



# GLAD TIDINGS



Vol. 45 Iss. 1

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, MD

February 2026

## Annual Congregational Meeting

### Congregational Meeting



PoP Members, our Annual Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, February 1 in the sanctuary immediately following the service. Sunday School was not held that Sunday. Attendees voted on issues concerning our congregation and buildings for the next year, including new council members.

## Congratulations to Our Church Council Members!



Newly elected: Jay Haran, Doug Register, Emma Yanevskyy, Luke Dillon (youth position).

Re-elected: Sherry Kienzle.

Continuing: Laura Dillon, Dan Gibson, Meredith Kuydendall, Jamie Pflasterer, Rainer Sahmel.

Thank you for your service on council: Jon Conary, Chuck Harrington, Sherry Schiebel, Kieran McKnight (youth member).

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

## Souper Bowl of Caring Collection



[tacklehunger.org](http://tacklehunger.org)

Time to Tackle Hunger - Souper Bowl of Caring 2026! Bring in your cans of soup, stew, and chili (hearty choices with lots of protein are preferred) to PoP, through Super Bowl Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup> to help provide warmth and nutrition to the clients of Gaithersburg Help! Vote for your favorite team (Patriots or Seahawks) by placing your cans in their box, or perhaps their opponent's, since Prince of Peace has a history of picking the losing team! Either way, Gaithersburg Help wins as we come together to feed hungry neighbors. Sunday School will count up the final can tally on Sunday, February 8.

## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner



Support PoP Youth by joining us for a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 17, from 6-8 PM in the Fellowship Hall! Come to enjoy an evening of fellowship and a buffet of pancakes, sausage, coffee, and breakfast juices, with gluten-free and dairy-free options available. Free-will donations are welcome (even if you can't attend!) to help Prince of Peace youth get to the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis—our goal is \$1,500; for check or online donations, please write "youth gathering" in the memo line. Thank you for your support!

Youth and families (especially current 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> graders): We need your help to make our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper a success!

Volunteers are needed to set up on Sunday, Feb. 15 after Sunday School, and on Tuesday, Feb. 17 for set-up, food prep, bussing tables, clean-up, as well as to donate items. Please sign up [here](#). Questions? Please contact Laura Dillon at 410-562-6942.



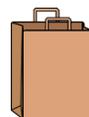
## Ash Wednesday



Come join us in person or [livestreamed](#) as we begin [our Lenten journey](#) at our Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, February 18 at 7:15 pm.

## Lenten Wednesday Services

During the [other Wednesdays in Lent](#) beginning February 25, we will have a time of Fellowship at 6:15 pm (in person) and the service of Holden Evening Prayer at 7:15pm, in-person and [livestreamed](#).



**Lenten Sharing Bags**  
Watch for the Lenten Sharing Bags coming soon!





## From Pastor Steve...

Pastor Steve Buechler  
([pastor@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastor@poplutheran.org);  
301-869-3666)

The Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper returns this year for the first time since Covid! I hope everyone will be able to come out and join us on Shrove Tuesday, February 17 between 6-8 pm as we enjoy pancakes and support our Youth in fundraising for the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering!

Also returning at the Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper will be the burning of last year's palms from Palm Sunday to make ashes for our Ash Wednesday service the following evening. Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance in the Bible, and one of the stories we've often read as I lead this event is the story from the end of the book of Jonah. As children, many of us heard the story of "Jonah and the whale" (although the book calls it a "fish"!), where Jonah doesn't want to go to Nineveh as God asks him. So, he gets on a boat and thinks he can escape God's presence. But there's a storm; the sailors throw Jonah overboard and he gets swallowed by a fish and stays there for 3 days. Finally, God has the fish spit him up on the land again. And that's usually what we remember.

But what happens next is that Jonah does what God asks him to do. He goes to Nineveh and tells people that God is upset with them for their evil deeds. Then something remarkable happens. The people of Nineveh believe God! They repent, and all of them - even the king - sit in ashes as a sign that they're sorry for their past behavior and - even more importantly - that they're going to try to change. And God is happy with this. And God changes his mind and doesn't bring calamity on the city. (Jonah is very upset with God for this, but that's another story!)

We'll use ashes in our Ash Wed service, but we don't actually need the ashes themselves. We DO need what they represent, though. Like all people who want to grow and do better, we need the willingness to "repent." And that word actually means "change." Repentance means the willingness to look honestly at myself and see what needs fixing in my life. Repentance means the honesty to admit that some of my problems are self-inflicted and not everything is somebody else's

fault. And repentance means having the humility to admit my own past mistakes and be willing to seek and receive God's forgiveness.

Honestly, doing those things is kind of counter-cultural in our society, where we're often told that we're all perfect in every way. And that's one of the reasons we have Lent! It's to remind us of the truth that we do need to change and that there is hope and forgiveness and new life, even when our efforts fall short. And sometimes, it's even helpful to have some ashes to remind us of that reality.

Yours in Christ,

## February Highlights

### Every Sunday

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

11:00 am Sunday School (pp 6-7)

### Every Monday

7:00 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal (pg 7)

### Every Tuesday

10:00 am Quilters (pg 8)

12:30 pm Women's Bible Study (pg 7)

**Saturday Service** - in order to provide an additional opportunity for worship apart from Sunday morning, we will hold a 5 pm Saturday service each month. Our next service will be on Sat., February 21. This service will have the same sermon and readings as the Sunday service but will not be livestreamed.

## COMING UP...

### February

1 Annual Congregational Meeting (pg 1)

1 Confirmation Meets

2 Groundhog Day

10 Council Meeting

12 Women's Book Group (pg 8)

14 Valentine's Day

16 President's Day

17 Shrove Tuesday (pg 1)

18 Ash Wednesday (pg 1)

19 Men's Book Club (pg 8)

21 Saturday Service (pg 2)

25 Lenten Fellowship & Evening Prayer (pg 1)



## March

4 Lenten Fellowship & Evening Prayer (pg 1)  
7-8 Youth Ski Trip (pg 4)  
10 Council Meeting  
11 Lenten Fellowship & Evening Prayer (pg 1)  
12 Women's Book Group  
14 Saturday Service  
14-15 Seekers Elementary Retreat (pg 1)  
17 St. Patrick's Day  
18 Lenten Fellowship & Evening Prayer (pg 1)  
19 Women's Fellowship (pg 4)  
25 Lenten Fellowship & Evening Prayer (pg 1)  
29 Palm Sunday

## April

2 Maundy Thursday  
3 Good Friday  
4 Holy Saturday  
5 Easter Sunday  
6 Easter Monday

For a current calendar, see:

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

## 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 \(poplutheran.org\)](http://poplutheran.org).

## COUNCIL CORNER

### December 2025 Meeting

News and Views from the PoP Church Council

### NEWS

Here are the updates from the Church Council meeting.

Finances: We had a 2025 budget that slightly exceeded estimated giving. We finished the year with Giving slightly better than 2024 but less than 2025 expenses. (Council notes).

Besecker: The deck and outdoor stairs (fire exit) on Besecker need to be replaced and the work has been scheduled.

Christmas Pageant: The Christmas Pageant for 2025 was a lot of fun, we broke bread together, made humus, enjoyed some mid-eastern fare, laughed, sang carols, ate cookies and drank hot chocolate.

Between the two performances we had an audience of about 100 people. Thanks to all who helped and all that attended.

The Congregational Meeting is Feb 1 at 11:15am.

### VIEWS

If you take a few moments and reflect on all the activities that happen at PoP powered by volunteers (many of whom do things quietly) it is amazing! THANK YOU!!!

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

Respectfully,  
Jon Conary

Council met on January 13. You can read notes from that meeting (including the Pastor's and Treasurer's report) [by clicking here.](#)

## SPECIAL PRAYERS

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

Pastor John B. McGarvey



### PoP Members

Alice Baur, Elizabeth Langum Chung, Elizabeth Cockerham, Brittany (DeGeorge) Daniel, Sherry Fischer, Laura Hampe Garofalo, Carmen Hooks-Hill, Roy Johnson, Mike & Remi Langum, Anne Lomperis, Dick Moore, Heather Robinson, David & Martha Rogers, Sherry Schiebel, Nancy Swanson, Emma Yanevskyy

### Sympathy

Family of Michael Pallin (brother of Jennifer Maloney)

### Thanksgiving

New Members joining Prince of Peace: Doug & Theresa Register; Kevin, Jessica, Dylan, Holden, & Adler Snyder; Victoria Wong; Jay Haran & Lauren Melito

### 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.



## Have you already broken your New Year's Resolutions?

Here's an easy one... Pray regularly for those on the PoP Prayer List! Download a copy of the Prayer List from the Thursday Weekly Email or pick up a printed copy from the bulletin board in the narthex. All of us praying makes a difference!

## SPOTLIGHT

### 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. If you normally attend services in person but are having problems doing that due to the weather, please send the request to the [office](#).

### Request From the Office and Glad Tidings

All of the article and picture submissions for the office (bulletin and Weekly Email) and Glad Tidings (newsletter) are wonderful. Thank you for helping to keep everyone up to date on what is happening and what has happened.

The Administrative Secretary and the Glad Tidings Editor have a request. (Yes, they are currently the same person. However, in the future, they could end up being two different people again.) Please send your submissions to the correct location to help ensure that they will be included in the correct publication in a timely manner. Articles for the bulletin and Weekly Email should be sent to the [office](#). Articles and pictures for Glad Tidings should be sent to the [editor](#). If the submissions should go to both or you are unsure where to send them,

please send them to the office and the Glad Tidings editor.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NEW DATE - 2026 Prince of Peace Youth Ski Trip!

The Prince of Peace youth ski trip has been rescheduled for March 7-8. Current 6th-12th graders are invited to join. We'll carpool from PoP on Saturday morning, enjoy an afternoon and evening of fellowship at the Dillon's ski house (including a visit to the rock maze), and return to PoP on Sunday evening after skiing at Wisp earlier in the day. Chaperones (including drivers) are also needed. Find additional information and sign up [here](#).



### Calling all 3rd-5th Grade Students!

Registration is now open for the DC-Metro and Maryland Synods' elementary school retreat, called "Seekers", at Mar-Lu-Ridge in Jefferson, MD on March 14-15, 2026. Cost is \$100. Go [here](#) for more info and to register Please contact Laura Dillon ([laldillon@yahoo.com](mailto:laldillon@yahoo.com) or 410-562-6942) with any questions.

### Women's Fellowship Event

Ladies of Prince of Peace, please mark your calendars for **March 19th at 6:00 pm** for a wonderful evening of fellowship, food, and a very special guest speaker. Judith Clark, founder of Women Who Care Ministries, will join us to share her story and offer insight into the mission and work of her ministry. This is a local organization serving our community. Please visit their website or speak with Meredith if you would like more information before the event. Feel free to bring a guest. Part of our goal, along with enjoying time together, is to help inform our community about this remarkable ministry. This will be a potluck gathering in the Fellowship Hall. Please follow the link (coming soon) to RSVP and indicate the dish you plan to bring.

## 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.

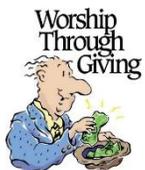
“Saturday Night Alive” events will occur on the following dates from 3:00-5:00pm at Lakelands Park Middle School (1200 Main St, Gaithersburg):



**Feb. 7, Mar. 21, Apr. 18, May 16.** Positions for potential volunteers include front desk check-in, 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

### Church Giving Envelopes



Envelopes for 2026 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.

### 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](mailto:michel_christian@yahoo.com)) or Kwame Mensah ([mensahkn@gmail.com](mailto:mensahkn@gmail.com)) with any questions.

### Electronic Giving

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



### Time and Talent

As we recognize all the blessings we have been given, we have the privilege of being a blessing to our church and others in our community!

We are grateful for our church members who have given their talents to duties during Sunday services, social justice efforts, administrative and building tasks, service projects, Sunday school.....the list goes on! We are encouraging ALL members of Prince of Peace to share that talent you have to contribute in some way to our church community. ***It takes every member to make a church!*** 🕊️ Take a look below for various ways you can help.

*Use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.*

1 Peter 4:10

Prince of Peace is also grateful for the additional monetary contributions to replenish our General Operating fund. **Council is encouraging each household to increase their giving by \$20/mo to fund our operating budget.** We are prayerful that we will look back and see that members rallied together and the church ended the year with a surplus!

*Give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*  
2 Corinthians 9:7

Thank you for your thoughtful commitment of ***time and talent*** this year!

### We Need You!

Please consider contributing your talent - many hands make light work! Contact these coordinators with interest or for more information.

**Facebook Greeter (backup)** Martha Rogers  
Sunday Service [office@poplutheran.org](mailto:office@poplutheran.org)  
Be a presence/host online during Sunday morning service. Greet the online participant group and be on standby for any audio/visual streaming issues.

**Snow Removal Coordinator (Coordinator Needed)**  
Coordinates with third-party vendor on removal of snow from church parking lot and walking areas (as needed/seasonal)

**Snacks** Pamela Cook  
Sunday Service [cook1082@verizon.net](mailto:cook1082@verizon.net)  
Bring snacks (cookies, etc.) for coffee hour held after Sunday service, (approx. 50-count.)

**Sound Board** Jon Conary  
Sunday Service [drjon2018@gmail.com](mailto:drjon2018@gmail.com)  
Manage the church sound/audio board during Sunday service, ensuring audio is functioning successfully and camera is focused on appropriate sections of the sanctuary.

**Team Lead** Pastor Steve  
Sunday Service [pastor@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastor@poplutheran.org)  
Ensure each member of the Sunday serving team (or their substitute) is present for their role. Usher attendees to the altar at communion time.

**Greeters** Pastor Steve  
Sunday Service [pastor@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastor@poplutheran.org)  
Greet incoming members/visitors at the door for Sunday service. Suggest a name tag for visitors and/or have them sign the visitor book.

**Other** Sherry Kienzle  
[skienzle1@yahoo.com](mailto:skienzle1@yahoo.com)

## YOUTH MINISTRY

### Sunday School PreK-K and Elementary February

In February, God will show his power through the prophets Elijah and Elisha. Our Bible Buddy, Yeddy, will remind us to “be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power” (Ephesians 6:10).

### December

PoP learners spent December “lighting” the advent wreath each Sunday with Ms. Sonvy during our opening music time, before singing a verse of our Advent song. Learners listened to the nativity story in class and made a manger with baby Jesus to take home along with other activities.



### Parents: Bible Presentation

If your child is between 2nd and 5th grade and has not yet been presented a Bible, please contact [Janet Levine](mailto:Janet.Levine@poplutheran.org). This spring, these young people will receive their Bibles during a worship service.



# ADULT EDUCATION

## Coffee and Conversation



Join us weekly after services for the Coffee and Conversation hour at 11am in the sanctuary. Throughout the year, we will include service activities at the church,

welcome speakers from outside organizations, and host group Bible study and conversation. To view schedule updates, or to sign up to lead a Bible study session this fall, please visit

<https://tinyurl.com/PoPAdultEd2025>. We look forward to having you!

Descriptions of the current upcoming “lessons” follow.

### February

- 1 Annual Congregational Meeting
- 8 Adult Bible Study, Sherry Kienzle
- 15 TBD
- 22 Adult Bible Study, Sherry Kienzle

### March

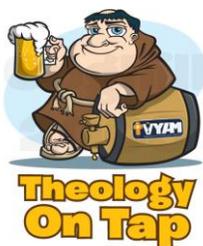
- 1 Adult Bible Study, Sherry Kienzle
- 8 TBD
- 15 TBD
- 22 TBD
- 29 Palm Sunday, Jamie Pflasterer

### April

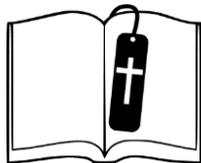
- 5 Easter Sunday, Jamie Pflasterer
- 12 TBD
- 19 TBD
- 26 TBD

## 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. We

plan to finish this book on February 17. After that,

we will start reading and discussing 1 Corinthians. 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 7:00 to 8:30 pm 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

This is going to be a happy, shockingly abnormal article, summing up Gaithersburg HELP’s 2025 fiscal year as a solidly excellent story. The Fall deficit of close to \$150K transitioned to a year end surplus of \$8K. Personal donations, always a major part of budgeted income, came in at 147%. Immense thanks to all of you who came to the rescue.



significantly.

Food costs continue to climb, client numbers continue to grow (15% increase in ‘25), so it is a big relief to start the year out of the deficit hole. In case you are wondering, yes, government grants are down

The need still exists for a volunteer, or perhaps several volunteers with different computer skills, to do IT support intermittently as problems pop up. The current IT volunteer has returned to grad school. If you have a bit of time and a level of computer expertise, please take a look at the HELP website (see below) for information of the varied applications involved.



HELP always looks forward to Souper Bowl donations. Please bring in hearty soups and stews to help fill the box for your favorite team! For ongoing donations, all nonperishable nutritious foods - fruit, tuna, cereal, rice, beans, etc - help keep the shelves stocked.

For questions or information, please contact Hope Walker ([hope.walker@GaithersburgHELP.org](mailto:hope.walker@GaithersburgHELP.org))

If you would like a tour of the Pantry on Muddy Branch Road, that can easily be arranged. The website is [GaithersburgHelp.org](http://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](mailto:Lisa Conary) for more information.

### The Prince of Peace Quilters delivered 47 quilts to Lutheran World Relief in 2025!

Lutheran World Relief delivered 315,818 quilts to people who needed them all over the world! We were a part of that! Thank you to all the quilters who gave of their time and talents, everyone who donated material, batting and thread and those who donated cash to purchase material, batting and thread. Thank you!!



Also on December 16, winter outerwear was delivered to the school from our Coat/Jacket Drive. A huge thank you to all who participated in these events!



## THANK YOU!

The Social Justice Ministry would like to Thank everyone who helped donate and assemble items for the Village at Rockville Christmas Drive this year. We delivered 40 bags of candies and 20 bags containing several pair of wooly socks with hankies and chapsticks too. No resident at TVAR will be left without gifts for the holiday. The congregation at PoP makes this possible each year. Our Thanks go out to you.

## 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.



## 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

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

John 15:12

*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 15**. Please email articles to Martha Rogers at [GladTidingsEditor@gmail.com](mailto:GladTidingsEditor@gmail.com). Photos and/or graphics are welcome!

*Glad Tidings* is online at [www.poplutheran.org](http://www.poplutheran.org)

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