

DECEMBER

NEWSLETTER

Peace United Church of Christ 9123 Aboite Center Rd 260-432-8290

PEACE CHURCH WEBSITE:-WWW.PEACEUCC.NET

E-MAIL ADDRESS:-PEACEUCC@FRONTIER.COM

Adult Sunday school 9:00 a.m.

Worship 10:15 a.m.

Pastor's Page

Blue Christmas

The artist and story-teller Brian Andreas once wrote on the canvas of one of his pieces of art, "I wish you could have been there for the sun and the rain and the long, hard hills. For the sound of a thousand conversations scattered along the road. For the people laughing and crying and remembering at the end. But, mainly, I wish you could have been there."

The poignancy of those words, just written on a canvas with some abstract art speak to me of the grief that can come with Christmas.

The Christmas of 1996 was perhaps one of the hardest Christmases I can remember enduring. Throughout my life I had been sheltered by the blows of significant grief and that year, when I was twenty-five years old and in the October of my first year of seminary my maternal grandfather died. I was extremely close to him and to my grandmother and I had never known grief before, certainly not at this proximity. It strikes me now, just twenty years later, how unprepared I was to navigate that holiday season. It seems strange to me now how many grief's I feel I have endured and how many people I wish could be here this season.

Last year our congregation mourned the loss of some beloved members, and I find myself going into this Advent season with a sense twinge of sadness. I miss their faces. I miss their voices. I miss their stories. I worry for their loved ones. Mostly, I just wish they could be here still, sitting next to us in worship, sharing a story, singing along to hymns.

This Advent season we will be remembering those who we have loved and lost and those fragile feelings of grief of any sort in worship together on December 3rd at 6:00 p.m. for a Blue Christmas service. It will be a time to be present to one another, to face our sadnesses, and to remember.

I believe Advent has the power to offer us healing as we await new life, as we contemplate new possibilities, but that we also have to create space for remembering what has been lost. Thankfully, we have a God so tender and so besotted with us that there is room for all of that in this season.

There is space for you at our Blue Christmas. And there is space for you just as well in our growing anticipation of the birth of God anew every Sunday morning. In both the sun and the rain, the laughing and the crying, we will be together. And God will be in the midst of us.

Pastor Christen



Worship during the Christmas and New Year Season

This year we have several opportunities for you to be part of worship at Peace UCC in this Christmas Season.



On Sunday, **December 24th**, we will have a Family Worship service at 5:00 p.m. where our choirs will sing and our bells will ring as we light the Christ candle and enjoy singing Silent Night as we light candles together. During our 10:15 worship that day we will have our children's Christmas worship.

On Sunday, December 31st we will be having a contemplative worship open house. *We will not be having a "traditional" worship on that day.* Instead, the sanctuary will be open from 10:15-11:30 a.m. where quiet Christmas music will be playing and stations will be set up for you to have communion, to receive anointing, and to share your hopes for the new year in a worship experience. You are free to come and go as you please during this open house time and both Pastors Christen and Nikki will be in the sanctuary to provide you with communion or pastoral care. We look forward to experimenting with this informal and contemplative form of worship again this year.

On Sunday, **January 7th**, we return to our traditional worship style as we celebrate Epiphany. 'Tis the season to feel the holiness of God who draws near.



The church office will be closed on December 25th, 26th, and January 1st in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays. December 27th, 28th, the office will only be open in the morning from 8:30 until noon. You are always welcome to call Pastor Christen with pastoral care concerns or needs at home at (260)338-2913 or on her cell phone at (260)579-5128 on those times when the office is closed.

The church will be closed on Friday, December 29th as the Fellowship Hall floors are being re-waxed during the Christmas break.

Christmas Elves Needed!



Youth and adults will be wrapping presents at Crossroad Children's Home again this year on Thursday evening, December 21st from 5:30 until 9:00 (or whenever we are finished).

All are welcome to join in this festive event which warms the heart and provides for others! If you are planning on attending, please RSVP to the church office so we know how much pizza to provide. There will be carpools leaving the church at 5:00, or you can meet us at Crossroad at 5:30.

NEWS OF THE FAMILY

We hold in prayer the family of **Deb and Matt Kelly**, at the death of their son, **Ryan Kelly**. Services were here at Peace. **Deb** is a nursery school teacher here at CNS.

Prayers for the family of Canterbury student **Drake Goetz**, at his death Nov. 20th. His father **Rob Goetz** is a teacher at Canterbury school and **Aiden Rivera** is in his class.

Please pray for **Roberta**, a friend of **Rick & Linda Hinton**, as she struggles for answers after complicated cancer diagnosis.

Ashley Gladin requests prayers for the **Mosher/Burdick** family after learning of a cancer diagnosis.

Continuing Prayers: *Denny Hauptert, Sue Tennant, Spencer and Kelsey Brattain, Vivian Albert, Mike, LouAnn & Sam Stone.*

And we hold in prayer all those concerns that remain unspoken...



*The Boar's Head
and
Yule Log Festival*

Plymouth Congregational Church will be presenting their 43rd season of the festival. We have been invited to attend the Dress Rehearsal this year on Thursday, December 28 at 7:00pm. A limited number of tickets have been reserved. Admission is free, but you will need a ticket to see the performance. There will be a sign-up sheet next to the kitchen in the Fellowship Hall. We will need your name and number of tickets. Thank You

If you prefer to go to another performance, on Friday 29 or Saturday 30 you can call Plymouth Church @ 260-423-9424 and ask to leave a message on the Boar's Head line and a volunteer will return your call.



BE A MISSIONARY WITHOUT LEAVING HOME !

Sunday, December 10, between and after worship, please visit the display in the Fellowship Hall offered by volunteers from the Third World Shoppe. Learn stories behind traditional toys from India, hand-harvested wild rice from White Earth Minnesota and special recipe chocolate from West Africa. Take a few minutes to view these unique items.

December~~~Birthdays



Zo Matson	3
Mandy Smith (Pick)	4
Ty Thomas	5
Christen Pettit Miller	8
Mike Stone	10
Karen Masterson	11
Kelly Spedden	15
Wyatt Thomas	17
Liz Graham	18
Nikki Shaw	19
Jen Dunn	20
Kim Baumer (Hossler)	25
Sam Stone	30
Dale Campbell	30



Pastor: Christen Pettit Miller
 Director of Christian Education: Nikki Shaw
 Administrative Assistant: Susan Tite
 Organist: Dennis Bowman
 Director of Celebration Choir: Jan Reams
 Director of Angelus Bells: Rochelle Starnes
 Director of Children's Music Ministries: Lorie Krouse & Bekki Vail
 Children's Nursery School Director: Tonja Ashton

Month	Faithful Giving Actual YTD	Faithful Giving Budget YTD	Current Shortfall	Current Bank Balance
November	154,312.49	160,783.00	(6,470.51)	39,389.00
October	135,535.00	145,056.00	(9,521.00)	29,074.00
September	114,998.00	131,550.00	(16,552.00)	15,250.00
August	102,470.00	117,518.00	(15,048.00)	18,808.00

Our approved budget carries a shortfall of \$-13,279.

Thank you for your generosity. Our congregation is such a blessing.





Peace Youth, Children and Christian Education News

Advent-ageous

What to do while we wait. It seems like there's a lot of waiting in the air in this month before we celebrate Christ's birth. Sure, in the sense that we remember and recreate the events leading up to Christ's birth, we wait on God to reveal Godself in Jesus. But since Christ's birth, ministry, and death the Christian community has been in a prolonged waiting period. We wait for heaven to be realized on earth. We wait for Christ's return, whatever that might look like. Maybe he'll come again in glory, a ruler who is truly righteous, or maybe we'll all finally believe that Christ's vision for the world is possible, that we can trust in God, and an era of peace in which we live in God's very presence will finally commence.

But beyond the existential waiting, we do some mundane, run-of-the-mill, very human waiting in this season. We wait out long, dark nights for the sun to appear on the horizon. We wait on long, meandering lines to buy Christmas gifts. We wait for turkeys to cook and guests to arrive. We wait for everyone to go to sleep so gifts might appear under the tree. We wait for everyone to wake up so we can open them all. Or we wait for everyone to sleep once more so we can be quiet and sad in peace and silence, wondering how long we must wait before we will see lost loved ones again.

It's in these waiting times that we can and should free our minds and souls to wonder about Christ's call to us. We can wonder about what it is that the birth of this babe-in-arms means for us now and here. Each time we find ourselves squirming, yearning for the coming

of good news between the beginning and end of this Advent season, let us use that time to pray, to serve, to love. After all, we have to fill our time somehow, it might as well be with dreaming about the ways in which we honor the baby boy who was sent to show us unfathomable love.

Pastor Nikki

Director of Christian Education

Children's Church

- We are starting our Advent series in Children's Church. We'll look at the stories of John the Baptist and the Annunciation, as well as what it means to do justice and celebrate jubilee.

Youth News

- We hosted a Youth Table at the Holiday Bazaar and made some cash to support our mission, fellowship, and youth group events. Thanks to all who helped or shopped with us!
- Breakfast with Santa is Dec. 2, 9-10:30 am. Youth volunteers need to be here at 8:30 am and should expect to be done with clean-up by 11:15. Thanks for your help! We love our youth elves.
- We will be going to Crossroad the evening of December 21 to wrap gifts for the kids served there. We'll meet at Peace at 5 pm and carpool there. If you choose to meet at Crossroad, please arrive at 5:30. We have pizza and drinks for our volunteer elves. Adults and youth are welcome! Contact Pastor Nikki for more details.
- **NEXT MEETING:** December 3, 11:30-1 pm at church.

Adult Sunday School

- On December 3 a 10-week Adult Sunday School class begins, breaking for Christmas and New Year's. We'll be reading Walter Brueggemann's book, "The Bible Makes Sense." Pastor Nikki has ordered 5 copies of the book. Please contact her to reserve yours at nicoleleighshaw@gmail.com or call or text 617-512-8692. The books are \$13 each, checks made payable to Peace UCC or paid through Tithe.ly with a memo line "Bible Makes Sense Book."

Breakfast with Santa

See you December 2, 9-10:30 for Breakfast with Santa! Contact Pastor Nikki at nicoleleighshaw@gmail.com or by calling/texting 617-512-8692 if you'd like to attend or volunteer.

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## *Nursery School News*



So far, the weather this school year has been remarkable. We have been able to play outside every day, with the exception of a few rain days. That being said, we know we will be spending some days indoors playing so the teachers are planning many special activities for the children. December brings celebrations at the preschool. Parents are invited for a special celebration with their child's class including decorating cookies and singing songs.

Ms. Renee Moore will be reading some fun winter stories with the children. And Pastor Nikki will be sharing the importance of giving and kindness. Thank you, Ms. Renee and Ms. Nikki, for sharing with us!! Thank you to everyone that bought cookie dough to help support the Nursery School.

**Cookie dough will be delivered on December 13**

The last day of classes for 2017 will be December 22. Students and teachers return to school on January 8, 2018.

*May all the blessings of God's perfect gift fill your heart  
and your home this holiday season.*

*Tanja Ashton*  
Director

## LIGHTED CHRISTMAS VILLAGE BUILDINGS FOR SALE

The following announcement is for adults only.

The young people in our congregation should not, under any circumstances, read what I have to say! As many of you know, Christmas is almost here and several of you are probably desperately looking for a gift that might please everyone in the family.

As many of you know, my wife Laura and I used to decorate our house for Christmas. And, many of you who had a chance to tour our home at Christmas knows, the last room on the guided tour was decorated with a Christmas village with over 100 building.

Well, now that my wife Laura is no longer here, I am unable to conduct Christmas tours. Which means that I have over 100 lighted village buildings looking for a Christmas home. I have them all displayed in their boxes in my computer room.

They are grouped by similar sub divisions, with means that you have the possibility of purchasing 8, 10, 19 or even 27 similar looking buildings.

And, if you feel that these village pieces do not represent the true spirit of Christmas, I even have a 11 piece Bethlehem Village set.

Finally, no matter how much your kids beg and beseech you, you cannot purchase more than 50 buildings – at any one time!

So, if you are interested in setting up a visit time to find that perfect family present then please contact me. Merry Christmas !!

Brian Migliore

1826 Thicket Court  
Fort Wayne, IN 46814-9346  
Home: 260.625.4680  
Cell: 260.271.9072  
E-Mail: [blmigliore@comcast.net](mailto:blmigliore@comcast.net)



### Peace Church Mission Statement:

Peace United Church of Christ is a family of God's people who strives daily to demonstrate Christian witness in the community by celebrating worship, learning and teaching, caring for others and seeking justice and peace. As an open and affirming congregation, our door is open to all.





**Head Ushers for December:  
Mike & Lorie Krouse**

**GREETERS:**

Dec. 3 Brian & Garsy Thomas  
Dec. 10 Gary & Becky Dexheimer  
Dec. 17 Bill & Judy Hogg  
Dec. 24 am Pat Sterling & Susan Tite  
Dec. 31 John & Marilyn Nussbaum

**SCRIPTURE READER:**

Dec. 3 Becky Vail  
Dec. 10 George Bartling  
Dec. 17 Hannah Shaw  
Dec. 24 am Robert Pettit  
Dec. 31

**INFANT CARE**

Dec. 3 John Paul Rivera  
Dec. 10 Jane Thomas  
Dec. 17 Kim Brown  
Dec. 24 Ann Frellick  
Dec. 31 Barbara Bauer

**ACOLYTES**

Dec. 3 Evan Mallory  
Dec. 10 Paige Vucich  
Dec. 17 Hannah Shaw  
Dec. 24 Kyra Vasquez  
Dec. 31 Kelsey Sennett

**OFFERING COUNTERS**

Dec. 3 Mike Krouse & Marilyn Nussbaum  
Dec. 10 Bev Hauptert & Larry Hoyle  
Dec. 17 George Bartling & Risë Vandenburg  
Dec. 24 Joyce Blosser & Kim Brown  
Dec. 31 George Bartling & Risë Vandenburg



**Cookie Baker's Get Ready!**

**Start thinking about your favorite Christmas cookie recipes.**

**On Sunday December 17, "Peace Cookie Carry In"**

**It's simple, bring in two, three, four or more dozen of your favorite cookies & after service come into the Fellowship Hall and fill up a container with an assortment of cookies.**

**Keep an eye on the bulletin for more information.**

**So start looking for those favorite recipes!**



## Financial Secretary Position Open February 2018

The Peace Board is looking to fill the Financial Secretary position starting February 2018. The candidate should be eager to participate at every meeting, willing to prepare ahead of meetings, be collegial toward Board members and their views, and most of all have FUN!

Per the Peace Constitution, the primary responsibilities of the Financial Secretary are:

- Records all monies and assets coming to the church, excluding Nursery School funds, and ensure deposit of all money in appropriate accounts.
- Provides monthly written reports to the Treasurer, annual individual giving statements to members, annual written report to the Congregation, and provide information at other times as requested by the Board.
- Serves as a member of the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee.

If you are interested in the position, please contact Pastor Christen, Mike Krouse or Sarah Huber.

If not you, then who?

If not now, then when?

Board Chair

Mike Krouse

| <b>Name</b>                | <b>Title</b>                 | <b>Contact Info</b>                       |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Bill Blosser               | Facilities Chair             | 260-432-7005<br>wlbns@yahoo.com           |
| Kim Brown                  | Treasurer                    | 260-437-4015<br>dandkbrown715 @msn.com    |
| Rise Vandenburg            | Pastor Relations Rep         | 260-436-2827<br>teachrv@juno.com          |
| Sarah Huber                | Financial Secretary          | 260-672-8400<br>sehuber10@gmail.com       |
| Gary Dexheimer             | Mission Chair                | 206-436-1954<br>Garyd8949@aol.com         |
| Michael Krouse             | President                    | 260-436-6205<br>mkrouse@comcast.net       |
| Paul McGrath               | Recording Secretary          | 260-438-2432<br>dadmcg53@gmail.com        |
| Karen Masterson            | Congregational Life<br>Chair | 260-436-1704<br>karenam@comcast.net       |
| Christen Pettit-<br>Miller | Pastor                       | 260-338-2913<br>cpettitmiller@comcast.net |

This table will be included in all future newsletters.