

# The Peaceful News

The Peace Presbyterian Church of Lakewood Ranch, Florida Newsletter

Summer, 2021

## One year ago, Easter season 2020,

we were struggling to adjust to a new way of life, stressed out about limitations. We were learning to use zoom and find worship online. We were praying it would be over before summer. This spring, Easter season 2021, we are trying to find our way back to a new normal that will include a little more zooming and a little less face-to-face than we had prior to pandemic.

I am so thankful to all of you who have maintained a positive spirit, trusting God and trusting one another in new ways, as we continue to adapt. There have been many times when the Session was not sure which way to go with multiple options, but we erred on the side of safety, hoping to protect you and to contribute to the health of Manatee County.

**“...persevere in prayer.”**

We are in a much safer place now with nearly all adults at Peace vaccinated, and what a joy to worship in our beautiful sanctuary again!

Adjustments are still being made, and your flexibility is a gift to all around you. We will continue to love our neighbor—the adolescent who is not vaccinated, or the immune-compromised adult who still feels nervous in public places. We will respect those who are desperate for more socialization and those who feel nervous singing or eating in groups.

At a recent Gratitude Team meeting, we read from Romans 12 and I challenge you to live by these words:

*Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.*



On May 23rd, Pentecost, at 10:00 we will rejoice to be all together, and if you cannot, we hope you feel part of Peace's worship via livestream! We'll baptize Nathan McSwain and welcome new members and enjoy fellowship again weekly inside or out! We will rejoice that God's Spirit was always with us, praying with us, sighing with us, and now filling us with zeal in the service of Jesus Christ, our steady companion.

*Elizabeth*

Rev. Elizabeth M. Deibert  
Pastor, Peace Presbyterian Church

*alive • heart • relationship • safety • listening • empathic • understanding • communion • compassionate • presence • awareness • emotional • soul • authenticity • honor • patience • dialogue • request • heart • needs • warmth • meeting • request • love • interpersonal • feelings • consciousness • responsive • emotional*

## Lively Learning On Sunday Mornings 11:00 am via Zoom



Peace Church has continued to conduct Adult Christian Education classes via Zoom throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in May 2020 at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings, a discussion group has gathered virtually to focus on current events related to our being a Matthew 25 church, or to view informative videos featuring noted theologians. We were encouraged to extend our learning through thought-provoking, heart-opening discussions led by Peace church leaders.

During Lent we used videos to see and hear Alexander J. Shaia use the great map of the Four Gospels to take us on The Christ Journey of Love, Growth, and Transformation.

The group considered questions such as: How do we face change? How do we move through suffering? How do we receive joy? How do we mature in service? Sometimes we found ourselves considering some never-before considered ways of looking at these matters.

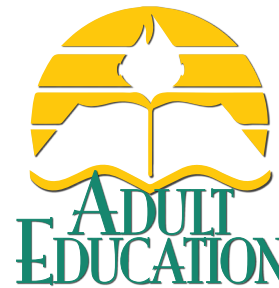
Currently on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. all adults who are interested are invited to Zoom with the group which has started a new set of lessons that may delight many of you who appreciated the classes taught by Mickey Miller and Richard Deibert a couple of years ago based on the lectures of Luke Timothy Johnson, Professor of Theology and Christian Origins at Emory's Candler School of Theology.

This set of Dr. Johnson's videos is from Early Christianity: The Experience of the Divine, which will guide us on a journey to the 'kernel' of Christianity's appeal: religious experience. Mickey Miller is providing synopses and study guides to aid all in following the lectures and discussions. Topics include "The Role of the Religious Experience", "Jesus and the Gospels", "the Resurrection Experience," and "the Power of the Saints." Mickey Miller, Bill Clough and others of the group will lead.

## Lively Learning On Monday Evenings Evening Book Study 7:00 pm via Zoom



During Lent as a Lenten Discipline, this group of Book Readers committed to reading, *The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully*, by Joan Chittester, Benedictine nun and respected theologian. The book led the group in considering topics such as Regret, Accomplishment, Memories, the Present, Mystery, Legacy, the Twilight of Life and the presence of God leading us through the last decades of our lives. Patti and Shannon Jung initiated these sharing conversations, and others in the group also led us in looking for and accepting God's Grace in living these years as abundantly as our younger days.



Currently on Monday evenings, these Book Readers invite you to join them in reading the warm-hearted author Anne Lamott's book, *Help! Thanks! Wow!* In her conversational book, Lamott tells us why these three words are the three prayers she uses most and most effectively in her ongoing dialogue with God. She writes about God in ways we don't often read, and her sincerity and directness can model pathways to a very personal connection with the Divine. Elizabeth Deibert will lead the first class.

## Youth Christian Education Peaceful Parents on Sundays 10:30 am in-person at Peace Church

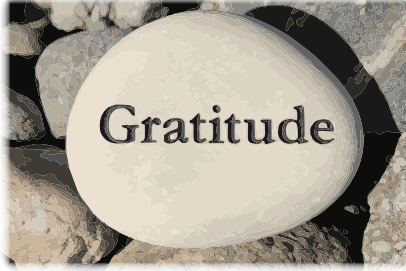
On Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m., our parish associates, Rev. Mary Beth McSwain and Rev. Cori Rigby, lead classes to connect and lead growth for the parents of Peace. The in-person Peaceful Parents group begins a new class on April 18<sup>th</sup> that runs through May 16<sup>th</sup> and will focus on discussing with parents the need to help their children navigate the rise of anxiety in culture. They will be using a podcast from the Fuller Youth Institute called "*Faith in an Anxious World.*" (<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/faith-in-an-anxious-world-parenting-podcast/id1493444457>) Each session, through May 16<sup>th</sup>, will be based on a different podcast in this series:

- April 18<sup>th</sup>: *Introducing the Faith in an Anxious World podcast & Faith in an Anxious World*
- April 25<sup>th</sup>: *Life in a Relational World*
- May 2<sup>nd</sup>: *Life in a Hurting World*
- May 9<sup>th</sup>: *Life in a Thriving World*
- May 16<sup>th</sup>: *Reflection*

The Adult Education team meets again on April 27. If you have suggestions for classes, a desire to lead a class, or input regarding ZOOM and in-person classes, please contact Elder David Klement, Co-Team Leaders: Barbara Wright, and Dona Larimer, or anyone else on the team. We'd love to know your thoughts and suggestions.

# Gratitude Team

The Gratitude Team has been focusing on the upcoming fall events—coming soon will be details of what we hope will be the final/#4 Building Fund campaign to pay down the debt on our beautiful sanctuary. And how great the timing—just when we are allowed back into the sanctuary for weekly worship!



Hope you have seen some of the Gratitude for Service testimonies that have been featured our weekly bulletin. Thanks to all of the individuals who shared their joy of serving with us! If you are involved in mission work through Peace and would like to share how you are grateful to be able to serve—please write a short testimony and share with Robin Miller / miller.millermore@gmail.com.

We are required by our lenders to continue to have funding campaigns until the debt is paid down below \$500,000. We will provide lots of information and advance notice before the campaign kicks off this fall. To date, we have had three successful campaigns that raised nearly \$1,000,000 each through our Peace members setting aside finances for the building fund in addition to funding the general budget

This August the Gratitude Team will again organize the Peace ministry teams for a Time and Talent Fair and include a Spiritual Gifts focus as a part of the Fair. More to come on this special event!

## MOMENT FOR GRATITUDE

TIME · TALENT · TREASURE ✨ WORSHIP + TWO IS WHAT WE DO ✨

A quote in this month's Guidepost magazine by Bob Goff speaks to helping others *"Your greatest sense of fulfillment will come in the service of others, not yourself."*

Peace Presbyterian Church has selected Beth-El for one of our missions to help the lives of migrant farm workers and their families in our community. Nancy began the first year we came to Peace. I joined the second year after seeing how much joy and fulfillment Nancy

received from helping at Beth-El.

There are many ways to serve at Beth-El—

repackaging beans and rice from fifty pound bags into smaller three or four pound bags, filling grocery bags with the beans, rice and other food items for the families, distributing the food bags to the families, sorting clothing and household items for the new thrift shop, financial contributions and clothing items for the thrift shop.

I recently answered a call to help repackage beans one morning so the volunteers who pack the grocery bags would have enough smaller bags of beans. I worked by myself until the amount of beans needed were bagged. Another couple came and did the same with the rice. I did not see the joy on the mother's face when she picked up her groceries for her family or the happiness on her children's faces when they received new clothes from the thrift shop. Driving home that beautiful sunny day with that "sense of fulfillment that comes in service of others," I could see those families joyfully receiving food for the week. Beth-El can do that to you.

John & Nancy Martin



# Outreach Team

“Christ is risen! Alleluia!” It was wonderful to see such great attendance at the outdoor Easter service, and then to enjoy the virtual service as well. Kudos to Peace staff, musicians, and readers for creating inspiring worship experiences week after week.

The Outreach Team has been trying to “reach out” as best we can with the pandemic still hanging over us. We had quite a few events in February.

- 1) We sponsored another note writing campaign, “Hearts for Heroes.” Peace members were invited to write a Valentine note to health care professionals, and Sally Schoeffel delivered them to a local hospital.
- 2) Outreach team member Ofelia Uribe started a dance-exercise class in the parking lot. They meet at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays, and have now moved to Fellowship Hall in the Peace Center. No charge, but donations of canned/packaged food for the Manatee Food Bank are welcome.
- 3) Many of us were part of the CROP walk on February 28, followed by...
- 4) A bell choir concert from “Ring Sarasota” on the same day.

Coming up:

- 1) Another concert: Violin soloist Carlann Evans will play for us Sunday, May 2, at 5 p.m. It will take place indoors, with masks. We will hear from guitarist Jonathan Smith as well.. There will be a \$15 charge for adults; kids under 18, no charge.

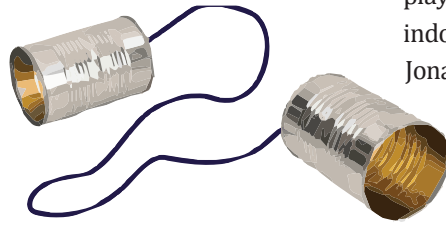
Please try to attend and bring a friend.

- 2) Postcards describing the Peaceful Path are available at Sunday worship and in the Peace Center. Grab a few and share them with your neighbors. And if you have not visited “the path” in person, you are in for a treat.

The Outreach Team is always ready to grow, and would welcome new members. Our next scheduled meeting is May 13th at 7:00 p.m. We hope to meet in person at Peace. Come and join us, just to meet the team and see if there’s a task you would like to do.

Lynda Harman, Outreach Chair

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.” Hebrews 10:24 (RSV)*



*The Peaceful Path was cleaned up and Michael made a discovery.*



# Property Team



From Ecclesiastes 3, ESV:

*What gain has the worker from his toil? I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time.*

We are ready and able to receive visitors inside both buildings safely. Please utilize the hand sanitizing stations at each entrance door, practice safe-distancing and remember to mask-up for safety when entering a building. The finish line is in view.

Our inside and outside Spring Cleaning mornings were an overwhelming success! We would like to thank the following volunteers for their help in sprucing up the property: Don Bouchard, Eirinn Camphire, Amy Cerniglia, Gail Cole, the Deibert's (Elizabeth, Don, Richard), the Donaldson's (Peggy and Bob), Tom Finnerty, Dick Giberti, Gary Holbrook, Jenni Holt, Linda Juillerat, the Kragt's (Glenda and Roger), John Martin, Steve Miller, the Muirhead's (Toni and Glen), Jamie Reagan, the Rineer's (Gertie and John), the Robinson's (Sherry and Jim), Dee Romito, the Schoeffel's (Sally and Kim), the Sliwowski's (Shereen, Piotr and Andrew), Yanick Tabot, Cynthia Tate, Beth Walch.

The bigger projects that the Property Team (and friends) accomplished most recently include a major cut back of the tree-line near our SR 64 sign and the entrance way, the installment of the "Glory Garden" as well as a butterfly garden. The playground has been upgraded with playground-specific mulch. The children (and parents) will be much happier not to have to play in sand and dirt.

We invite you to make an Earth Care gift to the Property Team. A few wish list items beyond the budget: irrigation for new butterfly garden-\$200, steel tine rake-\$50, new outdoor lighting at Peace Center-8 gifts @ \$100 each, exterior power washing-20 gifts @ \$50 each.

We welcome volunteers to join us on a Thursday morning from 9-11AM, during which time we tidy up the property (inside and out). Contact Dee Romito, Team Leader: 717-471-8901.



*Gardens on Spring Cleaning Day and the volunteer playground crew.*



# Worship Events



The Worship and Music Team has continued in 2021 to support Elizabeth, Amy and Eirinn in their efforts to provide a meaningful and technically superior virtual worship service. We are all so grateful for the support of the congregation in volunteering to be part of the service.

The outdoor service at 9:30 on Sunday morning continues to be well attended, especially as more people receive their vaccinations and are feeling more comfortable attending this service. The Worship and Music Team are responsible for preparing communion each Sunday with help from members of the congregation. We would appreciate anyone else who would like to volunteer to come at 8:40 to help us.

The Ash Wednesday service was held virtually on February 17th and was a meaningful way to begin the Lenten season. Palm Sunday was recorded with many participants, especially the children, who added to the feeling of expectation as we remembered Jesus being welcomed into the city of Jerusalem. The outdoor service was equally exciting as we all waved palm branches and shouted "Hosanna", with our masks on, of course!

The Maundy Thursday service was virtual. It was touching and meaningful as we experienced Jesus washing the disciples' feet, leaving us an example of servanthood to follow. We saw Jesus breaking bread with his disciples, telling them this represented his body and blood broken and shed for our sins. We also took the bread and the cup ourselves during the service in remembrance of what Jesus was about to experience on Good Friday. The Good Friday service was also virtual, but

so effective with its somber mood as we experienced once again the despair the disciples felt as their King was crucified on the cross, giving his life that we might live.

Easter morning was glorious, celebrating both virtually and in person. There were over 200 people in attendance at the outdoor service, where we joined in singing songs of Jesus' resurrection. It was a thrilling moment to be able to sing together for the first time in over a year! **Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!**

As of April 18, session approved to move our 9:30 worship into the sanctuary. Eventually, the indoor service will be live-streamed so that those not able to return to church in person can still enjoy experiencing it online. The Worship and Music Team have now formed an Audio Visual sub-team to be able to live stream the service inside.

The team met in the sanctuary on April 8th with Integrity Sound to discuss the technical aspects of recording the live service. We would welcome anyone else in the congregation who would be willing to learn how to record the live service. We are full of hope as we see the new possibilities of meeting together in person opening up soon. We cannot wait to see you again!

Kathleen Germano

*The Last Supper portrayed by the children and youth in the Passion Play. It is available on the Peace website under GROW.*





## FAITH AND FILM

The Faith and Film meetings have moved from in-person to zoom activities. The final showing of the season will occur May 14, don't miss it!

May 14, 2021

**BlacKkKlansman** (2018, R, 2:15)

Discussion Leader TBA

**John David Washington, Adam Driver, Topher Grace**

Ron Stallworth, an African American police officer from Colorado Springs, CO, successfully manages to infiltrate the local Ku Klux Klan branch with the help of a Jewish surrogate who eventually becomes its leader. Based on actual events. Directed by Spike Lee.

COMING SOON



The Fellowship Team has hosted fellowship 1 or 2 times a month after outside services since last year. We will begin weekly fellowship (with coffee) beginning May 2<sup>nd</sup> after services. Fellowship will be set up in Fellowship Hall with seating inside as well as outside to accommodate everyone. Of course, you are also welcome to just come get something and take it with you if you don't wish to stay.

Fellowship will also be assisting with upcoming funerals.

We will celebrate with something special for graduates on May 16th, as well as the upcoming baptism of Nathan McSwain on Pentecost Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

This team has organized the kitchen and pantry so that dishes, glasses, etc are more easily accessible to use and to clean up after events. We do want to do an inventory of all the dishes, glasses, etc. If anyone wants to help with that endeavor, please let the team know.



The McSwain family on  
Easter



Wednesday's Kids decorating the floral cross for Easter



Easter Cross covered in flowers



The children's choir playing the chimes on Easter Sunday



Pastor Elizabeth and Amy on Easter Sunday



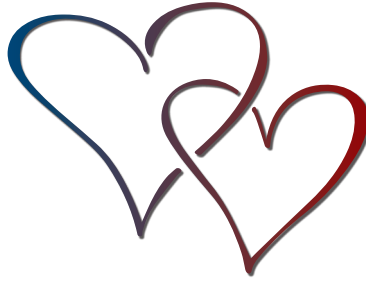
The outdoor crowd on Easter Sunday



## Congregational Care

The Congregational Care Team has spent these last few months reorganizing within the pray-ers and care cluster leaders group. As you likely know, our faithful praying servant Emily Miller has “retired” from her responsibility as the pray-ers leader. Her commitment to Peace in this role has been genuine and loving and we thank her for all her years of caring. Rest assured, she is still praying with the group- we won’t let her get too far away. Prayer concerns may now be sent to Sally Schoeffel, Jenni Holt, and as always Pastor Elizabeth and any of the care cluster leaders.

Care cluster leaders Betty Clough and Aubrey Sammons have stepped down from their roles. Welcome to Debbie Lewis who has assumed leadership of cluster #2 from Betty. Debbie joined us at her first cluster leaders meeting this month



and shared with us her enthusiasm for the opportunity to serve the Peace congregation in this role. As Aubrey steps down this month, we are searching for a new leader for her cluster #15. If you might be interested in serving in this way please contact Sally Schoeffel, team Elder, or myself. And for those in this cluster Sally and I will be available for your prayer concerns and in any way we can be of help to you as we transition to a new leader. Betty has served Congregational Care for many years and Aubrey has been with us a short time so we thank you both for your caring and commitment. Both of these ladies have commented to me that their devotion to praying for the congregation will continue even as their roles have changed.

Anne Warburton

## The Earth Care Team

has been expanded to include Peace’s Matthew 25 commitment! Peace Church has joined the Manatee Justice Ministry, and we are working with over a dozen local congregations to bring areas of injustice into the public eye and work for change.

This coalition is in the first year and it is exciting to be a part of it! You can participate in our zoom gatherings, just contact the leaders of this group (Christian Camphire & Tom Finnerty) for more information.

Our team held a successful road cleanup in March, picking up trash from our “adopted” Upper Manatee River Road. In April, we recognized Earth Day with a dedication of the Peaceful Path and the planting of an herb garden next to the Peace Center. Earth Care / Matthew 25 has many opportunities for you to get involved in making our community and world a better place. We invite you to join us!



Peace’s CROP Walk this year took place on the Peaceful Path



Youth and their dogs took part in the CROP Walk



Volunteers working on our adopted road, Upper Manatee River Road.



## Children, Family and Youth

Our **Wednesday Take-A-Break Kids** group has grown to nine children! Together we learn music, explore Bible stories and do arts

and crafts. They recently learned to play the tone chimes and played beautifully for all on Easter Sunday! Speaking of Easter, the children and youth created a delightful Holy Week play, we hope that this was enjoyed by all who watched it. The Nativity and Holy Week plays are available for viewing anytime on the Peace website.

Our spring **Cedarkirk Family Retreat** was in late April and we enjoyed the time together outdoors while canoeing, zip lining and swimming. Our family retreats are such a special time to disconnect from the busy-ness of life and to connect with each other.

In May, please join us for our **Youth—Led Worship** on May 16. Many of our Peace kids will be participating in different roles. We will also celebrate our graduates that day.

Have you heard about our **Peace Day Camp** for kids who are rising kindergarten – 6th grade? This day camp will run June 7-11 and the theme is Creation Care!

Later in this summer our two **Montreat Conferences** are a go! We are grateful as we return to more of the events that we have loved and have missed. As we move away from pre-recorded worship, we will still find ways to keep all ages connected to our kids and Youth.

We hope to offer a **Family Game Night** for all at Peace in the late summer and more intergenerational activities as people feel safer with gathering together.



*Wednesday's Kids made folded paper cranes*



*Camryn with her sand art at Wednesday's Kids*



*Peace families had an outing at the Celery Fields in Sarasota*



*Peace families at Cedarkirk  
for a weekend in April*



*The Simmons family at Cedarkirk*



*Preparations for canoeing  
at Cedarkirk*

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