

PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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POP NOTES

February 2025 Volume 63 Number 2

Love is Exciting and Wondrous

There is a TV Show from the 1970's that I would bet if I typed the first line of the theme song, you would burst into the either the lyrics or at the very least hum the tune the rest of the day. Are you ready to see if I am right?

"Love, Exciting and New, come aboard, we're expecting you."

Did it work? Are you now singing the theme song to the Love Boat? Captain Stubing, Dr. Bricker, Isaac the Bartender, Gopher, and Julie took us on adventures that led people in troubled relationships to find love again, for new love to bloom and for those who did not know they could love to find it in their hearts. The show made it all seem so easy to find love. It made it seem like there is nothing that cannot be overcome within us to find love. Love built and sustained in one hour every week. We never get to see what happens next. We never get to see if what they built will stand the test of time after they have left the Love Boat. They may have ended terribly or they may have been a love that stands the tests of time. We will never know.

There is another song that I know that you know well that speaks of love in its most self-giving and extraordinary way changes our lives. The first verse goes like this:

What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?

Of course, I am writing about the love that Jesus Christ has for us as it is summed up in the hymn *What Wondrous Love Is This*. The love of God is a love that is freely given to us on the cross. The love of Christ is selfless and seeks us out. It is not a prize to be won. The love of God is a blessing that fills us in life and is not a burden. The love of Christ is one that bids us to share his love with the world. It bids us to give the love away freely to ALL who enter our lives. (YES, even those who we do not agree with, those who scare us, and those who we would wish to not interact with for whatever the reason.)

The wondrous love of Christ is one that is not found in greeting cards. It is not found in boxes of chocolate or at the florist. The wondrous love of God is found in the most unexpected and jaw dropping place, THE CROSS. The wondrous love of God is found in Jesus Christ dying for EVERY person. The wondrous love of God is not held back, but is given freely because it is how true love is to be shown, unceasingly and given with joy.

Stop looking for the Love Boat to find love in your heart and look to the wondrous love of Christ on the cross, in the Sacrament, and in the work of Christ to give that love to those who were scorned by society and those who are ignored. Jesus looks from the cross and pleads with us to love one another as he loved us. That is the first and only rule of Christ, to love.

I am always here if you want to talk more about this love. It is truly the most exciting and always new each day of our lives. I would love to hear you talk about how you share God's love and ideas that you have that will help us all share that love with the world.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Bill

Finance

TREASURER'S REPORT – November 2024

CURRENT FUND	
Beginning Balance	\$ 3,306.20
Receipts	\$ 16,573.84
Disbursements	\$ 13,853.88
Ending Balance	\$ 6,026.16
BENEVOLENCE	
2024 Pledge	\$ 14,000.00
12 months Pledge	\$ 14,000.00
Received as of 12/31/24	\$ 14,660.85
Difference Over/(Under)	\$ 660.85
YTD	
Paid out as of 12/31/24	12,947.45
BUILDING FUND	
Beginning Balance	\$ 21,216.57
Receipts – Offering	\$ 1,478.50
Interest	\$.18
Total Receipts + Balance	\$ 22,695.25
Insurance	\$ 1,274.60
Property Tax	\$ xxx.xx
Parking Lot	\$ 2,130.00
Ending Balance	\$ 19,290.65

January Worship Attendance			
Jan 5th	40		
Jan 12th	46		
Jan 19th	10 (8:00)	34(10:30)	
Jan 26th	40		
Please bring a friend!			

Monthly Bible Quotes

Listen closely to my prayer, O Lord; hear my urgent cry. I will call to you whenever trouble strikes, and you will answer me. ~ Psalm 86:6-7

Keep on asking, and you will be given what you ask for. Keep on looking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks. ~ Matthew 7:7-8

I follow close behind you; your strong right hand holds me securely. ~ Psalm 63:8

Annual Congregational Meeting Date was January 26th – the budget was unanimously approved

Synod Assembly – this is very early, but if you would like to participate in synod assembly this year, you will need to register early. Since it is a bishop election year, the first ON LINE ONLY session will be May 17th, and in person assembly at La Roche University in Pittsburgh is June 12-14th. Talk to Pastor Bill early if you're considering attending this year.

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

Zack Davis, Betsy Naggy, Mark Lucas – Ministry Chairs

Being a Committed Steward

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we become committed stewards, who use our time, talents, and resources to help and serve others, build God's Church, and expand His kingdom. Even though you and I are undeserving, God honors us with the privilege of being His stewards.

- In Genesis 1:28, we learn that God gives us dominion over all His creation.
- In Genesis 2:15, we are given the task of tending and caring for what He has created.
- In Psalms 8:6, we read that God has made us overseers and rulers over the works of His hands.

God's Word gives us our authority, responsibility, privilege, and duty to be stewards of His creation. Our stewardship is to reflect the same love and concern that God has for all He has created.

As stewards, we are managers or caretakers, not owners of all that God entrusts to us. He has created and still owns and sustains all things. Everything we have is His. Faithful stewards remember that all we have and all we are is because of God. In Psalm 24:1 we read, "*The earth is the LORD's...*" We are God's stewards entrusted with the management of the world. On our own, we are incapable of becoming stewards, but we have been reconciled to God through Christ's life, death, and resurrection making us new creations. God becomes the source of our strength. We become His hands, feet, and mouth, as He works through us in our stewardship. As faithful stewards, our acts of stewardship are efforts that always seek to praise God.

By God's grace, we become committed stewards who are faithful, prayerful, grateful, generous, and service-oriented. Being committed stewards implies that our stewardship is not a part-time position. It is our whole life response to God's grace and love. It is much more than helping our neighbors occasionally or placing an offering in the collection plate. Living with the perspective of being stewards changes our lives. Being stewards is what we are, which determines what we do. *"And whatever you do, in word and deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him"* (Colossians 3:17). We are called to be stewards in our homes, neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. God wants us to use our time, talents, and resources for His glory. Blessings on your stewardship journey!

PROPERTY AND HOUSE

Lee Semasko, Mark Lucas, George Walter – Ministry Chairs

We were able to sell the lawn mower and will continue to have a lawn service. We will have the snow blower serviced after the season.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Pam Yuhaniak, Pat Maatta, Becky Plaininsek– Ministry Chairs

ASH WEDNESDAY service, MARCH 5th, POP at noon and Trinity, Derry at 7:00pm
Wednesday night Lenten Soup and Sandwich will begin on March 12th. Sign-up sheets will be in the gathering space for when/what you can bring to help.

We will continue to post the 10:30 am worship service on Facebook at www.facebook.com/poplatrobe and as a link on our website www.princeofpeacelatrobe.com

We will continue the 8:00am service the third Sunday of each month.

We need Ushers and Altar Care!!! Please volunteer on chart if you are able even for one week!!



	<u>Communion Assistant</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>	<u>Counters</u>
February 2nd		Sherry Stahl	Kellie Douglas & Kathy Bangor
February 9th		Denise Hegemann	Ed Sparber & Janie Hayden
February 16th		Kellie Douglas	Margy Williams & George Walter
February 23rd		Kellie Douglas	Vickie Onusko & Ann Frye

Altar Care: **Suzy Clevenger** Usher: **These are changing weekly now.**

EVANGELISM AND FELLOWSHIP

Vickie Onusko, Amy Schultz, Kathy Petrill – Ministry Chairs
Ann Frye - liaison for TNT

January 9th at Applebee's in Greensburg had a few less than normal but we had a good time. February's will be held at Rainbow Inn in Youngstown. Carpool if you can, parking can be tight.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Pastor Bill & Pam Yuhaniak – Ministry Chairs

Bible Study continues on Wednesdays at 1pm, please join us.

OUTREACH

Janie Hayden, Amy Schultz, Janice Migyanka – Ministry Chairs

- Souper Bowl of Caring – February 9th, 2025 – Donate money for your team playing in the Super Bowl, monies collected will be given to the Food Bank.
- We took hats and gloves on Jan 12th to Baggaley Elementary school.
- **Baggaley Care Closet** – most needed items seem to be toilet paper, deodorant, laundry detergent, and cleaning supplies. Also, they like to stock “on the go” snacks that can be quickly eaten during school time.
- **Food Bank Collections** - The Latrobe food pantry continues to take nonperishable food items. Please remember to check expiration dates. The item for February is toothpaste/single brushes.
- We are looking into a way to ship some of the blankets we’ve collected to North Carolina.
- We are collecting blankets and continue to collect toiletries, socks and t-shirts for the veterans.

Prayer Shawl Group – if you are interested in joining, please contact Cathie Schall at 724-309-6011.

Prayer Chain – If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Chain, there are three easy options for you to choose from to be a part of this important group. Call the church office to be put on the phone chain. For text messages: text @popprayer to 81010. For email: go to rmd.at/popprayer and sign up for messages there.



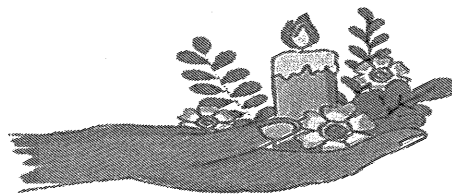
Prayer is an essential part of who we are as a people of God. Below is a list of people from our congregation to keep in your daily prayers. If you know of others who should be added to these lists, please contact the church office with the names. If you or someone you know from the congregation is in the hospital or is at home and sick and needs a visit from Pastor Bill, please call the office so that he can schedule a visit. The Pastor is only told by the hospital when a person is a patient if they ask for the church to be notified.

From our congregation: Audrey Spangler, Debbie & George Lindsey, Esther Toth, Ginger Warren, Kevin Spangler, Patty Williams, Roy, and Linette.

Our Shut-in members: Ken Lloyd (Loyalhanna Suites), Raymond Fry (Loyalhanna Suites)

Others in need of our prayers: Bill Bangor, Ellie, Erin, Jodi Fill, Judy James, Lauren Lee, Martha, Mary Ann Stefko, Rachel, Scott, Sheryl, Stan, Trish Gaia, and Vicki McCleary.

Those in the Military: Michael Clevenger, Jacob Hay, and Matt Mickinak



Let your Light Shine

The Bible says, “...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father Who is in Heaven” (Matthew 5:16). The question we must ask is, “How clearly and how brightly are we reflecting Christ in our lives?” There are lots of things that diminish our reflections. Willful disobedience to God's will, unconfessed sin in our lives, grudges and anger, grief, and guilt diminish and tarnish our reflections. God designed us to be reflections of Him, and what is happening in our lives, in our hearts, in our minds, and in our actions affects the brightness of the reflections.

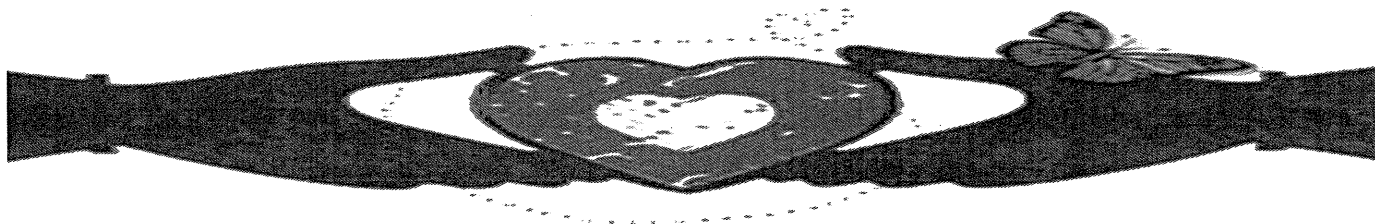
God wants us to be His light, so others will be drawn not to us, but to Jesus, the “*light of the world*” (John 8:12). The depth of our own relationships with God matters a lot when it comes to letting His light shine!

We are busy with numerous activities, things that are important to us, and rightly so. We are going to be

investing our time and energy in many things, yet each of us needs to ask, “How much am I investing in the lives of others?” Do you know someone who is struggling in his faith or has no relationship at all with Jesus? One of the most valuable things you could do is to strengthen your relationship with Christ and strengthen your relationship with that person. Ask God to give you a heart of compassion for that person and to help you be a reflection of Jesus that can turn him toward Jesus.

Of all the things we could invest ourselves in, of all the things we could exchange our time or energy for, there is nothing more valuable than investing in people to help them know Jesus Christ. It is an investment that lasts forever.

May we all let God’s light shine through us to others.



Love makes us worthy

Unlike God, who loves unconditionally, humans often make choices and set limits when doling out affection. But Thomas Merton reminds us, “Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy. That is not our business and, in fact, it is nobody’s business. What we are asked to do is to love, and this love itself will render both ourselves and our neighbors worthy.”

As for how to develop and maintain that type of love? Merton shares, “It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my [neighbors].”

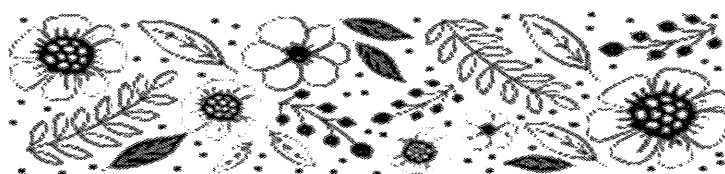


As playful as Valentine’s Day can be, it’s also a great time to remember the serious side of love, as indicated by these quotes:

“When you love someone, you love the whole person as he or she is, and not as you would like them to be.” —Leo Tolstoy

“You don’t love someone because they’re perfect; you love them in spite of the fact that they’re not.” —Jodi Picoult

“Love ... is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. ... It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses.” —Ann Landers





Baptisms



3	Ralph Frye
7	Corey Stanko Lucas Ray
11	Patricia Williams
12	J.T. Douglas
13	Mark Ridge
15	Angeline Schaefer
20	Pastor Bill Schaefer
22	George Lindsey
26	Sue Wintermeyer
27	Bonnie Churak
28	Nancy Miller Brooke Richards

4	Myles Douglas
8	Pam Stanko

11	William & Donna Smith
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PLEASE NOTE: If you do not see **your** Birthday or Anniversary listed, please let us know in the church office. We apologize if you were missed and we will make the necessary corrections so that it does not happen again

The work of racial reconciliation

Racial reconciliation isn't a new concept. Some 2,000 years ago, the apostle Philip recognized that a man from Ethiopia was just as worthy of baptism into the body of Christ as were the natives of Judea and Galilee.

In *Color-Courageous Discipleship*, Michelle T. Sanchez views racial reconciliation as a personal journey for the greater good. "Jesus seeks to bring about the kind of inner transformation we need to transform our world God's way," she writes. That echoes Martin Luther King Jr.'s statement: "Only through an inner spiritual transformation do we gain the strength to fight vigorously the evils of the world in a humble and loving spirit" (*Strength to Love*).

On Racial Reconciliation Sunday, observed the second Sunday of February, consider how you can address racial issues. Sanchez suggests simple steps such as starting a conversation with someone of another ethnicity or advocating for a friend. Consider how other people's lives and challenges are different from yours. Pray for people of different races and cultures. Ponder how you can come alongside and walk with them — and they with you.

In God's creative and thorough plan, he might transform your own life as you try to transform the world. —Janna Firestone



A prayer for Presidents Day

Lord of heaven and earth, we offer you our deepest gratitude for this country and the freedom to worship you. Stir up a sense of stewardship so we all may care for our nation and each inhabitant of it.

We pray especially for our leaders, that you will bless them with wisdom and humility. Prompt everyone in positions of authority to pursue righteousness, justice and the welfare of all.

Remind us of the psalmist's teaching: "Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12, NRSV). May that promise be fulfilled "from sea to shining sea." Amen.

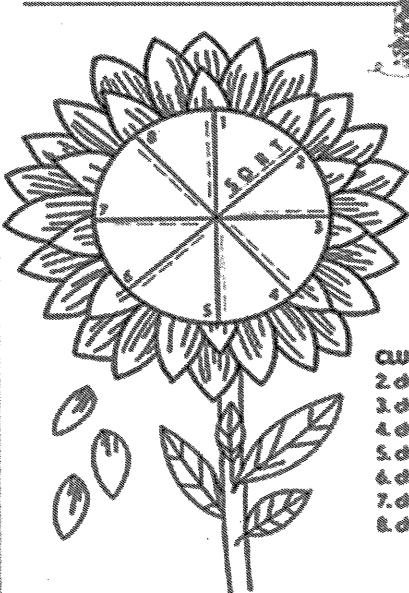
*** KID'S KORNER ***

PUZZLE

THE LOVE CYCLE

In 1 John 4, God instructs us to love other people. Where does our love come from?

Directions: Starting at #1 and going clockwise, solve each clue to create a new four-letter word. Then write the eighth word in both blanks below to complete 1 John 4:19, NIV.



We _____
because (God) first
_____d us.

1 John 4:19, NIV

CLUES

2. change 1 letter: a tent to play in
3. change 2 letters: a crease in paper
4. change 1 letter: a precious metal
5. change 2 letters: a beautiful dress
6. change 1 letter: opposite of up
7. change 2 letters: a type of bird
8. change 1 letter: God is this (see 1 John 4:16)

Puzzle!

Use the clues to fill in the boxes. Then write those letters on the correct numbered lines below to complete 1 John 4:16 (NIV).


A place to live:

Opposite of dark:

Companion:

Hand greeting:

Male adult:



8 2 16 13 4 6 2 19 5

17 9 2 5 19 5 12 6 7 19 5 4

13 15 6 2 19 20 6 7 19 14 4

13 15 8 2 16 18 15 16

8 2 16 13 23 10 1 14 21

1 John 4:16, NIV

a lovely aroma

Make this sweet-smelling gift for a friend or valentine.



What you need:


- Colored felt
- Scrap paper
- Permanent marker
- Scissors
- String
- Essential oils (rose, lavender, etc.)

- What you do:
1. Draw a flower shape on paper and cut it out.
 2. Place the flower template on felt and draw around it with the marker.
 3. Cut out the felt flower. Then cut a small slit or hole through it.
 4. Cut 8 inches of string. Thread it through the felt flower and tie to form a loop for hanging.
 5. To the felt, add 3-5 drops of essential oil. The air freshener will last about 2 weeks.
 6. Revive the scent, as needed, by adding a few drops of the essential oil.


Bible Quiz

The short Old Testament book of Lamentations is a set of communal laments (sorrowful songs) about the destruction in 587 B.C. of which city, by which people?

A. Babylon; the Assyrians
B. Jerusalem; the Babylonians
C. Rome; the Greeks
D. Caesarea Philippi; the Romans



GROUNDHOG DAY



February 2025

February 2025							March 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jan 26	27	28	29	30	31	Feb 1 Pastor away
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Pastor away Presentation of Our Lord 10:30am Sunday Worship	Pastor away	Pastor away 7:00pm Miracles at Work	MEALS ON WHEELS ALL WEEK 1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir 7:00pm Bell Choir			7:00pm A New Beginning
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
10:30am Sunday Worship		10:00am Prayer Shawl Group 7:00pm Miracles at Work	1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir 7:00pm Bell Choir	6:30pm Girl Scouts	Cyrl, monk, Methodius, bishop, missionaries to the Slavs 7:00pm A New Beginning	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
8:00am Early Worship 10:30am Sunday Worship		Martin Luther, renewer of the church 7:00pm Miracles at Work	1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir 7:00pm Bell Choir	7:00pm Congregation Council	7:00pm A New Beginning	
23	24	25	26	27	28	Mar 1
Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr 10:30am Sunday Worship		Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess 7:00pm Miracles at Work	1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir 7:00pm Bell Choir	6:30pm Girl Scouts	7:00pm A New Beginning	

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Our Mission Statement

Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church is a loving family, forgiven by Jesus Christ, who through prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit are called to be actively living, learning, and growing in the Word of God and are being sent out to share the Gospel with our neighbors through our words and deeds.

We are a member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

We serve the Greater Latrobe community as part of the Greater Latrobe Ministerial Association.