



GLAD TIDINGS



Vol. 41 Iss. 7

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, MD

September 2022



Our Fall Worship Schedule resumes on Sept 11!

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am
Sunday School at 9:00 am—Rally Day!

MoCo Interfaith 5K

The Montgomery County Interfaith 5K, a unique race that brings together people from all walks of life, religious backgrounds, ethnicities, and fitness levels, takes place on **September 5th at 8am** at the Maryland Soccerplex. When you register make sure to join the Prince of Peace team! Profit made by the race is **DONATED** to two area beneficiaries: Gaithersburg HELP and C-4 Clothing Closet. Find out [more about the MoCo Interfaith 5K here](#) or [on Facebook](#). For more information, check the bulletin board in the Narthex or contact [Chris Michel](#) or [Ric Kienzle](#).



PB&J for the Hungry

It's Peanut Butter and Jelly time! POP is collecting peanut butter and jelly for Gaithersburg HELP to celebrate Back-to-School and help restock their pantry. Donations can be left in the special collection bucket in the narthex. The drive will continue through October, so please consider picking up something to donate each time you shop. Any other donations of non-perishables are of course very welcome.



The Sunday School will also be participating in this collection. See page 6 for more information.



Ministry Fair and Cookout

When: after the service on September 11!

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, is a National Day of Service and Remembrance. This will be a great chance to learn more about **opportunities** at Prince of Peace, pull some **weeds**, clean some **windows**, share a **meal**. In addition, there will be opportunities for the Youth to perform some service projects that qualify for SSL hours.

The menu is hamburgers, hotdogs and salad provided by the Fellowship Committee (free will offering). Please bring your favorite dessert to share.

If you are involved in something at Prince of Peace, please consider preparing a poster or display to inform and/or recruit for the Ministry Fair.

Please coordinate with Lisa Conary so that we will save you enough space. For more information contact [Jon](#) or [Lisa Conary](#).

Park Clean Up!



Saturday, Sept 17, 2:00 - 4:30pm
2:00pm meet at church to carpool to nearby Muddy Branch Park.
4:30pm return to church for a tasty treat!

ALL are welcome.

*SSL hours for middle and high school students
For more information contact Sonvy Waidler
sonvy@yahoo.com

Blessing of Animals

Our Annual Blessing of Animals will take place at our 5 pm Saturday service on October 8! Come and bring your pets!





From Pastor Steve...

Pastor Steve Buechler
(pastor@poplutheran.org;
301-869-3666)

School is beginning again. And although it's been many years since I was in school, at this time of year I often remember many of the things that were new and exciting about the beginning of a new school year.

One of the things I remember from long ago (I think this may have been in middle school) was that I had a couple of teachers who began the first day of class by telling us, "This is the first day of class. And you all have an 'A' at this point." I know they meant that to be encouraging. But it never came off that way to me. First of all, it basically said, "you have nowhere to go but down from here!"

But beyond that, as somebody who was reasonably good at math, I knew it wasn't true! At that moment, all of us had no grade. We didn't have an 'A' or an 'F', or anything in between. What we all had was opportunity. It was a new class, and a new semester. And I think what those teachers really wanted us to know was that we all had a new opportunity. And to have a new opportunity is encouraging!

And even though I'm not in school anymore, as Sunday School and Confirmation also get going again in the fall each year, I'm reminded of that feeling of a new opportunity. Indeed, each new day, God gives us a new opportunity to live and grow and serve in new ways. It's not just at the beginning of a new school year.

In fact, the message of Jesus' forgiveness is not really intended to make us dwell on what we might have done wrong, or failed to do, in the past. Instead, it's the encouragement to see each new day, and each new season, as a new opportunity to live and grow in new ways.

As we begin this new season, and as many people return from vacation and we get going with many of our fall programs, let's remember that. Every new day and each new season is a new opportunity God gives us to be more than we were; it's a new opportunity to live in new ways; and it's an opportunity to live into a different time and a

different situation, looking forward to the new ways the Spirit will lead us and help us to grow.

Yours in Christ,

September Highlights

Every Sunday

10:00 am Worship live and streamed on our Facebook Page

Every Tuesday

10:00 am Quilters

12:30 pm Women's Bible Study

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 Sat., Oct 8. This service will include Blessing of the Animals this month. Otherwise, it will have the same sermon and readings as the Sunday service but will not be livestreamed.

COMING UP...

September

5 Labor Day

5 Montgomery County Interfaith 5K (pg 1)

8 Women's Book Group (pg 8)

10 Saturday Worship Service (pg 2)

11 Ministry Fair and Cookout (pg 1)

11 Sunday School Resumes (pp 1, 5)

11 Quilting on Sunday

11 Confirmation

13 Church Council Meeting

17 Park Clean Up! (pg 1)

October

1 Board Game Night

2 Confirmation

8 Saturday Worship Service
w/ Blessing of the Animals (pg 1)

11 Church Council Meeting

13 Women's Book Group (pg 8)

16 Confirmation

18 Interfaith Works Women's Ctr Dinner (pg 8)

31 Halloween

For a current calendar, see:

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

COUNCIL CORNER

July/August 2022

News and Views from the PoP Church Council

NEWS

Here are the updates from the July Church Council meeting. The Church Council did not meet in August.

Finances: Finances are doing okay ([Council notes](#)).

Shed project: the old shed has been demolished and the new shed should in place with the finishing touches on going.

Solar panel project: the solar panels is in place by the fall. We are in the permitting process at this time.

VIEWS

First, thank you for your continued support of POP through both your time and talents!!

Second, there are still several opportunities to share your time and talents. Please see the poster on the door to the back parking lot.

Respectfully,
Jon Conary

SPOTLIGHT

Enjoy a new poem by our own Susan Weiner:

The Maker of Hippos

A platypus has got a shovel-shaped nose,
A sloth has claws instead of toes,

A kangaroo hops just like a spring,
A dragonfly goes by on see-through wing.

A camel's hump is truly absurd,
And for an elephant-- well, I haven't a word.

Each of indescribable wonder,
Like electrical eels who crackle and thunder,

While the Maker of Hippos and marvelous things
Sits on his throne and joyously sings.

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, Laura Hampe Garofalo,
Annie Hampe, Roy Johnson, Mike & Remi Langum,
Anne Lomperis, Kaitlyn McGurgan & her family,
Dick & Sandy Moore, Heather Robinson, Martha
Rogers, Sherry Schiebel, David Swanson, Denny
Tritinger, Laura Wilson, John Zobel

Sympathy

Family of Ora Lee Hepner
(mother of Donna Von Wald)
Family of Dorothy Otis
(mother of Kathy Mellott)

Thanksgiving

Birth of Joe Rowan Daniel IV
(son of Brittany (DeGeorge) & Joe Daniel)

Ongoing

The people of Ukraine
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.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed for a number of key positions! Please check out the Key Volunteer listings on the glass door in the narthex and let [Pastor Steve](#) or [Jon Conary](#) know if you can help!

PHOTOGRAPHER

Looking for a designated photographer: someone who can take new pictures to update and/or add to the church directory and take pictures at events.



Contact Pastor Steve (pastor@popluther.org) or Jon Conary (drjon2018@gmail.com) for more information.

SPLASH Mailing Volunteer!

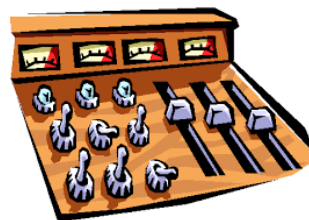


Looking for a volunteer opportunity that can be done from home, and where you can welcome PoP's youngest members to our church?

Coordinating our SPLASH mailings could be the perfect fit! Once a month, pre-printed newsletters are sent out to all families with children ages 0-36 months. Duties include coordinating with the office to make sure new babies are added to the list and on ordering supplies, sending out a (pre-written) welcome letter to new families, and addressing and sending out the pre-printed newsletters once per month.

Contact Jamie Pflasterer (jlpflast@hotmail.com) for more information.

We need a Vice Treasurer



We need a Sound Board Operator

Covid-19 has had a dramatic impact on how we perform many

of our daily/weekly activities including how we do church. Would you like to be part of the team that makes our "Live Stream" church possible? We are looking for a few more people to control the cameras and sound during our worship services.

We need an Online Greeter

We need someone to sit in the office during church and do the following: greet on-line worshippers, monitor the service on Facebook and let the sound person know if there is a problem, post links at the appropriate times in the service, share the peace, say bye and thank you to virtual attendees. The greetings and comments would all be as posts to Facebook.



Time commitment: 20 minutes to train, then the Sunday service.

UPDATE!

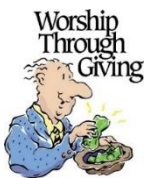
The Shed has been (nearly) built! On the 19th of July, a group of ten Boy Scouts and some parents came together to build and assemble most of the replacement shed in the back parking lot over the course of 9 hours, for the second part of Dekker Spielman's Eagle project. It was a brutally hot day, but everyone persevered and worked very hard to assemble walls and roof trusses, and then raise the four walls! Now there is only a little more to be done before the shed is finished - adding the remaining trusses and gables, putting on shingles, hanging the doors, and staining the outside. Dekker is working with his family and troop volunteers to complete the shed over the next few weekends, so that the church will have fully waterproof storage ready in time for fall and winter.

Check out the pictures on page 9.

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

Sunday School



Sunday School leaders are looking forward to welcoming our learners back on **Sunday, September 11 at 9 am!**

We will have classes for youth from preschool through high school ages. Everyone is welcome any week they can attend!

Preschool through Elementary School

Each week, we will meet for Opening in the sanctuary, where we will introduce a Bible truth, share our offerings, and participate in music led by Danielle Drobny.

Next, we will head to our Preschool - Kindergarten, 1st - 2nd Grade, and 3rd - 5th Grade classrooms, where we will use Group's Dig In Epic Teachings of the Bible curriculum. This fall, we will explore each of the Ten Commandments with a different Bible story each week and hands-on activities, such as active games, crafts, and science experiments. Our workshop leaders will be Lisa Conary, Janet Levine, Jamie Pflasterer, and Anne Witten. Trish Taylor will be our elementary shepherd.

We want your students to feel comfortable, so remember that parents are always welcome in class.

Middle School

We will use Sparkhouse Re:form Ancestors: Old Testament to explore the ancestors of our faith by exposing the real, unpolished, and unexpected personalities. In addition, Middle School will team up with High School monthly to work together on service projects during the Sunday School hour. Our Middle School leader is Samuel Bornhorst.

High School

We will decide together the topics to explore this fall. In addition, we will team up with Middle School to work together monthly on service projects during the Sunday School hour. So, if you are in 9th through 12th grade, please come by and check us out. Jon Conary will lead our High School class.

Please contact Janet Levine (lyle1janet@msn.com) or your learner's Sunday School leaders with any questions or concerns.

Middle School and High School Students

This past spring, we started to focus, in our Middle and High School Sunday school classes, on service projects. It is possible that the idea was inspired by our new Social Justice Ministry group! We have contributed items to the auction to benefit refugees and we put together kits for Lutheran World Relief from the items collected during Lent from the Sharing Bags. We believe that we not only benefited the refugees and the recipients of the LWR Personal Kits with these projects, but it also gave us an opportunity to help others. Another benefit can sometimes be, when the project benefits the community at large, and not just PoP, some of the SSL hours that students need to graduate high school.

We would like to continue with this focus over summer and into the fall. First order of business is to collect more ideas for projects. And second, to plan, organize and implement the projects.

If you would like a reminder that a project is coming up, please send your preferred contact info to Lisa Conary (lconary@prodigy.net).

Ideas we have collected so far:

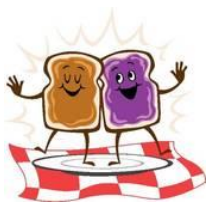
Help Dekker complete construction of the new shed - contact [Dekker Spielman](#) to see if he still needs workers and for details.

Create quilts for LWR - any Tuesday from 10am until noon in the fellowship hall and one Sunday a month, you can contact [Lisa Conary](#) for details or just show up

Plogging together as a group - yes, plogging is a thing, you can read about it on the Montgomery County volunteer website. You would have to register with them, but we could make it a group event - let [Lisa Conary](#) know if you want to volunteer to be the contact for that project.

More ideas would be very welcome!

Sunday School Offering

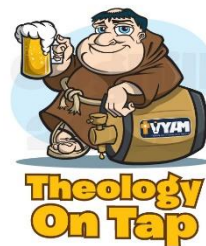


During September and October, our Sunday School offering will provide peanut butter and jelly to Gaithersburg Help. Learners contribute jars or cash so local students have filling lunches.

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 and location.



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 Genesis. Questions? Contact Pastor Wendy Deeben (wdeeben@gracerock.org)

MUSIC

Grace Notes

Is this the year to dust off your trumpet, trombone, saxophone, drums, guitar or other musical instrument and start playing again? Have you always wanted to sing or play with "the Band"? Grace Notes is looking for musicians and singers. We rehearse Monday nights from 6:30 to 8:00pm and are working toward the goal of playing once a month during our worship service.



Time commitment is rehearsal 3-4 times a month and playing at one Sunday service a month. Contact [Jon Conary](#) for more information.

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Gaithersburg HELP



Gaithersburg HELP has stayed unusually busy this summer, so perhaps Fall, when we normally see a big upswing in need, will be excessively busy. Non-perishable food and diapers are ongoing needs, and your kind contributions are very appreciated.

A chronic problem is lack of drivers for elderly and disabled clients needing to get to local doctor or service agency appointments. Clients love to have a friendly volunteer as their driver vs a cab, but due to shortage of drivers, only 30% of rides can now be provided by our volunteers. If you have even one weekday a month when you could take a

very appreciative client, please consider volunteering. Requirements are: age 21 or older with an active US driver's license in good standing. Liability insurance is provided by HELP.

For questions or information, please see the website (GaithersburgHELP.org) or contact Hope Walker (hope.walker@GaithersburgHELP.org)

COLLECTING GLASSES and HEARING AIDS

Prince of Peace is collecting eyeglasses, sunglasses and hearing aids for the Lions Club International. Glasses may be prescription or non-prescription but should be usable.



The Lions Club motto is "Kindness Matters". As an act of kindness please donate and spread the word about our new project. The collection boxes will be located as you walk into Church and in the Besecker Center.



If you have any questions, contact [Cherie DeGeorge](#).



Quilters



Would you like to change the world for someone? Can you tie a knot or tear/cut a piece of cloth? Then join the Quilter's group, Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am till noon at the church or work from home. We also can use donations of cloth (cotton preferred). We are

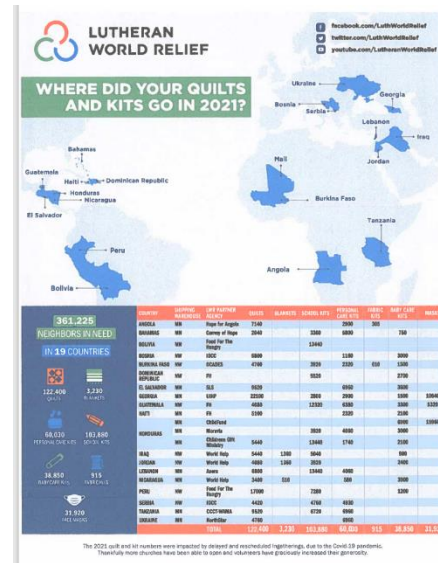
changing the world one quilt at a time! Contact [Lisa Conary](#) for more information.

Do you have some fabric in your home that you are not going to use? The PoP Quilters are in need of fabric for quilts. Please leave any fabric donations in the church office or music room. If you have questions, please contact [Lisa Conary](#).

The quilting group needs cloth. If you are decluttering and find sheets or cloth you no longer want, we would love to have it. We use sheets for the backing and other pieces of cloth for squares. Cotton is best but blends work as well. Thank you!

Check out the pictures on pages 9 and 10.

Where Did Your Quilts and Kits Go?



This chart shows where quilts and kits were donated in 2021.

Kits donated by Prince of Peace were shipped to the following countries:

Item	Date Shipped	Notes
Quilts	12/7/2015	Georgia
Quilts	11/16/2016	Haiti
Quilts	9/25/2017	Georgia
Quilts	6/18/2020	Georgia
Quilts	3/3/2022	Jordan
Personal Care Kit	12/7/2015	Georgia
New School Kit	11/30/2015	Honduras
New School Kit	10/26/2016	Haiti
New School Kit	11/16/2016	Haiti
New School Kit	11/23/2018	Mauritania
New School Kit	2/28/2020	Honduras
New School Kit	8/13/2021	Dominican Republic
New School Kit	3/3/2022	Syria
Baby Care Kit	4/27/2017	Peru

This chart shows where quilts and kits from Price of Peace were donated 2015 - 2022.

Social Justice Ministry News

The mission of Wider Circle is to end poverty through the creation of stable homes, work force, and neighborhoods. Volunteers are needed to deliver household essentials such as soaps for home and laundry, toilet paper, etc. from Silver Spring headquarters to clients in Southeast, DC. Masks and vaccinations required.

<https://signup.com/go/sLyAdeH>

"Partners recommended for safety and parking."

Fight DIPG, childhood brain cancer, at the Dream Big Gala, Saturday, November 12. Join DARCAR Automotive for a fun and meaningful night including dinner and a silent and live auction. Early Bird Tickets available through September 13. [Dream Big Gala | Powered By GiveSmart.](#)

Join Mar-Lu-Ridge for a Walkathon or Cookie Run on Sunday, September 25 from 1-5 pm. Walk the up to 5-mile camp road or run a 5K. Then stay for a meal and worship. All are welcome. Please bring family and friends. Sign up now. [4th Annual Mar-Lu-Ridge Cookie Run \(jotform.com\)](https://www.jotform.com).

N Street Village in Washington, DC invites you to celebrate 50 years of service for homeless women by participating in their Shero Community Walk on Saturday, October 15. Help raise money by gathering sponsors. For more info. about services go to [About The Village - N Street Village](#) or call (202) 939-2076.

Lutheran Disaster Services helps serve the US when hurricanes strike. This year they want to thank congregation members for past support and ask for current donations anticipating hurricanes to come for the fall of 2022. Read their important report on services rendered across the nation [2017 Hurricanes Anniversary Report 5 Years Later.pdf \(elca.org\)](#).

Interfaith Works Women's Center Dinner

On Tuesday, October 18, Prince of Peace, through the Social Justice Ministry Committee, will support the Interfaith Works Emergency Women's Center on Taft Circle in Rockville with a dinner delivered to the women who live there. This Center provides short term emergency shelter services to the Interfaith Works Clients who live there. In addition to temporary shelter, this program also provides holistic case management to each client. These services connect clients to other community resources, such as primary medical care, legal services, psychiatric services, permanent housing services, and vocational services. Interfaith Works operates Montgomery County's only year-round, emergency shelters exclusively for women at the Taft Center in Rockville and Women's Center at Crabbs Branch.

We will be preparing a dinner to serve 35 women at the Center. During the Covid Pandemic the volunteers who delivered meals were no longer allowed to come inside the Center to help serve meals and visit with the residents. Now that many people have been vaccinated or have had Covid, Interfaith is again allowing volunteers to help serve meals and talk to the women who live there. They are allowing three volunteers to come in at each dinner, to keep risks at a minimum.

We will be assembling the meals at Prince of Peace, but much of the cooking will be done at home. We will need a main course, a side dish, and a dessert to serve 35 women. If you are interested in participating in this new effort at Prince of Peace, please let Jane Sahmel (jane.sahmel@gmail.com) or anyone on the Social Justice Ministry Committee know, and we can coordinate our meal plans. If you would like to help deliver and serve the meals, please let us know of your interest in that also. This is an opportunity to serve our most vulnerable neighbors. Please consider helping with this effort!

FELLOWSHIP

Women's Book Group

The Women's Book Group will meet on **Thursday, September 8 at 7:30 pm** at the home of Alice Benson. Please RSVP to Alice at bensonfitch@icloud.com, whether attending in person or via Zoom. Members will be reading banned books and will discuss the reason the books are banned. Anyone not on the email list can contact Kathy Mellott at ufda_gal@yahoo.com for more information.

Future Book Selections and Hosts

October 13 *The Eyre Affair*

by Jasper Fforde

hosted by Judy Bruening

November 10 *The Mystery of Mrs. Christie*

by Marie Benedict

TBD

December 8 *The Authenticity Project*

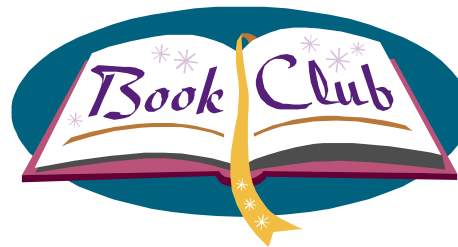
by Clare Pooley

TBD

January 12 *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*

by Lisa See

TBD



RECENT EVENTS

Pictures from UPDATE of the Shed Project from page 4.



The following pictures are from the "Quilting on Sunday" events.





From our July 31
"Sunday Quilting"
event.



From our trip to New Windsor to deliver 19 quilts, 26 personal kits, 12 school kits and one baby kit. We were treated to a very interesting explanation of how the kits and quilts are prepped for their final destination. This stack of 35 quilts started out about 8 foot high and was pressed down to about 2.5 feet, wrapped in plastic and strapped. Then they are loaded on a pallet for shipping - 12 per pallet. The boxes are Personal kits.



35 x 12 quilts!



THANK YOU!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

As the calendar draws closer to the start of the 2022-2023 school year, our school supplies drive has come to an end. Once again, I am in awe of the generosity of our congregation. The drive was a huge success. Many children in Montgomery County will start the school year with new backpacks and supplies to get them on the path to a positive year.

Today I delivered to the Interfaith Clothing Center:

- 6 - Stuffed backpacks
- 7 - backpacks
- 1 - Trapper Keeper
- 5 - 2" binders
- 4 - 1 1/2" binders
- 23 - 1" binders
- 42 - single subject notebooks
- 10 - composition books
- 13 - packages of college rule paper
- 20 - packages of wide rule paper
- 109 - folders
- 15 - sets of dividers
- 2 - packages of pencils
- 27 - packages of pens
- 28 - packages of colored pencils (that's 576 colored pencils)
- 5 - packages of highlighters
- 19 - pencil holders and boxes
- 3 - rulers
- 5 - assorted bottles of glue or glue sticks

Miranda and the volunteers were delighted with the donations.

Thank you again.

Laura Corbin Hurst
School Supplies Drive Coordinator



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 continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic, Afghan and Ukrainian refugees, and the war in Ukraine. Visit the ELCA Disaster Response webpage (<https://elca.org/disaster>) to donate or learn more about how you can help.

THINK ABOUT IT

From AARP magazine:

Attending religious services four times a month increased life expectancy by between 4 and 14 years. 258 of 263 people over 100 said they belonged to faith-based communities. Referenced a National Geographic/Blue Zones series of interviews.

From Prairie Home Companion by Garrison Keillor:
Singing with the Lutherans

In this classic essay, Garrison Keillor praises the singing talents and culinary preferences of Lutherans.

I have made fun of Lutherans for years - who wouldn't if you lived in Minnesota?

But I have also sung with Lutherans and that is one of the main joys of my life, along with hot baths and fresh sweet corn. We make fun of Lutherans for their blandness, their excessive calm, their fear of giving offense, their lack of speed and also for their secret fondness for macaroni and cheese. But nobody sings like them.

If you ask an audience in New York City a relatively Lutheranless place, to sing along on the chorus of "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," they will look daggers at you as if you had asked them to strip to their underwear. But if you do this among Lutheran they'll smile and row that boat ashore and up on the beach! And down the road!

Lutherans are bred from childhood to sing in four-part harmony. It's a talent that comes from sitting on the lap of someone singing alto or tenor or bass and hearing the harmonic intervals by putting your little head against that person's rib cage. It's natural for Lutherans to sing in harmony. We're too modest to be soloists, too worldly to sing in unison. When you're singing in the key of C and you slide into the A7th and D7th chords, all two hundred of you. It's an emotionally fulfilling moment.

I once sang the bass line of "Children of the Heavenly Father" in a room with about three thousand Lutherans in it, and when we finished, we all had tears in our eyes partly from the promise that God will not forsake us, partly from the proximity of all those lovely voices. By our joining in harmony, we somehow promise that we will not forsake each other.

I do believe this: These Lutherans are the sort of people you could call up when you're in deep distress. If you're dying, they'll comfort you. If

you're lonely, they'll talk to you. And if you're hungry, they'll give you tuna salad!

There are three ways to get something done:

1. Do it yourself.
2. Hire someone else to do it.
3. Forbid your kids to do it.

--Homiletics

When my father was in the hospital, he had a stream of visitors from the church. One day two men stopped by. Their quiet conversation was interrupted by the other patient's peppery language from behind the curtain. Before leaving, the visitors read some Scripture and prayed.

After they left, the roommate loosed another string of expletives and then sheepishly confessed to Dad, "If I'd known one of those guys was a minister, I'd have watched my language."

"Oh," Dad replied, "they're the deacons in the church. I'm the minister."

--Ginny Dow

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