



Peace Presbyterian Church - Elkhorn, Nebraska

August 2020



FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN...THE NEW SUNDAY MORNING

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” —Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)

This week I read an interesting article about congregational engagement during COVID-19 from the Barna Group. It said that a third of practicing Christians have stopped attending church (in person and online). They have “left the church” period. We will have to wait and see if this third of the Church will return once things begin to return to normal.

I see loss and opportunity in information like this. One of the challenges in this changed life of the Church is to look at what we do and why we do it. It gives us a chance to evaluate our relevance in the lives of people today. Sometimes we can get stuck in what we are used to and comfortable with. We can become out of touch with the people and culture around us.

To think that we will go back to the way things were before the pandemic is naïve at worst and wishful thinking at best. The world is changing and people expect the Church to do the same. Jesus is who Jesus is. The truth of the gospel is from everlasting to everlasting. Thanks be to God. But how we are church, do church, reach out to people – these are things that change and can be life-giving opportunities for us as the church. How we build relationship with Jesus and each other – this is ever changing in a digital world as well. Such change is a given in our life in the Spirit. The Spirit is always shaping us and moving us deeper into the way and life of Christ that resonates and speaks a fresh word to us and the world today.

Peace Church has this same opportunity and challenge before us. We have already stretched ourselves as we went “online” with recorded Sunday services, including communion online. Now we are worshipping through Drive-In worship. We do fellowship and the work of the church by live Zoom video gatherings. I hope that the next step we take is to live-stream our services so we can reach even more people and deepen this experience of community as the worshipping and serving and caring congregation of Peace Church right as it is happening.

What can you do right now? Share the hope we have for the future by sharing Peace Church with others. Invite them to Drive-In Worship. Invite them to worship with us online on the 1st Sunday of the month. Invite them into your life by getting to know them, their joys and concerns, their hopes and fears. Be a compassionate and connected friend to God’s people. Stay engaged and share your experience of life in Christ and in the church with others. Be open to the changes before us!

Peace,

Pastor Bonnie

Here is an excerpt from the Barna Group research article (One in Three Practicing Christians Has Stopped Attending Church During COVID-19: Faith & Christianity in State of the Church 2020, 7/8/2020).

“Recent data shows that, among practicing Christians—those who identify as Christian, agree strongly that faith is very important in their lives and attend church at least monthly (prior to COVID-19)—over half (53%) say they have streamed their regular church online within the past four weeks. Another 34 percent admits to streaming a different church service online other than their own, essentially “church hopping” digitally.

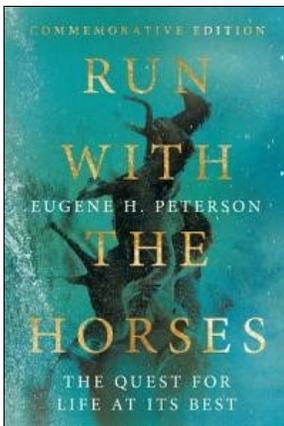
Finally, about one-third of practicing Christians (32%) says they have done neither of these things. Though some of these churchgoers may be part of the minority of congregations that were still gathering for physical worship during these weeks, we can, for the most part, confidently interpret this group as those who have dropped out of church for the time being.

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Some respondents share that, over four weeks, they streamed both their church's online service as well as a different church's service, perhaps taking advantage of the variety and surge of digital options. However, the plurality has stayed tuned in to their "home" church even at home; when looking for practicing Christians who are still and only attending their pre-COVID-19 church, we find that just over a third (35%) says this has been their course of action. Commitment extends to frequency of attendance during distancing as well; practicing Christians who stream the same church they attended before COVID-19 are significantly more likely than those who have switched churches to attend on a weekly basis (81% vs. 65%).

We see that very few (14%) have actually made a church switch amid the pandemic. It is more likely for a Christian to have stopped attending church altogether during the pandemic; in fact, 32 percent of practicing Christians have done just that. The remaining 18 percent of practicing Christians are viewing worship services from multiple churches throughout the month."



Excellence - based on the book *Run With the Horses* by Eugene Peterson
A 6-Week Study With Pastor Bonnie

Tuesdays, August 4-September 8, 12:00-1:00pm

via Zoom Meeting ID: 816-8700-9238 <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81687009238>
Watch for Pastor's Flocknote invitation and then click or call in.

Looking at the life of Jeremiah the prophet, Eugene Peterson explores the heart of what it means to be fully and genuinely human. Each week we will read scripture together and talk about what that passage has to say to our lives and about God. We will use Rev. Peterson's study guide to lead us through. You do **not** need to read his book, *Run With the Horses*, to do this bible study. But Pastor Bonnie highly recommends it if you want to supplement your study.



UPDATE ON THE PEACE COVID-19 RESPONSE and REOPENING

The Session decision to keep the church building closed through the summer stands at this time and will be reviewed at regular stated Session meetings. Peace will continue to hold On-Line Worship the first Sunday of each month and Drive-In Worship in the parking lot all other Sundays.

The Reopening Task Team continues to plan for the safe reopening of the church, reviewing suggestions and guidelines from government agencies and medical leaders. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Bonnie or an Elder.

Peace Staff Members continue to work from home and outside the church to keep up with church family support, office tasks and property maintenance. Pastor Bonnie reaches out to the church daily with *Pastor's Daily Bread* and creates options for on-line worship and fellowship.

Please reach out if you have needs or questions:

Pastor Bonnie: 870-415-2082, peacepcpastor@gmail.com

Church Staff: 402-289-1104, peacepresby@msn.com

Mary McArdle, Treasurer: peacetreasurer89@gmail.com

Thank you Peaceful Quilters (n Sharon Bossman, Bill Dermeyer, Nancy Haack, Susan Scholl, Ann Settles) for making beautiful quilts for our graduates. Your artistry and heart for youth created a huge blessing!!



Our Purpose

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves



- to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
- to support the mission of the church worldwide,
- to work for justice and peace
- to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.



PARTNERSHIP
4 HOPE

Partnership 4 Hope is a community-based initiative designed to address the unique challenges that Young Adult Former Foster Youth (YAFFY) face. The community and population it serves are young adults in the greater Omaha Metropolitan area, nineteen years of age and older, who have "aged out" of the foster care system. It strives to meet these challenges by recruiting and providing this population with mentors who will establish a meaningful mentoring relationship, as well as a community support system that will partner with and help both mentor and mentee to succeed as they travel together on the journey toward independent living. It will also seek provide material, emotional, and relational assistance to meet challenges they face in that process.

Last spring JoAn Ferguson was in contact with Lori Strong of Partnership 4 Hope to invite her to speak to the Peace Presbyterian Women. As a result of their on-going communication, a group of PW members became a prayer support team for young adults served by the organization.

Recently Liz Baker, PW Mission Chairperson, Made a visit to Partnership 4 Hope and returned the following report. We are grateful she shared it with us.

"I took some things to Partnership 4 Hope and met Lori Strong. What an amazing lady, filled with the love of Jesus and a heart to serve. As the group helps youth aging out of the foster care system, always in great demand are personal care items like the Blessing Bag items we collect. When they help these kids get settled in to a home or apartment, there are two things they want them to have: a Bible and a quilt. They have a group of five women from Bellevue that makes quilts for them. Lori wanted me to pass along how grateful they are for our prayers for the youth. Not everyone can give, but everyone can pray. I find such reassurance in meeting people like Lori. Too often we only hear the negative going on in our community and world. Then along comes a lady who gives so much to those trying so hard to start a new life. Remember Lori and the youth in your prayers.

— Liz Baker, PW Mission Chair



PW COLLECTING ITEMS FOR THOSE IN NEED

The PW will again this year donate personal care items to those in need in our community. Would you partner with them by donating body wash/soap, shampoo, deodorant? Full size items are preferred, but travel sizes are welcome. Once we are able to return to worship in the sanctuary, a collection box will be available for your donation. Thanks in advance!

You're invited to celebrate . . .

July 31 will be celebrated as "PW Gives" Day—a day to celebrate the many ways that Presbyterian Women give to witness to the promise of God's realm.

- Watch for (and share your!) stories about how, where and why PW gives; share on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- Send your #PWGives story and photo to carissa.herold@pcusa.org.
- If you are not already on PW's email list, email pw_pcusa@pcusa.org to be added to the list and receive information about this day (and other PW programs)!
- Pray that the work of PW will be sustained and strengthened.

How to Give

- Give online at www.presbyterianwomen.org/give. Please select the annual fund, PW's Mission Pledge, and indicate **"PWGDAY19"** in the notes box.
- Contact Mindi Stivers by phone (844/PW-PCUSA, ext. 5398) or email mindi.stivers@pcusa.org.
- Mail your gift to Presbyterian Women, Inc. , PO Box 643652, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3652. Please note "annual fund" and **"PWGDAY19"** in the memo line of your check.



ADULT AND CHILD MASKS FOR ALL STIIL AVAILABLE

The Peace Presbyterian Women are still offering cloth adult and child sized face masks for a free-will Donation. Make checks out to Presbyterian Women and mail to Peace Church. Each order provides a pack of 2 masks which can be delivered to your door. You can order as many masks as you want. Just email Liz Baker at coronado52@cox.net.

Minister, Social Activist, Servant of God...Rev. Craig Dunbar shares his passion for the mission to which God has called him. He challenges us to hear God's voice and choose to accept our personal call to love and serve others as we spread the Word of God.



WE WILL NEVER
CHANGE THE WORLD
BY GOING TO CHURCH.
WE WILL ONLY
CHANGE THE WORLD
BY BEING THE CHURCH.

Though we missed Pastor Bonnie while she was on vacation, Peace Church was blessed on July 19 & 26 to hear Rev. Craig Dunbar share the love and passion he feels as he ministers to the poor and homeless of Omaha. Along with his professional call as Hospice Chaplain with Amedisys Hospice Care, Craig believes he is called to share God's love by providing food to those who need a meal. He operates a hot dog cart and offers free food to all who are hungry. No one is turned away and no one is charged for the meal.



His cart reads "Hot Digity Dog for Jesus" and along with the dogs Craig shares the Word of God. He is not shy about this mission and can often be seen praying with those who stop by his cart. "Jesus told the crowd of hungry people he would feed them physical and spiritual food. We echo His teaching as we tell the hungry we serve 'God loves you and wants to give you life here on earth by providing you earthly food and eternal life by giving you His son, Jesus.'"

Craig presented this same message to the Peace family, challenging us to seek and hear God's voice, find our personal calling, and follow God's leading. "God gave us the Word of Life...we can't hide it away in our churches or fail to share it when God gives us the opportunity. God calls each of us to our own point of service which has been prepared for us. God provides the passion and strength to complete the job. It's up to each one of us to decide if we will listen to and follow God's voice or choose to ignore it. Hearing that call and finding out how we are to love and serve others is life changing for everyone - for our own life and those we touch."



Craig Dunbar's ministry is carried on primarily by his own resources and a few gifts from others. The Peace Mission Committee is receiving donations to help the work. If you would like to donate, please mark your gift "Hot Dog Cart" and place it in the Sunday offering or mail it to Peace. See Dave Fulton with your questions or for more information on this ministry.

BEST WISHES ON YOUR SPECIAL AUGUST DAY!

BIRTHDAYS: 2 Pete Hill; 3 Lyn Ramsey; 6 Jason Fuller; 13 Aubrey Marsh; 14 Allan Rolfs; 15 Greyson Lake; 16 Colton Bowcott, Pam Huff; 19 Dean Marshall, LaRue Marshall, Glenn Vieselmeyer; 20 Reagan Deibelbis; 27 Elizabeth Hopkins; 28 Tom Wagner

ANNIVERSARIES: 2 Cliff & Patty Karthaus; 3 Drew & Stephanie Metzler; 5 Steve & Shari Brosz; 14 Chris & Nancy Robertson; 17 Mike & Shirley Young; 20 John & Penny Dumke; 24 Thaddeus & Bonnie Wilkins; 25 Jim & Jeanne Weaver

Website: www.peacepresbyterian.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/peacepresbyterianeikhorn

Podcast: "A Soulful Word" @ <http://buzzsprout.com/253873>

FlockNote: To receive church text and email communications text: peacepc to 84576

Address/Phone: 333 S. 204th St., Elkhorn, NE. 68022, 402-289-1104

