT Groups are a part of our faith's DNA, as Jesus is often quoted in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Jesus is there in the midst of us, at all times, but when we are surrounded by so many, can we really listen for the still small voice calling us?

BUT I can't be that vulnerable with people I don't know! What about those awkward pauses? Who will care what is really going on with me? If you can't be real with your church, your church isn't serving you. At Peace UCC, we are proud of the commitment to being real and radically hospitable to all in our community. And this doesn't just mean to the guests who come in for the first time. For those of you who have been here for 40 years, you are just as in need of God's Radical Hospitality found in community and CONNECT Groups continue the mission of spreading that hospitality among us.

BUT I don't understand the process, how will I get into a group? Who will lead the group? To start off 2018, we will have a **SIGN UP DAY on January 7th**, where you will be able to sign up and share input on what kind of group you are interested in. This will be a time to share what kind of connection you want to make. Do you want to connect with other adoptive families? Do you want to connect with other singles? Do you want to connect with other people who like to run, or bike, or do yoga together? After getting all this input, we will be matching everyone to a group and helping participants start up with a special dinner in Fellowship Hall, to try out the model and get to know each other as we engage this test drive of Connect Groups through May. Leaders will continue to be found and developed as we go through the year. And everyone, leaders, hosts, and participants will have support and resources along the way as we continue to build up this part of our ministry.

And remember, this Test Drive of our CONNECT Groups will run from February – May and then each group will make a decision about the plans for summer and the fall to continue. Some groups will stay together for a longer time, some will change and seek out new members, or split into a few new groups. Use this time to engage yourself in a new way, and let go of the Big BUTS, so you can take the test drive. Take this opportunity to try out something new, and meet some new people at Peace UCC to add to your faith family.

CONNECT Groups Coming!

We are a people of story, and to really allow our faith walk to change our lives, to bring us closer to wholeness, and each other, we must engage each other in this story telling. Coming in 2018, we will be launching a church wide initiative to engage every member in a small group, a CONNECT group. What is a connect group? What is a small group for that matter? Why should you care?

Whether we realize it or not, we engage in small groups throughout our lives from work friends, to fantasy football or video game allies, to the people who regularly ride the same bus or walk the same route as you do. But these groups of our lives fill us with a false sense of community many times. Would you be comfortable telling the group on the bus about a recent death in your life, or divorce proceedings? We need to connect as people, to feel the community of support and caring that a church is meant to do. We need to be able to tell our stories as we go through life, in process. Everyone needs 4-7 close friends to whom we can turn when needed, and who would turn to you as well. This is the role of CONNECT Groups.

At Peace UCC, we have a thriving system of engagement, education or advocacy groups that range from large group to mid size group to small group. But the difference in what will be the focus of early 2018 is that CONNECT groups are intentional, focused, and accountable to each other.

Take a look at the list of groups here at Peace and make a check mark next to the ones you engage with. Where do they fall? Look at the list under the Connect, do you fit any of those already ongoing Connect Groups? Many of us don't fit into those categories or even if we do, we don't know if we were invited into them, or how to start. This means you! So maybe I've got you interested at this point, but now what? Next comes the reasons not to right? And I do completely understand them. And more than that, I share many of those same concerns in my own life.

BUT I don't have the time! I'm too busy. My kids have sports. My schedule isn't regular enough....Or many other reiterations of the same concern. And we are super busy people. Multi-tasking, long hours, complicated work schedules and family lives are the norm in our modern world. And it doesn't seem to be slowing down. So understand that, I get it. AND, I want you to see what it is like to make a commitment to this type of connection with your church community to see how it helps you grow, or to feel more at peace in your regular life knowing that your CONNECT group night is coming up later this week. Once we get rolling, we will also have a wonderful opportunity to add more groups at times that work better for your family. As we engage the Test Drive of CONNECT Groups, I want to ask you to be open to the experience. Try it on, test it out. It isn't forever.

BUT I already come to church, why would I need a CONNECT Group? I already serve on a committee, why would I need a CONNECT Group? These are great questions. And yet, we have more needs for connection and support than anyone can provide in the brief encounters before and after services. Sundays at Peace UCC are a wonderful time to recharge, engage and connect with your faith family, but that isn't the only day of the week you may need support. CONNECT groups are your first line of response for building community. Community that transfers

- P**resence
Journey
New Members
- E**ducate
Men's Bible Study
Women's Bible Study
Sunday Morning Book Studies
Faith Formation for Kids & Youth
- A**dvocate
Race Forward
Sanctuary
- C**onnect
Miriam Ministries
Couples Groups
Middle & High-School Youth Groups
- E**ngage
Social Action
Council
Fellowship Lunch
Fellowship Hour Hosting
Transportation
Building and Grounds
Women's Fellowship Group
Worship Leadership & Music
ONEVOICE
Choir
Bell Choir

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
DECEMBER 2017						
3 8:30 & 11am Worship with Communion 9:45am Faith Formation / OWN 9:45am Journey Group (Peace Rm) 12pm Fellowship Lunch (F-Hall) 12:45pm Confirmation (SHR) 6:30pm ONEVOICE Christmas Team Rehearsal (Sanc)	4 6pm Social Action Mtg. (Peace Rm) 7pm Sanctuary Work Group Meeting (Peace Rm)	5 *** 7am Men of Peace (Peace Rm) 10am: Women's Bible Study (Peace Rm) 5pm: Beverage & Bible (Glynn's) 10:30am & 7pm Knitter/Crochet Group (Rm 115)	6 ** 1 ** Every Wednesday 6pm Adult Bell Choir 7:15pm Adult Choir Rehearsal (Sanc)	7 * 2 * Every Thursday 7-8am Women's Fellowship (Peace Rm) 10am-3pm Quilting Group (Rm 104)	8 7:30pm Washington Irving Christmas Performance (F-Hall)	9 7:30pm Washington Irving Christmas Performance (F-Hall)
10 8:30 & 11am Worship 9:45am Faith Formation / OWL 9:45am Journey (Peace Rm) 9:45am Book Study (Rm 215) 12pm Fellowship Lunch (F-Hall) 6:30pm ONEVOICE Christmas Team Rehearsal (Sanc)	11 7pm Stephen's Ministry (Peace Rm & Rm 215)	12 *** 7pm Race Forward (Dwelling)	13 ** 9:30am Miriam Ministry (Peace Rm) 7-9pm Church Council (Dwelling)	14 * 9-11am Channel One Volunteer Team (Channel One HQ)	15 7:30pm Washington Irving Christmas Performance (F-Hall)	16 9:30am Cantata Rehearsal 12pm CPR/AED Training (Rm 214) 2pm Washington Irving Christmas Performance (F-Hall) 7:30pm Washington Irving Christmas Performance (F-Hall)
17 9am Faith Formation / OWL 10am ONE Service - Christmas Cantata 12:30pm Caroling at Samaritan 6:30pm ONEVOICE Christmas Team Rehearsal (Sanc)	18	19 *** 12:30pm Sr Card Players (Peace Rm)	20 ** 10:30am Miriam Ministry Christmas Gathering (Peace Rm) 6:30pm Blue Christmas (Sanc) 7pm Council (Dwelling)	21 * 9am Channel One Team (Channel One HQ)	22	23
24 10am ONE Service - Children's Christmas Program 4pm Lessons and Carols w/Candlelight Communion (Sanc) 6pm Contemporary Service w/Candlelight Communion 7:30pm Contemplative Guitar Service w/Candlelight Communion (F-Hall)	25 OFFICE CLOSED 	26 *** OFFICE CLOSED 7pm Race Forward (Dwelling)	27 **	28 *	29	30
31 10am ONE Service 						

A special **Thank You** to ALL those listed who donated or sponsored a Poinsettia for our Christmas Services. Just a reminder that you are free to pick up your plant(s) up any time the church is open after the Christmas Eve services

Name of Giver	In Honor of...	In Memory of...
Barb & Gary Karau	Our 3 Grandchildren	
Rev. Jerald Barnhart		June Barnhart
John & June Franks		Our Baby Girl
Ida Brakke		Donald Brakke
Charles & Margie Barrows (2 plants)	Sarah & Joel Gordon's Marriage	Our Parents
Glenn & Mildred Lilleskov (2 plants)		All That Have Gone Before Us
Jeff & Ila Teskey		Bob Teskey, Jim & Myrtle Darnell
Ellen & David Rebstock		Wayne Long, Milton & Freda Rebstock
Kris Bradt		Jim Wagner
Jason & Amy Gardner (2 plants)	Steve & Cindy Huyber Peter, Margo, Greta & Max Oetliker	
Russ & Dolores Koelsch		Parents & Siblings
Steve & Cindy Huyber (2 plants)	Our Children & Grandchildren	Our Parents
Buck & Bonnie Lenz		Our Loved Ones
Jenny Bradt		Dorothy Bradt and Maureen Vokaty
Richard & Peggy Lehman	Our New Church Family	
Steve & Ione Klomepken (2 plants)		Our Parents & Eunys Kloempken
Sheila Boss		Grandparents
Marlys Peterson		Loved Ones
Bluhm Family		Richard & Loneta Bluhm
Paul Bauch	All Who Share Their Gifts of Ministry at Peace	
Brian & Cheryl Winters (2 plants)		Ben & Donis Winters Father, Jim Johnston
Debby Adams (2 plants)	The Marriages of My Sons (Garrett & Sara; Grant & Ali)	Special Friends - Shirley, Nancy, Richard, Kermit, and Grandparents
Terry Timm		My Mom and Aunt
Ben & Carole Winters		Parents & Grandparents
Steve & Laurie Gilseth		Family
Cathy & Bill Meinhardt		Loved Ones
David & Anna Froehling		Loved Ones

Ongoing Peace Groups

Tuesday Morning Men of Peace Group @ 7am - Peace Room

(All men are invited to join us for fellowship and discussion which generally focuses on the upcoming worship scriptures.)



Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study @ 10am - Peace Room

(All women are invited to join us for fellowship and discussion, meeting weekly on Tuesdays at 10am. For additional information contact Sheila Boss)

Tuesday Beverage & Bible @ 5pm - Glynner's Pub

(Tuesdays, from 5-6pm at Glynner's Pub [1643 Broadway Ave N] & we'll gather for fellowship and discussion. Starting in 2018, we will be gathering on a different week day)

Tuesday Knitter/Crochet Groups @ 10:30am - Room 105

(ALL are welcome to join us every Tuesday at 10:30am in Room 105)

Thursday Morning Women's Group @ 7am - Peace Room

(Reading and discussing a book to be decided upon soon. For additional information contact Anna Froehling)

Twice Monthly Race Forward - Dwelling @ 7pm

(Everyone is welcome to attend this group as we explore our blind spots and open up the uncomfortable discussion of race and privilege. For additional information contact Ruth Larson.)

Miriam Ministry - Wed, Dec 20 @ 10:30am - Peace Room

(ALL WOMEN are welcome to join us for our Christmas potluck gathering in the Peace Room).

Quilter's Group - Thursdays @ 10am-3pm & 1st Saturday of Month 10am-11:30am - Room 104

(For additional information contact Marie Wilson)

Fellowship Lunches - Weekly, after the 2nd Service, Teams provide and prepare Fellowship luncheons for anyone wishing to stay for lunch. For more information on being a part of a Team, visit the Welcome Desk.

YOUTH RELATED DATES:

- 12/2: Youth Parent/Leader meeting (9am to noon)
 12/3: Advent Candle Lighters
 8:30am - Abby Alcock & Loreli Bentz
 11am - Hannah Paul and Ashley Rosado
 12/10: Advent Candle Lighters
 8:30am - Erick Rist
 11am - Aidan Thompson & Semini McLaurin
 12/17: Advent Candle Lighters
 10am - Ian Thompson & Zach Nevala & Melina Lopez
 12/24: Advent Candle Lighters
 10am - Peter Haug & Anna Haug

Additional announcements are sent via Snap Chat. Contact Pastor Beth is you want to be included in the group.