

# News & Events

## at Petersburg Lutheran Church

*“To Know Christ, to Grow in Christ, and to Show the Love of Christ”*



January 2023

### Council Highlights

The Church Council met on Wednesday, December 14th and discussed the following:

- Thank you to snow shovelers, the Call Committee, and Don Bieber for his help with the camera.
- Thanks to the High School students on their Day of Giving who moved furniture out of the pastor's office for painting, removed all the old carpeting in the parsonage, and moved two sofas!
- Volunteers are needed to help with Worship services in the coming months – please contact the office if you can assist with reading, children's sermon, pulpit message, or in any other ways.
- Bev Siercks has been spending 1-3 hours/day at the church to keep things going, and she has reached out to and/or visited the families that have recently experienced losses, to see how PLC can support them.
- Council agreed to officially close the Kinder Skog account on June 30, 2023.
- The 2023 Budget was discussed, several updates were made, and the Council approved the budget to present to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
- Council voted to refer the pastoral candidate couple to the Congregation for a vote.
- Council discussed the compensation package for the pastoral candidate couple, and voted on a final version to present to the Congregation for a vote.



### COUNCIL MEMBERS

President – [Bev Siercks](#)  
(907-772-4330)

Vice President – [Bill Moulton](#) (907-518-1485)

Treasurer - [Robin Roberts](#)  
(907-518-0052)

Secretary – [Ginger Evens](#) (907-772-4392)

[Nancy Berg](#) (907-518-1098)

[Desi Burrell](#) (907-772-3665)

[John Small](#) (907-772-2718)

[Chris van Ettinger](#)

[Bridgett Wittstock](#)  
(907-518-1413)

*Newsletter Editor:*  
*Robin Roberts*

**Next Church Council Meeting: Wednesday, January 11th at 6:30pm.  
Meetings are open to all Congregation members.**



## New Member Class!

Bev Siercks will be holding a New Member Class starting in early January. If you are interested in joining our church or becoming a voting member, *Please let the church office know!*



## IMPORTANT Congregational Meetings:

*Please Mark Your Calendars!!*

**January 1** - Meet-and-greet the Pastoral candidates who will be available on Zoom during Fellowship Coffee Hour, in the Holy Cross Hall immediately following the Worship service.

**January 4** - Meet-and-greet the Pastoral candidates via Zoom from 4-5pm. A link will be sent out to all members in advance.

**January 8** - Special Congregational Meeting to VOTE whether or not to Call the Pastoral candidates, and to approve the compensation package. The meeting will be held in the Sanctuary, immediately following Worship.

**January 22** - Annual Congregational Meeting, 11am immediately following Worship service, in the Holy Cross Hall. The Annual meeting is when we review the activities of our church for the past year, look ahead to this new year, vote on new Council members, and review and approve the annual budget. *This is a key business meeting, and it's important that members attend and vote!*



## Special Christmas Offering



Every year, our Special Christmas Offering goes to the Moringe School, Monduli, Tanzania. This year's need is for food for the students. According to Mr. Ndooki, the cost of food has skyrocketed. *Please give prayerful thought about those with so much less than we have*, as we reflect on the bounty we enjoy. Education, and something as simple as a decent meal can make such a profound difference in someone's life.

We are reminded again of our continuing commitment to the Moringe Sokoine Secondary School. We have been faithful to Eden's memory and his wish that we do not forget them. This connection has changed and blessed us, too - it compels us to look outward, rather than inward. Our dollars go so much further in Africa than in more developed places on Earth. We can do God's work, using the blessings that God has given us, by showing our generosity again this Christmas.

Moringe Sokoine is a private school. In Tanzania, you must pass a test in order to go to the free public school. Many students cannot pass, but still want to go on to their equivalent of high school, so private schools have come to be. Parents have to pay a small fee each month, but that is hard in their economy. On the Trask's visit a few years ago, they were reminded daily how important education is to a society. They met some of the graduates of the school who had gone on to further training and were now health workers, teachers, and business people who were giving back to their communities. One of the drivers for their tour group had attended Moringe Sokoine and was able to get a good job because he was fluent in English.



“The meaning of life is to find your gift.  
The purpose of life is to give it away.”

- Pablo Picasso

## 3% Benevolence for January

Every month, 3% of our General Giving goes to a different outreach ministry, divided evenly among charities in our community, Alaska, and national/international.

The recipient of our 3% giving for January [Accessible Hope International](#). Accessible Hope International partners with locally-led ministries around the world who serve the global disability community through wholistic, hands-on development, programming, and discipleship. Equip is the training and consulting arm of Accessible Hope International. Over years of experience working in the developing world, they saw a need for a training curriculum designed to better incorporate people with disabilities into the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 16-20) and invite them into the Body of Christ. They walk alongside churches, ministries, and groups who work in the developing world and want to better prepare their leaders to embrace Jesus' approach to disability, and learn how to incorporate people with disabilities into their communities and churches.

## Financial Report

PLC continued 2022 “in the red,” – spending more than we receive in donations. Our expenses continue every month for salaries, utilities, and building maintenance, but giving to support the church has not been keeping up.

**Giving (minus Expenses) for the month of November were: \$669**

**Giving (minus Expenses) for the year so far: ~~-\$45,864~~**



Thank you for continuing to bring your offering to church or mailing it in. Electronic donations can be made using the [Online Giving button on the PLC web site](#), or on your mobile device by installing the [Vanco Mobile app](#) – just choose “Petersburg Lutheran Church” and make your donation.

## Stewardship: An exciting new year is coming!

By Chris van Ettinger

Excitement is in the air! The Holy Spirit is moving through our Call Committee and Council in hopeful anticipation of the Call to our new Pastoral candidates. The new year also brings our Annual Meeting in January, and with that our 2023 Budget Proposal. Every year Council gives thoughtful and prayerful consideration to this major financial task. Looking at our monthly income and expenses realistically and faithfully, we arrive at a proposal to present to the congregation.

This year our proposal comes with the hopeful expectation that our worship participation continues to rebound and flourish. In faithful anticipation of new ministerial leadership, we are very excited for our church and community; however, it will take everyone's supportive participation and commitment.

Money is not always an easy subject to talk about in church, but without it we cannot keep our lights on, heat going, staff paid, buildings and grounds maintained, etc., let alone support our missions. Petersburg Lutheran Church has committed to tithing 10% of our monthly offerings in mission support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), and 3% more to local, state, national, and worldwide benevolent organizations.

PLC is an inspiring example of charitable giving.



The Bible has a lot to say about money, tithing, and offerings. The Old Testament talks of the expected giving of a tenth of one's crop harvest and livestock to the temple priests under the Law of Moses. "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops" (Proverbs 3:9). The New Testament talks more of giving freely from the heart, what one wants to give according to how God has prospered the individual. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 says: "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Earlier in 2 Corinthians 8:7, Paul says to the church of God in Corinth: "But since you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you - see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

We all know the story of the widow's offering in Mark 12:41-44. To his disciples Jesus acknowledges the sacrifice that the poor widow made in her giving of two small copper coins into the temple treasury. "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on." God sees the sacrifice of such an offering and that it comes from a pure heart. What an individual decides in their heart to freely give is between the individual and God. When we give to others, we are ultimately giving to the Lord.

Giving is also done through one's gift of time and talents. 1 Peter 4:10 says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."

Stewardship is our response to God's goodness with gifts to support God's work in the world. Please give prayerful thought to what your heart is telling you to give to Petersburg Lutheran Church in your treasures, time and talents for this new year. Thank you and God's blessings for a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2023!

## Opportunities to Serve Your Church! By Desi Burrell

Your church Council needs YOU! Council is composed of nine members, and each year there are usually three vacancies to fill. This year we have four vacancies, and ***we have a two-year position available for a youth member.*** The time commitment is typically one meeting a month, on a Wednesday evening. If any youth in our congregation have a heart for service and would like to serve, this is a wonderful way to make a difference.



***We are also looking for four to six congregation members to serve on the Nominating Committee for 2024.***

If you would be willing to help or want more information, please reach out to any of us on the current **Nominating Committee: Chris Van Ettinger, Bill Moulton, Sue Flint or Desi Burrell.** New Council members and Nominating Committee members are elected during our Annual Meeting on January 22.

## Prayer Partner



January's Prayer Partner is the [Good Shepherd Lutheran Church](#) in Wasilla, AK, led by Pastor Rick Cavens. They write: "We are seeking a Youth Director to fill the position, as our current Youth Director is leaving us on Jan. 1st. We would love for you to keep us in your prayers that we would find one soon."

## With Thanksgiving... by Cindy Lynn

I sat down and thought of all the saints at PLC that have made a wonderful difference in my life. Some of these people are in glory with our Lord. If I have forgotten anyone, please forgive me.

Ruby Martens brought over a hot potluck dinner when my three girls and I returned on the ferry in January 1995. We had not attended PLC yet. Ken Caulum helped me repair my “little house” in Spring, 1995. Colleen Nicholson offered to paint my bedroom as I had never painted anything. This started a 27-year friendship and Colleen became my daughter Laura’s baptismal sponsor. Laura was 17, so Colleen tutored Laura for confirmation after school. Laura became an ordained ELCA Pastor in 2007. Marjorie Oines asked for help with the Lutheran Care Services in the fall of 1996. Marj became, and continues to be my closest friend. We both love Jesus and were both RNs. She even went with me on two medivacs without hesitation. I have had two personal care attendants from PLC: Diane Abbott Hjort for 13 years and Patty Biggers. Their loving care and hard work have allowed me to live in my home.

Years ago, six men from PLC helped put skirting on my home after more than three winters of frozen pipes. This included Grant Trask, Chris Christensen, and John Swanson. Our church youth took three pick-ups worth of rotted timber to the dump. At my first church picnic at Sandy Beach, I met Willmer and Toby Oines. They became not only friends, but spiritual mentors. Pete and Carol Beckett drove all four of us to Saturday night services and all advent/Lenten soup and bread events. Willmer, Pete and Mary replaced my oil tank with a new one.

The Congregational Care Committee provided hospital visits and readers as I am blind. Linda Hoag, Patty Biggers, Karen Cornelius, and Gerry Frostad provided many hours of reading books. Pastor and Cynthia Marohl and Colleen Nicholson watched my girls when I had to go south for medical. Ruth Callahan gave me a Christmas tree I still use. Norm Tate gave me some red cedar planks I used for the walkway in my back yard.



Laura and Jamie Goth received the church scholarship and private donations to attend Trinity Lutheran College and Gettysburg Seminary. Susan Christiansen designed and made Laura a beautiful Advent shawl. Bridget Wittstock and her children Kjell and Gillian brought me Easter baskets. I also received Christmas cookies. Our church choir came to my home to sing Christmas carols when I was bedridden.

We developed an information and referral program for seniors between January 1996 and July 1998. 219 community members were helped. The board members included: Joy Jansen, Nancy Reedy, Ruby Martens, Patty Parr Simpson, Sandy Wolf, Lois DeBoer, and Pastor Marohl. I served as the director.

Lunch times at the Sing Lee Alley restaurant followed Thursday Bible study. This included myself, Joy Jansen, Leslie Croxton and Leslie Bosworth. Joy became a close

friend and quietly left fat-free angel food cake on my door. PLCW provided great memories. Jackie Harrison was my secret prayer partner and provided lots of goodies for my girls. Jane Hjort provided me with years of large print Guideposts.

When Laura gave a sermon at PLC, I remember Colleen Swanson touching my shoulder signaling “Good job, Mom.” Thanksgiving dinners were organized and prepared by Nancy Berg and Rose Dunham and many others. We chowed down together in the new Holy Cross Hall. My granddaughter Julia was able to attend Good Beginnings. I remember when the Rebbi Hus was moved on logs!

People who have greeted me at church include our Pastors, Stan and Vivian Hjort, Nancy and Dave Berg, Judy Janke, Dell Johnson, Susan Holmes and Chris van Ettinger. Chris and Susan called, visited and brought Costco items, lunch and goodies during Covid. Pastors Mike and Eric made monthly visits. Lila and Grant came over to witness my Five Wishes for advanced medical directives. Don Bieber walked me to Colleen’s after Fellowship, and Paddy Mikkelson drove me to church.

I am able to enjoy our services thanks to Joy providing large print bulletins and our 88.5 radio station.

Little things matter. I have been and continue to be Blessed by my PLC family. Thank you all, Your Sister in Christ, Cindy Lynn



## Large Print Worship Bulletins

If anyone needs large print Bulletins on Sundays, please let the church office know by Thursday each week so we know how many to print.

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