

Peace United Church of Christ
October 25, 2026
Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost
Preparing the Way: Capital & Stewardship Campaigns
10:30am



Prepare the Way, Lauren Wright Pittman

1111 North 11th Avenue East, Duluth, MN 55805

www.peaceucc.org
office@peaceucc.org

Welcome and Announcements

Ringling of the Bells

Choral Call to Worship

***Come and remember who you are here
Do this to remember who I am
Come and remember you belong here
All belong here***

*Call to Worship from Psalm 90

O God, you are our dwelling place,
From everlasting to everlasting, you are God!
Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
So that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Let your work be manifest to your servants and your glorious power to
their children,
Let your favor be upon us and prosper for us the work of our hands.
O God, you are our dwelling place,
From everlasting to everlasting, you are God!

*Song *Bring Many Names* #11, New Century Hymnal

***Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory, living, loving God.
Hail and Hosanna! bring many names!***

***Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation, genius at play:
Hail and Hosanna, strong mother God!***

***Warm father God, hugging every child,
feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving till we're reconciled:
Hail and Hosanna, warm father God!***

***Old, aching God, gray with endless care,
calmly piercing evil's new disguises,
glad of good surprises, wiser than despair:
Hail and Hosanna, old, aching God!***

***Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
saying no to falsehood and unkindness,***

***crying out for justice, giving all you have:
Hail and Hosanna, young, growing God!***

***Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing, everlasting home:
Hail and Hosanna, great, living God!***

***Prayer of Confession**

Gracious God, your will is abundance for all your children. But our world points us to scarcity. We worry that there is not enough to go around. We hoard goodness for ourselves and forget our neighbors. We believe our worth is defined by what we possess. We think we have to do it all alone. We forget to trust you. Forgive us, heal us, and remind us that you have prepared a way for us to follow. Amen.

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

Beloved, God promises grace upon grace. Through Christ we are forgiven and set free for abundance and new life. Thanks be to God!

***Passing of the Peace**

Story for All Ages

Amanda McElray Hunter

Sending the Children

***Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
Gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) everywhere!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around:
loaves abound!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around:
loaves abound!***

Hebrew Bible Reading

Genesis 32

Betty Greene, reader

paraphrase from *The Book of Belonging*, Mariko Clark

"Oof!" Jacob's breath came out in a grunt as the stranger's knee sunk into his belly. *Is this a dream?* Jacob had been wrestling with this mysterious person all night. Surely, if this were a dream, he would have woken up by now.

***Who is this wild person? What kind of man can touch my hip and send a zap all the way to my foot?* Jacob wondered. And then it occurred to him: *Maybe this is more than just a man.* Suddenly, instead of fighting to get away, Jacob found himself fighting to hold on. *Could this be God?* He had met God before without realizing it and wasn't about to make that**

mistake again. Jacob sunk his fingers into his opponent as he fell. "I won't let go until you bless me," he gasped.

The mysterious wrestler asked Jacob's name. Technically, his name was Jacob, grandson of Abraham, family of God. But his problems had started when he was pretending to be someone else. Disguised as his brother, he had lied to his father, stealing from them both. Impatient and insecure, Jacob had always grasped for good gifts, but it hadn't made him feel happy or safe. He was always running, always restless. Striving and struggling, desperate to belong. But if this stranger was God, Jacob's story was no secret. So Jacob told the truth, for the first time in a long time. "My name is Jacob."

"Very good!" God laughed. Because, of course, the mysterious wrestler was God! "And here's your blessing: From now on, your name is Israel, which means 'to wrestle.' Hold on to me! We'll wrestle, and sometimes it will be fun, and sometimes it will hurt, but I'll always be right here. You don't need to cheat your way into love, and you don't need to run scared. Just hold on to me."

A true name. A place to belong. Standing to leave, Jacob – now called Israel – stumbled. His hip screamed with pain, shooting all the way to his foot. Yet he smiled as he limped along, carrying the story of his new name with every step.

Choir Anthem

Be Thou My Vision

Gospel Reading

Matthew 22:34-40

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

Special Music

Sermon

Wrestling a Blessing

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis

***'Tis the gift to be simple,
'tis the gift to be free,
'tis the gift to come down where you ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
It will be in the valley of love and delight.***

***When true simplicity is gained,
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed.
To turn, turn will be our delight,
'Til by turning, turning we come round right***

Community Prayers and Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer of Jesus

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Choral Amen

Offertory

One Love, Bob Marley

*Doxology

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen!***

*Prayer of Dedication

*Closing Song

*God, Who Stretched
the Spangled Heavens*

#556, New Century Hymnal

***God, who stretched the spangled heavens infinite in time and place,
Flung the suns in burning radiance through the silent fields of space;
We, your children, in your likeness, share inventive powers with you;
Great Creator, still creating, show us what we yet may do.***

***We have ventured worlds undreamed of since the childhood of our race;
Known the ecstasy of winging through untraveled realms of space;
Probed the secrets of the atom, yielding unimagined power,
Facing us with life's destruction or our most triumphant hour.***

***As each far horizon beckons, may it challenge us anew,
Children of creative purpose, serving others, honoring you.
May our dreams prove rich with promise, each endeavor, well begun;
Great Creator, give us guidance till our goals and yours are one.***

*Benediction

*Postlude

Assisting in Today's Service:

Cindy Macaulay and Julie MacKenzie, Ushers

Andrew Holmstrom and Lyra Tennis-Luoma, Nursery Attendants

Musicians: Carrie Kelsey, Sophia Farell, Cathy Ameel, John Bankson, Bud Trnka,
Matt Prois, Ian Connell, and Mike Swanoski

Peace United Church of Christ Staff

Alex Nelson – Livestream Technician

Amanda McElray Hunter – Children, Youth and Small Group Coordinator

Bri Dornbush – Office Coordinator

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis – Pastor

Carrie Kelsey – Kitchen Manager

Dan Shepard – Maintenance

Jim Pospisil – Music Director

Rev. Laurie Crelly – Pastoral Care Chaplain

Mali Lorenz – Bookkeeper

Rachel Burnett – Business Manager

Sophia Farell – Soundboard Technician



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Today's Forum: A Bible Study on Generosity

As we embark on a season of generosity through our Stewardship and Capital Campaigns, we gather to ground ourselves in the source of our generosity: God's generosity with and for us. The Capital Campaign Spiritual Life Team has prepared a Bible study focused on three texts that lead us to consider generosity as a practice of faith. Come to explore and discern.

Capital and Stewardship Campaign Materials

Have questions about the Capital and Stewardship Campaigns? We have the answers! Folders with information about both campaigns are available for pick-up in the Narthex, beginning today!

Fall Fest Capital Campaign Kick-Off Extravaganza & 4th Annual Chili Cook-Off**Today, 11:30am–1:30pm in the Fellowship Hall**

Join us for this family friendly event celebrating all things Capital Campaign and all things autumnal, with carnival games, a cakewalk, arts and crafts, good things to eat, and our 4th Annual Chili Cook Off! Last year our first-place winners were Lisa, Ross, and Sabine Feikema. Who will it be this year? The winner receives a ribbon!

All Saints Day Photo Slideshow, Sunday, November 1

Every year we honor our loved ones who died over the past year. If you would like to submit your loved one to be honored during the service please email Bri at office@peaceucc.org by Sunday, October 25. Please submit a photo, their name, their birthdate and date of death, and how they are connected to you.

Our Faith, Our Vote, Our Voice

This year's mid-terms may be among the most consequential of our lifetime. Wherever you are on the political spectrum, it is important that your voice be heard. Consider what our faith says about justice, compassion and wealth distribution. Your vote is your voice. Early voting is now open and includes some weekend hours! You can cast your ballot and feed it into the voting machine just the same as if you go to the polls on November 3. Early voting hours, in addition to regular weekdays, are

- Sunday, November 1, 9:00–3:00
- Tuesday evening, October 27, until 7:00
- Weekdays until 5:00 through November 2

Several non-partisan groups are recommending that early, in person voting may be the safest way to make sure your vote counts!

All Souls to the Polls: Early Voting in Interfaith Community, Sunday, November 1, 12:00–3:00pm

**Duluth City Hall & St. Louis County Courthouse,
411 W 1st St, Duluth, MN 55802**

Voting is a sacred act, honoring our God-given human dignity and worth. Participation in our democracy makes it possible to do what our faith calls us to do, like feed the hungry, care for the sick, and welcome the stranger. On Sunday, November 1, members of faith communities will joyfully declare that people of faith stand for a free and fair democracy. Residents of St. Louis County and/or the City of Duluth will be able to cast their early votes. There will be food trucks, celebrations, public witness and a brief program at 1:00pm. Early voting is the most secure way to vote. Together we are called to powerful and transformational community!

This Week's Schedule

Monday, October 26

9:00am Yoga with Robin in the Fireside Room and Zoom

5:00pm Making Meaning Out of Malignancy in the Fireside Room and Zoom

Wednesday, October 28

8:30am Chum Breakfast Making in the Kitchen

3:00pm Tea & Talk in the Fireside Room

5:00pm Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall

5:30pm Childcare Available in the Nursery

5:45pm Bible Study in the Fireside Room and Zoom

5:45pm Kids' Club in the Wildwoods Room

6:15pm Choir in the Sanctuary

6:30pm Middle School Youth Group in the Youth Room

6:30pm High School Youth Group in the Wildwoods Room

7:15pm Confirmation 2 in the Chapel

7:30pm Confirmation 1 in the Fireside Room

Thursday, October 29

8:00am Men's Breakfast at Perkins on London Road

7:00pm Paul Winchester Music Clinic in the Sanctuary

Sunday, November 1

8:30am Taizé Worship

9:30am Self-Serve Coffee in the Narthex

9:30am Forum: All Saints Workshop in the Fireside Room

10:30am Intergenerational Worship with Holy Communion. Sermon by Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis. Children's Church with Amanda McElray Hunter. Special Music by Sara Thomsen. ASL Interpretation and Welcome of New Members.

11:30am Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall

11:45am Liturgies for Resisting Empire Book Discussion in the Music Room