

# The Peaceful News

The Peace Presbyterian Church of Lakewood Ranch, Florida Newsletter

Fall, 2019

## As we celebrated ten years since

the day we were chartered as a church, my heart was full of gratitude for all the saints, who have been so faithful to God and such a blessing, as companions in this journey.

Looking back through photos and the memories in my mind, I recall moments of fear, of joy, and of strain. Yet always God the Spirit was with us, giving us strength and leading the way, even if we did not know where we were going. I am thankful for patient ones who



endured and the passionate ones who gave us a boost of energy when we needed it. But most of all, I give Christ the honor and glory for making us into a household of God by grace and by peace, as he took us from near and far away to shape us into this dwelling place for God. We are made strong by the strength that comes from God's glorious power. We are peace, because Christ is our peace that breaks down every barrier, and makes us who are different, one people by love.

Finally, I am grateful for the love you expressed in your words of gratitude for Peace and in the gift of a lovely blooming Cassia tree, along with monthly gifts of flowers for the year of vision—2020—as we dream of all that God will do for us and desire from us in the future. Hear my thanksgiving with this poem of Joyce Kilmer.

## TREES

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.

Prayerfully yours,

*Elizabeth*

Rev. Elizabeth M. Deibert

Pastor, Peace Presbyterian Church

# Gratitude Team – Annual Stewardship Campaign

In conjunction with “Celebration Weekend,” your Gratitude Team has canvassed the congregation for 2020 pledges for the continued operation of Peace Church. Ingathering Sunday was celebrated at the two services on November 17th. Preliminary pledges were very encouraging. This is not surprising as Peace Church has historically been a generous church – not only with their financial pledges, but also with their time and talents.

Levels of financial resources vary from member to

member, but that is why we continue to stress the sharing of our members’ time and talents. “Giving” to the church is not only money. We appreciate whatever you can give to the church – whether it is your time, your talents, or your money. A healthy portion of each is what has made Peace Church what it is today.

If you have not pledged yet or “signed up” to share your time and talents, please do at your earliest convenience. Our sincere thanks to the congregation for the continued support of this church!



*Grateful for the Past, Excited for the Future*

On October 19, 2009, Peace Presbyterian Church was chartered. Now, ten years later, Peace is observing its 10th anniversary by celebrating “10 & TEN – Grateful for the Past, Excited for the Future.”

Last Saturday night, the Gratitude Team hosted the congregation for an evening of Celebration and Food. Videos, testimonies, a slide show, and The Dave Lewis Singers highlighted a well-received program in our new sanctuary commemorating our ten years as a chartered church in the PCUSA.

Pastor Elizabeth was also honored—as the congregation gave her gifts of flowers and a Cassia tree which will be planted

outside of her office with a plaque citing her leadership in the growth of Peace!

This was followed by a wonderful meal—catered by Apollonia Grill—where fellowship and memories were shared by all. We also shared our visions of the future and dreaming of what our church can become and the good that we can do from our corner of the world.



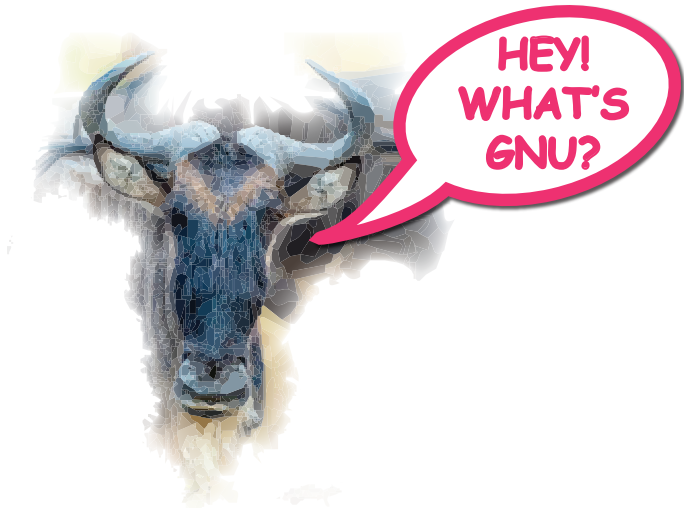
*More than 140 Peace people showed up to celebrate and give thanks for the 10 & Ten.*



*Pastor Elizabeth at the Celebration.*



*A cassia tree was given to Pastor Elizabeth to honor her first 10 years as pastor at Peace. Shown from left Peter, JoAnne, Pastor Elizabeth and Barbara.*



## New Parish Associates Mary Beth McSwain and Cori Rigney

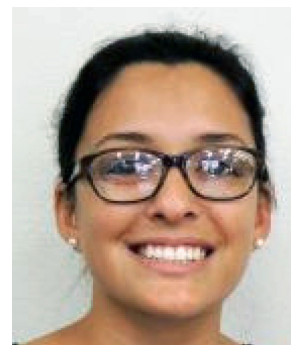
**Mary Beth** is a Presbyterian PK (Pastor's Kid) who grew up in Winter Haven, FL. She met her husband Billy, now an ophthalmologist at The Eye Depot, at Stetson University where she majored in Religious Studies and minored in her hobbies, Studio Art and Piano Performance. At Vanderbilt, she and her husband were nurtured in their emerging calls to ministry (M. Div. 2010) and medicine (M.D. 2011). While



traveling around the country for training, Mary Beth experienced a range of ministries-- in prison, with people with disabilities, in college classrooms, and in hospice chaplaincy. Mary Beth was ordained in Tucson, AZ in 2013 where she served as the Associate for Worship Arts at Northminster

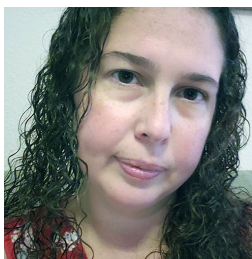
Presbyterian. There, she developed a creative worship service and a service for African refugees and asylum seekers. In 2015, their son Luke was born and they returned to Florida. Mary Beth served First- Bradenton (2016-2018) and has taught and preached around the presbytery since the birth of their second son Nathan in 2018. When she is not keeping up with her boys, Mary Beth enjoys art, music, baking, and reading books about the church in society.

**Cori** grew up in Bradenton, FL and was baptized when she was 16 yrs. old at Palma Sola Presbyterian Church. Cori married her high school sweetheart Ben, and together they have three children, Emma, Benny and Noah. She attended USF where she earned her undergraduate degree in Elementary Education. Then Cori attended the distance learning program at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary and graduated with an MDiv. Until June, 2018, she served as the Associate Pastor at Pine Shores Presbyterian Church in Sarasota focusing on youth and young adult ministries.

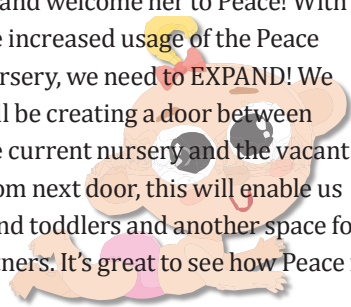


These two women are new Parish Associates for the church and will be commissioned as such at the Congregational Meeting in January. Mary Beth will be aiding with Adult Ed and Cori will be assisting with Congregational Care, although both will be preaching, etc.

We are delighted to welcome **Jaclyn Carrington** as our second professional nursery caregiver! She joins Damaris Luna every Sunday and she often brings along her own rays of sunshine: children Emmalynn and Jacob. Stop by and welcome her to Peace! With the increased usage of the Peace Nursery, we need to EXPAND! We will be creating a door between the current nursery and the vacant room next door, this will enable us



to have one spot for babies and toddlers and another space for preschoolers and kindergartners. It's great to see how Peace is growing!



Coming up in January 2020, Peace Church will be leasing space to the Center Montessori Preschool! The preschool will be in the north wing of the Peace Center, using rooms 52 and 54, Monday-Friday. We look forward to welcoming these inspired

# Montessori

teachers and their lovely students. We are in the process of

adding a fenced play area on the east side of our Peace Center. This play area will be used by both Montessori and our Peace children. If you have any little tykes outdoor toys, please consider donating them for the playground, contact [cyf@peacepcusa.com](mailto:cyf@peacepcusa.com)



## About the Peace Forums

What kind of a world do we want to live in? What are our deep concerns for humanity?

What does our relationship to Jesus Christ teach us about social concerns?

*His ministry is about helping the poor, recovery for those with disabilities, deliverance to captives, and a time when everybody will find acceptance.*

—Luke 4:18

The Peace Forum is a time and place for talking and learning about the important issues of our lives. On an occasional Sunday afternoon or evening we talk about those things that concern us: our lives, our futures, and those of our children and grandchildren.

Incorporating Presbyterian values going back 500 years to the Reformation, we are working to transform society, to develop and protect the resources of nature for the common welfare, to work for justice and peace in society, and to use God's creative power for the fulfilment of human life. (The Confession of 1967)

At Peace Forums we discuss matters with full civility, listen deeply, and respect persons with different perspectives, and “commit to being uneasy” in our diverse life together.

In recent years Peace Forums have focused on various topics including:

- How diversity and ethnicity has affected our feelings and lives
- How we deal with depression and suicide, and resources for help
- How service animals and emotional support animals can alleviate human distress
- How Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) can affect children for the rest of their lives
- Learning about the stressed life in Haiti
- Global warming and climate change, and the effects on Florida's environment
- Explored experiences and the rights of people who are gay or lesbian, LGBTQ

### Next Steps

Let us know topics and concerns you would like to see addressed—perhaps topics on health care, racism, homelessness, human trafficking, gun violence, bullying, refugee resettlement. Or, should we revisit one of the previous Peace Forum topics?

Would you be willing to help us focus on a forum topic or be interested on being on a steering committee?

For more information, or interest in participating, please contact:

Diane Engster [text – (703) 598-5668], Bill Yolton at (703) 598-5670,

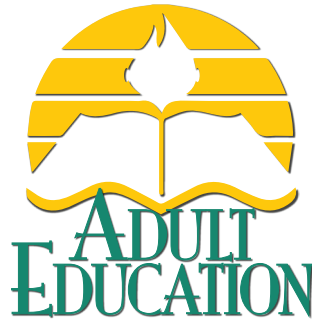
Adult Education Team Co-Chairs—Dona Larimer and Barbara Wright, or

Parish Associate, Mary Beth McSwain



*Our Church's bird families showed up to hear Elizabeth preach on protecting the environment.*

Peace Church's Adult Education classes center on the themes of The Bible, Theology and Ethics, Christian Life, and Spirituality. These classes will be offered during Lively Learning in the coming weeks. All are welcome to attend at 9:45 Sunday mornings.



**“Anxious to Talk About Race”**

is an examination of ways that the issue of race affects Americans inside and outside our Christian churches. Led by David Thomas and Elizabeth Deibert. October 27–December 15

**“Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes”**

looks at the distinctive perspective of the birth of Jesus offered by each of the four Gospels by thinking about how a house might look for Christmas based on what each Gospel says. Led by Richard Deibert. November 17–December 15.

Beginning in January new classes will start.

**“The Bible and #Me, Too”** delves into Christian sexual ethics. Led by Mary Beth McSwain and Patti Jung. January 5–February 16.

**“An American Conscience: the Reinhold Neibuhr Story”**

explores the thoughts of the American Reformed theologian, ethicist and commentator on politics who was described by Arthur Schlesinger as the “most influential theologian of the 20th century” and by *Time* as “the greatest Protestant theologian in America since Jonathan Edwards.” Led by Steve Kersten and Bill Yolton. January 5–February 16

**“Earth Care”** investigates our responsibility to our planet and our church’s commitment in learning to be faithful to that charge. Led by members of The Peace Earth Care Team. January 5–February 16.

**The Mission Team** has been busy supporting both Turning Points and Beth-El this fall.

We have been very involved in transforming the thrift store at Beth-El into a clean, bright, pleasant place to shop for the farmworker community. The store was closed for six weeks while we re-did it from top to bottom. And we got some terrific help from Eirinn Camphire and the youth group who came out and helped hang hundreds of garments on Columbus Day. They are to be commended for giving up a day off from school to devote the day to those that are less fortunate.



Also, we want to make the members of Peace aware that we are going to have an ongoing need for recycled plastic shopping bags to be used in the thrift store. Please drop them off in the Beth-El barrel and we will take them up weekly.

And last but not least, we need additional volunteers to help sort and hang the incoming donations of clothing for the store. If you have found the food pantry work to be too physically challenging, please consider this new task which can be a sit-down job in an air-conditioned room with no heavy lifting required. Team Leaders this is a great way to enjoy fellowship with your team and do so much good at the same time. Please reach out to Dean Vittetoe or Nancy Hogue for details.



**The Fellowship Team** is looking for people to volunteer to bring food for Fellowship, i.e. fruit, muffins, cookies, breads, brownies. They can be store-bought or homemade. Sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall and indicate what you will bring so that others can supplement. If possible, please have food there by 9 a.m. As always, the team will continue to provide drinks and take care of setup and cleanup.

Just a reminder, if you like to borrow or use any fellowship items (including coffee, creamers, sugar, lemonade, plates and cups, etc.) please make the team aware so that we are prepared for Sundays. You can email Ellen Walch or Anne Lamb to let them know.

We hope you are enjoying the anniversary cakes for couples married 50 years or more, which we will be continuing to do for several more months. If we have missed yours, please let us know.

Also, please be sure to look at the Pastors Appreciation Wall for new additions this past October.



## MOVIES SET FOR 2019-20 FAITH AND FILM

This group meets on the 2nd Friday of each month, Sept. to May. We gather at church at 6:30 to visit with each other. The movies begin at 7:00 p.m. SHARP, followed by discussion.

There is no need to sign up or make any advance plans. Just show up on the correct Friday and enjoy the movie. This group is a great way to ease into the "+2, as in Worship +2 is what we do." **BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS AND ANY REFRESHMENTS**

**Dec 13, 2019**

***The Upside*** (2017, PG-13, 2:06)

Ivy Ruark, Discussion Leader

**Kevin Hart, Bryan Cranston, Nicole Kidman**

A comedic look at the relationship between a wealthy man with quadriplegia and an unemployed man with a criminal record who's hired to help him.



**Jan 10, 2020**

***First Reformed*** (2017, R, 1:53)

David Thomas, Discussion Leader

**Ethan Hawke, Amanda Seyfried, Cedric the Entertainer**

First Reformed is a serious and sobering film about the challenges facing contemporary religion and the spiritual riches which abound to those who remain open to grace and the mystery of God. It also has some harsh things to say about the prosperity Gospel-based evangelicalism of megachurches like Abundant Life." (S&P review) While the plot depicts some hot button issues, the heart of the narrative concerns the spiritual trajectory of an earnest pastor struggling with his own inward issues.



**Feb 14, 2020**

***Marshall*** (2019, PG-13, 1:58)

Jim Padula, Discussion Leader

**Sterling K. Brown, Kate Hudson, Chadwick Boseman, Josh Gad**

A rousing courtroom drama about Thurgood Marshall as an ardent NAACP lawyer in a town convulsed by racial hatred of blacks. "Director Reginald Hudlin keeps this courtroom drama percolating and is able to draw strong and credible performances from Chadwick Boseman (who played Jackie Robinson in 42) and from Josh Gad. The film's depiction of racial prejudice is very timely." S&P Review



**Mar 13, 2020**

***The Mustang*** (2019, R, 1:36)

Dirk Brinkmeyer, Discussion Leader

**Matthias Schoenaerts, Jason Mitchell, Bruce Dern**

Uplifting story about how a wild mustang becomes a spiritual teacher to an emotionally shut-down man. Roman Coleman (Matthias Schoenaerts) is a prison inmate who admits to being silent and antisocial. The authorities have decided to move him from his solitary confinement in a maximum security prison to another prison situated in the Nevada desert. Assigned to do "outdoor maintenance," Roman observes some of the other inmates working with wild mustangs, led by Myles (Bruce Dern), the crusty and critical trainer in charge of the program. Based on a true story. Authentic mustang horse training scenes.



**Apr 17, 2020**

***The Biggest Little Farm*** (2018, PG, 1:31)

Documentarian John Chester and his wife Molly work to develop a sustainable farm on 200 acres outside of Los Angeles. The hopeful story of a natural farm built on biodiversity and a recognition of interconnections, impermanence, and transformation.

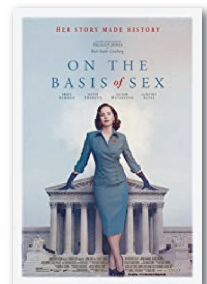


**May 8, 2020**

***On the Basis of Sex*** (2018, PG-13, 2:00)

**Felicity Jones, Armie Hammer**

The true story of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, her struggles for equal rights, and the early cases of a historic career that lead to her nomination and confirmation as U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice.



# November's Family Fun Fest a Success

The FFF is a product of the Outreach Committee led by Lynda Harman and Tom Finnerty. We had 115 volunteers working to make the FFF a success. Success for the FFF came in many ways: it brought our Peace family closer, it introduced the Peace campus to new friends and neighbors, it raised money for



2 local missions (Beth-El and Turning Points), it exposed community services to our visitors (such as Whole Child, Satchels Last Pet Resort and the Lakewood Ranch Rotary Books for Kids Program) and we utilized the property in a way that isn't "usual"—we all played outside!



Bounce House at Family Fun Fest (FFF) is useful for trying out back flips.



Face painting was very popular at the Family Fun Fest.



Relishing the music at the FFF.



Learning Native American music at the Family Fun Fest.



The Lakewood Ranch High School Acapella choir sang at the FFF.



Shooting baskets at the Family Fun Fest.



Contemplating the Silent Auction items.



All the Peace Volunteers ready for the FFF.

# PEACE: A MATTHEW 25 CHURCH

The Session approved Peace Church to become a Matthew 25 Church. Mathew 25:31-46 tells us that we need to be actively engaged in the world around us. Based on this scripture the 222nd and 223rd General Assemblies (2016 and 2018) encouraged PC(USA) to “act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor”.

By becoming a Matthew 25 Church, the Session and Peace Church are committing to becoming more active in showing God’s love, justice and mercy. Three areas of focus have been identified: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, eradicating systemic poverty. The Session wants to address all three initiatives.



Building congregational vitality focuses on our own “spiritual strength and capacity for purposeful mission”.

Dismantling structural racism involves “confronting deeply ingrained racist systems and structures in our communities and country”. Systemic poverty is the “exploitation of people who are poor through laws, policies, practices, and systems that perpetuate their impoverished status”.

By registering as a Matthew 25 Church with PC(USA), Peace is making a commitment “serve the least of these” in our community and the world.

To learn more, visit [presbyterianmission.org](http://presbyterianmission.org), click on “Programs and Services”, scroll down and click on “Matthew 25”.

Information taken from the PC(USA) mission website.

## Another date to save—CROP Walk



The CROP Walk is February 23, 2020. Come join us for a beautiful walk over the Manatee River on the Green Bridge. The walk begins at the United Methodist Church in Palmetto. More

information will be in the bulletin as the time nears.



## Blood Drives

Peace Church partners with Sun Coast Blood Bank four times a year to sponsor blood drives. Giving blood is an easy way to help save lives. For every unit of blood donated up to three lives are saved. Many of us have received or know of someone who has received blood. This would not be possible without donations. You never know when your type of blood is needed. It takes less than an hour to donate and doesn’t cost a thing! Recently, the blood drives have been held at the same time the youth have run a car wash. This has benefited both groups.



**DONOR**

Many have indicated that they have traveled to countries which make them ineligible to donate. That may be true, but for those of you who traveled to Haiti last year, that time limit is up. Stop by the blood mobile to find out whether you are now eligible. Anyone 16 years old or older is eligible with their parent’s permission. **SAVE LIVES—DONATE!**



**December 22  
Sisters of Peace Party**

## Peace Presbyterian Hosts Presbytery

Peace Presbyterian Church hosted the Peace River Presbytery meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>. There were folks at the meeting from many different churches in southwest Florida. There



**Peace River Presbytery**

was a meeting, a worship service, and installation of the new General Presbyter. A continental breakfast and luncheon for up to 225 attendees was served. Now that we have a beautiful sanctuary, we are able to host this meeting. It is a way for Peace Presbyterian to thank so many churches in the Presbytery for their support and donations in the past 10 years since our church was officially chartered.





The Children, Youth and Families of Peace have had a busy fall. We held two car wash/hot dog stand fundraisers which brought in \$1,949 for our Youth Fund! This money will be used to supplement the family's share of cost for upcoming camps and mission trips. Thank you, Peace for your generosity!

In the past few months, we've volunteered at Beth-El, visited the Siesta Key Drum Circle, attended the "Joseph" musical at the Players Theatre and held a wonderful lock-in, with 17 youth spending the night! We are building our relationships

with each other and striving to serve God together. Several youths have joined ministry teams to help guide our church with their ideas and enthusiasm – we'd love to see youth on every ministry team!

We are looking forward to our domestic mission trip in late November—helping to repair homes of people in need in nearby Hillsborough County. All of the Peace families are invited to an Advent Dinner on December 1, and a few weeks later we will present the Nativity Play during worship on December 22. Don't miss it!

With grateful hearts we celebrate 10 years of Peace Church! The friendships we have made, lively learning studies and adventures we have taken together have been the foundation of many a meaningful childhood.



*Kids Club went to the new Jumpin' Fun in Lakewood Ranch.*



*Peace Church youth playing games at a lock-in.*



*Sarah and Amy at the beach drum circle.*



*Children's Choir members playing musical chairs.*



*Children's Choir practice*



*Peace Youth have held a couple of car washes to raise money for their projects.*

## Angel Tree Time is Almost Here



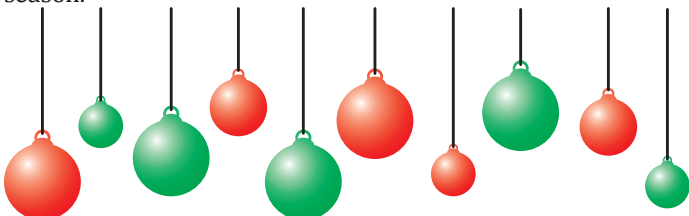
Shortly after Thanksgiving, the Angel Tree will be set up in the Narthex of the sanctuary. On it will be the requested gift for a child or adult at Beth-El. The gifts need to be purchased, wrapped, and returned by the date on the gift card. The Mission Team will ensure the gifts are delivered to Beth-El

in time to be distributed for Christmas. Peace will provide Christmas presents to four needy families. This year, since so many families fear deportation or have experienced job loss, we will also be providing Walmart gift cards. The gift cards will be given to Beth-El to be distributed as they see fit. For larger ticket items, please consider joining with another family to purchase the requested gifts. Thank you in advance for helping these needy, hardworking folks.



## Holiday Decorating & Potluck Dinner on December 1

December 1 will be our official tree decorating and potluck dinner. We will need several adults and teens to decorate the trees in the sanctuary at 3 p.m., then families will gather in the Fellowship Hall to welcome the Christmas holiday season with a potluck dinner at 5 p.m. More information and details will be shared in the announcements and bulletin. Thank you in advance for volunteering to help us welcome the Christmas season.



## Service of Hope

Do you or someone you know find the holidays difficult? If so, invite them to come to the Service of Hope with you. This is a special service of scripture, prayer, meditation and sharing. This annual service is open to the community and is run by the Stephen Ministers of Peace. It has beautiful music and video too.



**When: Sunday, December 8, 2019 at 4:30**

**Where: Peace Presbyterian Church Sanctuary**

## News From the Congregational Care Team

The Congregational Care Team has been busy over the last few months. Our faithful Pray-ers continue to pray for every member of our Peace family, by name, every day. In addition, 7 Care Cluster Leaders now pray each of the 7 days for the concerns in Sunday's bulletin as well as those that come to us during the week. And the Stephen Ministers support individuals within the congregation in times of need.



We have welcomed 4 new Care Cluster Leaders: Susie Melum, Louise Lippert, Aubrey Sammons and Cori Rigney. Susie and Louise (both recent new members) assumed leadership of existing Clusters while Aubrey and Cori are leaders of brand-new Clusters. We now number 16 Care Clusters.

At our quarterly Cluster Leader meetings our concerns are primarily for the needs of others and getting to know members of Peace. But they are also wonderful opportunities for us to get to know each other through the sharing of faith journeys and life experiences. We hope you will share your joys and concerns with your Cluster Leaders within this community of caring called Peace Church.

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