Glad Tidings

Vol. 45 Iss. 8 Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, MD October 2026

Blessing of Animals



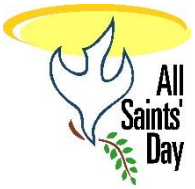
Our Annual Blessing of Animals will take place during our Saturday service at 5 pm on Saturday, October 10! Come and bring your pets! (Or, if your pet really doesn't like leaving the house, we can bless a picture, too!)

Confirmation and Reformation Sunday



October 25

All Saints' Day



On All Saints' Day, November 1, we will celebrate one of the oldest festivals of the Church. During worship there will be a time to remember family and friends who have gone before us. If there are some special people you would like to remember on this day, please submit their names to the Church Office and their names will be spoken during the service. Please include your name, their name(s), relationship to you, and whether the passing occurred in the past year. Please submit names by **Monday, October 26.**

PB & J Collection

Please join the Sunday School in donating PB & J for back-to-school provisions for clients of Gaithersburg Help! Now through the end of October.





We will share counts in the November newsletter.



Prince of Peace Farmers & Artisans Market continues each Thursday at 3:30 pm in the front of the building. Come **each Thursday through November 19, 3:30 - 6:30 pm**. Come browse and shop and say hello to the local growers, bakers, makers, and your neighbors while supporting our church community.

Now you can take dinner home with you. Examples include:

- Butter chicken
- Thik and Juicy
- LeLe's Crepes (coming in September)

For more information,
email farmersmarket@poplutheran.org.

Sign up to volunteer at our Farmers and Artisans Market. Prince of Peace Lutheran Church: volunteer at farmers market



From Pastor Steve…

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

At the end of October at Prince of Peace, we usually celebrate two things simultaneously: Reformation Sunday and Confirmation. We will again this year as we confirm 8 of our young people!

We aren't the only Lutheran church to put these two together on the same Sunday, but I do remember years ago we got some pushback from a couple of folks who thought that they each deserved their own day, because the theme of one would crowd out the other. But I always disagreed, because I think the themes are related and complementary.

That's because Reformation Sunday is about remembering the central promise that we are justified (made right and acceptable before God) by grace through faith. And that means we need to think seriously each year about what "faith" really means for each of us. And that's the same thing we ask our Confirmands to do each year as they write (and sometimes share) their "faith statements." Especially in the age of AI, I always remind the confirmands that we're not looking for a "correct" answer that they can download from somebody else, but a reflection on what faith in God means to each of them.

And in fact, "faith" has many facets, even in the Bible. Sometimes, "faith" is a perspective in the midst of a confusing and chaotic world (Hebrews 11:1). Sometimes, "faith" is about enlightenment and hope (Ephesians 1:15-19). And sometimes, "faith" is about boldly acting in spite of danger and chaos (Matthew 14:22-32). At different points in our lives and even at different moments in the day, "faith" may mean different things to each of us.

And so, by celebrating Reformation Sunday and Confirmation together, there's actually a chance for all of us to consider the ways in which the Holy Spirit works in our lives and in our days to give us the kind of perspective and hope and courage we need to keep going. And when we reflect on those ways, we can become more aware of how God acts in our lives each day, and the people, places and events that God uses to help us move forward.

So, I hope this year's Reformation and Confirmation celebration is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on – and grow in – the kind of faith that draws us closer to God and gives us courage and strength to live in to the future.

Yours in Christ,



October Highlights

Every Sunday
10:00 am Worship live and streamed on our Facebook Page
11:00 am Sunday School

Every Monday
7:00 pm Grace Notes Rehearsal

Every Tuesday
10:00 am Quilters
12:30 pm Women's Bible Study

Every Thursday
3:30 pm Farmers & Artisans Market (pg 1)

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., October 11. This service will include Blessing the Animals.** This service will have the same sermon and readings as the Sunday service but will not be livestreamed.

COMING UP…

October
4 Sacred Grounds Fall Planting (pg 6)
8 Men's Book Club (pg 8)
8 Women's Book Group (pg 8)
10 Saturday Worship Service (pg 2)
10 Blessing of the Animals (pp 1,2)
13 Church Council Meeting
18 Ukraine 102 (pg 6)
25 Reformation Sunday (pg 1)
25 Confirmation Sunday (pg 1)
31 Halloween

November
1 All Saints Sunday (pg 1)
1 Daylight Saving Time Ends
3 Election Day
8 Blessing of the Quilts
8 Quilt Raffle Drawing
10 Church Council Meeting
11 Veterans Day
12 Women's Book Group (pg 8)
14 Saturday Worship Service
20 – 22 Middle & High School Retreat (pg 5)
26 Thanksgiving Day
27 Black Friday

For a current calendar, see:
https://poplutheran.org/church-calendars/

COUNCIL CORNER

September 2026 Meeting

Updates from the PoP Church Council

Property
The new stone and plaque have been installed in the Memorial Garden. Picnic tables are being stained, and several minor items of upkeep have been completed in recent weeks, (light pole repair, drywall patching, painting church trim, etc.)

Finances
Some financial deficits were realized throughout the summer. Many thanks to families who have "accepted the challenge" by increasing their monthly giving by $25 or more!

Confirmation
Eight PoP youth will be confirmed on Sunday, October 25, 2026. Confirmands will present their faith statements to Council on October 13th.

Volunteers
We encourage all members to become part of a serving team!
Many hands make light work. See the Hot Jobs section for urgent opportunities or contact the Church Office to inquire of positions on other serving teams of interest.

Thank you for the continued support from our members - we welcome your input!

Council met on September 8. You can read notes from that meeting (including the Pastor's and Treasurer's report) by clicking here.

WhatsApp

Council decided to start a WhatsApp group to text PoP-related information and announcements to members. Please join at https://chat.whatsapp.com/G1MsYhPEAbgJ5nw5nlCo1b?s=cl&p=i&ilr=1. Contact Laura Dillon (410-562-6942) with any questions.

SPECIAL PRAYERS



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

PoP Members
Elizabeth Langum Chung, Elizabeth Cockerham, Brittany (DeGeorge) Daniel, Clara Ely, Sherry Fischer, Laura Hampe Garofalo, Helen Griffith, Carmen Hooks-Hill, Mike & Remi Langum, Anne Lomperis, Madelyn Militizer, Kathy Mellott, Dick Moore, JoAnn Pearcy, Heather Robinson, David & Martha Rogers, Sherry Schiebel, Nancy Swanson, John Zobel

Sympathy
Family of Frank Ballman (friend of Dave Molchany)
Family of Brenda Bogie (aunt of Tracy Solomon)
Family of Hing Wah Lew (father of Zena Lew Huen, grandfather of Katrena & Athena Huen)

Thanksgiving
Baptism of Lillian Colleen Garofalo (daughter of Laura and Matteo Garofalo)
Birth of Paul Roger Zirpoli, grandson of Peter & Becky Carr, son of Rachel Carr and Chris Zirpoli

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.

An Easy Way to Support the PoP Prayer Ministry

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!

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):

- **Oct 10 (Fall Festival)**
- **Nov 21 (Dance Party)**

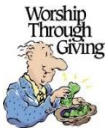
Volunteers are welcome to help with front desk check-in, AV tech setup/takedown, craft table, merchandise sales, or just mingling with participants. This is a chance to see God's work through our hands. (High school students can also earn SSL hours by volunteering.) Contact Ric or Sherry Kienzle for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

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 7, 2027 - 2027 Annual Congregational meeting

STEWARDSHIP

Church Giving Envelopes



Envelopes for 2026 are still available to all who would like them. They are located in the office. 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) 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!

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
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
Bring snacks (cookies, etc.) for coffee hour held after Sunday service, (approx. 50-count.)

Sound Board Jon Conary
Sunday Service 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
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
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

YOUTH MINISTRY

Sunday School

Lower Elementary Service Project

Our Lower Elementary class celebrated the ELCA Day of Service by creating art for people who would appreciate an expression of God's love and a reminder that we are thinking of them. Ms. Lisa brought a variety of fun arts and crafts items so the learners could choose what to share with others. The learners made cards, used "magic" (carbon) paper to trace multiple copies of designs, and painted with watercolors. We prayed that the recipients would feel God's love and our care, and that God would help them with their problems.









We read the story "How Full is Your Bucket? For Kids" by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer, which follows a boy who learns about an invisible bucket as a metaphor for emotional well-being. The story illustrates the importance of kindness and support in filling our own and others' buckets. Several learners declared that their buckets were completely full!



Elementary Sunday School has kicked off for the fall, and our learners are enjoying making music together before the start of each lesson. We read the story of Daniel and the Lions Den together, and used pictures of lions, mad faces, and happy faces to interact with each part of the story.

Middle & High School Students

Calling all Middle and High School Students!

Registration is now open for the Middle School/High School Event at Skycroft Retreat Center in Middletown, MD **on November 20-22, 2026**. The theme of this year's retreat is "Lost and Found." Please register at https://secure.qgiv.com/for/mshsevent2026/event/mshsevent/ (our Synod is DC-Metro and Primary Adult Leader is Laura Dillon). Cost is $200 and **registration closes November 6**. Please contact Laura Dillon (laldillon@yahoo.com or 410-562-6942) with any questions and let her know if you register so we can arrange carpools from church.



ELCA Youth Gathering

Prince of Peace will be sending a group of youth to the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota from Sunday, June 27 to Friday, July 2, 2027. To be eligible to attend, youth must be in 8th-12th grades during the 2026-27 school year. Please indicate your interest to attend or receive more info at https://forms.gle/cFLewdX4s8wscaYH6, or contact Laura Dillon at laldillon@yahoo.com or 410-562-6942 with any questions. A $300 deposit is due October 9, 2026.



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/PoPAdultEd26to27. We look forward to having you!
Descriptions of the current upcoming "lessons" follow.

October

4 - **Sacred Grounds Fall Planting**



Prince of Peace has once again been selected by the National Wildlife Federation to take part in their Sacred Grounds program - which means that we will have more plants for the native beds on the right as you enter the back parking lot. We will be receiving enough Lobelia cardinalis (aka cardinal flower) and Penstemon digitalis (aka beardtongue) for an additional 100 square feet!

NWF will also be giving away plant kits for individuals to take home and plant this fall, for flowers next year! Visit www.nwf.org/NativePlantPledge to sign up - there will be kits that contain white wood aster (shade), whorled milkweed (sun), and yellow wild indigo (sun).

11 - TBD

18 - **Ukraine 102**
The war is still raging - and escalating - in Ukraine, and the people are still just trying to survive. Please join Yasya Yanevskyy, PoP's own proud Ukrainian-American, for a taste of Ukraine with a purpose. She will present some Ukrainian history, a little introductory language lesson, a sampling of Ukrainian foods, and ways we can help through United Help Ukraine.

25 - Adult Bible Study, Sherry Kienzle

November

1 - Adult Bible Study, Sherry Kienzle

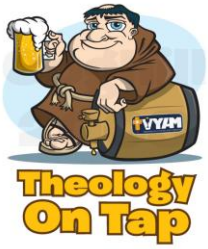
8 - Nancy Hadad, UCMA

15 - TBD

22 -TBD

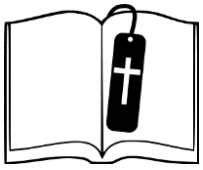
29 - No Sunday School: Thanksgiving

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 studying Galatians. Pastor Wendy is using N.T. Wright's book on Galatians (Bible for everyone).
If you have questions or need to join by Zoom, please contact Pastor Wendy Deeben.

Note: Our annual crab feast will be on Saturday, October 10th at Pastor Wendy's house at noon. Please bring a side dish or a dessert to share.

MUSIC

Grace Notes



Interested in joining the band full time or on an ad hoc basis (one or two months a year)? Grace Notes is looking for more musicians and singers. We rehearse on Monday nights, from 7:00 to 8:00 pm and usually play once a month during our worship service. Contact Jon Conary for more information.

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Gaithersburg HELP

As the days get cooler, donations of hearty soups and stews plus cereals and protein-rich items are always popular with clients. POP's ongoing support of HELP is so appreciated.

Gaithersburg HELP continues delivering cases of staple foods to POP each week for UCMA's (Up-County Mutual Aid) Saturday packing and delivery of food to local families in need. By mid-September the number of families receiving weekly supplies had risen from 10 to 22.

In contrast to UCMA's increasing numbers, with food being delivered to client homes, Gaithersburg HELP's number of food clients has decreased by about 20% since this time last year, seemingly due to fear of ICE. But the number of families served for the 2 groups is quite different. In August 381 families were served by HELP. Having clients pick up their food is the only way HELP is able to serve that many folks.

For questions or to volunteer, please contact your POP Delegate, Hope Walker, 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 for lots of great information, including the volunteer application form



Quilters



Can you tie a knot or tear/cut a piece of cloth? Or do you love to sew? Then join the Quilter's group, Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am until noon at the church or work from home. 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

Local Food Aid

A mutual aid distribution center organized by Up-County Mutual Aid (UCMA) working with the MoCo Immigrant Rights Collective (IRC) **is hosted at Prince of Peace Saturday mornings from 8 am-10:30 am** to provide food and essential goods to local families. **There are a few ways to support the effort:**

- **Volunteer to open and close the building on Saturdays** (contact Jennifer Maloney)
- **Help sort on Saturday mornings or donate food** (sign up here.)
- **Donate and bring perishables and non-perishables to Prince of Peace** (sign up here.)
- **Porch drops during the week at other locations** (requires registering here and emailing Nancy Hadad to let her know you are from Prince of Peace so your registration can be approved quickly.

Please contact Jennifer Maloney with any questions. Thank you very much for your compassion, generosity, and willingness to support our neighbors in need!

NOTE: Nancy Hadad, from UCMA, will be leading Coffee & Conversation on November 8.

FELLOWSHIP

Men's Book Club

Men's Book Club will meet **on October 8th at 7pm at Dick Moore's house.** The book is *The Death and Life of August Sweeney* by Samuel Ashworth.

Women's Book Group

On October 8 at 7:30 pm, the Women's Book Group will be discussing *The Benevolent Society of Ill-Mannered Ladies* by Alison Goodman. Sharon Wahl will be hosting.

Future Book Selections and Hosts

November 12 *Remarkably Bright Creatures*
By S. Van Pelt
TBD

RECENT EVENTS

Stepping Stones

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our successful dinner for Stepping Stones Shelter in August. We provided delicious lasagna from Gemelli's, along with a salad, garlic bread, and several desserts. The Shelter is so appreciative of our donations, as this is the main meal of the day for their residents, and all their meals are donated. These families are in the process of transitioning back to the community with the help of the staff at the Shelter. With their help, and our support, they will soon be in housing and learning about other programs that can assist them. Hopefully we can provide a meal again in the new year to this wonderful organization.





Interfaith 5K























Pr Steve's 35th anniversary - ordination



Congratulations Pastor Steve on the 35th anniversary of your ordination! We are so glad your home is at Prince of Peace.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

John 15:16



Pastor Christine

Thanks to Pastor Christine for joining us for worship while Pastor Steve had some deserved time off, and for illustrating in the children's sermon how we are all loved and welcomed by God.

Haven Universe and the Honduras Team

Thank you to Haven Universe and the Honduras team from PoP for sharing their incredible work from this past summer. Haven Universe has deep ties in the local community and works alongside Honduran organizations, ministries, hospitals, schools, and community partners to serve and advocate for people with disabilities and their families—especially individuals with autism. Learn more at https://havenuniverse.org/honduras-missions/tegucigulpa/ The summer 2027 trip will run from June 17-28.



NWF

Prince of Peace was excited to welcome the National Wildlife Federation and several green team representatives from local congregations to tour our native garden, as NWF expands the Sacred Grounds program. We looked at the pollinators supported by the garden, including native bees! Thanks to the City of Gaithersburg and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for providing grant funding to encourage more gardens with native plants.













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) to donate or learn more about how you can help.

THINK ABOUT IT

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.

––Isaiah 40:8

October is Clergy Appreciation Month

Things Pastors Can and Cannot Do

Pastors can:

- Preach the Gospel to encourage the work of the Holy Spirit in people's lives.
- Lead with love and encouragement no matter how many people follow.
- Thank those who give time, money, energy, and other resources.
- Understand that God is still working in them.
- Take care of their own health [body, mind, heart, and spirit] while caring for others.
- Set a good example of faithful living even if very few are paying attention.

Pastors cannot:

- Make anyone follow Jesus or grow in faith. That is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Make people come to worship, serve, or give financially. People set their own priorities.
- Choose how someone is going to treat another person. Each person is responsible for their own behaviors.
- Magically revive the life of the church on their own. This is only possible when the whole church works together to do it.
- Decide how and when God is going to act in the world and in the life of the church. That is up to God.
- Defeat the powers of sin, death, and evil that are still at work in the world. Jesus already did that.

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Articles for the November issue of ***Glad Tidings*** are due **October 12**. 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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