



# Peace Notes

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PLYMOUTH, MINNESOTA

Volume 26, Issue 6 June 2021



## Seeking Refuge - Jonathan House

As Peace's Summer preaching and worship series look at the Biblical themes of "Seeking Refuge," let's join in supporting the ministries of Johathan House, the only Twin Cities metro-area housing program designed specifically for asylum seekers.

Up to 3,000 people in Minnesota are currently seeking asylum from war, human rights violations, and political, religious, or social persecution. They come from the world's most troubled regions in hopes of finding safety and a normal life.

Asylum-seeking individuals (who are legally allowed to reside in the United States) are not even allowed to file for a work authorization permit (by current policy) until a full year after filing a complete asylum application. During any of the asylum processes, these individuals cannot receive any federally funded governmental assistance. This leaves them especially and systemically vulnerable. Safe and stable housing is one of the most crucial needs in helping these vulnerable individuals and families to recover from forced displacement and begin to rebuild their lives; this is where IAFR's local Jonathan House ministry comes in. Jonathan House provides shelter, hope, and healing for 9 asylum-seeking individuals across two houses in the Twin Cities area.

This June, Peace is sponsoring one of the homes to supply it with paper goods and cleaning supplies. **You can participate by signing up at [Signup.com](https://www.signup.com) and bringing your donation to Peace by Sunday, June 27th.**

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Worship series "Seeking Refuge"

We will continue to offer virtual worship via our website and YouTube channel.

# FAITH IN DAILY LIFE

By Joni Sutton

He sings, he plays the guitar, teaches, runs, curls, and cheers for the Cornhuskers. This can only mean one thing: this month, we are featuring Peace member **Matt Peterson** as a person who is living his vocation!

Matt and his wife, Nancy, have been members of Peace since 1996. Born in Omaha, Nebraska, Matt had a confirmation instructor in seventh grade by the name of Andy Sedlins. "I was surprised to see him again when my family and I moved to Plymouth and he was the pastor at Peace," says Matt. Matt and Nancy have three adult children: Derek and Liese, who live in the Twin Cities, and Annika, who is a student at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington.

Matt works as a raw materials buyer for Arctic Fox, a manufacturer in Delano. Part of that job includes training colleagues on various topics, which is something Matt enjoys. He sees his vocation as a teacher, and he loves sharing knowledge on subjects with other people. Matt says that when he is teaching, he feels he is "being a servant to others to help them gain a better understanding of the subject at hand." It can be challenging to find the correct language to reach the person he is teaching, but he says, "the joy is when someone 'gets it' and gains new knowledge."

How did a Nebraska boy pick up the sport of curling? In 1980 he had a baseball teammate who couldn't stop talking about the sport. Matt became curious, and he went with his friend to an open house that fall. "Once I stepped on the ice, I was hooked," he says. Other than during the three years when he was living in Alabama, he has played ever since. When he isn't curling, you might find him running. He has run seven marathons, including the Boston Marathon in 2016.

At Peace, Matt has been a Sunday School teacher, and he sings in the Senior Choir. He is a substitute ringer in the Adult Handbell Choir, is a frequent lector, and he is an usher. He has also served on the church council. He has frequently helped to lead Worship while singing and playing his guitar. When asked what thriving looks like to him, Matt says, "thriving is when we are living harmoniously within the framework of God's love and being able to work through differences while remaining civil." Whether at church council meetings, in church reading groups, or as a teacher, Matt is a person who knows how to find consensus while letting all participants know that their opinions matter – that they are heard.

Asked what he is looking forward to at Peace, Matt says he is waiting for the day to get back in the building for Worship regularly and thoroughly participate in singing. "I long to see my fellow members in person and to feel once again the sense of community that has so long been a part of my life." We agree, Matt!



**Matt Peterson**



## CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATE! Justin Brolin, Class of 2021

Justin is finishing his senior year playing baseball for Wayzata High School. He will continue playing this summer with the Legion team. He is excited to share that the graduation ceremony will go back to normal at Mariucci Arena with no limitations; the whole family can attend!

Justin plans to study business at Coastal Carolina University, located near Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.



# Talking about Gun Violence

Gun violence is scary. Gunshots fired at Plymouth Middle School, racial injustices, and other headlines may be challenging to talk about with children, but our church library is here to help! These two books are written for small children and include American Psychological Association resources for adults. The Library of Love at Peace Lutheran Church is rooted in Micah 6:8...

*"do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God."*



## Operation Bootstrap Africa - Sponsoring Opportunities

By sponsoring a girl at the Maasai Girls Secondary School in Tanzania, you are breaking the cycle of child marriage, poverty, and servitude. Only 30% of the population of Tanzania goes beyond primary school. The percentages go down drastically for girls, especially in the traditional Maasai communities.

By becoming a sponsor, you give a young woman the chance to make the change she wants to see in her country. There are currently 18 girls in need of sponsorship at the Maasai. **To be part of the change, go to [bootstrapafrica.org](http://bootstrapafrica.org) and click "Sponsor a Student" or call 612.871.4980.**



## Grounds and Garden Clean-up Day

Sunday, May 2nd, people gathered, prepared the garden and flower beds, shared stories, and laughed.



# Greetings in Christ! Jason Lukis

My name is Jason Lukis; I am honored and thrilled to be invited to introduce our upcoming worship series “Seeking Refuge,” but before that, allow me to share with you a small bit of background about my own journey with Peace Lutheran and as a pastor in the ELCA. My family began attending Peace Lutheran when I was in college at Gustavus Adolphus back in 2000. As a result, I have had some periodic seasons of connection worshiping with you all over the last many years, as well as having been a former member. Some of my family are still members and have even served on the council. After working in youth ministry for a number of years, the Holy Spirit gave me an unignorable nudge to begin seminary studies at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, CA, and I have since served two pastoral calls over the last decade of ordained ministry in the ELCA.

In 2017, Christ began planting seeds and cultivating the soil of my spirit for a new sense of call to be the Church alongside forcefully displaced people (specifically asylum-seeking individuals) in need of safe and stable shelter during the time of systemic vulnerability after first entering the United States. The first seeds of a new call were planted in me when I visited Leipzig and Wittenberg, Germany, for the 500th-anniversary commemoration of the reformation. I was deeply struck by seeing and learning about how some of the church communities I encountered in Germany were stepping up in response to the Syrian refugee crisis at a time when the US was explicitly closed to welcoming people from this whole region in conflict. Those seeds and soil of my heart were then watered sometime later when on a trip to Toronto, where I was visiting as an attendee of the Parliament of the World’s Religions. I stayed in a hostel during my stay there. I learned that the local government had approached the hostel owner to ask whether they would consider opening some of their space in the hostel to provide safe and stable shelter for some of the Syrian refugees that Canada had responded to with compassion and welcome. I then learned that the hostel owner reluctantly responded that the 2-year commitment that was asked for “just doesn’t fit into our business model.” I woke up the following day with one burning question that has stuck with me ever since, “Is it not Christ’s business model for the Church to respond to the foreigner in need?”—a theme that surfaces recurrently throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

I served as a solo pastor at an ELCA congregation in the Northwest Metro area at the time. Like all deeply discerned questions that strike the hearts of Lutherans, this question began to work its way into our liturgical expressions of worship and prayer. In time, a fellow musician and talented composer—Tom Struwwve and I set to work writing, crafting, and creating a worship service rooted in a spiritual invitation to cultivate solidarity and compassion for forcibly displaced people, both throughout the scriptural narrative and in our world today; we titled that liturgy Seeking Refuge. This liturgy and the broader theme will be the backbone of 6 weeks of our worship life together at Peace Lutheran Church from Sunday, June 13th to July 18th (surrounding and including World Refugee Day on June 20th).

In the years that followed, I continued to feel the Spirit’s tug on my heart to dedicate more of my vocational energy to accompanying forcefully displaced people, which eventually led to my taking the leap of faith out of congregational ministry to join the ecumenical missionary organization International Association For Refugees’ Twin Cities-based ministry Jonathan House; read more about IAFR—Jonathan House and Peace Lutheran Church’s related supply drive on page one. Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—who was once himself brought to seek asylum in a foreign country.

*Rev. Jason Lukis*



**Rev. Jason Lukis**

**worship series**  
**“Seeking Refuge”**  
Sunday, June 13th to July 18th

## GAP group - God’s Ambassadors for Peace by Mirah Lukis

Rev. Dr. Karen McKinney leads a group called GAP, or “God’s Ambassadors for Peace.” Roughly fifteen, fifth to eighth-grade students gather at our weekly Zoom meetings to discuss racial injustice and how that relates to us and our daily lives. We are taught to “stand in the gap” and be “God’s ambassadors for peace,” meaning that we need to spread God’s message and stand in the way of injustice. The Biblical text that centered us is Micah 6:8, which reads: “He has told you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

My experience with GAP has been very uplifting and inspiring. I have learned a lot about racial stereotypes and heard different perspectives from people I may not have otherwise gotten the chance to meet. From discussing tough topics relating to race, I have gained the confidence to stand up for what’s right.

I value GAP because everyone there is committed to helping make the world a better place. Rev. Dr. Karen McKinney, along with Nicole (Nikki) Foster, do a fantastic job talking to us about things that are usually difficult to discuss and educate us about race. They are both very inspiring people whose real-life experiences help us better understand racial injustice. We all trust each other, and know we will not judge one another.

With more people doing what GAP is striving to do, we can make the world a better place. We can work together to spread God’s message for peace, work against racial stereotypes and racism, and stand in the gap.



Artwork made for Rev. McKinney and Ms. Nikki.

# Updates and Notices

## Outdoor Worship starts June 13th

In case of inclement weather, we'll be in the sanctuary. Please feel free to use the Greenwood School parking lot, this will allow us to use our parking lot for worship.

- June 6, 10 am** Outdoor Games Ribbon Cutting.  
After worship, check out the new toys and games!
- June 13, 9 am** First Outdoor Worship
- June 13, 10 am** Blessing of the Bikes,  
bring or ride your bike (or just your helmet) to church!
- June 20** World Refugee Day



Pastor Thiem Baccam is an ELCA clergy serving a Laotian congregation in Minneapolis. Thiem was born in Laos and came to the United States in 1979 as a refugee. His family settled in Decorah, Iowa. He attended Luther College and graduated from Wartburg Seminary in 1993. Thiem has a heart for the gospel and sharing the love of Jesus Christ. Thiem is married to Katmany and they have three grown children. **Sunday, June 20 Thiem will preach and he and Katmany will share music**



## June Bible readings

**June 6:** Galatians 5:16-26

## Seeking Refuge Bible Stories

- June 13:** Jesus and family are refugees in Egypt, Matthew 2:1-15
- June 20:** Joseph is sold into slavery, Genesis 37:18-36
- June 27:** Moses is hidden amongst the reeds, Exodus 2:1-10
- July 4:** Ruth and Naomi seeking refuge, Ruth 1:1-7
- July 11:** David flees King Saul, 1 Sam 23: 13-29
- July 18:** John's religious persecution, Rev 1: 4-10

### EFFECTIVE THE WEEK OF JUNE 13:

**the church office will be open on Wednesday's from 10am - 4pm.**

We will also revert back to our street mailing address and close the P.O. Box. Please send your mail to 3695 County Road 101 N, Plymouth, MN 55446

### To reach the church office

please email [peace@peaceofplymouth.org](mailto:peace@peaceofplymouth.org) or call Chris at 612-386-8013.



**Pastor Kjell** can be reached Sunday-Thursday at [kjell@peaceofplymouth.org](mailto:kjell@peaceofplymouth.org) or 763-571-2919 (in case of emergency 24/7)

### Prayer Requests

If you have prayer requests you can send them to [prayer@peaceofplymouth.org](mailto:prayer@peaceofplymouth.org) and they will be added to the prayer chain email. If you would like to receive the prayer chain emails sign-up under "News & Events" at [peaceofplymouth.org](http://peaceofplymouth.org)

**Peace Notes is a monthly newsletter. Deadline for submissions is the 5th of the month**

**Peace Lutheran Church Staff**

- Lead Pastor ..... Rev. Kjell Ferris
- Minister of Music..... Stefanie Fiser Kleven
- Organist..... Anne Phillips
- Office Manager .....Chris Bacon



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## COMMUNICATIONS

Want an announcement into the weekly email? Email [chris@peaceofplymouth.org](mailto:chris@peaceofplymouth.org) by Thursday 5pm.

Want an announcement into the monthly newsletter? Email [chris@peaceofplymouth.org](mailto:chris@peaceofplymouth.org) by the 5th of the previous month.



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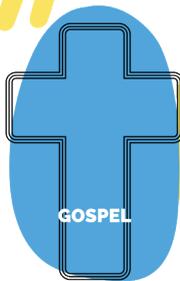
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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Outdoor Worship starts  
on June 13th.**

**All Are Welcome Here**

*Invite Your Family & Friends*



GOSPEL



GATHER



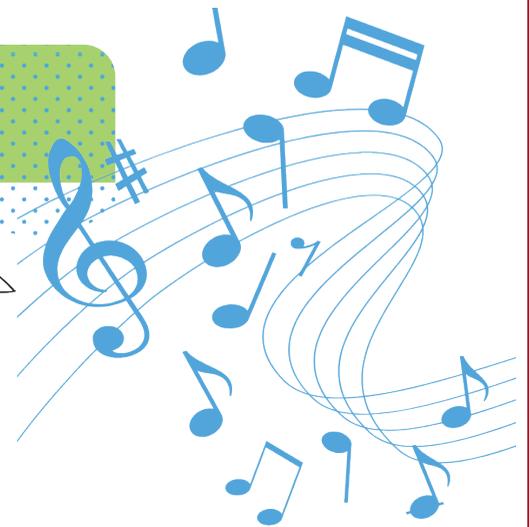
GAMES



GUITAR



GARDEN



**SUNDAY MORNING**

9:00 am —Worship Live Streamed & In-Person

9:45 am —Fellowship & Education

for all ages via Zoom Ministries.

Find these on [peaceofplymouth.org](http://peaceofplymouth.org)



**YouTube**

**Peace is social!**

Find us on Facebook

@PeaceofPlymouth or search

Peace Lutheran Church Of Plymouth to stay connected.

Youtube Channel: Peace Lutheran Church of MN

**Welcome. Worship. Service.**

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