



GLAD TIDINGS



Vol. 44 Iss. 1

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, MD

February 2025

Souper Bowl of Caring Collection



2025

It's time to tackle hunger with the Souper Bowl of Caring! Bring in your cans of ready-to-eat soup and stew (hearty choices with lots of protein

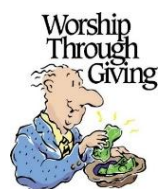
are preferred) to PoP, through Super Bowl Sunday, February 9th. Vote for your favorite team by placing your cans in their box, or should you stack the deck since Prince of Peace has a history of picking the losing team?? Either way, Gaithersburg Help wins as we all come together to feed our hungry neighbors. Youth Sunday School will count the final tally on Sunday, February 9.

Bible Presentation

Has your 2nd through 5th grader been presented a Bible by Prince of Peace? If not, please contact [Janet Levine](#) so they can be given a Bible during a worship service this spring.



Church Giving Envelopes



Envelopes for 2025 are available to all who would like them. They are located on the donation table in the Narthex. Please contact [Helen Griffith](#) if you have any questions.

If you prefer to give online or electronically, see page 4.

Congratulations to Our Church Council Members!



Newly elected: Laura Dillon, Dan Gibson, Jamie Pflasterer

Re-elected: Kieran McKnight (youth position)

Continuing: Jon Conary, Chuck Harrington, Sherry Kienzle, Meredith Kuykendall, Rainer Sahmel, Sherry Schiebel

Thank you for your service on Council: Pamela Cook, Bill Harral, Chet Wolejsza

Copies of the Annual Report are available in the narthex and [online](#).

Name Tag

Do you have a name tag? They are hanging on the windows on either side of the back entrance to the Narthex, hopefully in alphabetical order by last name. When you wear it, people can put a face with a name helping them to remember who you are.



Do you need a name tag? There is a clipboard hanging on the wall over the table where the After Service Snacks are usually served. Members and active visitors of all ages can have a name tag. Please sign up and one will be made for you.

SPECIAL WEATHER NOTE



Inclement Weather

During the winter months, if inclement weather requires us to cancel services or activities, a notice will appear on the [website homepage \(poplutheran.org\)](#).



From Pastor Steve...

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

Each year, as we begin the month of February, I never know if it will snow. But this year, I know what will NOT happen in February. Lent will NOT happen! Because Easter is late this year, Lent doesn't begin until early March, and especially for Pastors and church staff, that means we get a breather between the Christmas season and the Lent and Easter cycle. Many years, it seems like we just get finished with Christmas (and the Annual Meeting) and we're suddenly running right into Lent.

But this year, we have a month of "green Sundays" in which we're simply living in the "Sundays after Epiphany." And while it's great not to have the intensity of Lent going on, these Sundays are also a good time for all of us to consider what "epiphany" means in our lives. It's more than just a breather between Christmas and Lent!

The word "epiphany" is a Greek word which means "revelation" or "manifestation" or "enlightenment." But often, we look for and expect God's "enlightenment" to happen in a sudden, blinding flash. We're often drawn to biblical stories in which that seems to happen for someone and we hope that it might happen to us as well.

But in fact, as many of our stories during these "Sundays after Epiphany" remind us, God's enlightenment in our lives doesn't always happen like that. More often, people become "enlightened" over a long period of time as they listen to Jesus, ask questions and consider the meaning of what Jesus has done in their lives. Often, people become "enlightened" as they see something which could be a sign of God's work and then explore whether or not it is. And sometimes, people become "enlightened" only after the Resurrection of Jesus, which puts things in a context they hadn't seen before.

So, in this season of "enlightenment" don't worry if you haven't had a blinding flash of revelation. Rather, be open to listening and learning. Explore small events in your life and ask whether God is

pointing you in a new direction through those events. And be willing to continue to watch and wait for times ahead when things you've prayed and wondered about may come into clearer focus.

Yours in Christ,

February Highlights

Every Sunday

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

11:00 am Sunday School

Every Monday

6:30 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal

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., February 8. This service will have the same sermon and readings as the Sunday service but will not be livestreamed.

COMING UP...

February

8 Saturday Worship Service (pg 2)

9 "Souper" Bowl Sunday (pg 1)

11 Church Council Meeting

13 Women's Book Group (pg 8)

14 Valentine's Day

17 Presidents' Day

20 Men's Book Club (pg 8)

23 Confirmation Meets

March

5 Ash Wednesday

8 Saturday Worship Service

9 Daylight Saving Time Starts

11 Church Council Meeting

13 Women's Book Group (pg 8)

16 CERT Training (pg 5)

16 Confirmation Meets

17 St. Patrick's Day

For a current calendar, see:

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

COUNCIL CORNER

January 2025

News and Views from the PoP Church Council

NEWS

Here are the updates from the January Church Council meeting.

Finances: Giving exceeded 2023 but was a little behind the year's expenses. (Council notes).

Feast Fund: We would like to do a kitchen refresh in 2025.

Annual Meeting: The 2025 annual meeting was held on Sunday, January 26 at 11:00am. The 2025 budget was approved and Dan Gibson, Laura Dillion, Jamie Pflasterer and Kieran McKnight (Youth member) were elected to church council.

VIEWS

If we increase giving by \$5.00 a week per family we will eliminate the budget deficit by year end.

Thank you again for your continued support with both time and talents.

Respectfully,
Jon Conary

Council met on January 14. You can read notes from that meeting (including the Pastor's and Treasurer's report) [by clicking here.](#)

EDITOR'S NOTE: The date on the first page is 2024. However, this is the report from the January 2025 meeting.

SPECIAL PRAYERS

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

Pastor John B. McGarvey



PoP Members

Madelyn Berkeley-Miltzer, Elizabeth Langum Chung, Brittany (DeGeorge) Daniel, Sherry Fischer, Laura Hampe Garofalo, Zena Huen, Roy Johnson, Mike & Remi Langum, Anne Lomperis, Kaitlyn McGurgan & her family, Dick Moore, Jim McNerney, Heather Robinson, David & Martha Rogers, Sherry Schiebel, Laura Wilson, Chet Wolejsza

Sympathy

Family of Tom Banfield (uncle of Richard Farrar's partner, Linda)

Family of James Baur (husband of Alice Baur)

Family of John Delic (relative of David Molchany)

Family of John Gould & his family (friends of Sherry Schiebel)

Thanksgiving

Birth of Rebecca Kinley Carr (daughter of Carolyn and David Carr; granddaughter of Becky and Peter Carr)

Ongoing

The people of Ukraine and all those who are suffering due to hatred, war, and acts of violence
For racial justice and equality
All those struggling with Covid-19 and their Caregivers
All those impacted by nature

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

OTHER EVENTS

Haven Universe "Saturday Night Alive!"

Non-profit, Haven Universe has been partnering with Prince of Peace for several years and invites you to volunteer (or be a guest!) at HU "Saturday Night Alive." These events are hosted for individuals with special needs and their families and friends, many of whom are adults that attend with their caregivers.

"Saturday Night Alive" events will occur **on the following dates from 4:00-6:00pm** at Lakelands Park Middle School (1200 Main St, Gaithersburg):

February 15

March 15

April 5

May 3

Positions for potential volunteers include front desk check-in, gym setup/takedown, AV tech setup/takedown, craft table, merchandise sales, or just mingling with participants. This is a chance to see God's work through our hands. (High school students can also earn SSL hours by volunteering.) Contact [Ric](#) or [Sherry](#) Kienzle for questions. We hope you can join us to be a witness of Christ to others!

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!



YOUTH MINISTRY

Sunday School

We learned how wise men followed the star to find Jesus and decorated some stars of our own!



In January, youth Sunday School returned to the story of how the Israelites escaped from Egypt, wandered in the desert, and finally reached the land of Canaan. We learned how Joshua sent spies into the city of Jericho, how Rahab helped hide and protect them, and how she marked her home with a red cord, so that she and her family would be safe when the city fell.



Youth Sunday School was hard at work, making paper bag reminders for the congregation to bring in their soup for the February Souper Bowl of caring! Everyone wins when we help keep hungry neighbors fed this winter. Hearty, ready-to-eat soups will be collected through Super Bowl Sunday, February 9th, when Youth Sunday School will count up the final can tally.



In February, PreK-K and Elementary Classes will learn the stories of Jesus's baptism and his miracles. A new Bible buddy, Ray the Glowworm, will remind us that Jesus is God's son.

For Middle School:

Middle schoolers will continue to explore the Bible as a narrative, finding connections between the Old Testament and the new and seeing how Jesus's resurrection resolves the story.

ADULT EDUCATION

Coffee and Conversation

Coffee and Conversation is the adult version of Sunday School. It is held at 11:00 am, after the service. Descriptions of the upcoming "lessons" follow.

February

- 2
- 9
- 16 Bible Study, led by Sherry Kienzle
- 23 Bible Study, led by Sherry Kienzle

March

- 2 Bible Study, led by Sherry Kienzle
- 9
- 16 12:00-2:30 pm Special Event - Emergency Response Training (See CERT Training below.)
- 23
- 30 Melissa Blackstone - TVAR - 7 Dimensions of Wellness

To be added to the email list and get notifications of upcoming programs, please send an email to pop_adult_sunday_school+subscribe@googlegroups.com.

To sign up to lead a session or activity on an upcoming Sunday, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/PoPAdultEd2024>.

SaltWatch Comes to PoP's Coffee and Conversation Hour

Adult Sunday School was pleased to welcome Abby Hileman, the [SaltWatch](#) Coordinator from the [Izaak Walton League of America](#), as our guest speaker on Sunday, January 12th. During the hour we learned about smart salting (one 12 oz coffee cup is enough to salt a driveway, and salt needs space to work), how over-salting affects our waterways, damages our infrastructure, and may play a part in the movement of heavy metals, and about ways to

make a difference locally (stream monitoring through the [SaltWatch](#) program and [advocacy efforts](#)). If you missed the presentation, reference materials are available in the narthex - we hope to have a presentation later this year on the [NitrateWatch](#) program as well.

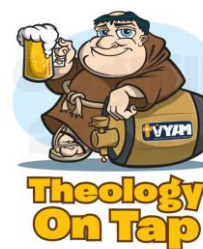


CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Training on Sunday, 3/16 from noon - 2:30PM

Do you know how to assist your neighbors and co-workers in an emergency situation? Will you be able to help if Emergency Services are delayed? If your answer was not a resounding yes, then consider taking the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training being offered by Montgomery County, right here at Prince of Peace! Training will be held after Sunday school on **Sunday, 3/16 from noon - 2:30pm in the sanctuary**, and lunch (pizza/subs) will be available for participants. SSL hours will be given to teens who complete the training. Topics covered will include rescuer safety, hands-only CPR and AED, and stopping life-threatening bleeding. To learn more, visit <https://montgomerycert.org/cert-training/>

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 join us!



PoP Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study meets every Tuesday from 12:30-2pm. We are currently reading and discussing *Women of the Bible: 52 Bible Studies for Individuals and Groups* by Jean E. Syswerda. If you have questions or need to join by Zoom, please contact [Pastor Wendy Deeben](#).



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 on 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

URGENT NEED



Gaithersburg HELP ended 2024 in vastly better financial shape than in 2023, which was a scary year. Generous contributions of food and

financial gifts from PoP, along with the wonderful Coffee House contribution, were a significant part of that positive outcome. A huge Thank You to all!

Good nutritious stuff, beans, proteins, stews, peanut butter, and cereal are always needed. And Souper Bowl Sunday offerings are eagerly anticipated.

HELP is addressing how best to assist our clients during a time of threatened deportations. The last time this happened, many of the Spanish speaking clientele were afraid to come in for needed food. Assurances will be provided that HELP is not a government agency and that no information is ever collected on citizenship status. In addition, pointers will be provided to CASA of Maryland and the Montgomery County Gilchrist Center, both of which provide very detailed information.

For questions or to volunteer, please contact your POP Delegate, [Hope Walker](#). If you would like a tour of the Pantry on Muddy Branch Road, that can easily be arranged. The website is GaithersburgHelp.org for lots of great information.

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.

Fabric Donations Needed



Do you have some fabric in your home that you are not going to use? The PoP Quilters are in need of fabric and sheets for quilts. We use sheets for the backing and other pieces of cloth for squares. Cotton is best but blends work as well. Please leave any fabric donations in the church office or music room.

If you have questions, please contact [Lisa Conary](#).

Social Justice Ministry News

Interfaith Shabbat Service at Shaare Torah on Friday, 2/28 at 7pm - all ages invited!

Shaare Torah welcomes Prince of Peace and other congregations from the Rt 28 corridor to participate in their interfaith [Shabbat service](#) on February 28th. This will be a shortened version of the service that is usually held on Fridays at sundown, which is the beginning of the Sabbath day of rest. This service will be specially geared towards an interfaith audience, is casual and open to all ages (including babies/toddlers), and will last approximately 30 minutes, with fellowship and dessert after. Come join us and get to know our interfaith neighbors!

Social Justice Ministry is Collecting

Social Justice Ministry is collecting coats, shoes, mittens and other cold weather items for the school children at Brown Station Elementary. If you have a coat or boots that you don't use or a child has outgrown, please consider donating them to the school. There is a box at church for donations. If you have questions, please contact [Jennifer Maloney](#).

Lutheran World Relief is asking for donations to help our neighbors in Southern California who have been affected by the terrible wildfires. Still struggling for control, firefighters from across the world are coming into LA to help put out the spreading blaze. So many are homeless. So many have nothing left. LWF is on the ground assisting struggling survivors now and asks for your help too. [You can help neighbors affected by California fires | Lutheran World Relief](#)

PoP Mobility Objects Closet (PoP MoC)

Prince of Peace Care Team has long dreamed of being able to provide mobility assistance tools for those in our congregation with broken bones, orthopedic surgery, strokes, or other mobility issues. We have now accumulated a number of relevant items for use by members of PoP and are very grateful to those who have donated items to make this a reality. We anticipate that additional items will continue to be added to the inventory. **To borrow equipment or find out more info, please send Sharon an email (smwahl16@gmail.com) or text (301-452-5100) and indicate which item(s) you are interested in checking out.** We can assist you in obtaining the equipment, but your medical professional will need to instruct you in its use. We are delighted to report that PoP members are already taking advantage of this opportunity! Items currently available include: Rollator Walker (foldable with seat and 4 wheels), 2 Folding Walkers (with 2 front wheels), Cane, Crutches, Wheelchair, Bedside portable commode with handles (can be used as a freestanding bedside commode, over a toilet or as a shower chair).

Seeking volunteers for a FREE 9'x9' native plant garden, to provide feedback to the National Wildlife Federation

The National Wildlife Federation is seeking volunteers who would be willing to plant a 9'x9' Bringing Nature Home Garden Kit, to replace a section of lawn with a native plant garden and then provide feedback about their experience (either a brief survey or followup call). The kits are FREE and contain 5 different species and 20 total plug-sized plants. Kits for sun and shade are available and include planting plans for various shapes / locations (including underneath a shade tree). If you are interested, please contact [Jamie Pflasterer](#) or [Tonya Meyer](#) - we will draw names to determine the 8 lucky recipients! (Please note whether you would be willing to plant a garden in the sun, shade, or whether either would work.)

NNIA News: PoP Members Make a Difference

PoP is a member congregation of New Neighbors Interfaith Alliance (NNIA). This all-volunteer organization helps families start new lives in Montgomery County. One volunteer leader recently sang the praises of PoP members Emma and Sasha Yanevskyy. They have been working with a family from Afghanistan. "Emma has been so wonderful ... so helpful," with getting the children settled in school. When the husband started his job search, "Sasha was the perfect person to help."

Emma says, "NNIA really made it easy for us to help out, and we have been really enjoying getting to know the family."

Want to know how you can help out? You can volunteer to deliver a monthly food basket; tutor an adult learning English; help a job seeker look through online listings; donate gently used household items. Contact Sonya Waidler to learn more: sonvy@yahoo.com, or 301-795-8020.

Mar-Lu-Ridge

Summer Camp 2025 Registration is OPEN now. Please visit our website and choose your favorite camp or camps before the sessions sell out. We can't wait to see you on the Ridge! Scholarships are available for anyone in need of assistance. We are committed to providing a safe, enjoyable camp experience for everyone, regardless of your ability to pay.

CAMP DAY: Join us **Sunday, March 23, 1-4 pm** for this **free** event. You'll have a chance to tour camp, meet some staff, try activities, and enjoy the view! No RSVP necessary.

[View the Schedule](#) (note: Middler Horseback is closed)

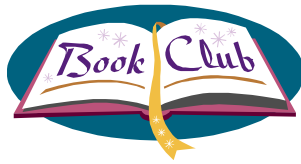
[Register today!](#)



FELLOWSHIP

Men's Book Club

The Men's Book Club will be discussing *The Exorcist* by William Peter Blatty. We will meet at Dick Moore's house on Thursday, February 20 at 7:00 pm.



Women's Book Group

The Women's Book Group will be discussing *The Women* by Kristin Hannah on Thursday, February 13 at 7:30 pm. Sharon Wahl will be hosting.

Future Book Selections and Hosts

March 13 *The Art Thief...*

by Michael Finkel
host Nancy Morton

April 10 *The Husband's Secret*

by Liane Moriarity
host Susan Victor

May 8 *The House of Doors*

by Tan Twon Eng
host Alice Benson

RECENT EVENTS

Pictures from tree decorating



Pictures from the pageant!



Pictures from the Lutheran Home



Pictures from tree decorating in the sanctuary





THANK YOU!

Social Justice Ministry wants to extend our sincere gratitude for the Congregation's generous support and involvement in our outreach projects. Your contributions, whether through your time, effort or donations, made a significant impact on our community. Thanks to your kindness and caring, we were able to provide eight families with all the fixings for a Thanksgiving Feast and with gift cards to aid in purchasing additional groceries. The families were so grateful and thankful for your warm-heartedness and compassion. We also recently donated 29.9 pounds of food to the Gaithersburg Help pantry and delivered 52 pairs of glasses in support of Lions Recycle For Sight Program. Gaithersburg Help and the Lions Recycle for Sight Program are ongoing projects. Gaithersburg Help donations may be left in the blue buckets by the entrance doors. There is a box in the narthex for the eyeglasses.

Giving Tree

Thanks to the generosity of the Prince of Peace congregation, The Giving Tree was able to provide 78 gifts of toys, clothing, and gift cards, for 21 kids (students and their siblings) at Brown Station Elementary School. Prince of Peace does not disappoint! The school was very grateful for the Giving Tree program that helped these families have a merrier Christmas.



Stepping Stones Shelter Dinner

Prince of Peace took a delicious dinner of lasagna, salad, garlic bread, and Rice Krispie bars for 26 people to Stepping Stones Family Shelter in Rockville on January 20. Our plans did not go exactly as expected because of the snow, and we had to make the dinner at the homes instead of at the Church as planned, but the dinner came together with all your generous donations.

Thanks to all who donated food and supplies to help the mothers and children at the Shelter. They are so appreciative of all that we give them to help transition these families back to permanent homes. We hope to have another opportunity to provide a meal in the near future.



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.



Sunday Service Extras

Prince of Peace is in full bloom with fresh flower arrangements on Sundays!!

Please help us by ordering an arrangement. The cost will be \$40.00. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Pamela Cook at 301-806-8016 (call or text).



Snack after Sunday Service is back! If you are interested in helping, there is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Thank you for all your help! If you have any questions, you can contact Pamela Cook at 301-806-8016 (call or text).



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) (<https://elca.org/disaster>) to donate or learn more about how you can help.

THINK ABOUT IT

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

1 Corinthians 13:4

People need love, especially when they don't deserve it.

--Unknown

God loves us the way we are, but he loves us too much to leave us that way.

--Leighton Ford

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway.

-- Kent M. Keith

No one loves the man whom he fears.

--Aristotle

During World War II when housing was in short supply, a lady in our church told a five-year-old girl, "It's too bad you don't have a home."

The child quickly replied, "We have a home. We just don't have a house to put it in!"

--Margaret T. Hiscox

The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because generally they are the same people.

--G. K. Chesterton

Glad Tidings is published monthly (July/August and December/January issues combined) by:
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Articles for the March issue of *Glad Tidings* are due February 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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