

2021-2022  
Annual Report



Peace United Church of Christ  
1111 North 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue East  
Duluth, Minnesota 55805



**2021-2022**  
**ANNUAL REPORT OF**  
**PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1111 North 11<sup>th</sup> Ave East, Duluth MN 55805

Presented at the Annual Meeting  
of the Congregation  
June 12, 2022

**Coordinating Council**

**Officers**

Moderator ..... Tom Hystead  
Vice Moderator ..... Joan Peterson  
Secretary/Recorder ..... Diane Swanoski  
Treasurer ..... Dick Goese  
Past Moderator ..... Doug Bowen-Bailey

**Council Representatives**

Christian Education ..... Penny Cragun  
Acting for Justice ..... Monica Liddle  
Christian Spiritual Life ..... Susan Larson Kidd  
Christian Stewardship ..... Dave Courtright

**Members at Large**

Mary Adams  
Jessica Olson  
Bud Trnka  
Matt Ryan

**Staff**

Interim Pastor ..... Rev. James Mitulski  
Interim Pastoral Associate ..... Rev. Charlotte Frantz  
Minister for Faith Formation ..... Nathan Holst  
Pastoral Care Chaplain ..... Gudrun Witrak  
Music Director ..... Jim Pospisil  
Pianist ..... Wendy Durrwachter  
Bookkeeper ..... Rose Feriancek  
Office Coordinator ..... Nancy Nelson  
Administrative Coordinator ..... Elise Courtright  
Custodian ..... Dan Shepard

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**Duluth, Minnesota**

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## ANNUAL REPORTS

### Rev. James Mitulski, Interim Pastor

Dear friends—We began our work together last September even before I moved to Duluth in October. After extensive interviews, I was hired and came for a visit in September, attended my first Council meeting, found a lovely apartment to share with my cat Keats in the Board of Trade building downtown, and began participating in meetings via Zoom. I was warmly and thoroughly welcomed when I returned a few weeks later, and since then I have worked closely with you as we have continued the work of Peace Church.

It soon became apparent to me that this is a congregation of tremendous resilience and spiritual depth, assets that have proved to be invaluable in the past year. Just as important is the quality of leadership and the level of commitment you have exhibited in the face of considerable challenges. In my work with churches like ours it's best to name plainly what these challenges are, as well as to appreciate the strengths and assets that have helped us navigate them so far.

Here's a summary of my work with you since my report at the February Congregational Meeting. At that time I identified that we were grappling with three inter-related problems: the conflicts arising after Pastor Kathy's 30 year tenure, the conflicts during and after Pastor Greg's brief tenure, and ongoing effects of Covid on the life of the community. Since then, through programs like "Talk, Listen, Pray" and other structured opportunities, the dynamics around the conflicts have been addressed and processed for many people, though perhaps not all. Covid has continued to affect us, and I imagine we will be dealing with it for quite some time in various ways.

We resumed in-person worship in February, and we have been layering in activities ever since. These have included: Black History Month; Women's History Month Forums on Women Changemakers; Lenten Weekday Services; Lecture with LGBT activist from El Salvador Alvaro Duran, co-sponsored by United Theological Seminary; Healing Service; Palm Sunday Service and Outdoor Procession in conjunction with St. Mark AME Church; Maundy Thursday; Good Friday service with Glen Avon Presbyterian and Pilgrim Congregational Church; two Easter Vigils (one on the Beach); well-attended Easter Services; Earth Day Service and activities; National Poetry Month; Asian American History Month; forums and services; Confirmation; and High School Graduation. These are just some of the things that have gone into restoring the rhythms of a normal year.

I've devoted a lot of individual and group time to conflict resolution and will continue to do so as we move into our next phase in the latter half of 2022. This will include surveying the congregation, creating a pastoral search team, writing a new profile this fall, and posting a job opening that hopefully will result in the hiring of a new pastor sometime in the new year.

Anything I've done could only be accomplished because of our excellent staff and extraordinary council members, and because of all of you who have continued to show up with your participation, your prayers, and your financial gifts. The best way to ensure that we stick to our timeline is to continue to show up, to pray, and to give of our time and our money for the success of Peace Church and to continue our witness for Justice in the community. It is an honor to serve you in this way as your interim pastor.

With love, Pastor Jim



#### **Church Staff 2021-2022**

**Front Row, left to right:** Nancy Nelson, Rose Feriancek, Elise Courtright, Dan Shepard  
**Back Row, left to right:** Gudrun Witrak, Jim Pospisil, Rev. Jim Mitulski, Nathan Holst, Rev. Charlotte Frantz

## **Charlotte Frantz, Interim Pastoral Associate**

It's hard to believe that I've been with Peace UCC as part of the staff for almost a full year. Last July during the interim-interim time, I was asked to help fill in a few of the gaps while a search committee worked to secure an interim pastor. One thing led to another—and by the first of January, I was working almost full time alongside other staff members, still filling in the gaps as they appeared.

My background includes more than forty years of parish ministry, 25 years of that as the only pastor serving a congregation and 15 years in multiple pastoral staff ministries. I also have a certificate in not-for-profit administration completed in 2015. I love being a generalist—and I believe it is the wide spectrum of skills and experience that has allowed me to fit in where needed.

Interim periods are inherently interesting and amazing times in congregational life. It's a time of re-orientation and re-evaluation and often experimentation. There tends to be a lot of sifting and sorting about what is helpful and what needs to be redesigned as a congregation moves into a new future.

The impact of interim time here at Peace is compounded by the experience of Covid. We are being propelled into a new era as we collectively recover from two or more years of isolation and disruption. There's no going back to what was. We cannot replicate our pre-covid life as a church.

At times, all the newness feels immensely disconcerting. At times, it feels overwhelming. Sometimes, it feels like liberation and a new start.

We all need time to grieve for what we think we might have lost. We need time to take stock of what is important now. And we all need time to imagine what our future might be. I appreciate the ways in which Pastor Jim Mitulski is making space and time for these tasks. It is not easy—especially when we engage in these tasks at our own individual paces.

While Pastor Jim makes time and space for these interim tasks, I find myself assisting with programming, writing liturgy and leading worship, providing significant pastoral care, filling in gaps as they appear, and responding to needs as they arise. I have worked closely with the Sponsor Circle in resettling four Afghan women and am now involved with the Homelessness Response Team, the newest team in the Acting for Justice Hub.

I believe Peace has some internal work to do so that staff and congregation can continue the ministries that are so much a part of who we are. I think it would be helpful to define more clearly what is important as we move into the future, and then ask how to configure staff responsibilities that will support that future.

The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a wonderful occasion to recall much that is important and to consolidate our visions of the future. I'm glad we will celebrate this during interim time. I'm pleased that I can be with the congregation at this particular time. Thank you.

Charlotte Frantz, Interim Pastoral Associate

## **Nathan Holst, Minister for Faith Formation**

This has been another year of transition for the church, and that includes how we have done our faith formation with children, youth, and adults. In September, I was asked to oversee our children's ministry programming. In order to do that, I stepped back from some of the work I had previously done with our teams. While it was full, I think we had a successful year of faith formation programming. I am especially grateful to our ministerial staff for helping make this year possible—Pastor Jim for all his work in helping our congregation take more steps in our transition process and Pastor Charlotte for all she does on a regular basis to recognize what's needed and step in to make sure it happens.

## Beloved Community Events/Small Groups

I am grateful that this year allowed some small groups and events to meet in person. I was able to lead a men's retreat in April. Together with Pastor Jim, Charlotte, and others, we held Lenten prayer groups. Though we were not able to have our family-oriented Winter Camp at Wolf Ridge because of covid concerns, I held regular opportunities (often outside) that were intergenerational events—including Easter breakfast, an ice skating event, tubing at Mont du Lac, and our Halloween Carnival. I look forward to planning more this summer, ensuring that there are many opportunities for our congregation to build beloved community together.



## Children's Ministry

It was so wonderful to be back to a school year that was largely open to in-person gatherings, even if numbers generally remained low as parents navigated covid and the overwhelm that has come from it. While there were some exceptions from covid spikes, we were able to consistently meet for Sunday School on Sunday mornings in person. In the fall, we consistently held kids club every other Thursday for our elementary age kids, but then we decided to discontinue that program based on our low numbers.



We gathered for our usual big events as well. We had another great pageant in December with kids returning in person to do "The Version Births." We had a successful Easter egg hunt at our Easter breakfast. And we're just about to put on our annual day camp, with this year hosting what's called a Peace Village, helping our kids learn about conflict resolution, mindfulness movement, media literacy, and connecting with nature.

One of the most important things we did with children's ministry this year was host a series of parent feedback sessions. Working with the children's ministry team, I helped create questions for parents to reflect on what they were looking for at Peace and what was exciting to them. We had three different sessions with parents, and each brought energy and insight. I compiled the information from the sessions and then made a list of innovations and responses that we started to implement. One of the ideas that has been widely well received is children's church—a once a month gathering with kids during the sermon where we focus on the lesson for the day. We also are working on creating a new worship space that is geared toward young children that we hope to start in the summer or fall. Lastly, we created a regular monthly gathering for parents to get together and connect—to vent, to share, to get support. We plan to continue this in the fall, building on the energy we started.

## Middle School Youth Group

We had another great year in middle school youth group; we consistently had about 10-12 kids all year. While covid has impacted our numbers generally with youth group, we have managed to create a core and consistent group that has gotten to know each other well.

We once again began the fall with the Peer Ministry program that has become a staple of youth group, giving gratitude for Tom Westrum's continued support in co-leading the program. This is a great way to set the culture of youth group, and I believe it is a big part of why youth group has continued to develop into a place where youth love to come and feel welcome. Peer Ministry focuses on the good Samaritan story and does a great job of incorporating fun, Bible stories, and experiential learning.

Then in the New Year, we followed the lead of our youth for what they wanted to do together. We did some brainstorming a number of weeks on what we wanted, and we eventually decided to bring in a speaker from Loaves and Fishes to learn about the Catholic Worker in town. Then the kids decided to do a bake sale fundraiser and ended up raising over \$250 for Loaves and Fishes. It was amazing seeing the youth organize together.

I look forward to the summer when we plan to go to Camp Amnicon for our summer camping trip. I hope this will help build our youth program, bringing in new youth who may not have already been involved, and create new bonds together for the year.

## **OWL**

We were able to restart our OWL program again this year in partnership with UUCD and Pilgrim church, with about 20 youth. We have some really amazing facilitators who help make sure it's a successful program and the year went smoothly with only a few covid adjustments. We plan to train some new facilitators this summer to add to our pool of trained facilitators, and we are working on training a couple facilitators who can run adult programs.

## **High School Youth**

This year Sara Olson Dean and I confirmed six youth. While covid affected so much of our participation, we were able to hold a confirmation retreat at Camp Amnicon in May. We also added mentors this year, having them join the youth once a month for our regular confirmation gathering. Mentors really seemed to have a positive impact on the group and I'm certain we'll be doing that again next year.

We had a wonderful graduation service for our seniors in early June. Each one of our seniors was involved in the service in some way, and they did an amazing job. As I listened to members of the congregation talk about the service, it reminded me that the service also brings so much life to our congregation in a time when we need it.



We also hosted feedback sessions for parents and youth to find out more about what our youth are looking for at Peace. Out of those sessions came some ideas for our high school youth to connect more often. We started a simple social gathering once a month for pizza and fun, and we will start that up again in the fall. Another idea youth had was to do a once a month spiritually focused gathering, creating a youth led worship space. I'll be working with youth this summer to develop that idea.

This summer we are planning two trips for our high school youth—one to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in July and the other a Camp Amnicon canoe trip in August. We have youth signed up for both trips, and I trust they will both be powerful experiences that will stay with them for years to come.

## **Other**

Another significant part of my year has been my continuation with the MN Conference in being a member in discernment for pursuing ordination on the "multiple paths to ordination" track. I have done a lot of work this year to move that process forward, and I appear to be on the final stretch. Last summer, I took a course through the Proctor Institute's Freedom Seminary, getting credit through United Seminary with an independent study. In the fall, I took a constructive theology course, which had a profound impact on my ability to articulate my theology. Then in the new year, I began my clinical pastoral education (CPE), where I went once a week to the Stillwater prison for group reflection with a group of peers, some from outside the prison and some from inside. This also had a profound impact on me, helping me process some deeper internal challenges, but also gave me practical tools that helped strengthen my ministerial leadership. I am grateful to Peace Church for supporting me in all of this work.

Nathan Holst, Faith Formation Minister

## **Gudrun Witrak, Pastoral Care Chaplain**

It is with great gratitude that I give this report for my staff position as Pastoral Care Chaplain. Paying attention to what has heart and meaning for our Peace Church members is a privilege for me, and I was able to listen to, pray with, and support those whose lives were impacted by illness, or injury, or loss of a loved one, I learned a lot more about the core of Peace Church. It is not only a congregation of justice seekers for all; Peace Church is also made up of countless Circles of Caring. I thank Lynn Devlin and Linda Goese for their prayer chain ministry. Thanks go out to Alice Marks and her card ministry—cards that bring joy and caring to those unable to join us in person. Thanks to Sue Munns, Melanie Lundell, and Kay Stevens for knitting prayer shawls. It is a joy to bring those shawls to our people as a visible and tangible reminder of our love, prayers, and support. There are so, so many members who regularly visit our beloved members who cannot join us each week, and I thank them.

My deep thanks also go to Pastor Charlotte, Nathan, and Pastor Jim for their pastoral care.

Respectfully submitted, Gudrun Witrak, Pastoral Care Chaplain

## **Jim Pospisil, Music Director**

The 2021/2022 activity year has been an exciting time for the music program at Peace. We have enjoyed great diversity of musical styles and performances by many musicians. Pastor Jim has brought many new ideas from his wealth of knowledge with new hymns for our congregation.

Many familiar faces provided special music throughout the year. The congregation continued to sing hymns and familiar songs in worship, the choir continued their weekly anthem, and many people provided additional special music. The following people provided special music: Wendy Durrwachter, Ron Deters, Susan Larson Kidd, Tyler Stark, Gudrun Witrak, Kirby Wood, the Kids' Choir, Ian Connell, Nathan Holst, Buzz Munns, Benjamin Fena, Noah Beyer, Melanie Sever, Byron Klimek, Andre Good, Kelli Hallsten, Patty Beech-Dziuk, Katey Fornear, Dan Shepard, John Erickson, Leon Rohrbaugh, Jessica Olson, Dale Shimmin, and Elliott Dean.

Notable was the Christmas Cantata, with a small orchestra and choir performing familiar carols, anthems, and some newly composed music, as well as some improvisation. Our annual Cabaret in January was also a success, thanks to all the great musicians who performed.

Peace Church is ready for experimentation (especially the choir and instrumentalists), providing new experiences when called upon.

I enjoy our broad definition of worship music, ranging from Bach to Bob Dylan, hoping to reach our congregation in several different ways. We wish to continue to be aware of the diverse desires and needs of people and how music can be the vehicle for a spiritual experience.

I have enjoyed the new energy and hope of the past year. I am looking forward to what is possible in the future.

Submitted by Jim Pospisil



## **Coordinating Council – Moderator**

It seems odd to be looking back on a year in the middle of a calendar year. The more usual time for taking stock being the New Year Holiday. But it has been a year!

I want to begin this brief reflection by saying how very grateful I am to have been supported and bolstered by the Coordinating Council. They worked especially hard on our behalf under unprecedented circumstances. Their dedication to Peace Church was unwavering.

The Standing Committees and the congregational-driven Teams continued to guide the life of the church through the disruptions of Covid-19. Even with the restrictions of the pandemic, Peace adapted worship services and programming so as to keep the whole congregation as safe as possible. A Covid-19 Task Force was established and met 2-3 times a month to monitor local data and advise the Council and the congregation on necessary protocols.

A significant adaptation during the 2021-2022 church year was the expanded use of live-streaming in conjunction with in-person worship. This year was impacted much like the previous year by the social distancing and threats of each wave of covid infections. Our ministers and tech team allowed us to connect through virtual church services, then to fully resume in-person worship in February.

For nearly half of the year Peace was without a lead minister. During that time we were blessed by an amazing group of clergy persons who are part of our congregation who volunteered to fill the void and lead us in worship and provide ministerial care including Charlotte Frantz, Nathan Holst, Gudrun Witrak, Sara Olson Dean, Tom Little, Matt Hunter, Bob Stevens, and Gary Boelhower.

In July of 2021 a search committee was formed to call an Interim Minister. The Committee, chaired by Jessica Olson, included Coordinating Council members Mary Adams, Diane Swanoski, Dave Courtright, and me. Rev. Cindy Mueller, MN Conference Minister of Search and Call, advised the committee as they

worked through the summer reviewing and interviewing interim candidates. In September we invited Rev. Jim Mitulski to become our Pastor. Pastor Jim joined us in mid-October. Peace Church has been richly blessed to have Pastor Jim in our midst.

The Coordinating Council has and is undergoing transitions. In December Doug Bowen-Bailey stepped back from the Past Moderator position. As the year ends, we note that four (4) council members—Mary Adams, Bud Trnka, Dave Courtright and Matt Ryan—are completing their terms. All of these Council members have given tirelessly of themselves. They provided thoughtful and studied perspectives, and they will be missed.

The past year has been another year of change. The Council, the staff, and the entire congregation have all truly demonstrated a steadfast commitment to the mission of Peace. I am continually awed by our church's ability to adapt, to be resilient and provide unselfish care for one another and for the wider community we serve. I am very proud to be a part of Peace Church

I thank you all for the opportunity to serve as the Moderator. Tom Hystead, June 12, 2022

### **Coordinating Council – Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee is composed of Dick Goese, Betty Greene, John Ameal, Kirby Wood, Moderator Tom Hystead, and Interim Pastor Jim Mitulski. The team meets monthly with bookkeeper Rosemary Feriancek. The primary job of the Finance Committee is to review the monthly financial statement and to pass along to the Coordinating Council any concerns or questions that they might identify. The Committee plays a role in the development of the annual budget each fall and discusses and makes recommendations concerning any other issues related to the finances or policies for the church.

### **Coordinating Council – Human Resources Committee**

Change management was the primary activity of the HR Committee in 2021-22. Three valued staff members left us in 2021. Job descriptions were revised, and new ones were developed to ensure coverage for all the administrative needs of the church. A proposal was made to the Council to bring Rev. Charlotte Frantz on in a larger role to assist with the administrative work before our interim pastor arrived. That proposal tied in with the HR proposal that Nathan Holst oversee and implement programs related to faith development for Children, Youth and Families, while retaining his responsibility to organize, oversee, and lead a vital ministry to the middle school and senior high youth.

The HR Committee worked closely with Pastor Jim to orient him to the HR processes of Peace Church and support the change in leadership for him and the staff. The Employee Handbook was revised; it received Council approval in the spring, and changes were shared with staff. Administrative changes were made to leave balances for all staff. Work was done to develop checklists for hiring and exiting employees, and the performance evaluation process was reviewed and revised.

The Human Resources Committee feels privileged to be able to provide support for the Pastor and our valued staff.

Respectfully submitted, Leanne Ventrella, HR Committee Chair

### **Transition Team**

In June 2021 our Coordinating Council appointed an ad hoc committee to search for a new interim pastor. The search committee members included Mary Adams, Diane Swanoski, David Courtright, Tom Hystead, and Chair Jessica Olson. Our Minnesota Conference contact, Reverend Cindy Mueller, met with our committee several times and reached out to pastors she knew might be a good fit for Peace Church. She also forwarded pastoral profiles as they were received by the conference. The committee received four profiles, interviewed two candidates, and ultimately offered the position to Reverend Jim Mitulski. Reverend Mitulski's experience working with congregations and staff similar in size to Peace UCC, his passion around social justice issues, his commitment to engaging worship, along with his extensive experience with transition ministry—serving as an interim pastor for five different congregations—led our committee to conclude Pastor Jim would be the right fit for Peace UCC during this transition time.

Pastor Jim started his tenure with us in October 2021, and he has led several “Talk, Listen, Pray” sessions with the congregation over the past several months. These sessions allowed space for anybody who chose to participate to share about their Peace experiences and listen to each other’s stories. Each session concluded with a time of prayer, involving all participants.

A transition team was appointed by the Coordinating Council to work with Pastor Jim and help us identify who Peace Church is now and who we want to be in the future. The committee includes Mike Schrage, Cathy Ameel, Mary Junnila, Bob Stevens, Ezra Schomberg, Veronica Gaidelis-Langer, and Kelly Grgas. The committee had an initial meeting with Pastor Jim in March, and members were tasked with reviewing Holy Cow Consulting’s website and their congregational assessment tool, as well as Without Fear Consulting, which helps foster anti-oppression cultures for non-profits and faith/interfaith organizations. The transition team committee’s work is temporarily on hold while the work of processing our pandemic experience along with Pastor Kathy’s departure continues. The group anticipates engaging with the congregation this fall via surveys and conversations about Peace’s needs, strengths, and weaknesses.

Submitted by Jessica Olson, Transition Team Chair

## **Christian Education – Adult Education/Faith Formation Team**

The members of the Adult Education/Faith Formation Team include Marilyn Mayry, Penny Cragun, Gary Boelhower, Catherine Carter Huber, Molly Watson, Cindy Macaulay, Pastor Jim Mitulski, Pastor Charlotte Frantz, and Nathan Holst.

After a break from holding adult education forums in the summer and early fall of 2021, adult education began in October with a focus on the transition to interim ministry and the arrival of Pastor Jim Mitulski. On October 17, representatives from the Pastoral Relations Committee and the Search Committee led a discussion on preparing for the interim. October 24 was an open zoom session to welcome Pastor Jim Mitulski. In October the Adult Ed team began meeting with representation from the Faith Formation/Spiritual Journey team, since there is overlap between the teams. After further discussion and meeting together, both teams decided to join as one team. The first joint meeting was held on March 1, 2022.

The Adult Education/ Faith Formation team also met for the first time with the Children’s Ministry Team on February 22, 2022. Quarterly meetings are planned to explore the differences between teams, explore commonalities, and brainstorm intergenerational events.

Sunday Adult Forums resumed in November with sessions led by Pastor Jim and held in the sanctuary after the 10:30 worship service.

- Nov 7: What Does Intentional Interim Ministry Mean?
- Nov 21: What Does Interim Ministry Mean for Peace Church in 2022?
- Nov 28: Social Justice and the Art of the Nativity, presented by Rev. Dr. Justin Tanis from United Theological Seminary

### **December forums focused on the liturgical season of Advent.**

- Dec 5: An Advent Conversation About Hope and Joy: Learning with the Dali Lama and Desmond Tutu, facilitated by Gudrun Witrak
- Dec 12: There’s Something About Mary, led by Pastor Jim
- Dec 19: Reflections on Our Ancestors, facilitated by Gary Boelhower
- Dec 26: Kwanza, led by Pastor Jim

### **January forums focused on Our Common Connections.**

- Jan 2: New Year, New Life and the Meaning of Baptism, led by Pastor Jim
- Jan 9: Peace Budget and Finances
- Jan 16: Dr. Martin Luther King’s Letter from the Birmingham Jail
- Jan: Roe vs Wade and the UCC Pro-choice Position, led by Pastor Jim
- Jan 30: UCC and Covenant, led by Pastor Charlotte

**February forums continued the focus on Common Connections as well as Black History Month.**

- Feb 6: Our Common Call to Hospitality: Welcoming the Stranger, by Pastor Charlotte
- Feb 13: Our Common Call to Hospitality, Part 2: Welcoming Afghan Newcomers, by Pastor Charlotte
- Feb 20: Our (un)common History: Black History Month, led by Pastor Jim
- Feb 27: Getting Ready for Lent: A Common Season, led by Pastor Jim

**March is Women’s History Month and the forums highlighted local women who have made significant contributions to the local community.**

- Mar 6: Deb Holman, CHUM outreach worker
- Mar 14: Sister Lois Eckes, former prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery
- Mar 20: Moira Villiard, multi-disciplinary artist and community organizer
- Mar 27: Classie Dudley, President of Duluth NAACP

**April is Poetry Month; forums focused on poetry with one Sunday devoted to Earth Day.**

- Apr 3: Poetry with Gary Boelhower: The Medicine of Remembrance
- Apr 10: Poetry and Music with Nathan Holst
- Apr 24: Earth Day, Earth Justice with Jodi Slick, founder and CEO of Ecolibrium

**May forums celebrated Asian American History month and our confirmands**

- May 1: The Twin Ports of APIDA Collective, by Pakou Ly, Julie Kim, and Jennifer Lien
- May 8: The Twin Ports APIDA Collective’s “Like Me, Like You” art exhibit, by Julia Cheng
- May 22: Breakfast with our Confirmands
- May 29: The Spirituality of Bob Dylan, led by Pastor Jim



Submitted by Penny Cragun

**Christian Education – Library Team**

Members and Workers: Sharon Crosby, Janell Kohls, Denise Perry, and Kathy Wood

Our Mission Statement begins with the Peace Church Vision Statement and continues as follows: “The purpose of the church library is to support the ministry of the congregation in accordance with the above vision statement. We seek to provide print and non-print material for all ages, which strengthens the educational work of the church, increases our knowledge of our own faith and others, enriches our worship life, provides information on social and economic issues, fosters an appreciation of good literature and nurtures spiritual growth.”

The check outs are increasing as the church building returns to more normal use. We also have some DVDs available for check out. They are located on the shelves near the Card Catalogue. We ask that you take time to write your name on the card in the book and place it in the file box, either on the card catalog or on the display shelves in the entry. There is also a box in the Children’s Library area.

Work nears completion on the card catalogue for the Children’s Library. Card sets for removed books have been removed and now the sets for the new books can be added.

Many books have been donated in the past year as people have downsized or spent time cleaning house. These are always appreciated, and what can’t be used in the Library are donated to the Rummage Sale.

We are happy to receive donated books, as this helps us to stretch our budget. Sharon Crosby has been working most Wednesdays to accession books, enter information into the database, and print and file the new catalog cards. She continues to update the Adult Library catalog and database as new books are added to the library. We welcome anyone who has the interest and time to help in the library to come in at their convenience—you do not need to be a member of the team. No knowledge of processing or covering books is necessary. We can give you direction. We would also welcome reviews of books in the

library and suggestions for new books. Call Sharon Crosby at 218-624-5582 if you are interested in helping.

We appreciate your help and your donations and hope that you will visit the Peace Church Libraries and use the materials available there.

Submitted by Sharon Crosby

## **Christian Education – Historical Team**

Members: Bill Kohlts, Marge Anderson, Marg Paulson, Joan Severson, Joan Hatlestad, Linda Goese, and Sharon Crosby

The team has started meeting again. We still have many pictures that need to have names and dates recorded and need to be organized into albums. We have been meeting via zoom with the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. Janell Kohls has helped with her knowledge of information in the church data base. We met with Doreen Marciniak, who is one of the longest standing members of the congregation. We have been putting up displays at the bottom of the stairs outside the Fellowship Hall each Sunday during Coffee Hour. We will continue this during the anniversary year.

A letter and current photos must be sent each year, in June, to the Department of the Navy regarding the bell from the USS ASCELLA that has been on loan to us since 1959.

We continue to organize the “New Member Photos.”

We are still trying to collect a copy of each cookbook the church has compiled over the years. We have the most current ones (1956, 1976, 1989, 2006, and 2017) but we continue to look for the older ones. Please watch for them at rummage sales and as older members pare down their possessions.

We still do not have pictures of some of our more recent Confirmation Classes; if anyone has pictures of these classes, please let us know. We can get copies made and return the originals to you. We will be compiling a list of the specific years that are missing and will publish it in the Peace Bell.

We did some research in the records to try to locate information about relatives of Marien Unden Polfson for her grandson-in-law, David Lutze, in Wausau, Wisconsin.

We continue to index the archives, photo albums, and scrapbooks. Most of these indexes have been entered into the computer so that they may be more easily searched.

Marge Anderson has been reviewing Peace Bells and making summaries of each year and thus creating a history of Peace Church.

Bill Kohlts has completed a new picture display of all the pastors who have served this church. He has received several additional photos from the Eden Theological Seminary archive in Missouri.

If anyone has a memory, old photograph, or a document about an event or happening related to the church, the committee would be interested in hearing about it. We are always looking for additional committee members who recognize the value of “remembering the past.” Please contact a team member if you are interested in being on the Historical Team and helping to organize and archive the important documents from our past.

Submitted by Sharon Crosby

## **Acting for Justice – Acting for Justice Hub**

The Acting for Justice Hub provides a focus for Peace Church’s commitment to justice work locally, nationally, and globally. The Hub meets monthly and serves as the umbrella for a variety of teams with specific justice foci, including Dismantling Racism, Climate Justice, Global Ministries, Beyond Violence, Immigrant Welcoming, Open and Affirming, and CHUM (Churches United in Ministry). This year, the creation of a new Hub team to address homelessness in Duluth was approved by the Peace Coordinating Council and formation is in process.

The Hub used discretionary funds of \$2500 this 2021-22 program year to support the following activities and organizations: Family Rise Together (Duluth); Protect Minnesota; WE Health Clinic; Bob

Tavani House; Duluth NAACP; Family Freedom Center; Together for Youth (Duluth); Yoga in the Jails Project (Duluth/StLouis County); Pride Event-Twin Ports; ONA Coalition; Global Ministries-UCC National; Climate Justice Coalition-UCC National.

Highlights in Acting for Justice at Peace Church this year include:

- Hosting the Sandy Hook school shooting memorial on Dec. 14, 2021
- Co-sponsoring/supporting Dismantling Racism conferences in Duluth, November 2021 and May 2022
- Hosting Alvaro Duran, Salvadoran theologian and human rights advocate for LGBTIQ+
- Resettling four Afghan women in Duluth through creation of a Circle of Support, which gained national recognition through a journal article in the New Yorker.

Submitted by Monica Liddle, Acting for Justice Chair

### **Acting for Justice – Climate Justice Team**

This team did not meet during the 2021-2022 program year.

### **Acting for Justice – Global Ministries Team**

The Global Ministries Team shares information about the two main global outreach connections at Peace: the national setting UCC Global Ministries, and the Good Crocodile Foundation, an indigenous-led development organization in East Timor. Information is posted on the board by the Fireside Room. In May 2022, Inge Lempp, a leader of the Good Crocodile Foundation, led worship along with the Liddle family, previous missionaries in East Timor.

Submitted by Monica Liddle

### **Acting for Justice – CHUM Involvement**

Like the rest of our community, CHUM is adjusting to life with Covid. Our CHUM breakfast team is still packing sandwiches for distribution at the Drop In Center and our monthly CHUM dinner is prepared at Peace and then delivered. CHUM's Rhubarb Fest was adapted to meet the challenges of covid and this year will be more robust. Angie Miller served as Peace's delegate this past year.

Peace had the opportunity to welcome CHUM's new Executive Director. John Cole, when he preached here on July 18, 2021. John immediately saw the need for increasing shelter and affordable housing in Duluth and, along with other shelter providers, developed a comprehensive proposal Stepping on Up. This proposal is a graduated, five-year plan that begins with authorized outdoor living spaces and a safe bay for folks living in vehicles. The second phase would increase the number of shelter beds with more privacy and security than dormitory style shelters. The third phase would increase the number of affordable housing units. Joel Kilgour of Loaves and Fishes is working with CHUM congregations, the city and county to implement Stepping On Up.

In response to this initiative, Peace added another team to the Acting for Justice Hub. The Homelessness Response Team is now organizing and collaborates with similar working groups from other congregations. Interested Peace members should be in contact with Pastor Charlotte, Pam Kramer, or Geof Witrak.

Many thanks to this year's CHUM volunteers: Kay and Bob Stevens, Geof and Gudrun Witrak, Pat and Carl Sjoding, Cathy and Jerry Carlson, Brenton Decker, Cameron Harrity, Cathy Ameal, Gayle and Jack Kelly, Judy Derauf, Liz Liebenstein and Tony Montez, Melissa Boyle, Nancy Taggart, Nancy Deever, Pam Kramer, Nina Preheim, Terese Tomanek, and Linda Goese and the Rhubarb bakers.

### **Acting for Justice – Dismantling Racism Team**

The Dismantling Racism team has generally met on the third Thursday of the month at 3:30 p.m. through Zoom. Our mission statement (developed in November 2018) is as follows:

- To encourage, strengthen and make visible the high priority on social justice in all aspects of the congregational life of Peace UCC.
- To offer educational opportunities that further our understanding of white privilege and systemic racism, throughout Peace UCC and in the wider community.
- To foster support for issues and events that are especially important to, or particularly impact, communities of color; when needed and requested, to offer leadership.
- To foster relationships between Peace UCC and communities of color in Duluth, especially, but not limited to, collaboration with St. Mark AME Church.
- To make Peace UCC's resources available to the wider community for the work of confronting racism and advocating for racial equality.
- To collaborate with other congregations/communities of faith and organizations to more effectively address issues of racism.

Our 2021-22 work included the following:

- Seven members attended meetings fairly regularly; others needed to step back for a bit but stayed in the loop about team activities. We always welcome new members.
- In June we promoted the community Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial and Juneteenth events.
- We provided support for the Foy Scholarship celebration on July 31.
- In the summer we had intentional one-on-one conversations to build relationships with each other.
- In September we reviewed our long-range plan, which includes 1) Internal work as individuals and community; 2) developing relationships with local partners, and 3) living faith publicly—bringing faith to public action. We also brainstormed our plan for the year recognizing that we could not do everything desired, especially with limits on in-person activities due to the pandemic.
- In October we shared with Interim Pastor Jim Mitulski important things to know about the Duluth community as well as what brought each of us into this work.
- Each month this year we had conversations within our team about where Peace Church is on a spectrum using an organizational assessment rubric.
- Each month we shared takeaways from our individual learning activities.
- In the fall we promoted a community presentation about a new community crisis response plan, which was implemented in January.
- We also promoted the Minnesota Council of Churches fall event “Minnesota’s Racial Legacy: Finally Telling the Truth”. There will be a Duluth “Truth Telling” event in the fall of 2022.
- In January we supported the work of the NAACP through promotion of the online MLK events. Some Peace Church folks participated in the community read of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*.
- For Black History Month, we watched the movie “John Lewis: Good Trouble” and held a book discussion of John Lewis’s graphic novel *March*.
- We updated language on the Peace Church website about the Dismantling Racism Team.
- In March Peace hosted a Theology, Sexuality & LGBTQ+ event with Alvaro Duran, an Anglican priest, theologian, and pastor of a faith community in El Salvador. We also assisted with Adult Forums interviewing diverse local women who are changemakers as part of Women’s History Month.
- During Lent some of our members participated in weekly discussions of the daily devotion *Lent of Liberation*.
- This spring we promoted educational sessions by the Duluth Human Rights Commission on Indian boarding schools and on redlining in Duluth.
- We promoted antiracism conferences such as the November 12-13 Overcoming Racism Conference organized by the Facilitating Racial Equity Collaborative (FREC), UMD’s March 2 Summit on Equity, Race & Ethnicity, and the May 13-14 White Privilege Symposium in Duluth organized by The White Privilege Institute.

Submitted by Betty Greene

## **Acting for Justice – Immigrant Welcoming Team**

Most of Peace's Immigrant Welcoming Ministry has been devoted to the resettlement of four women from Afghanistan. Just after Thanksgiving, 2021, the Immigrant Welcoming Team was re-constituted as a Sponsor Circle. This was a new program developed in order to help resettle some of the 78,000 Afghans who had been evacuated to the United States between August and early December. Members of the Peace Church Duluth Welcome Sponsor Circle are Gary Boelhower, Cyndi Brown, Mollie Stapleton Clark, Penny Cragun, Gayle and Jack Kelly, Terrie and Lyle Shannon, and Charlotte Frantz (staff). These nine people were required to do an extensive study of the Twin Ports area, take an online class, and undergo background checks. The Circle submitted their material and were certified for resettlement.

Late in the evening of Valentine's Day, four Afghan women arrived in Duluth. Amena Haidari, Halimi Akbari, Sediqa Khalili, and Halima Amiri came from Fort Dix, New Jersey. The women stayed at McCabe Renewal Center, and the Benedictine Sisters became partners with us in providing hospitality and accompaniment. Afghan newcomers are eligible for various assistance programs, and we all learned how much paperwork and online applications are required! All four newcomers speak conversational English. They enrolled immediately in ELL classes offered by ISD 709. The Islamic Center of the Twin Ports welcomed them with a special potluck meal.

Meanwhile, Janette and Jake Shaw were readying a three-bedroom home on the hillside as a rental. Peace Church members connected the Circle and the Shaws, who were willing to work with Peace and the newcomers. Jim McLean and Peace volunteers worked with the Shaws to finish renovations as soon as possible. Dennis Isernhagen, Bob and Kay Stevens, Annette Strom, Louise Hawley, and Geoffrey Gates were all part of Jim's team.

UUCD opened up their rummage sale storage area; members of Peace donated furnishings; March 12 was moving day. Alex Dean, Warren Post, Benji Stapleton, Jessica and Heidi Olson, Melissa Boyle and Jen Stenersen all helped gather donated furniture and furnishings.

An Afghan resettlement fund here at Peace has made support for the women possible while they complete the necessary documentation for work. Peace musicians donated the proceeds of the January Cabaret to the fund, and Peace members have been generous with their financial gifts.

Thanks to Peace and the networks among our members, Amena, Halima, Halima, and Sediqa had employment interviews at Benedictine Living Center and are working in Benedictine's kitchen. Getting them linked to immigration attorneys has been a slow and cumbersome process, though all of them have had interviews with the Advocates with Human Rights.

Halima Amiri is now studying online for CNA certification and is taking an English Intensive course at UMD this summer. Sediqa is contemplating a move to Maryland where a cousin and spouse recently moved for resettlement. Amena and Halima Akbari are considering the possibility of relocating to an area with a much greater Afghan population. The Welcome Circle continues to support the women as these divergent plans take shape and is dedicated to the women's welfare and best interests. We have fulfilled the Sponsor Circle organization's commitment to support the first three months of resettlement.

Our work is overseen by Episcopal Migration Ministries which acts as a mentoring organization to groups like ours. They ask a commitment of six months or until a person relocates to an area geographically distant from the Sponsor Circle. Should the women relocate (which now seems likely for three of them), the Sponsor Circle will do what it can to make the transition as smooth as possible.

In the meantime, please know that the generosity and commitment of Peace Church has made this ministry possible and deeply impressed both the women and those who have become acquainted with the Sponsor Circle's work. Thank you.

Submitted by Charlotte Frantz

## **Acting for Justice – Beyond Violence Team**

The Beyond Violence team of Acting for Justice was formed to respond to and generate actions regarding gun violence and violence caused by war or domestic terrorism, etc. We are a small group but we have encouraged members to attend local vigils and rallies to prevent gun violence and we educate the congregation about gun violence and anti-violence issues.

Because there have been so many mass shootings, local area shootings and shootings in Minnesota and America, we have been active in the responses to those. Peace hosted a vigil on May 25, 2022, for the victims of the Buffalo and Uvalde shootings, and in December we held a vigil for the Sandy Hook shooting victims.

Also using the World Beyond War, a global movement to end all wars, we have focused on peaceful solutions to conflict.

Peace also held a press event for Grandmothers for Peace around Mother's Day of this year.

Always in search of new members, please join our team as we are small but mighty.

Submitted by Joan Peterson



## **Christian Spiritual Life – Worship and Arts Team**

Worship in the late spring and early summer took on a very different face in 2021. We started the summer with pods of people able to attend worship, safely distanced. We began to alternate indoor and outdoor services through the summer, with the outdoor worship services held under the tent.

After our first interim pastor left at the end of May, we were ably led in worship by a host of pastors, chaplains, and lay leaders. The Worship Team wishes to thank Pastors Sara Olson Dean, Tom Little, Bob Stevens, and Charlotte Frantz. Nathan Holst was key to our worships when he returned from his family leave. Gary Boelhower, Matt Hunter, and Gudrun Witrak also led worship as preacher and liturgist. The new CHUM executive, John Cole, was our guest preacher in July. Pastor Charlotte and Ben Fena were the sermon givers for a special service in August.

Our music director Jim Pospisil gathered musicians each Sunday to add the joy and meaning to the written and spoken word. As in 2020 and 2021, we thank the tech team for ably streaming the 10:30 service for those who wished to tune in. We continued that streaming into 2022 with an emphasis on streaming the 10:30 service each Sunday. Gradually, as we began services in the fall, we were able to admit all who wished to attend worship and saw a steady increase in attendance as more and more members came back to find community and unity.

In October we welcomed our new Interim Pastor Jim Mitulski, who has challenged us to look at new ways to worship, adding a contemporary reading each Sunday, new hymns, and videos to our worship. We thank the pastoral staff, Pastors Jim and Charlotte for guiding us through this interim time.

Nathan Holst, Children's Minister, led our Story for All Ages during services as more and more children came back to worship in person. He began a children's sermon time in the Fireside Room once a month as the congregation sang them out and back into the service. Prayers Around the Cradle services were held Wednesdays in Advent. We sang and prayed the Holden Evening Prayers for our Lenten worship on Wednesdays. Taizé services were reassigned to the first Sunday of the month at 5pm, beginning in April. Our W & A member, Amanda Hunter, invited congregants to help create a "Garden of Resurrection" on Palm Sunday. The finished art piece hangs in front of the sanctuary, and after the Easter season it will hang in our gallery space.

Worship remains of utmost importance to our church life, and as we transition to seeking a settled pastor, our congregation is experiencing new ways of worship, giving feedback as to what is most meaningful in our worship services, and coming together as the Beloved Body of Christ.

Respectfully submitted, Gudrun Witrak

## **Christian Spiritual Life – Shared Ministry Team**

It is our goal to receive all who come through our doors as welcomed guests, to provide a path for finding connection and means for sharing unique gifts. We do this remembering that the journey of long-term attendees of Peace may bring them to a place where renewed connectivity is needed.

Members: Cindy McLean, Nina Preheim, Cindy Macaulay, and staff representatives Charlotte Frantz and Elise Courtright.

Despite the past year being a bit quiet, our team kept meeting, brain storming, looking ahead, and enjoying each other's company! Our main tasks are doing what we can to help with the Inquirers class for prospective new members (usually held three times a year), provide welcome bags for visitors, send out birthday cards, and put together the shared ministry booklets, which were made available in May for members to fill out. The team also initiated the creation of the church's first online picture directory. One of our informal team descriptions is 'a job and a friend to do it with' ~ a busy place like Peace needs lots of volunteers and we sure look ahead to more folks reconnecting!

Respectfully submitted, Cindy Macaulay

## **Christian Spiritual Life – Food and Fellowship Team**

The Food and Fellowship Team has slowly returned to participating in the life of the church as Covid restrictions were lifted. In the fall of 2021, the committee assisted the Stewardship team. In October the team helped with the kickoff serving sandwiches, and in November we helped dish out pie for "Peace of the Pie" celebration. In the Spring of 2022, the team served taco bowls for the Earth Day celebration and also served breakfast for the confirmands, their families, and special guests. Coming up in the summer of 2022, the team will assist with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration event. The Food and Fellowship team is excited to resume more gatherings so we all can reconnect. Come join us as a team member!

Submitted by Cathy Ameel

## **Christian Spiritual Life – Health and Healing Team**

In March of this year, Monica Liddle, Susan Larson Kidd, and Bud Trnka decided to revitalize and transform the old Health and Wellness Team. The purpose of the Health and Healing Team is ***"To enhance our faith and spirituality through developing deeper appreciation for our bodies and the Earth."*** We plan to offer continuous sessions at Peace in the areas of mental and physical health, always with an emphasis on the spiritual connection to the earth, and our health and healing.

We offered a Lenten pilgrimage for the Lenten season at 5:00pm on Wednesday evenings. We then sponsored Tim Peters offering a spiritual renewal program for four weeks.

In the summer of 2022, we are planning to offer a short, repeated series entitled "From Conflict to Collaboration"—a self-examination of our individual conflict style couched in a spiritual healing environment.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Larson Kidd and Monica Liddle

## **Christian Spiritual Life – Prayer Chain Team**

*"Our prayers do make a difference."* Max Lucado

Praying for those who have concerns and joys is the role of the 47 volunteers of the Peace Church Prayer Chain. Being able to pray for others is a gift and brings hope and encouragement to those for whom we pray. From May 1, 2021, to April 8, 2022, we received 135 prayer requests.

Coordinators: Linda Goese and Lynn Devlin

## **Christian Stewardship – Stewardship Team**

The Fall Stewardship Campaign to fund the operating budget for 2022 fell 14% short of what had been pledged for 2021. Combined with a proposed 2022 budget that was 20% greater than 2021, it led to Peace's first major budgetary shortfall in recent memory. The reasons for the lapse in support were multiple: the departure of a beloved 30-year pastor, the issues related to our failed first interim pastor experience, and the pandemic's double whammy of restrictions against in-person worship and small group gatherings and the economic stresses on portions of the Peace family. A second stewardship appeal in January 2022, combined with some downward adjustments in the 2022 operating budget, successfully closed the funding gap.

In the course of analyzing the Fall Campaign, it was apparent that those making pledges for budget support constitute only a minority of those listed as "active" members. That fact held pre-pandemically as well and strongly correlated with non-contributing members' extended lack of attendance or other involvement. Consequently, an inquiry process is underway to clarify which members wish to stay connected to Peace so that we can better focus our future stewardship efforts.

Returning to healthy financial stewardship primarily depends upon being able to have a sustained return to full in-person gathering. That and a successful transition to new pastoral leadership will fundamentally dictate the congregational response to our annual appeal—however we choose to message our members.

Submitted by Geof Witrak, Stewardship Team chair

## **Christian Stewardship – Property Team**

Although there were no major changes to the building in the last year, the team has still been busy ensuring that the church and grounds remain in good condition. We took a very conservative approach to the property budget last year, knowing that we will be taking on some larger projects in the coming year.

A few accomplishments of the last year:

- Replaced numerous fluorescent light fixtures with LED units using nearly half the energy.
- Worked on the annual Earth Day event, with members coordinating CHUM garden maintenance and continuing the cleanup of the old dump area behind the church.
- Took on additional maintenance tasks while Dan Shepard was on leave. We gained a newfound appreciation for just how much Dan does to keep this building running. We would also like to extend a big thank you to all the additional volunteers who helped during this time.
- We also ordered a new tent for outdoor services. The old tent served well for many years, but it needed to be retired after 2 years of serving as our outdoor meeting space during COVID.

Additional committee members with ideas and/or skills are important to continuing the Property Team's mission. Drop by one of our meetings. Check out what the ongoing needs are. Then sign up! Help maintain this building, which offers so much to its members and to the broader community.

Submitted by David Courtright, Chairperson

## **Christian Stewardship – Worship Technology Team**

In summer of 2021, the existing Technology Team that had been streaming during the COVID shut-down disbanded. The tech team met to discuss sustainability, the future of streaming and the availability of volunteers. Alex Dean and Doug Bowen-Bailey wanted to take some well-deserved time away from streaming services. Tyler Stark and Susan Larson Kidd continued to run sound in the sanctuary and help set up/tear down gear for summer tent services. They backed off on the intensity level of streaming that was offered as well as the frequency of streaming. Susan continued to learn from Doug and Alex about the video, OBS, YouTube streaming process. One important component that came from this process was the importance of creating a schedule and sharing that with the Office Coordinator.

For August, September, and October, Tyler and Susan ran the livestream with some help from Paul O'Brien and Alex Dean. They streamed one service every other Sunday. When our Interim Pastor Jim Mitulski arrived, he was interested in adding back the 8:30 service and streaming one service every Sunday. By December, a contracted student from UMD had been recruited and trained to help support the weekly streaming.

January through May, the team streamed at least one service every Sunday, along with Wednesday Lenten services, and every holiday service. During a five-week interval starting in January, in-person services were suspended due to a COVID resurgence and worship services were stream only. Another paid student was recruited to support the stream team. The team received sound training and sound improvement support from Don Schraufnagel. They ordered some much-needed musical equipment.

Additionally, several events were supported with sound/video and/or streaming such as funerals, weddings, recitals, cabaret, and guest-speaking occasions. May of 2022 included training of new volunteers and planning for summer services.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Larson Kidd

### **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Team**

A committee was convened in January 2022 to plan a variety of activities for our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Our main priority is to gather stories of those who have been members their entire lives and others who have been members for many years. The committee will also record testimonials from folks of all ages, asking them to describe what Peace Church means in their lives. Many other events and activities are in the planning stages, but will take place primarily during August, September, and October. The History Committee has a display of artifacts from the early church at the bottom of the front stairs. The original altar, pulpit, parts of the bell tower, all confirmation group photos, etc. are on display. To kick off the yearlong celebration, Kirby Wood portrayed our first pastor, Rev. Johan Lüeder, during children's time on March 13, exactly 150 years since the first congregational meeting took place at our predecessor church, St. Paul's Evangelical.



Team members are Bill Kohlts, Sharon Crosby, Lynn Devlin, Susan Isernhagen, Janell Kohls, Linda Goese, Cindy Klinksiek, Justin Olson, Laurie Berner, and Marsha Hystead.

More to come! Submitted by Marsha Hystead, Chair

### **Authorized Ministers**

One of the interim tasks has been to support, and where needed, strengthen Peace's relationship with authorized ministers who are members of the congregation. During this past year the Church Council has learned more about the relationship between authorized ministers and a local congregation. Within the United Church of Christ, the term "authorized" refers to persons credentialed for ministry by the Committee on Ministry.

Throughout their ministerial careers, authorized ministers are expected to maintain membership and affiliation in a local United Church of Christ congregation. Ministers who are employed in settings other than the United Church of Christ enter into four-way covenants which are partnerships composed of the individual, the Conference, the employer and the local church. A local congregation supports and encourages individuals in their ministry and ministers are accountable to local congregations for the ministry in which they are engaged.

In early 2022, the Coordinating Council approved updated four-way covenants with Tom Little and Holly Pederson. Also, during the past year Pastor Jim facilitated a zoom meeting with most of Peace's authorized ministers.

Listed on the following pages are short summaries from our current authorized ministers:

## **Chaplains**

### **Sara Olson Dean**

I am completing my third year as a chaplain at Essentia; our department serves both St. Mary's Medical Center and Essentia Health Duluth. I provide clinical coverage for three units: pediatrics (including the peds ICU), the neonatal ICU, and the birthplace. On those units, I provide care for patients, family, and staff. In November 2021, I also became our department's supervisor. In that role, I oversee the schedule for our 24-7 coverage, provide support and resources for our team of chaplains, orient new chaplains and CPE interns, and generally help to keep the work of our team running smoothly. I enjoy rich conversation with our team of chaplains as we explore the work of spiritual care, and it is a privilege to walk alongside patients, family, and staff amidst the myriad experiences that people have within the hospital's walls. Last fall, I became a Board Certified Chaplain, and I am grateful for the chance to continue the work of professional and vocational development.

### **Tom Liddle**

I am Tom Liddle, ordained minister of Word and Sacrament. I serve as a staff chaplain on the neurotrauma unit at Essentia. I also support Global Ministries engagement with the Protestant Church of East Timor and do some supply preaching. I love that I get to come alongside people at critical times in life and offer a listening ear and compassionate presence.

### **Liz Liebenstein**

I am ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and delighted to be a friend of Peace Church. (Presbyterian clergy have standing in their Presbyteries and therefore do not join a local congregation as in the UCC.) Currently it is a privilege and source of joy to be called to serve on the memory care units at the Benedictine Living Community. There I spend my days with residents who are living with dementia, and I am utterly amazed at the beauty and depth of the indwelling Spirit who never leaves us. In ways that affirm and include everyone, we worship through singing, prayer, scripture, and conversation. The Holy One surprises and blesses me daily.

### **Jan Murphy**

I am a chaplain at Essentia Health and work on 3E/COVID/ Medical Unit and 8E. I'm also on the hospital ethics committee as well as a research assistant for a PC-7 Study. One morning a week I cover emergency.

### **Holly Pederson**

I serve as a chaplain on an Essentia Health St. Mary's interdisciplinary hospice team. While adhering to my own values and beliefs and striving to live a life that honors myself and others—all for the Glory of God—I am called to serve all people regardless of gender, race, class, ethnicity, religious affiliation, or other personal characteristics. I know that it is a sacred privilege to be allowed to enter their lives and bear witness to parts of their spirits, hearts, and minds. I use religious and/or other materials sensitively and appropriately as I respond to those experiencing grief and emotional confusion. It can be sustaining and clarifying for wounded souls and help those in emotional need find a place of calm to meet the next moment. Spiritual support can include listening, hearing laments, life review, helping to facilitate hope and meaning in life, praying together, conducting funeral services, providing sacraments of Baptism and/or Holy Communion, sharing in praise and worship through music, listening to sermons, scripture reading, or simply holding the hand of one in need. I continue to be in awe of how God works in my life and the lives of those I serve. Holly Pederson, M.Div. 5/31/22

## **Ministers serving Congregations other than Peace**

### **Cherie Daniel**

I serve the continuing mission of The Duluth Congregational Church as the half-time pastor. Our building was recently sold to Vineyard Eastside and our various ministries continue in place. With technology and Spirit, we are reaching more members and friends as the church remains stable. I thank God for the Church.

### **John Szarke**

I am John Szarke and have been serving as a part-time pastor at Community UCC in Biwabik, Minnesota, since 2015. During the week I provide pastoral visits to members who are in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or who are homebound. Sunday morning Worship is always a highlight of the week as this very close-knit community comes together to worship and spends time together. It is a joy for me to witness their love and care for one another, the community, and beyond.

## **Clergy Available for Occasional Service**

As of 2018, the United Church of Christ stopped using the term “retired clergy” because authorized ministers often continue serving in various ways. Instead, these clergy are now listed as “available for occasional service.”

### **Nancy Deever**

I am a retired Presbyterian pastor, educated at United Seminary and ordained in 1984 at Hope Presbyterian church in Virginia Minnesota. While serving in Grand Marais, I had dual standing in both the Presbyterian Church and the UCC. In 1992 I moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, and volunteered at Ghost Ranch, a National Presbyterian multicultural conference center. While in New Mexico, I taught high school science and earned a Master’s degree in environmental science. I am now retired and volunteer with several organizations, including Family Freedom Center here in Duluth.

### **Charlotte Frantz**

I retired from called ministry in 2015 after 40 years serving congregations. I joined Peace soon thereafter. Since then I’ve done pulpit supply for area congregations, served a two year interim at United Presbyterian Church in Superior and am now serving as Interim Pastoral Associate at Peace. Additionally, I’ve been a founding member of the Interfaith Committee for Migrant Justice.

### **Sara Lund**

Sara Lund served as a hospital chaplain at St. Mary’s in Superior and had a four-way covenant with Peace. Following her retirement, she offered pulpit supply and pastoral care on a regular basis for area congregations. Currently, she is enjoying a new vocation—being grandmother to two new grandsons, one in Idaho and one in Germany.

### **Terese Tomanek**

Terese came into authorized ministry by way of chaplaincy at Essentia. After her ordination, she served as chaplain at Woodland Hills and had a four-way covenant with Peace Church. She has done pulpit supply in Duluth and points north. She is currently serving as a Duluth City Councilor and is an active volunteer on numerous Boards.

## **Exempt Clergy**

In order to keep their standing (or credentials for practicing ministry), authorized clergy must meet certain requirements for continuing education. Certainly clergy, primarily those retired and not interested in being available for occasional service, may apply for exemption from these requirements.

### **Bob Stevens**

I am Rev. Bob Stevens. I have been in chaplaincy positions for the last 40 years, which has made it possible to be a member of Peace church for most of that time. Now retired, I am now in an exempt position with the Minnesota conference of the UCC. That means that I do not need to take the training required of active Clergy, and I cannot accept a call or fill in at other churches, but it does allow me to fill in at Peace where appropriate.

## **Member in Discernment**

Members in discernment are making preparation for authorized ministry and may be licensed while they are working to fulfill requirements for ordination.

### **Nathan Holst**

Nathan Holst, Peace’s Faith Formation Minister, is a member in discernment with the Committee on Ministry. He is preparing for ordination and will complete the academic requirements by the end of this summer. He is the first member in discernment to use what Committee on Ministry calls an alternate pathway to ministry. Much of his learning has been through his work here at Peace. He has been licensed for ministry here since 2018.

## **Statistics: June 2021 – May 2022**

### **New Members (4)**

Stephen & Lori Dando  
Ellen & Laura Hamel

### **Confirmands (6)**

Mary Boyle  
River Fena  
Lydia Kraker  
Joran Mittlefehldt  
Kellen O'Connell  
Gus Olson

### **Baptisms (2)**

#### ***Older Children/Adults***

Lydia Kraker  
Joran Mittlefehldt

### **Weddings (3)**

Isaac Sanchez & Isabelle Schomberg  
Eric Lorentz & Jessica Davis  
Sergei Hanka & Katie Murphy

### **Funerals/Memorial Services/Deaths (7)**

Nettie Bothwell  
Marion Caven  
Jerry Cleveland  
Jean McClelland  
Chester Mulligan  
Jim Soderberg  
Cheryl Walsh