

Peace Evangelical Lutheran  
Church of Tacoma  
2106 South Cushman Ave  
Tacoma, WA 98405

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# THE CALL TO PEACE

Volume 22 • Issue 1 • Lent 2026



## Faith Opportunities on Sundays 9:45-10:45 am

- **Godly Play for children ages 4-3rd grade** (basement classroom)
- **Explorers for 4th-6th graders** (multipurpose room classroom)
- **Feet to Faith confirmation for 7th-8th graders** (conference room)
- **Adult & Older Youth Education class** (multipurpose room)

**Children:** During 11 am worship, we offer a children's worship time in the basement classroom.

**Community Bible Study on Break** The Community Bible Study on Thursdays will take a break for Lent and resume after Easter. Please join Sunday classes and Wednesday evening Lent offerings.

**Lent Devotional Resources** We're providing several devotional resources for your personal use (see all-church email or talk with Pastor John to get a copy):

+ "Living Well through Lent: Cultivating Healing and Wholeness in Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind," a Living Compass weekly devotional

+ "Walking As Children of Light," a Bread for the World Lenten devotional

+ ELCA World Hunger 40 Days of Lent Calendar and Lenten Series Sumud: "Body of Christ" exploring 1 Corinthians 12, focusing on solidarity with Palestinian Christians, featuring reflections from ELCA Bishops.

**Christ in Our Home** Would you like a copy of the daily devotional "Christ in Our Home"? Pick one up on the Welcome Table or call the church office.

**Centering Prayer for Our Nation** You are invited to a time of quiet, shared prayer. In response to the heaviness many of us are carrying, we will gather with meditative music and in silence to center our hearts, be together, and pray with pure intention for what is happening in our country. **Saturdays, 12-1 pm Feb. 21-Apr. 4** in the sanctuary. Contact Jeanie Correa (253-278-3390) for more information.

**Prayer Chain** Do you know that Peace has a Prayer Chain, a group that prays regularly the thanksgivings and needs of our community? Want to add a request to the Prayer Chain? Want to be part of the group that prays these requests? Want to learn more? Contact Gail Storrs at [gailstorrs@gmail.com](mailto:gailstorrs@gmail.com), 253-222-5246.

## Lent, Holy Week & Easter Special Worship Services

+ **Wednesday, February 18 - Ash Wednesday**  
7 pm Worship (also live streamed) - We receive the sign of the cross in ashes and begin Lent with confession, prayer, and Communion.

+ **Sunday, March 29 - Palm/Passion Sunday**  
8:30 & 11 am Worship (11 am live streamed) - We tell the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and then his suffering and death.

+ **Thursday, April 2 - Maundy Thursday**  
7 pm Worship (multipurpose room - no live stream) - We tell the story of Jesus' last supper, where he washes his disciples' feet and commands them to love one another, and we share Communion.

+ **Friday, April 3 - Good Friday**  
7 pm Worship (also live streamed) - We tell the story of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross and God's deep and abiding love for us.

+ **Sunday, April 5 - Easter Sunday!!**  
Bring cut flowers to adorn the cross outside the church.  
8:30 & 11 am Worship (11 am live streamed) - We tell the story of the empty tomb and God's power for life over death, and we share Communion! Jesus is risen!  
Easter breakfast at 9:30 am, with a chance to give to support youth ministry.  
Godly Play Children's Easter Story at 10:30 am

## Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner!

On Fat Tuesday February 17, the day before Lent begins, come to a pancake dinner and domino night from **6-7:30 pm!** We'll eat pancakes with all the fixins, play dominoes and board games, and families will receive free domino sets!

## Easter Eggstravaganza!

Come to Peace Sat. April 4 from 10 am to 11:30 am for food, Easter crafts, the Easter story, and an egg hunt! Great for families with kids!



Peace Lutheran  
Church



# Pastor John's Reflection



People of Peace,

In his book *Everything Must Change*, Christian writer Brian McLaren writes, people and societies operate out of a framing story, a story that gives them direction, values, vision, and inspiration by providing a framework for their lives. He suggests, the most common framing story in our world today is deeply destructive to our global community—it's about greed, materialism, environmental abuse, and power in violence. It's the same framing story held by the Roman empire in Jesus' day. But Jesus confronts that framing story and offers with his life an alternative one—the kingdom of God. What's it about?

- + It's not about violence and worldly power—they don't ultimately prevail.
- + It's not about competition, but community.
- + It's not about the love of power, but the power of love.
- + It's a vision of peace and justice for all, and forgiveness, and serving the other.

In Jesus' kingdom, the king gives all he is, his whole self, for all people, opening his arms in death to embrace the world in love without condition, without reservation. It's ironic, at the center of the framing story Jesus brings is his suffering and death on the cross. Sounds at first like weakness, failure, and an utter waste, but through the eyes of faith, it's the power of God revealed for life, salvation, and peace.

That's the mystery of Lent and Holy Week we're invited to explore. Jesus invites his followers (us!) to let his framing story shape our lives—his way of loving, serving, dying and rising to new life in God.

Lent is here. Lent is a season of 40 days leading to Easter Sunday. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday February 18 (worship at 7 pm). Lent is a journey with Jesus to his death on the cross, and so we begin by reflecting on our own mortality and sinfulness and God's deep love for us in Jesus and God's power for life and forgiveness over death and sin. You're invited to practice the three disciplines of Lent—prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (acts of service). Prayer connects us with God in conversation, fasting helps us give up what distracts us from a deeper relationship with God, and almsgiving helps us take on what brings us closer to God and others through service. When we intentionally walk with Jesus to the cross in Lent, the Easter promise of resurrection is much more meaningful! Here are some ways to make your Lenten journey richer:

- + **Midweek Gatherings in Lent.** Five Wednesdays in Lent beginning February 25, come to a soup supper (6 pm), intergenerational activity of prayer and service (6:30 pm), and Holden Evening Prayer or children's faith activities (7 pm). Worship will be a rest stop on the journey, a time to pause and contemplate the goodness and love of God for us. We incorporate all three Lenten disciplines—prayer (worship), fasting (simple supper), and acts of service.
- + **Sunday Morning Adult and Older Youth Class.** During the Faith Education Hour (9:45-10:45 am on Sundays), we explore the six church seasons (a different season each Sunday) and how God meets us in the seasons of our lives on our journey of faith. Prayer, confession, reflection, and action will be a pattern we use together.
- + **Lent Devotional Resources, New Peace Devotional Book, Christ in Our Home Daily Devotional.** These are resources to use regularly on the Lenten journey.
- + **Centering Prayer.** On Saturdays from 12-1 pm, the sanctuary will be open for a time of quiet centering prayer for our community, as we find solace in the grounding presence of God in this time of anxiety and heaviness.

+ **Micro Actions.** Commit to take on some of the micro actions suggested by our Anti-Racism Work Group. These are everyday actions each of us can take to make a difference in the fearful environment in our country.

+ **Holy Week Worship.** Let the story of Jesus' passion resonate in your life as we gather to worship on Palm/Passion Sunday (March 29), Maundy Thursday (April 2), Good Friday (April 3), and Easter Sunday (April 5).

My prayer for us this Lent is that the framing story of Jesus will shape our lives in community, and that God will give us strength, courage, and energy to live together into God's vision of peace for our world!

*Pastor John*



# Youth Ministry

## A Season of Becoming: A Reflection on Youth Ministry at Peace

This Lent with our youth has felt like a quiet, beautiful awakening. We are entering a rhythm of listening and gathering, making an effort in discovering not just who our young people are as individuals, but who they are becoming together.



### From Table Talk to Vision

The heart of this season's planning took root on Sunday, January 25, when we gathered at Pam Asadi's home for an Idea-Generating Luncheon. Between bites of shared food, our youth began to articulate how Peace can truly show up for them.

We looked outward, too, discussing needs of our Hilltop neighbors and how our collective passions might meet those needs. There is a burgeoning excitement about what we can do through **Thrive International** and upcoming **SLAM Trips**. Whether it's through new Bible studies, worship nights, or regional Lutheran gatherings, the youth are discerning a collective identity that is rooted in both faith and action.



### The Power of Shared Stories

We saw a glimpse of that collective identity during our Youth Dessert Walk. There is some special mystery in the unity of a drive together from house to house. As families opened their doors, our youth received stories and sweet treats. By sharing desserts and hearing about the traditions that ground different households, our young people experienced the depth of history and love that exists within the Peace community. Those miles walked and stories heard have helped knit this group together, providing a foundation of belonging that will support everything we do next.

### Looking Toward the Horizon

As the Lenten shadows give way to Easter light, the momentum from Pam's luncheon is already taking shape. We are moving into a season of "Passion-to-Mission" projects—initiatives born directly from the hearts of the youth. We are looking forward to:

- **Local Service:** Deepening our footprint in the Hilltop through intentional neighborhood presence.
- **Worship & Study:** Developing a youth-led worship night and a consistent rhythm of spiritual practices that resonate with their daily lives.
- **Global Connection:** Finalizing plans for regional engagement and our continued partnership with Thrive International.

This is a season of discovery, of gifts, of community, and of calling. I am continually moved by the way these young people are growing into the people God is shaping them to be. Thank you for your prayers, your open doors, and your constant encouragement. Grace and peace,

*Manis Pierre*, Youth Minister

# In-Reach Ministry

Dear Peace family,

As we enter Lent—a season that invites us to look inward—I'm grateful for the quiet, everyday ways our Peace family cares for one another. I've seen these acts of in-reach when someone grabs a broom to tidy up, when members step into multiple roles on a Sunday, and when parents share the work of raising children in community. I've seen it in the laughter shared between friends, in the meals brought to nourish one another, and in the many ways people step in to serve—both in roles that are noticed and in those that quietly bless from behind the scenes.

We don't always get it perfectly right, but we keep trying. Together, we're learning how to care for one another with grace, patience, and love. These small moments are holy. They're the heart of In-Reach: the Spirit moving through our actions and words, reminding us that we are one body, caring for one another. I'm grateful for this community and look forward to the ways God will continue shaping our life together.

*Rebecca Foster*, In-Reach

## Music Ministry - Lenten Journey

Hello People of Peace,

"For He satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul He fills with good things." --**Psalm 107:9**

Lent has been a profound and enjoyable season for me for many years, even though there were times I'd be very hungry at choir rehearsals. Our music ministry at Peace welcomes the hungry, as well as the tired, poor, and huddled.



And it's been great seeing the ministry's continued collaborating and expansion, which you'll get to see on display during the many extra special services around the corner, such as Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter, and more.

Consider sharing time and talents with us as part of seeking Jesus more deeply in the fasting, prayer, giving, and self-control of your Lenten journey. In whichever ways God guides you to sacrifice and connect during Lent, I hope He blesses you immensely!

*Michael Green*, Interim Music Director

## Remember in Prayer

### Those who celebrate...

- All God's children journeying through Lent and celebrating God's power for life and hope at Easter
- The Peace community as we reach out to Hilltop families, especially through housing ministry, community meals and community resources ministry, ministries with children and youth and families, and faith offerings for all

### Those who are hurting...

- All who suffer racial injustice
- The hungry, all suffering economic poverty, the incarcerated, those without homes, all without hope
- All who grieve the death of loved ones
- All who are ill, facing surgery, recovering from hospitalization, for healing...
- All who struggle financially, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, for hope...
- All who experience sexual harassment or abuse...
- Refugees fleeing war and poverty, and all who live amidst violence, war, or unrest, especially the people of Congo, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, South Sudan, Iran, Iraq, Ukraine, Gaza and the Holy Land, Central African Republic, Venezuela, & Yemen

### Our work...

- Our Future Directions, as we live into the Vision God has for us as a church
- Our ministries in housing and community development
- Our ministry of sharing Jesus' love with children, youth, and families
- Our work for justice and peace in our world, building bridges among people

### Partners in mission & service...

- Peace Community Center as the Center lives into its new strategic plan
- Our global partners: Rev. Jane Kagochi in Kenya, our companion synod in Namibia, the Sevigny family in Japan
- Living Stones prison congregation in Shelton
- Faith Action Network leading in advocacy for justice for all, and for political leaders

For the complete list, see Sunday's bulletin.

## Community Engagement and Outreach

Dear People of Peace,

As we enter the sacred season of Lent, I am reminded that this is a time of both honest reflection and renewed commitment. Lent invites us to slow down, to examine our hearts, and to realign our lives with God's call toward justice, compassion, and love. It is a season that does not rush past suffering but sits with it, trusting that God is still at work, forming, healing, and preparing something new.



This Lent, I am deeply grateful for the work unfolding through our Affordable Housing Feasibility Team. Their faithful commitment reflects a theology that takes flesh, one that understands housing not merely as shelter, but as dignity, stability, and hope. In a time when so many families face uncertainty, this team has leaned into the hard questions with courage, wisdom, and collaboration. Their work reminds us that Lent is not only about what we give up, but also about what we choose to take on, the call to advocate, to plan thoughtfully, and to imagine a future where all can thrive. This is holy work, and I am thankful for every person offering their gifts, expertise, and prayer to this effort.



I am also filled with gratitude for the blessing of Peace Café. What began as a vision rooted in hospitality and healing continues to grow as a sacred gathering space for community. Peace Café embodies the spirit of Lent by creating room for honest conversation, mutual care, and shared nourishment, both physical and spiritual. It is a place where barriers are lowered, stories are honored, and relationships are formed across difference. In a world that often feels fragmented, Peace Café stands as a living reminder that God

meets us at the table, inviting us into deeper connection with one another.

As we look ahead to the rest of this year, I am encouraged by the ways people are leaning in to ministry with renewed energy and purpose. There is a quiet but powerful movement happening, folks showing up, offering their time, their voices, and their faith. Lent teaches us that transformation often begins in the wilderness, in moments of sacrifice and discernment. Yet it also assures us that we do not walk this road alone. Together, we are learning how to be a community that listens more deeply, serves more faithfully, and trusts more fully in God's leading.

My prayer for us this Lent is that we remain grounded in hope, even as we confront hard realities. May we continue to see God at work in affordable housing conversations, in the life giving presence of Peace Café, and in every person who feels called to step forward in ministry this year. May this season shape us into people who carry resurrection hope, not just for ourselves, but for our neighbors and our wider community.

*Brendan Nelson*, Director of Community Engagement and Outreach

## Sunday Adult & Older Youth Classes in Lent - Seasons of Faith

For 6 Sundays starting February 22 during the Faith Education Hour (9:45-10:45 am), we will explore the **seasons of the church year** and discover how God meets us in the seasons of our lives through stories of Jesus, his teachings, and church seasonal themes as we seek to live lives of justice and faithfulness to God. This Lent, through prayer, confession, and reflection with scripture, art, music, and conversation we journey together as a community of faith. **Feb. 22** - Advent, **Mar. 1** - Christmas, **Mar. 8** - Epiphany, **Mar. 15** - Lent, **Mar. 22** - Easter, **Mar. 29** - Pentecost. Rev. Lynn Longfield, Brendan Nelson, and Pastor John will lead.



## Children's Ministry



Hello Peace Community! My name is Annabell Davis-Bloom, and I'm so excited to start as the new Children's Minister here at Peace Lutheran Church. I feel incredibly grateful to be joining this church community and to partner with families as we help children grow in their faith, learn God's Word, build community, and experience his love in meaningful ways. I've already been so encouraged by the warm welcome I've received, and I'm looking forward to getting to know you and your children better in the weeks ahead.



We are looking for volunteers to serve in our Sunday children's classes, specifically Godly Play. This is a great opportunity to connect with the children of the congregation and let me get to know you! Whether you can help weekly, monthly, or here and there, your help is deeply appreciated. If you enjoy working with kids or feel called to volunteer, I would love to talk with you. Please feel free to contact me through email or phone calls. Thank you for welcoming me, and I can't wait to serve alongside you! Please contact me at [annabell@peacetacoma.org](mailto:annabell@peacetacoma.org) or 253-948-0180, ext.104. Grateful,

**Annabell Davis-Bloom,**  
Children's Minister

## An Invitation For a Time Such As This

The *For Such a Time As This* small group led worship at Peace Sunday January 25. If you missed it, check it out on the Peace Lutheran Church YouTube channel. Every evening, as a spiritual exercise of faith and commitment to the cause of the Gospel, **you are invited to place a lit candle** (preferably electronic) in a window of your home or at the place you stay. We do this to bear witness the whole night through that the light of Christ shines in the darkness and darkness cannot and will not overcome it. It is an exercise for the health of our souls, an action of trust in the God we worship, and a declaration that we believe that adherence to the values Jesus taught can lead to our salvation as a society. In a world often overshadowed by oppression and cruelty, lighting the Christ candle is a powerful act of hope. The Christ candle symbolizes the light Jesus brings, reminding us that love and compassion can overcome the deepest despair.



## Peace Café & Community Meals

Dear Peace Family, Friends, Partners, and Volunteers,

On behalf of our team, we would like to thank you for your continued partnership in our meal ministry. We are truly blessed to serve alongside you as we endeavor to be the hands, feet, and heart of Jesus. We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for all that you have done to be a blessing to our community in 2025.

We have welcomed new faces, met neighbors who simply heard about what we were doing, and welcomed individuals who wanted to volunteer and serve. In 2025, we **served 3,064 meals**. Wow! What an incredible reflection of love and compassion shown to our brothers and sisters because we said yes to Him.



We also received a wonderful gift from one of younger members who decided to start saving 100 juice boxes at his school. Thanks to Asher Tou and Edison Elementary!



Since the addition of Peace Café, Fridays have become what we lovingly call a "one-stop shop" for our community. Our services include dine-in meals, carry-out/to-go options, and delivery of all leftover meals within the community. Please share this information with those in need.



As a reminder, our Friday services include:

- Peace Café: 3:00–5:00 PM
- Community Meals: 5:30–6:30 PM
- Peace Clothing Closet: 6:00–7:00 PM



We are grateful for your commitment as we work together to live out grace, hope, faith, and healing with everyone we encounter. Praise God! If you are interested in providing a meal or to volunteer, feel free to email Damishe Greenwood-Walker at [plcadmin@peacetacoma.org](mailto:plcadmin@peacetacoma.org).



## Wednesday Evenings in Lent

Starting **Feb. 25**, for **5 Wednesdays until March 25**, here's the schedule:

6:00 pm	Simple Soup Supper
6:30 pm	Intergenerational Activity of Prayer and Service
7:00 pm	Holden Evening Prayer (adults & youth), Faith Activity (kids)
7:30 pm	Depart in peace...



for the intergenerational activities:

**Wednesday February 25. Activity: Prayer Walk.** Groups will gather to walk together in the neighborhood, read scripture, and pray needs and thanksgivings.



**Wednesday March 4. Activity: Micro Actions to Make a Difference.** We will consider suggestions from our Anti-racism Work Group of micro actions for justice we can each take, make personal commitments for Lent, and do an action for justice together to support the vulnerable in our community.



**Wednesday March 11. Activity: Learning How to Communicate with No Harm.** We will learn about Retreat Home (a network of people and homes offering hospitality to those in need of temporary housing) and practice a short listening skill featured in Retreat Home's Trauma Informed Approach workshops.



**Wednesday March 18. Activity: Supporting Immigrants and Refugees.** We will learn about challenges faced by refugees and immigrants in Tacoma, pray for our immigrant neighbors, collect and sort Halal food items, and write cards to support Muslim families.

Coming soon: separate list of suggested Halal food items we're collecting. (Food items due Sunday March 15 in the church office or kitchen refrigerator/freezer if perishable, or bring items March 18 evening.)

**Wednesday March 25. Activity: Prayer Walk – Hilltop Neighborhood.** Groups will gather to walk together in the neighborhood and pray for the Hilltop community.

**Faith Activity for Kids:** At 7 pm, children are invited to go on a **Journey of the Heart: Walking through Lent Together**. Children will learn and participate in activities as they hear the story of Jesus' journey to the cross and resurrection and his deep love for us. Youth are invited to help children or go to the Holden Evening Prayer service.

**Holden Evening Prayer:** At 7 pm, adults and youth are invited to the sanctuary for a beautiful sung evening prayer service that originated at Holden Village, a Lutheran retreat center in the Cascade mountains. There will be an opportunity for candle-lighting and silent prayer. Come, quiet your hearts, and connect with God.

## From the Church Council

Dear Peace Family,

Your 2026 Church Council is in place—nominated by the Nominating Committee last fall, voted into office at the Annual Congregational Meeting in December, and installed and blessed during worship in January. Our first meeting is January 20th and we'll soon begin planning our annual retreat. Now and throughout the year we're seeking to support the life and ministries of Peace with the help and guidance of God. Now and throughout the year we ask for you to pray for us as your council, for our staff, and for our whole community at Peace.

Maybe you're wondering what a church council is meant to do? Peace's Constitution gives us guidance on this. The council has "general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the Faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." Among the specified duties of the council, a few stand out to me:

- The council takes a lead in stating the mission of the church and in long-range planning, and we're meant to evaluate the congregation's activities in light of our mission.
- We're encouraged to involve the whole Peace community in worship, learning, and service.
- We have a duty to maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff.
- We're asked to promote peace and goodwill in our church, and we're meant to be part of fostering mutual understanding when there's conflict.

That's work we share as a whole council, and individual council members also relate to and support certain aspects of life at Peace such as worship, education, or stewardship.

You are invited to reach out to me as Council President, or to any member of council if there's something you'd like us to consider, or a concern you'd like us to include in prayer at a council meeting. We meet on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Serving on council is meant to be just that, a service. As a council we discuss and vote on certain Peace business, but council meetings are also an opportunity for us to widen our knowledge of what's happening in the Peace community, to deepen our capacity to serve alongside the whole church, and to pray together as we try to know where God is leading. We welcome your guidance and encouragement, your questions and your prayers.

Who are these council members you can talk to and pray for? Visit the Staff & Council page on the website to refresh your memory on who's serving in each role this year. Thank you for who you are in the Peace family!

*Gretchen Duggan*, Council President

### 2026 Council Members:

Gretchen Duggan (council president), Lenora Snea (vice president), James Pedrick (treasurer), Allison Kies (secretary), Neoma Clay (evangelism/outreach), Lope Ariz (stewardship), Nora Hanawalt (youth), Pam Asadi (worship), Lorena Guerrero (education), Rebecca Foster (inreach), Zoe Forbes (community resources)

## Check out Peace Lutheran Church on Social Media!

Check out the website: [Peace Lutheran Church](http://PeaceLutheranChurch.org)

Find us on Facebook: [Peace Lutheran Tacoma](https://www.facebook.com/PeaceLutheranTacoma)

Instagram: [@peacelutheranchurch](https://www.instagram.com/peacelutheranchurch)

Check out our YouTube page: [Peace Videos](https://www.youtube.com/PeaceVideos)



## Opportunities to Serve & Give

**Community Resources Ministry** Want to support Community Meals Fridays 5:30-6:30 pm? Provide and serve a meal for up to 60 people or help clean up or come and eat and talk with folks. If you have a Fred Meyer rewards card please link it to Peace. Go to [www.fredmeyer.com](http://www.fredmeyer.com), community rewards, and enter Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church or key in Fk117. Questions or to volunteer: contact Damishe (253-383-1317 ext. 100).

**Lenten Soup Suppers** Sign up at the Welcome Table to bring soup and bread for the soup suppers **6 pm on Wednesdays February 25 – March 25**. Questions? Ask Nancy Heavey, 752-8450.

**Want to Give Offering to Peace Through Auto-Deduction?** Contact the church office.

**Thrivent Choice Dollars** Are you a member of Thrivent Financial? Do you have Choice Dollars to direct to a charitable organization? Please consider directing your Choice Dollars to Peace Lutheran Church or Peace Community Center by logging into your account on the Thrivent website. **Do it by March 31**.

**Our Lenten Offering** Our offering this Lent is for Thrive International, a nonprofit empowering legal refugees and immigrants in Tacoma to rebuild their lives with dignity and independence through transitional housing and personalized support all under one roof. In a season in which refugees and immigrants are feeling increasingly fearful and vulnerable, this is an important way we can respond in welcome and love. Please give to "Peace Lutheran Church," marked "Lent Offering."

**Join the Gospel Choir** Rehearsals are **first, second, and third Thursdays at 6 pm**. **Gospel Choir sings in 11 am worship second and fourth Sundays**. Share the gift of your voice in song! Questions? Contact Michael Green, [michael@peacetacoma.org](mailto:michael@peacetacoma.org).

**Welcome & Support Ministry** Interested in being part of the Sunday Welcome & Support ministry? Contact Rebecca Foster to learn more ([reebsfoster@gmail.com](mailto:reebsfoster@gmail.com)).

## Women's Ministry



This past year brought the women's ministry many moments of joy, community and laughter. Planning the 2025 spring retreat was a great reminder that many hands make light work and that meaningful reflection and rest are essential for a healthy spirit and mind. We walked into the fall ready for intention and prayerful connections, and the women's Bible study groups have been and continue to be such a gift.

However, the end of the year made us say goodbye (for now) to the woman who fueled, orchestrated and transformed so much of women's ministry -- Charissa Carroll. As we look into 2026 and beyond, may we harness the same grace, patience and creativity she

poured into the women of Peace.

**Women's Ministry Team**, Leigh Wong, Julia Kagochi, & Sarah Butler Wills

## Who's Who on the Peace Lutheran Church Staff

Pastor: John Stroeh, ext 101, [pastorjohn@peacetacoma.org](mailto:pastorjohn@peacetacoma.org)

Director of Community Engagement & Outreach: Brendan Nelson, ext. 102, [brendan@peacetacoma.org](mailto:brendan@peacetacoma.org)

Youth Minister: Manis Pierre, ext. 103, [manis@peacetacoma.org](mailto:manis@peacetacoma.org)

Children's Minister: Annabell Davis-Bloom, ext. 104, [annabell@peacetacoma.org](mailto:annabell@peacetacoma.org)

Interim Music Director: Michael Green, [michael@peacetacoma.org](mailto:michael@peacetacoma.org)

Musician: Twylla Moore, [twylla.moore@outlook.com](mailto:twylla.moore@outlook.com)

Nursery Care: Brianna Miller

Operations Manager: Damishe Greenwood-Walker, ext. 100, [plcadmin@peacetacoma.org](mailto:plcadmin@peacetacoma.org)

Finance Coordinator: Jenny Haferbecker, [jenny@peacetacoma.org](mailto:jenny@peacetacoma.org)



# Peace Community Center Update

As many of you know, Peace Community Center is working to complete a new strategic plan. Below are drafts of the Center's new mission and values statements (along with our vision statement that has not been changed), and the proposed strategic priorities. If you have any questions, please reach out to a Center Board member.

**MISSION:** Peace Community Center, a faith-rooted, community-led organization, works alongside Hilltop youth and families to build pathways to stability, opportunity and housing security.

**VISION:** We envision a thriving Hilltop where youth and families belong, experience stability, and use their diverse gifts to shape a just and loving community.

## VALUES:

**Faith-Rooted Justice:** We are guided by a faith that calls us to love our neighbors, pursue justice, cultivate hope and joy, and honor the dignity of every person. Our faith shapes why and how we work—creating a place of inclusion and belonging for all people, not exclusion or division.

**Community Led Listening & Learning:** We listen first, learn continuously, and adapt in accountability to the Hilltop community. Listening is an ongoing practice, not a phase.

**Belonging & Place:** We are rooted in the Hilltop and committed to cultivating spaces of belonging and joy across generations. We move at the speed of trust and build with relationships, not programs alone.

**Collective Action & Partnership:** We believe lasting change requires collaboration, mutuality, and shared leadership. We work alongside others, not above or apart.

*Note: The Board will work in the near future to draft statements on how the Community Center will act based on the approved values.*

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:** Please note that the following three priorities have been separated for clarity, but each intersect, interact, and build off one another. Each of the goals under the priorities have a period for focused development to reach specific targets, many of these goals (for example building partnerships) will have ongoing components to them once the time of period is complete.

### Priority A: Strengthen and Develop Hilltop Partnerships

*Why This Matters:* Partnerships are the foundation of community impact and an integral part of the Center's values. Peace Community Center exists in an ecosystem of non-profits, schools, businesses, and other organizations who are working to positively impact the community. We can have much greater impact when we work in collaboration rather than silos.

*Outcome:* A strong, foundational partnership with Peace Lutheran Church, strengthened connections with other Hilltop community partners, and long-term Hilltop residents are built as the foundation to building the Center's new programs and their impact.

### Priority B: Develop Programs and Services grounded in the relationship building outlined in Priority A and Peace Community Center's New Mission, Vision and Values.

*Why This Matters:* Peace Community Center's impact on the Hilltop community will be a direct result of the programs it develops, and they are developed alongside partners and the community it aims to serve.

*Outcome:* Peace Community Center has a strong working relationship with Peace Lutheran Church, neighborhood partners and community members to develop meaningful mission-aligned programming that positively impacts Hilltop young people and families. Programming is relevant to our community and those we serve both participate in programs and help to design them.

### Priority C: Build Peace Community Center's Capacity to Further Mission (Board, Culture, Fundraising)

*Why This Matters:* Creating a strong foundation to grow the organization's new mission is critical to sustainable impact. Organizational culture, the board of directors, and fundraising efforts are three critical components for building a healthy organization on which programs can flourish.

*Outcome:* Hire an initial organization leader who has the experience to grow the organization's programming and fundraising efforts and build the organization culture and collaborative partnerships with the Hilltop community. Strengthening the Board of Directors and its ability to fulfill its governance role in alignment with the organization's new mission and values.

*Board of Directors, Peace Community Center*

Kerri Pedrick, President  
Gerdon Jones

Joanne McWilson, Vice President  
Malando Redeemer

Sarah Detweiler, Treasurer  
Pastor John Stroeh, Ex Officio



# Gratitude - Retreat Home

Dear Peace Lutheran Church,

I just came from a meeting with other providers for our unhoused neighbors. One of the providers, who works in Puyallup, made a comment that resonated with me: "This year, more than any other, we saw the HUGE generosity of folks giving to their neighbors. It's like from so much darkness and our persistent fear for our neighbors' lives, has come out in waves of grace, in the form of donations. It has been beams of light for us providers".

Isn't that a perfect description of Advent, and now Epiphany, as we see the gospel in action? I feel, because I saw, the exact same thing coming from you all, dear Peace Lutheran. You knocked it out of the park!



Thank you so much for your generosity with the Christmas wreath drive! Picking tags from the wreath and donating gift cards, sheets, cleaning and hygiene supplies, and laundry baskets to Retreat Home will make a huge difference for our guest families—and for me, too. I'm truly touched by your kindness. Everything you gave goes straight to our guests as they move into their own homes. You've shown love and support for your unknown neighbors, and it's amazing.

Thanks again for being such a wonderful part of our community and being "beams of light". You continue to support Brad and I in this endeavor, and we are so proud to call you our home church!

Blessings and gratitude, *Sarah Butler Wills*, Executive Director of Retreat Home

## Mission Statement

Compelled by the love of God and our faith in Jesus Christ, Peace Lutheran Church, a diverse people of faith, in partnership with Peace Community Center, seeks to realize God's dream for the world through worship, learning, giving, and serving.

## Core Values

Serve with **COURAGE** Embrace **DIVERSITY** Cultivate **COMMUNITY** Seek **JUSTICE**  
**Vision Statement**

We believe God's **vision** for Peace is to be a **diverse** community of faith **in the Hilltop** where all are welcome—a community that is **Spirit-filled, compassionate, healthy, reconciled, and just**.

## Welcome Statement

All are welcome at Peace! We are a diverse community of welcome for people of all ethnic and cultural heritages, ages and generations, educational and financial backgrounds, gender identities and sexual orientations, spiritual and religious preferences, gifts and abilities! Centered in Jesus and his love, we believe that every human being is created in the image of God, whose Spirit gathers us into one community of faith in our Hilltop neighborhood. You are a blessing to Peace! We welcome your presence, your gifts, your voice, your service, your leadership, and our shared life together in community!

## Foundational Commitment to Anti-Racism

As followers of Jesus, we believe that God created all people in God's image (Genesis 1:27), Jesus breaks down all dividing walls (Ephesians 2:14), and the Holy Spirit connects and unites all people. The whole church looks forward to God's future when people will be gathered from all cultures and peoples in the reign of God (Revelation 7). This church names racism (individual and systemic) as sin. We affirm that the diversity of cultures is a God-given gift, and we seek to extend God's love to all our neighbors. We believe Jesus calls us to understand, address, and dismantle racism in individuals, communities, systems, and structures, joining God in bringing about justice for the oppressed and transformation of all society (Luke 4).

