

JULY 2026

THE LATEST @ PRINCE OF PEACE



ENEWS Each Friday and Sunday we send an e-news with up-to-date info about what's going on at PoP and in our community and how you can be involved. Sign up by contacting the church office today!

FACEBOOK Follow us on Facebook (Prince of Peace Lutheran Church) and share our nearly-daily posts with friends

YOUTUBE Our online worship is published each Sunday on our YouTube page, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

WEBSITE Our website has current info, updates, and links for worship and ministry. Visit poplargo.org for more.

OUR COUNCIL COVENANT AND YOURS

Recently, Pastor Rachel and I had our annual leadership reviews with the Council. It was a time to look back at our first year together with the other leaders of the congregation who serve with us on Council. Several insights were helpful, but one really took me by surprise. At one point, someone noted that we had done some great work this year to arrive at a Council Covenant... but, did anyone other than the Council actually know what was addressed in that document? I thought this was a great point.

If you are unfamiliar with Council Covenants, the concept is similar to most other group covenants. Participants collaborate to establish

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OUR COUNCIL COVENANT AND YOURS *Continued...*

norms to which each person is accountable. These covenants make explicit some of the shared values of the group. While the work the group does is important, so is the way in which its members approach their task. With that in mind, take a look at the six principles that your Congregation Council has established to do its work:

1. Follow Jesus, viewing our work through the lens of being faithful disciples who are united in the mission God has given us at Prince of Peace.

Our discernment and decisions are informed and guided by our theology as followers of Jesus Christ and shaped by our Lutheran expression of that faith. Once our theology is reflected in the options we weigh, we look to the mission we share to guide us.

2. Embody our faith. We will pray for each other, the congregation, and the mission we share. We will prioritize growing spiritually as a group, following Christ before we presume to lead.

3. Live visibly as faithful disciples. We will serve as visible examples in the congregation, participating faithfully in worship, congregational events, and ministry initiatives as members of Prince of Peace.

4. Delegate work that does not belong to Council. Council will not micromanage the work of committees, staff, or rostered leaders, but empower them to do the work set before them, equipping them where possible.

5. Value one another's time. We will be aware of the time allotted for agenda items and table items when necessary. We will be active participants in approving the agenda, being sure to amend agendas to include items that need to be discussed. We will familiarize ourselves with the materials presented in advance of the Council meetings. We will be active participants in Council's email threads, contributing vote and voice.

6. Discern fully, hearing multiple perspectives, respecting each voice, and speaking with one voice once a decision has been made. We will

actively listen to all input, considering thoughts and opinions, seeking to understand one another's perspectives, and asking for clarification when things are unclear. We will make space for each person to be heard, and generously accept invitations to speak less or more when our own voice is too prominent or too quiet. We will make sure the dissenting opinion is heard in our deliberations, even if no one in the room holds this opinion. Once a decision is made, we will support Council's decision regardless of whether we were in favor of the decision at the time it was made. We do not require uniformity of perspective but commit to unity in how we communicate about the decisions Council makes (speaking with one voice), trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us.

After several opportunities to review and adjust the language, this was the agreeable version that seemed fitting to this year's Council. All members signed the covenant after approving it, and it is one of the documents that is included in the monthly Council information packets that each member reviews before the Council meetings.

Why do I share this information with you? First, I think it is important for each member of this congregation to know how its Council approaches its task. We are intentional and thoughtful about how we share the leadership responsibilities at Prince of Peace.

Beyond that, though, I think this language is important because it describes a type of shared leadership that can (and does) extend beyond the Council itself. These principles are not just a model for healthy leadership in Council meetings, but in congregational life as a whole. Would you sign your name to this covenant? I encourage you to review the language again to see if you agree. If you do, and you are reading a printed version of this newsletter, perhaps even sign your copy. Every member of this congregation is a leader in some ways. The more of our leaders who are willing to commit to leading together and doing so in healthy, faithful ways, the stronger our congregation can be!

—Pr. Gregg

PASTOR RACHEL'S REMARKS

If your eyes have ever wandered during one of Pr. Gregg's sermons (it's rare, but it happens), you may have noticed me writing in my worship binder. If you've ever wondered what I'm writing, all will now be revealed!

After the first Easter of the Pandemic, when we realized we wouldn't be returning to 'regular' worship any time soon, Pr. Gregg and I started an online Coffee Hour on Sunday morning, right after the worship service was streamed. We would get on Facebook Live, and our parishioners (any anyone else) could join us for about an hour from wherever they were. Pr. Gregg and I would talk, and those who were watching could type in their thoughts, questions, and answers; in this way, we got to have a 'live conversation' with each other.

Our Coffee Hour would start the same way each week: the person who had not preached would share their thoughts on the sermon. That person would talk about what was interesting, what we wondered, what we were inspired by. We'd ask questions. The preacher would answer, and sometimes add in things they didn't include in the sermon but thought were useful or intriguing. And those who had participated in the worship service just prior to Coffee Hour would chime in with their thoughts, too.

After a few weeks of this pattern, I realized I was having a hard time keeping track of all the things I heard in Pr. Gregg's sermons, even things that made

me think "Oh I should definitely mention this!" So, I started taking notes while he preached, to be sure I could contribute meaningfully to the conversation later. We were in our dining room at this point, so no one could see me, of course. And I discovered that, in addition to being able to have a better conversation, I was remembering more of the sermons in general, understanding more fully, and staying more focused while I listened.

I had always been a very thorough note-taker in school, but this was not something I'd seen done in worship. I knew I was a visual learner (many people have a way they learn best – by hearing, seeing, or doing, usually, though science continues to discover more about how people learn), but I didn't realize until I started taking sermon notes how much of a difference seeing the words on the page made for me. Taking notes was helping me grow in faith. And so, when we returned to in-person worship, I continued taking notes when Pr. Gregg preached. And once in a while, someone would mention to me that because they'd seen me taking notes, they'd tried it, too – and it helped them as well!

I welcome you to try note-taking in worship, if you think it may be helpful; if you do, I hope you'll share with me how it goes! And if you've discovered something else that helps you take in sermons more fully, I'd love to hear about it!

–Pr. Rachel

JUNE CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- + Discussed the annual Pastoral Leadership Reviews
- + Approved First Fruits contributions of \$500 to Clothes to Kids
- + Voted to approve seven new voting members joining PoP
- + Reviewed plans for Belonging Sunday on Aug 2
- + Reviewed YTD Revenue and Expenses, including Regular and Special Day offerings
- + No monthly Council meeting will be held in July

Clothe a Kid,



Change a Life

FIRST FRUITS: CLOTHES TO KIDS

This month, we are sending \$500 to Clothes to Kids, a local organization dedicated to providing new and quality used clothing to low-income or in crisis school-age children, free of charge. We have partnered with CtK before, and in the past, our donations have been used to purchase underwear for kids in need. To learn more about CtK, visit their website at clothestokids.org.



JULY 13-17, 9AM-4PM

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

“Creation Speaks” VBS at PoP is July 13-17 from 9am-4pm, and we are looking forward to welcoming more than 50 children and youth for this week of learning and growing in faith!

Thank you to everyone who has donated supplies, gift cards, and money to support VBS! It takes many supplies to cover this many kids and activities, and your generosity makes it possible!

Thank you to our volunteers who are getting ready to help with this week! If you're interested in volunteering in any way, please let Pr. Rachel know, we'd be glad to have you!

Finally, please plan to **join us on Sunday, July 19** between services for a “VBS Show & Tell” in the Parish Hall, where you can see what great things happened at “Creation Speaks!”



POP PRESCHOOL

We are enrolling for the 26-27 school year! Encourage your parent friends to visit PoP Preschool and speak with Priscilla Luster for more information.

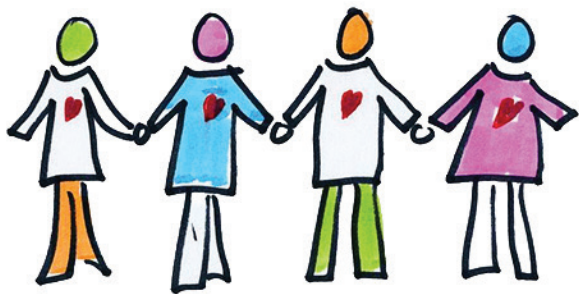
OPPORTUNITIES TO WORSHIP



WEDNESDAYS / NOON / CHAPEL

WEEKLY NOONDAY PRAYER

Join us on Wednesdays at noon for a service of Scripture, song, and prayer. We will share joys and concerns, and then pray, read, sing, and grow together. We hope you will be able to come encounter the Word of God with us, whether once in a while or every week. See Pr. Gregg's June Newsletter article for more information.



Be sure to sign up by July 26!

SUN, AUG 2 / ONE SERVICE AT 10:30AM

BELONGING SUNDAY

You belong at Prince of Peace! On Sunday, August 2, we will gather for 'Belonging Sunday' to celebrate our community and create stronger connections. We will have a ****special combined worship service at 10:30am**** (please note this will replace our usual two services). During this service, we will bless our new church name tags, which we will be able to use every week, to know each other even better.

After worship, we hope you'll stay for a potluck! The church will provide fried chicken, and we invite you to bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Please join us for Belonging Sunday as we worship and give thanks that we all have a place to belong, right here at Prince of Peace! Sign up on the attendance sheet or call the church office, so we can order plenty of fried chicken!

OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT



FRI, JULY 3 / 6:30PM / CLEARWATER

POP GOES TO THE BALL GAME!

Join PoP for an evening of Threshers baseball, food, and fireworks on Friday, July 3, at 6:30pm! Tickets are \$17.50, and include open seating in the 3rd base picnic area, a 2 ½ hour buffet of hot dogs, burgers, peanuts, popcorn, ice cream sandwiches, soft drinks, bottled water, and a fireworks show to conclude the evening! Please pay for your tickets with cash or check via the offering plate or church office, or online; mark your payment with 'Baseball tickets' and your name.



**MON, JULY 13 / 6-8PM / COMMERCE BREWING
521 S COMMERCE DR, LARGO 33770**

BEER AND HYMNS

Join Shawn Thomas on the keyboard for an evening of Beer and Hymns at Commerce Brewing. This is a community sing-a-long event that will feature a variety of hymns and other familiar songs. Beer is optional, singing is mandatory! Food Truck (Divino's Tacos) will be onsite, or feel free to bring your own food. Commerce Brewing is located in an adjacent building to the north of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. Ample parking available at PoP.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE



Ruth's Promise Adult Day Program



JULY 5-9, COLLECTING FOOD FOR RUTH'S PROMISE

FOOD COLLECTION

The first week of July, we are collecting snack items for Ruth's Promise, our adult respite care ministry. Each day, our clients are provided with a snack as well as lunch. Thank you for your support of this vital ministry. Our clients and their caregivers thank you!

- SF (Sugar Free) Puddings
- SF candy (individually wrapped)
- Snack pack crackers
- SF Sprite (2 liter)
- Nutrigrain Bars
- SF Jello cups
- Fruit cups
- Belvita breakfast crackers
- Brownies
- Keto breakfast bars
- Pop Tarts
- Fun size candy bars



JULY 12-26

TEACHER APPRECIATION DRIVE

This July, we will be collecting school supplies for our Teacher Appreciation Drive to support learning at Largo Middle, Fuggitt Elementary, Prince of Peace Preschool. As anyone who's known an educator can tell you, many teachers end up providing school supplies for their students out of their own pockets, because other funding isn't available. To help

teachers, leaders, and students, we contacted these schools and asked each teacher what they would need to start their year off strong. We compiled these requests, and now we're inviting you to help us support learning in our community! The full list of requests will be sent in our July e-news, posted in the narthex, and available as an Amazon wish list. Please drop off any of these supplies at PoP between July 12 and 26, and we will deliver the specifically requested items to these 42 teachers before school begins on August 11. **Thank you for your generous support!**



WED, JULY 15 / 9:30AM / PARISH HALL

QUILT MINISTRY

Learn how to create a LWR quilt from start to finish. Session includes cutting squares, piecing the quilt top, stitching the backing, building the sandwich, zigzagging to secure, and tying to finish. Not familiar with these terms? We will demonstrate.

Contact: Jan Brewster or the church office

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE CONT.



COLLECTING ON AUG 2

CLOTHES TO KIDS

Each year, more than 91,000 pairs of new underwear are distributed to children in need who shop at Clothes to Kids. You can help by donating pairs of new underwear on Sunday, August 2, during the annual donations drive at PoP. Most needed sizes include:

Little Girls Bikini-style: Size 4–16

Young Women Bikini Style: Size 5 and up

Little Boys Boxer Briefs: Size XS–XL

Young Men Boxer Briefs: Size S–XXL

A donations table will be set up in the Narthex. Thank you for supporting Clothes to Kids!

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN



SUNDAYS / 10AM / COC, PEACE

WIRED WORD IN THE SUMMER

Scripture is our foundation for our discussions about current events, and this summer our lively Sunday School group is considering how Scripture connects to modern topics like soccer enthusiasts building community, animal protection laws, public education, and how secular culture views death. Each week's topic is TBA, as the editors of the Wired Word write the lessons shortly before they are published, to be as current as possible. Join us any or all Sundays as we read God's Word and apply it to our lives--right now.



SAVE THE DATE

Aug 2: Belonging Sunday

Aug 10: Beer & Hymns at Voodoo Brewing Co., St Pete



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Vivian Adams

Nita Anderson

Emily Behrendt

Dorothy "DJ" Brown

Amanda Byrne

Kristin Campbell

Jane Corcoran

Lee Dreger

Alina Fasoldt

Tyler Fasoldt

Kelly Gibson

Gail Grebe

Linda Henderson

Nathan Johnson

Pauline Koberna

Judy Lorenz

Leah Marshall

Andrew McEntegart

Robert McLaren

Carol Millspaugh

Katherine Potter

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