



GLAD TIDINGS



Vol. 40, Iss. 10 Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, MD Dec 2021/Jan 2022

Advent and Christmas worship at POP

Although we've had to make modifications because of COVID, Advent and Christmas activities will still happen! Below is what's planned, along with links for you to learn more. Please share this information with others!



[Advent Evening Prayer](#)
[Holden Evening Prayer \(livestream on Facebook\)](#)
each Wednesday evening in Advent (Dec. 1, 8 and 15) at 7:15 pm

Christmas Eve and Day Services

[Christmas Eve](#)
Christmas Eve Children's Service at 4 pm (in-person and [Livestream on Facebook](#))

Christmas Eve Carols and Holy Communion at 7 pm (in-person and [Livestream on Facebook](#))

[Christmas Day](#)
Carols & Holy Communion at 10 am (in-person and [Livestream on Facebook](#))

For updates (or more information), please check our [Advent](#) and [Christmas](#) web pages.

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells!

It is Christmas Pageant time! Since our youngest actors will not be fully vaccinated in time, we will do another virtual pageant this year.

Watch the Weekly Emails for the pageant release date!

Questions? Contact [Lisa Conary](#).



Giving Opportunities

Giving Tree is Here!



Make a child's Christmas joyful! Each year, PoP members can select a child's name from the Giving Tree and purchase a special Christmas gift for him/her. This year we are working with Brown Station Elementary School to provide a happy Christmas for selected students and their siblings. The tree will be virtual again this year. Follow the link for Sign-up Genius (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10COF45ADAD2BA6F4C07-2021>) to find the children's names and their special gifts.

If you have any questions, please contact [Rachel Carreras](#).

Christmas boxes item collection*

Make Christmas brighter for residents of the Village at Rockville (formerly the National Lutheran Home). Social Ministry will collect items for Christmas boxes. **Items are due by December 5th**. Please leave donations in the basket in the entryway. Contact [Jennifer Maloney](#) for more information.



Gifts of Hope*

[Gifts of Hope](#), the Metro D.C. Synod's alternative gift-giving program will be available this Christmas season. People who give through Gifts of Hope



have assurance in knowing they are helping

people who need it the most. **We will be selling Gifts of Hope every Sunday from November 28th - December 19th!**

ELCA Good Gifts/World Hunger Appeal*

The ELCA World Hunger Appeal - piggy bank/coinboxes; collection will purchase an item from the Good Gifts catalog of the World Hunger program. Follow this link for more information, <https://goodgifts.elca.org/gods-global-barnyard>

NOTE: All articles marked with an asterisk (*) have more details on pages 3 and 4.



From Pastor Steve...

Pastor Steve Buechler
(pastor@poplutheran.org;

301-869-3666)

We don't really have any idea about which day or month Jesus was born. There's no mention of Jesus' birthdate anywhere in the New Testament. And the only clue we might have to the time of year comes from Luke, who tells us shepherds were out in the fields keeping watch over their flocks by night. And if that was the case on the day Jesus was born, it certainly was NOT in the wintertime, when shepherds and their sheep would have been huddled together keeping warm in the caves which served as sheep pens!

But we celebrate Jesus' birth on what was, on the ancient Roman calendar, the darkest day of the year - the day of the winter solstice. In the first century, the Romans celebrated December 25 as the "Feast of the Unconquered Sun" - the day when the sun slowly began to return and the days grew brighter. After the legalization of Christianity in the 4th century, Christians began to celebrate Jesus' birth on that day, partly as a way of suppressing the pagan holiday, and partly as a way of bearing witness to the true light of God coming into the darkness of the world. (This is why we still read the first chapter of John's Gospel on Christmas Day.)

At least in the northern hemisphere, there's also something meaningful about celebrating the light of God in the midst of the darkest days. It's often the case that light is most noticed when there's not so much of it around. It's often the case that light is most appreciated when it's hard to see where you're going. And it's often the case that light is most needed when the darkness is deepest.

Celebrating Jesus' coming into the world at this time of year can serve to remind us that God is present and coming into our lives even and especially when we face our darkest moments. Celebrating Jesus' coming into the world at this time of year can help us to appreciate the moments of light that help guide us and strengthen us when our way is dark. And celebrating Jesus' coming into the world at this time of year lifts up the good news that no darkness that surrounds us

will ever overcome the light of Jesus which has come into the world (John 1:5).

Yours in Christ,

December/January Highlights

Every Sunday

- 9:00 am Sunday School (pg 5)
- 10:00 am Worship live and streamed on our Facebook Page

Every Tuesday

- 10:00 am Quilters (pg 6)
- 12:30 pm Women's Bible Study (pg 6)

COMING UP...

December

- 1 Advent Evening Prayer (pg 1)
- 5 Sunday Brunch (pg 6)
- 8 Advent Evening Prayer (pg 1)
- 9 Women's Book Group (pg 7)
- 11 Saturday Service (pg 4)
- 14 Church Council Meeting
- 15 Advent Evening Prayer (pg 1)
- 24 Christmas Eve (pg 1)
- 24 Children's Christmas Eve Service (pg 1)
- 24 Christmas Eve Carols and Communion (pg 1)
- 25 Christmas Day
- 25 Carols and Holy Communion (pg 1)
- 26 No Sunday School (pg 5)
- 31 New Year's Eve

January

- 2 No Sunday School (pg 5)
- 8 Saturday Service (pg 4)
- 9 Sunday School Resumes (pg 5)
- 11 Church Council Meeting
- 13 Women's Book Group (pg 7)
- 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February

- 8 Church Council Meeting
- 12 Saturday Service
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 21 President's Day

For a current calendar, see:

<https://poplutheran.org/church-calendars/>

SPECIAL PRAYERS



. . . My need was met because someone came and communicated . . . in words I could not express. . . .
Pastor John B. McGarvey

PoP Members

Alice & James Baur, Elizabeth Langum Chung, Brittany (DeGeorge) Daniel, Clara Ely, Laura Hampe Garofalo, Annie Hampe, Carmen Hooks-Hill, Roy Johnson, Mike & Remi Langum, Anne Lomperis, John Miltzer, Kaitlyn McGurgan & her family, Dick & Sandy Moore, Heather Robinson, James Rogers, Martha Rogers, Clara Koenig Satria, Sherry Schiebel, David Swanson, Denny Tritinger, Susan Weiner, Laura Wilson, John Zobel

Sympathy

Family of Joyce Taylor (mother of Kim Drissel)
Family of Pastor Eric Peterson
(former pastor/friend of Sherry Schiebel)

Thanksgiving

Confirmation Class: David Butler, Eric Ely, Eric Hoeger, Connor Kohne, Evan Schneider, Dekker Spielman, Cruz Witten, Yasya Yanevskyy

Ongoing

For Racial justice and equality
All those struggling with Covid-19 and their Caregivers
All those impacted by weather

The complete Prayer List is available in the Weekly Email sent on Thursdays.

CHRISTMAS SPOTLIGHT

It's Poinsettia Time!

If you would like to donate flowers for the altar this Christmas, please have your order and payment in by Sunday, December 12.

Poinsettias are available for \$13 each in Red, Pink, and White.

Check the Weekly Email for any changes in this information.

Flowers can be donated in honor or memory of a friend or loved one. You may take your flowers home any time after Christmas Day. Order forms are available in the narthex.



Gifting Options

Christmas boxes item collection

Make Christmas brighter for residents of the Village at Rockville (formerly the National Lutheran Home). Social Ministry will collect items for Christmas boxes, from socks to toothpaste, knit throws, postage stamps, combs, brushes, and more. You can create your own box or bring items for boxes we will assemble at church. [Here's the complete list.](#) Items are due by December 5th. Please leave donations in the basket in the entryway. Contact [Jennifer Maloney](#) for more



Gifts of Hope

[Gifts of Hope](#), the Metro D.C. Synod's alternative gift-giving program will be available this Christmas season. Our beneficiary organizations are



connected to the Synod in some way;

donors have a curated list of vetted organizations that transform lives in our local community and beyond. For people who don't know what to buy for someone, want to give a gift in someone's honor or memory, or want to give something different than just another "thing," Gifts of Hope is a great option. People who give through Gifts of Hope have assurance in knowing they are helping people who need it the most.

We will be selling Gifts of Hope every Sunday from November 28th - December 19th! If you are unable to come to service but are interested in purchasing a gift, please stop by the POP office on Tuesday- Thursday from 9:30 am-1:30 pm. Let's beat 2019 record of \$3,330!!

ELCA Gifting Options

Through the ELCA GOOD GIFTS program, you can feed a refugee family for a week (\$50), send a woman to farmer's field school (\$75), or buy a community fish farm (\$250). During December, Social Justice Ministry will distribute coin boxes (to collect change to support this program. Follow this link for more information, <https://goodgifts.elca.org/gods-global-barnyard>

Devotion Options

New! Digital Advent devotionals for families are available. One, "An Illustrated Advent for Families", is geared to families with young children (toddlers - elementary age) and the other, "An Illustrated Devotional" is a more intergenerational devotional for homes with slightly older children (upper elementary/middle school) and adults. If you would like one, or both, of these, please email Judy Bruening (judy.bruening53@gmail.com)

Want an easy way to spend more time in God's Word every day? Try out the [Daily Texts devotional](#) from Ground Up Grace. With two daily Bible verses and a short prayer, it is easy to start or continue a Bible reading habit. To order, sign up in the narthex by December 5 and leave payment (\$11) in envelope, or email [Donna Von Wald](#). See sample in narthex. Books will be in before the end of December. If you would like a copy but cannot afford it, please let Pastor Steve know.



OTHER NOTICES

Council Meeting

Council met on November 9. You can read notes from that meeting (including the Pastor's and Treasurer's report) [by clicking here](#).

Second Saturday Service

In order to provide an additional opportunity for worship apart from Sunday morning, we will hold a 5 pm Saturday service on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Our next service will be on Saturday, December 11. This service will have the same sermon and readings as the Sunday service, but will not be livestreamed.

The next Saturday service will be on Saturday, January 8.

Mask Mandates

Whenever Montgomery County imposes an indoor mask mandate, masks will be required for worship

and all other indoor activities at church. Otherwise, masks will be optional, except for Sunday School, as most children are not yet vaccinated.

OTHER EVENTS

Haven Universe

We are continuing to support Haven Universe and the 2021 mission trip to Honduras (**re-scheduled from June**)! A small group of vaccinated PoP missionaries will be traveling to Honduras in December 27th to assist with medical missions, construction projects, and work with a local Special Needs school in Copan. The mission team is requesting prayers and accepting financial contributions toward trip and supply costs. Tax-deductible donations can be made payable to Haven Universe and mailed to the church office or directly to Ric Kienzle. You can also make a donation through the link [here](#) and please note in the "Add special instructions to seller" box "PoP Mission Honduras" so that we are able to track and allocate correctly. Any contribution (large or small!) would be greatly appreciated, and most importantly we ask for continued prayers for a safe and successful mission! Any questions - please contact Ric Kienzle (r.kienzle@yahoo.com).

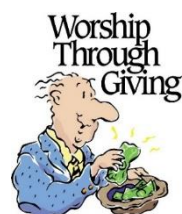
Annual Congregational Meeting



Please save the date for the 2021 Annual Meeting, which will be held live and via Zoom on January 30. We will provide more details closer to the date, but we look forward to a good conversation with you all about plans for the upcoming year.

STEWARDSHIP

Online Giving



It's easy and will make your life easier. Just go to the church [webpage \(poplutheran.org\)](http://poplutheran.org) and click the green Donate Online button. Giving online can help all of us easily provide consistent support for the church. Signup today!

Online giving is a win for the church and for the congregation. Please contact Chris Michel (michel_christian@yahoo.com) or Kwame Mensah (mensahkn@gmail.com) with any questions.

Electronic Giving

To donate right now or become an E-Giver, go to poplutheran.org or scan this QR code with your smart phone or tablet. Thanks for supporting the ministries of Prince of Peace!



AmazonSmile

You can support Prince of Peace with each Amazon purchase! Use our AmazonSmile link (<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1283295>) and PoP receives .5% of your purchases. Use AmazonSmile every time you shop! AmazonSmile is completely integrated with Amazon.com; you use the same account and have the same shopping cart, Wish List, Registry, and account info. It's easy to set up and use. First click on the following link to tell Amazon that you want donations to be made to Prince of Peace:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1283295>; then whenever you want to make a purchase at Amazon, go to smile.amazon.com instead of www.amazon.com. (AmazonSmile will remember the nonprofit previously selected.) It's easy!

Or you can use the Amazon app at no extra cost to you. Simply follow the instructions below to select "Prince of Peace Lutheran Church" as your charity and activate AmazonSmile in the app. PoP will continue to receive applicable donations from your purchases.

How it works:

1. Open the Amazon app on your phone
2. Select the main menu (=) & tap on "AmazonSmile" within Programs & Features
3. Select "Prince of Peace Lutheran Church" as your charity
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to activate AmazonSmile in the mobile app

YOUTH MINISTRY

Calendar

No Sunday School:

December 26

January 2

Sunday School Resumes **January 9**



Sunday School



The Lower Elementary class explored what the Bible says about God being forever. We discussed what forever means by drawing timelines and realized that our timelines won't end because God makes forever possible. We also played a game to measure the passage of time by making our own spinning tops.

For our ELCA Good Gifts change collection box campaign, the Social Ministries Committee asked the Sunday School learners to choose where our donations will go.

The PreK/K-5th grade classes decided we should fund Farmer's Field School for a Woman and Vaccinations for a Child. Here are descriptions from the catalog.



Farmer's Field School for a Woman - \$75

Women produce half the world's food without access to the same resources as their male counterparts. With an opportunity to attend farmers' field school, women learn the latest advancements in agriculture and help nourish their families and communities.

Vaccinations for a Child - \$30

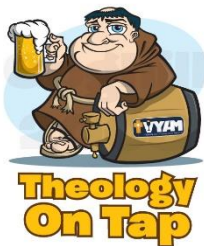
More than 4,000 children die each day from preventable diseases like measles, polio, tetanus, and tuberculosis. Immunizing a child is one of the best ways to ensure that a child stays healthy – and a family stays free from medical costs.

The Middle School and High School classes will make their decisions in early December, and we will make sure you learn the results! Thank you for helping support causes important to our young people and for making a difference in people's lives!

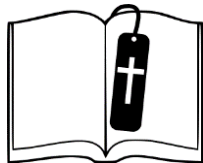
ADULT EDUCATION

Theology on Tap

Join us for our next Theology on Tap session to talk about issues of faith. Pastor Steve leads one of these events each month. Check Weekly Email and the online worship notice for the next date. We are currently meeting on Zoom. Logon and join us!



PoP Women's Bible Study



The Women's Bible Study meets every Tuesday from 12:30-2pm on Zoom. We are currently studying the Book of Acts. Questions? Contact Pastor Wendy Deeben (wdeeben@gracerock.org)

We will meet at Jane Sahmel's house for our Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 14, 12:30 -2pm.

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Gaithersburg HELP

Please keep those wonderful food donations coming in. We are especially in need of the following items: Canned vegetables, Canned fruit, Cereal & Soups. Donations can always be left in the bins outside the church doors.



There is always a need for new volunteers. Check the GaithersburgHELP website or talk to Hope Walker (hope.walker@GaithersburgHELP.org) for more information.

Quilters



Join our Quilters every Tuesday 10am to noon as we make mission quilts for Lutheran World Relief. No sewing skills required! No experience necessary!

Questions? Contact Lisa Conary (lconary@prodigy.net).

Sunday Brunch

Come to Sunday Brunch in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 5 after the 10 am service. Why?

- Learn about Christmas giving opportunities
- Reconnect with POP family
- Fellowship and conversations
- Sponsored by Social Justice Ministry and Fellowship Committees

If you are interested in contributing food, contact either [Joan Kowalik](#) or [Cherie DeGeorge](#).

Social Justice Ministry News

Afghan Refugee Event

The Social Justice Ministry Committee continues to look for ways that Prince of Peace can support Afghan Refugees as they resettle in the Washington Region. We encourage members of the congregation to visit the Lutheran Social Services Website and donate what they can to help in this effort. Lutheran Social Services is the lead organization in settling people in this area and is involved on many levels in this effort. They are helping people to find housing and are in great need of household items to furnish new homes. If you want to find more personal ways to connect, there are a number of ways you can volunteer such as serving as a mentor, tutor, or driver. There is a lot of very good information on their website.

The Social Justice Ministry Committee is planning a fund raising event to support Afghan Resettlement after the first of the year.

SAVE THE DATE: March 12, 2022. This will be the date for a SILENT AUCTION/SOCIAL EVENT to raise funds and awareness about the needs of Afghan refugees. We would like the congregation to begin thinking about things that you might donate for the Auction. Do you have something that you no longer need or use that someone might love to buy at the auction? Please start thinking of these things and putting them aside now. We would love our members to share a talent for the auction - cook a dinner, share a skill like quilting or pottery making, make a pot of soup each month for a year, host a dinner or event that a group at Church might enjoy. The possibilities are endless with our talented congregation. We're working on getting some fun entertainment and some educational activities to learn more about Afghanistan.

We hope that Prince of Peace can come together as a Congregation to have a fun and festive evening, and support this very worthy cause. Please put MARCH 12 on your calendar now and join us for this upcoming event!

FELLOWSHIP

Women's Book Group

DECEMBER

The Women's Book Group will meet on **Thursday, December 9 at 6:30 pm** to discuss *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig.

Excerpt from GoodReads: Between life and death there is a library, and within that library, the shelves go on forever. Every book provides a chance to try another life you could have lived. To see how things would be if you had made other choices . . . Would you have done anything different, if you had the chance to undo your regrets? This is a novel about all the choices that go into a life well lived.

Judy Bruening will be hosting at her home. RSVP judy.bruening53@gmail.com. The Book Group is open to all POP women. For this special holiday gathering, please contact Kathy Mellott at ufda_gal@yahoo.com for details for anyone who has not participated previously.

JANUARY

The Women's Book Group will meet on **Thursday, January 13 at 6:30 pm** to discuss *You Don't Belong Here* by Elizabeth Becker.

Excerpt from GoodReads: It is the true story of three female journalists who permanently shattered the barriers to women covering war. The author uses these women's work and lives to illuminate the Vietnam War from the 1965 American buildup, the expansion into Cambodia, and the American defeat and its aftermath. Arriving herself in the last years of the war, Becker writes as a historian and a witness of the times.

Contact Kathy Mellott at ufda_gal@yahoo.com for details.

(Note: We do not have a hostess yet.)

Future Book Selections and Hosts

Feb. The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue
by V.E. Schwab
host **Debbie Chen**

Mar. Circe
by Madeline Miller
host **TBD**



POP OFFICE

Office Hours

Our office is now being staffed by Martha Rogers on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, from 9:30 am - 1:30 pm**. However, it is always possible to:

- Call or email the office (or the Pastor directly) - we will be monitoring email and voicemail daily, so it's always possible to contact us;
- Drop off food for Gaithersburg HELP at the church - the bins continue to be located outside each door under the covered walkways.
- Send offering checks to the church (although [we're encouraging online donations](#) if you can do that.)

Recycling Toner/Ink Cartridges



Please continue saving used ink & toner cartridges for PoP. We still recycle them for store credit on office supplies. You can leave

them in the box in the Narthex or in the labeled bin on the "Give & Take" table outside the back door.



Kitchen Care

Now that we are doing more in the building, help us keep the kitchen tidy and organized! Kitchen rules are posted in the kitchen, usually on the refrigerator, so that we can keep it clean and tidy and make it easier for everyone to use.



ELCA DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. With wildfires, hurricanes, flooding, and earthquakes, there are many immediate needs here and around the world. Most current for many of us is the Covid-19 pandemic. Visit the [ELCA Disaster Response webpage](https://elca.org/disaster) (<https://elca.org/disaster>) to donate or learn more about how you can help.

MAR-LU RIDGE

Summer Camp

Mar-Lu-Ridge is ready to welcome campers ages 6-17 and families to our 2022 season! Check out the schedule and the information on our website and make your plans today. We never turn anyone away, so please let us know if you need financial assistance. Registration begins January 1. Our 2022 session promises to be full of laughter, faith building lessons and activities, time spent outdoors and new friends. Together we will explore God's Boundless love!

We are pleased to share the Mar-Lu-Ridge 2022 Summer Camp schedule. We have included some old favorites again as we work our way back to pre-COVID programming. You will note we have adjusted programs for older campers, so they do not conflict with the ELCA Gathering.

It is our mission to provide camp to everyone who wishes to attend, so Camperships are available to anyone in need of financial assistance. Please share that news with your congregation as you advertise camp opportunities.

Our curriculum for the summer is "Boundless", written in conjunction with the curriculum for the Gathering. Theme verse: I pray that you and all of God's people will understand what is called wide or long or high or deep. I want you to know all about Christ's love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is. — Ephesians 3:18-19

Additional information can be found at these links:
[Summer Camp 2022 Schedule](#)
[Campership application](#)

Advent Family Gathering: Dec. 5

A wonderful MLR tradition. Bring the family and enjoy a day of crafts, wreath making, food and fellowship as we celebrate the season of Advent. Agape Hall 1-4 p.m.

[Register today](#)



THINK ABOUT IT

Advent was one week away, so we thought we'd see what the children remembered from our family devotions the year before. "Who can tell me what the four candles in the Advent wreath represent?" I asked.

Luke jumped in with seven-year-old wisdom and exuberance. "There's love, joy, peace, and . . . and . . ."

"I know!" six-year-old Elise interrupted to finish her brother's sentence: "Peace and quiet!"

--Michelle L. Hardie

Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be.

--Thomas á Kempis

God, help us not to despise or oppose what we do not understand.

--William Penn

The best way to prepare for the coming of Christ is never to forget the presence of Christ.

--William Barclay

Good Friday came after Christmas, but the angels still sang at the manger. In the midst of the hardest reality of life, there is always a welcome for tenderness and beauty.

--Bruce W. Thielemann

Glad Tidings is published monthly (July/August and December/January issues combined) by:
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Articles for the February issue of *Glad Tidings* are due **January 16**. Please email articles to Martha Rogers at GladTidingsEditor@gmail.com. Photos and/or graphics are welcome!

Glad Tidings is online at www.poplutheran.org

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