

AUG 2025

THE LATEST @ PRINCE OF PEACE



Getting to *Know* YOU



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GETTING TO KNOW YOU

The best part of accepting a new call is the opportunity to meet new people, to hear their stories, their passions and hopes.

As we get settled, Pastor Rachel and I are beginning to fill our calendars with opportunities to talk more with members of Prince of Peace; we are so grateful for your willingness to make time to speak with us!

We also want to be purposeful in our efforts to know you better, so we are beginning with two goals in mind. The first is to share in a helpful way the feedback we received during the listening events in May. Your

Continued...

GETTING TO KNOW YOU *Continued...*

participation in those meetings was a key part of our discernment for new calls to Prince of Peace, and we want you to see what people said as they reflected around tables together. You can expect to read more about that in next month's newsletter.

The other goal is one we will be sharing with you. In the next year, we want to meet with each household of this congregation individually. And, since making time for these conversations will require your schedule, this is a goal we can all share!

Sometimes new calls begin with 'cottage meetings', which are opportunities to gather several members together and share in grouped conversation with new pastoral leadership. We used this approach in our previous call. However, as we begin serving with you at Prince of Peace, we know several of our people are not present in the local area at this time of year. Accordingly, we need a different strategy.

In the next 12 months, we are going to go down the membership list, name by name, and work to find time in which we can meet with each person. You can

reach out to us, too (particularly if our alphabetical approach would mean you'd be waiting more months than you'd like), and share a few good times when you'd be available.

In the past, meetings like this were held in people's homes. That is welcome, but not mandatory. If you'd like to meet at the church, that's perfectly fine. Or, if you'd prefer to meet at a coffee shop, a library, a restaurant, or a brewery - we want you to be comfortable. Then, when we get together, you can expect us to ask you for your story. We want to know what brought you to Prince of Peace, what passions you have for ministry here, what questions you have for us as we begin, and a few other easy topics. It's not a quiz or an interrogation - just a time for us to learn more about you and a time for you to learn more about us.

In the meantime, whatever you need, please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly. You can be in touch with us by calling the church office, or our cell phones (which someone at the church office can share with you).

I look forward to the conversations!



Pastor Gregg

pastorgregg@poplargo.org
727.585.9969

JULY CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- + Approved a First Fruits gift of \$500 for Lutheran World Relief: Texas Disaster Relief
- + Extended thank you to all who participated in VBS. It was a wonderful week with nearly 60 children and 37 volunteers
- + Project Management Plan presented to replace current church management software
- + Welcomed Pastor Gregg and Pastor Rachel to their first Council Meeting at Prince of Peace

WE ARE EXCITED TO BE HERE!

PASTOR RACHEL'S CORNER

I have said it over and over these last 12 days, and I'll say it again – Pr. Gregg and I are so excited to be here with you all! It has been quite an adventure to get here – months of call process, a flurry of weeks of house selling and buying, saying goodbye and saying hello – and we are ready to get to the ministry we're going to share with you.

I also want to say, on behalf of both of us, Thank You! Thank you for the prayers you have prayed for us. Thank you for the incredibly warm welcome you've been giving us. Thank you for wearing nametags and reminding us of your names! Thank you for your restaurant

and activity suggestions. Thank you for giving us grace as we get up to speed on the many great things happening here at PoP. I am sure there will be more thank-you's to share as we continue to settle in, and we are so grateful for all of you!

Finally, please know that we are here for you. As Pr. Gregg writes, we are hoping to spend intentional time with all of you over this next year, but please don't wait for a special visit to share what you need. We look forward to walking with you, and we do that best when we know what's going on (and we can't know unless you tell us!). Please feel free to contact us directly, via email or phone.



Pastor Rachel

pastorrachel@poplargo.org
727.585.9969



HIGH SCHOOLERS RETURN FROM LUTHEROCK

Three of our high school students along with chaperone Erik Mathre attended camp in late July at Lutherock in North Carolina. The week kicked off with an off-site biking trip along the scenic Creeper Trail in Damascus, Virginia, where campers enjoyed the beautiful views of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Back at Lutherock, they zipped through the trees on the zipline, tested their climbing skills on the rock walls, and explored the Sky Park. To top it all off, they camped out on the Nolichucky River, which was followed by an unforgettable day of whitewater rafting. Campers enjoyed archery, team-building with their cabin, and all the classic camp songs that make Lutherock feel like home. Camp would not be possible without your generous support. Thanks to all who donated to the camp scholarship fund this year!



VBS THANK YOU

What an incredible week of VBS! Nearly 60 children from Prince of Peace and our community, including partnering with Foster Care, came together for five days filled with learning, laughter, and fun. A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated high school youth helpers and adult volunteers who supported the nine counselors from Luther Springs, as they shared God's love and grace, teaching us about how God created us to be. Your generosity in donating supplies and gift cards was instrumental in our preparations, and we deeply appreciate everyone who held our children and leaders in their prayers throughout the week. It was a truly blessed experience for all involved.

Ruth's Promise Adult Day Program



THANK YOU

RUTH'S PROMISE

Thank you for all the generous snack donations to Ruth's Promise Adult Day Program. Your support means so much. We're also excited to share that we received a \$15,000 grant for scholarships from Pinellas Community Foundation, helping us continue to provide vital care and support to our participants and their caregivers.



COLLECTING AUG 3-7

FIRST SUN FOOD: PACK-A-SACK

Our First Sunday Food partner is Pack-a-Sack. Each week we prepare more than fifty bags of nutritious food and snacks for students at Fuguitt Elementary and our own PoP Preschool - to make sure that disadvantaged children have something to eat over the weekends. We are collecting individually packaged snacks of Goldfish, pudding, mac 'n cheese, peanut butter, juice boxes/pouches, squeeze applesauce, peanut butter or cheese crackers, instant oatmeal, cereal, and breakfast bars. Bring to worship August 3 or to the church office during the week.



COLLECTING AUG 10-17

CLOTHES TO KIDS UNDERWEAR DRIVE

In 2024 Clothes to Kids donated 82,000 pairs of NEW underwear to children in need! You can help by dropping off packs of new underwear in the Narthex during the POP annual donations drive August 10-17. Most needed sizes include:

Girls Bikini Briefs XS—L

Toddler and Boys Boxer Briefs XS— L

Womens Bikini Briefs S—XL.

Mens Boxer Briefs S— XL

The children of our community Thank You!



THE START TO ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR

POP PRESCHOOL

Summer camp fun has come to an end, and August 11 starts another school year at Prince of Peace Preschool. Our 6 classrooms have a total of 36 children, with 6 new children joining over the next month. We have a few openings for 2- and 3-year-olds, and room for 12 more 4-year-olds between our 2 VPK classrooms. Please pray for these youngest members of our church community and for our teachers as they begin a new school year of learning and growing.



SUN, AUG 17 / 10AM / PARISH HALL

RALLY DAY

Join us for Rally Day on August 17! At 10am, we'll gather in the Parish Hall to celebrate the start of fall Sunday School! You'll be able to meet our Sunday School teachers for the year and take part in some fun activities with friends! We currently have classes for PreK through adults. We hope you'll be there!



SUN, AUG 24 / 10AM

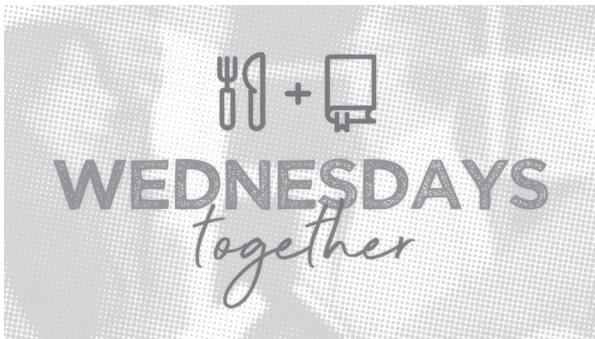
CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

This summer has been filled with faith and fun! Children and youth have participated in VBS, 3M Mondays, and camped at Luther Springs and Lutherock. Now as we begin a new school year, we will celebrate Rally Day on August 17, and Sunday School classes for all ages will begin the following Sunday, August 24 from 10-10:45am. Elementary and Middle School classes will meet upstairs in the COC, and High School in the Youth Room.



THE JOY OF NEW BEGINNINGS ADULT EDUCATION

New beginnings and fresh starts are everywhere in August and here at PoP we are filled with JOY! As school starts, we will embrace some “new”. What, exactly the NEW will look like is still on the drawing board, but go ahead and plan to join us Sundays at 10am and at Wednesdays Together at 6pm for a time of growing our faith. Check out the weekly bulletin to learn details as we renew our sense of hope and purpose. We have so many opportunities to learn new things together. JOIN US in AUGUST!



BEGINNING AUG 20 / 5:15PM / PARISH HALL WEDNESDAYS TOGETHER

Wednesdays Together mark the center of our week at Prince of Peace. Dinner is served at 5:15pm (\$6/adults, \$3/kids), then we move to activities for youth and children, as well as adult Bible Study, at 6pm. Choir rehearsal follows at 7:30pm. Please join us for a delicious meal and good conversation!

Interested in helping with dinner? Setup, serving, or cleanup, there is room for you! Mark your Sunday attendance sheet if you are available to lend a hand on a weekly or monthly basis. Thank you!



WED, AUG 20 AT 7:07PM / INVITE FRIENDS

PRAYER AROUND THE CROSS

Prayer Around the Cross is a brief time in the middle of our noisy, busy weeks to enter a quiet moment of prayer, song and scripture with all our siblings in Christ. We sit and listen together, voicing our own prayers in silence, while the pastor speaks prayers for us all. During our time together, friends rise and light candles, placing them around a cross laid across the chancel steps as they bring loved ones before the Lord. Join us on this special evening, after our meal and classes, as we end the day together in prayer.



RESUMES WED, AUG 20

CONFIRMATION

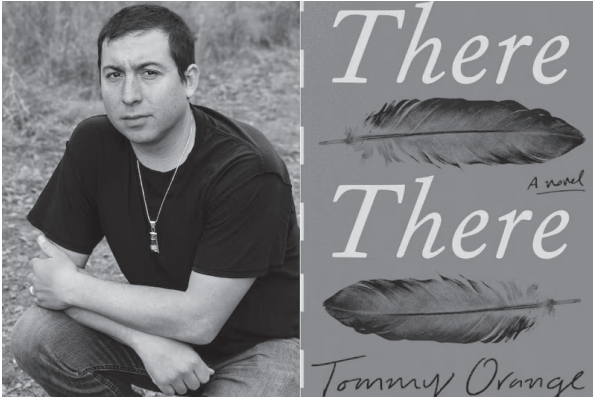
Confirmation will kick off on August 20 after our Wednesdays Together dinner! We will meet the Parish Hall with an orientation session for all parents, mentors, and students. We will talk about why we are here and what's ahead in months to come. Rising 6th graders can expect Pr. Rachel to be in touch soon about starting Confirmation. We look forward to seeing you there! Classes will continue for 6th-8th graders on Wednesdays, beginning August 27, from 6-7pm in the COC.



AUG 22 / 10AM / PARISH HALL

CARD PRAYER MINISTRY

We meet in the Parish Hall to write notes for healing, wellness, celebrations, encouragement, and hope. Folks who are homebound or cannot worship with us for any reason find these cards to be so very welcome. Come join us in spreading God's love. Any questions please call Debbie Freedman or the church office.



THURS, AUG 24 / 7PM

BOOKED FOR DESSERT

The book selection for the August 24 meeting in the Parrish Hall is "There, There" written by Tommy Orange. All are welcome to join the group for lively conversation, fellowship and refreshments whether or not you have read the book. Contact the church office for information.

**SAVE THE DATE
SUN, SEPT 21 / 3PM / SANCTUARY**

INSTALLATION OF REV. GREGG AND REV. RACHEL HOFFMAN

Save the date for the Service of Installation of Rev. Gregg Hoffman and Rev. Rachel Hoffman as pastors here at Prince of Peace Church. Bishop Pedro Suarez will preach and preside. A reception follows in the Parish Hall. Stay tuned for more details about this in the coming weeks.





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HOURS MON-THURS 8:30am-2pm | 727.585.9969 | info@poplargo.org

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