



FROM THE...

PASTOR'S DESK



Volume 64
Issue 12

DECEMBER
2023

The Olive Branch

*Peace Lutheran Church... A Life-Changing Community,
Sharing Christ's Love!*

Dear Friends through Christ Jesus:

This Thanksgiving, our three children had their own set of plans, so my wife Sandy and I spent the holiday by ourselves in Ocean Isle, North Carolina, with the world's second largest baptismal font as our back porch—the Atlantic Ocean. The island's shoreline runs east to west, therefore, during the winter months the sunrise and the sunset can be viewed from our balcony. Beautiful three day trip.

One of my goals on this mini-vacation was to replenish my stash of large Conkle seashells, along with spending time with Sandy and eating at a few of our favorite restaurants. The giant Conkle shell is the perfect symbol of baptism. Baptism is one of the greatest gifts from our Lord and Savior. Strange uh? Simple water attached to the promises of God can change anything!

Well, Sandy and I walked, and we walked, and we walked, searching for those simple hidden treasures. We didn't have much luck either.

We walked so much the first two days; my feet were killing me, my thighs and calves and toes started cramping up. Half of this walking, about 10,000 beach steps, is done in 1-2 feet of water moving quickly, on rippled, uneven ground, not really knowing what the next step brings. While the fruits of our labor had been slim, we still have one more day of searching. But wait, isn't every day a day of searching, not knowing what the next step bring? Some just seem to be harder than others. And that last day was a doozy.

Fortunately, low tide wasn't until 1PM and it had warmed up to a brisk 48 degrees cold on the beach! So, Sandy and I bundled up and headed out for our last adventure, at least till May. The tides were at the lowest point they had been the past couple of days, revealing a small brand new sandbar. I was pretty certain the waters weren't too deep, but Sandy was going to wait and see if I was right. There on that tiny little sandbar and in the waters nearby, we

found at least 20 giant Conkle shells. The pain and cold sort of disappeared.

After Sandy and I had search every inch of that small sandbar, I just stood there and took it all in. By now, we are close to a 1/2 mile from shore and our little island is starting to disappear, with the incoming tide. Looking straight out into the ocean, I could see three porpoises did not look cold at all. On a sandbar to my right, there are about 50 or so seagulls who have been trying to avoid us all afternoon. To my left, on another sandbar, the largest flock of pelicans I've ever seen, had to be over two hundred.

While we may have look like specks standing in the middle of the ocean, it is in these moments that this speck feels the closest to our Creator, and I realize how truly blessed this little speck is. God loves me! Unworthy as I am, I know in my heart, God loves me! What a feeling!

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Staff:

Jacqui Robinson, Office Administrator
Cindy Wagman, Choir
Sally Cook, Pianist
Dina LaPlante, Custodian

Volunteer Staff:

Faye Schill, Treasurer
Lori Search—Food Pantry Director
Mark Grice—Campus Maintenance
Steve Barnett—Campus Maintenance
Terry Zrutskie—Campus Maintenance
Christian LaPlante—Campus Maintenance

I finally looked toward the shore, and there I see a beautiful fourteen story condominium, with about twenty multimillion dollar homes, getting as close to that point as possible. These individuals must want so badly to see what I see and feel right now. For them to risk losing everything to an unpredictable arm of nature, shows quite clearly that human beings are a strange breed.

Now the excitement of finding all those shells has worn off and Sandy and I are freezing, we can't feel our feet anymore, we're not quite sure how far the tide has come in, and yet, we feel blessed.

As I glanced down the beach and could barely see our home away from home, I realized, shoot, we still need to walk back. This is going to be painful. Like I said, humans are a strange breed.

So why? Why am I obsessed with finding these giant Conkle seashells?

Why go through all the trouble? Because, to me, it is the only gift I can give to a person, the only physical gift I can give that can save lives. That's right, save lives! The Conkle shell is marked on the inside with a Cross, showing that person, daily, the length God will go through to make that love known. It's the only gift I can give, where a person can see that love of God sitting on their bathroom or kitchen sink. It is the only gift I can give that is a daily reminder of their baptism, something a person can feel and hold in the palm of their hand, a gift which Jesus gives to all of us strange human beings.

I have continued to look for these priceless treasures for the past twenty-five years because of all the stories I hear from people in former congregations. Parishioners, who still cherish that simple shell, and share how that powerful reminder got them through a particular struggle.

Folks, Baptism is a sacrament, a mystery, promising the forgiveness of sin, comfort, strength, hope, wisdom, guidance, and eternal life. All we must do, is use it. And as far as I understand, our God has not lied to us yet.

So, if you genuinely want to prepare for the coming of our Lord and Savior during this season of Advent and Christmas, simply return to God's gift of Baptism, daily. Put that Conkle shell in your hand and ponder the Cross inside. It is all you will ever need. It is one heck of a Christmas present.



Pastor David Trexler



Thanksgiving 2023 is history—we now enter the joy-filled season that celebrates the birth of our Savior. As we decorated our PLC sanctuary for Christmas, memories of Thanksgivings and Christmases past flooded my mind. An Air Force “brat” with an active-duty career of my own, I often spent them away from home.

Thanksgiving 1958—I was 11 years old--at sea on our way to an assignment in Hawaii. Christmas 1972 with fellow airmen and Thai friends at a basketball tournament in Bangkok. I can count four Christmases in England and eight “Weihnachts” in Germany, both countries with their own special markets and traditions.

As a college student, then as a young single officer, I was frequently a long way from family. Thankfully, I was always invited into the homes of fellow workers or friends for these special times. It warms my heart to this day to recall joining those who reached out to share their homes and families with me.

The very essence of our Christian faith involves sharing God's love and grace with others. Having experienced that so many times over so many years is such a special blessing.

Merry Christmas to all!

Tom



Christmas Season Schedule



Advent



- 1st Sunday of Advent - 12/3
- 2nd Sunday of Advent - 12/10
- 3rd Sunday of Advent - 12/17
- 4th Sunday of Advent - 12/24

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, December 24th - 10:00AM



Candlelight Worship Service - 4:30PM

Candlelight Worship Service - 7:00PM

MERRY CHRISTMAS - 12/25
CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED!



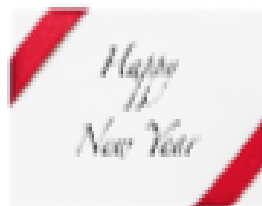
Pre-New Year's Eve Bunco/Poker Prayers

Saturday, December 30 - 2:00PM

Saturday Night Casual Worship - 5:00PM

New Year's Eve - Sunday, December 31

Worship Service - 10:00AM



NEW YEAR'S DAY - 1/1/2024
CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED!

Note: There will be NO Sunday School on Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve!

Treasurer's Report

God's blessings to all members, visitors, and friends of Peace Lutheran Church.

As you can see below, in October our income was better than the expenses. Our thanks to all who contribute and give with a joyful heart. God bless you.

Your 2024 contribution envelopes will be in the narthex by December 15th. No paper supply issues this year. Your contribution statements will be sent by email or snail mail shortly after the new year.

We have a fund called Major Repair Fund where we will be putting contributions for the roof replacement for our sanctuary. Please make this contribution in addition to your regular General Fund contribution. We still need to pay our regular bills and payroll. One quote that I have received on the sanctuary roof came in at \$40,000 and \$81,000 for both the sanctuary and Peace Place roofs. Both roofs need to be replaced. The Major Repair Fund, after paying for the fire alarm system in Education Building, will be at \$8,000 approximately (This is a correction from last month).

I continue to seek a replacement for the job of Treasurer. I'm willing to spend more than a year training if necessary.

Please keep Peace Lutheran Church members and finances in your prayers. The undersigned appreciates your prayers.

Your sister in Christ,
Faye Schill, Treasurer
treasurer@peacelutheranpb.org

Treasurer's Report of General Funds for October 2023

	<u>October</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Contributions	\$19,728.00	\$143,994.79	\$163,014.20
Loose Contributions & Other	\$399.00	\$6,150.11	\$15,723.30
Use of Facilities	\$2,525.00	\$22,245.00	\$26,666.70
Total Income	\$22,652.00	\$172,389.90	\$205,404.20
Expenses	\$18,865.16	\$214,337.34	\$205,404.20

Excess Income for October 2023: \$3,786.84
(Total Monthly Expense less Monthly Income)

The General Fund account is used for regular expenses (utilities, salaries, lawn care, insurance, mortgage, etc.)

Please help! As of late, our money counters get the job done in less than an hour, but we pray for the day that it will take them two hours minimum!

Also, invite friends and family to hear our Pastor's excellent message and commune with God's family here at Peace. Thank you and God bless our money counters and all who volunteer and support Peace Lutheran Church of Palm Bay.

Did you know? Instead of writing multiple checks for individual contributions like the Children's Hunger Project, the Food Pantry, etc., you only have to write one check. Simply designate the breakdown of your giving in the check's memo area or on the envelope itself. "FP" for Food Pantry, "CHP" for Children's Hunger Project, and so on.



DITOTA, Bob & Gabi (42)	12/12
BACHTEL, Harvey & Pam (27)	12/20
PATTON, Dag & Mary Deese (4)	12/21
SANDBERG, Roger & Beverly (50)	12/29



(numbers of years married)



BRIDGES, Jennifer	12/05
MOLESKI, Charlie	12/11
GREENE, Mary A.	12/13
BARR, Emily	12/14
PADULA, Laura	12/15
ROBINS Sr., George	12/16
PATTON, Dag	12/17
ROSALES, Marcel	12/17
WAINIKAINEN, Lindsay	12/19
LIATOS, Phyllis	12/20
HOFFMAN, Susan	12/24
NEUMANN, Terry	12/28
GRICE, Jennifer	12/29
WIKOFF, Holly	12/30



Kris Friant	Ariel Cook	Gary Witter	Paul Bickford
George Robbins	Manuel Rodriguez	Carolyn Tarkka	Frank Miller
Lori Deaton	David Flaherty	Helga Bromm	Sally Cook
Ryan Dasinger	Viola Forrester	Phyllis Dale	Suzie McKeny
Rick Pellecchia	Gary Gossett, Jr.	Bill & Nancy Love	Megan O'Neal
Ann Beardslee	Dan Rank	Christian LaPlante	Lou Madden
Jacqueline Darby	David Pinkerton	Matt Parks	Allison Patton
Debbie Parks	Maliaka Singleton	Betsy Witter	Michael Adams
	Pastor David & Sandy Trexler	Karl Bromm	Kim McGibney
		Carleen Loneski	

EXTRA! EXTRA!

The Space Coast Flute Orchestra will present our Christmas concert on Sunday, December 17 at 3 pm. Location is Suntime United Methodist Church at 7400 North Wickham Road. Hope to see you there.



If you are touched by the music during our worship service, please consider joining the Chancel Choir. We have rehearsals on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm. The handbell choir rehearses on Wednesdays at 6 pm. If you can read music and are interested in learning to play handbells, please speak to **Cindy**. We'd love to have some new faces in our little corner of the sanctuary!

We are looking to add some new families to our Panera pick-up schedule. This involves a trip to Hammock Landings on Friday evening around 8:50, bringing home the bread and pastries leftover from that day, packaging it into servings for our food pantry, and bringing it to church on Sunday morning to place in the freezer. There is a detailed instruction sheet with the sign up chart in the Narthex. For more details, please speak to **Cindy Wagman**, **Carolyn Tarkka**, or **Terry Zrutskie**. Please consider helping with this important ministry.

~Cindy Wagman

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

The Food Pantry will be closed for 3 upcoming dates:

Dec. 26

Jan. 2

Jan. 16

We will no longer accept donations of clothing or household goods.

All the volunteers wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Food Pantry's new location.





If you didn't get your picture taken in November for the new church directory, you can still be included by sending us a picture in an email to: office@peacelutheranpb.org. We would appreciate a nice horizontal picture of you. If that isn't possible and you want to be included, please call the office at (321)727-3131 and we'll come to you. After we get all the pictures we can, proof it, and send it to the printer, the new directory will hopefully be ready in January or February 2024.

In addition, if you would like to include a business card to go into the directory, please give it to **Faye Schill** or mail to the church office.

Thanks to all the members of Peace Lutheran for your participation. And a great big thanks to **Steve and Yonna Barnett** for helping take pictures.

Jacqui Robinson and Faye Schill



A **HUGE** thank you to everyone who donated for the Pack-A-Sack Thanksgiving Bags. We were able to bring a total of 31 bags to The Salvation Army so they could distribute to those who may not have had a Thanksgiving meal otherwise.



Your generous hearts are always a blessing for those in need, but especially during the holidays.

May God bless you all abundantly!

Sincerely,
Sandy Trexler

Angel Tree Tags



Thank you so much for those who placed the Angel Tree Tags on our Christmas Tree after the Christ The King service on Sunday, November 26. These Angel Tree tags will help children have gifts for Christmas, and that will always put a smile on their faces!

Please feel free to pick a tag (or more than one) off the tree in the Narthex. You can bring your gifts and place them under the tree. **(Please attach the Angel Tree Tag to the bag or gifts you are giving, so they will know which gift belongs to the child on the tag)**

Please note: We do need to have the gifts back by: Sunday, December 10th. The Salvation Army will be doing their distribution on December 14th.

Thank you for all you do!
Sandy Trexler



 **December 2023**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Christ the King! 8:45am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	27 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	28 9:00am FOOD PANTRY 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA 6:00pm Turkey Creek Meeting HOA 7:00pm Men's Via de Cristo 7:00pm Women's Via de Cristo	29 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	30 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA	1 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 8:45pm Panera Pickup	2 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 5:00pm Saturday Night Casual Worship
3 1st Sunday of Advent 8:45am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	4 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	5 9:00am FOOD PANTRY 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA 7:00pm Men's Via de Cristo 7:00pm Women's Via de Cristo	6 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 2:00pm Stamp Club FH 6:00pm CODA	8 9:00am Garden Club 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 8:45pm Panera Pickup	9 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 5:00pm Saturday Night Casual Worship
10 2nd Sunday of Advent 8:45am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	11 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	12 9:00am FOOD PANTRY 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA 7:00pm Men's Via de Cristo 7:00pm Women's Via de Cristo	13 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	14 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA	15 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 8:45pm Panera Pickup	16 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 5:00pm Saturday Night Casual Worship
17 3rd Sunday of Advent 8:45am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	18 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	19 9:00am FOOD PANTRY 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA 7:00pm Men's Via de Cristo 7:00pm Women's Via de Cristo	20 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	21 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA	22 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 8:45pm Panera Pickup	23 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 5:00pm Saturday Night Casual Worship
24 4th Sunday of Advent CHRISTMAS EVE 8:45am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 4:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	26 9:00am FOOD PANTRY 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA 7:00pm Men's Via de Cristo 7:00pm Women's Via de Cristo	27 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	28 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA	29 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 8:45pm Panera Pickup	30 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 2:00pm PRE- NEW YEAR'S EVE BUNCO & POKER PRAYERS 5:00pm Saturday Night Casual Worship
31 New Year's Eve 8:45am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Service 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch	2 9:00am FOOD PANTRY 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm CODA 7:00pm Men's Via de Cristo 7:00pm Women's Via de Cristo	3 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 6:00pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	4 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 2:00pm Stamp Club FH 6:00pm CODA	5 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 8:45pm Panera Pickup	6 12:00pm Brown Bag Bunch 5:00pm Saturday Night Casual Worship

Bits & Pieces

Check us out on Facebook @ Peace Lutheran Church

Give us a LIKE and get updates, spiritual messages, events and any changes.

Or visit us on our website
www.peacelutheranpb.org



Jesus says in Matthew 25, *"For I was hungry and you gave me food... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."*

Where do you buy groceries, gas, prescriptions? What restaurants do you like? Where do you purchase clothing or things for around the house? A couple weeks ago, Peace began a program called Scrip. Simply and I mean simply, purchase the cards following worship or order whatever you want for the following week. That's it. 100% of the proceeds will go toward our food pantry in feeding the poor.

We are going to shop no matter what. We might as well serve the Lord in the process. I love the program because it helps me think more about God. I don't always do that when I use my debit or credit card. When I'm out having a meal with family or friends, shopping at the mall with my wife, doing some work around the house, and I go to pay the bill with my Scrip card, I find myself lifting up a word of thanksgiving for being able to enjoy the blessings given by my Creator.

Give it try. See how you feel.

Please help us keep our list of military personnel up-to-date!
Call or e-mail the office with any changes in status, rank, or location! Thank you!

E.J. Alcario, Iraq
John Bedford, Iraq
Kristen Hall AF, Iraq
Capt. Brian Nailing,
Co. Ft. Hood, TX
Maj. AD Dennis Peoples,
Rock Island Arsenal, IL
Major Nathan Schill,
Ft. Leavenworth, KS

USN FC3 Stephen Weaver,
USS Dewey
Navy Chief Sean Patrick Goguen,
Norfolk, VA
1st Lieut. Tanner Johnson—Army,
E. Africa



Our Food Pantry is always in need of donations of either food or financial donations to support this much needed ministry. Our community is flooded with people looking for help, and we are grateful that as a church, we can help meet the need, anyway we can. Your generous donations will

allow us to continue to help them and together, we can see our community get stronger!

Our pantry is open on: **Tuesday's—9:00AM-11:00AM**

Thank you to everyone who has been donating to the food pantry. It truly makes a difference in our community.



Peace Lutheran Church
1801 Port Malabar Blvd N.E.
Palm Bay, FL 32905

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PALM BAY
The Olive Branch

NON PROFIT ORG
U S POSTAGE
PAID
MELBOURNE FL
PERMIT 144

Dated Material:

December 2023

Return service requested

Phone: (321) 727-3131
Dial-A-Story: (321)727-1048
Email: office@peacelutheranpb.org
Website: www.peacelutheranpb.org
Facebook: @peacelutheranpb

Senior Pastor: David L. Trexler

Worship

5:00PM—Saturday Night Worship
8:45AM—Sunday School
10:00AM—Worship Service



We Serve

Altar Guild—Set up and prepare for communion each week, usually serving one month at a time; more people are needed.

Worship Servants—Sunday Worship Assistants and Communion Assistants are needed.

Office Helpers—Those who help with mailings, preparing Welcome Packets, etc.

Chancel Choir—Wednesday night rehearsals—7:00PM

Bell Choir—Call Cindy Wagman to learn more about our choirs 321-830-4207.

Money Counters—Teams of two people working for one month at a time. Call church office if interested.

In the Nursery—Nursery is available during worship.

Property/Grounds—There is always plenty of work to be done here. Please contact Steve Barnett.

Projectionists Needed—People that are in the projection room Sunday morning for our Sunday presentations. Please sign up in the projection room.

Panera Bread Pick-up—Each Friday evening people are needed to go to Hammock Landings to get the goodies for Sunday morning Café Peace. Cindy Wagman at 321-830-4207

Call and Caring—Our team visits people who are in the hospital, nursing homes, and who are homebound. See Sally Christensen for more information.

Please call the office to be a servant for the Lord by taking on one or more of these opportunities. (321)727-3131

