



Peace United Methodist Church
Pastor Mickey Olson
303 Ninth Avenue South
Virginia MN 55792

Peace UMC Mission

Peace in our Communities,
offering healing and
wholeness to all in life's
journey.

The Methodist Messenger

December 2021

Church Office

Hours: Monday-Friday
9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Phone: 218-741-7739 or 218-741-7738
www.werpeaceumc.com
E-Mail: pastor@werpeaceumc.com
office@werpeaceumc.com

Worship Schedule

10:00 AM Peace UMC
303 South 9th Avenue
Virginia, MN 55792

Note: 1st Sunday of each month is
Communion Sunday

Our Staff

Pastor	Rev. Mickey Olson
Youth Coordinator	
PORCH Director	Rachel Bodas
Administrative Assistant	Joan Schriber
Music Director	Jeanene Hagberg
Choir Accompanist	Char Cremers
Custodian	

Thought for the month:

Isaiah 12:2

² God is indeed my salvation;
I will trust and won't be afraid.
Yah, the LORD, is my strength and my shield;
he has become my salvation."



From the Pastor

I was planning what schedule we would have for Advent and Christmas this last week. Would we have in person Christmas Eve? How would we handle an overflow if many came and the Covid #'s were high? Will everyone who comes wear a mask?

And what do I do if they refuse? I knew these were the same questions I have been dealing with for almost two years. I feel stuck. Do you? I think we are in a holding pattern for the church (and in our personal lives). A holding pattern is a term that airlines use when planes are stacked up over a terminal waiting to land. The air traffic controllers will tell the waiting planes a certain altitude and a flight path to follow which keeps them safe as they circle above. Everything is in a holding pattern. Waiting for the virus to subside so we can land and get on with our lives. Trying to stay safe in a flight plan as we yearn to fly free of restrictions.

The Bible tells us of many instances where the faithful are in a holding pattern. In Exodus the freed Israelites wander for forty years before they settle in the promised land. Abraham and Sara wait 90 years for a child of their own. The disciples return to their former occupations after Jesus dies and don't move forward until Jesus invites them for lunch on the shore. God always is moving in the midst of holding patterns. It is only us humans who are impatient for them to end.

The season of Christmas is upon us. Mary waited nine months to birth the Christ Child, while the heavens and earth waited in great anticipation for the birth of a savior. We wait in great anticipation and hope for Christmas and maybe to break out of our holding pattern as we seek to follow this child into the future.

Abundant Christmas Blessings,

~Pastor Mickey



Please notify the Church Office (218-741-7739) if you or someone you know is in need of pastoral care for illness, hospitalization, surgery or emergency.

Pastoral Calls: 218-343-6849

E-mail: pastor@werpeaceumc.com

Pastor's Phone Number - Please put my cell phone number in your cell phone directory for emergencies. If I don't answer, please, please, please, leave a message. Please do not give my cell phone number out to strangers asking for help. I pray you will call me when you need me.

ANGEL OF HOPE

Angel of Hope ~ Children's Memorial Park
Recognizing and welcoming families of all faiths and cultures.

Please join us for:

Our 13th Annual Candlelight Service

to honor the memory of children who have died, regardless of age or reason.

MONDAY, December 6, 2021 7:00 pm @ Angel of Hope Children's Memorial Park.

We will gather between 6:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Peace United Methodist Church at 303 South 9th Avenue, Virginia and proceed to the Angel of Hope Children's Memorial Park as a group at 7 p.m. We encourage you to dress warmly, wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Following a brief service at the park, the candlelight service will take place inside the Peace United Methodist Church chapel. The chapel will be open for those in attendance not wanting to attend the outside service. Masks will be required inside the church.

A special dedication will take place for the memorial tiles placed on the "Wall of Love" this year.

For more information please contact Cheryl Weappa @ 749-5642.

CARING COMMITTEE

Caring Committee will meet Sunday, December 12th upstairs after worship services.

FIX IT FELLOWSHIP

As a reminder, the Fix It Fellowship group is available to assist with your household projects. The applications are available in the library or call the office to have one mailed out. We will be in touch with you to schedule completing your tasks.

OFFICE NOTES

Church Closing-In the event a church event is cancelled due to inclement weather, please check Local TV-WDIO News 10/13
Radio Station WEVE
Facebook, website
Please use your own judgement when it comes to traveling in winter weather.

OUTREACH / MISSIONS

A Fun Christmas idea for you.

Do you enjoy a challenge? Laurel Roen came across this fun Advent Calendar Challenge with the thought it would be a good way to supplement our church food shelf. She tweaked the list to fit what we see in most need. If you would like to participate, fill your box with as many items as possible and bring it to church the week of January 2-8. Need help carrying your box or getting it to church? If you call Pam Omersa at 744-7921 or the church office, one of the mission team member will pick it up from you. Have fun with this great idea of what Christmas giving should be about. Start on December 1. It is appreciated if cans have pull tabs.

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|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Can of green beans | 2 Corinthians 9:8-9 |
| 2. Can of soup | 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 |
| 3. Box of stuffing mix | Luke 11:9-13 |
| 4. Boxed potatoes | Psalms 107:8-9 |
| 5. Box of macaroni and cheese | Malachi 3:8-12 |
| 6. Can of fruit | Genesis 1:29-31 |
| 7. Can of baked beans | Genesis 19:1-3 |
| 8. Can of tuna | Ecclesiastes 9:7 |
| 9. Box of cereal | Luke 11:1-4 |
| 10. Snack pudding | Matthew 14:13-21 |
| 11. Shampoo | Romans 2:10 |
| 12. Snack fruit | 1 Peter 2:1-3 |
| 13. Bar of soap | Proverbs 14:21 |
| 14. Box of crackers | Psalms 81 |
| 15. Powerade, Gatorade, etc | Isaiah 55:1 |
| 16. Granola bars | Matthew 12:1 |
| 17. Canned Chef Boyardee meal | John 6:27 |
| 18. Canned spam or packaged beef | 1 Chronicles 29:14 |
| 19. Jar of peanut butter | Luke 11:5-8 |
| 20. Meal such as Dinty Moore | 1 Timothy 3:4 |
| 21. Can of corn | Ruth 2:1-23 |
| 22. Flavored rice such as Rice a Roni | Deuteronomy 8:1-20 |
| 23. Toothpaste | Zechariah 7:9 |
| 24. Your choice | |

Merry Christmas from the Missions Committee

We are planning to continue our partnership with the Youth Foyer as our December project. In the past we have put gift tags on a tree for you to select. With Covid still keeping attendance down and people not shopping as much, we have decided to fill large coffee mugs with hot chocolate, candy canes, etc, and a variety of gift cards and the residents can use as they choose. If wishing to participate, we are asking you to make a check to Peace UMC with a notation of Youth Foyer on the memo line. We will purchase the gift cards and make sure they are evenly distributed. There are also two babies and a toddler living with their Moms, and we will provide gifts for them. Please consider this opportunity, as you have so generously in the past. They are more than appreciative of our church outreach. Note: please see that the church receives your check by Sunday, December 12. Thank you.

Wishing each and every one of you a beautiful, blessed Christmas.

Barb, Becky, Betsy, Connie, Terry, and Pam

PASTOR NOTES

Covid update: We will continue to mask and not have coffee an' for now until the numbers go down significantly.

Thank you to all who sent cards and gifts for pastor appreciation month and for my birthday. I feel loved and cared for. Pastor Mickey

PASTOR'S REPORT

This church has remained strong and committed to its mission and ministry throughout the pandemic. Offering has held steady at 90% of giving. In person worship is trending up after a slight blip with some covid cases in church. Some leaders have taken on new leadership positions, and we have new people volunteering to fill worship helper and counting duties. The recorded worship is reaching many people who would never have walked through our doors but are finding Christ through our digital presence. Our missional presence is still strong in our communities and giving to missions has been phenomenal. We continue to stock our food pantry and Joan is a welcoming presence to those who come for help. I am working with Pastor Amy from Gethsemane and we will continue to find ways to be in ministry together with them. Trunk-or-treat and the community picnic were two very successful outreach events we did together. We have two confirmation students and we are joining them with the Gethsemane students. We are developing a proposal for a shared youth pastor with them also. I think this church is positioned to make creative decisions and solutions to a new way of being as we ease out of the Covid Pandemic. We can use our strengths to move forward and not be stuck in old ways of doing things. It is a different time and there are many who are yearning for what this church has to offer. So let us go forth with confidence in our mission to make disciples of Christ for the world.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

It's that time of the year again! Sunday school will be preparing for our annual Christmas Program over the next few weeks. However, we will be utilizing a different method this year by pre-recording the program. We are asking all students to stay after church on Sunday December 12th to record our program. The program will then be played for the congregation on December 19th and will also be available to view on our church website.



Letters have been sent to all Sunday school parents/guardians with more information. If you have any questions, please contact Becky at 218-591-9906.

We hope you enjoy the program coming soon!

TRUNK OR TREAT

Trunk or Treat 2021 was a huge success with Peace having 10 decorated vehicles and 6 from Gethsemane. 150 cups of hot chocolate/coffee were served and lots of candy was given out. Thank you again to all who donated candy and their time to make this a fun community event.

Despite being cold and dealing with very wet snow at times, our hearts were warmed by the thanks we received from kids and parents who like the idea of Trunk or Treat.

I have no idea how many kids came through, but there were a lot.

As I was preparing for this year's event I thought it would probably be the last time we do Trunk or Treat as people might be getting tired of standing out in the cold. However, I heard **several** people (including those from Gethsemane) say, 'Next year when we do this. . .', so Halloween 2022 is a go. I am already thinking of my theme for next year. I have so many ideas and have a whole year to work on it. What will it be. . .Pirate Ship? Star Wars? The Grinch?

Lois Lackner
Trunk or Treat Organizer

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Enclosed with the November newsletter was a table tent for you to use during Advent. You can insert a candle and light it each week as you watch the recorded service or in your own way. We hope you will use this as a way to keep each other together in spirit since we aren't able to worship together in person this year. The Worship Commission

If anyone would like to donate a poinsettia as a memorial to a loved one for our Christmas Eve service, please get them to the church on Wednesday, Dec. 22nd between 9:00-1:00. There will be a sign-up sheet in the library. If you want to participate and won't be able to get to the church during that time frame, please contact me and I will arrange a time for you.

Lois Lackner
744-1458

WORSHIP HELPERS

Diane Hawley would like to set up a six month worship helper schedule starting in January. If anyone new would like to volunteer for reading or greeting please let her know. In addition, any of our current volunteers who have special date requests should contact her. Diane Hawley 218-744-5198
Thank you to all past and future worship helpers.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Communion moved to Sunday, December 12th due to Pastor's need to isolate due to COVID-19.

Friday, December 24th Christmas Eve Taping-11:00 AM—CONGREGATION WELCOME TO ATTEND

Friday, December 24th-Christmas Eve Services - 4:00 PM

Sunday, December 26th 10:00 AM

Christmas Eve services will be broadcast at www.werpeaceumc.com(worship, view worship service) beginning on Friday, December 24th after noon for one week. Christmas Eve services will also be broadcast on Friday, December 24th at 4:00 pm and 10:00 pm on Mediacom channel 5 and will be broadcast at normal time for the rest of week.

BOOK STUDY

On January 5th I will be leading a book study at church. We will be meeting on Wednesday evenings at 6pm and Thursday mornings at 11am.

The book we will be reading is *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele Richardson.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

In 1936, tucked deep into the woods of Troublesome Creek, KY, lives blue-skinned 19-year-old Cussy Carter, the last living female of the rare Blue People ancestry.

The lonely young Appalachian woman joins the historical Pack Horse Library Project of Kentucky and becomes a librarian, riding across slippery creek beds and up treacherous mountains on her faithful mule to deliver books and other reading material to the impoverished hill people of Eastern Kentucky. Along her dangerous route, Cussy, known to the mountain folk as Bluet, confronts those suspicious of her damselfly-blue skin and the government's new book program. She befriends hardscrabble and complex fellow Kentuckians, and is fiercely determined to bring comfort and joy, instill literacy, and give to those who have nothing, a bookly respite, a fleeting retreat to faraway lands.

OVERVIEW

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek is a historical novel by American author Kim Michele Richardson. Published in 2019, the book takes place in the Kentucky hills during the Great Depression in 1936. In its depiction of prejudice and community in 1930s Kentucky, *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* touches upon themes including the distrust of authority, the random and dangerous nature of prejudice, the power of community, and the importance of caring.

I hope you will think about joining us. Books will be available in the church library for purchase. If you are interested please let Joan know so we can get an idea of how many books to order. The book is also available from many booksellers and for borrowing from the public library.

Rachel Bodas