

# Prince of Peace Tidings

Volume 27

January 2025

Issue 1

## Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year: 2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Now greet the swiftly changing year

With joy and penitence sincere.

Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace

Another year of grace. (LSB 896, stanza 1)

The Triune God – the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit – has blessed us with another year of His grace! The Psalmist David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, puts it this way: *“You crown the year with your bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with abundance”* (Psalm 65:11).

Yes, God’s wagon tracks certainly overflow with abundance! We, poor, miserable sinners do not deserve God’s gifts of daily bread and salvation, but He grants these gifts to us anyway! His grace overflows to us!

In the hymn stanza above from “Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year,” we sing of gratitude for God’s gifts of salvation and daily bread in the past, in the year just ended – 2024, and in the year to come.

We have been surely blessed by God through all the blessings He has bestowed upon us! As a reminder, of His continuous blessings, Luther writes of them as He explains the Creed:

### **First Article: Creation**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

#### *What does this mean?*

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

### **Second Article: Redemption**

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

#### *What does this mean?*

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness,

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# Prince of Peace Tidings

innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

## **Third Article: Sanctification**

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*What does this mean?*

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

God has certainly blessed us in the past, and He blesses us now, and He continues to bless us into the future! In this coming year, *“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace”* (Numbers 6:24-26).

In Christ,

Pastor Adelsen

## ***By request: The Sermon for Christmas Day “The Greatest Gift”***

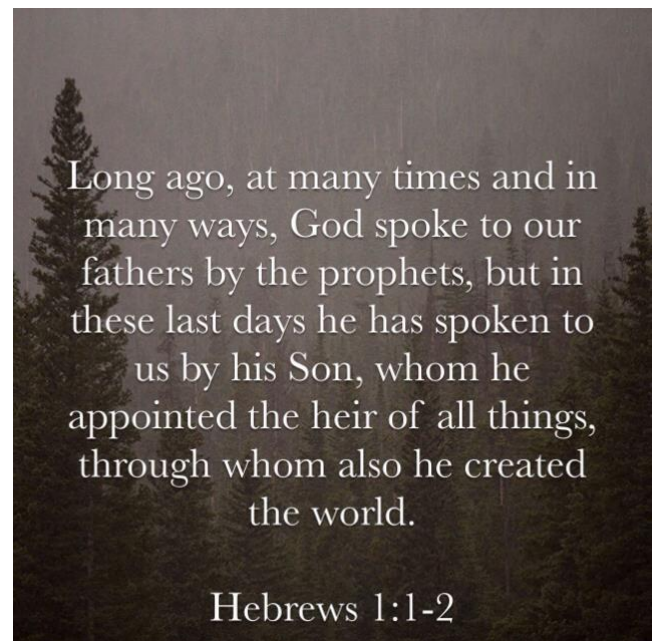
Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen! Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Merry Christmas!

***“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world”*** (Hebrews 1:1-2).

Long ago and at many times, God spoke to His people. He spoke to His people in a partial nature through the prophets.

We can think of Moses and the burning bush when an angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame out of the midst of the bush.

We can point to visions and dreams like Joseph and Daniel. We can point to the calling of Samuel.



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***“But in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son”*** (Hebrews 1:2a). The word “but” has a tendency to wipe out what came before it. We say things like, *“I’d like to do what you’re asking, but...”*

However, the “but” here is not set against the sureness of God’s speaking in the Old Testament times, but it is set against its partialness and the variety of its ways: law, history, poetry, prophecy. What the Old Testament believers received from God was only partial and the message of the prophets was incomplete. More was to come, but this more to come did not cancel out what had been divinely recorded but only completes it.

Those prophets of old were certainly inspired by God to write and proclaim God’s Word. Through those prophets, God was speaking. Those prophets spoke God’s Word as they clung to God’s Word for their hope of salvation – for they as we, shared in that first sin and needed a Savior. We need a savior from our sin of unbelief and selfish ambition. For ***“no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”*** (2 Peter 1:21). Every word in Holy Scripture is God’s Word, not just words of sinful man. The Holy Spirit inspired the prophets to write them down for us, so that we can always cling to them.

But now – ***“in these last days”*** – Jesus has the Last Word, a word that redeems us from sin and death. Today, God is no longer speaking partially through His prophets. Today, He is now speaking fully through Jesus Christ.

So, now that we have the Son of God, God has no more to say, since the Redeemer to whom the Old Testament pointed is the ultimate Word and the perfect revelation of God. Today, we have the Final Word of God, which is revealed in His Word, the Bible.

Now, some may say today: *“If only if I could hear the very Word of God like Moses and Elijah and Isaiah!”* Yes, that would have been awesome to hear, but what we have is so much better! They only received snippets, pieces and parts of the various ways God revealed Himself. Today, ***“in these last days”*** – God speaks to us through His Son!

So, what God spoke through the prophets from Moses to Malachi, we have complete through our Lord Jesus Christ!

And Jesus is not just a prophet of prophets. Jesus is God. This Jesus who was born of the virgin Mary is the Creator of the world. This Jesus existed before time existed. This Jesus spoke the world into existence.

***“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth”*** (Genesis 1:1). Here, we have a reference to God the Father. ***“The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters”*** (Genesis 1:2). Here, we have a reference to the Holy Spirit. But where is Jesus? Then God said, ***“Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw that it was good”*** (Genesis 1:3-4). Jesus is the One who spoke.

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St. John affirms this in our Christmas Gospel this morning: ***“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him”*** (John 1:1-3a).

Jesus is ***“the radiance of the glory of God”*** (Hebrews 1:3). You see, the whole array of God’s divine attributes radiates forth in Jesus. Radiance is an inner brightness that shines out like the sun in the sky with its streaming light. To see that light is to see the sun; to see Jesus is to see the God of glory.

Jesus is ***“the exact imprint of [God’s] nature”*** (Hebrews 1:3). You see, Jesus is an exact image of the invisible God made visible in Jesus. Jesus exactly represents God the Father. So, to know Jesus is to know God’s nature and God’s glory. For as Jesus said, ***“Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father”*** (John 14:9) and ***“I and the Father are One”*** (John 10:30).

Not only was Jesus active in Creation, but He ***“upholds the universe by the Word of His power”*** (Hebrews 1:3). You see, we exist today because of Jesus. He keeps everything going. The sun rises each day because of Jesus. ***“[Jesus] is before all things, and in Him all things hold together”*** (Colossians 1:17).

Jesus is ***“the purification for sins”*** (Hebrews 1:3). Sin stains. Sin defiles. Sin damns. Only One could purify and that is God. And only once would God do this. At Calvary’s cross, the Creator and Sustainer became the Sin-bearer. God took upon Himself human flesh for that moment. He was born on this day with the purpose of being the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world.

Then, with the work of redemption done, Jesus ***“sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”*** (Hebrews 1:3). Today, Jesus is ***“far above all rule and authority and power and dominion”*** (Ephesians 1:21a). He has all power and all honor. The ascended Lord holds the scepter in His nail-scarred hands, ruling over all in heaven and on earth.

***“For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’? Or again, ‘I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son’?”*** (Hebrews 1:5). You see, no one has ever been saved by the name of an angel. But there is a name that saves. ***“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”*** (Acts 4:12).

Jesus is superior to the angels, because He was ***“begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father”*** (Nicene Creed). Jesus is superior because from all eternity He is God’s Son, the Second Person of the Triune God, true God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is Emmanuel. He is fully God become fully man – for us.

But what about that second phrase: ***“I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”***? Those words were spoken originally about Solomon, but these words also have a deeper meaning. You see, they pointed ahead to David’s greater Son, the eternal One whose kingdom would have no end. It is not enough to call Jesus “Son,” but He also calls God “Father.” Never has there been such a divine sonship claimed for the angels.

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*“And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, He says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship Him”* (Hebrews 1:6). On that Last Day, that great day of judgment, He will stand as “the firstborn,” first in rank and position, as all the angels bow down before Him in worship.

Today, *“in these last days”* God continues to speak to us by His Son through apostolic ministry and through His priesthood of all believers. Jesus sent out His apostles to speak His Word. Pastors are called and ordained to speak what Jesus says. You are called to speak the Christmas message to your friends, your family, your neighbor *“for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord”* (Luke 2:11). Jesus has come to save you and me from the power of sin, death, and the devil. He has come to undertake the Great Exchange as He put on our human frame, and in return He gives us redemption, His glory, and His name. *“For while we were still sinners Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8). In Christ alone, we are reconciled to God through His death.

When God speaks in Holy Baptism, we receive His name and with it everything that belongs to Jesus, including His life that conquers death. When God speaks through pastors and yourselves who say what Jesus says, forgiving one another in His name, we are forgiven. When God speaks *“this is My body; this is My blood,”* the incarnate Christ’s body and blood are truly present in the Lord’s Supper. When you hear, *“The peace of the Lord be with you always,”* the Lord’s peace rests upon you. This is the same peace the angels proclaimed at His birth.

On this Christmas Day, we see the supremacy of Jesus. We see the radiance of His glory as the exact imprint of God. Through His coming, we have received the Greatest Gift – which is salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. For there is no greater gift than forgiveness, life and salvation! Merry Christmas! Amen!

*The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.*

+ SOLI DEO GLORIA +

If you would like to read or listen to past sermons, check out <http://www.wspop.org/sermons.html>.

You may also listen to sermons on Spotify at <https://open.spotify.com/show/27gLS12vjGx23YjuAM3XLH> or by using the QR Code:



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## Sunday Adult Bible Study: Will the Real Church Please Stand Up?

Upon the completion of our study on 1 Corinthians, we will begin a different sort of Bible study as we will read together *Will the Real Church Please Stand Up: 7 False Churches*.

Meet the Campbells: Ben, Jessica, and their two children have recently moved to Midway. They are looking for a church family to call their own.

Follow along as the Campbells experience the sights, sounds, blessings, and struggles of seven different churches that leave them longing for something more. Will the real church please stand up?

On the journey, you will discover the purpose and unity of each false church before finally encountering the real church and learning what exactly makes a church real or false.

The real church is standing, ready to welcome you with the true gifts of Christ. When we finish this study, you will know a real church when you see it.



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## Wednesday Morning Bible Study: 2 Peter & Jude

Christians around the world often contend for their faith. In some parts of the world, Christians must strive against armed threats. Other believers must fight against false teachings both within and without the Church. Striving for the Gospel truth both in faith and life is a common theme in 2 Peter and Jude.

Jude specifically writes that Christians are “to contend for the faith” (Jude 3). Peter urges his readers to “be all the more diligent in making their calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10).

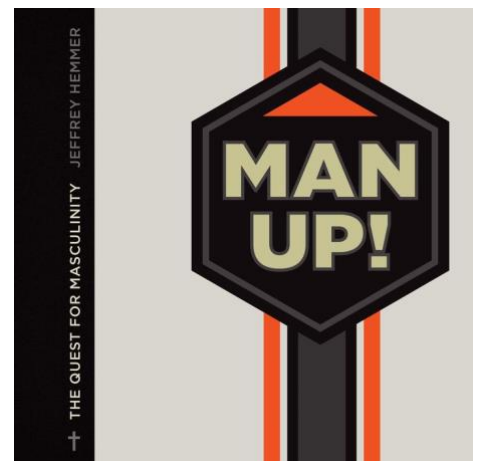
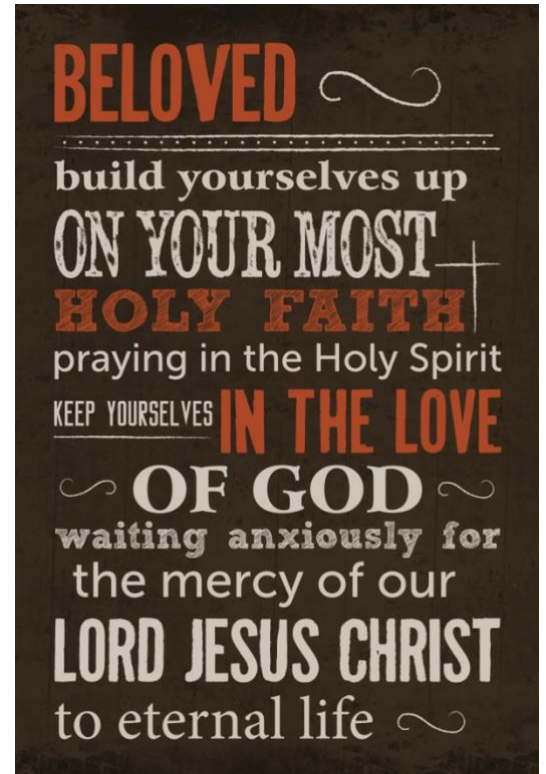
The message of God’s grace and forgiveness through Christ Jesus binds together the Christian Church. Satan seeks to destroy that holy communion. After the apostles and evangelists established congregations, Satan delighted in sending false teachers into those congregations to untie what Christ had bound together through faith. Satan does the same today.

Peter and Jude wrote their letters to strengthen and encourage God’s people to remain faithful to Christ’s calling.

Come and join us **each Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.** as we continue our study on 2 Peter and soon begin our study on Jude!

## Men’s Bible Study: The Quest for Masculinity

What does it mean to be a man? How are men featured in the culture? What is the role of a man? We discuss these issues through the lens of God’s Word! Men, join your fellow brothers in Christ on **Tuesday, January 14 at 5 p.m. at Features in West Salem.**



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## Baby Hats for Newborns, Preemies and Stillbirths

Baby hats knitted and crocheted needed! We will be having a dedication for the hats on Life Sunday January 19, 2025. So please have your finished projects in by January 19! Our hats will be donated to a local hospital. Thank you so much!



## First Friday Fellowship at POP

Mark your 2025 calendar for First Fridays at Prince of Peace! Beginning on Friday, January 3, all are welcome to POP each first Friday of the month. Each first Friday will begin with prayer and devotions and then move on to activities such as movie night and game night.



## Quilting

Quilters: Meet at the church Monday, January 20 at 9 a.m.

## LWML

Our first meeting of the new year will be held Saturday, January 4, at 9 a.m.

We'll be discussing projects and events for 2025.

2024 secret sisters will also be revealed.

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Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life

**LIFE NEWS—JANUARY 2025**



**LUTHERANS  
FOR LIFE**

**lutheransforlife.org**



## Life Newsbytes

**62,000 Babies Older Than 15 Weeks Are Killed in Abortions Every Year** – Although historically many doctors believed that unborn babies could not feel pain until the third trimester or even well after birth, the modern scientific literature shows that unborn babies can feel pain by 15 weeks gestation, and possibly as early as 12 weeks. The majority of abortions occur in the first trimester, but a substantial number are performed at 15 weeks or later on unborn babies who are capable of experiencing pain. Due to significant limitations with U.S. abortion data, the precise number of abortions after 15 weeks is unknown, but available data suggests that tens of thousands of abortions on unborn babies who feel pain are performed at 15 weeks or later each year.

### *How many abortions take place in the U.S. at 15 weeks of gestation or later?*

2022 abortion data from the states and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicate that approximately 6% of all reported abortions take place at or after 15 weeks of gestation. When applied to the Guttmacher Institute's most recent estimate of 1,032,150 abortions nationwide in 2023, this is approximately 61,900 abortions at 15 weeks or later each year. (Read more: [www.lifenews.com/2024/12/23/62000-babies-older-than-15-weeks-are-killed-in-abortions-every-year](http://www.lifenews.com/2024/12/23/62000-babies-older-than-15-weeks-are-killed-in-abortions-every-year))

## Speaking up For Life

"What is it that is essential for your life this New Year? What gifts do you cherish? Certainly, Jesus is the most precious gift we have! Let Him shine through your whole life this year. Take Him with you everywhere. Remember whose family you belong to! Cling to Jesus, our Father's Son, this New Year! Our Father goes with you and promises His blessings, now and forever!" *Rev. Darren Green, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota*

"Abortion has only ever represented a symptom. The sickness has always consisted of the deeper reality of sin. So, law never embodied the finish line or the prize. Our Savior's victory invites us to

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settle for nothing less than sharing life, abundant and everlasting, with each human being and receiving them all as gift and privilege. Let's press ahead with renewed enthusiasm!" *Pastor Michael Salemink, Lutherans For Life*

"As Christians, each one of us should be deeply steeped in God's Word. That is where the truth lies. We don't want to be 'right' for our own sake so we can boast in our 'right-ness.' We should want to be 'right' because God is revealing His truth to us, and we have been aligned with His truth. As we labor together in the life arena, let each one of us be so grounded in God's Word that we recognize God's truth and speak it in love." *Barbara Lane Geistfeld, DVM, Lutherans For Life*

## Life Shines in Darkness

by *Pastor Michael Salemink*



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"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:4-5).

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The 1993 blockbuster film *Jurassic Park* didn't just spawn dinosaurs. It also gave us two of the most poignant sanctity of life affirmations in popular culture. Dr. Ian Malcolm, a chaos theorist played by Jeff Goldblum, laments

that "Scientists were so preoccupied with whether or not they could, they didn't stop to think if they should." And the same character appreciates how "Life, uh, finds a way."

Nobody can deny that life issues involve difficulties. Surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis bring significant suffering. Bearing a child is hard. Injury, illness, and impairment hurt. They impose and deprive. Feeling afraid, ashamed, impoverished, abused, or abandoned sometimes complicates the circumstances. Even Jesus recognizes the reality: **"When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come"** (John 16:21). **"In the world,"** He goes on to acknowledge, **"you will have trouble"** (John 16:33). The Darkness is real, and it is deep.

It's just that it does not negate the light. The burdens do not cancel the blessings. The sorrows don't even equal the celebrations. God always makes life, and He always makes life worth it. The Good Giver of Life also accompanies each one as the Almighty Lord of **"my power is made perfect in weakness"** (2 Corinthians 12:9). The crucifixion forgiveness of Jesus Christ proves that He constantly populates the adversities themselves with delights.

However compromised—and we all are—every neighbor embodies a gift. However imperfect, every day comes as opportunity and privilege. They usually require patience and persistence, of course, and not a little bit of shared sweat and tears. But they turn out the sweeter for it. **"When she has delivered**

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the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world" (John 16:21). "Take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33)!

## Repenting of "Feasts that Know No Fast"

Fresh off the Christmas season and the retail frenzy that accompanies it, January brings a shot of frigid air into the lives of the people we know and love. This is not a meteorological statement either. While it is true that January is one of the colder months for those in North America, the cold front blast that hits us is the full force of credit card spending that fueled the retail frenzy. The bills for the gifts, the parties, the food and the travel have now come due. The credit card makes things convenient, but it also requires more discipline than many can muster. When the bills come in January for December's celebration, it really puts a damper on things.



Congregations often make the same mistake in stewardship. We often charge forward in doing what we always do or starting new endeavors without counting the cost. But at the end of the month, or the end of year, when the bill comes due, the red ink on the congregational balance sheet smacks the people in the face like a stiff north wind in January. We hunkered down. We circle the wagons. We start to panic. The work of the Gospel suffers.

The fifth verse of "Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness" (*LSB* 788) addresses this January situation. The words penned by William Watkins Reid are very needful for us to hear as we start a new year, while dealing with the bills of past efforts and expense.

*"Forgive us, Lord for feast that knows not fast ..."* This hits us hard, doesn't it? We love when the money is flowing, the parties are going, and things are getting bigger and better. But there is a time in life, and most especially in our spiritual disciplines, that we need to fast. The purpose of a fast is to step back, lay something aside for a time, and replace it with meditation on Scripture and prayer. This is designed to keep us from turning something that may well be good into an idol that separates us from the God who loves us in Christ.

*"For joy in things that meanwhile starve the soul ..."* In "The Parable of the Sower," we hear Jesus talk about how the worries and cares of life choke out the growth of the seed of the Word that was planted. We know how this happens in our lives. Professional and youth sports do this. Materialism does this. Travel and leisure and do this. There is a list of things that we enjoy that starve the soul.

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But it also happens in our congregations. When corporate stewardship is not managed in a responsible way, it can and does destroy individual stewardship. Is it good individual stewardship to support a ministry that doesn't take its corporate responsibility seriously?

*"For walls and wars that hide your mercies vast and blur our vision of the Kingdom goal."* This is the ultimate end of the idolatry of failed stewardship. We build walls between believers within the church and hamper those who are outside from coming to the Light of Life that is Jesus. The wars we fight over money and its impact on ministry do the same. It eventually blurs our vision of what we are here to do: share the Good News of Jesus. When the wintry blast of January hits us in this fashion, we are called to repent.

When the Holy Spirit uses the cold front of the call to repentance, we meet the God who forgives and restores. That is what He does for individual and corporate stewards. When the bills hit, they call us back to Jesus. He is the One who indeed forgives us our shallow thankfulness and leads us into the bounty of His mercy yet again.



## Our January birthdays

Evilyn Hausner	January 5
Sarah Kolander	January 5
Sharen Hammes	January 7
Carter Hodgkins	January 8
Alex Soto	January 8
Thomas Schran	January 11
Wally Roush	January 18
Jodi Soto	January 19
Cassie Grube	January 20
Lisbeth Novak	January 22
Braxton Hundt	January 23
Sawyer Hundt	January 24
DeAnne Otto	January 26
Sharie Brunk	January 30

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# Prince of Peace Tidings

Claudia Grube January 30  
Laura Horstmann January 30  
Nancy Horstmann January 30

## **Our January anniversaries**

Eric & Cassie Grube January 7

## January Schedules

### Ushers

January 5-Roger & Virginia Emmons  
January 12-Russ & Sharie Brunk  
January 19-Randy & DeAnne Otto  
January 26-Willie & Leatta Danielson

### Greeters

January 5-POP Family  
January 12-Chris Leis & Barb Hinds  
January 19-POP Family  
January 26-Mike & Carolyn Dosland

### Money counters

January 5-Elaine Schmidt & Debbie Dunnum  
January 12-Chris Leis & Lori Peters  
January 19-Barb Alsobrooks & Elaine Schmidt  
January 26-Barb Hinds & Debbie Dunnum

### Song Leaders

January 5-Patty & Nancy Horstmann  
January 12-Brooklynn Scholze  
January 19-Holly Ford  
January 26-Sarah Kolander

### Altar Guild

DeAnne Otto  
Melissa Adelsen

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# January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			New Year's Day 1 Divine Service: 9 a.m.	2	3 Pastor's day off First Friday Fellowship	4 LWML: 9:00 a.m.
5 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30 Elders: 11:30 a.m.	6 Divine Service: 7 p.m.	7	8 Bible study: 9:30 a.m. <a href="#">Choir: 7:30 p.m.</a>	9	10 Pastor's day off	11 Women's Bible Study: 9 a.m.
12 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30 Council: 11:30 a.m.	13 Divine Service: 7 p.m.	14 Men's Bible Study: 5 p.m. at Features, West Salem	15 Bible study: 9:30 a.m. <a href="#">Choir: 7:30 p.m.</a>	16	17 Pastor's day off	18 Women's Bible Study: 9 a.m.
19 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30	20 Quilting: 9 a.m. Divine Service: 7 p.m.	21	22 Bible study: 9:30 a.m. <a href="#">Choir: 7:30 p.m.</a>	23	24 Pastor's day off	25 Women's Bible Study: 9 a.m.
26 Divine Service: 9 a.m. Bible study for all: 10:30	27 Divine Service: 7 p.m.	28	29 Bible study: 9:30 a.m. <a href="#">Choir: 7:30 p.m.</a>	30	31 Pastor's day off	

## EVENTS

### Baby Hats

A dedication for the baby hats will be held on Life Sunday, January 19.

### Bible Study Opportunities

\*Sunday morning after worship

\*Wednesday morning: 9:30

\*Men's group: Tuesday, Jan. 14, 5 p.m.,

\*Women's group: Saturday, 9 a.m.

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