



In Touch
News of
Peace Lutheran Church
Waldorf, MD 20602
February, 2012

A Letter from Pastor Craig: Uh-Oh

That is the title of a book by Robert Fulghum. On the first page he opines that “Uh-oh” may have been the first thing Adam said to Eve after he bit into the apple. Could be. I would hope for an expletive more worthy the damage done. But, since he didn’t know what all the consequences of knowing good from evil would be, “Uh-oh,” was probably it.

This quote begins a book some colleagues and I are reading (*Almost Christian : What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church*):

Let me save you some trouble. Here is the gist of what you are about to read: American young people are, theoretically, fine with religious faith—but it does not concern them very much, and it is not durable enough to survive long after they graduate from high school. One more thing: we’re responsible.¹

Uh-oh! I’ve talked to a lot of teens over the last three decades of teaching Confirmation and I’m pretty sure Kenda Dean is right. In fact, it often doesn’t last much past “graduation” from Confirmation class. And, it’s not just teens and young adults. She’s describing the whole mainline American church. That’s us. Her point? That, instead of teaching our children Christianity, we (the Church) have taught them to be nice. And, the content of their faith mirrors that of an *Almost Christian* culture that equates sharing and caring with faithfulness and obedience to God. They’re not the same. People don’t get crucified for being nice: they get crucified for being trouble-makers. And, lest we fool ourselves into thinking that nice people don’t crucify others, two words: “capital punishment.”

As for the place of religion in people’s lives, Ms. Dean says, “Teenagers tend to approach [it] like music and sports, as an extracurri-

¹ Dean, Kenda Creasy (2010-06-12). *Almost Christian : What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* (p. 3). Oxford University Press. Kindle Edition.

cular activity: a good well-rounded thing to do, but unnecessary for an integrated life.”²

Worse yet, when asking people what they believe about God and Jesus, many have a hard time finding words for their faith. Ask a mainline Christian of any age what God wants and you’re likely to hear words to the effect of, “God wants us to be happy, to be kind to each other, to work hard, be good people.” Seldom will one hear Jesus’ own words, “Repent and believe the good news.” Repent? That would imply that there is something wrong with us. Believe the good news? That the Kingdom of God isn’t for nice people so much as it is for anything-but-nice people.

As you read this, the beginning of Lent is three weeks away. Allow me to suggest a challenge to ourselves. Rediscover Christianity. If not already participating in daily devotions, let’s start. Several are published and available. Many more are online and free.

Next, have a faith conversation – with someone important to you, someone you trust to listen carefully and push you to be clear and complete... talk about what you understand God’s purpose for you is. Why are you doing what you’re doing? If you get a paycheck, stop calling it my/our money and wonder, out loud, what God wants you to do

² *Almost Christian*, p.6.

with GOD’S money. If you’re of voting age, explain why you think Jesus would vote the way you intend to vote (or not vote at all?). Talk about where God wants you to be on a Sunday morning, say... and why. Think through and talk about what it means to be, as the Bible calls us, the Body of Christ – and what kinds of behaviors (or lack of) betray or promote unity.

Then, if you have a teen around to talk to, have that conversation with him or her or them.

Last, tell me about it.

Maybe Adam said, “Uh-oh.” I don’t know. But, Jesus said, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” That’s us. Pass it on.

Love, Craig

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

- 5 – Souper Bowl of Caring: After both services
- 4, 8, 18, 22 – Peace Food Pantry Open, 9:30 am
- 7, 14, 21, 28 – Peace Prays Prayer Group, 9:00-10:30 am in the sanctuary
- 9 – Church Council Meeting, 6:30 pm (preceded by supper at 5:45 pm)
- 19 – Intergenerational Event: Lenten Prayer Practices

- 21 – Shrove Tuesday
- 22 – Ash Wednesday worship, 7:00 pm
- 28 – Women’s Study Group, 6:30 pm
- 29 – Lenten Worship, 7:00 pm

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CONGREGATIONAL MEETING NOTES

The Congregational Meeting was held on Jan. 8.
✠ Council Roster/or Newly Elected: Carole Crawford, Vice President; Amanda Foster, Treasurer; Cathy Bender; Tim Murphy,

Capital Appeal Chair; Andi Bartolomeo, Communication Liaison to Council; Fellowship Liaison to Council; Jeanette Bryant, Property Liaison to Council; Daryl Faustini, Stewardship Liaison to Council; **Evangelism and Worship & Music, vacant.**

- † Dean and Pam Pedersen were nominated to attend the Synod Assembly scheduled for May 4 & 5, and September. Alternates will be selected by Council in the event that Dean or Pam cannot attend.
- † Amendments to the Church Constitution were approved by the congregation. Revisions to the bylaws to be consistent with the Constitution and the way that PLC conducts its business are in progress and will be presented at the next congregational meeting.
- † The 2011 Financial Report was presented which included notice of a year-end \$21,000 deficit even though less money was spent as planned for in the 2011 budget. Debt reduction of \$16,000 was used to pay down the existing mortgage.
- † The 2012 proposed budget of \$371,818 was approved. The budget does not include salary increases for staff and has reduced the funding where possible.
- † Dean Pedersen provided an update on the Building Expansion, including a request for an additional \$50,000 for advanced

work to prepare for building construction and to authorize additional payments of \$5000 from the Building fund for 12 months to pay towards the existing mortgage. Both motions were passed by the congregation.

COUNCIL NOTES

Jan. 12 Council Meeting: Revisions were made to the final Treasurer's Report as presented at the Annual Meeting, including an increase in debt reduction from \$16,000 to \$26,000 to pay down the existing mortgage. Weekly contributions made to date in January are running lower than needed to meet the budget.

Daryl Faustini provided an overview of the Stewardship Ministry and Becky Conrad provided an overview of the Youth Ministry. Both discussed the strengths, weaknesses, and threats for each ministry.

The 2012 Church Council will be installed on Jan. 29.

Lenten Wednesday Worship: 7:00 pm

Feb. 22 - Ash Wednesday

Feb. 29

Mar. 7, 14, 21, 28

Holy Week Worship

Apr. 1 - Palm Sunday 8:30 & 11:00 am

Apr. 5 - Maundy Thursday 7:00 pm

Apr. 6 - Good Friday/Tenebrae 7:00 pm

Apr. 8 - Easter 8:30 & 11:00 am

THE WONDER

Do you hear what I hear? I think it is the collective sigh of relief from those who put in a lot of work and effort on the Christmas program with *my* added sigh of relief that it all came together once again. And it is the sound of Wonder at the talent so many in our congregation have and so willingly share. I want to thank everyone who helped in any capacity with the Christmas program this year. It takes quite a number of folks working together to make such things work... those who worked with our children rehearsing songs and lines; those who performed all the roles in the program from our smallest angels and shepherds to our wise men as well as the roles of Benjamin, Mama, Mary, Joseph, Ethan, the Storyteller and the 'Extras' in our opening scene; those who helped with costumes and props; those who were part of our choir and provided special accompaniment; those who helped with sound; those who helped clean up after the program was over; those who brought cookies to share; and everyone in the congregation for your support in so many ways. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

A number of you shared your kind words with me after the program letting me know you enjoyed it and thought it went well. Thank you, but please be sure to share those words and say thank you to everyone who was involved. As I indicated above, this is not something one person can do...to modify a phrase...it takes a congregation! And I believe it takes a congregation led by the Holy Spirit. So, be sure to say 'thank you' to God while you are at it.

As we start a New Year these are my hopes for us at Peace Lutheran:

- That we will continue to be filled with the Wonder of Christ's birth and God's love for us all year long.
- That we will share that Wonder and Love with everyone around us, both within our congregation and out in the community.
- That we will open our eyes to the needs of our congregation and our community and readily give of what we have been given...time, talent and treasure.

Do you hear what I hear? It is the sound of us moving into another year of serving our Lord in so many ways. May the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:7)

Sharon Altman *[The above article was submitted for the January newsletter and inadvertently omitted. It is included in this issue with apologies to Sharon Altman.]*

WHO CARES?

How many angels can fit in your kitchen? It doesn't take long for two, or even one angel (or human) to prepare a meal for residents of the Angel's Watch Shelter for homeless women and children in Hughesville. The residents finish the cooking process; the food is often delivered cold. And speaking of delivery, sometimes there's even a volunteer willing to do that part of the job.

I believe Peace does care, and each of us *can* find a way to serve as God's hands in the world. Each of us has our own way of doing this. At least one of our Koinonia groups cooks a meal once or twice a year. I would encourage individuals, families, neighbors, and friends to form teams and participate in this ministry at some time during the coming months. It's fun to do as a group.

A shopping list, recipes, instructions and a telephone number for queries are available along with the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Funds to purchase the food are available, as are foil baking pans! Could it be any easier? Please check the Angel's Watch clipboard in the standing display rack, or speak with Rex or LeeAnne Ayers.

Without the Way there is no going;
Without the Truth there is no knowing;
Without the Life there is no living.
--Thomas á Kempis (1390-1471)

FOOD PANTRY

We have been busy in our Food Pantry serving the community. We could use more helpers sorting or bagging. If you can't spare the time, perhaps you can provide support with food donations; canned fruit, tuna, and canned beans are always needed. You could use your offering envelope to make a designated contribution. Ask about helping. Call Carole Crawford 301-274-5869, email tipkayla@gmail.com or look for me on Sunday.

Carole Crawford, Food Pantry Coordinator

FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS FEBRUARY 2012		
1 st Sat.	2/4	1. J. Brannon 2. L. Jewell 3. M. Webber 4.
2 nd Wed.	2/8	1. P. Pedersen 2. D. Czupryna 3. P. Czupryna 4.
3 rd Sat.	2/18	4 Volunteers Needed (Please contact Carole Crawford)
4 th Wed.	2/22	1. P. Pedersen 2. J. Bryant 3. A. Bell 4.

THANK YOU!

Jan. 4: Chemo Hat Work Day ... **188 chemo hats complete!** ... 6 sewing machines and two pressers ... 16 volunteers ... fellowship and purpose ... pinning and sewing ... tags and embellishment ... time and talent ... sharing faith and love ... looking forward to the next time. Thank you to the following people for making the day a success – Amy Bell, Doris Scannapieco, Ginny Wolford, Sharon Faxio, Leah Fowble, Barb Straub, Karen Gesl, Mary Lynn Davis, Jerry Diehl, Elsie Draughn, Jeanette Bryant, Rose Wagner, Karen Ulbright, Becky Conrad, Jill Fronck, and Nancy McGuire. We hope **you** will join us next time!

CHEMO HAT WORK DAY- MARCH

We have scheduled the next Chemo Hat Work Day for Thursday, Mar. 1. Please consider joining us any time between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm, in the Narthex. There is a variety of tasks – no experience is needed. On the job training will be provided. We welcome donations of lightweight costume jewelry to be used for embellishments.

PRAYER PRACTICES INTERGENERATIONAL EVENT

Join us during the Sunday School hour on Feb. 19 for an Intergenerational Event on **Prayer Practices for Lent**. We will present a variety of ways to pray during Lent.

PEACE MUSICIANS IN CONCERT

On Sunday, Feb. 12, two of our gifted Peace Lutheran musicians will perform in the Ward Virts Concert Series of the College of Southern Maryland (CSM).

Gretta Williams, accompanied by Stephen Johnson, will play at 3:00 pm at CSM's Prince Frederick campus (Flagship Building, Room 119).

Concerts are free, but seating is limited, so patrons are encouraged to arrive early. No tickets or reservations are needed.

PEACE PRAYS

“Of course Peace prays,” you say. “Every Sunday during worship!”

“Of course we do,” you say, “each in our individual ways! And don’t forget all the

meetings and small group gatherings! They all pray, too,” you say.

I ask, “But did you know about the every-Tuesday gathering of the Peace Prays group? Let me tell you about it. We gather at 9:00 am and spend a half hour chatting and relaxing. It’s a good time to share stories from the week, get to know the new people who join us, and talk about things that are bothering us. I don’t make it every week, so I don’t know how much the format changes from week to week. I do know that the prayer part is always different and always amazing.”

“At 9:30, we focus on prayer. We use two minutes to silently gather our thoughts and get into a prayerful mood. One of us then asks God to be present with us and to hear our prayers. We spend the rest of our time in a combination of silent and spoken prayer.”

“Wait! You spend a whole hour in prayer? How can you possibly do that,” you ask in amazement.

“I understand your surprise. The truly amazing thing is that I usually feel that our time is too short. There are so many things to pray for! It’s also easier to stay focused with a group, and one prayer inspires another. God promised that when two or three are gathered in His name, He would be with us and hear our prayers. Because He is

there and we are deeply involved in prayer, time seems to pass in a different way.”

“I know there is plenty to pray for. I usually feel overwhelmed and don’t know where to start. Maybe I’ll give it a try. You said you meet Tuesdays from 9 to 10:30 in the sanctuary?”

“Yes, that’s right, and if you need more information, you can speak with Sharon Altman or Deb Foster.”

WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?

No, I haven’t actually heard those words spoken here at Peace, but sometimes I do get that impression when I talk to some folks about getting involved with various ministries or coming more often to church and Sunday School. And, I admit, every now and then it runs through my mind. What’s in it for me? Why should I bother going to church on a cold, rainy Sunday? Or show up for some meeting with only a few people there? Then it runs through my mind...What was in it for Jesus?

Seriously, have you ever thought about that? As Christians we all know the answer to "Why did Jesus die on the cross," right? It was to save us from all of our sins! But, what was in it for Jesus to become human and die a horrible death? Now, if you’re like me you probably figure He may not

have had much choice in becoming human. But, I also have to figure He did have choices in how He lived here on earth and whether He died for us or not. He was fully human and given free will like the rest of us. If you recall He did ask his Father to lift the burden from Him but concluded with ‘Your will be done’ (to paraphrase His prayer in Gethsemane). So, I think He could have chosen to not do the things He did for us, to not do God’s will and go on with His life in an easier manner. So, other than His/God’s love for us and His love of His Father, I can’t think of any other reason why He would have shown up and done what He did...nor can I think of any better reason. As far as I can tell there really wasn’t anything in it for Jesus...but to love and serve God and His neighbor.

Kathleen Norris in her book *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith* states that “...worshipping God means loving my neighbor.” She also shares that a pastor once reminded her through a sermon on the passage from Mark 6:30-34 “...that we ‘go to church for other people. Because,’ he added, ‘someone may need you there.’”

So, what’s in it for me? Why should I show up to church or Sunday School or a ministry meeting or to help at some church event? Maybe nothing is in it for me directly...but I have to say, when I do show up even just to help others, or maybe I should say, *especially* to help others, I know I get

so much out of it. What I need to remember is that all that I do should be because I love God and my neighbor. And, I thank God/Jesus that he showed up for me and that He keeps showing up in the Holy Spirit every time I need Him.

May we all remember the importance of showing up and of being there when God and others need us.

Prayerfully submitted by Sharon Altman

REMEMBER IN TOUCH

Please share a photo of any activity sponsored by your group or ministry, via email to newsletter@myplc.org so our readers can see how you are serving as God's hands!

REMEMBER THE WALK

In Touch will feature your own short thoughts, quotes from others, or favorite songs or hymns about walking. They will appear in upcoming newsletters, to inspire us until next year's Walk to End Homelessness!

Walking takes longer...than any other known form of locomotion except crawling. Thus it stretches time and prolongs life. Life is already too short to waste on speed.

~ Edward Abbey, "Walking"

February 2012

Becky Conrad, Director of Youth and Family Ministries

youth@myplc.org

301-843-1832

Youth News

Souper Bowl of Caring: Tackle Hunger

Sunday, Feb. 5

The Souper Bowl of Caring utilizes Super Bowl weekend in America to mobilize young people to fight hunger and poverty in their local communities. Its vision is to transform Super Bowl weekend into America's largest youth-led weekend of giving and serving. Youth collect monetary and food donations during the week leading up to Super Bowl Sunday. 100% of the money and food is then given directly to local charities of the group's choice. At Peace, we will collect monetary donations after each service on Feb. 5 and the collection will be given to the Peace Lutheran food pantry, the most direct way of tackling hunger through Peace.

2012 Youth Talent Show and Auction

Saturday, Mar. 24

The donation-gathering process has begun for this year's auction. If you have donations of goods (new or handmade) or have a connection with a business that would like to donate, please see Becky as soon as possible. The deadline for donations is Mar. 11.

Shekinah 2012: Imago Dei – Image of God

Mar. 16-18

The synod's retreat event for confirmation aged youth will be March 16-18 this year. The theme this year is *Imago Dei*. We will look at what it means to have been created as the image, the likeness, of God. Shekinah provides opportunities for learning, growing in faith, worshipping, meeting new people and renewing old friendships - and having fun with other youth just like themselves outside of their home congregation. Middle school youth attending Shekinah need to return paperwork and \$100 fee to Becky by Sunday, Feb 5.

Thursday Nights at Peace: Youth Meal, grades 6 and up invited. No meetings, no parents, dinner provided ☺

**FEBRUARY WEDNESDAY LENTEN
WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

	FEB. 22 Ash Wednesday	FEB. 29
ALTAR CARE	E. Draughn	
USHERS	L. Finamore	L. Finamore
ACOLYTES	Dean F., Sydney F.	G. Wolford
ASSISTING MINISTER	S. Foster	S. Foster
LECTOR	D. Mullaney	P. Festa

“Music... will help dissolve your perplexities
and purify your character and sensibilities,
and in time of care and sorrow,
will keep a fountain of joy alive in you.”
— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

FEBRUARY 2012 WORSHIP ASSISTANTS & HELPERS

		FEB 5	FEB 12	FEB 19	FEB 26
ALTAR CARE					
8:30		A. Bell	B. Van Sickle	M. Wiersma	S. Herrin
11:00		J. Bryant	D. Foster	B. Capps	D. Mullaney
GREETER					
8:30		A. Reese			
11:00		M. Morgan			
USHER					
8:30		S. Herrin, M. Wiersma	B. Dewey, C. Drew	B. Straub, D. Micsky	M. & L. Garner
11:00		B. McGee	F. Thomas	M. Morgan, M L Davis	C. Williams, B. Conrad
ACOLYTE					
8:30		Julia T., Megan T	M. Wiersma, P. Festa	Sydney F., N. Davis	M. Wiersma, G. Wolford
11:00		Dean F., Thomas B.	Thomas B., David B.	Kinsey P., Kate P.	P. Festa, Caitlyn B.
ASSISTING MINISTER/CANTOR					
8:30		G. Wolford	G. Wolford	G. Simperts/A. Murphy	S. Foster
11:00		G. Wolford	G. Wolford	G. Simperts/A. Murphy	S. Foster
LECTOR					
8:30		B. Simperts	L. Finamore	M. Robinson	D. Mullaney
11:00		S. Altman	G. Endicott	P. Festa	G. Endicott
CHILDREN'S SERMON					
8:30		C. Endicott	S. Altman	OPEN	G. Williams
11:00		C. Endicott	G. Collinson	OPEN	G. Williams
CHILDREN'S TIME					
8:30		N. Welsh	G. Collinson	B. Quasius-Dewey	M. Robinson
11:00		G. Williams	J. Boling	B. Curbelo	J. Fronck
EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS					
8:30		C. Crawford, D. Mullaney	S. Herrin, C. Drew	M. Wiersma, E. Draughn	E. Draughn, S. Altman
11:00		J. Bryant, S. Altman	C. Crawford, D. Foster	C. Crawford, D. Foster	C. Warren, J. Bryant
TELLERS					
		J. Stamos, T. Wells	C. & C. Drew	C. & E. Bender	E. Layton, D. Mullaney
<p>Task Coordinators: Altar Care— Elsie Draughn; Greeters—Jim Hanson; Ushers, Acolytes, Lectors, & Eucharistic Ministers— Ginny Wolford; Assisting Ministers, Cantors, Book Bearers, & Children's Sermons—Gretta Williams; Children's Time—Jill Fronck; Tellers—Amanda Foster To donate altar flowers or an eternal flame candle, see information and sign-up sheet on a labeled clipboard in the narthex/lobby.</p>					