

The Peaceful News

THE PEACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LAKEWOOD RANCH, FLORIDA NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2023

When I was growing up,

we were awakened to Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* played with enough volume that no one in the house could sleep past 7:00, when the Christmas morning celebration began! Prior to Christmas, my dad would play our favorite Christmas albums, one of which was filled with music of the harp.

I was reminded of that album on the first Sunday of Advent when we had the blessing of a guest harpist, Kristen Elizabeth, in worship, playing beautifully two Advent favorites, *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* and *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*. Just the night before we had heard *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* played by our favorite bagpiper, Gemma Briggs, at the Celtic Christmas Concert at Peace.

What Advent-Christmas music stirs your peaceful memories? I encourage you to take some time this season for music appreciation. Music has a way of opening spaces for emotional healing, for breathing more deeply, for embracing a faith that is beyond our understanding, for stirring hope in a world full of despair. Music puts notes and lyrics together to transport us beyond our present reality to joy, love, and light of the season that our Savior brings.

This year on the first Sunday of Christmas, December 31st, we plan to have a simple Christmas service with no visual slides and no bulletin. In joyful hymn-sing tradition, you will have opportunity to name any Christmas carol in the hymnal for the church to sing. It will be fun to crack open the hymnals and find some favorites. May this season crack open our hearts and minds to glory in the newborn King!



Prayerfully yours,


Elizabeth

Rev. Elizabeth M. Deibert
Pastor, Peace Presbyterian Church



December 2023—January 2024 Dates to Remember

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 STREAM Annual Assembly (6:30p)	5 THE CHOSEN (Season 2) Small Group meeting at Peace (7p)	6	7 DECORATING the Peaceful Path for Christmas. ALL are welcome! Questions? Jamie (jreagan2@verizon.net) (9-12p)	8 Faith & Film Matinee: <i>Joyeux Noël</i> (2:30p)	9 Adventure Seekers Trip: <i>"The Love of Christmas"</i> (2p)
10 Bequests & Legacies Info CFA Lori Daff-Siggins (11a) Peace-full Christmas Caroling for All (1 to 4p)	11	12	13	14 Sam. Counseling's Grief in the Holidays (2p) at LWR Toale	15	16
17 Beth-El Angel Tree: Donations/gifts due The Peaceful Path to Christmas*	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Christmas Eve Morning Service (11a) Christmas Eve Evening Service (7p)**	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve Simple Service (9:30a)	1	2	3	4	5	6 Our Daily Bread Volunteers needed to serve a meal

 Peace Center will be closed
12/25/2023 thru 1/1/2024

* The Peaceful Path to Christmas includes Bagpipes & Ring Sarasota Bells, with a Living Nativity & treats in the hall (5 to 7p)

** Christmas Eve Evening Service with Carols, Communion, & Candles (7p)

EARTHCARE/MATTHEW 25 TEAM



God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, And, yes, Earth itself..."

Genesis 1:26f
(The Message)

'Master...When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?' Then the King will say, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.'

Mt.25:37-40 (The Message)

As children of God and with these texts as our mandate we understand we are called to be faithful stewards of the earth and all it bears, and seek the welfare of those in need.

As part of our concern for the earth in the midst of climate change we expect to complete the conversion to LED lights in the Peace Center before Christmas. We expect to reduce our electric usage by an estimated 24,000 KWHs per year, reducing CO₂ emission by 17 metric tons. (The cost of the conversion is covered mostly by special donations).

S.T.R.E.A.M. -Stronger Together Reaching Equality Across Manatee is a coalition of about 17 congregations. We held 7 house meetings at Peace this fall and we have 50 Network Members committed to work for justice in our community. At the recent (December 4) 3rd Annual Assembly it was decided to add the **Mental Health Care** initiative to the already existing **Afordable Housing** and **Criminal Justice Reform**. Mark your calendars and be part of **The Nehemiah Action** on Monday, April 29, 2024. Shannon Jung from our congregation was elected Co-President of **S.T.R.E.A.M.** for 2024. Congratulations and thanks to him for his commitment to serve the community.

On the weekend before Thanksgiving 15 folks from Peace, including some who have been in the class on race relations, walked The Civil Rights Trail in Montgomery and Selma Alabama. On Sunday, December 10 those who were part of the trip will talk about their experiences at 11:00am in Trinity Square, Plan to attend.

We are grateful for the support of Eirinn and for the leadership of Chris Camphire as chair. We welcome Chris Snow as the chair beginning 2024.

We are considering applying for some "Cool Congregation" grants in the near future.



STREAM leaders from Peace



Uneeda speaking to a STREAM meeting.

WORDS BELIEFS ACTIONS

THESE MUST ALWAYS ALIGN

ON THE ROAD

Bradenton to Montgomery to Selma and Back. Why...

Even after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbade discrimination in voting on the basis of race, efforts by civil rights organizations such as the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to register Black voters met with fierce resistance in southern states such as Alabama. But the civil rights movement was not easily deterred. In early 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. and the SCLC decided to make Selma, located in Dallas County, Alabama, the focus of a Black voter registration campaign. King had won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, and his profile would help draw international attention to the events that followed. Alabama Governor George Wallace was a notorious opponent of desegregation, and the local county sheriff in Dallas County had led a steadfast opposition to Black voter registration drives. As a result, only 2 percent of Selma's eligible Black voters (about 300 out of 15,000) had managed to register to vote.

On February 18, white segregationists attacked a group of peaceful demonstrators in the town of Marion, Alabama. In the ensuing chaos, an Alabama state trooper fatally shot Jimmie Lee Jackson, a young African American demonstrator. In response to Jackson's death, King and the SCLC planned a massive protest march from Selma to the state capitol of Montgomery, 54 miles away. A group of 600 people, including activists John Lewis and Hosea Williams, set out from Selma on Sunday, March 7, 1965 a day that would come to be known as "Bloody Sunday." The marchers didn't get far before Alabama state troopers wielding whips, nightsticks and tear gas rushed the group at the Edmund Pettus Bridge and beat them back to Selma. The brutal scene was captured on television, enraging many Americans and drawing civil rights and religious leaders of all faiths to Selma in protest. Hundreds of ministers, priests, rabbis and social activists soon headed to Selma to join the voting rights march.

On March 9, King led more than 2,000 marchers, Black and white, across the Edmund Pettus Bridge but found Highway 80 blocked again by state troopers. King paused the marchers and led them in prayer, whereupon the troopers stepped aside. King then turned the protesters around, believing that the troopers were trying to create an opportunity that would allow them to enforce a federal injunction prohibiting the march. This decision led to criticism from some marchers, who called King cowardly. That night, a group of segregationists attacked another protester; the young white minister James Reeb, beating him to death. Alabama state officials (led by Wallace) tried to prevent

the march from going forward, but a U.S. district court judge ordered them to permit it.

Six days later, on March 15, President Lyndon B. Johnson went on national television to pledge his support to the Selma protesters and to call for the passage of a new voting rights bill that he was introducing in Congress. "There is no Negro problem. There is no Southern problem. There is no Northern problem. There is only an American problem," Johnson said, "Their cause must be our cause too. Because it is not just Negroes, but really it is all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And we shall overcome."

Some 2,000 people set out from Selma on March 21, protected by U.S. Army troops and Alabama National Guard forces that Johnson had ordered under federal control. After walking some 12 hours a day and sleeping in fields along the way, they reached Montgomery on March 25. Nearly 50,000 supporters—Black and white—met the marchers in Montgomery, where they gathered in front of the state capitol to hear King and other speakers including Ralph Bunche (winner of the 1950 Nobel Peace Prize) address the crowd. "No tide of racism can stop us," King proclaimed from the building's steps, as viewers from around the world watched the historic moment on television. On March 17, 1965, even as the Selma-to-Montgomery marchers fought for the right to carry out their protest, President Lyndon Johnson addressed a joint session of Congress, calling for federal voting rights legislation to protect African Americans from barriers that prevented them from voting.

That August, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which guaranteed the right to vote (first awarded by the 15th Amendment) to all African Americans. Specifically, the act banned literacy tests as a requirement for voting, mandated federal oversight of voter registration in areas where tests had previously been used and gave the U.S. attorney general the duty of challenging the use of poll taxes for state and local elections. Along with the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act was one of the most expansive pieces of civil rights legislation in American history. It greatly reduced the disparity between Black and white voters in the U.S. and allowed greater numbers of African Americans to participate in politics and government at the local, state and national level.

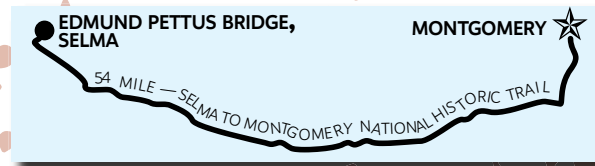
(Source: <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/selma-montgomery-march>)

Our Trip and Journal...

A dozen members of Peace traveled to Montgomery and Selma, AL Saturday, November 18 to experience the Civil Rights Legacy and memorials that exist in these Alabama cities and learn more about the history of Racism. Montgomery, the capital of Alabama represents an important place in the fight for voting rights, with the Alabama State Capitol building having served as the end point of the third, and most famous, march for voting rights from Selma. But there's much more to Montgomery's significance than what occurred at the iconic Capitol and the Peace Group was able to visit several sights during their 2+ day stay.

The opportunities included **The Civil Rights Memorial**, **The Rosa Parks Museum**, and **The Legacy Museum** which includes **The National Memorial for Peace and Justice**. Being in Montgomery also provided the group with a worship service at Immanuel Presbyterian Church where Elizabeth and Richard were first called to serve as co-pastors following their ordinations. The congregation hosted the Peace contingency for dinner Saturday night and provided sack lunches for all following worship on Sunday. What a joy for all the Peace people to see how much Elizabeth and Richard are loved, missed and respected after so many years away from their first church.

The next day the group traveled the 54-mile Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail to visit **The National Voting Rights Museum and Institute**, walk **The Edmund Pettus Bridge**, and experience **The Slavery Civil War Museum**. The following image explains the sights along with words used by the group to explain their feelings following the trip. This time was filled with great fellowship, learning, and "life changing" experiences for all.



- 50 MILE MARCH
- ADMIRATION/AWE
- ANGER
- APPALLING
- AWE-INSPIRING
- BIGOTRY
- BLOODY SUNDAY
- BRUTAL
- BRUTAL
- CHALLENGING
- CIVIL RIGHTS
- COMMUNITY
- COMPASSION
- CONVICTING
- COURAGE
- COURAGEOUS
- CRUEL
- CURIOUS
- DARING
- DEHUMANIZING
- DEPRESSING
- DESEGREGATION
- DETERMINATION
- DISAPPOINTING
- DISGUST
- DISGUSTED
- EDUCATIONAL
- EMOTIONAL
- EYE-OPENING
- FAITH
- FEAR
- GUTTING
- HEART-BREAKING
- HEAVY
- HISTORICAL
- HOPE
- HOPEFUL
- HOPEFUL
- HOPEFUL
- HORRIFIC
- HORROR
- HUMILIATING
- IMPACTFUL
- INCREDULOUS
- INDIGNANT
- INFORMATIVE
- INFURIATING
- INHUMANE
- INHUMANE
- INJUSTICE
- INJUSTICE
- INSPIRED
- INSPIRING
- JUSTICE
- KKK
- LOST OPPORTUNITY
- LOVE
- LYNCHING
- MEANINGFUL
- MOVING
- NECESSARY
- OVERWHELMING
- OVERWHELMING
- PAINFUL
- PAINFUL
- POWERFUL
- RAW
- RESILIENCY
- REVEALING
- SAD
- SAD
- SADNESS
- SHAMEFUL
- SHOCKING
- SHOCKING

The Rosa Parks Museum is located on the Troy University at Montgomery satellite campus. It has information, exhibits, and some artifacts from the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott. This museum is named after civil rights activist Rosa Parks, who is known for refusing to surrender her seat to a white person on a city bus.

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery is set on a six-acre site and is the nation's first comprehensive memorial dedicated to the victims of racial terror lynchings. The outdoor memorial uses sculpture, art, and design to contextualize racial terror and its legacy today.

Standing proud across the street from the Southern Poverty Law Center, a hub for hundreds of people who continue to work for civil rights around the country and the world.

The Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama, is a monument for 41 people who died between 1954 and 1968 fighting for equal treatment of all people.

- SO SORRY
- TERRIBLE
- THOUGHTFUL
- TRAUMATIC
- TURNAROUND TUESDAY
- UN-AMERICAN
- UNBEARABLE
- UNBELIEVABLE
- UNFAIR
- VOTER-REGISTRATION
- WRETCHED
- WRONG

The Legacy Museum in Montgomery has you travel through 400 years of American history—from enslavement, to racial terrorism, to codified segregation, to mass incarceration. The critically acclaimed location features first-person historical accounts, interactive content, cutting-edge technology, and a world-class art gallery.

The National Voting Rights Museum and Institute, established in 1991 and opened in 1993, is an American museum in Selma, Alabama, which honors, chronicles, collects, archives, and displays the artifacts and testimony of the activists who participated in the events leading up to and including the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches, and passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, as well as those who worked for the African-American Voting Rights and Women's Suffrage movements.

Slavery and Civil War Museum is on the Selma side of the Edmund Pettus Bridge that is so famous for the march across that Martin Luther King Jr. led. The museum itself is not funded by the state, but rather a wealthy African American woman from around the area that did not want to see the history of the historical town wither away.

1. The exterior grounds of Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, AL.



2. The "Peace Road Warriors" posed at the altar of Immanuel Presbyterian Church.



3. An example of the transportation used by the residents of Montgomery, AL to mobilize themselves during the Bus Boycott that lasted 12½ months. 1955–1956.



4. A sculpture by Hank Willis Thomas, "Raise Up," on the grounds of **The Memorial for Peace and Justice**. Inspired by a 1960s photograph by Ernest Cole of South African miners, it suggests police suspects lined up at gunpoint. *"Black and Brown people in the United States are often presumed dangerous and guilty when they have done nothing wrong. Our history of racial inequality has created conscious and unconscious bias that has resulted in racial discrimination against people of color by law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Police shootings of unarmed men, women, and children, racially biased and excessive sentencing of people convicted of crimes, and abusive prison conditions make mass incarceration a dominant issue for the poor and people of color.."*



5. Manatee County, one of 805 hanging steel rectangles at **The National Memorial for Peace and Justice**, representing each of the counties in the United States where a documented lynching took place. Manatee County listed 6 victims to lynching, beginning in 1903 and ending in 1934.



6. As part of Montgomery's mural scene, local and international artists are harnessing the power of paint, creating public art that offers more than aesthetic appeal alone; it's also spreading messages of hope, welcome and justice for all. Renowned French artist, Hopare, completed this large-scale outdoor mural. It is inspired by the spirit of everyday Montgomerians of the present and future who embody the city's pivotal legacy as the birthplace of the civil rights movement.



7. Crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge over the Alabama River, west into the town of Selma, AL. This is the view of the bridge captured in the famous photographs of the beginnings of conflict of **Bloody Sunday** on March 7, 1965, when police attacked Civil Rights Movement demonstrators with horses, billy clubs, and tear gas as they were attempting to march to the state capital, Montgomery. The marchers crossed the bridge again on March 21 and walked to the Capitol building.



Congregational Care Team

Welcome to our newest Peace members! Thirteen adults and 4 youth joined us in October. When you are contacted by your Care Group Leaders, they can answer your questions about worshipping at Peace as well as all the activities that are available for adults, children, and older youth. We are always available to hear your joys or prayer concerns and are so happy that you are here with us.

October saw the kick-off of our new Breaking Bread dinner groups. 6 groups have plans to meet once or twice before Christmas and then again during winter/spring. These are casual meals in groups of 8-10 folks who want to get to know others through church fellowship. If you missed the sign-ups and would like to join a group contact Wilsey Philips—there may be open spaces available. Included here are photos of a few of the groups.



On November 12, the congregation elected 6 candidates to serve as Deacons, and following training they will be ordained and installed in January 2024. These folks will extend the responsibility of the Congregational Care Team and work with the pastor(s) in providing compassionate care to those persons who are hospitalized, homebound, or in greater need of any kind. This is an exciting addition to our commitment of caring within this congregation.

We wish Thanksgiving and Advent blessings for everyone and ask that we all remember in prayer those in our midst who suffer from illness or have greater need of any kind.

Larry (foreground) wonders who of the 13 new members joining Peace in October would be willing to serve Communion.



THIS LENT'S SMALL GROUP CAMPAIGN

The CHOSEN

GOOD NEWS! Peace is sponsoring a church-wide small group campaign for Lent, called **THE CHOSEN**. These are videos about the life and ministry of Jesus and his disciples. Each week, beginning the week of February 18 to March 22, five or six small groups will meet at various times and locations. Each group meets for five weeks. Please sign up for your favorite small group in the church lobby.

Questions?
Contact Rev. Steve Kersten at
kerstenstephen@gmail.com

MISSION TEAM



Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:10.

The Mission Team helps us share our gifts by providing opportunities for all of us to give and serve. Our team has big hearts and a passion for serving others. Welcome to new team members Jason Bonafede, Laura Burnside, and Gail Watters!

We look to continue to expand the team and our impact in our community. Everyone can be part of Mission—with volunteering, financial gifts, and/or joining the team.

We're grateful to those in the congregation who have generously contributed more than \$2,400 to the Peace and Global Witness offering (25% will support local peace and justice organizations) and over \$8,800 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) so far this year. And thank you to everyone who provided meals for the Francis House family, donated requested clothing items for Turning Points and food items for the Manatee Food Bank barrel, or supported the Friends of Beth-El, Meals on Wheels Plus Empty Bowls, and Turning Points Be the Key (or Guitar Strum) fundraisers.

Throughout the fall, Peace Baggers have taken on new responsibilities as the Beth-El food pantry continues to evolve to meet farmworker needs and reduce food waste. We have several Books for Kids volunteers reading with kindergarteners in Title 1 schools each week to help develop the reading proficiency so critical to their future success in school and life. Peace volunteers at Turning Points continue serving in many roles (including the

Veteran Stand Down event) to provide relief to for those facing housing/homelessness challenges. Our Meals on Wheels Plus volunteers are delivering meals and providing companionship and social activities for needy seniors. We also helped feed the hungry by serving a meal in the soup kitchen at Our Daily Bread and partnering with our Youth to pack seeds which will provide a sustainable food source for needy people in Haiti.

We look forward to an exciting calendar in December and the year ahead – including the Meals on Wheels Plus Holiday Shoebox drive for homebound seniors (Gwen Certo), Beth-El Angel Tree for needy families/children (Aubrey Sammons), and an opportunity to volunteer (or serve a meal) at Our Daily Bread on January 6th (Tina Juillerat).

Stay tuned for more about our first "Donation Drive Sunday" on February 4th...

Don't miss the primary Mission event that will be back (and better than ever) this holiday season! We will host the Spirit of Giving event on Dec. 3rd after worship (10:30 am-Noon) in the Peace Center. There will be no Lively Learning classes that day so that everyone can learn about our Peace Mission Partners (and Team)! Stop by and learn how our partners are ensuring that God's hands are acting in the world and delivering the love of Christ that so many in our community need. We pray that you too will decide that you want to be one of God's helping hands. Our partners need your help to address so many critical needs – you can contribute, volunteer, or do both!

The Spirit of Giving is love...

"(Money) is an excellent gift of God, answering the noblest ends. In the hands of his children, it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked."

John Wesley



Sue reading to a large group of kindergarteners

Peace volunteers doing MISSION work at...



Turning Points



Meals on Wheels



Meals on Wheels Christmas shoe boxes



Our Daily Bread



This fun group took an historical trolley tour of Sarasota in October. We had a knowledgeable and informative narrator, Ed, and pleasant trolley driver, John, followed by a delicious outdoor lunch on the waterfront at Marina Jack's, which most of the 29 passengers attended.

Our next Peace Adventure Seekers event is a festive celebration of Christmas music with The Ditchfield Family Singers' performance of "The Love of Christmas" - Carols and holiday family favorites. The four generations of this Sarasota family have been performing for 29 years. They are known as "Florida's version of the "VonTrapps" from the Sound of Music.

It will be on Saturday, December 9—2:00 PM—Doors open at 1:00, at First Baptist Church, 1306 Manatee Ave West, Bradenton 34205. Cora Lee has reserved two blocks of tickets, \$30 main floor seating ~ \$20 balcony, using steps, no elevator. Cain's carpool leaves Peace at 12:30 PM. Please advise if interested.

We will have dinner after the performance at Olive Garden, 4410 14th Street W. Bradenton 34205; 941-756-2370; pay on your own. Please indicate when signing up if you are attending BOTH the show and dinner, and main floor or balcony seating preference.

For more information, contact Cora Lee or Gwen. If you would like more information about the Ditchfields, see <http://www.ditchfieldfamilysingers.com>

Cora Lee: wlcain@gmail.com; 941-242-2271, Gwen: GwenCerto@aol.com; 941-932-5553



The Adventure Seekers took a tour of historical Sarasota on a trolley.



Fellowship has had a busy Fall season. In addition to our normal Fellowship time, we had our annual brunch in September. We also had a special goth Birthday Celebration for Gail Lowe and are looking forward to another special goth Birthday celebration for Grant Lowe in January. We also had special Halloween treats and Thanksgiving treats. We appreciate all the contributions from the congregation for the special days and the regular Fellowship days as well. If anyone wants to contribute a homemade treat or store-bought treat, please feel free to do so.

We are continuing with Don's Lunch Bunch on the fourth Thursday of the month, as well as our Fellowship Musical Movie night on the last Friday of the month. Because of the holidays, Don's Lunch Bunch will be on November 30th, followed by the musical movie, Scrooge, on December 1st. Everyone is invited to both of these activities. If you would like to join Don's Lunch Bunch at any time, just let Ellen Walch know so we can add you to the list. The next Don's Lunch Bunch will be January 25, 2024. The first musical movie of the year will be Evita on January 26, 2024.

We are also having our annual Cookie Stroll on December 17th for Fellowship time immediately after church that day. Come taste all the variety of cookies and determine your favorite or favorites. In the evening of December 17th, we will be back in the Fellowship Hall with more cookies and beverages during the Candles, Carols and Live Nativity. So, after (or before) you have had an opportunity to walk on the path or go to the Sanctuary, stop by and relax in the Hall with a cookie or two. We also understand that there will be an appearance by Santa Claus.

After taking two weeks off for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, Fellowship will resume at its usual time after church on January 7, 2024. We look forward to bringing more treats to the congregation and providing time for meaningful socialization for all ages.



Peace Church celebrated the goth birthday of Gail Lowe, one of the early church founders.



Fellowship always serves up a great spread every season.



One of the first Bread and Butter group dinners. They meet to get to know one another and join in fellowship.



LINE-UP

SECOND FRIDAYS OF THE MONTH, ALL MOVIES WILL BEGIN AT 2:30 pm IN TRINITY SQUARE AT PEACE

December 8, 2023

Joyeux Noel (2005, Rated PG-13, 1:24)

Wally Harman, Discussion Leader

Starring: Benno Fürmann, Guillaume Canet, Daniel Brühl, Diane Kruger

An extraordinary film about a miraculous occurrence during Christmas in World War I when men laid down their arms and fraternized with the enemy.



finds Texan doctor Max (Patrick Swayze), who has been assaulted and robbed, lying in the street. Hasari takes him to his district, where the homeless and lepers live. Max becomes friends with Hasari and clinic doctor Joan (Pauline Collins), and Hasari gets a job as a rickshaw driver. Max soon plunges into his new life

January 12, 2024

The Fault in Our Stars (2014, Rated PG-13, 2:06)

Dirk Brinkmeyer, Discussion Leader

Starring: Shailene Woodley, Ansel Elgort, Laura Dern

Hazel and Augustus meet at a support group for young people with cancer. Their romantic and unique love story makes them forget about their disease's problems. Life has not to be perfect to experience an extraordinary love.



April 12, 2024—Earth Care Month

Dark Waters (2019, Rated PG-13, 2:06)

Grant Lowe, Discussion Leader

Starring: Mark Ruffalo, Anne Hathaway, Tim Robbins

Based on a true story of an attorney trying to punish the DuPont chemical corporation for dumping toxic waste in West Virginia, acting as a lone-crusader-against-the-corrupt-system film.



February 9, 2024

A Soldier's Story (1984, Rated PG-13, 1:41)

Uneeda Brewer, Discussion Leader

Starring: Howard E. Rollins Jr., Adolph Caesar, Art Evans

The ramifications of racism and loyalty are shown through the prism of blacks in the military, revealed through a mystery set in the 1940's deep South.



May 10, 2024

Amish Grace (2010, Rated PG, 1:26)

Mickey Miller, Discussion Leader

Starring: Kimberly Williams-Paisley, Tammy Blanchard, Matt Letscher

When a gunman killed five Amish children in a Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania schoolhouse shooting in October of 2006, the world media attention rapidly turned from the tragic events to the extraordinary forgiveness demonstrated by the Amish community. This movie explores the Amish's astonishing reaction to the horrific shootings—of forgiveness and compassion. Based on a true story.



March 8, 2024

City of Joy (1992, Rated PG-13, 2:13)

Tom and Wilsy Philips, Discussion Co-Leaders

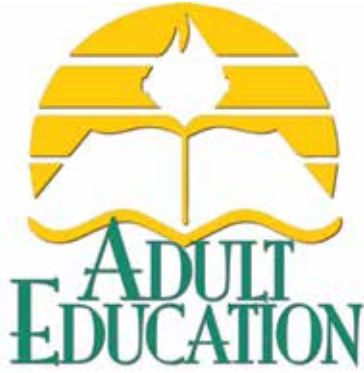
Starring: Patrick Swayze, Pauline Collins, Om Puri

Farmer Hasari Pal moves his family to Calcutta to start a new life. Settling in the city's poorest area (the "city of joy"), he



June 14, 2024—Pride Month

Peace Presbyterian is an open, welcoming, and affirming church. The June Movie Matinee will view and discuss a supportive topical film. The title and discussion leader are to be determined later with the recommendations of members of the LGBTQ community.



This past fall has been a busy time for the Adult Education team as we returned to offering multiple classes, in this case three. Since our beginning, Peace Presbyterian always put adult education in the forefront of church activities. Our offerings included: ***Bible Stories for Grown-Ups: Reading Scriptures with New Eyes***; ***Genesis Selections for 21st Century Christians***; and ***Race Relations: Christians' Responsibility to Know and Understand Social Justice***. I am happy to report that all three classes met with much success and were well attended. The ***Genesis*** and ***Race***



Mickey teaching an Adult Ed class in October.

classes conclude this Sunday (December 10) following Fellowship, hope you can attend one to experience the opportunities our team offers.

2024 will begin with one class, following the lives of ***Amos and other Biblical Prophets***. The class will be taught by Rev. Craig Miller beginning January 7, and running for 5 weeks. (Note: no class will be offered on January 14 to allow the ministry teams to meet, this would be a great chance for anyone to find a team to join). This class will probably end February 11, 2024. February 18 will be the first Sunday in Lent and a new class may focus on Lent or continue with our recent focus on Race Relations. These decisions will be made at our January 14 team meeting. Be there and be part off our decision making process.

NOTE: With his ***Genesis*** class ending Sunday, December 10, Mickey Miller plans to step aside from teaching classes at Peace. His knowledge and teaching skills will be sorely missed. Mickey and Emily are founding members of Peace and the success of the Adult Education program owes a giant thanks to Mickey for all the long and hard hours he has committed to helping all of us grow in our walk with the Lord! Thank you Mickey.

GRATITUDE TEAM

The Peace Congregation has been generous giving their time, talents, and treasures to the operation of our church and to support our varied mission endeavors from the very beginning! This year, while the pledge drive for 2024 is not yet complete, we have good numbers to share.

As our membership has grown, so have the number of pledges. This year we added 29 new pledges of financial support, and 36 families increased their financial pledges in our total of 134 pledges to date. The church is looking forward to the remaining commitments coming in to support the church and our missions in 2024. Pledges can be sent confidentially to Beth Walch at bookkeeper@peacepcusa.com or turned into the offering plates. Note one option on the pledge sheet is: "I cannot pledge but will give as I can". Your assistance in helping us complete our campaign is greatly appreciated.



Also, two treasured families of Peace remembered the church in their final financial planning. Chuck and Sue McClurg set aside a substantial Legacy Gift that will provide some funding for years to come for both music and missions. Sally Bull and Dick Dutton, also Peace family members, made a financial gift that will be used wisely for current improvements and funds for needs upcoming. Blessings from family!

The Gratitude Team is working to educate members on the importance of end-of-life legal documents and estate planning. Look for documents and classes coming up. If you have any immediate questions, please find a member of the team so that we can put you in touch with our qualified resources!

Worship Events



Peace held a sing-a-long, guitar sing, just for fun, one evening.



Pastor Elizabeth showing the children the Giving Boxes from a memorial gift donation.



Your Outreach Team is getting ready for December Christmas-time events to share Peace. Candles, Carols and Live Nativity are planned on December 17th from 5:00 to 7:00pm. While strolling the Peaceful Path, one will be able to hear Christmas music on bagpipes and on English Handbells. We will welcome back Gemma on bagpipes and Ring Sarasota on bells to this outside event. You may have heard them in the past during worship. Invite your friends and neighbors.



Workers from Peace cleaning up the Peaceful Path, which has introduced many in the community to our church.

The Outreach team is also gearing up for 2024 presentations of the **Lakewood Ranch Wind Ensemble** concert series. Performances are scheduled for Sundays at 2 pm on **February 4, 2024** and **May 5, 2024** mark your calendars!



CHILDREN YOUTH AND FAMILY



It has been a festive fall for the Children, Youth and Families at Peace! The Pumpkin Patch was a great success, we welcomed so many wonderful folks from our community and raised money for our youth camps in the process. Big thanks to the Peaceful Path crew for the delightful not-so-spooky Path and the Fellowship Team for offering a variety of delicious treats!

Our youth group enjoyed building their relationships with fun outings such as Go-Karting, hiking at Rye as well as competing at

Peace in a CHOPPED competition. Our 14 college youth received a package of love and support from Peace before the holidays. Packed inside were some sweet treats - including a \$20 gift card from a Peace "Santa." It is our hope and prayer that all families at Peace will know how much they matter to us and to God.

We are looking ahead to fun and meaningful advent plans for our Peace families and of course, the nativity play.

We have a Kids Club outing planned January 21st for grades 2-5. Everyone: get ready for Peace's Cedarkirk Retreat Day on Saturday, April 13th for ALL at Peace! Stay tuned for more details.

We pray that all at Peace will find the true spirit of Christmas through the joy of Jesus this holiday season and into 2024.



Peace youth group packing Hope Seeds for Haiti in October.

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